

JESSE JOHNSTON

AND

HIS TIMES.

BY THOMAS P. HUNT,

THE DRUNKARD'S FRIEND.

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JESSE JOHNSTON AND HIS TIMES.

ABOUT the year 1828, near the city of —, there was a plantation, from which the proprietor had removed. The homestead had once been elegantly improved. But sad changes had come over it. A few remaining yellow jessamines and multi-floras, trailing on neglected shrubbery, and thick branches of flags, and daffodils, and blue bells, showed where once was a garden; the extent of which was marked by a few remaining leaning posts and rails, with here and there paling hanging on them. Whatever reason induced the builder of the house to place it as far from the spring as he did, and to have the kitchen at the inconvenient distance of fifty yards or more from the house, is not known, but does not

prove that the proprietor was an eccentric man. In many parts of the country, people seem to possess the wonderful facility of so ordering the location and arrangement of all their buildings as to give as much trouble and labour as possible. If the object be, to furnish a plea for the employment of many servants, and the procurement of much vexation and delay in domestic occupations, even Solomon himself, in all his wisdom, could not have devised a more successful scheme. That there is, however, something attractive and spell-binding in this plan, cannot be doubted. For new settlements are founding on the tops of steep hills, with the water a part of a day's journey from every place where it is needed, and the out-houses all just where and as they ought not to be. Little do such persons dream of the supposed ease, comfort and economy of a different arrangement.

This place was evidently now the abode of intemperance. The never-deceiving flag of an old hat and red petticoat stuffed into the windows, and the air of wasteful neglect reigning around, told, too plainly, that a drunkard's barracks was near by. Here lived Jesse Johnston and his wife. A generous, kind, good natured, easy pair, who could come as nigh the truth as most of persons, when they say that their drinking injured nobody but themselves. Jesse really loved his bottle, but hated nothing, unless it was unnecessary work; a light in which he regarded almost all occupations, whenever he had money enough to obtain a supply of liquor, and strength to drink it. His wife, as all good wives are in duty bound, did not hesitate, at least in this instance, to adopt her husband's preferences as her own. It followed, of course, that if Jesse loved to drink, Molly did too. And

she readily admitted the force of all his assertions in favour of liquor, and excuses for sometimes committing a small mistake in taking a little too much, or rather, for "being overtaken;" which, his wife said, was nearer the truth; for in no manner or shape did she ever admit that they were to blame for being drunk. It is not strange that, thus united in sentiment, they both became one in the result, as well as in the practice of their mutual love. Unlike many intemperate husbands and wives, they seldom quarrelled, and still more seldom fought. They usually drank together; and while there was but little disposition to cheat, there was a sufficient self-interest on both sides, to keep a watchful vigilance to ensure fair play in the dividends. They entered into the "O be joyful" of Shanter's glory about the same time; and it was seldom that they passed into the lion-

hearted state, before the floor or wall would be more apt than themselves to receive their blows and kicks! Nor was it often that the one recovered in time to upbraid the other for sleeping ingloriously on the field of honour.

On one occasion, however, the noise and the alarms of bloody strife was heard in Jesse's house.

In an adjoining county lived a couple, who, like Jesse and his wife, and like many other husbands and wives in those days, believed in the use of intoxicating liquor, and practiced as they believed. Shortly after they had purchased a keg of rum, the old man was summoned to attend court. Never before did home appear to him under so many endearing charms. Never did he feel such unwillingness to leave the *partner* of his joys. A stranger might possibly have laboured under the mistake

that the old man was fearful that his wife might be injured by drinking too much. Never was a greater error. He knew that her temperance principles were perfectly orthodox. Her settled convictions and his own perfectly accorded. "Liquor was a good creature. It was made to be used. No body ought to drink it, unless they could drink when they pleased, and let it alone when they pleased. They had both resolved, that it should never please them to let it alone, until they found it injuring them—that it had never injured them yet, and they did not believe that a little ever injured any body. It is true folks said that their son, that was buried not long since, died of rum. But, poor fellow! they knew better. He had been to the tavern, but it was kept by a moral, decent, temperate man, as the recommendation of twelve men, high in office both in church

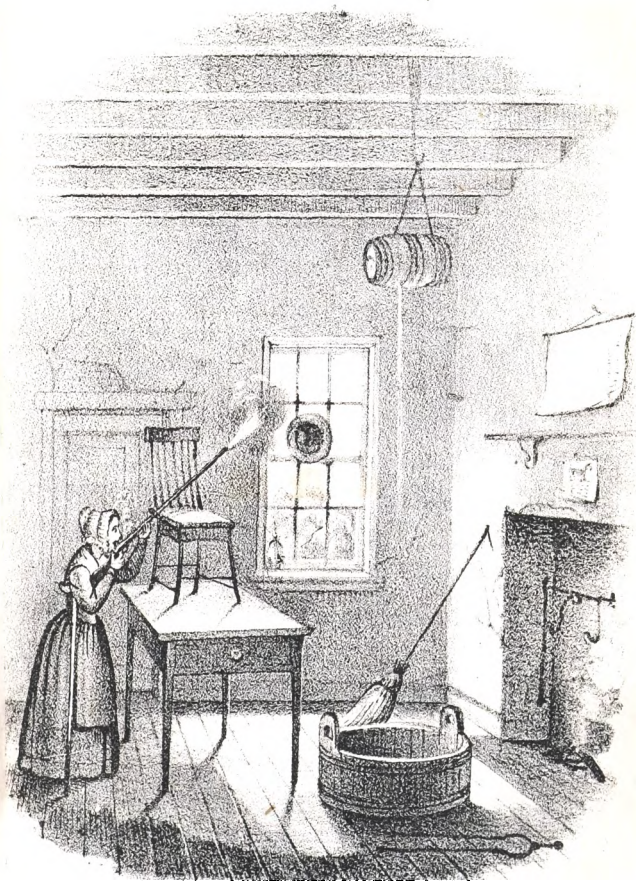
and state, and the license of the court proved ; and he kept a very orderly house. How then could their son have got drunk there ? Besides he did not sell to drunkards ; and he knew their son as well as they did, and if he had been a drunkard, would not have let him had it. It was true the boy loved to drink ! who did not ? It was also true, that he left the tavern late, and slept out all night in the cold rain, and caught a violent cough, of which he died. But so far from rum killing him, they verily believed, that if he had had some of it when he waked up, he would not have been even sick. A cruel murder had been committed, and it was said that whiskey caused it.—What folly ! Had they not drank whiskey, and as much of it as most people ? Why had it not made them kill somebody ? Jim Jones had beat his wife, and turned his children out of doors, and it was all laid to

