



Temperance Department.

TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF.

(From Day of Rest)

II.

"Will you turn over a new leaf?" Those words rang in his ears as he walked through the wet uncomfortable weather toward the city. They would not cease their importunity even when he was seated round the convivial board, apparently the most jovial of those jovial ones who, like himself, were making shipwreck of health, wealth, character, happiness, and everything. Their echoes followed him when he returned to his disturbed home, and that night his wife listened with astonishment to the frequent repetition of the words in his drunken soliloquies.

At such times he invariably let fall ominous words confirmatory of Mrs. Bates's fears that they were getting into difficulties. No other ground whatever had she for such a supposition. On the contrary, by actions that spoke louder than words, Mr. Bates represented that they were in a prospering state. Costly articles of furniture were unexpectedly sent home by him; pictures, statuettes, &c.—for he was an ardent admirer of the fine arts. Mrs. Bates, in her first bursts of astonishment, declared the purchases were altogether superfluous, and made in a fit of intoxication. Had she said in a fit of intoxication, she would have been nearer the mark, for that was the fact. However, she finally took a more charitable view of the matter, and was secretly pleased with the costly "superfluities;" and what housewife would not be?

Mr. Bates never troubled his wife about business matters. When sober, he was emphatically "close" with regard to such topics, though it evidently cost him an effort to keep so. He did not hesitate to tell her, when he had been particularly successful with any of his designs, of the praise and admiration he had gained. Indeed, he could not have disguised his pleasure and satisfaction, for he was naturally a demonstrative man. But nothing further did he deem it expedient to disclose to her; consequently, she had about as much idea of their affairs being in a declining state as the man in the moon, until she learned the import of her husband's drunken mysterious mutterings.

Then fear became her constant companion. She began to think. Yes, her husband was indeed an habitual and a hard drinker. Under such circumstances could business be properly attended to? Such thoughts, such questions, perpetually distressed her. Would he "turn over a new leaf?" She had herself, with much misgivings, once proposed that question to him; but the next moment had accused herself of foolishness, as he scornfully tossed the proposition aside with words of pleasant banter.

A month or two from the time of the commencement of our story, on one of the mid-week evenings, he brought a friend home to dine with him. As usual, he had been drinking, and Mrs. Bates felt in nowise disposed to be very gracious to his guest. Besides, Mr. Jones was not a man calculated to produce a favorable impression on the mind of such a woman as Mrs. Bates, sensible, educated, and generally refined as she was. He was loud and noisy—hilarious would be the best word—and his frequent jokes were coarse and ungentlemanly. Mrs. Bates was not sorry when she could leave the room, and long after her departure the two gentlemen sat over their wine. Half-an-hour or so passed in loose, desultory conversation, when Mr. Bates said, as if suddenly recollecting, "These are the pictures I was speaking of."

"Ah!" ejaculated Jones, rising to look at them; and raising his eye-glass, he scanned them attentively for five minutes with the air of a connoisseur. They were beautiful paintings—one of a Spanish girl with fruit, the other an exquisite Italian landscape.

"Hump! you must come down a cool fifty," said Jones after a quiet survey, and swinging his eye-glass round and round.

"Not a fraction," promptly responded Bates.

"You won't get your first sum anywhere."

"Won't I, though? I tell you, Jones," said Mr. Bates, bringing his hand down heavily on the man's shoulder with tipsy confidence, "I would not part with them for anything that could be offered, although I have such a stock, were it not that I am pushed for cash just now. Why, man, they're splendid!"

"Yes, they are fine pictures," said the other, slowly; "but, at any rate, you'll knock off twenty; come, that's fair."

"I won't!" said the uncompromising Bates, very decidedly. So as Jones saw he was determined, he pressed the subject no longer; and after discussing another bottle, the bargain was arranged satisfactorily to both parties.

Jones met Mrs. Bates on the stairs as he was leaving the house, and wished her "good evening," but she did not comprehend the meaning of the words to her husband, I'll send for them to-morrow, Bates."

When he had gone, Mr. Bates seemed wofully ill at ease. Presently taking a seat immediately opposite his wife, and making an imbecile attempt to look uncommonly sober, he began: "I've been thinking it was very foolish, Marian, to buy those paintings"—waving his hand toward them—"quite unnecessary; a piece of unpardonable extravagance."

"I thought so at the time of your purchasing them," said his wife, quietly; "but as we have them it's no use regretting. They are very beautiful."

"Hump! The value of them in pounds, shillings and pence would be infinitely more beautiful to me just now. In fact, I've been talking to Jones about converting them into ditto, and he seems to take up with the idea."

