

## Temperance and Prohibition.

"Help! Help! For Mercy's Sake, Help."

BY MRS. F. D. GAGE.

It was one of those dark, dismal, murky days of February, which follow the breaking up of a cold spell of weather. It did not freeze, but it was cold; as chilly, cold, wet, and disagreeable as one can possibly conceive a day to be. Everybody who could, shut the door and sat down by the fire, shivering, "Oh, how disagreeable it is!" Those who had to go out buttoned up close, and hurried through the shower as best they might.

There was a man building a foundry in our village; and to supply his engine with water he was having a well dug beside his furnace which was a heavy pile of stone work. This well was nearly completed and the men engaged in digging it held a consultation whether they should continue their work. The elder and wiser of the two said:

"No the earth is too full of water, the ground is too soft, the pressure of stone too great; it will fall in." And he refused to enter.

But the other laughed at his fears, descended in spite of all remonstrance, and began his work. In vain his brother entreated him to desist. His reply was:

"No danger; I know what I'm about." But he did not know. The burdened earth gave way, and he was buried many feet beneath an avalanche of sand and gravel.

Wild went the cry over the village, "Fisher's well has fallen in and buried Johnson beneath!"

The storm, the wind, the rain, the mud, were all forgotten. The shopman dropped his yard-stick, the farmer left his market wagon in the street, the lawyer threw down his book, the mechanic his tools, the minister his pen. All rushed with throbbing hearts to the rescue. Women caught up their infants, and ran amid the storm to sympathize with the frantic wife; and all looked into each others' faces, and asked, in gasping whispers, "What can we do?"

Ropes, ladders, spades, and shovels were wanted. No one stopped to ask "Whose is this?" no one said "That is mine!" but the cry was "Take it! Take it! for God's sake hurry—he will die!"

Down they leaped into the dark abyss. None said "Tis not my business—do it thou;" but all were so eager that the police had to form a circle to keep off the crowd, lest they should shake down the surrounding earth and bury the workers.

Then there was the stone work; it was pressing heavily. "Take it away," cried Fisher, "save him!" and with giant strength he hurled the huge rocks from their places.

"It will cost him a great deal," said one more prudent than the rest.

"Don't talk of cost; we'll all give him something, and help to rebuild. Save him! save him! don't let him die for a few pounds' expense."

They worked like giants, till the big sweat-drops rolled from manly brows, and strong hands trembled with fatigue; then others took their places, and thus the work went on.

A tin tube was forced down, through which they shouted and asked the prisoner, if alive, to answer; and his voice came back to them from his grave—

"Alive! but make haste; it is fearful here!"

He was *alive*, and, with a wild joyous shout, they redoubled their zeal to save him. No one said "He went in himself—let him die!" No one bade the pleading, weeping wife "mind her own business; they had nothing to do with her perishing fool of a husband—let him die!" No one urged the matter as to the legal liability of taking this man's spade, that man's ladder, and the other man's boards; or the penalty attached to destroying the masonry and despoiling the work.

No, no; there was a *man* to be saved. All else was forgotten, and in the full tide of human sympathy they risked themselves to save him. And he *was* saved!

"He is saved! he is saved!" went up with a shout of joy that shook the very heavens above them. "He is saved!" cried the young wife, as with streaming eyes she clasped her infant to her breast, and thought of his relieved wife and little ones. "He is saved—bless God!" murmured the aged mother, and the image of her own son flitted before her. "He is saved!" burst forth as one voice from the whole village.

And yet this was but *one* man, a day laborer, famed for no extra virtue. Had he died, his would have been but a short agony. His wife would have shed tears of sorrow, but not of shame. His children would have been fatherless, but no dark spot would have sullied their lives; no withering memory would have blighted their young hearts.

O men! O women! how strangely inconsistent you are. There are hundreds dying this very day in our Christian land; tens of thousands are being crushed beneath a weight more terrible than the ground in the well; dying a suffering, lingering death, that will as surely come to them, if no hand is raised to save them, as would have come to the man in the well.

Frantic wives are pleading—frantic mothers are imploring—"save them, save them!" "For mercy's sake save them!" Dig away the temptation that have covered them up. Tear up the masonry of law and public opinion that is pressing upon them and burying them still deeper, and endangering those who are now safe. Hurl those stones of selfishness from their places. Take this man's rope, that one's ladder; but *help, help*, in mercy *help*, ere those thousands die—die in torments awful, terrible—die in misery, shame, and sin. Help! help! they were once the wise, the good, the great; the artisan, the mechanic, the merchant, the farmer, and the student.

Save them, oh, save them from the drunkard's tomb. Let them not be buried alive in passion and temptation. Up through the dark aisles of life, with the hollow voices of despair, they are calling you to save them or they perish! Oh! lift that load which is crushing them, and which they have no power to resist.

Look into the faces of the loved ones, growing pale with anguish. Look at the deep furrows which tears have worn in the sister's cheek. Look at the sunken eyes and wan lips of the wife. Look at the bowed form and gray hairs of the mother, and let your hearts be moved. Stand no longer idly watching

while your victims perish day by day.

