

If anyone has an honest employment he is sure at times to have hard fighting, but never give up, you will be sure to gain the victory.

Now widows, lasses, and their mothers were daily telling me to have a wife, as they felt sure I could make a comfortable home. And being told by friends that I could stoop at any time and pick up nothing, therefore their advice was to take a wife with plenty of money. So I took their advice but I did not marry my wife for the sake of her *fortune*, but it turned out lucky, as she told me all she possessed was 3s. 6d., and that sum she laid out on a bride's cake, the day *we agreed to be one*. No person can accuse me for spending my wife's money, but the best of all is she has been a fortune to me. We were married at Kintbury, by Mr. Fowle, October 26th, 1833. Six children has been our stock in hand, two left us when very young, four we paid rather dear to be educated and apprenticed, and we tried to instil into each knowledge-box to be strictly honest and not spend their cash on smoke and strong drink, as they cannot upbraid their parents of either. Two years after I began as a carrier, I took some land of C. Johnson, Esq., of Wallington-house, and agreed to pay him £4 per acre for it, having been neglected for some years it had become full of noxious weeds. The first year it produced only three sacks of wheat to the acre. My late master reproved me very sharply for being so foolish, for taking land in such bad condition, and rented at so high a price, when I told him I had been a very silly fool, as a slave to him for many years, and now I was determined to try for myself; did you blame me? when I took the land I knew quite well I shall have plenty of slavish work, and made up my mind to do so. I have been carting manure at one o'clock in the morning, by moonlight, in the month of October; and during the summer I was seldom on the bed after two or three in the morning, as I had to go to Newbury five days in the week; but I felt such a joyous sensation, on account of my deliverance from the house of bondage, into an independent condition. I had now become my own master, and all my hard labour was for my own profit. Some persons told me that I should kill myself with hard work, and then be buried under the gallows. But I worked on cleaning, and enriching the land, until it abundantly recompensed me for all my self-denying labours; and the same land which the first harvest only produced three sacks to the acre, in two years after yielded sixteen sacks; all this difference resulted from my early rising and labour. I worked early and late without the aid of strong drink, but I had never heard of teetotaller. I harvested six crops, and planted



the seventh, but previous to the last named planting I removed to another house, and by so doing I incurred the heavy expense of removing, and fitting up a new building for my convenience. But that was not all the loss, I gave warning to my old landlord at the wrong time, and he took advantage of my ignorance, compelling me to pay him three quarters rent after I left the house; although he had kept the key in his possession for the time. This is precisely how he rewarded me for the great improvement I had made in the value of his property, all at my own expense. When the new Poor Law came into operation every business seemed to undergo a change, people were almost everywhere badly off, and my expenses became double my income, besides having been so unjustly treated by the landlord of the house, before stated, and the expense of removing, and building, and the failure of four horses. These calamities came upon me like a violent storm. I went to C. Johnson, Esq., and stated my case, when he advised me not to give up, and he would let me have more land, and said I might pay the rent when convenient, he also offered to lend me as much money as I needed. Many well wishing friends offered to lend me cash, as they stated I took orders, delivered the goods, paid all bills without any anxiety to them. During nine years and ten months I was entrusted with many thousand pounds, and all parties found it just, neither grocers or other merchants sent outrides, as I went for them, but I was badly paid. At this time the future appeared all darkness, and getting into debt with no prospect of paying did not agree with my pride, so I sold off at a great sacrifice and paid all I owed, and engaged with Mr. C. Wright, as a grocer's porter, in March, 1838; and after I came to Newbury, I almost daily saw persons from Kintbury, who informed me what a beautiful crop was on the land I had left, then I wished I had taken friends' advice and kept the land and carrying. The person who took to my land paid me honourably, and his first crop paid a small fortune, as he had good crops resulting from my hard work, and corn sold at a higher rate than it had for several previous years; owing to making the railroad through Kintbury, and the demand for many additional labourers, my business would have doubly increased, my old customers often said to me, I wish you had never given up! and well they might they tell me so, as I took all orders, delivered the goods, got the goods cashed, paid all bills, and kept upright and down straight with all my employers. But they found out after I gave up that every man was not so obliging and good tempered as the poor old *Dunce*.

One day as I was working in the warehouse, quite unexpectedly,



Mr. C. Wright said to me, you are deserving of a better place, than grinding at my sugar mill; and if you see anything better that would suit you, I will advance you an amount of cash to enable you to take it. About the same time I saw my old landlord, Cuthbert Johnson, Esq., when he very kindly asked me how I was doing in worldly matters, and said if I saw anything worth taking, he would assist me by the aid of his purse. I was not aware I had so many kind friends, but I did not accept either of those generous offers, but I still remember them as being worthy of my best and sincerest thanks for their disinterested kindness.

I went to London in expectation that I might get a business, but I failed. But while there I was introduced to persons of high stations in life, who tried to teach me politeness, but I could not allow my brain-box to be filled with false pretence, so I came home no better for their attempts to educate me. During my stay, Her Gracious Majesty was crowned Queen of England; in the streets, and parks, there was such a concourse of people, I never again expect to see so many, until that day, when kings, queens, dukes, lords, judges, magistrates, lawyers, parsons, rich, and poor, shall stand on a level before a just judge, to receive the reward due to them,—you and I will be there.

