

The Friend of Temperance

A Family Newspaper--The Official Organ of the Order of "The Friends of Temperance."

VOL. VIII.

RALEIGH, N. C., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1874.

NO. 31.

Friend of Temperance.

PUBLISHED BY
R. H. WHITAKER,
RALEIGH, N. C.

TERMS:
Five copies per year \$3.00
Six months \$1.75
Three months \$1.00
CUBS:
One copy per year \$1.00
Six months \$0.60
Three months \$0.35

Selected Story.

A Thanksgiving Story.

BY FRANCIS HENSHAW HADEN.

It was a stormy November day. A beautiful girl stood at the window of a very humble looking house, gazing up and down the narrow, dreary street.

"Oh, dear! Surely it is time he should be coming." Notwithstanding the wind, and the rain, with these words she opened the window and looked out, up and down the street.

"Here he comes! Oh, now if he has not letters for me I think it will make me ill." Her little hands were pressed over her heart, and with a deep-drawn breath she turned her gaze again up the street to watch the progress of the carrier, as he came along, buffeted by the wind and driving rain, hurrying along, stopping now and then with a long peal at the bell across the street, then over he darted to the house next her, where, after a thundering knock, he stood impatiently stamping. They were so long coming to the door. How could she bear the suspense? Ah, they come at last. With something like a growl the carrier runs down the steps--yes, and passes the door. She cannot believe it. There must be one. She is about to call after him, when, yes--thank heaven! he turns, looks at a letter; he holds it up to meet the beautiful, eager face, and inquires quickly:

"Miss Eva Trevor?"

"Yes, yes! Give it me. Thanks, she answered, slipping her treasure to her heart, and closing the window to return, shaking with the cold to the fire.

"You'll fetch your dear, child--don't call it an old negro woman from the next room.

Directly after she came in, she brightened up the fire, and then stood waiting while Eva read her letter. She knew well enough she would hear the news too.

Presently Eva said:

"Oh, mamma, I am so--so happy! Here, listen--" And she read to the faithful servant the contents of her letter.

"Now, you know, I am to go to the young lady, one hour, three times a week, and then her mother (Mrs. Johnson) will be liberally, I know. Then, through her, I may find other pupils."

"Yes, how glad too of you is; but do Lord knows I never expected to see this day when you had to teach the plucky for a libin."

A tall, dignified, and very handsome man, apparently of about forty years, entered the room, followed by a boy bringing a basket.

Here, Peggy put away these articles, he said.

And after the boy was sent off, he went into the next room, and in a low voice said:

"Take care of these things my good Peggy. I mean, make them last as long as you can. We have no economy a little now, you know."

lady said. And Eva thought her yet troubled as she spoke.

"I am very like my mother and her family so many tell me, and as I can see myself from a picture I have of my dear mother."

"And her name--what was it dear?"

"Evelyn Lindon. Was it her you were speaking of? Perhaps you know her?" Eva asked.

"The likeness was not to her, my dear. Ah, excuse me a moment. I must find my little, file and bring her to you, the lady said, hurrying out. She did not return with her daughter, who came in after a few minutes and said:

"Mamma will see you before you leave. She is engaged now."

After the lesson was over and Eva was about going, Mrs. Johnson, came in. She was looking very pale, and Eva noticed it, said:

"I fear you are not well. You should not have come down again to see me."

"I am well, my dear. I wanted to see you again. Your face is like a picture, bringing back to memory days and scenes that have passed and were so dear. I feel as if I could not let you go," the lovely lady answered.

"But I shall come again soon."

"Yes, and often. Come as my dear little friend, as well as Lily's teacher."

"I shall be so glad!" Eva answered, as she pressed her lips to the beautiful ones offered her in parting.

"Strange!" murmured the lady, as she turned away. "And now my heart is throbbing so wildly! Why could I not have asked the dear child the question, the answer to which would have brought me peace? Or--or--nay, I will not think of that. I will hope on."

Eva sat on a stool at her uncle's feet her sunny head resting on his knee.

"Uncle, next Thursday will be Thanksgiving, and we will have a treat of some kind, will we not? A ride, or a walk, or a nice dinner?" she said.

"Perhaps, I will try, my little sunbeam. I ought to be to happy and profoundly thankful that I have you my darling. What should I do without you?"

"What would we do without each other, uncle? But I don't mean for you to have anything to do with our Thanksgiving treat. Mamma had better manage it. Now, darling, uncle, won't you smile? Oh I can remember long ago, when I could not have been more than six years old, of an uncle who was always smiling. Why did you grow to sad? Tell me--do. I am old enough to understand now, and it will do you good to tell your sorrows to some one, the sweet girl urged.