liquor. They knew that Jim's wife's tongue and his childrens' impudence were to blame for it. She kept complaining that she was sick, and had too much work to do, and that her babe was sick, and had not enough of the right kind of food, and that it could not have it, while she was feverish and worn down with continual labour. As much as to say, that Jim did not do his duty in supporting the family. No man can endure to be always upbraided by his wife, and she knew that Jim would not stand it; for he had beat her for looking sad and sulkey more than once, and knocked his son down for daring to protect her. Why did she not keep her mouth shut; and what business had the children to interfere with him, and to take sides with their mother against him. They did not say that Jim was right, but human nature had its frailties, and Jim had his, and

never beat his wife and children when, as was sometimes the case, he was drunk. Indeed, it was foolish to say to the contrary. For every body knew that a man was not drunk as long as he could stand up, and had sense enough to know and to defend his own opinions. It was not liquor that made Jim do so wickedly ; it was his wife's ugly temper. Young Harry Mount was a vagabond—and liquor had to bear all the sin. But how was it ? His mother fretted about his being out so much—his father scolded at him for his wildness, and his employer dismissed him for idleness and neglect of his business ; but not for drinking ; for they all drank themselves. It was no use to tell them about liquor making folks do bad. The world was as wicked as it could be, before the flood, and they never heard that folks had any liquor until after that time. And the first man they

ever heard of that made and drank it, was the best man then living." Thus they had reasoned, until they did not know how to resist the philosophical conclusions at which they arrived: that if rum did injure *some* people, it would never injure *them*.

It was no fear, then, of injury to his wife, that caused his heart to sink heavily, as he made preparation to leave home. He knew his wife, and had confidence in her. And he was persuaded that she would not drink up all the rum before his return, provided he did not stay too long; but if he did, never would he get a drop of it. How to avoid this calamity perplexed him much. At last he bethought him of a remedy. His wife was a cripple and could not climb. He hung the keg far above her head and hid the ladder, and then affectionately bade his wife adieu, consoled by the reflection that he would on his



return enjoy with her the contents of the keg. But he little knew what is woman's power to conceive and to execute. Not long after his absence, that indescribable "out of sorts" kind of feeling, to which persons accustomed to improper stimulants are sometimes subject, began to come over her. It waxed worse and worse, and made solitude insupportable, while it banished all desire, as well as fitness, for company. She knew that a little liquor would go to the place where it was needed. And she knew of nothing but liquor that could sustain, soothe, and relieve her. But how could she get it? There it hung before her, its healing powers tasted, tested. The wash-tub was in the corner, the loaded rifle over the door. To place the one under the keg, and to pull the trigger of the other was but the work of a moment. Whiz went the ball, down came the liquor; and

when the old man returned, the keg hung where he had left it, but the rum was gone.

Jesse Johnston and his wife, if they did not differ on the question, Whether she was right in drinking all during her husband's absence? yet could not agree as to who was to blame for it. He thought that the woman was; she that the man was. He ought to have left a part of it out for her. Jesse thought not; for in that case, she would get more than her share, for she would expect some more after the old man returned. They could not agree, and words waxed warm. They had sometime finished in great harmony their bottle of whiskey, and were in that easy to be provoked, and prone to misunderstand, and keen to reply state, which is said sometimes to be found among people who never dream that they are drunkards. Words hissing hot, when ideas so crowd the mind

as almost to exclude the power of speech, generally are accompanied with gesticulations. Besides, bitter words are more provoking and harder to be borne than blows; who would not rather receive a blow than be called a coward! How many of the chivalric actually receive a ball in the heart to avenge or escape a blow of the mouth! Whether it was a desire to choose between two evils, or the accidental touch of the hand in gesticulating, is not known; but so it was, that blows were struck between this loving couple. Who struck first, or who struck last, and why and how the battle ended, is not chronicled. Jesse, although somewhat boastful when in his cups, was never heard to allude to this battle. His account to some, who were so impertinent as to inquire how the scratches came upon his face, that they were caused by his chasing a hare through the briars,

taken with his silence and his evident anxiety to change the subject, left the impression on the minds of some, that women could sometimes use their nails and teeth, as well as more nimbler members, with success, when occasion required it.

And while it was very natural for women to fall, there were more bruises on Molly's face and in more places than usually resulted from a single tumble over a log, which she averred was the true cause of her variegated appearance. It is probable that even the fact of the fight would never have been revealed, had not Jesse's wife once referred to it, while defending the use of liquor, as a strong presumptive evidence in favour of always keeping liquor in the house. She said, that she and her old man never had but one fight in their lives, and she verily believed that if they had had a supply at the time, the

thing never would have happened. For the quarrel and the fight both took place after they had drank all the liquor in the house, and wanted more.

The Temperance reformation was at this period (1828) in its infancy. Dr. Hewit's voice was sounding through the land in tones of deep pathos, strength of argument, fervidness of spirit, dignity of manner, and untiring zeal, unequalled by any who had preceded him in the blessed work. But with all his power, sustained by the most veritable and alarming statistics, many, very many, only laughed at the idea of reforming the drunkard and changing the long established habits of the country! A temperance lecture had but few to attend it then, and still fewer who felt that they were required to serve either themselves or others. Although great success attended Dr. Hewit's lectures, and Dr. Ed-

wards with his careful, prudent and skilful array of principles and facts, was doing much to prepare the way for a success almost miraculous, and more indebted to their efforts than to the labours of many who have nobly reaped on ground that they knew not had been sown by others. Although Beecher had written his six unequalled sermons on intemperance, and Kettridge had published his tract, and Delavan had devoted his thousands, and Tappan and Grant, of Boston, and many other able friends were doing all they could to instruct and prepare the minds of the people; yet what were all these, in a land wholly given up to the idolatry of intoxicating liquor! In the great city of Philadelphia, the first effort to form a society was in the back parlor of Dr. Gebhard, in 1827—and consisted of seven or eight gentlemen. In the city near which Jesse Johnston lived, the

first attempt to organize a temperance society did not call together men enough to officer the institution. And as unpopular as the measure may be, in these days of rotation in office and division of spoils, the only remedy to prevent a failure was resorted to; of loading one or two with double honours, by making them President and Treasurer, Secretary, &c., as they had strength to bear it. As for females attending or joining the society, the idea was not only absurd but disgraceful. The general opinion was, that if men were drunkards it was well enough for them to join the society. But then nobody felt that there was any danger in woman's drinking. And great horror filled the minds of the people when the first lady joined the society. "Was it possible that Mrs. — was a drunkard! Did you ever hear that Mrs. — drank too much? Why, we