"Sell them, do you mean?—to him?" said she, in undisguised disgust. "Never should such a man have a shilling's worth of mine! There is something about him that I hate!" and her eyes flashed.

"Very probably," replied Mr. Bates; "I don't admire him myself; but the fellow abounds in riches, and it is well for one in my position to have such a friend. The truth is, Marian, my affairs just now are in a critical state, and a good round sum would be of incalculable service to me, therefore I think my wisest plan would be to dispose of those two paintings; they will be the least missed of anything we have."

Mrs. Bates felt alarmed to hear it hinted that it was really necessary to convert any of their possessions into hard, serviceable cash, and then to hear him say, "They will be the least missed of anything we have," sounded like the prelude to something terrible. However, there was no help for it; the paintings went, and, ere long, a few other "superfluous" articles followed them.

One night Mrs. Bates was sitting up alone, waiting for her husband as was her wont. He was unusually late—it was past the midnight hour. The poor woman, weary in mind as well as body, was leaning her head down on her hands, and bitter tears were trickling slowly through her fingers. Her hopes were dying, her cup of happiness seemed dashed aside for ever. It was strange how, at such times, her heart seemed to go out after God; how the burdened spirit seemed to find relief in thinking of Him, and in breathing broken, imperfect prayers, like the first trustful hispings of a little child to its father. Very strange it seemed, for Mrs. Bates had not been a praying woman.

Her husband came in intoxicated, and apparently in a furious passion. She secretly trembled as he paced the room, with rolling, unsteady gait; his eyes glaring, his lips muttering terrible imprecations.

"What is it, Aleck? What's the matter!" she said at length.

"Matter enough," he growled; "but why are you up now? You'd better go to bed, and mind your own business."

She still kept her seat, however, and he went on raving in the same unaccountable style, and uttering horrid oaths. All the intelligible words he let fall from which she could determine the cause of his excitement were—"The wretches! the hypocritical wretches! And so they have been pleased to blaze it abroad that Alexander Bates, the talented architect, has completed failed with his designs for—" He spoke mockingly, and then came another volley of oaths, uttered in a voice of thunder.

Mrs. Bates rose, and with trembling steps

approached him. "Aleck," she whispered hoarsely, "it is not so really?"

"Of course not; never succeeded so well in my life. It's their jealousy; but I'll be revenged!" and he clenched his fists savagely.

"But who has said it, Aleck?" asked his wife, in the same anxious, trembling tones.

"No one that I care for. I'll ride over their heads yet!" he raved, throwing his arms about tragically. "I'll let the world know who Alexander Bates is! How dare they speak with derogation of me? I'll teach them yet!"

The truth was, those last designs had been almost wholly conceived and drawn out by him whilst under the influence of drink, and were, consequently, most extravagantly and absurdly done. Indeed, when, a day or two subsequently to the above-mentioned outburst of passion, he reviewed his work with sober eyes, he felt ashamed and disgusted, and mentally admitted that the censure he had received was deserved.

From that time he drank more deeply in vain efforts to forget himself and his multifarious troubles. His pride had been sorely wounded.

The family suffered much, and, already on the sliding scale to ruin, their speed became fearfully accelerated.

(To be Continued).

A SCENE AT GLENDALOUGH.

It is work more than talk that is wanted in this busy, bustling world. And although all are not armed with the orator's power and responsibility, all—young and old, rich and poor—can wield the mallet of the workman. This is beautifully illustrated by an incident, the accuracy of which has been abundantly established by those immediately concerned. It is many, many years since Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall visited Ireland, previous to writing their well-known work descriptive of its scenery and customs. On the occasion of their visit to Glendalough, the far-famed district of the seven churches, they observed a young lad seated on one of the tombstones, who, immediately on their approach, doffed his cap, and offered his services as guide over the district. A bargain was soon struck and the party drove off. The lad, full of the quaint old legends of the place, did his work well and to the entire satisfaction of his employers. Returning home after a day's thorough enjoyment, Mr. Hall took a flask from his pocket, and, after partaking of the contents, offered some to the lad. To his utter astonishment the offer was firmly but politely declined. To Mr. Hall such a thing was inexplicable—an Irish boy who would not even taste whiskey was, indeed, a stranger sight than any he had seen during the day. He could not understand it. Resolved to test the lad's principles, he offered him a shilling, then half a crown, then five shillings, if he would drink the poisonous drug; but the lad was firm. Under the ragged jacket there throbbed a true heart. Mr. Hall determined, however, to conquer if possible, and finally offered him half a sovereign, a coin not often seen by lads of his class in those parts. It was a wicked act, and proved too much for the politeness even of an Irish boy. Drawing himself up in something well nigh akin to indignation, and pulling a temperance medal from the folds of his ragged jacket, he firmly told Mr. Hall "that for all the money his honor might be worth he would not break his pledge." The history of the medal was soon told. It had belonged to the lad's father, who had spent the prime of his days in the service of the cruellest of task-masters—Drink. Until the advent of the gentle Apostle of Temperance, happiness had been unknown in yon home on the hill-side. But with his advent, peace and joy prevailed. The medal was now round the lad's neck—a father's dying legacy to his son. Hence his noble and firm resolve. Nor was his heroism in vain. It was too much for Mr. Hall, who there and then screwed the top on to the flask, and threw it into the lake by the side of which they stood. Since that day, and entirely through the influence of that lad, Mr. and Mrs. Hall have been staunch teetotalers, aiding the movement by tongue and pen. In face of an incident such as this, why should any one say they have no influence?

