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The Stranger's Story.

We were sitting in the bar room of a comfortable little inn, in the village of W——, one evening, enjoying our hot punch. It was in the latter part of November. The steady wind and rain held their orgies, and we, Jack Stanton, Will Hooker and myself, were quietly discussing the important topics of the day, and now and then trying the merits of our toddy.

Will Hooker was just beginning to relate one of the interesting stories of his adventures, when a light tap on the bar room door interrupted him. He arose and opened the door. A man entered with the rain dripping from his garments, and inquired if he could get lodging for the night. Mine host of the inn came forward and relieved the man of his wet coat, and then for the first time I took a full survey of him.

He was apparently about fifty years of age, rather too tall for the medium height, hazel eyes, and a feminine cast of features. His dark hair, with here and there a silver thread of gray, curled beautifully around his high forehead. I shall never forget the expression of mingled pain and shame that crossed his face as those clear eyes were bent for the first time upon our circle. We were about drinking a toast given us by Jack Stanton, when he gazed upon us. In spite of my strong nerves my hand trembled and refused to bring the glass to my mouth, and I thought I detected a smile on his countenance as my two friends drank their wine while mine remained untouched.

"Ha! Ha!" exclaimed Will Hooker. "So you are trying to play possum on us. It done well enough when we were at college, but times have changed since then, and we are at liberty to go out on a spree when we please, without disturbing the professor and being severely reprimanded before the whole school."

"Excuse me," I replied, "I intend to bear my share of the licks and cuffs of life, and especially my share of the wine. But when you bear my excuse you will acknowledge that I was half right. I also intended to ask you to desist for a few moments, but seeing the wine was too near that organ which is destroyed by that hissed article, I concluded to let you go this time, and when you intended to drink again to remind you of my presence."

"Logic, by Jingo!" exclaimed Jack Stanton. "But to my shame I must confess it beats all my powers of comprehension to ascertain your meaning."

"Well, simply this," I replied: "you see how a stranger in the room and I think it proper to ask him to share our wine with us?"

"But I should think it more proper if neither of you would take your wine again this evening," came in silvery tones from the stranger.

My blood boiled in indignation, and I was about to make an angry reply, when I remembered he was an apparent stranger to me, and as it would not correspond to my sentiments uttered but a few moments ago I turned it off by merely saying—

"Why are you so prejudiced against wine drinkers?"

"To reply to your question," he replied, "I should have to go back to the time when I was a young man like yourself. But after I have refreshed the inner man, if it will not be too tedious for you to listen I will try to explain to you why I am prejudiced against wine drinkers."

At this in moment the landlord opened the dining room door and announced supper. The door that separated the dining room from the kitchen being open, the savory odors of meat and other viaticals came rushing into my olfactory nerves reminding me of a slumbering appetite. I proposed that we should adjourn to the dining room and partake of the good things that Master Holly had prepared for us, after which we would return and listen to the stranger's story.

ing room. I remember the morning as if it were but yesterday, when my father called me up to the desk, and addressed me in the following words:

"My son, you are now about to enter upon the duties of a merchant, your first step will decide your course of life. Guard well your speech, keep an evil company, and your morals will guard themselves. But mark me, if you heed not my advice, ere you reach the age of thirty, you will be a miserable wretch, or perhaps fill a pauper's grave."

"Oh! how true those words came to pass! Had I but followed the injunctions of my father, what years of misery, toil and suffering would I have been saved from! What joy and peace would have been mine, if I might add to the peace that passeth all understanding!

"A few days after I joined the young man's association, and it was there I first agreed to gamble and to drink wine. And here let me tell you, if there were less young men's associations and more plow meetings, many a youth who is now treading the downward road to ruin, would have been saved. I will tell you why I am prejudiced against young men's associations. They are organized under the head of literature and art, but, woe to the young man that enters gambling, swearing and drinking in the order of the night. But I will say nothing more on this subject, for I presume you all know the secret of those organizations."

"As I said before, a few days after leaving my father's home I attended one of these meetings, and there for the first time drank of those nightly meetings for more than a year, and in that space of time the habit of drinking had its full hold on me. Nevertheless, I was at my desk regularly every morning and most truly say that I learned more in that year than I did in all my school days; but the blinding fog, the loss of memory, the false light in the eye told that fatal tale."