thought she was one of the most pious women in town ! And her daughters, too ! Did you ever hear the like ! Most respectable, accomplished girls ! Who would have thought that they were drunkards ? ” The idea that the Temperance Reformation was suited only to the inebriates, was almost universal. Ladies never apprehended that there was the least impropriety nor danger in their using the drunkard’s drink, or complying with bacchanalian customs ; nor any responsibility in throwing all the power of the charms of pure affection and benevolence around the glass, too tempting in itself to need the aid of beauty and of love’s influence to make it more attractive. They had never reflected that it was to please them, that young men often took the first glass ; and that the strongest reason that restrained many from adopting the principle of total abstinence,

was the fear of being compelled to refuse a lady, when invited by her to drink a sentiment. But such is the fact. However evident it now is, that there is more *appearance* of evil in complying with customs and habits that war against all that is lovely and of good report, blindness had happened in part to the mothers and fathers in Israel on this subject; and even the drunkards' wives, while they mourned under the tyranny of a beastly husband, desired only, like many now, that they would drink moderately. There was a belief that liquor in moderation was not only harmless, but absolutely necessary, and positively a blessing. Every side-board was loaded with it. Ministers of the Gospel drank it before and after their holiest exercises, as well as daily at their meals, and universally in their pastoral visits, as well as in the social circle. If there ever was a custom pernicious,

cious, dangerous, wicked, the enemy of men's best interests, deeply imbedded in the affections of men, defended by all the strength that virtue, talent, genius, wit, wealth, interest, hospitality, and beauty and love could exert, that custom was the one that the temperance friends sought, not to modify, but to extirpate. No wonder that it was laughed at, scorned, despised, contemned, even by the wise and amiable. Attention had never been directed to the cause of men's drinking too much. In looking out for a cure for drunkenness, men went no farther than to attempt to prevent the fruit from getting ripe enough to fall, yet spared and cultivated the tree of death; and rejoiced in its green leaves and buds and blossoms! It was only when the evil was accomplished, not when it commenced, that it was to be corrected. *Avoid drinking too much*, was the advice

that closed one of the best works depicting the evils of intemperance, Keeme's Drunkard's Looking Glass. It had never entered the head of man, till Hewit taught it, that the way to avoid the evil was, to drink not at all. When this remedy was proposed, people did not understand it, and generally thought that it was only for those already sunk and debased; and not too, for those who stood where the drunkard now falls, and who may fall where the drunkard perishes, unless both fly to the same shelter of safety, a rock over which the siroc blows not, the chamber in which the threatened find shelter: **TOTAL ABSTINENCE FROM ALL THAT CAN INTOXICATE.**

It is not known that the world was more hard hearted in the beginning of the temperance reformation than it had been before. But it was almost as difficult to induce persons, to pledge their influence

and co-operation in persuading and inducing men to abandon the use of liquor, as it was to get them to give it up themselves. Mrs. T—— and her daughter, wealthy, honourable, pious, were among the first ladies who joined the society. A stranger, in the year 1825, was travelling in a strange land. He was taken violently ill at a distance from any house. He was overtaken in the wood by an elderly gentleman, who perceiving his situation, with the true Samaritan spirit, urged and took him to his house. There he remained many days insensible with a burning fever. On his return to consciousness, he beheld the friend, who though a stranger, had taken him in, bending, with his wife, over his sick bed, with all the solicitude and anxiety of a father and a mother. They had watched over him by night and by day, not knowing who he was, nor whence he came, or

whither he was going. They only knew he was sick, and was a stranger. It may be he had a mother, who was waiting his return, and in feverish anxiety inquiring, why does he not come? or that a wife's bosom bleeds, as his babes, interrupted the tissue of her imaginings, which almost always forsakes the fields of hope, and wanders in dens and quagmires, when it seeks for friends long absent, and untelegraphed, by asking Where is father? Will he come to-day? or he may be a murderer, flying from the fiendish scenes, or a viper, whose only return of gratitude may be, to sting and to destroy the very bosom that had warmed him into life.—They knew not, they cared not. He was a fellow being, and was suffering—that was enough for them. Never will that stranger forget their kindness. They have a lovely promising family of boys and girls. One son among

them, so kind, so gentle, so generous, so promising, seemed almost entitled to a Benjamin's portion of their love, and to justify much of that parental pride, if not partiality, with which they regard their first-born, their darling boy. A few years had passed away since the stranger thus became interested in this family. But those years, not differing indeed from other years, had brought with them changes of separation, of sadness and of death. The mother of that boy had died. He, enterprising and promising, had left his father's house with his father's blessing, had married the lovely daughter of a rich, gay, fashionable family. How soon the wine cup does its work on some constitutions ! The dull, phlegmatic, the cold, the calculating miserly man, whose greatest stimulant is selfishness, takes a long time to become a drunkard ; nay, may escape entirely, although every day sporting

with the tempter. But not so with him of generous mood. The rapid downward course of this noble-hearted youth was made known to the stranger alluded to above. He determined to make an effort to repay, in part, the debt of gratitude he owed to this boy's family, and to save *her* son whose kindness and care, under God, had probably restored to life the only son of a widowed mother. His first attempt was unsuccessful. The young man regarded an invitation to sign the pledge as an intimation that he was a drunkard, a thing he hated, detested, as much as any man. "He a drunkard! He disgrace his family! He ruin the peace of his young, his lovely wife! He blast all his prospects in life! No, never. Did he believe that such would be the result, never again would he touch another drop. But there was no danger. He drank no more than

other men, nor half as much as many, who were not suspected of drunkenness. He sign the pledge ! What was the use ? He could keep sober without it. He had been sober all his life. Long before the pledge was heard of, he had daily access to liquor at his father's table, and in his store, and never was drunk, as often as many young and old men, who sometimes at weddings, and Christmas, and fourths, and elections, and courts, and trainings, drank a little too much, and were none the less respected in society. He was certain that he never would be a drunkard, and was unwilling to admit the possibility of such an awful state, even by signing a pledge." He laboured under the impression that none but drunkards were on the temperance list. His friend saw that it was useless to argue the matter with him. He resolved, although it had been determined at a large meeting of wise

men, that ladies need not join the society, to make an effort to place at the head of his list, the most honourable, pure, unspotted, and unsuspected names in the community. The society must occupy an honourable and honoured position, so that those who really needed its influences most, should not have the almost only relic of immortal birth, an honourable pride, injured or wounded by the efforts made to save them. So general was the use of liquors among men, that but comparatively few who signed the pledge could say that they were not benefited by it, and of whom the remark could not, and was not made, with some propriety—"Ah! it was well enough for him, he was in some danger." But among that sunny, bright portion of our race that comprises our mothers and wives, gallantry forbids the suspicion of impurity. Woman was untarnished and unsuspected. Would

