

George C. Haddock

George C. Haddock inherited his intense hatred of the liquor traffic from his parents who had been appalled by the prevalence of drunkenness in the Mohawk Valley. From the time he entered the ministry until his death he was one of the stoutest and most indefatigable proponents of the temperance cause. He did this work not for himself, his family, or his home, "but for a principle, a cause, a reform". His was no empty faith, for, with a heroism that knew no bounds, he sealed with his own blood the words of his lips. His tragic death was the crowning glory of a life work.

Born at Watertown, New York, on January 23, 1832, George Haddock was the youngest son in a family of six. His father, Samuel Haddock, was a blacksmith with an insatiable desire for learning. Ministers were constantly entertained at the Haddock home and the rugged smith always paid close attention to everything that was said. Books were his constant delight. He gradually acquired a wealth of knowledge and was known throughout the region as "the learned blacksmith". George's mother, Sabrina Barnes, a daughter of "Preacher Barnes" of Little Falls, New York, sprang from a

family that had furnished preachers to the Methodist Church for more than a hundred years.

As a lad, young George proved to be a very bright student. Educated at Black River Institute at Watertown, he was allowed to teach a class in Latin and Greek at the age of twelve as a reward for having had the best lesson during part of a term. Soon afterward he earned the title of the "boy orator" but unfortunately his academic career was suddenly terminated and he never secured a college degree. Throughout his life, however, he exhibited the studious habits of his youth.

Although his mother had dedicated him to the Methodist ministry, George as a young man manifested no liking for that profession. Instead, he entered the printing office of his brother at Watertown when he was seventeen. During the next ten years he was an itinerant printer, drifting from place to place as employment was offered. Temptations to drink were daily offered him but, although his associates were rough, he steadfastly resisted. On one occasion, in Milwaukee, he was "invited to drink a glass of beer, but refused; at which 'insult' he was set upon by a small mob and showered with stones". Doubtless such incidents helped to shape his future life.

On February 4, 1852, George Haddock mar-

ried Cornelia B. Herrick, a woman who proved to be a constant source of inspiration to him. The first seven years of their married life were lean, for the young printer proved to be "a wanderer", aimlessly striving to find himself. Early in 1859 he was firmly converted to Methodism and was licensed to "exhort" by the Ohio Conference. In the fall of that year he was given a regular appointment in the little town of Washington, Ohio, but resigned when some members of his congregation criticized his pulpit utterances as unsound. After several months of fruitless travel he returned once more to Milwaukee to engage in printing, though he continued to be active in church work.

In the fall of 1860 he joined the Wisconsin Conference on probation and two years later was received into "full connection" in that group. Reverend Haddock labored for twenty-two years in Wisconsin churches during which time he held some of the most important charges in the conference. He received thirteen appointments, five for one year, seven for two years, and one for three years. Oshkosh, Ripon, Appleton, Fond du Lac, Racine, Milwaukee, Bay View, and Waukesha are some of the more important cities in which he preached the gospel. Throughout his ministry his wife continually encouraged him and willingly shared his burdens. It is said "her steadfastness,

her courage, and her faith were of priceless value to her husband." Often depressed, he was subject to periods of gloom and discouragement, all the more distressing in contrast to his natural joviality.

The character of George C. Haddock was a combination of noble qualities. He endeavored at all times to be a "manly Christian". To him, life was a "growth of the mind as well as the heart, and of every power and attribute" that would contribute to complete self-realization. While he conceived of religion as embodying certain ethical standards of conduct, he did not think it imposed an obligation to be ascetic. He disagreed with his brethren who "thought it a sin to laugh or jest, or indulge in innocent pleasantries, or dress attractively, or to sing any but religious songs, or to have any kind of social gathering in a church, or to engage in any species of recreation or amusement. I have known many ministers who seemed to think there was a kind of merit in groaning and sighing, and who immediately checked themselves if they were betrayed into a laugh. The most of their people have thought, perhaps, that this was a sign of piety, whereas it may have been dyspepsia or rheumatism. Certainly it was not Christianity."