"Two more years passed, and passed a night! Those two years passed over my head without I was more or less intoxicated. I was now nineteen, and for the first time my eyes were opened, and I saw the dark abyss of despair into which I was rushing headlong. If I had stopped then, all would have been well, but no, the tempter had too strong a hold upon me, and I, after two years of dissipation, was too weak to resist. But another grief was lying heavily at my heart. I saw my father sinking rapidly. Day by day the step grew heavier, the voice fainter, and ere a year passed I knew he would pass beyond the tomb. Not was I mistaken. One morning, being unable to rise, he called me to his bedside, and addressed me in the following words:

"My son, I shall soon leave this world. A few more days and I shall be numbered with the dead, but I could not bear to part from earth without giving you warning of the doom that awaits you if you follow the course you are pursuing. I know your secret. The poison was in your cup, and you are making you for its victim. And remember when I pass away, that you have brought your father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. But I forgive you if you now return to the path of virtue."

"I will now return," I murmured. "I will touch this cup no more. God help me to keep my oath!"

"I saw a smile on his countenance as I left the room. My father lived just three days after I promised to drink no more wine. I kept my promise for more than a year, and in that time I met my ideal of a man, and married her. My business prospered greatly, and I concluded to have a magnificent wedding. I sent invitations to all the elite and wealthy of M——, to witness my nuptials. I also gave a wedding supper, and here I again fell. I was pressed to drink and yielded. Glass after glass was emptied, and when the carnival was at its height I was led to my room heavily drunk.

When I awoke the sun had reached half way to the meridian; my throat was sore, and my lips dry and parched. My first thought was to try the virtue of wine. I immediately ordered some and emptied four full glasses, one after another as quickly as they could be filled. I then felt better. After this the old habit gradually came upon me. It would be too tedious to go through the whole catalogue of my dissipation. After a while I began to be heedless and neglect my business, and in five years from the time I was married, I was a bankrupt. I rented a dingy old building in Water street, and moved there. I was in the lowest depths of poverty. Now and then I earned a little, but I spent it for accursed drink.

"Three years we struggled along through poverty with scarcely enough food to keep soul and body together. But now comes the saddest part of my story. I had earned a few dollars and concluded to have a glorious old drunk. It was in the latter part of November, a night very much like this; the rain fell in

torrents, and the November wind screeched and howled in all its fury. Quite a crowd had gathered in the tavern when I entered. I made my way to the bar and called for whisky. Again and again I drank, and when the clock on the mantle told the hour of midnight, I was beastly drunk. With misty steps I wended my way home. I entered the room and called for a light, but no one answered. O God! what a sight met my gaze! On the bare floor lay the forms of wife, mother, and two children! One girder told me the tale. My heart felt it, and as I saw their glazed eyes I thought their lips moved and uttered the word 'murder!'

"Nature could stand no more. I fainted, and for three weeks I lay in a fever and delirium. And when reason resumed its sway I was scarcely strong enough to raise my hand or speak above a whisper. When I was able to walk I was led to the place where lay my darling; four fresh wounds of earth denoted their resting place. Then I knelt upon those graves and swore an oath that I would conquer the devil of sin, and, thank God, I have done so. I have held the almighty draught to my lips, but the amphetamine never returned."

"For ten years I toiled day by day for my bread, and when I thought I had expiated my crime in toil and suffering, I went into business, and again prospered; but, thank Heaven, my appetite for strong drink never returned. I have sworn to never touch another drop of wine, and by the help of God I intend to remain faithful to the oath."

When the stranger had finished his story I was perfectly sober, and gladly saw the downward road I was treading.

"And I?" I exclaimed, "will never touch another drop, so help me God!"

"Nor I," responded Will Hooker. Then Master Holly came forward and said—"Honoraria I will sell no more poison to my fellow men, but will seek employment of another nature and try to live a better life."

I saw a tear trickle down his face as he clasped our hands one after another and murmured: "God bless you."

When the turnpike was being surveyed from Manchester over the mountains to Peru, Mr. Leland, who was formerly of Chester, accompanied the party. One day they died at the house of an old settler, whose custom it was to kill a young horse every fall for his yearly supply of meat. Being very hungry Mr. Leland did not stop to ask his accursed blessing. Observing this, the owner of the horse immediately stepped to the table and asked a blessing, much to the mortification of Mr. Leland. All ate heartily, and on their way back to their work, Mr. Leland asked one of the workmen what kind of meat they had for dinner. The man replied he supposed it was a piece of a two year old colt. Mr. Leland vainly essayed to throw up his dinner, but nature was stronger than his will, and the forbidden meat stayed down.

