

Temperance Column

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging. Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Prov. 1:20.

Late in the autumn of 1842 a young man could have been seen walking the streets of Worcester, Mass. The cold night-wind made him shiver, for his old clothing gave little protection to him. Those who knew him cared not that he was penniless and hungry. It seemed as though it was of no use to try to live. Why not die and end it all? And as he stood by a railroad track he raised a bottle of laudanum to his lips. But degraded as he was, he could not take his life. He dashed the bottle to the ground and went on his lonely way.

John B. Gough at twenty-five was a drunkard and an outcast. His life had not always been associated with evil. He was born in Sandgate, England, in August, 1817. His father was a soldier who had a pension after his discharge from the army. His mother was a Christian woman who tried to educate her boy as best she could. She was the village schoolmistress. When he was ten years old he left school, and after this time did not again attend school. When he was twelve, a family who was going to America offered to take the young lad along and give him an opportunity to make himself in the new land. John was eager; and although his mother was almost broken-hearted, she consented and he made the venture. Two years of almost slavish existence upon a rude farm near Utica, N. Y., made the young lad impatient with life and he went to New York, where he obtained a position as an errand boy for \$2.25 a week. One wonders just what his employer expected the young lad to live upon! Two years later, then earning \$3 a week, he asked his mother and sister to come to this country. Two little rooms were rented, his sister obtained work, and John was happy. But only for a brief time, because both of them lost their work and suffered from cold and lack of food. The winter's struggle against poverty was too much for his mother, and in the spring John was saddened by her death. There were none to care, and the one he most loved was carted away to the Potter's Field. John was very bitter against the church, and those who he felt neglected him. He stopped going to church. Sometimes he worked at his trade as a bookbinder, then he drifted to the comic theater, and soon to drink, which caused his downfall. He was a good workman, but could not keep his position long because of his habit of drink. He was married at this time, but continued drinking, and his wife and child died from neglect and suffering. So at twenty-five he was homeless and sought to take his life by poison. Soon after this a stranger met him, kindly urged him to sign the pledge, and took him to a temperance meeting, where he with trembling hand wrote his name to the promise that he would never drink intoxicating liquors again. It was his first step toward freedom. For seven years he had allowed the habit of frequent drinking to fasten itself upon him, and now there was a terrific battle ahead. For six days and nights the demon within demanded its accustomed liquor, but John B. Gough had started to rule himself, and at last he felt strong enough to walk the streets without the use of whisky. There is no greater or nobler battle than that which a man fights against some great habit which enslaves him. For before a man can control others, or be a help to others, he must be able to control himself. That John B. Gough was able all the rest of his life, with the exception of one short period, to be stronger than the thirst for liquor

makes us admire his grit and his true manhood. He learned in the terrible fire of temptation how to restrain the wrong habit and to keep his life true to the nobler and higher ideal.

Mr. Gough was soon telling others of the freedom which had come to him when he had signed the pledge. He proved to be a very able speaker, and quickly gained a great reputation as a temperance reformer. He spoke from sad experience. At the time of his death he had lectured nearly ten thousand times, nearly always upon temperance subjects. In his library he had four great volumes of autograph signatures of one hundred and fifty thousand people who, like himself, had signed the pledge.

He was greatly aided in his first days of struggle by the kind words of friends. Indeed, he tells us that without these helpful words he would not have been able to win in the combat. A true woman became his wife, and in their mutual love there was another chain to help hold him to a better life. He soon after renewed his relations to the church and humbly walked in the Christian way until his death.

