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DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY, AND THE DISSEMINATION OF MORALITY, LITERATURE, AND NEWS.

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## THE OLD MAN'S LESSON.

BY AUSTIN C. BURDICK.

"Malcolm, I wouldn't go out to-night. Come, stay with me this evening."

"Not this evening, Alice. I have promised to meet some friends this evening, and I must keep my word. I will be home in good season."

"I had hoped that I should have your company this evening. Come, why can't you try and see if I can not make you as happy as those companions you are to meet. Just this once, Malcolm. O, only this once!"

"No, no, Alice. I am going out. What—crying! Now what's the use of that! Can't a fellow go out once in a while without leaving a crying wife!"

"I can't help it, Malcolm. But here—kiss me before you go."

Thus spoke Malcolm Warren and his young wife.

Malcolm was a young man twenty-seven years of age, and a carpenter by trade. His wife was one of the sweetest dispositioned girls in the town, and she made one of the best of wives. She loved her husband with the whole energy of her pure soul, and she knew she was beloved in return. And yet there was a cloud upon her heart. Her two children, a boy and a girl, often saw her shed tears when they were alone with her in her snug little sitting-room, and the little boy was old enough to ask what made his mother cry. But she dare not tell him.

Malcolm Warren owned the little cottage in which he lived, and he had paid for it all out of his own hard earnings, while Alice had borne her share of the burden, by purchasing all the furniture.

Malcolm was stout and healthy, and an excellent workman, and he had never seen the hour when he needed to lay idle for want of work.

A better-hearted youth lived not in the town, and when he took the gentle Alice for his wife, there was many a fair maiden whose bosom gave place to a kindly, wistful envy.

They would not have robbed Alice of her prize, but they only hoped that their own lots might be as fortunate.

Why should a cloud come upon that house? Why should Alice weep? Ah! for the same reason that thousands of our fairest daughters weep. For the same reason that hot tears are ever crying out their silent appeals for mercy—tears that run and run, until they make a flood that fairly yells as it rolls over our land.

Malcolm Warren had a highly social nature—his society was prized by all who could secure it—and he had been indulging in the false smiles of the wine-cup. For the last year he had been allowing his appetite to gain strength.

At first it was only an "occasional glass"—then it was "a glass or so, once in a while"—and then "one or two glasses a day."

But lately he had gone so far as to spend his earnings away from home, and for nearly two months past he had spent all of his money with his "jovial" companions. Alice saw all this, and she knew full well where it would end if it was not stopped soon.

She knew her husband's nature, and she knew how surely he was falling. She had whispered to him her fears, and he had tried to laugh them off as idle whims. She had prayed to him to stop the fatal career while he yet had strength, but he had been offended because she could think that he would ever become a drunkard. So Alice was afraid to speak all her fears. Yet she saw with a clear eye all that was coming. She saw the broad road upon which her dear beloved was traveling, and her heart was aching. She knew that even now WANT was staring them in the face! It was autumn, and she asked Malcolm for money to buy warmer clothing for herself and children, and he had none to give her. Only a day before he had brought home a small bucket full of flour, instead of sending home a barrel, as he used to do. He earned money, and where was it? Alas, poor Alice knew too well. And then sometimes Alice looked up into Malcolm's face, and she saw that its manly beauty was being slowly but surely eaten away. The large blue eyes were growing dim, bleared, and bloodshot, the once fair cheeks were becoming swollen and bloated, and the lips looked dry and crackled. No wonder she knelt down by her bedside and prayed. It was now Saturday evening, and Malcolm was going out.

He was going to meet some of his friends, and Alice knew he was to meet them at the tavern. He had worked only three days during the past week, and he had the pay for those three days' work in his pocket. That money was needed at home, but where would it be on the morrow!

"Malcom, O, do not wholly forget your fond, loving Alice while you are gone!"

But Malcom did not answer. He kissed his wife, however—kissed her not as he used to do, but kissed her merely because she had asked him to—and then left the cottage.

After he had gone, Alice sat down and wept. She could not help it. Her darling boy crept to her side and placed his arms about her bended neck. He asked no questions, but he asked her not to cry. His little mind seemed to have some idea of the coming calamity. It must have been vague, but it was clear enough to prevent him from forcing the dread thoughts upon his mother. Once more he asked her not to cry, and then his own little heart burst, and the mother and child wept together.