she but give her name, her influence, then glory would be the banner over the banquet of love, at which all might be honoured and safe. But would woman do it? Yes, she would. For whatever part she may have had in introducing death and all its woes into the world, it was through her throes, and agonies, and pain, that life returned and salvation came. The angels' song at the Redeemer's birth was not the only sound that reached the ear of heaven. Mary's sorrows and Mary's sufferings caused Mercy's voice to sound its soothings into her heart. And when alone and forsaken the Saviour's body was wounded for transgression, he was not the only sufferer. But, "what pierced his body, pierced her soul." And in the flames of persecution and ages of oppression, and years of privation endured for salvation's sake, woman was always first to suffer, and never a coward. Yes, woman



would lend her influence, embalmed in her purity, and sanctified by her prayers, to this work of love. And she did it. Mrs. T. and her daughter gave their names. The young man's wife gave hers. It was not known that she suspected that the effort was to save her husband, or that he was in danger. But there was sorrow on her face when she signed. Many other ladies followed their example, to which was speedily added the signatures of many honourable men, both old and young. The list was then presented to the young man. On it he saw the names of the fair and best, the brightest, in his eyes, among them that of his wife. He could not feel disgraced by signing now. Nor could he longer hope to drink, without associating with the abandoned, for nearly all his associates had signed the pledge. He yielded and was saved for the time. A year or so after-

wards, as the stranger was passing through the town in which they lived, he stopped to spend the Sabbath and enjoy sanctuary privileges with the people of God, to be refreshed and quickened for the duties of life. As the congregation was leaving the house, after the morning service, a lady with a lovely babe approached him, and placing it in his arms said; "Sir, the first word this child shall utter shall be your name, and his first sentence shall be, to call you blessed." "What have I ever done to receive so sweet, so precious an honour!" There was a tear and a smile mingling together, as in a soft voice she whispered, "You have saved its father from being a drunkard." But alas! he was not saved. Like an honourable man he abstained from ardent spirits, all that the letter of the pledge required. Yet, after a while, wine proved to be unto him a mocker, and he perished!

At this period teetotalism was not the order of the day. Great was the discovery and great the blessings of the old pledge. High and lasting honours be to those who gave it to the world. But experience and wisdom herein proved that, good as the pledge was in the beginning, it is better now, nay perfect. For it cannot fail to relieve and save all who will keep its *letter*, from a drunkard's fate.

It is not to be wondered at, if Jesse Johnston proved somewhat obdurate against any attempt to induce him to give up his cups. But few cared much for temperance, and among a number of these, there could be found not only advocates but users of intoxicating liquors, under the names of wine, and cider, and beer, and cordials. To abandon entirely a time-honoured custom of presenting poisonous liquids in kindness and hospitality to strangers and friends was

an effort too great to be expected of thousands, who loved their neighbours as themselves; and who persisted in spite of the "woe," to give his neighbour drink, and to put his bottle to his lips, because they were determined not to withdraw it from their own. Even among the few who felt for the drunkard's as for a brother's woe, and were willing for his sake to give up ardent spirits, but few were found who urged, what was then called by learned divines, who now have changed their minds, the ultra grounds of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquor.

There was one, however, who often urged upon Jesse and his wife to sign the total abstinence pledge. To this he absolutely objected. "Not he. He had no particular objection to abstain from any one kind of liquor, though he did not see the use of it, provided he could use others. But as

for giving up all kinds he would not do it. Liquor was not made in vain ; and if not, it was right to use it. As to its ever hurting him, he did not believe one word of it. He had had much bad luck in life, and had seen many changes. But he had stood them all. He had drank all his life, and although he sometimes used liquor unwisely, he was no drunkard. If it was going to hurt him, why had it not done so before now ? He would never die on account of liquor." It was in vain that the interests and welfare of his family were urged upon him. "He had no family except his wife ; and she had tried liquor as well as he had, and as often, and stood it well." No picture of poverty, in which he stood forth conspicuously, moved him. "He had not many wants. As long as he could work, he could make enough to support himself ; and his old woman was a good washer. If

the worse came to the worse, he could go to the poorhouse, where better board and bed awaited him, and where he would be sure to get his allowance of whiskey and tobacco,"—two articles then thought to be indispensable in the rations of all who were supported by either civil or religious bounty. Even among the Friends, bills may be found for so many gallons of rum furnished their paupers. Neither prospect of death, disease or poverty, could move old Jesse. As for signing the pledge for the good of others, he thought "every body could do as he had done; take care of themselves; and if they did not, it was none of his fault."

One evening Jesse was persuaded to attend a temperance meeting, by being treated by a temperance man to a mug of beer before going. Being of an obliging disposition, he was induced to sign the pledge against ardent spirits. One who

had no faith in this step, on hearing of it, went the next morning to Jesse's usual drinking barracks, and asked the tumbler-washer for drunkards, whether it was true, that Jesse had signed the Temperance pledge? "O yes; and would not drink a drop of brandy; but got gloriously drunk in drinking success to the temperance cause on cider."

In the fall of 1828 a dreadful malignant fever raged in the vicinity of N—— river. A worthy but poor family, consisting of the parents and six children, were all seized with it at the same time. Death relieved two of the little ones from the evils to come. Removal from the miasma or cause of the fever, was thought to be the only remedy that could save the remaining members of the family. They were accordingly removed. As they came near, to the house where Jesse Johnston lived, a

violent, cold, beating shower of rain overtook them, and they were compelled to seek a refuge from the storm of old Jesse. He gave them the kitchen. But it was all he could do; except to make known their destitute condition in the city near by.

Jesse was kind, and had a feeling heart. Great is the error of those who look upon drunkards as naturally the depraved men which their acts seem to indicate. There is no man who is not subject to desires, and impulses, and temptations, which often come without bidding, and return against remonstrance. So long as man is under the influence of reason and conscience, he may, by divine aid, escape these evil influences. But when reason is dethroned and conscience hushed, the man, for the time being, has lost his humanity; and is nothing distinguished from the brute, except his more than brutal lusts and ferocity.

