

The merchant fixed his eyes frowningly on the child; but did not speak.  
"All his money goes for drink, and it is ruining him; and we are getting poor, and mother is sick. Oh, sir, don't sell father any more liquor; please don't," again entreated Ruth in a quick, despairing voice.

"He'll get it somewhere, if he don't here," answered the merchant in a sharp voice. "I'm not to blame if he can't control his appetite; that's his look-out, not mine. He must take care of himself."

Just then Mr. Gregory came in with an unsteady step and called for brandy. In an instant Ruth's hand was laid gently on his arm.

"Don't drink, father; dear father, don't. It's poison. It will kill you."

"What are you here for, child?" enquired Mr. Gregory.

"I came to keep you from drinking any more, father."

"Me from drinking? me? hic, hic. Don't worry about me. I never take enough to hurt a fly," taking a glass of brandy from the clerk, and quickly quaffing it. "Now go home, Ruth; go home."

Ruth slowly went out and sorrowfully pursued her way homewards.

"Where's your father?" enquired Mrs. Gregory as she entered the sitting-room.

"I left him in John Randolph's store."

The patient, long-suffering wife clasped her hands tightly and closed her eyes, and a deep sigh escaped her.

The afternoon wore away. Mr. Gregory had not returned, and the evening shadows were deepening and lengthening. Ruth put on her hat and went to one of the neighbors on a slight errand for her mother. As she was returning, the voices of two men just before her came to her ear. Said one:

"Well, he's gone, poor fellow! the victim of rum. A nobler soul by nature cannot be found."

"He'll be no loss to his family. They'll be better off without him," was the reply.

A shiver of dread ran over Ruth's frame.

"Please tell me what has happened," she asked in a timid, tremulous tone.

"Hiram Gregory is dead. He was intoxicated, and fell on the railroad track, and the express train ran over him."

A sharp cry of agony burst from Ruth's lips. She grew weak and faint, and leaned against the lamp-post for support.

"Ivan, this girl is his daughter," exclaimed one of the men, hurrying to sustain her.

A little later, the forms of several men appeared in the evening darkness carrying a burden. They stopped at Hiram Gregory's house and left his lifeless remains.

We will pass over his funeral, and the sad days which immediately followed.

Her husband's dreadful death was a sudden blow to Mrs. Gregory. Her feeble, exhausted frame had no power to rally, and she grew rapidly worse. In less than a month another grave was made in the churchyard. The sorrowing, devoted wife and mother had found rest.

Two weeks after, the house of Hiram Gregory was sold to pay his debts, and Ruth was left penniless. But her loving pitiful Heavenly Father unexpectedly raised her a friend. Mrs. Blake, a widow of small means, living near, offered her a home, and adopted her into her strong, true, loving heart. For some time Ruth mourned for her parents, refusing to be comforted; but as weeks and months passed, the bright hope of childhood returned, she again became happy, and the days glided swiftly by.

A year passed. It was a bright, sunny afternoon, Ruth's eleventh birthday, and the anniversary of her dear mother's death. With many sad and conflicting emotions, she went to the church-yard and stood by the graves of her buried parents. She thought of her mother, so patient and loving, and of her father, once so kind and noble, who had yielded his manhood and life to his appetite. The last time she had seen him was in John Randolph's store, quaffing the poisonous brandy so unscrupulously sold by the rum-seller; and this man, who had been the cause of his ruin and death, was rich and prosperous, living in luxury upon money gained by a business which carried misery, tears, and desolation into so many homes.

Her soul was flooded with stinging, crushing memories. Soon steps were heard in the soft, springing grass behind her, and a hard, dry sob fell upon her ear.

Ruth turned quickly around. John Randolph was within a few yards, standing with his back towards her, by the side of a small new-made grave. Death had been very busy of late, and had taken Mr. Randolph's youngest born, a bright, beautiful little girl, and the grief-stricken father was tearfully viewing her last resting-place.