"What if a little rain should say,
So small a drop as I
Can ne'er refresh those thirsty fields,
I'll tarry in the sky?
What if a shining beam at noon

Should in its fountain stay—
Because its feeble light alone
Cannot create a day.
Does not each rain drop help to form
The field-refreshing shower?
And every ray of light
To warm and beautify the flower?"

Mrs. Stowe writes, that when George Shelby visited Legree's plantation to purchase back Uncle Tom, he found himself too late to do more than soothe the poor fellow's last moments, and give him a grave. But, kneeling on the turf which wrapped the clay of his poor old friend, he vowed that from that day forward he would live with a single object, and that to do one man's work in wiping out the shame and disgrace of slavery from America.

Reader! seeing the wreck and ruin caused by the Liquor Traffic and the drinking customs, the wives it worse than widows, the children it starves and orphans, the good it retards, the evil it creates, will you refuse to do one man's work in wiping out the shame and disgrace of our own land?—Our Union.

THE TWO SAILORS.

A mother on the green hills of Vermont was holding by the right hand a son, sixteen years old, mad with love of the sea. And as she stood by the garden gate one morning she said:

"Edward, they tell me, for I never saw the ocean, that the great temptation of a seaman's life is drink. Promise me, before you quit your mother's hand, that you will never drink liquor."

"And," he said, for he told the story, "I gave the promise, and I went the globe over, to Calcutta and the Mediterranean, San Francisco and the Cape of Good Hope, the North and South Poles; I saw them all in forty years, and I never saw a glass filled with sparkling liquor that my mother's form at the gate did not rise up before my eyes, and to-day I am innocent of the taste of liquor."

"Was not that sweet evidence of the power of a single word? Yet that is not half. For," still continued he, "yesterday there came into my counting-room a man forty years old."

"Do you know me?"

"No."

"Well," said he, "I was brought drunk into your presence on ship-board; you were a passenger; they kicked me aside; you took me to your berth, and kept me there till I had slept off my intoxication. You then asked me if I had a mother; I said I had never heard a word from her lips; you told me of yours at the garden gate; and to-day I am master of one of the finest ships in New York harbor, and came to ask you to come to see me."

The mother's words on the green hills of Vermont! God be thanked for the mighty power of a single word!

BOYS AND SMOKING.

A timely note of warning is sounded by the New York Times against the growing evil of smoking among boys. It states that "careful experiments lately made by a physician of repute prove that the practice is very injurious." Of thirty-five boys, aged from nine to fifteen, who had been in the habit of smoking, in twenty-seven he found obvious hurtful effects; twenty-two had various disorders of the circulation and digestion, palpitation of the heart, and more or less craving for strong drink, and twelve had slight ulcerations of the mouth. All were treated for weakness and nervousness, but successfully only after they had relinquished smoking. The Times says of this smoking: "One of the worst effects is the provocation of an appetite for liquor, which, indeed, is not confined to the young, but which grown persons are better able to manage. Where boys drink to excess they are almost invariably smokers; and it is very rare to find a man overfond of spirits who is not addicted to tobacco. Men who want to give up drinking usually have to give up smoking at the same time, for they say that a cigar or a pipe generally excites a desire for liquor very hard to control." The great increase of smoking among boys in recent years is one of the alarming tendencies of our time. There ought at once to be inaugurated a vigorous anti-tobacco crusade throughout the land.

A DUMFRIES publican was fined £6 on Tuesday for taking a family Bible in payment of beer.