A deep sympathy for his fellow men was an-

other quality of this fiery Methodist minister. In his daily prayers he always remembered "the poor, the distressed, the weak and the afflicted". A hungry man was never turned from his door. On one occasion, when the conference was considering the sufferings and wants of a superannuated preacher, Reverend Haddock sprang up, exclaiming, "Brethren, I've got five dollars' worth of sympathy for this brother", and immediately deposited the money. A liberal donation resulted. His concern was often expressed for the drunkard and not infrequently he would help an intoxicated man home. It was the liquor traffic — not the victim — which called forth his sharpest denunciation.

His sermons were full of humanitarian solicitude. Apropos of economic conditions, he declared that "labor and capital are equally important, and they should share equally in the joint earnings of both. If the manufacturer grows immensely rich, while those of his workingmen who are sober, economical, and industrious, continue to be hopelessly poor, because their wages barely suffice to maintain them, a great robbery is perpetrated." In the same discourse he maintained that "a man has no moral right to defraud a fellow-man simply because he has the power to do so. If he hires a man, he should pay him all his work is

worth in view of all the circumstances. All below that is robbery, no matter what the law says."

Reverend Haddock had the faculty of adapting the teachings of Jesus to contemporary circumstances. He applied his high sense of morality to everyday problems. Alert to current events, he filled his sermons with information of practical affairs. "He handled great thoughts and aimed to preach on great themes. Into all his discourses he carried a vigor, zeal, and healthy spirituality that gave to his words intense heat, and to his thoughts a high elevation. An eloquence often fiery, as often tender and tearful, was therefore a prevailing trait of his pulpit work."

Courage was another quality that was continually manifesting itself in his character. Fear formed no part of his constitution. His self-reliance was based on conviction, but he was naturally quick tempered. Once an irate blacksmith threatened to give him a beating for his utterances on drunkards. "The gage of battle was accepted by the minister without hesitancy, and a rough-and-tumble fight ensued in which the blacksmith was badly worsted." This, according to a dispatch from Milwaukee, "chagrined the disciple of Tubal Cain so much that, attributing his adversary's powers to practice of the doctrine which he preached, he too became a total abstainer, and is

now one of the most irreconcilable prohibitionists in his district."

On another occasion he was waylaid at night by three emissaries of the liquor interests following a series of temperance lectures in the Methodist Church at Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. A terrific blow from behind stunned him momentarily, but despite the fact that he was unarmed he pitched into them fearlessly. After a desperate struggle, in which he was struck down several times with the heavy clubs of his assailants, he was overpowered. When one of the men brandished a gun, he called for help, whereupon the "cowardly villains" fled. Haddock pursued one of the flying miscreants determined to identify him, but the rascal took refuge in a saloon whose entrance was barred by its burly keeper. Panting from his exertion he cried out: "If you fellows who are there will come out and defend yourselves one by one, I will whip every man of you!" It is significant that the challenge was not accepted. When his assailants were brought to trial they were pronounced "Not Guilty" in spite of evidence sufficient beyond a "reasonable doubt" to convict them.

One day Haddock saw a member of his congregation staggering drunkenly homeward. The next Sunday the offending party appeared at the door

of the church and walked straight down the aisle toward his pew before the pulpit. Haddock felt that only by a severe shock could the man be effectively reformed. Accordingly, the irrepressible preacher stopped his sermon in the middle of a sentence and began narrating the incident of the drunken man, describing him so minutely that there could be no question who was meant. All eyes turned upon the accused but the minister never paused, "pouring out rebuke and condemnation, fierce, sustained, merciless, maddening. The victim sat spellbound with downcast eyes and haggard, agony-stricken face". The bitter indictment concluded, Haddock took up the sentence where he had left it and finished his sermon as though nothing had happened. The victim of this merciless attack swore vengeance, but nevertheless reformed and lived to revere the memory of his former pastor.