In 1853 so great had become his fame as a speaker, and so much good had been accomplished by his addresses, that he was invited to England by the temperance societies to give some lectures. He was received like a conquering hero. Great audiences assembled everywhere. For two years he gave addresses almost incessantly in all parts of the British Isles. His simple, touching account of his life brought forth unbounded enthusiasm. Many thousands were encouraged to give up drink and become men again, with self-control and freedom in their lives. Many stories are told of the blessing which his message brought to human lives. One day, while in a carriage in Edinburgh, Mr. Gough noticed that the driver tied a handkerchief around his neck and leaned closely against the carriage window. Mr. Gough was always sympathetic, and asked him if he was cold or sick. "No, no," replied the man, "the window is broken and the wind is freezing, and I'm trying to keep it from you. God bless you, sir. I owe everything I have in the world to you. I was a drunkard and a beggar once, and beat my wife. In Edinburgh you told me I was a man, and when I went out of that house I said, 'By the help of God, I'll be a man!' and now I've a happy wife and a comfortable home. God bless you, sir. I would stick my head in any hole under the heavens if it would save you any harm."

Until his death, in 1886, he spoke for temperance and swayed the great audience by his eloquence. He had a beautiful home, was a great lover of books and art, and not only completely redeemed his life but aided many thousands to break their bonds of habit. He often cautioned against the first glass, the first step in the wrong direction.

He helped greatly in the battle against liquor during his forty years of public life. In his early days it was not a disgrace to drink nor even to become drunken. To-day we know the harm which intoxicating liquor does, and we know that he who drinks is in the greatest danger of losing command of his own life. In this change of public opinion and knowledge Mr. Gough had no small part. True to his own ideals he has made it easier for every boy and girl, every man and woman, to live his or her life free from the entanglements of a habit which does so much harm. There are other results which came from his battle which we shall notice in later lessons.

It was not John B. Gough alone who was compelled to keep watch lest the enemy break into the stronghold. Long years ago Paul was writing to some Christians at Corinth who were

always in trouble of some kind. They were especially prone to sins of intemperance. He used the figure of the Grecian games celebrated at Corinth. They loved their athletic sports. "Now," said Paul, "the Christian life is just like a race. We must go into training, and train our bodies in order that when the test comes we can perfectly control them. Just as the laurel wreath is placed on the head of the victor in your Grecian races, so in this Christian race the Master awards a crown to the winner." Then Paul adds, "I dare not go out of training either lest I fall by the way, even after I have helped others to win in the race." This last verse (1 Cor. 9:27) is very closely related to the life of John B. Gough, as you have seen in reading it.—Selected.

MARRIED

"What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder."—Mark 10:9.

Steeves—Lounsbury

On Monday evening, Jan. 28th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Steeves of Steeves' Settlement, their son Melvin, was united in marriage to Mildred Lounsbury, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Lounsbury of Butternut Ridge. The single ring service was used.

We extend to this young couple our best wishes. The ceremony was performed by the writer.

REV. H. E. MULLEN

OBITUARY

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."—Revelation 14:13.

Mrs. Augustus Stairs

The death of Mrs. Augustus Stairs occurred at the home of her son in Nortondale on Tuesday, Feb. 19th, in her seventy-fifth year, following a few weeks' illness.

She leaves to mourn their loss, a son, Harry, of Nortondale, a sister in Canteloupe, B. C.; two brothers and four grand-children.

The funeral was conducted at the home Thursday at 1:30 p. m., by Rev. S. G. Hilyard, who spoke on words found in Psalm 90:12. Three selections were sung by the choir, "No, Not One", "Pearly White City" and "Does Jesus Care".

Interment was made in the Cox Burying Ground.

We pray comfort and blessing on the sorrowing ones. S. G. H.

Mr. and Mrs. Beecham Trites send \$10 to the Missionary Fund in loving memory of Oliver N. Trites who departed this life, February 26, 1934.

IN MEMORIAM

A precious one from us has gone,

A voice we loved is stilled;

A place is vacant in our home,

Which never can be filled.

God in His wisdom has recalled,

The boon his love had given,

And though the body slumbers here,

The soul is safe in Heaven.

(Signed) Loved Ones left behind.

Berry's Mills, West. Co., N. B.
February 15, 1934.

The death of little Gladys Mae Amero, age 18 months, occurred at the home of her parents at Hassett. The funeral service was held at the home on February 7th, conducted by the writer. Interment was in the Baptist Cemetery at Have-lock.

To the sorrowing ones we extend our sympathy.