

## Temperance and Prohibition.

### THE ANGEL AND THE DEMON.

BY ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER.

A good angel strove with the Demon of Drink for the soul of Frank Marsden.

"I will save him by his word to his dying mother," said the Angel; "a man's word to his dying mother is strong."

The Demon laughed. "But I am stronger," he said.

Jane Marsden lay dying, and as her end drew near, she besought her only son, with bitter tears and entreaties, that before she died he would give her a sacred promise to turn from the error of his ways.

"Oh, Frank," she moaned, "I cannot die in peace unless you promise me that after I am gone you will give up that accursed drink. It will ruin you, my lad, body and soul."

Frank hid his handsome face in his hands, and sobbed aloud: "Mother, mother, don't go away and leave me alone. I've been a bad son to you; but if you'll only stay with me I'll never give you another moment's sorrow as long as I live."

The widow's thin hand wandered lovingly among her boy's thick curls. "You'd have been a perfect son to me if it hadn't been for the drink, dear," she said gently. "There isn't a cleverer or a handsomer lad in the countryside than my Frank; and if you'd only be steady, you'd be a great man some day."

"I shall never do any good without you to help me, mother."

"Yes, you will, Frank, if only you'll leave off drinking. Promise me that you'll give it up for my sake," begged the dying woman. "I shan't rest easy in my grave till I have your sacred promise, dear. If you make a promise, I know that you'll keep it; for you were always true to your word, even when you were but a little lad."

And Frank—who, in spite of his faults, was a devoted son—gave the desired promise.

"You have made me so happy, Frank," murmured the dying woman. "I know you'll be a great man some day, and I hope that I shall be allowed to hear of it; for it would make me happier even in heaven to know that my boy had become what God meant him to be."

So Jane Marsden went down to the grave rejoicing in her son's repentance. "I am glad to die," she said to herself, "if by my death Frank's heart and life may be changed; for a promise made to a dead mother will prove stronger than all the vows sworn to a living one."

For two years after his mother's death Frank religiously kept the promise he had made to her, and tasted no drop of the poison he had abjured and, in consequence, he got on in the world, for he was a very clever lad, and as he was still young, people were willing to regard his wild boyhood as a youthful freak, and to help him to settle down into a respectable member of society. But at the end of those two years the old craving awoke with redoubled force, and its miserable victim again succumbed to its power. Marsden lost his situation and spent all his savings

at the "Blue Boar," and altogether became a sorry spectacle for angels and men.

Again the good Angel strove with the Demon of Drink for the soul of Frank Marsden.

"I will save him by the might of a good woman's love," said the Angel; "a good woman's love is strong."

The Demon laughed. "Not as strong as I am," he said.

When Frank Marsden was in the depths of his degradation, he saw for the first time the face of Alice Garth, and it seemed as if a new world had suddenly opened to him. For the sake of this sweet girl he felt that he could wrestle with the principalities and powers of darkness, and could prevail. And Alice loved the clever, handsome youth, who had fallen so far from his original estate; and her heart was filled with a passionate longing to lead him back again into the paths of righteousness.

"I am not fit to speak to you, Alice," said Frank, one day. "I worship the very ground you walk on; but I can't think what you can find to like in a miserable wretch like me whom everybody justly despises."

"I love you, Frank," replied Alice; "and love, you know, sees the ideal hid in the person, just as the sculptor sees the statue hid in the block of stone. To the people who truly love us we appear to be what God meant us to be; the Frank whom I love is the real Frank, and his sins and shortcomings are nothing but a husk, which, with my help, he will succeed in casting off forever."

"Alice, I swear that if anything could make a respectable man again of me, such love as yours could do it. When I drink I feel as if some devil has entered into me, and that I am not myself at all. I assure you, my darling, no one loathes and despises me more at such times than I loathe and despise myself; and yet the evil that I would not, that I do."

"But I want to stand at your side and help you not to do it, dear. As the sculptor carves the statue out of the stone, so I mean to make the ideal Frank that now only I can see, into the real Frank that everyone can see."