This was another drop in the poor wife's cup of affliction. O, how palpable must be her husband's course now, when even her prattling child saw and knew the danger! But she could only clasp her boy more tightly to her pain-stricken bosom, and pray more fervently. And the little boy, when his mother had done praying, exclaimed, "Amen!"

It was a clear, cool evening, and as Malcom Warren stepped out into the street, he seemed to shake himself as though he would shake off the influence of the dear place he was leaving. But he could not wholly do it. He could not drive from his mind the tearful countenance of his fond and faithful wife, nor could he forget the look of earnest, simple anguish that he had noticed upon the face of his child. Yet he tried to crush the thoughts that were thus springing into life.

"Pooh!" he said, as the image of his entreating wife forced itself upon him.

"It's only a little fun and frolic. Whose business is it? Get out with your nonsense."

And thus speaking the young husband and father closed his hands, as though he would hold on upon the feelings he had expressed, and then he hastened on. At length he reached the tavern, and here he found his companions. The laugh and the joke commenced, and ere long, Malcom had forgot all about his home. He sat in the bar-room, and his sharp wit made food for much merriment.

"Who says there's danger in the bowl?" cried a young man, as he raised the cup to his lips.

"It's the raven's croak," said another of his companions.

"Here's confusion to the idea."

"Good!" said Malcolm Warren, poising his glass.

"Poison in the bowl? Nonsense! Look at old Uncle Adam, now. He's used it all his lifetime, and here he is, the oldest man in town. Come, here's to Uncle Adam."

The person to whom Malcolm had thus alluded, was an old, white-haired man, who stood at the bar with a glass of rum in his hand. His name was Adam Stamford, and almost ninety years had rolled over his frosty head. His form was bent, and his limbs trembled, but still he lived, and his mind was yet clear. He heard the remark which the young carpenter had made, and having set down his untouched liquor, he turned and gazed upon the youthful speaker. He knew Malcolm Warren well.

"Malcolm," he said, "come with me. Come alone, for alone I would speak with you. Come."

There was something deep and meaning in the old man's tone, and as he turned towards the door, Malcolm arose to follow him.

"Detain him not," said Adam, as some of his companions sought to hinder him.

"Why should I go with you, Adam?" he asked.

"To please an old man. I mean you no harm. Come."

Passing out the door they moved across the street.

Near by was the village cherchyard, and thither Adam bent his steps. Arriving at the gate he passed in. As Malcolm hesitated to enter, the old man said:

"Come, follow me!"

Malcolm went, and stood within the village churchyard.

And his white-haired guide was the sexton, who, for more than sixty years, had made those cold beds for the children of mortality.

The cold moon shed its beams upon the place, and the chill air sighed mournfully among the weeping willows that grew by the hedge. The gravestones stood up like spectres above the faded grass, and here and there arose a white monument, like some powerful spirit that watched the sanctity of the place.

"Malcolm Warren," spoke the old man, in a voice so deep that it seemed to come from one of the neighboring graves, "not long since you pointed to me as an example of how long a man might live who smiled upon the wine cup. You pointed to me as one who had outlived all my companions, and yet was one who had always quaffed at the intoxicating bowl. Perhaps you spoke truly; but you did not speak the whole truth, for the whole truth you did not know, and now I have brought you here to whisper that truth in your ear."

Malcolm gazed up into the old man's face, and as he saw how solemn was the expression that rested there, he forgot the company he had left at the tavern, and his thoughts became serious.

"Malcolm," resumed the sexton, "I can look back now into the past, and see a score of young men who commenced the race of life with me. We went to school together, and together we sat in church. We grew up to be men, and then we often sat together as I saw you sitting this evening. We learned to love the excitement of the intoxicating bowl, and we thought not then of the dangers we were courting. Years passed on, and I saw those twenty men sink snto the arms of death, and I buried them all here. Malcolm Warran, *they all sleep in drunkards' graves!* One after another I saw them fall, and at length I was left all alone of the party who were wont to assemble around the bar-room fire!"

A deep groan escaped from the young man's lips, and a shudder ran through his frame.

"All gone!" he uttered.

"Yes—all!" the old man returned.