It has been discovered that a majority of the live men in the democratic party ten years ago are now shining ornaments in the democratic party. This could hardly have been otherwise. An active, progressive, intelligent man would succumb among the debris of dead issues on which the democratic party lives, and the dead men who came into the Republican party from association as old Whigs could not keep pace with the progressive life of the new party, and like stragglers in the army, fell back into more congenial company.

IT'S DARK.—The following beautiful sentiments are from Meister Karl's Scotch Book entitled "The Night in Heaven." It is full of touching tenderness: "It is dark when he feels the clouds of sorrow gathering round and knows that the hopes and happiness of others are fading with his own. But in that hour the memory of past integrity will be a true consolation and assure him even here on earth as quickly as they could be filled. It is dark when the sweetest voice of that old habit gradually came upon me. It would be too tedious to go through the whole catalogue of my dissipation. After a while I began to be heedless and neglect my business, and in five years from the time I was married, I was a bankrupt. I rented a dingy old building in Water street, and moved there. I was in the lowest depths of poverty. Now and then I earned a little, but I spent it for accursed drink."

A leader of music in a church where congregational singing was practiced, selected a tune with the wrong metre, to be sung to the words, "With hyssop purge my soul, O Lord!" He tried it twice, when some old lady cried out,—"Mister, you had better try some other yarb."

The Dead at Andersonville.

Five hundred yards northwest of the stockade, is the cemetery where sleep more than fifteen thousand of the victims of Andersonville,—a spot nearer hell, in the concentrated malignity which it represents, than any other on the continent. Fortunately the prison records were recovered, so that all but about four hundred graves can be identified. The government has put up head boards at all the graves, with the number, name, state, regiment or company, taken from these records.

The inclosure in which the bodies repose, I should judge, must contain some twenty acres, and is exceedingly well adapted to the purpose, being dry, and pleasantly diversified with hill and dale, and part of it with a small grove. The government, however, has planned to remove the bodies to a very large and extensive lot of a hundred and sixty acres, adjoining the present one on the south. The intention was to take up the bodies and bury them by States, and to beautify the lot with monuments and such other works as would render it worthy of a free republic. A force of more than five hundred men had worked on it the entire winter. But when I was there the work had been arrested, the men dismissed, and I hope and pray it may never again be resumed. It seems to me that the fittest place for our braves to rest in, is just where they were borne out and laid from the prison. It is too late now to add glory to their ashes by garnishing their sepulchres. They will speak to the future more impressively out of the long trenches, where they were laid without a coffin or a shroud, than they could from the most costly mansions of the wealth of a nation could build. For one I protest against the intended, but mistaken honor. We cannot disturb their sacred dust without breaking the charm and the lesson of their lives. The less of ostentation here the better. Only let the government see that imperishable tablets are set over these graves and that these God's acres, sown with its martyred dead, are kept severely simple, and severely beautiful, and it will have done its duty.

Had I a son or a brother there, I could not be tempted to remove his remains from the company of his illustrious compatriots. It would seem to me little less than profanation to disturb a repose so august and so profound. In all the earth there is not a spot where our martyrs to liberty and law could rest so well, as right here in sight of the hell where they were tortured to death.

He would be a remarkable man who could go up and down these long avenues of graves, reading these unknown names without a feeling such as he never experienced before, and is never likely to experience again. But if the names are familiar if they call up old faces, in whose light he has walked, and repaired—trusted comrades with whom he has marched, and bivouacked, counselled and prayed, what word in the language can tell the feeling then? I read these names of sixty comrades of the old 27th, captured at Drury's Bluff, who came here to starve and die. As I have no words to express my feeling, I shall not attempt it, but will hope that surviving friends, who may trace these lines, may at least have this comfort, that one who loved them has looked upon the place of their rest, and tenderly pronounced their names.—Letter from Chaplain C. L. Woodcock to the Congregationalist.