Ruth had long regarded Mr. Randolph with shrinking dislike. He was the direct cause of all her woes, and the sight of him aroused feelings of passion and hate, which gained mastery. She forgot the hallowed

place she was in, and remembered only her wrongs.

"Mr. Randolph, I hate you; I do," she cried, in a voice quivering with anger; "you are a bad, wicked man, you are; you killed my father and mother, and I'm glad your little Mary is dead; and I wish you and all of the rest of your family were dead too. You sell liquor, and get rich by making people poor and wretched; and God will surely bring you to judgment for all you do."

A shiver ran over Mr. Randolph's frame, and his lips parted as if he were about to speak; but Ruth would not listen to him. She ran out of the church-yard, and did not stop till she reached Mrs. Blake's.

Her anger soon subsided, and instead came bitter self-reproach for the sharp, cruel language she had used to Mr. Randolph. His little daughter had done her no injury, and why should she rejoice in her death? It was the father only who had sinned.

A month passed. One bright morning as Ruth was going by Mr. Randolph's house, she saw Dr. Harris's horse at the gate, and upon enquiry was told that Mr. Randolph was ill of a fever. His symptoms daily grew worse, and his condition became seriously alarming, till his life was despaired of.

Another week went by. Mr. Randolph's good condition had triumphed over the disease, and though very weak and low, he was slowly improving.

One afternoon, as Ruth was returning from the post-office, she heard him in a faint voice call her name from the window, and ask her to come in.

Reluctantly she obeyed. She had not seen him since she fled from him in the church-yard; and the change a short illness had made shocked her.

"Ruth Gregory," said Mr. Randolph hoarsely; "it has been as you predicted. God's condemnation and judgment has overtaken me. I have followed a business which has made hearts and homes desolate, and see clearly its terrible consequences. Through my sin you are bereaved and sorrowing. God forgive me, and help you to forgive me too."

Tears gathered in Ruth's eyes. All her long cherished hatred for this man departed in a moment. His pitying, penitent words touched her inmost soul.

"Oh, Mr. Randolph!" she cried. "I too have been to blame—forgive me for the wicked, cruel words I spoke when you stood by your little Mary's grave."

The next time Ruth saw Mr. Randolph was at an evening meeting. He was well known to be an irreligious man and very profane; therefore when he entered the crowded vestry room, and took a foremost seat, his appearance created visible surprise. There was an expression of subdued grief on his face quite touching to behold. The minister briefly addressed his people, and was followed by Deacon Proctor. John Randolph then arose to speak, and there was a sudden midnight stillness in the room, and all eyes were fixed on him. In a clear, firm voice he said:

"God has visited me in His mighty wrath. He has brought me face to face with death, and has revealed to me the enormity of my sins. My life record is black with guilt. I have grown rich in a business which has debased my own soul, and carried ruin and desolation into many homes and hearts. And now, Christian friends, before you as witnesses, with the help of the merciful God I am seeking to serve, I vow to abandon forever the sale of intoxicating liquors, and to do what one man can to root out this foul destroyer, intemperance, from our land."

When John Randolph concluded, there was not a dry eye in the room. "Thank God," "The Lord be praised," burst fervently and solemnly from many lips. The next day, the dazzling gilt sign, "John Randolph, Wines and Liquors," disappeared forever from public view.

Many years have come and gone since then. John Randolph's vow was never broken. All the rest of his long life he was a faithful Christian, laboring zealously for the fallen and degraded; and his strong outstretched hand has guided out of sin and darkness into light and joy.

To Ruth Gregory he was a firm, generous friend. She received from him fine educational advantages, which have made her a happy and useful woman. The dark scenes of the past are not forgotten, but the clouds were gilded with present blessings, and God has led her with His unerring finger into a heaven of plenty and peace.—*Congregationalist*.

