

From Little Sistering.

## WATER.

"Water! water!" cries the bird,  
With his singing, gentle note;  
And the liquid cry is heard  
Pouring from the little throat;  
Water, water, clear and sweet!  
To water! to water!"

"Water! water!" says the oak,  
While it rushes at his side,  
Down among the mossy rocks,  
Rippling with its crystal tide;  
Water, water, pure and true!  
"Moo! Moo!"

"Water! water!" said the tree,  
With its branches spreading high;  
"Water, water," rustled he,  
For his leaves were very dry:  
Water, water, for the tree,  
Pure and free.

"Water! water!" said the flower,  
Whispering with his perfumed breath;  
"Let me have it in an hour,  
Ere I thrashing droop in death.  
Water, water, soft and still,  
Is my will!"

"Water! water!" said the grain,  
With its yellow head on high;  
And the spreading, fertile plain,  
Ripening, joined the swelling cry:  
Water for the grains of gold!  
Wealth untold!

Water! water! sparkling, pure,  
Giveth Nature every where—  
If you drink it, I am sure  
It will never prove a snare.  
Water is the thing for me—  
Yes, and thee.

Water! water! young and old!  
Drink it, crystal-like and sweet;  
Never heed the tempter hold—  
Crush him underneath your feet.  
Water, water! Youth, for thee—  
Thee and me.

From the Sons of Temperance Offering for 1853.  
**THE COLD WATER FANATIC.**

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Come Parker," said a young man named Franklin, "There's to be a temperance meeting over at Marion Hall. Don't you want to hear the speaking?"

"No, I believe not," was answered indifferently. "I have little fancy for such things."

"Sturgess is in town, and, I am told, will make an address."

"I heard him once, and that was enough for me," replied Parker. "He's a cold water fanatic."

This was said in a group of half a dozen men, most of whom were strangers to Parker. Some of these looked at each other with knowing glances. Here a separation took place, and the different parties moved away.

"I think you had better go with me," said Parker's friend, who still kept in his company. "If Sturgess is a little enthusiastic in the cause, he is yet a very interesting speaker. Perhaps he may say something that will set even you to thinking."

"I'm not a drunkard," returned Parker.

"No; still, you are not beyond the reach of danger. No man is, who daily gratifies a desire for a glass of brandy."

"Don't you think I could do without it?"

"Certainly; you could do without it now."

"Why do you say now so emphatically?"

"Now means at the present time."

"Well!"

"I cannot speak for the future. You are not ignorant of the power of habit."

"Upon my word! you are complimentary. Then you really think me in danger of becoming a drunkard?"

"Every young man, who takes daily a glass of brandy, is in that danger."

"You really think so?"

"Most assuredly! How are drunkards made? You know the process as well as I do. Every mighty river has its beginning in a scarcely noticed stream. Ask the most besotted inebriate for the history of his fall, and you will find a part of that history running parallel with your own at the present time."

"You are serious, as I live," said Parker, forcing a smile.

"It is hardly a matter of jest. But, come! Go with me to hear this cold water fanatic, as you call him. You have no other engagement for the evening. Now, that your thoughts have been turned upon the subject of a daily glass of brandy, it may be as well for you to hear something further as to the consequences of such a habit. A wise man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself."

"But the fool—why don't you finish the quotation, Franklin?"

"That is needless, its application you fully understand. You will go with me?"

"I will, as you seem so earnest about the matter."

And so Parker went to Marion Hall, which he found crowded. After some difficulty in procuring a seat, he made out to get one very near to the platform, upon which was seated the president and secretary of one of the temperance associations in the place, with two or three others who were to act as speakers. One of these latter was a man past the prime of life. His hair was thin and gray, and his face lean and withered; but his dark, restless eyes showed that within was an active mind and quick feelings. This was Sturgess, the individual before referred to. After the usual preliminaries, necessary on such occasions, he arose to address the meeting. For some time, he stood with his eyes moving through the audience. All was hushed to profound silence; and there was a breathless expectation throughout the room. The speaker's usual style was impulsive. He was more given to declamation than argument; generally carrying his hearers with him by the force of strong enthusiasm.

"My friends," he at length said, in a low, subdued, yet thrillingly distinct voice. His manner, to those who had before listened to him, was so different from what was expected, that they felt a double interest in the speaker, and bent forward eager to catch every word.

"My friends," he repeated, "a little over half an hour ago, an incident occurred which has so checked the current of my thoughts and feelings, that I find myself in a state more fitted for the seclusion of my chamber, than for public speaking. It is a weakness I know; but even the best of us are not at all times able to rise above our weaknesses. I was conversing with a friend in the midst of a group of men, some of whom were unknown to me, when one of the latter proposed to an acquaintance, whom he called by name, an attendance upon this meeting. 'I have no fancy for such things,' was answered. 'Sturgess is to speak,' was advanced as an argument. 'He's a cold water fanatic,' said the young man, with a sneer."

There was the most perfect stillness throughout the room. All eyes were fixed upon Sturgess, whose low, subdued tone of voice, so unusual for him, made a marked impression on the audience. He stood for some moments again silent, his eyes searching everywhere.

"If," he resumed, in the same low, half-sad, impressive voice, "that young man were here to-night, I would feel it a duty, as well as a privilege, to tell him why I have become what he calls, a cold water fanatic, why I let forth my whole soul in this cause, why I am at times over enthusiastic, and why I am, probably, a little intemperate in my crusade against the monster vice that has desolated our homes, and robbed us of the sweet promise God once gave us in our childhood."