"Eva, love, I know it is cruel in me to shadow your young life with my sorrow. I have striven against it, but cannot banish from my heart the cloud that gathered there just thirteen years ago. I will tell you, dear. That day, then, was Thanksgiving, and I was to have won the crowning blessing of a man's life. It was to have been my wedding-day. In those days, Eva, when I often smiled, as you say, I was quick and full of life--imperial, and a demon of fortune possessed me. I was jealous child; I could not bear to see another class the hand pledged to me, nor to have her smile even away from me. And this it was that drove my darling from me. I thought I was sure she loved me so well, that from me she would take the oft-repeated children, and never rebel. Ah I overrated my power; I stepped too far. Could she have loved me? I have often questioned. A few days before the one appointed for our union we were at a party. Laughingly she said: 'This will be my last chance to enjoy myself with perfect freedom. Now this night, Herbert, let me give to my friends; the future will give to you.'

Uncle Herbert ceased speaking. Eva pressed and kissed the hand she held; her silence expressed more sympathy than any words she could have spoken.

"Yes, mamma, I must have a nice Thanksgiving dinner, I tell you; and I'm either going to sell my watch, or I'll go and tell my kind friend all about it, and ask her to advance me some money. I don't know just which yet. I'll see. I'm going now to give a lesson."

"Don't sell de watch, honey. Keep one in de house, for de specificity of de family," Peggy said, following Eva to the door.

The lesson was over, and Eva waited, as the little Miss had urged, to see mamma.

Soon the lady came in.

"I've been out, making some preparation for Thanksgiving," she said, with a sigh. "This little one wants to be merry. To me the day has many sad memories."

"I'm sorry, so sorry, to hear you say so. I think folks ought to feel differently. But so it is with my dear uncle. He is always more sorrowful. Thanks, living--"

"What is it dear lady? You are ill?" cried Eva, springing to her friend's side, undying her bonnet, and drawing off her wrappings.

"No, dear, it's only some little heart-ache I've had for a long while, and I'm quite tired now. You were telling me of your uncle?"

"Yes, about his being so sad on Thanksgiving days. And if I only could, I wish so much to have something nice for him that day. You know we are poor now. We were rich once, only a little while ago. Would you--"

Hesitating, trembling, blushing, she stood.

"Yes, certainly, my dear. I intend to have paid you last time. It is customary to have the tuition fee in advance, but I forgot," the lady said, taking out her pocket-book, and placing in the little trembling hand a roll of new, crisp notes, stopping the happy girl's thanks by saying:

"I wanted to have you with us that day. Can you not come?"

"Oh, thank you! I cannot leave home. I wish I could go, but I have to stay. I would gladly, Eva answered.

"If you could tell me more of your uncle. Would you mind, dear? I used to know one who knew him well," the lady said, turning away her face to speak to her little girl, who still lingered.

"You can go now, Lily, if you choose. Run out and get the fresh air."

"Oh, perhaps, you know the girl he loved so dearly? Eva quickly asked.

"I knew one that was his promised wife many years ago; I knew her here and afterwards in Europe."

of having advertised for pupils in music, of the one answer she had received, and of the lady's kindness. And so she went, watching his face as he glowed and paled, catching the sigh and kissing away the tears that told how constant and true his heart was still.

"Her name--the lady's name, you said?" Uncle Herbert asked.

"Mrs. Johnson, uncle, dear."

"I know her not."

"But you will go, she has been kind. We must not be rude, you know?"

"Yes, darling, we will go to her. But I shall never had my heart set on that. Now, now I grieve for the gold that is gone. Oh, if the wealth was mine, and she had none, I would hunt the wide world over to find my love, he said.

And naughty, loving, tall-tale Eva carried these words to her friend, who, smiling through her tears, said:

"We will make him smile again tomorrow, dear. He will be happy, I think--I trust."

How busy the little love was that blessed day! Mamma fixed a nice lunch for them, and was well pleased that they were going to dine "wid dems equals," as she expressed it. Eva stole away the evening before to purchase a pair of beautiful kid gloves for her uncle.

"How handsome my darling uncle is!" she thought, as she arranged his lavender tie, and handed the gloves to correspond.

Very beautiful was Eva's friend that Thanksgiving-day, as she watched and waited for her expected guests. She heard their coming steps, and quickly glanced within the curtained window.

A moment more and she hears Eva's light tread ascending the stairs, and she gazes with an eager look in her beautiful eyes, through the lace folds of the curtain.

Herbert Lindon has entered the drawing-room. Eva will soon follow, the lady knows. She must not lose these precious moments. His back was toward her. With noiseless steps crossed the room, and stood close behind him.