THE REV. BASIL WILBERFORCE ON TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

I will tell you what we are to do. We are by every means in our power to press voluntary total abstinence upon the people. Why did I become a total abstainer? I saw without doubt that total abstinence was the only cure for the drink system. I went about in my large parish, and did my very best, God knows, to bring the people to a right mind about this matter. But I was a total abstainer; I did not see my way

to misery and desolation caused by drink I saw my way to casting it altogether aside, and the very instant I did so I found the good of it, because I was asking people in fighting down an evil to do something I had done which I had not been able to do before. The reason why moderate drinkers, if they love the souls of others and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, should become total abstainers, is simply this, that the drunkard, if he is to be saved, must be shielded and aided and encouraged by his stronger brother. Many object to become abstainers because they say the scriptural argument is all against us. How can they say so? I say the whole spirit of God's blessed book teaches total abstinence—that is, the spirit of total abstinence. King David, after fighting in the heat, called out that he should like some water from Bethlehem. Two or three men drew their swords and fought their way through the Philistines, and brought it to him; but he poured it out upon the burning sand, and said, "I cannot drink this; for it is the price of blood." I say is not this the very spirit of total abstinence? I look upon the wine; it maybe a harmless creature of God, but it is the price of my brother's blood. It is the price of the souls for whom hell is yawning; and I take my Christian liberty of pouring it upon the burning sands instead of using it. I believe St. Paul was a teetotaler. He was thoroughly consistent, and said he would not drink wine if it made his brother to offend. A friend of mine brought up that old argument about Timothy. He said, "I have got you now: St. Paul advised Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake." There is no doubt he did. Why? Because there was such a rigorous rule of total abstinence among them that it required an inspired letter, which has been handed down from the Church from all ages, before he could be made to break his pledge. And what is more, I will venture to say that if St. Paul had recommended him to take a little tincture of rhubarb for his stomach's sake, I do not believe we should have had one hundred millions of money invested in tincture of rhubarb as we have in alcohol. The Bishop said a man had a right to use his Christian liberty when his medical man ordered him to take alcohol. I say a man has as much right to put himself under a doctor as a Catholic has to put himself under his Pope; but I would not be under either of them. I say it with the deepest respect for the medical profession—I believe there is no more honorable profession, which does more good, self-denying work; but all the doctors in England would not persuade me to take alcohol, whatever they said about it. When I first became a teetotaler I was subject to faintings, and people said if I abstained I should soon die; but I didn't. I knew a titled lady, a total abstainer, who went abroad, and accidentally falling down some cathedral steps, sustained a compound fracture of her arm, and the French physician who attended her asked what were her habits of life, and was told she was an abstainer, and he gave it as his opinion, on her recovery, that it was entirely due to her system being free from alcohol. The greatest arguments in favor of the medical side of teetotalism come from the gaol. People go there in all states of health, they are made total abstainers, and there has never been a single case of a man or woman, lad or lass, who has suffered therefrom. Then why don't people become teetotalers? Because the drink is so nice. People get so accustomed to alcoholic drinks that they feel they cannot make the sacrifice. I do not want people to take a half pledge in this matter, but to take a downright teetotal pledge that they won't touch the drink any more.

CARDINAL MANNING ON DRINKING.

On Sunday week, the Cardinal preached at the Church of SS. Mary and Michael's, Commercial-road. In the course of his sermon he said: I hope you have come together to make a resolution before God to do away with that which is the curse and the shame, and the ruin of our people—I mean the deadly and accursed drink, which is wrecking men, wrecking women, wrecking little children, and making wreck of the homes of our country. This bad habit of drinking to excess has got to be a shame and a scandal among men. It is my great joy to know how many thousands of the poor are of my flock, and also how many thousands of them have altogether renounced this great curse of soul and body. I wish to increase the number of them. I wish to prevail on every man, who would listen to my voice to have nothing to do with it; never to set his foot in any place of temptation—never to listen to a companion who tempts him. I honor and love the working-man who has the courage—I will say the manhood—to give up drink, to take water, that pure, that sufficient drink which God has given us, with which a man's strength even in toil will be sufficiently sustained and his thirst will be sufficiently slaked. I honor and love the working-man who has the manhood to do this, and I will tell you why. He labors from