"But that is not half, Malcolm. There were wives and children that died, and they too, lie here. I buried broken hearts here! O, how well can I remember the bright-eyed, laughter-loving girls who used to play with us when we were boys! And how well can I remember when I saw them standing at the altar—and when they turned away from the holy place they were blushing, happy brides. But a few short years, and I began to gather them into the fold of death. They sank down with broken hearts, and crushed hopes. Some of them lived to be gray-headed, but their gray hairs came down in sorrow to the grave! See that grave there—the one with the dark gray stone. He who sleeps beneath that mound was once the happiest youth in the whole village. He was a carpenter by trade, and he built the house in which you were born. He used to laugh and sing over the wine-cup, and he thought not then of harm. I once heard his young wife beg of him to remain at home with her, but he refused her the boon. She told him that she was cold and hungry, and that her children needed clothing, but he heeded her not. A few short years afterwards that wife's heart broke, and she died, and her children both died of cold and hunger. The husband and father I found one cold night lying by the roadside, and he was dead! These are their graves, for I buried them all together. You can see the wife's grave next beyond the gray stone of the husband, and those two little graves are where sleep the frozen boy and girl!"

The old man drew his sleeve across his eyes to wipe away the tears, and while he did so Malcolm bowed his head and groaned heavily. At length the sexton spoke again:

"Malcolm Warren," he said, "there was once a full regiment of stout, hardy soldiers followed Napoleon Bonaparte into Russia. There were many other regiments went also, but of this one in particular have I read. Of that whole company of men only one solitary individual lived to return to the home of his birth. All the rest died on the way. They were starved and frozen, and they dropped by the wayside. Now suppose some thoughtless youth should point to that single living soldier, and say that amid the eternal snows of Russia there was no danger, because *that* man had passed them all and still lived! Like that single fragment of a regiment do I stand here now, a living man!"

The youth gazed up into the face of the aged speaker, and new emotions were working upon his features.

"Come, Malcolm, I would show you one more spot before we go."

The old man leaned upon his staff and moved slowly on among the graves, and involuntarily did the youth follow. At length they stopped by a spot where two graves lay side by side. The slabs were of marble and glistened brightly in the moonlight.

"Malcolm," spoke the sexton, in a deep, hoarse whisper, "I remember well when I made those two graves. There was no sorrow to fill the beds which here I made, for they who sleep here died amid the sweet breathings of peace and honor. They were good, virtuous people, and when they were gone our townsmen mourned, for our village had lost two of its most noble spirits. O, I love to stand over these graves, for I know that God smiles upon them! There is no taint, no dishonor here. Malcolm, do you know who rest in those two graves!"

The youth did not answer, nor did he raise his head, but with one deep, wild cry he sank down, and there he lay across both the graves, weeping and sobbing like a child. His FATHER and MOTHER slept there!

For a while the old man gazed steadily upon the scene, and then he took the youth by the arm and roused him up.

"Come, Malcolm, we will go now. I can show you no more."

The youth followed his guide out from the churchyard, and after the gate was closed they passed on to the street. Here Adam Stamford stopped.

"Now, Malcolm," he said, "you can return to your companions at the tavern, but let me pray you never to use my name again as you did this evening. When you again think of old Adam Stamford, think only of what he has told you in the churchyard—think of what he has seen, and of what he has suffered, and of that you may in welcome speak."

The old man turned partly away, when Malcolm sprang forward and caught him by the arm.

"Uncle Adam," he uttered in choked and broken accents, "O, forgive me for what I have said and what I have done. I—I cannot tell you all now. I cannot speak—but I shall go to the tavern no more. O, God bless you!"

The clock struck nine, and Alice Warren folded the hands of her little boy together, and bade him say his prayers. Her youngest child, the girl, was asleep in the cradle. The first words of the prayer were uttered—"Our Father who art in Heaven,"—when there came the sound of footsteps upon the plank walk in the little front garden.

"It's papa," said the boy, letting his hands drop upon his mother's knees, and bending his ear to listen. But the mother dared not speak.

At length the door was opened, and the husband entered. Alice cast her eyes tremblingly up, and she saw the big tears that were rolling down the cheeks of her beloved.

Instantly she sprang forward and clasped her arms about her husband's neck.

"Malcolm, Malcolm!" she cried, "what has happened? Tell me—O, tell me!"

Malcolm Warren sank into a chair, and as he did so he drew his wife down into his lap.

"Alice—O, Alice!" he uttered, sobbing and weeping as he spoke. "Can you forgive me for all that has passed?"