"He turned with a cry of joy and extended arms.

"Louise! forgive me! Oh, my darling! I dare I hope?"

"You cannot doubt me, Herbert--Did I not promise you should find your love, if you wished?"

"My own, my beautiful, peerless love!" Herbert cried. Then putting her gently away, he groaned:

"Nay, I have no home to offer now, Louise."

Religious.

North Carolina Conference.

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Political.

Washington.

OPENING OF CONGRESS.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Washington, Dec. 7--Noon. The Senate and House of Representatives are quiet.

The usual committee was appointed to inform the President of the readiness of Congress to hear from him.

The President says in his message that our relations with all foreign powers are friendly and without disturbance, though there is an unsettled question with Venezuela, which has not yet paid the awards of the Joint Commission under the Convention of 1866. Congress, it will be recollected, strongly expressed its sense on this subject in February, 1873. The President, in his message of last December, said there was reason to believe the hesitancy of that Republic in recognizing the claim sprung, in part at least, from real difficulty in discharge of our government's debts.

Therefore, the expediency of further forbearance on the part of our government was believed to be worthy of the consideration of Congress. In addition to Venezuela, we have unsettled questions with Spain, growing out of the affair of the Virginias and other grievous transactions on the part of the Spanish authorities in Cuba. The magnitude of the offenses has not been reduced since the President's previous message, a year ago. As this unsettled condition of affairs in Cuba cannot long continue, it may become necessary for other nations, with whom the question is pending, to interfere to terminate the interference which has so long prevailed, the Spanish Government having unsuccessfully attempted to suppress it. In the meantime the commerce of all countries, and especially that of the United States, suffers, the flags of the United States and England having been insulted. The President in conversation although he does not state the fact in his message, says the United States purchase about eighty per cent of the Cuban exports and, therefore, the duties paid by American citizens contribute to this extent in helping Spain to continue the war against the insurgents. The President had hoped that by the meeting of Congress to-day, the present negotiations with Spain would have been ended; but in this he has been disappointed. He, therefore, in his message, says little or nothing about indemnity, pending the negotiations, but at some future time will present to the subject the special consideration of Congress.

The position of the President on the financial question is positively as follows, notwithstanding former speculations of those who spoke without authority. He desires and recommends the resumption of specie payments at the earliest practicable day, but he does not believe this can be reached by the first of January, 1875. He does not name any day, leaving Congress to devise means to secure this desired end, it being the duty of Congress to do so. The legal tender clause of the currency act should be repealed to take effect as to contracts made after the day to be fixed by law for its repeal. Power should be given to the Secretary of the Treasury to obtain gold, from and after the date fixed for the resumption of specie payments, by the issue of bonds. In addition to this the revenues of the government should be in excess of the expenditures to support the resumption; greater economy should be practiced in all departments of the government, and if necessary, the custom and internal revenue laws changed, in order to secure a larger amount of revenue with the return of specie payments; banking should be free, bill holders should

continue to be protected as at present under the banking laws. There should be no limitation to the volume of currency, as the community itself should determine what amount is required for business transactions instead of leaving the Executive, Secretary of the Treasury, and Congress to fix the limit. It would be the duty of Congress, however, to make regulations, regarding free banks of issue, and to state the conditions on which they can be organized and transact business, the legislation to be in accordance with the new order of things, or in other words, the resumption of specie payments. There should be no monopoly in fixing the amount of issue. The President will recommend that Congress should re-visit the question of the currency act, passed during the last session, unless it be to amend it so as to conform with a plan for the resumption of specie payments. The President will make no recommendation on the subject of internal improvements by the general government, but will merely refer to the fact that Congress has already appointed a Committee on Transportation Routes to the Seaboard, which has already made its report, and will give further information on more recent investigations.

The President devotes much space to affairs in Arkansas; giving reasons why he declined to interfere in the recent difficulties in that State, and he adverts to the facts narrated in his special message to Congress February 1874, relative to Louisiana in which he said he had no specific recommendation to make on the subject, but if there were any practical way of removing these difficulties by legislation then he earnestly requested that the question might be taken up at that session of Congress. He was extremely anxious to avoid any pretense of undue interference in State affairs, and if Congress differed with him as to what ought to be done, he requested its immediate decision to that effect otherwise he should feel obliged, as far as he could by the exercise of legitimate authority to put an end to the unhappy controversy which disturbed the peace and prostrated the non-organic governments, which were recognized and upheld by the Courts of the State. It seemed advisable that he should state what course he should be bound to pursue in reference to the matter in the event that no action being taken in the subject by Congress at that time, but subject to any satisfactory arrangements that might be made by the parties to the controversy and which of all things was the most desirable. It would be his duty, so far as it might be necessary for him to act, to adhere to the government on behalf of the recognized government. The President again submits the question to Congress, and will continue to act as he has heretofore acted relative to affairs in Louisiana, unless otherwise controlled by Congress.