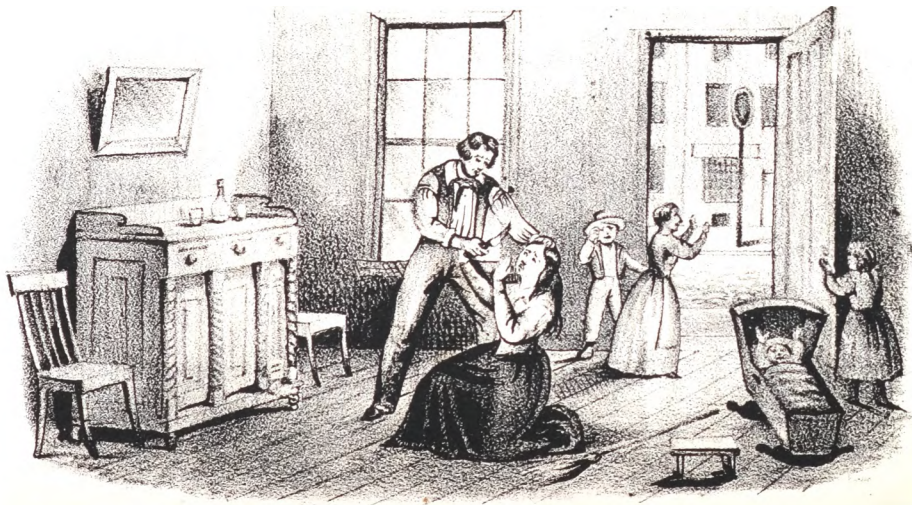
This is just the case with the drunkard. He is a man of like passions with ourselves. He loves his parents, his wife, his children and his friends, and would not injure one of them for the world when sober. He loves the confidence and honours of society, and dreads its scorn and contempt. He can and does rejoice in the smiles of life, not only for himself but for others. He is a man made in the image of his Maker. But when drunk, he is still a man of passions, divested of reason and conscience, and, in proportion to his intoxication, is deranged, a lunatic. If in this state passions be roused and temptations beset him, he is only as a chained captive, obedient to the nod of his tyrant, and falls into the snare as an idiot into the fire. A drunkard in B—— was arrested for murder. When he came to himself, and saw the blood upon his hands, he asked the

keeper of the jail, for what reason he was committed. The jailer replied : " For murder." The poor fellow forgot the dangers that awaited him, the disgrace, the trial, the death. His first thoughts were about his wife. " Oh," said he, " what will my poor wife say — what will she do, when she hears that I am a murderer ! " It was that wife he loved, that he had murdered !

In the state of R——, a man was hung for murdering his wife. She had gone to the liquor-seller, and on her knees begged him not to let her husband have rum. But she was ordered out and her request denied. In the evening, after her husband became somewhat excited, the liquor-seller began to taunt and tease him by calling him hen-pecked, under petticoat government, and the like sneering epithets. After he had aroused the fiend in his heart, he told him

that his wife had been there to stop his grog. "Has she?" said he; "sell me a knife, and I will cut her throat." He bought the knife, and started for home, bent on vengeance. When he reached the door, as he afterwards stated, his heart failed him. How could he injure his wife? She had known happy days before he married her, and amidst all his neglect and cruelty had never complained, had never upbraided him. She was the mother of his children, and had ever toiled for their good and his, and always taught them to respect him even when he knew he deserved not their love. How could he injure such a wife! His conscience would not let him do it. He fled from the house as though the angel with the flaming sword of justice were pursuing him. But he fled to the grog-shop. Another half-pint did the business. Now no reason restrained,

no conscience rebuked him. He ran to his house, seized his wife by the hair, and drawing back her head, cut her throat. She, clapping her hand on the gash, ran over to the liquor-seller's, and exclaiming to him, "See what you have done!" died on the stone steps at his door! It is related in a Spanish fable, that Satan once proposed to a man to do one of three things for a great reward. Murder his father, fire his house, or get drunk. The man recoiled at the thought of murder and arson. But the reward was tempting, and what harm could there be in getting drunk just once? So he determined and agreed to get drunk. He did so. Maddened and infuriated when his affectionate, gray-haired father attempted to control him, he murdered him, and, to conceal this horrid act, set fire to the building, and perished in the flames with his father's corpse! No;



drunkards are not different by nature from others. And he who abhors the crimes committed by deranged men, should never venture on the formation of a habit, which may deprive them of any restraint or power to resist and to escape the temptations of a wicked heart. The drunkard was more to blame for his moderate drinking, for that which made him a drunkard, than for deeds which resulted from a state of insanity. Let every moderate drinker remember this; that he is doing that, which if the drunkard had never done, he had not been a murderer. But to return.

Jesse was a kind-hearted man, and was ever ready to relieve distress, and to do a favour. Nor was he mercenary in his benevolence; but would put himself to any trouble without reward. If he would have felt disappointed at not being "treated," it was a catastrophe that seldom occurred in

those days of almost universal drinking. And if he accepted the offered drink, he did so on the ground that many young men now swallow the liquid poison, rather than not offend the offerer of the gift, to say nothing of a kind of joy at the thought of having a fair excuse to drink. But he never yet had charged a drink, or any other price, for any act of kindness. For really it afforded him pleasure to do such things.

As soon as the sufferers were located in the kitchen, he hastened, as has been stated, to apprise the benevolent of the city of — of their situation. He did not go to liquor-sellers for assistance. Why not, he did not say. But so it was, he did not go to them. It has often been remarked that beggars shun liquor-sellers when they are soliciting charity. It may be that they know that liquor-sellers hate the drunkard, and never regard any as being such, so long

as they have money. However ragged, and filthy, and forlorn may be their appearance, if the pennies are in their hands they are sure of not being scowled at, nor interrupted while they await their turn to be served. And they know that when the money is gone, and according to the Irish proverb, "poverty has covered them with nakedness," there will always arise a suspicion in a liquor-seller's bosom, that they are drunkards, to whom kicks and cuffs are more justly due than the wasting of their charity, the means of which were not obtained by giving liquor to him that was of a heavy heart, and ready to perish. Jesse kept away from the liquor-sellers and applied to the temperance women of the city. Governor ——'s wife never was applied to in vain to relieve suffering. And the city of —— contained, and still contains as many females, as any city in the world,

always ready to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and bless the sufferer. Every provision that the sick family required was speedily provided and sent to it. A skilful physician was employed.

At this period, the medical world was much divided in reference to the best mode of treating disease. To enter into the various theories that then agitated the followers of the healing art, would be but to repeat what has been, was, and may be. Each great man had his followers, and the remedies pursued by the one set were eschewed by the other. Let no one be uneasy at this diversity of opinion, and practice existing in one of the most honourable, ancient, learned, necessary and richly patronized arts in the world. Much good arises from it. A deeper and more laborious research into the mysteries of art, and a

fuller exposition of a knowledge of human nature, even if it be sometimes a revelation of its folly and weakness, has been the result. Besides, no evil has resulted from it. Many patients have recovered by efforts of assisted nature. And never yet did physician follow a patient to the grave, who was not consoled with the reflection, that if he had been sent for sooner, or had his remedies been rightly administered, or operated as he expected, and the disease had not been incurable, the patient had not died. It is true that examinations sometimes prove that the disease was misapprehended, and the remedies misapplied : but these were the results of the vagaries of the constitution, never that of ignorance of the practitioner, to whatever school he belonged. Here and there a few eminent men acknowledged the imperfections of the art, and with watchful caution sought to

avoid injuring where they were not certain of benefiting. But many went according to the book, gave pukes and purges, blistered and glistered, bled and stimulated, called in consultation; and if the patient recovered, art had triumphed — if he died, all men had to die, and there was an end of it.