The gentle wife was bewildered at first—nay, almost frightened, for the speech of her husband was so wild and incoherent that she feared his brain was turned. But ere long he spoke again, and as he spoke he kissed her. He was more calm, and his voice was more low. He told her where he had been—and spoke of the resolution he had made. He did not tell of any *trial* he was going to make, but he told of the iron will that had entered his soul. The night of his temptation had passed, and the day of salvation had dawned.

A few moments more, and the husband and wife were upon their knees. They tried to pray aloud, but they could not. Their emotions were too deep for utterance—too wild and thrilling for speech. A moment they struggled there, and then they enfolded each other, heart to heart, and wept in silence. The little boy crept to the spot, and threw his tiny arms about the necks of his parents, for even his young soul had caught the spark of new life that had been breathed into existence within his home.

On the next morning Malcolm Warren arose a better and a happier man. He was calm now, and he told Alice all that had transpired the night before, and when it was all told they prayed as redeemed souls alone can pray.

Days, weeks, and months passed away, and Malcolm Warren became once more the same handsome youth that had been loved and cherished by honest friends in times gone by. The flowers of affection bloomed again about his hearthstone, and the angel of peace and joy made a home beneath his roof.

People wondered when they noticed that old Adam Stamford went no more to the tavern; but the story of that night's lesson in the village churchyard soon became generally known, and other men took it to their hearts, and profited by it. It was a good seed sown in a fertile spot, and the fruit was abundant. The good old sexton never gave his example again on the side of moral ruin, but to the last day of his life he gloried in the reform he had helped to work, and the last hours of his life were cheered by knowing that some of the happiest families in the village blessed him for the joys that had dawned upon them.

## THE COMING ELECTION.

### TO THE FREE DEMOCRACY OF POTTER COUNTY.

The coming election is one of much importance; perhaps of more consequence to the friends of Freedom than any previous effort to sustain the cause of Humanity, from the fact that the recent triumph of the Slave Power, in the passage of the Nebraska swindle bill, nullifying the Missouri Compromise, has so elated the doughfaces of the North, and and flattered the slaveholders of the South, that they now think their power to be omnipotent, and that the friends of Freedom will bow down their backs always in humble submission to the behests of Slavery. It therefore becomes us as true American citizens, as friends of the down-trodden slave, and as Christians, to put forth every effort with an unyielding determination to stay the gigantic strides of the combined powers of Rum and Slavery, which have already advanced to an alarming extent, producing the most horrid apprehensions in the minds of a philanthropic and Christian people that a sane man can have any conception of. The passage of the Nebraska outrage, making the Missouri compact a nullity, has left a large extent of unsettled fertile territory exposed to the devastating ravages of Slavery. "But," says the Northern Soft, "Slavery will never be carried into the Territories." Then I would ask, why and for what purpose the Slave Power and her allies have labored so long and so hard to accomplish the passage of that notorious bill? Certainly there could have been no other object in view other than to extend Slavery and its influence over sufficient territory to entitle her to a Representative in the United States Congress and Senate—sufficient to overbalance the representation of Freedom and Humanity forever. Let us look at the matter for one moment, mathematically. The territory now lying exposed to the Slave Power is sufficient in extent to form thirteen States, each equal in size to the State of Ohio, which would entitle them to a representative in the United States Senate, equal to a two-thirds majority, which difference the free States never could overbalance by the acquisition of territory, except from concessions by some foreign power of which we have not at present the most distant hopes. Therefore, as a friend of the down-trodden and the oppressed in every land, and under all circumstances, I do consider the present a most critical period in our existence. The welfare or misery of yet unborn generations may depend upon our actions at the present time. Therefore, as philanthropists, statesmen, and Christians, let our actions be prompt and in accordance with the principles of Justice and Humanity, regardless of party ties and trammels, and let the polls at the coming election this fall tell that little Potter is not abashed by the frauds and outrages of Rum and Slavery practiced by a PIERCE Democracy.

D. N. JINCKS.

*Allegany, Sept. 7, 1854.*

ANECDOTE OF CHARLES LAMB.—The following is an original "Lamb," and was, we believe, picked up by Fields, the poet. Charles was once travelling in the vicinity of one of the English watering places, in company with several ladies; one of them, who was more remarkable for prudery than good taste, took occasion to call forth the polished satire of the wit, after this fashion:

"Dear me, Mr. Lamb, that's shocking!"

