

“Sweet Angle of Edinburgh”

One of the most marvelous instances of the transforming power of divine Grace is that related by John B. Gough, of a woman whom he encountered in Edinburg, Scotland, where he had gone to labor in the interests of temperance.

He attended a meeting in the wickedest part of that city. He had never before witnessed such degradation, misery and filth, as were visible among the outcasts there assembled. Among the audience was one of the most desperate characters known to the city authorities. She had served fifty-four terms in prison. Not one of the police force would attempt to arrest her without help, and when she was excited by rum or passion, the thieves and outlaws among whom she lived would flee from her.

Some one on the platform pointed her out to J.B. Gough, and was telling him her character, when she noticed that they were looking at her. She immediately arose, went on to the platform, and in a defiant manner asked Gough whether he would give the temperance pledge to such a one as she. His companion greatly feared a scene of fighting and confusion and whispered to Gough not to notice her—that she would never keep a pledge to abstain from liquor. She demanded in a threatening way, Is he ready to give me the pledge? He replied, yes; but there is a man here that says you will not keep it. Terribly excited at this, she screamed at the top of her voice, and demanded to know who and where he was that had so said. Her excitement was calmed by Gough who again said he would give here the pledge, and that he would take the word of any woman in Edinburg. Touched by his confidence, she stood quiet and thoughtful for a minute, and yielding to the visitation of Divine love to her soul, afresh extended at that critical moment, she promised to give up her drinking habits.

Four years after, J.B. Gough held another meeting at Edinburg. Two women sat in front of the platform, listening attentively. The tears and emotion of one of them touched his heart deeply. When the meeting closed one of the women came up to the platform and asked him if he knew the woman that sat sobbing in front of him. He said no. “Well,” she said, *“that is my mother. In addition, oh how proud I am of her. But the fire and rum is all taken out of her now, wherein the neighbors were all afraid of her when she drank. Now, when they have trouble or sickness, the worst of them will say, bring me the good angel, for she has got the comfort that serves all.”* There she sat clothed, and in her right mind. She that was as ferocious as a tiger sits with streams of joyful tears, wetting her cheeks, so subdued and humble that she shrinks from making herself known even to the man that dare trust her word when no living creature would believe her. Gough asked her how she got along. *“Oh sir, the struggle was hard, hard, hard, very hard. Often I have dreamed that I had gone back to drink, and that I was fighting with the neighbors with a worse nature than ever before. The dreams have been so real to me that I have often awakened out of sleep*

and rolled out of bed onto my knees, crying at the top of my voice for God to save me, and I would never drink or fight again.”

“The voice of my daughter has often called me to consciousness, in times of such despair. She would cry, ‘Mother, mother—you are safe; it is only a dream you had.’”

“As I passed from that anguish, at the thought of falling, I had some idea of the misery of a lost soul, and when I threw myself on the floor of my little quiet, clean room, with my saved daughter by my side, Oh how the joy of a heaven on earth flooded through my soul. Praise God I am not only saved from drink, but saved from sinning against such a merciful and loving God as I have found in Jesus.

J.B. Gough made inquiry from others how she got along and spent her time. He found that she hired a little shop and sold eatables, such as the poor around her used, at a lower price than they could buy at other places. Her daughter and she made common sacks. They lived on thirty cents a day, and were able to help scores of poor families. As soon as the drink got out of her own system, she began to labor with others likeherself. Her first effort was with a woman that was counted the next hardest case in Edinburgh. She never left her until she was reclaimed. When she went after such ones, she was never known to fail. She believed when she felt for them, God felt for them, and had laid the burden on her for them. There was no sacrifice too great for her to make, in view of rescuing another immortal soul. She generally brought them to her house, and kept them there, until she broke up their hardened hearts with her love. She would watch every move that they would make. She would wait on them, wash their feet, comb their hair, pat their cheeks, and kiss them as but few others can. She knew her work, and had the assurance that she was successfully wooing them for Christ. She was never idle in her new Master’s work. Many were lifted up from the lowest depths of sin through her instrumentality.

She lived to the honor of her Redeemer, Jesus Christ, over twenty-seven years. She died in great joy, praising God for his power to save to the utter most all that come to Him through Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man.

The mayor of Edinburgh, with the city officers, and ministers of the gospel, and Christians of every denomination, together with thousands of the citizens, mourned with a heartfelt grief as her remains were lowered into the grave.—*Incidents and Reflections*, pp. 34-37.