The physician employed in this case was a great advocate for diffusive stimulants — and it was sometimes remarked that brandy was the only article in his *materia medica*, that he loved to take. Be this as it may, he relied greatly on brandy in this case. The stimulating plan had been followed to an alarming extent in those days. A gallon of fourth-proof spirits was sometimes administered in four and twenty hours! For colds, for fever, for inflammatory, for chronic, for almost all sorts and kinds of suffering, liquor was the remedy.

It was a catholicon, a panacea for every ill. Many eminent physicians opposed this unwise, cruel, indiscriminate use of alcohol. And statistics furnished by Dr. —, of Virginia, at the time he was endeavouring with a masterly mind and feeling heart, to arrest the destructive practice, left the impression on the minds of many, that if the liquor did not kill more than the typhus fever, it too often left the patient and physician labouring under a worse disease than it cured, not only in the form of dyspepsia and liability to relapse, but in the more hideous form of confirmed habits of intemperance.

Doctor Rush, that prince of praying Physicians, had at a very early period, called the attention of his students to this subject. And not content with this, had endeavoured to interest and awaken all classes of the community against the use of alcohol; then

so common, not only in the sick chamber, but in every house, and on every occasion of friendly meeting, whether social, political, or religious. As early as 1811, he caused to be gratuitously distributed among the Bishops and Elders of the Presbyterian church, then attending the General Assembly of that body in Philadelphia, his Tract on that subject. His opinion was, that alcohol, in all its forms should be under the control of none but apothecaries and ministers of the Gospel. Little did he know the sad havoc it had made in the ministerial ranks.

There is an impression, that to exhibit the frailties of ministers, is an injury to the interests of religion. To a certain extent this may be true. And the desire to conceal the faults of such, may be not only amiable but praiseworthy. In any event it is so much to be preferred to that phari-

saical spirit which publishes abroad the errors of humanity for the reason,

“That men compound sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to.”

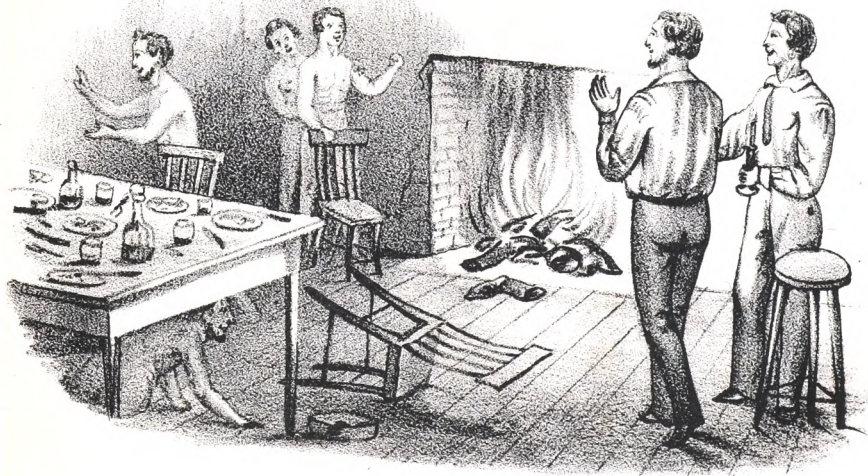
But ministers are but earthen vessels, and men of like passions with others. They are not gods, but our fellow servants. It may be that it was to teach and impress this truth, that christians are not kept from the consequences of yielding to temptation, if they venture into forbidden paths, more than other men, that records of Noah's drunkenness, and Lot's debauch, and Judas' treachery, and Peter's oaths and denial, and Paul's, and Barnabas' separations, besides the grievous fall of others, are so faithfully given in a book that is to be daily read by all the world. Certain it is, that the interests of religion are not promoted by withholding the truth, when that truth is needed as a beacon light to warn others

of danger. Let him that thinketh he stands, take heed lest he fall. And while he weeps over the sins of others, let him avoid the cause of their sinning.

Ministers of the Gospel had, at this period, fallen into the current of fashion. The best of liquors were reserved for and presented to them wherever they went. It was as impossible for all of them to escape the effects of alcohol, as to take burning coals into the bosom and not be burned. Many of the most talented, and most respected for piety, fell before they knew it. In A——, a young clergyman of high promise arrived one Saturday night to preach on the next day. He was detained on the road until late at night, and did not wish to call upon his friends and disturb them at that unseasonable hour. He remained at the Tavern. He had had no dinner. Being of genteel appearance and gentlemanly address, and

his ministerial character unknown, the Landlord, permission being obtained, invited him to take his evening meal with some young gentlemen who were regaling themselves with an oyster supper, and its accompaniments, that evening at his house. He made himself very acceptable to the company, composed of polished, educated and refined young men. As the cheering influence of the wine moved upon him, he drew from the rich store of a highly educated mind, anecdotes and tales, that extorted the laughter or the tear, as the magic wand of the speaker directed. The excitement of mind under social influences, is nigh akin in effects to the excitement of wine. When both meet it is stronger, they conquer even Alexander the conqueror of the world. The glass flew round, and the jests flew about, until reason fled away, and a joyful flow of wit, had taken place

of the flow of soul, and wit had yielded to grimace, and grimace had dwindled to idiotic bursts of laughter, and then the invention racked to continue the entertainment. One young man boasted that he could do what no other could, and threw his hat into the flames. In went every hat, amidst thunders of applause. Presently another defied the party to equal him, as he threw his coat into the fire. No sooner said, than they all stood coatless. Emulation was excited, ambition was aroused—and garment after garment followed as fast as the flames could devour them. Hat, coat, pantaloons, shirts, (the minister's and all) were consumed. The smoke and smell of burning garments aroused the landlord, the servants and the boarders. The cry of fire is heard. And when the landlord reached the bacchanalian room, there stood as nature clothed them, this hopeful group, amazed,



astounded and disgraced ! But this might be called only the fun of the wit. Where, oh where are —— and —— ? But let not the question be answered. The old ministers know what its response would be, given from all denominations in the land. The sanctuary furnished its victims then. But while with pain this is stated, justice and truth require the joyful admission that the first alarm was raised against this evil by ministers. And as soon as the remedy, devised by ministers, was proposed to the world, as a body they entered into the work with a spirit of sacrifice that cost many of them their popularity, home, and living. If here and there some of them opposed the work, God overruled it still, to show the connexion there is between drinking and other hateful sins, and the folly and danger of those reputed to be highest in piety, strongest in talent, and most ex-

