

TEMPERANCE COLUMN.

FROM PALACE TO CROSSING

(A TEMPERANCE STORY.)

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

He neither wrote nor read at home, nor did he ever pause to discuss a point with, or to retail an interesting bit of city gossip to his lonely wife. He rarely dined away from his club nor did he ever go to church. He reached home generally at midnight, frequently indeed inflamed with wine, and left immediately after breakfast in the morning. Time sped on. The baby boy had now reached the mature age of two years. He was his mother's only companion, and he grew daily dearer to her. He understood her, and she believed in her heart, sympathized with her in her grief. He was almost a stranger to his father who never kissed him nor patted his chubby cheeks by way of a response to his wooing prattle and funny facial contortions. George Wyndham sank by little and little. During the previous year he had spent not only his days but many of his nights from home, and he had been frequently assisted to his own door by companions as dissipated as himself. He now gave his wife the most meagre and inadequate allowance for housekeeping expenses, and, to her dismay, it grew daily less. But, hoping that matters would brighten she contracted sundry debts which time did not diminish. Wyndham's earnings were scanty, but he squandered them in drinking and gambling. He had long ceased to be trusted by the editor in chief of the journal with which he was connected, as promise after promise had been broken, and his frequent inability to supply editorial matter anxiously expected had had most injurious effect upon the paper. He wrote as brilliantly and, perhaps, as powerfully as ever, but fitfully, so that he could no longer be depended upon. Consequently he was degraded from the position upon which he had entered a few years before with so much promise, to the lowliest place on the staff.

Another boy was born to him and his wife, and the letter congratulating (or perhaps I ought to say condoling with) him upon the event was the last he ever received from the sorely disappointed Bishop of E—, who had done all he could to save his protégé from the dire effects of the ruin which he had brought upon himself. Indeed, it was only in deference to his earnest entreaties to the Editor that Wyndham had been allowed to continue upon the staff at all. His circumstances grew more and more embarrassed, until about three months after the birth of his youngest child he and his family were homeless and penniless, and to add to their misery he lost his employment.

Resourceless and undone he now, like many others, came to himself and realised to what his folly and criminal imprudence had brought him and his helpless innocent dependents. He could not bear to

look into the sorrowful face of his patient, illused wife, nor did he consider that he had the right to caress his two pretty boys. Stung to the heart with compunction and remorse, he gave up his evil courses, and after weeks of suffering and almost beggary he succeeded, with the assistance of a London friend, in finding employment in connection with a new journalistic venture in a remote corner of South Wales. Here his income was so small that his wife was brought face to face with the alternative that she must either work too or starve. Accordingly on the early occurrence of a vacancy in the national school of Boyn—the place of their residence, she applied first and by virtue of possessing a certificate of the first class she was the successful candidate. The husband and wife between them earned a comfortable living for themselves and their boys. They rented a pretty ivy grown cottage, furnished it appropriately and forgetful of the bitter past, were really happy. The boys, Willie and Alfie, grew apace and they became two of the earliest choristers in the choir, of which I was then the master. They were good little fellows, naturally bright; but their faces always seemed to me to bear the impress of sorrow and suffering.

Thus for a few years true happiness reigned in George Wyndham's home, and he exerted himself to the utmost to retrieve his lost fortunes. But alas! During the Christmas-tide festivities of 1876 he tasted wine, and having tasted it, drank deeply. Coming home maddened with alcohol he savagely attacked his wife, dragging her out of bed and thrusting her with her boys out of the house into the bitter cold of the winter night. She sought shelter in a neighboring cottage, her husband left his home and family during the night and never saw it or them again. Mrs. Wyndham's injuries were so serious that she lay for months upon a bed of sickness and suffering, weeping almost incessantly. She made every effort to discover her unfortunate husband's whereabouts, but without avail. Recovering, she resumed her teaching and thus she was able to support herself and her boys. But the woes and sorrows of her hard life occasioned by her husband's unaccountable conduct, had destroyed her health. She continued the faithful discharge of her professional duties for two years, then sickened with consumption, lingered for a few months and died commending her orphan boys to the Father of all.

A year or two ago George Wyndham was seen and recognized, selling cigars and matches at a London crossing

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