What if the jeopardy is self-imposed? So was that of the man in the well; but did you withhold your hands? What if the property be destroyed and the rights of others interfered with? So was it with the property that covered the man in the well; but human life demanded the sacrifice, and it was cheerfully made.

Up, then, men and women! Work to redeem the drunkard as you would your neighbor from other danger. Save him by force. Take him from the mire of intemperance. Drag him from the horrible pit, and place his feet upon firm ground, where there is no trembling and quaking.—*Nat. Advocate.*

### AN OLD FARMER'S SLATE.

"A farmer," says the *Rural New Yorker*, "does not always think of what is needful and may be done when leisure times occur. I recall to mind a large and successful farmer, who at his death left his affairs in a prosperous condition, and his premises in complete order. His neighbors often wondered at the ease with which he conducted his operations. He never hurried but the right thing was always done at the right time, and his work never lagged. The improvement he made was in odd spells when the routine of regular farm work was broken by rainy weather, or after finishing the work on a crop, and while waiting for another to get to the proper stage.

"He kept a large slate hanging in the kitchen, where all his workmen could see it, and whenever a job occurred to him he noted it on the slate. For instance, some of his entries ran thus: 'Make a gate for the Brook lot.' 'Clean out the ditch in the wheatfield.' 'Lay a new floor on the scaffold over the barn floor.' 'Bury the large stone in the middle lot.' 'Get some trees to mill for making garden fence pickets.' 'Plant shade-trees along the road-side.' 'Dig the alders out of the fence-corners, and look after the wild mustard that came up where the threshing-machine stood in the field last year.'

"In this way his slate was filled, and if a leisure half-day occurred his men all had plenty of work, and if the master happened to be absent the slate told the workmen what to do. After a time it was his custom to lay out the day's work on a slate each evening previous, and when a job was finished the record was erased. To get the slate clean was the ambition of the workmen."

Such a slate as this would be a useful thing on every farm and in every home. Suppose you try it, and write down wants, needs, jobs, and plans, and then clear the slate when you can.

### PULL BACK AND GO AHEAD.

Soon after Lincoln issued his call for the first seventy-five thousand men, a well-meaning "peace-crank" called on him and begged him to stop the war.

"That's what I'm trying to do," said Lincoln, sadly, "and lying awake night's thinking how to do it."

"But you have called for volunteers."

"Yes."

"Well, do you mean that that is trying to stop the war?"

"Yes."

"You are joking, Mr. Lincoln."

"No, I'm in dead earnest. Some things are easier to stop by letting them run a while and slow down gradually than jerking them up suddenly, especially if you don't know just what

is making them go. Let me tell you a story:

"When I was a boy about fifteen, I had to ride a horse over to a neighboring town. The man that owned him gave me a quarter to take him there and get him shod. Well, I didn't know much about horses except from behind with a plow dragging after them, so when I got on that horse I felt a little awkward. I thought I'd start right, so I cut a switch and rode off bravely.

"After I was beginning to get a little sore, and the horse was beginning to find out the sort of green rider he had on his back, something set him going, and he broke into a gallop. He got going so fast that I had to take both hands to the bridle, so I tucked my switch under my arm, grabbed the reins in both fists and yanked. He gave a leap, and went harder than ever. I yanked and he ran, and the harder I pulled the more unmanageable he got. After a mile or two of pretty uncomfortable going, I found that the end of the switch under my arm struck him in the flank every time I pulled. Now I don't know enough about this war yet to feel sure that I ought to yank back. But I hope if I let it run long enough to look carefully all round me, I can make it slow down in reasonable time."—*Youth's Companion.*

### A BAD HABIT.

"Of course it will rain to-morrow just because I want to go to town."

I suppose you constantly hear people say such things as that; probably you say them yourself. It is a general custom, even with good Christians, and apt to be accepted as quite innocent. To me it seems particularly wrong and particularly ungrateful. Any Christian will admit that God is strangely careful for our little pleasures, not only that he gives us life and breath and all things, but that he makes the ins and outs of every-day matters fit comfortably together so many times when we had every reason to fear a painful jar, that he seems, so to speak, to go out of his way to please us; and then we glibly assert at any minute, a sort of rhetorical flourish, not even with a bitter pang showing the temptation of bitter feelings—"It will be sure to be that way, just because I want it this way. It is always so."

To think of such a habit carried on through a lifetime, in the face of God's watchful kindness! I wonder that we are not afraid. I wonder still more that we are not ashamed. It would be so much more natural and so infinitely sweeter to take things as a matter of course, what is really a matter of course, that "He careth for us;" in little things and in great, in all things that we ourselves care for.

Perhaps I turn the verse aside from its main meaning in the apostle's arguments, but I know I can use it as a thanksgiving: "Every good gift and every perfect gift, cometh down from the father of lights."

It is a verse which the weakest Christian can gloat over. Dwell on the words "every good gift," "every perfect gift," "cometh down," nothing withheld; he is the giver of every good and perfect gift.—*Presbyterian Banner.*

Neuralgia may not be dangerous, but it hurts. It seems to tear the face with red-hot pinchers. Stay indoors and use Perry Davis' Painkiller. The blessed freedom from pain which follows cannot be told.