

Temperance

A Murder.

When John B. Gough was speaking in Norwich, Connecticut, once, he referred to a local incident. Mrs. Falkner had told him some facts concerning her son. The young man, it seems, had been a drunkard, but signed the pledge. To get away from the influence and power of his old drinking companions, he left home and went to a distant city. After he had been away two years his mother received a letter which contained the glad news that he was coming home to spend Thanksgiving with her. How the joy welled up in her fond mother's heart! 'My boy is coming home! My boy is coming home for Thanksgiving!'

The young man came into the town by the stage, which stopped at the door of Solomon Parsons's tavern. He got out. It was after dusk. Some young men were standing by.

'Hello, Fred. How are you, old boy! What will you take to drink?'

'Nothing, thank you.'

'Not on Thanksgiving! Come, take a glass.'

'No, I'd rather not. I've come to see mother. She hardly expects me to-night. I thought I'd wait till dark, and then go in and surprise the old lady.'

Solomon Parsons spoke up and said: 'Fred Falkner, if I were six feet tall, and broad in proportion as you are, and yet was afraid of ale, I'd go to the woods and hang myself.'

'But I am not afraid.'

'Oh, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha! I say, boys, there's a big fellow afraid of a glass of ale. I suppose he's afraid of his mother—ha! ha! ha!'

Though possessing the strength of mind to keep his pledge when let alone, he could not stand ridicule. They handed him a glass of liquor and dared him to drink it.

'Well,' he said, 'I'm going to mother now, but I'll show you I am not afraid to drink the stuff.'

He drank it, and then came another, and still they plied him with it. Twelve o'clock that night he staggered into a barn, and was found there in the morning—dead! 'My boy is coming home for Thanksgiving!'

Having stated the facts, Gough continued: 'Ladies and gentlemen, Solomon Parsons, the man who tempted Frederick Falkner to his ruin—Solomon Parsons, who staggers through life under the weight of that poor mother's curse—is in this hall to-night, and he sits right there! This same Solomon Parsons still keeps a grogshop on the bridge of your town, licensed by the State. Men of Connecticut, rout him out!' Parsons slunk from the hall and hurried home. In less than twenty-four hours he and his bag and baggage, license and all, were carted out of the town escorted by an indignant throng.—'Forward.'

A Heart-rending Scene.

I was sitting at my breakfast table one morning when I was called to the door by the ring of the door-bell. There stood a boy thirteen years of age, poorly clad, but tidied up as best he could.

He was leaning on crutches, one leg off at the knee. In a voice that trembled with emotion, tears coursing down his cheeks, he said: 'Mr. Hoagland, I am Freddie Brown. I have come to see if you will go to the jail to talk and pray with my father. He is to be hung to-morrow. My father was a good man, but whiskey did it. I have three sisters younger than myself. We are very poor, and have no friends. We live in a dark, dingy room. I do the best I can to support my sis-

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ters by selling papers, blacking boots and doing odd jobs, but Mr. Hoagland, we are awful poor. Will you come and be with us when father's body is brought home? The Governor says we may have his body after he is hung.' I was deeply moved to pity. I promised, and made haste to the jail where I found the father.

He acknowledged that he must have murdered his wife, for the circumstances pointed that way, but he had not the slightest remembrance of the deed. He said he was crazed with drink or he would never have committed the crime. He said:

'My wife was a good woman and a faithful mother to my children. Never did I dream that my hands should be guilty of such a crime.'

The man could face the penalty of the law bravely for his deed, but he broke down and cried as if his heart would break when he thought of leaving his children in a destitute and friendless condition, I read and prayed with him and left him to his fate.

The next morning I made my way to the miserable quarters of the poor children. I found three little girls on a bed of straw in one corner of the room. They were clad in rags. They were beautiful girls, had they proper care.

They were expecting the body of their dead father, and between their cries and sobs would say, 'Papa was good, but whiskey did it.'

In a little while two young officers came bearing the body of the dead father in a rude pine box. They set it down on two rickety stools. The cries of the children were so heart-rending they could not endure it, and made haste out of the room, leaving me alone with the terrible scene.

In a moment the manly boy nerved himself, and said, 'Come, sisters, kiss papa.' They gathered about his face and smoothed it down with kisses, and between their sobs cried out, 'Papa was good, but whiskey did it.'

I raised my heart to God and said, 'O God, did I fight to save a country that would make a scene like this impossible?' In my heart I said, 'In the whole history of this accursed traffic there has not been enough revenue derived to pay for one such scene as this. The wife and mother murdered, the father hurg, the children outraged, the home destroyed.' I there promised my God I would vote to save my country from the ruin of the oligarchy.—'Evangelical Friend.'

True Temperance Would Help Greatly to Establish the Kingdom of God.

Not only does temperance give self-mastery, prevent waste, and promote peace, all of which help mightily the cause of righteousness, but it is itself an agency to lead men into the kingdom of God. The temperate man, not the victim of intemperance, is the one most likely to understand and to accept the principles of the Gospel of Christ. St. Paul said that the law had been to him a schoolmaster to lead him to Christ. True temperance is such a schoolmaster. He who has learned to control his body—his appetites, passions, etc.—is pretty sure to be moved by the call of Christ.

It needs to be seen that temperance is an economic problem as much as it is a moral or political problem.

It is still certain that the new birth is more effective in curing the intemperate than the Keeley or any other cure, though these should not be despised.

The true temperance man is temperate in all things—even in his advocacy of temperance.

A glutton can hardly flatter himself that he is temperate because he does not get drunk.

Drunkenness and poverty are twin evils which mightily aid one another.

The greatest temperance society that could be organized would comprise the mothers of the land, pledged to teach and practice temperance in their families.—'Epworth League Bible Studies.'

Tit-Bits from the Temperance Essays.

Total abstinence is of great benefit to those who practice for football and any other kind of athletics, and also to those who have much thinking to do.

Strong drink makes people do things they never would have done had they been sober. This is the cause of many dark crimes.

Slums would decrease in number if drinking habits were stopped, and there would be less work for the policemen.

The man who drinks regularly is taken up to jail some time in his life, and therefore is disgraced.

An employer will always prefer the boy who is an abstainer.

Boys and girls whose parents take strong drink are far oftener absent from the school than those whose parents are abstainers.

Though a drunkard may have a good education, he loses all his wisdom, intelligence, and knowledge; and through time he does not even know the difference between good and evil.

An abstainer will have a more comfortable home than a drinker, and it will likely be larger, because he will be able to afford a bigger rent.

People who are abstainers generally live longer than those who indulge. They are seldom seen in the poorhouse.—'Temperance League.'

The Right and the Wrong Sort of Local Option.

'Local option, in so far as it may mean prohibition breaking out in spots, the spontaneous righteousness of groups of people is certainly not to be decried. But local option that means a tarrying in the tents of wickedness, for the convenience of the wicked, is all wrong. Indeed, the latter variety of local option means local lawlessness; and the whiskey element heartily believes in it. It makes all the difference in the world which of the contesting armies uses this term. In the speech of the temperance people, local option means prohibition operative there—here—anywhere they can get it—ultimately everywhere; it means no option for the saloon. Named by the enemy, local option means located saloons there—here—anywhere they can push in—ultimately everywhere; it means all option all the time.'—Ada Melville Shaw, in the 'Union Signal.'

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