alted in authority, trifling with the truth, either by refusing to aid it or by going contrary to its dictates. If there were drowsy preachers, there were tipsy deacons and drunken christians. And no wonder. Men of all classes laboured under the delusion, that intoxicating liquors were to be drunk by persons in health because they were *creatures of God*. A preacher who honestly but erroneously embraced this opinion, in an argument with two temperance ladies, quoted the text, "That every creature of God was good," in defence of his proposition. They asked him if he felt willing to preach from that text, and, in his sermon to answer a question which should be put to him in a sealed paper, not to be opened until he commenced preaching, at a signal given by them. He agreed to do so. After he had proceeded to enforce his interpretation of the text with his views and illustra-

tions, the signal was given, and on opening the paper, he was fairly out-done, in finding that he had to answer the question: What is a drunkard good for? He hemmed and hawed, and at last gave it up, by declaring that he did not know. And his convictions of the truth that God's creatures are called good only when they do good, led him to the conclusion that in some uses, they might be called "evil gifts," and were therefore to be totally avoided. Men did not then apprehend that the moderate use produced moderate effects, insensibly, gradually, naturally, tending to a disease whose constant cry was rum, and whose cravings could never be satisfied. Had the light which now beams on the subject, shone on Dr. Rush, he would no more have thought of entrusting rum to ministers, to be distributed and sustained in its use by them, than would, under present circumstances, the pil-

grim fathers, have entrusted it, as they did, to pious deacons. The pilgrims came to this country without intoxicating liquors, and presented the strange anomaly not only of a state without a king, and a church without a prelate, but also a community without alcohol. When the first cargo of spirits reached their shores, a grand consultation was held in regard to its reception. Many were for keeping it out. Would that their counsels had prevailed. But they did not. It was determined to admit it, yet to place it under the control of the deacons, the most pious, prudent, watchful men in the colony. With what success this wisdom was followed, may be known by the adage "as drunk as a deacon," that soon became common. Even if the deacon escaped, his sons perished. For then, as now, and as it ever will be, it was just about as wise to undertake to control the devastating course of a whirlwind, as to

sell, as a common beverage, intoxicating liquor, and expect the vender and the user, and their families, to escape the consequences of intemperance, dissipation, disease, and death, ever consequent on this awful business.

Nothing has done more to make this a drunken world, than the influence exerted in favour of the moderate use of liquor by men of respectable standing in church and state. Early in the history of this country there existed a band of horse thieves, known to each other by the enormous whiskers and moustaches that they wore. As one by one justice overtook these rogues, and it was found that they all wore whiskers, every man who valued his reputation became smooth shaved. And although now it has become common for men of peculiar structure of mind, and for dandies, who have no more idea of steal-

ing a horse than has the goat, whose envy they might excite, by the length and bushiness of their beards; yet even in many parts of the country, the old men instinctively look well to their stable locks, whenever a stranger arrives in the neighbourhood, with the former insignia and mystic symbol of said horse thieving fraternity. But the fashion is extending beyond the self-encircled, and the importune dandy. And just in proportion as the respectable patronize it, so it will prevail. If any thing could be done to throw around this custom the law's honour and protection, its speed, however rapid, could not exceed the velocity with which the use of intoxicating liquors spread around, when good men, men of standing, under sanction of law, sold it to good men.

As the law stands now, forbidding the drunkard to use it, it makes its use a

proud distinction among the moderate drinkers. It is distilled, imported, sold only for the respectable. For what particular benefit, has never yet been affirmed. But so it is, that every effort to break up the traffic and the custom of its use, has been resisted only on the score, that those who do not abuse themselves by it, must be publicly accommodated with facilities for their innocent gratification. Not a man can be found who would not resist the proposition to furnish drunkards with intoxicating liquors. No legislature would enact such a law. No court would license a house for such purpose. And landlords must change their tone very much, for not one of them can be found "who sells, or ever did, or ever will sell to a drunkard," before any of them could be found willing to avow themselves, the ministers of such a dispensation. Were the sale and use con-

fined, as it ought to be, if it exist at all, to the low, the base, the vulgar and the vicious, the evil would not be as great as it is; but unveiled, and no longer overshadowed as it now is, by good men and gentlemen whose honourable standing in society is used to protect and honour the business of every liquor-seller in the land, would be more distinctly seen.

The good men who use it may be compared to the white-washed walls of the sepulchre, that hides from the public view the hideous results of their own practices; or at least, they serve as a rock of defence and a tower of refuge to all who plead their practices and their arguments as reasons why the traffic should not be discontinued. Nay, more; the respectable portion of society not only turn aside the blows aimed at the liquor business, but often prevent them from being struck.

It is said that the Egyptians were once invaded by a foreign nation. In every battle the Egyptians proved victorious, until an officer in the enemy's camp, knowing that the Egyptians worshipped dogs and cats, and regarded them so sacredly as on no account to kill them, proposed to arm the front ranks with these animals, and thus arrayed, to charge home upon them. The plan proved successful. The Egyptians were amazed to see their gods in this dangerous position; they dared not shoot an arrow nor strike a blow for fear of injuring their deities: and thus fell unresisting victims to the intrigue of their enemies. Just so it is with the respectable moderate drinkers. The friends of temperance are amazed to see them held up in the front ranks of all the liquor-sellers and drunkards in the land. And long has the blow been withheld from fall-

ing on those who deserve to receive it. But patience has its bounds. And let such men remember that the time may come, when those who love their country, its altars and its firesides, may fire away, *dogs or no dogs, cats or no cats.*

Much has been said of the rash denunciations uttered against multitudes who are engaged in the traffic. It is not pretended that such denunciations are unmerciful to many liquor advocates, nor that plain and severe as they are, that they embraced half that truth and justice which might apply to the traffic. But here is the difficulty: "Master, in so saying thou speakest against us." Those who desire to retain their respectability do not feel easy under the castigation continually applied to their baser sort, who under every application of the lash cry out, *We are servants only of the respectable classes of society.* Could those

who use intoxicating liquors, as yet moderately, be induced to abandon it, the indignation of society would not long slumber over the enormities daily inflicted upon the hearts of many unoffending females and children.

The experience of ages has always showed that it is impossible so to guard the use of intoxicating liquors, as to prevent many of the sober from becoming drunkards, and drunkards from obtaining it almost when and in any quantity they pleased. The strictness of the law and watchful scrutiny of courts can never rid the land of intemperance while the law compels or allows the courts to throw around this traffic its protection and sanction. What better laws can be made than have been on this subject? What better state of society can exist than has existed? No; it is in vain to hope that laws sanctioning the traffic,

demand and sustained by the appetites and desires of men who are not drunkards, can prevent the legitimate consequence of the use: *drunkenness in many cases — security in none.*

But the story of Jesse Johnston has almost passed out of mind in this digression. Some brief allusions seemed to be necessary in order to present the true state of matters in the beginning of the temperance reformation, as well as the peculiar claims it has upon the respectable and influential class of society, who, as yet, have never given it their influence. That the cause is of the deepest importance to the rich as well as to the poor, need not now be urged. Intemperance has made many rich families poor, and many poor families miserable. Temperance, total abstinence, has made many poor families rich, and rich families happy. Why, then, in this land

of mutual rights, and privileges, and duties, should not both rich and poor unite against a common enemy, and in favour of a mutual friend.

