

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY H. WEBB.

Volume VI.

BLOOMSBURG, COLUMBIA COUNTY, PA. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1842.

Number 27.

OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRAT
OPPOSITE ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, MAIN-ST

TERMS:

The COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT will be published every Saturday morning, at TWO DOLLARS per annum, payable half yearly in advance, or Two Dollars Fifty Cents, if not paid within the year. No subscription will be taken for a shorter period than six months; nor any discontinuance permitted, until all arrearages are discharged.

ADVERTISEMENTS not exceeding a square will be conspicuously inserted at One Dollar for the first three insertions, and Twenty-five cents for every subsequent insertion. A liberal discount made to those who advertise by the year. LETTERS addressed on business, must be post paid.

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the United States Saturday Post.

THE FAILING HOPE.

A TEMPERANCE STORY.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Shall I read to you, ma?" said Emma Martin, a little girl eleven years of age, coming up to the side of her mother, who sat in a musing attitude by the centre table, upon which the servant had just placed a light.

Mrs. Martin did not seem to hear the voice of her child; for she moved not, nor was there any change in the fixed, dreamy expression of her face.

"Ma," repeated the child, after waiting for a few moments, laying, at the same time, her head gently upon her mother's shoulder.

"What, dear?" Mrs. Martin asked, in a tender voice, rousing herself up.

"Shall I read to you, ma?" repeated the child.

"No—yes dear, you may read for me"—the mother said, and her tones were low with something mournful in their expression.

"What shall I read, ma?"

"Get the Bible, dear, and read to me from that good book," replied Mrs. Martin.

"I love to read in the Bible," Emma said, as she brought to the centre table that sacred volume, and commenced turning over its passages. She then read chapter after chapter, while the mother listened in deep attention, after lifting her head upwards, and breathing a silent prayer. At last Emma grew tired with reading, and closed the book.

"It is time for you to go to bed, dear," Mrs. Martin observed, as the little girl showed signs of weariness.

"Kiss me, ma," the child said, lifting her innocent face to that of her mother, and receiving the token of love she asked. So breathing her gentle

"Good night!" the affectionate girl glided off, and retired to her chamber.

"Dear child!" Mrs. Martin murmured, as Emma left the room. "My heart trembles when I think of you, and look in the dark and doubtful future!"

She then leaned her head upon her hand and sat in deep and evidently painful abstraction of mind. Thus she remained for nearly an hour, until aroused by the clock which struck the hour of ten.

With a deep sigh she arose, and commenced pacing the room backwards and forwards, pausing every now and then to listen to the sound of approaching footsteps and moving on again as the sound went by. Thus she continued to walk until near eleven o'clock, when some one drew near paused at the street door, and then opening it, came along the passage with a firm and steady step.

Mrs. Martin stopped, trembling in spite of herself before the parlor door, which a moment after was swung open. One glance at the face of the individual who entered, convinced her that her solitude had been in vain.

"Oh James!" she said, the tears gushing from her eyes, in spite of a strong effort to compose herself. "I am so glad that you have come!"

"Why are you so agitated, Emma?" her husband said, in some surprise, looking enquiringly into Mrs. Martin's face.

"You staid out so late—and you know I am foolish sometimes!" she replied leaning her head down upon his shoulder, and continuing to weep.

A change instantly passed upon Mr. Martin's countenance, and he stood still, for some time, his face wearing a grave thoughtful expression, while his wife remained with her head leaning upon him.—At last he drew his arm tenderly around her, and said—

"Emma I am a sober man."

"Do not, dear James! speak of that, I am so happy now!"

"Yes, I will speak of it now." And as he said so, he gently seated her upon the sofa, and took his place beside her.

"Emma"—he resumed, looking her steadily in the face. "I have resolved never again to touch the accursed cup that has so well nigh destroyed our peace forever."

"Oh James! What a mountain you have taken from my heart!" Mrs. Martin replied, the whole expression of her face changing as suddenly as a landscape upon which the sun shines from beneath the obscuring cloud. "I have had nothing to trouble me but that—yet that one trouble has seemed more than I could possibly bear."

"You shall have no more trouble, Emma. I have been for some months under a strange delusion, it has seemed. But I am now fully awake, and see the dangerous precipice upon which I have been standing.—This night, I have solemnly resolved that I would drink no more spirituous liquors.—Nothing stronger than wine shall again pass my lips."

"I cannot tell you how the whole of this evening I have been painfully oppressed with fear and dark forebodings. Our dear little girl is now at that age, when her future prospects interest me all the while. I think of them night and day. Shall they all be marred? I have asked myself often & often. But I could give my heart no certain answer I need not tell you why."

"Give yourself no more anxiety on this point Emma," her husband replied. "I will be a free man again. I will be to you and my dear child all that I have ever been."

"May our Heavenly Father aid you to keep that resolution," was the silent prayer that went up from the heart of Mrs. Martin.

The failing hope of her bosom revived under this assurance. She felt again as in the early years of their wedded life, when hope and confidence and tender affection were all in the bloom and vigor of their first development. The light came back to her eye, and the smile to her lip.