morning to night, his strength departs from him, he is wasted with toil, he is tempted on every side, his companions drink; they offer it to his lips, on his way, from his work to his home there flares upon him a temptation at every corner, inviting him to come in; and the working-man who has strength in him to say, "By God's help I will not do it," and who perseveres in that resolution, I look upon him as a man who could be a martyr if called on—who would lay down his life for the sake of Jesus and his faith. It is not so much for us who have not the toil of the body as you have. We toil indeed, but it is a toil of the head, which breaks our sleep, and wears out health and strength, and brings many of us to an early death, but it does not bring the need which you have as working men. And, therefore, I look on the self-denial of the working man, who takes the pledge and keeps it, as a bright example to all of us. I love and respect him for giving such example to us. What I say of men I say also of women. Dear brethren, it is bad enough if a man drinks; it is worse if a woman drinks. Under God I can cure a man of drink, for a man has got a strong will in him; but unhappily when once a woman has given herself to drink there is a weakness to which you cannot give strength; and what is more, if a man drinks he makes a brute of himself and his neighbors are ashamed of him; but when a woman takes to drink she loses the sense of shame, she becomes dead to shame—she becomes more dead and more insensible treble-fold than a man does. Alas! if the father drinks misery comes into the house—the poor wife suffers—the poor children are naked and hungry—the house is wretched; but if the mother drinks the risk is seven times greater, and the hope of cure is seven times less. And therefore I say, if there be any who hear me who has got this most horrible and most accursed habit, dear brethren in Jesus Christ—dear sisters for whom Christ died—make your resolutions tonight; resolve to-night to give it up. Remember your children, the souls of whom are intrusted to your charge. Think of what an account God will take of you at the last day for every son and every daughter, for every boy and every girl and every infant; and if there be any one among you who has not yet fallen and who thinks he can escape this dreadful habit, let me tell him that there is many a man and woman who has died an incurable drunkard who began taking drink little by little, until at last the fatal evil grew upon them. It is just as if you were to bind a skein of silk round about the hands and of a man. The first fine threads would hardly be sensible; he might break them in a moment; but when ten, and twenty and a hundred and a thousand threads are bound, then they become like strong ropes, which nothing could break. So it is with the gradual habit of drinking.—*Alliance News, May 1.*

IS PROHIBITION A FAILURE?

Vineland, New Jersey, is one of the best illustrations, upon a moderate scale, of the practical workings of prohibition. In his last annual report the constable and overseer of the poor of Vineland, Mr. J. J. Curtis (the two offices filled by one person), gives testimony, the significance of which is obvious in its bearing against the liquor traffic. Mr. Curtis says:

"Though we have a population of 10,000 people, for the period of six months not a settler or citizen of Vineland has received relief at my hands as overseer of the poor. Within seventy days, there has been only one case, among what we call the floating population, at the expense of \$4."

"During the entire year there has only been one indictment, and that a trifling case of battery among our colored population."

"So few are the fires in Vineland that we have no need of a fire department. There has only been one house burned in a year, and two slight fires which were soon put out."

"We practically have no debt, and our taxes are only one per cent. on the valuation."

"The police expenses of Vineland amount to \$75 a year, the sum paid to me, and our poor expenses a mere trifle."

"I ascribe this remarkable state of things, so nearly approaching the Golden Age, to the industry of our people and the absence of King Alcohol."

"Let me give you as a contrast to this the state of things in the town from which I come in New England. The population of the town was 9,500, a little less than Vineland. It maintained forty liquor shops. These kept busy a police judge, city marshal, assistant marshal, four night watchmen and six policemen. Fires were almost continual. That small place maintained a paid fire department of four companies, of forty men each, at an expense of \$3,000 per annum. I belonged to this department for six years, and the fires averaged about one every two weeks, and mostly incendiary. The support of the poor cost \$2,500 per year. The debt of the township was \$10,000. The condition of things in this New England town is as favorable in that respect as places where liquor is