MIXED UP, SLIGHTLY.—Here is a portion of Mark Twain's account of a recent visit to the Bude House in New York:

"On the fifth floor is a huge room with nineteen large Adams' steam presses, all manned by women (four of them confounded pretty, too), snatching off Bibles in Dutch, Hebrew, Cherokee, Yaw-yam, etc., at a rate that was truly fruitifying to contemplate. (I don't know the meaning of that word, but I heard it used somewhere, and it struck me as an unusually good word. Any time that I put in a word that doesn't balance the sentence good, I would be glad if you would take it out and put in that one.) Adjoining was another huge room for drying the printed sheets (very pretty girls in there, and young,) and pressing them (the sheets, not the girls.) They used hydraulic presses, (three of the prettiest ever curls, and never a sign of a water-fall—the girls I mean)—and each of them is able to weigh down with the most incredible weight of eight hundred tons of solid Simon pure pressure (the hydraulics I am referring to now, of course,) and one has got blue eyes and the other brown. Ah me! I have got this hydraulic business tangled a little but I can swear that it is no kind of mine. You needn't go to blame me about it. You have got to pay just the same as if it were straight as a shingle. I can't afford to go in dangerous places, and then get my wages docked in the bargain."

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE EXHUMED.

The London Times publishes an interesting letter in regard to the discoveries at Jerusalem, from which we select the following:

"The colossal foundation of the temple walls, which are 'stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits,' laid by Solomon or his successors on the throne, are now being laid bare at the enormous depth of ninety feet below the present surface. The bridge that once spanned the ravine between the temple of Zion, and the temple on Moriah is now proved to have been upward of one hundred and fifty feet high. If this be, as it seems, the ascent to the house of the Lord which Solomon showed to the Queen of Sheba, we cannot wonder that on seeing it there was no spirit in her. The pinnacle of the temple on which the tempter placed the Saviour has just been uncovered to the base, and is found still to have an elevation of one hundred and thirty-six feet. The statement of Josephus is, therefore, no exaggeration. If any one looked from the battlement to the valley below he would be giddy, while his sight could not reach to such an immense depth. Sections of the ancient wall of Ophel have been examined, showing that as Josephus says, it was joined to the southeast angle of the temple. Aqueducts, cisterns, rock-hewn channels and passages have also been discovered within and around the Haram, throwing light on the buildings, the arrangements and the services in the Temple. The great work of a complete exploration of ancient Jerusalem is thus fairly and auspiciously commenced. The opportune visit of the Sultan and Grand Vizier to this country, and the representation made to the latter by the Archbishop of York, followed up as they have been by the energy, the wisdom, and tact of Lieut. Warren and his admirable staff, have smoothed down Moslem prejudice, removed local opposition, and thus brought about opportunities for excavation and exploration such as never occurred before; and besides, large numbers of Arab laborers have been trained to the work, and are eager to be employed; and the exact points of successful exploration are now well known."

GREELEY'S HANDWRITING.—Horace Greeley is acknowledged, on all hands to be the most elegant penman since Rufus Choate—for it was the latter and not the former, who upon a memorable occasion, vainly attempted to decipher his own hieroglyphics, which, upon investigation, proved to be an architectural drawing of a house. Mr. Greeley is not an elegant penman. In fact, so far as we know, he lays no claims to such distinction. He is able to read his own writing unless the ink is too dry; and when the subject reappears in the bold type of the Tribune's editorial columns, any fair reader can make it out with tolerable certainty. That excellent caricaturist, Thomas Nast, has attempted, in the May number of Putnam's Monthly, to present a correct impression of Mr. Greeley at his editorial labor. He has succeeded a very little better than his previous attempt at Plymouth Pulpit, but his picture, after all, is only a caricature.

Mr. Greeley's writing desk is on a level with his chin, which forces his right shoulder higher than is shown in the Nast picture, and impresses the beholder with the belief that the writing is performed under unnecessary difficulties. This position may have something to do with the style of Mr. Greeley's chirography, but we think not. Neither, as some foolish people imagine, has a love of eccentricity. Mr. Greeley would greatly prefer to write more legibly and elegantly, but he never expects to; and no one need expect it for him. Besides, he will always, when able, do his own writing. It is doubtful if there is a public man living who has less work for an amanuensis than Mr. Greeley. Not only does he commit to paper with his own hand the vast quantities of original matter which daily, and weekly appear in print, but he is extremely meticulous in his attention to correspondents, all of whom are served at first hands.