The speaker's voice had trembled—but now it was lost in a sob. In a moment he recovered himself, and

went on, still in the same low, searching tones:

"In the sweet promise of our children. Where are they? I look all around this large audience. There sits an old friend; and there, and there. Like mine, their heads are blossoming for eternity. Long years ago, we started side by side on the journey of life. We had our wives and our little ones around us then. Where are they now?"

Another long pause and deep silence followed. The dropping of a pin could have been heard in that crowded assembly.

"When my thoughts go wandering back, to that olden time," resumed the speaker, "and I see, in imagination, the bright fire, now extinguished, and hear, in imagination, the glad voices of children, now hushed forever; and when I think of what caused this sad change, I do not wonder that I have been all on fire, as it were; that I have appeared to some a mere cold water fanatic."

"I wish that young man were here to-night; and, perhaps, he is here. I will, at any rate, take his presence for granted, and make briefly my address to him."

"You have called me, my young friend, a cold water fanatic. If you had said, enthusiastic, I would have liked the term better. But, no matter, a fanatic let it be. And what has made me so? I will draw for you a picture:

"There is a small, meagerly furnished room in the third story of an old building. The time is winter; and on the hearth burns a few pieces of pine wood, that afford but little warmth. Three persons are in that room—a mother and her two children. The mother is still young; but her thin, sad, suffering face, tells a story of poverty, sickness, and that heart-sorrow which dries up the very fountains of life. A few years previously, she had gone forth from her father's house, a happy bride, looking down the open vista of the future, and seeing naught but joy and sunshine. She clung to her husband as confidently as the vine clings to the oak; and she loved him with all the fervor and devotion of a pure, young heart. Alas! that shadow so soon fell upon her path; that love's clinging tendrils were soon torn away!

"She is still young. Look upon her as she moves with feeble steps about her room. Ah! into what a depth of misery she has fallen!—Where is her husband—he who solemnly swore to love, cherish, and keep her in sickness and in health? The door has opened! He enters—gaze upon him! No wonder an expression of pain and disgust is on your countenance; for a miserable drunkard is before you. No wonder the poor wife's pale cheek grows paler, nor that the sadness of her face changes into a look of anguish. Hark! He has greeted her with an angry word. He staggers across the room, and, in doing so, throws over that little toddling thing on her way to meet him. The mother, with an exclamation, springs forward to save her child from harm. See! The drunken wretch has thrust her angrily aside with his strong arm; and she has fallen—fallen with her head across a chair."

"The fall, my friends, proved fatal. A week after that unhappy day, I stood by the grave of one who had been to me the best and most loving of children!"

The speaker's voice faltered. But he recovered himself, and went on:

"A few years before, I gave my child, dear to me as the apple of an eye, into the keeping of one I believed to be kind, noble-hearted, and faithful. He was so then—yes, I will still say this. But the demon of intemperance threw upon him her baleful glances,

and he became changed. And such a change! The scene I have pictured took place in a far city, whither my child had been taken. Alas! the poor child did not die in my own arms. I was summoned too late. Only the sad pleasure of gazing upon her wasted cheeks, white as marble, and icy cold, remained to me."

The old man could no longer suppress his emotions. Tears gushed over his face, and he wept aloud. Few dry eyes were in that assemblage.

"Is it any wonder," resumed Sturgess, after he had again recovered the mastery of his feelings, "that I am a cold water fanatic? Methinks, if the young man to whom I have referred, had passed through a sorrow like this, he, too, would have been an enthusiast—a fanatic, if he will, in the cause of temperance. He, too, would have proclaimed from the streets and house-tops, in highways and by-ways, his mission of reform and regeneration. But let me say to him, and all like him, that prevention is better than cure, that it is easier to keep sober than to get sober, easier to give up the daily glass at twenty-two or twenty-five, than at thirty or forty. These drinking habits gain strength more rapidly than others, from the fact that they vitiate the whole system, and produce a diseased vital action."

"A cold water fanatic! perhaps I am. But have I not had cause? Ten years ago, a youth of the brightest promise stepped confidently upwards, and set his foot on the firm earth of manhood. He had education, talents, industry and good principles. But he lacked one element of safety—he had not a deeply fixed antagonism towards all forms of intemperance; indeed, like the young man to whom I have before referred, he rather regarded the advocates of temperance as fanatics. And he was not so much to blame on this account, for his own father, in whom he confided, kept liquors in his side-board, used them himself, and set them out in mistaken hospitality before his friends. Well, this young man went on well for a time; but, sad to relate, a change was apparent in a few years. His frequent visits to taverns brought him into contact with dangerous companions. Drinking was followed by its usual consequences, idleness; and the two united in speedily working his ruin."

"My friends"—the speaker was again visibly excited—"one night, two years ago, I was returning home from a visit to a neighbor. It was dark, for heavy clouds obscured the sky, and there were all the indications of a rapidly approaching storm. Presently lightning began to gleam out, and thunder to roll in the distance. I was, perhaps, a quarter of a mile from home, when the rain came down in a fierce gust of wind. The darkness was now so intense, that I could not see five paces ahead; but, aided by the lightning, I obtained shelter beneath a large tree. I had been there only a few moments, when a human groan came upon my ears, chilled the blood back to my heart. The next flash enabled me to see, for an instant, the prostrate form of a man—He lay close to my feet. I was, for the time, paralyzed. At length, as flash after flash rendered the figure momentarily visible, groan after groan awoke human feelings, I spoke aloud. But the only answer was that continued moan, as one in mortal agony. I drew nearer, and bent over the prostrate body. Then, by the lightning's aid, I knew it but too well! It was, alas! that of the unhappy man I have mentioned—MY OWN SON!

"I took him in my arms," continued the old man, in a faltering voice, after another pause, in which the audience bent forward with manifestations of intense interest, "and with a strength