The President reiterates his confidence in the Indian peace policy. It adhered to he says it will produce additional benefits, results, and ultimately free the frontier of Indian depredations. He alludes to the civil service reform, saying it has been as eagerly adhered to as the opposition requested it permitted. Its results have been beneficial, having elevated the capacity and tone of appointments in the several departments of the government, but it would be impossible to continue the reform without the direct support of Congress, sanctioned by the people. The President alludes to the reports of the heads of the several departments, which accompany the message, and calls attention to their respective recommendations. He again recommends the passage of a law establishing a court for the adjudication of claims against the government, a bill for this purpose having been introduced by Judge Lawrence at the previous session of Congress. The President does not allude to Utah affairs, the subject being left open for future consideration. He calls attention to the fact that Utah is an unorganized territory, and that it is the duty of Congress to organize it under the condition of slaves according to contract, and also to amend whose character is such as to be memorialized, the communities in which they are located. He invites attention on this subject, saying he will express his pleasure, as well as to execute any law on the subject.

The President, in conversation, said he had three vacant district Judgeships to fill, namely, in Alabama, Arkansas and Louisiana. It was probable he might be successful in selecting a suitable appointee for Alabama from that State, but as to the other States might therefore be forced to appoint persons not now resident in them. As

to Arkansas, these best fitted for the place were either in favor of the General government or desired its total overthrow. An officer of the army or navy, he said, would be appointed to look after the disposal of the King of the Hawaiian Islands and suite during their sojourn in Washington. They will be located at a hotel the government paying the expenses. The President will entertain the King at a state dinner in addition to courtesies to be extended to him by the Secretary of State. This will be the first visit of a King to Washington.

Miscellaneous.

Bed-time.

"Wasn't all bed-time, my dear, attend to you!"

"We heard the steam whistle when an aching heart. The child to whom it was addressed turned away with a defiant, sullen expression, to spend the day over the punishment in prospect, merited, no doubt, but who thought cruelly deferred. The whipping was mentally endured throughout the long, sunny day, when the big-eyed boy took only a listless share in the sports of his companions, and brooded over his fault and the coming reprobation. Bed-time came, and the father thought of the misdeed and inflicted the whipping, never weighing as part of the punishment, the long day of agonizing suspense, the hours of sleepless misery."

"And we, looking on sadly, thought that bed-time should be the happiest hour of the day. Let it be stated that we are altogether in favor of punishment for faults, but we do believe in even-handed justice where the children are concerned. Injustice will come with advancing years. The world will note our often hard measure for small offenses, but spare the child! If a whipping is earned, give it promptly, with a full understanding of the reason for its infliction; and, oh, by all parental love, let the rod be the last resort; try all milder punishment first."

Above all, take your time and let the evening prayer to said in loving tones to a Saviour who calls little children to himself. Let the father's caress, the mother's kiss, be the last link between the day's pain or pleasure and the night's sleep. Send the children to bed happy. There is no sorrow, punishment, discipline, let them meet it on the day in which they meet it, or to that in which they meet it, against the happiness that is a father's right. When night comes let only tender thought, loving care, whisper of blessing, prayer, and express hope over the path where children's feet rest."

EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

The report of the United States Commission of Education estimates the school population of the United States at seven million and eleven Territories at two between the ages of six and ten years, at about 10,228,000. It presents a comparative statement showing that the annual expenditure for the education of the public schools of the United States is \$21,741,000, or about one cent for each child of school population. It also shows that the same per cent of the population between six and sixteen years of age is attending school, as compared with the same per cent of the population in other countries.

North Carolina shows the smallest expenditure, at \$1,400,000, or about one cent for each child of school population. It also shows that the number of institutions in all classes of educational institutions in the United States in 1870 was 224,042, and the number of pupils was 7,209,938; while now, according to Commissioners Eaton's report, there are over one million in all classes of institutions, and the number of pupils is estimated at 216,932 teachers and 8,721,000 pupils.

In conclusion, among other things, the Commission earnestly urges that in view of the appalling numbers of children growing up in ignorance and poverty of the impoverished condition of portions of the country in which slavery has been lately abolished, and in view of the special difficulties in the way of establishing and maintaining schools therein for universal education, and in consideration of the urgent need of immediate action in this regard, that a whole-hearted effort be made to provide for the education of the public lands shall be set aside for the benefit of the children of the Territories, and that the Secretary of the Interior be authorized to make such provisions as may be deemed it proper.