It was about four months afterwards, that Mr. Martin was invited to make one of a small party, given to a literary man, as a visiter from a neighboring city.

"I shall not be home to dinner, Emma," he said, on leaving in the morning.

"Why not, James?" she asked.

"I am going to dine at four with a select party of gentlemen."

Mrs. Martin did not reply, but a cloud passed over her face, in spite of an effort not to seem concerned.

"Don't be uneasy, Emma," her husband said noting this change. "I shall touch nothing but wine. I know my weakness, and shall be on my guard."

"Do be watchful over yourself, for my sake, and for the sake of our own dear child." Mrs. Martin replied, laying her arm tenderly upon his shoulder.

"Have no fear, Emma," he said, and kissing the yet fair and beautiful cheek of his wife, Mr. Martin left the house.

How long, how very long did the day seem to Mrs. Martin! The usual hour for his return passed away, the dinner hardly lasted; and then his wife counted the hours as they passed lingeringly away, until the dim, gray twilight fell with a saddened influence around her.

"He will be home soon now," she thought. But the minutes glided into hours, and still he did not come. The tea table stood on

the floor until nearly nine o'clock, before Mrs. Martin sat down with little Emma.—But no food passed the mother's lips. She could not eat. There was a strange fear about her heart—a dread of coming evil, that chilled her feelings, and threw a dark cloud over her spirits.

In the meantime, Martin had gone to the dinner party, firm in his resolution not to touch a drop of ardent spirits. But the taste of wine had inflamed his appetite, and he drank more and more freely, until he ceased to feel the power of his resolution, and again put brandy to his lips, and drank with the eagerness of a worn and thirsty traveller at a cooling brook. It was nine o'clock when the company arose, or attempted to arise from the table. Not all of them could accomplish that feat. Three, Martin among the rest, were carried off to bed in a state of helpless intoxication.

Hour after hour passed away, the anxiety of Mrs. Martin increasing every moment, until the clock struck twelve.

"Why does he stay so late?" she said, rising and pacing the room backwards and forwards. This she continued to do, pausing every now and then to listen, for nearly an hour. Then she went to the door and looked long and anxiously in the direction from which she expected her husband to come. But his well known form met not her eager eyes, that peered so intently into the darkness and gloom of the night. With another long drawn sigh, she closed the door, and re-entered the silent and lonely room. That silence was broken by the loud and clear ringing of the clock. The hour was one! Mrs. Martin's feelings now became too much excited for her to support silent anguish of spirit. For nearly a quarter of an hour her tears continued to flow, and then a deep calm succeeded a kind of mental stupor, that remained until she was startled again into distinct consciousness by the sound of the clock striking two.

All hope now faded from her bosom.—Up to this time she had entertained a feeble hope that her husband might be kept away from some other cause than the one she so dreaded, but now that prop became only as a broken reed, to pierce her with a keener anguish.

"It is all over!" she murmured bitterly, as she again arose, and commenced walking to and fro with slow and measured steps.

It was fully three o'clock before that lonely, and almost heart-broken wife and mother retired to her chamber. How cruelly had the hope which had grown bright and buoyant in the last few months, gaining more strength and confidence every day been again crushed to the earth.

For an hour longer did Mrs. Martin sit, listening in her chamber, every thing around her so hushed into oppressive silence, that the troubled beating of her own heart was distinctly audible. But she waited and listened in vain. The sound of passing footsteps that now came only at long, very long intervals served but to arouse a momentary gleam in her mind, to fade away again, and leave it in deeper darkness.

Without disrobing, she now laid herself down still listening, with an anxiety that grew more and more intense every moment. At last, over-wearied nature could bear up no longer, and she sunk into a troubled sleep. When she awoke from this, it was daylight. Oh, how weary and worn and wretched she felt! The consciousness of why she thus lay, with her clothes unremoved, the sad remembrance of her hours of waiting and watching through nearly the whole night, all came up before her painful distinctness. Who but she who has suffered, can imagine her feelings at that bitter moment.

On descending to the parlor, she found her husband lying in a half stupid condition on the sofa, the close air of the room impregnated with his breath—the sickening disgusting breath of a drunken man! Bruised, crushed, paralyzed affection had now to lift itself up—the wife just ready to sink to earth, powerless, under the weight of and overburdening affliction, had

now to nerve herself under the impulse of duty.

"James! James," she said, in a voice of assumed calmness—laying her hand upon him and endeavoring to arouse him to consciousness. But it was a long time before she could get him so fully awake as to make him understand that it was necessary for him to go up stairs and retire to bed. At length she succeeded in getting him into the chamber before the servants had come down; and then into bed. Once there, he fell off again into a profound sleep.

"Is pa sick?" asked little Emma, coming into her mother's chamber about an hour after, and seeing her father in bed.

"Yes, dear, your father is quite unwell," Mrs. Martin said in a calm voice.

"What ails him, ma?" pursued the child.

"He is not very well, dear; but will be better soon," the mother said evasively.

The little girl looked into her mother's face for a few moments, unsatisfied with the answer, and unwilling to ask another question. She felt that something was wrong, more than the simple illness of her father.