"And you shall do it, sweetheart, if only you will have the patience with me and forgive me that which is past."

Alice's face was as the face of an angel as she answered, "My patience shall never grow weary, Frank, and my forgiveness shall be until seventy times seven."

So with the prize of a lovely and loving wife before him, Frank Marsden put aside the sin which so easily beset him, and began the race of life afresh. And so quick and clever was he that again he made himself a place in his world, and began to earn the admiration and respect of his fellow men. It required two or three years of hard work before he was in a position to offer Alice Garth such a home as he felt was meet for a refined, delicately nurtured girl, and whose years of waiting were very sweet to both of them. During that time Alice was mistress of the village school, and happy indeed were the half-holidays that she and her lover spent together; in the winter reading and discussing books new and old, and in the summer reading their

own life's romance instead, and studying in grassy lanes and sweet-scented hay-fields that never-wearing fairy tale which is always old and always new. At last their fairy tale ended—as fairy tales ought to end—with a gay little wedding in the village church; and Frank Marsden took Alice Garth to love and to cherish till death should part them.

The first year of their married life in their pretty, woodbine-covered cottage was a period of unclouded happiness, and then the old temptation again began to knock at the door of Frank's soul. For a time he held the fort against the invading foe, but only for a time; and then there came an outbreak which made the neighbors shake their heads and poor Alice wish that she were dead. But miserable as Alice was, her love for her husband never failed. Tenderly she bore with him in his maddest bouts of intoxication; and patiently she endured the poverty which now threatened to destroy their once happy little household.

Again the good Angel and the Demon of Drink strove together for the soul of Frank Marsden.

"I will save him by the hand of a little child," said the Angel; "the hand of a little child is strong."

"But I am stronger," said the Demon; and he laughed.

When the days of Frank's humiliation seemed at their darkest, a baby came to the woodbine-covered cottage, to comfort Alice and to make Frank's heart once more as the heart of a little child. And when Frank realized that to this new son of his he must be as a god knowing good and evil, he swore that the ideal of fatherhood should never be lowered by him, and that the lad should never have occasion to be ashamed of his father. So he put away from him the accursed thing and became again a sane man. For the sake of his wife and child people were ready to help the reformed drunkard by giving him work, and the cottage once more became bright and cheery. Little Tommy was the very apple of his father's eye, and Frank was never happy now apart from the boy. Long and interesting were the talks the two held together as Tommy grew older, and began to take notice of the world around him. Then there came to the bright little home a baby-girl, whom Frank called Jane, after his still tenderly-loved mother, and altogether the latter days of the Marsdens promised to be better than their earlier ones. Again Frank and Alice read and discussed books in the long winter evenings, and again wandered through grassy lanes and sweet-scented hay-fields on the long summer days. Alice began to look back upon that terrible past as a bad dream from which she had awakened, and to forget those "old, unhappy, far-off things" which had thrown so dark a shadow over her early married life.

But this halcyon time was doomed not to last. Once more the evil spirit entered into Frank, and once more sorrow and want took up their abode in the woodbine-covered cottage. Poor Alice's once pretty face grew wan and wistful, and the two children soon felt the pinch of poverty and began to droop. Many a night did Tommy cry himself to sleep, calling in vain for his dear daddy to come and comfort him, and many a night did Alice sit up until the small hours to let in the besotted, slave who had once been the light of her eyes and the joy of her heart.

For the last time did the good Angel



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strive with the Demon of Drink for the soul of Frank Marsden.

"I will save him by means of worldly ambition," said the Angel; "worldly ambition is strong among the sons of men."

"Not as strong as I am," sneered the Demon, and he chuckled to himself.

One day, when the Marsdens were in sore pecuniary straits, a lawyer called to see Frank and to tell him that his mother's brother had just died in Australia and had left him a large fortune. Marsden was staggered at the unexpectedness of this sudden accession to wealth, and could not at first realize that he was a rich man; but as he more fully grasped the idea he once more made up his mind that he would finally break himself of the pernicious habit which was ruining him in body, soul and estate. While poverty stared him in the face it was a relief to drown his

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