After my return from London, Mr. Gale, wine merchant, of Speenhamland, sent for me, he stated that he wished to see my wife, as he wished to ascertain whether she was competent to conduct a business. An agreement was arranged, and my wife entered upon the management of a publichouse, with the distinct understanding that she should not serve anything on Sunday. By that rule I thought I could keep a clear conscience, but very soon I found out what a sad mistake I had committed, as we had to contend with much wickedness. My reader, if you have ever felt anything of the love of God, beware, never take a publichouse, not even with the excuse that you will not sell on Sunday; if you do so you will be wofully deceived. Mr. Gale was a coach proprietor, a brewer, also an evil-spirit merchant, and he wished me to be his servant, and help his men, and I complied with his request to my sorrow, for I had a large number of horses to look after, get hay, and corn ready, and take it every week, some-times to Devizes, and other times to different parts of the country. I had pigs to feed, clean, a large garden to cultivate, and water the streets of Speenhamland. My work was never kept under, although I was at it almost night and day, but worst of all my fellow workmen were false, and disagreeable to me, they were jealous, and told me I must not suggest any improvements to the master. Oh, what muffs masters put dependence in!



One morning, in May, I was in deep distress in mind, it seemed as though my grief would soon sink me into hell. I tried to pray but could not, I had lost what I once enjoyed peace with God. On the day above named while in this miserable state, I was cutting nettles round a hedge, and by some means chopped the middle joint on the knuckle of my left hand, I immediately felt a tingling sensation up my arm and although it was such a slight cut, I was compelled to carry my hand in a sling nearly four months, and although this was upwards of 40 years ago, I have but little strength in my hand and arm.

Now for the trial—a cripple, how must I get a living for my wife and children. Well, that which for years I had been persuaded to do, kept rushing into my mind, viz: to prepare my original drops for the rheumatic gout, which Dr. Alderman cured me with some years before, he also gave me prescriptions for the cure of other complaints, but as I did not understand the rules of selling patent medicines, I felt a disinclination to bring them before the public; but having cured a few private persons who presented me with a few testimonials, these I took to Mr. Hall, printer, who advised me to begin at once. I got papers printed, and on the first day of September, 1840, I went to the stamp office and paid for a license to prepare and sell medicines for one year, also 1½d. and 3d. for stamps, according to the price of the medicines; all this was strange work, as I did not know how to seal and stamp the bottles, but I persevered and overcome the puzzles. When I first started I did not think of having agents to sell for me, but was very quickly obliged to supply druggists many miles round. I must here relate the first eight days. I travelled in quite a strange part, in villages, and towns, I took some pounds. I have often wondered at the confidence the people had in me, every week I appointed new agents, then the wholesale houses in London wrote wishing to be supplied. When I began I possessed £25, which was very soon spent. I was a total stranger to the drug trade, also to the price of printing, in consequence of which I was frequently charged three times more than a just price. I wished to act uprightly with all I dealt with, and expected the same from others, but alas, to my great loss I had to pay a very high price for my confidence in man.

When I first heard of teetotalism I said it was well for men who did no work, for drunkards, and counter jumpers, but as for me I never would be an abstainer as I was not a drunkard, neither was I fond of strong drink of any kind. I was told when at Marlborough there was a Frenchman, named Lloyd,



going to lecture on teetotalism, in the Wesleyan Schoolroom. Accordingly I went and saw him analyse some so-called sherry wine, which quite convinced me that such trash was not fit for man or beast to drink. I there and then made up my mind that I would have no more strong liquor of any kind for a long time. This was on November 13th, 1840. When I returned to my lodgings, the landlord endeavoured to make out that if I carried my resolution into practice, and travel the number of miles that I did daily, I should very soon be dead. He, and others advanced many foolish arguments, in favour of strong drink, but I was determined to push through all difficulties, and practise four rules, namely:—*work hard, live on plain food, pray earnestly, and drink unadulterated water*; and nearly 40 years experience in the the above practice convinced me and tens of thousands that are working much harder than you, that all kinds of labour can be done better without the aid of strong drink than with it. In the country where the iron is melted the men that do it only wear thin drawers and shirt, as it is the hardest and hottest labour that any men work at. Well since they left of beer they are drinking oatmeal, stirred in cold water. They sweat much less, and do more work with much less fatigue. The same results has been done in the harvest fields and answered well.

On the eighth day after I became a teetotaller, I left Uphaven at seven o'clock, and walked to Devizes. The rain came down, and the wind blew tremendously, the whole nine miles, and it is a very bleak road, and to make the matter worse, my umbrella came to pieces, so that when I got to Devizes the water was streaming out of both coat sleeves, and the knees of my breeches. A woman seeing what a sad plight I was in, said, get a good hot glass of brandy and water; but I was determined to test the teetotal method of travelling. I was very hungry, not having more than two ounces of food that day, my clothes stuck to me like bird lime, and I was all of a tremble. At last I asked a lady to allow me to go to bed while her servant dried my wet clothes, to which she consented. I got up at four o'clock, had tea and a chop, and for a wonder to brandy soblers I did not catch the slightest cold. From that test I have been thoroughly convinced there is no good in strong drinks. If I had taken it in the wet state I was then in, inflammation would have been the result, and most probably death; many that knew me when I travelled in the nine counties, reading this book, will say, we and our children have often spoken of your never to be forgotten sayings in private and public congregations. Much of the seed has taken deep root.