[We trust this confidential statement will not induce any number of our ambitious readers to address Mr. Greeley with the view of obtaining a personal reply, for we are authoritatively informed that all such honors will be respectfully declined until after the next presidential election.]—Puckard's Monthly.

A hen has the capacity of laying six hundred eggs—and no more.—Usually they lay a few the first year; from three hundred and twenty to three hundred and seventy in the next three years; and the rest from the fifth to the ninth year inclusive. The true economy, therefore, it will be seen, is not to keep the hens after their fourth year.

No man can avoid his own company, so he had best make it as good as possible.

This line is to fill out the column.

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Reforms in the Modes of Religious Efforts.

The following suggestions made in a report to the recent Methodist Conference at Chicago, will interest the religious community at large, as embracing thoughts of an important practical character:

1. As to the condition of our Sabbath Schools. These are essential, perhaps beyond all the past, yet are susceptible of great improvement, in more careful and strict discipline, better prepared and more advanced text books, better detailed and more critical teachers for advanced classes, in order to retain such in the schools and advance them in Biblical learning. Two growing evils are obvious in many of our Sabbath schools. 1st. The habit of using question books in classes not sufficiently advanced for them and thus displacing the good old habit of committing Scripture to memory. 2d. The use almost exclusively of Sunday school reading of the narrative or story kind, thus mellowing the taste of our children for nothing but light reading.

We recommend a more careful supervision of our Sabbath Schools by the pastors and quarterly conferences. 2. We urge upon the extended membership of the Church greater religious activity, particularly in the social meeting and Sabbath schools. Work is the law of growth, spiritually, as much as physically or mentally. Much as many members, now engaged as volunteer laborers in our prayer meetings, class meetings and Sunday schools, no doubt the moral power of the Church to-day would be twice as great.

3. We ask the pastors, parents and Sabbath school teachers to give more earnest attention to the subject of Temperance. This is called for, first, in self-defense against the insidious and specious aggressions upon the Church even in our best families, now that intemperance has become the most alarming evil of our age.

A new and simultaneous resort to total abstinence pledges is now called for on the part of old and young, as the only safety for ourselves, and those under our immediate influence, especially as it is now well known that there is a large class of persons who, if they commence drinking intoxicating drinks at all, are sure to go on to drunkenness. Then let no time be lost in saving one precious youth, for it is easier to prevent a hundred from rushing into intemperance than to rescue one.

4. Family religion and family government claim a woman's notice. We fear that parents have come to feel that the Sabbath school and church give sufficient religious instruction to their children, and so excuse themselves. This works ruin. Careful study of the Scriptures in the family, strict observance of the Sabbath, sacred regard for truthfulness and integrity, with personal religious conversation and prayer in the household, cannot be safely neglected by any Christian family. All this should be mingled with a firm and kind authority which knows no yielding where a principle of submission or of right is involved, or Christian parents even may look for the early ruin of their children in these days of lax discipline and dissipation.

Greater efforts to supply suitable reading for our Christian families is demanded. Our writers have the chief responsibility of forming the literary taste of the people. Whether that is being elevated, or corrupted, is a serious question. The pulpit, also, shares this responsibility. In our judgment, there is at present a great lack of just the right kind of reading among our people. What is not too light, nor too heavy; nor too high, nor too low; for those who should and would read, provided something were fitted to their case. Here is an inviting field of usefulness just now open to our writers. Who will enter it? With careful discrimination and wide acquaintance with the people, no field promises greater reward.

It is a fact we are glad to put on record, that some of the recent ventures in the sensation news paper line have been disastrous failures. The paper Manufacturing company of Unionville, purchased a few weeks ago thirty-five tons of these condemned publications, such as the "Last Sensation," "Kelsey's Weekly," and other indecent, sporting, and gambling papers. The blank paper was originally sold at sixteen cents per pound, and after having been printed, was bought back at five cents, to be worked over. This is the best use such filthily stuff could be put to, and the fact speaks well for the taste and good sense of the public, and points a moral which publishers will be likely to heed.

Much fun was made in Warren lately, when a large party, who had started to hunt a bear, finally brot their game to bay, and it proved to be a black yearling calf.

No man can avoid his own company, so he had best make it as good as possible.

This line is to fill out the column.