It was near the middle of the day when Mr. Martin became fully awake and conscious of his condition. If he had sought forgetfulness of the past night's debauch, and degradation, the sad, reproving face of his wife, pale and languid from anxiety and watching, would too quickly have restored the memory of his fall.

The very bitterness of self-condemnation—the very keenness of wounded pride irritated his feelings, and made him feel gloomy and sullen. He felt deeply for his suffering wife. The pride kept him silent. At the dinner hour, he ate a few mouthfuls in silence and then withdrew from the table and left the house to attend to his ordinary business. On his way to his office, he passed a hotel where he had been in the habit of drinking. He felt so wretched—so much in want of something to buoy up his depressed feelings, that he entered, and calling for some wine, drank two or three glasses. This, in a few minutes, had the desired effect, and repaired to his office feeling like a new man.

During the afternoon, he drank wine frequently, and when he returned home in the evening was a good deal under its influence, so much so, that all the reserve he had felt in the morning was gone. He spoke pleasant and freely with his wife—talked of future schemes of pleasure and success. But, alas! his pleasant words fell upon her heart like sunshine upon ice. It was too painfully evident that he had again been drinking—and drinking to the extent of making him altogether unconscious, of his true position. She would rather a thousand times have been him overwhelmed by remorse. Then there would have been something for her hope to have leaned upon.

Day after day did Mr. Martin continue to resort to the wine cup. Every morning he felt so wretched, that existence seemed a burden to him, until his keen perception was blunted by wine. Then the appetite for something stronger would be stimulated, and draught after draught of brandy would follow, until when night came, he would return home to agonize the heart of his wife with a new pang, keener than any that had gone before.

Such a course of conduct could not be pursued without its becoming apparent to all in the house. Mrs. Martin had, therefore, added to the cup of sorrow, the mortification and pain of having the servants, and her child daily conscious of her degradation. Poor little Emma would shrink away instinctively from her father when he would return home in the evening and endeavor to heap upon her his caresses. Sometimes Mr. Martin would get irritated at this.

"What are you sideling off in that way for, Emma?" he said half angrily, one evening, when he was more than usually under the influence of liquor, as Emma shrunk away from him on his coming in.

The little girl paused and looked frightened—glancing first at her mother, and then again, timidly, at her father.

"Come along here, I say," repeated the father seating himself, and holding out his hands.

"Go, dear," Mrs. Martin said.

"I reckon she can come without you telling her to," said her husband responded angrily. "Come along; I tell you!" he added in a loud, excited tone, his face glowing red with passion.

"There now! Why didn't you come when I first spoke to you, ha?" he said, drawing the child towards him with a quick jerk, so soon as she came within reach of his extended hand. "Say, 'Why didn't you come! Tell me! Aint I your father!'"

"Yes sir," was the timid reply.

"And haven't I taught you that you must obey me!"

"Yes sir."

"Then why didn't you come, just now, when I called you?"

To this interrogation the little girl made no reply, but looked exceedingly frightened.

"Did you hear what I said?" pursued the father, in a louder voice.

"Yes sir."

"Then answer me, this instant! Why didn't you come when I called you?"

"Because I—I was afraid," was the timid hesitating reply.

Something seemed to whisper to the father's mind a consciousness, that his appearance and conduct while under the influence of liquor, might have been touched by the thought, for his manner changed, though he was still to a degree irrational.

"Go away then, Emma. Take her away mother," he said in a tone which indicated that his feelings were touched. She, don't love her father any more, and don't care any thing more about him," pushing at the same time the child away from him.

Poor little Emma burst into tears, and shrugging to the side of her mother, buried her face in the folds of her dress sobbing as if her heart were breaking.

Mrs. Martin took her little girl by the hand and led her from the room up to the chamber, and kissing her, told her to remain there until the servant brought her some supper, when she could go to bed.

"I don't want any supper, ma!" she said, still sobbing passionately.

"Don't cry, dear," Mrs. Martin said, soothingly.

"Indeed ma, I do love father," the child said—looking up earnestly into her mother's face, the tear still streaming over her cheeks. "Won't you tell him so?"

"Yes, Emma, I will tell him," the mother replied.

"And won't you ask him to come up and kiss me after I'm in bed!"

"Yes, dear."

"And will he come?"

"Oh yes; he will come and kiss you."

Mrs. Martin remained with her little girl until her feelings were quieted down, and then she descended with reluctant steps to the parlor. There was that in the scene which had just passed, that sobered, to a great extent, the half intoxicated husband and father, and caused him to feel humble and pained at his conduct; which it was too apparent was breaking the heart of his wife; and estranging the affection of his child;

When Mrs. Martin re-entered the parlor, she found him sitting near a table, with his head resting upon his hand, and his whole manner indicating a state of painful self-consciousness. With the instinctive perfection of a woman, she saw the truth and going at once up to him, she laid her hand upon him, and said:

"James—Emma wants you to go up and kiss her after she gets into bed. She says that she does love you, and she wished me to tell you so."

Mr. Martin did not reply. There was something calm, gentle and affectionate in