But where was left the thread of our story? — We had left Jesse — or rather the doctor at Jesse Johnston's — urging the necessity of procuring brandy, as the only remedy that could prolong the lives of his patients. Strong objections were made to this, by a gentleman, who took a deep interest in the welfare of the family. He insisted that this was not one of the "*only one or two cases*" in which Dr. Rush admitted the use of alcohol to be necessary. That if it failed to produce a good result, it would prove very injurious in this particular case. The physician asserted his right to be obeyed. And the gentleman procured the brandy as directed. Early in the morning the Doctor called on him to accompany

him on a visit to the patient. On the road much friendly argument was had on the prescription about which they had differed the night before. The gentleman expected to find the patients much worse, or dead. The physician felt certain that they would all be alive and better. On entering the room, to the delight of both, all the sick were evidently convalescing. The sunken eye began to look about as though there was something new and lovely in life. The feverish look was gone ; health was returning. The mother, who the night before was too feeble and pained to regard the situation of her babe, was now smiling, as it stretched forth its little hands to beg for a biscuit that its little sister was devouring with a voracious appetite.

“Come,” said the Doctor, “do you not give it up?”

“Certainly,” said the gentleman ; “facts



are stubborn things, and there is no resisting them. But——”

“W——,” said the Doctor, “did you not begin to feel better as soon as you began to take the brandy?”

“What brandy?” said the sick man.

“The brandy that Mr. —— brought last night.”

“Mr. —— was here last night after you left; but I saw no brandy.”

Mrs. W—— also declared that she had seen none, and the children joined in the declaration. None of them remembered having seen or tasted any brandy. The Doctor was somewhat nettled.

“Sir,” said he to the gentleman, “you have deceived me, you did not comply with my injunction and your promise.”

“I certainly did,” replied the gentleman. “Here is the merchant’s receipt; there is the bottle; smell it, you know the smell of

brandy; and there is the sugar and the nut-meg. You know they were not here when you left. I did procure all as you directed, and directed it to be given as you endorsed.

The Doctor became satisfied that whatever mystery was connected with the affair, the gentleman had no connexion with it. Yet there was a mystery. He had said that the patients could not recover without brandy. They certainly must have drunk it, and forgotten it; for they were better, the crisis of the disease had passed, they would recover. He certainly was not mistaken. At least he would not acknowledge his mistake, nor permit his friend to enjoy the laugh that he in vain was trying to conceal, at his expense, until old Jesse and his wife had shed what light they could give on the subject. They went in pursuit of the old man and woman.—

Him they found half-way between the door and fire-place, so drunk that he could not turn over; and her they concluded to be in the same immoveable fix. They had drunk up all the liquor, and thus saved the patients' lives.

Remember, reader, that this was a long time ago. Things have changed now.—Physicians almost in a body denounce the indiscriminate use of alcohol as a medicine. Chemistry has been called in to their aid, and they gladly have exchanged the uncertain tinctures for salts, the quality of which they know, and are no longer compelled to undo, as formerly was the case, all that could be expected from one ingredient, by combining with it another of entirely adverse properties. Nurses who cannot sit up without liquor, and therefore like physicians who could not practice

without it, deemed it an essential for the patient, can now find but little employment. Here and there may be found a few physicians of the olden time, who are a disgrace to the profession, a nuisance to society, and a curse to their families. But the most of that honourable profession acknowledge that the temperance reformation has done as much for the health of the public as their pills and lancets. Most cheerfully have they laboured in the temperance cause, and much honour has been the reward of their efforts. Not a generation has passed away since Hewit first suggested the meeting that resulted in the formation of the national temperance effort. It is true that during the last century some distinguished members of the Friends' society, such as Anthony Benezet and others had been indefatigable in their exer-

tions on this subject. But their efforts did not so far succeed as in every instance to induce that people, once ever ready to testify against sin, to bear their testimony against the demoralizing traffic of intoxicating liquors, with that disinterestedness which would prevent the cellars of some of their churches, like those of some other denominations, to be rented out as store-houses, filled with what Robert Hall called liquid damnation. But even this renting of churches for that which has proved to be the churches' worst foe, in many instances was the result of ignorance, which would not be perpetrated now. Things have changed greatly. No side-boards groaning under liquors pleasant to the sight and good to the taste are now to be seen. The minister has to have a disease now before he drinks. And the diseases that so uni-

versally required alcohol, have almost all deserted the land. A few years ago, those who did not drink had to apologise for their non-compliance with the customs of genteel society. Now, those who drink have to apologise for the violation of the laws of morality and good breeding. A drinking female is rare; a drunken female rarer. Young boys and girls are growing up in crowds, who never tasted, and never will taste, intoxicating liquors. The Washingtonian movement has reformed many drunkards. Death is rapidly removing the rest. And were it not for the moderate drinker, that great army of drunkards, which once mustered four hundred thousand strong, and of which forty thousand died annually, would soon be extinct. But in spite of the moderate drinkers, there is cause to rejoice that the evils of intemperance will be ban-

ished from our land. How small the work would have appeared if, in the beginning, no greater obstacles were in the way of success than those which are to be now removed, and are removing? Every association of love and sympathy of affection was then steeped in Rum. One universal sentiment prevailed through the land in favour of the moderate use; and the use was almost as universal as the sentiment. Preachers, lawyers, physicians, statesmen, warriors, soldiers, sailors, mechanics, husbandmen, merchants, old men and mothers, young men and maidens, listened with pleasure to the poet's song in favour of liquor. And of all the utopian schemes ever originated in a mad-man's brain, none was thought to be more hopeless than the effort to reform this nation from its habits of inebriation. Yet it has been done. The

land of Washington is fast becoming the land of Washingtonians, who drink nought but water, cold water. Sons of the pilgrim fathers are becoming sons of temperance. Beauty, wealth and talent, piety and prayer are engaged in furthering on a cause owned of God, and blessed to man. A few more years, followed by the same exertions, will make the history of Jesse Johnston and his times sound like fiction, and he who undertakes to testify to its truth will run the risk of being regarded as a visionary dupe of his own musings. But the tale of Jesse contains nothing but facts, occurring about the time they are stated, though not all in the connexion in which they are narrated. Should this effort to preserve the memory of Jesse prove acceptable to the present generation, it is possible that the history of some other events con-

nected with the fates of men and rum, may be given to the public. But if it seem best that Jesse's memory shall perish with him, stranger things than that have happened, and his biographer will bow in silence to the public will.



The Brave Soldier.