"W—wh—what, Madam?"

"Why, there! down on the beach, those boys—bathing."

Charles looked, and saw some half dozen little urchins, gamboling in nudity and unconcealed delight along the sparkling sands, and thus rebuked his companion:

"B—b—boys? These are g—g—girls, Madam, are they not?"

"Why, Mr. Lamb! no! I assure you they are boys!"

"Are—are they?—Ah! well ex—c—use me, madam; at that distance I d—d—don't know the difference!"

Let reason go before every enterprise, and counsel before every action.

From the Binghampton Standard.

### THE MAINE LAW—HOW IT WORKS.

The cause of liquor prohibition is onword and upward. Every step of progress since the day the Maine Law went into operation has been a triumph. Every experiment has served but to cheer and encourage its friends, and confound its enemies. From old Conneticut, the last of the States that have wheeled into the Maine Law line, comes up significant testimony in favor of the workings of the law. There, as in other states where the law has had anything like a fair chance to demonstrate its power for good, it is conquering its enemies by thousands and transforming them into fast friends.—The Conneticut *Union* of a recent date says:

"We have the most heart-cheering accounts from all parts of the State of the good effects of the Conneticut Prohibitory Liquor Law. Our exchanges, those too, by the way, who have strenuously oqposed the enactment, as well as our correspondents, all tell the same story. The grog-shops are closed, the traffic is at an end, brutes are transformed into *men*, and many a broken-hearted wife and mother, once more beholds a ray of light which promises peace and plenty to their hitherto destitute and miserable abodes. Never did a change so important and palpable come over the inhabitants of this State so suddenly before. Many who have hitherto opposed the principle of prohibition on the ground of its oppressiveness and unconstitutionality, now openly declare that had they known its adoption to be instrumental in working out such beneficial results, they never would have opposed it, and should its repeal ever be attempted, we may safely rely upon their assistance in sustaining the law. Instead of the plea of "oppressiveness and unconstitutionality," we hear the glad shout of him who has been released from the "oppressive" demon of intemperance, and whose "constitution" has been greatly benefited by the change, even at the sacrifice of that of the State, or even the United States, if indeed it is in conflict with any *constitution* save that of the victim of strong drink.

### POPULARITY OF THE MAINE LAW.

*The Vermont Journal* (Windsor,) which has not hitherto been known as favoring the Liquor Prohibition, in its last issue says:

"In some quarters a disposition to drag the temperance question into politics still seems to exist. What valuable result is sought to be secured by the movement is not apparent. No organized opposition to the Anti-Liquor Law, makes it necessary for its friends to organize for its support. We have yet to learn that any considerable portion of the people of Vermont desire its repeal. On the other hand we believe that a very large majority of the Freemen are decidedly in favor of its continuance. The good which it has accomplished has been apparent to all, and so apparent, that a great many who bitterly opposed its enactment, are now numbered among its friends. If the question of continuance or repeal were to-day to be submitted to popular vote, we do not doubt that a majority of ten thousand would be in favor of its continuance. We repeat then that there is not and has not been, the slightest occasion for raising an issue upon that law during the pending campaign."

Eliphalet Case, Esq., formerly postmaster of Lowell, is one of the Democratic candidates for Senator in the Rising Sun district, Indiana, where he advocates the Nebraska bill and opposes a Prohibitory Liquor law in his speeches before the people.—*Boston Post.*

Perhaps the fact that Mr. Case is (or, at least, very recently *was*,) deeply interested in a large whisky distillery, may account for the milk in *that* cocoanut. He goes for whisky because he makes it, and for Nebraska because one iniquity naturally props itself up by another.—*Tribune.*

NOTICE TO TAVERN KEEPERS, &c.—*Whereas*, I am unfortunately unable to control my appetite for intoxicating liquors; and whereas, their use has greatly afflicted myself and family; therefore, this is to notify all landlords, beersellers, and others who dispose of intoxicating drinks of any kind whatever, that any person who may sell or give the same to me hereafter, will be dealt with according to law. I have been the means of much affliction to myself and others, and ask the pardon of the community for past offences.

AUGUSTUS RICKERD.

[We find the above singular advertisement in the Harrisburg *Herald*.]

Why is a man with a bad memory covetous? Because he is *for getting*.