His method of inculcating right conduct is aptly illustrated in the life of his own children. He was not a "stickler for discipline, but endeavored to lead and inspire rather than coerce and awe. Hence he generally left his children free in many details to act according to their sense of right, which he constantly strove to cultivate." Meeting his son Frank, he remarked, without pausing, "Better finish that smoke, boy, instead of throw-

ing it away". Shortly afterward he "exhausted the entire subject of nicotine in a conversation on the use of tobacco". Once he told his son, "If anybody strikes you without cause, strike back. You'll have to take care of yourself in this world, and it's no one's duty to be imposed upon". Thus, he sought to teach self-reliance, and to base action upon personal judgment and a personal sense of right.

Haddock believed that the worthy Christian ought to be militant, not seeking easy peace with evil. Confident of the righteousness of his own conclusions, he tried to convince others. Thus, he engaged in sharp debates with the spiritualists whom he found had gained a foothold in Appleton. He was utterly lacking in mercy in such debates, believing that spiritualism was a "pernicious error" which he must "crush, mutilate, utterly destroy" if that were possible. On another occasion he challenged the pastor of the Universalist Church at Fond du Lac to a public discussion through the medium of the press. The arguments continued through nearly fifty columns and finally closed with an appeal to the Scripture. And all this time he was steadfastly opposing the liquor interests and preaching in behalf of temperance and prohibition. He viewed all questions in "a moral light" and would "tell it to the world, if

the world had need to hear it." Men everywhere always said of him, "You always know where to find George C. Haddock."

When he came to Iowa in 1882 he inquired, "What is going on here? I will preach about that". Nor was he long in finding out, for Iowa, like Wisconsin, was in the midst of a tumultuous liquor controversy. During that year the legislature and the people both voted for a constitutional amendment making the sale of liquor illegal, only to have the Iowa Supreme Court declare the amendment unconstitutional on a technicality. In the bitter campaign which ensued the liquor interests were again repulsed by the enactment of absolute prohibition, a statute that was further strengthened by the General Assembly in 1886.

Reverend Haddock entered into the temperance crusade at Burlington but some of his flock disagreed with him and he was transferred to Fort Dodge the following year. For two years he labored in Fort Dodge, never hesitating to strike a blow for the temperance cause. At the end of that time he was appointed to the Sioux City charge which proved to be his last.

Reverend Haddock did not immediately engage in the liquor fight at Sioux City. His wife was perfectly aware of his intense desire to align himself with the temperance forces, but she was also

aware of threats freely made that "if the saloons were closed, every church in the city would go up in flames." One night as they sat reading in the parsonage she looked up calmly from her Bible and said: "George, I've settled it. It is your duty. Go on." And he entered "the last narrow road left to him in life".

His decision to fight had been influenced in no small degree by the fact that women were signing petitions to force injunction suits against the bootleggers because the men were not willing to do it. "I do not like the idea of hiding behind petticoats", Haddock declared. "It is a disgrace to Sioux City that men cannot be found to sign these petitions." He therefore asked Attorney D. W. Woods, who was prosecuting the cases, to prepare twenty-five complaints for his signature with instructions that the first case brought up for hearing should be one of these. As he was about to sign the first petition Attorney Woods remarked: "Mr. Haddock, you are signing your death-warrant." To which the minister laconically replied, "I am aware of that." A brother pastor received the following note penned on July 19, 1886. "I have signed twenty-five complaints, and I believe I take my life in hand by so doing. *But somebody has to do so.* I believe we will win eventually, though the fight will be long and desperate."

Dark rumors and threats to "do up Haddock", to "kill him", and to "cut his throat" followed his entrance into the battle. One day a burly saloon keeper standing on the opposite side of the street with an axe in his hand shouted over to him: "You come over here, and I'll cut off that head of yours." Haddock promptly crossed the street and walked deliberately by the man but without an assault.

Once his mind was made up, Reverend Haddock entered into the temperance battle with heart and soul. Nothing could deter him. His speeches fairly burned with passion as he brought the weight of over twenty years' experience against the liquor interests of Sioux City. "No one contends", he thundered, "that the sale of alcoholic beverages is for the general good. All know that it is forbidden by law. Yet the law is openly violated in Sioux City every day of the year. And I say that this is not the good of the many. It is not the welfare of the majority, but the passion of the few. It is not the voice of the law, listened to and obeyed, but the wild clamor of the mob, with brains poisoned with drink, and hearts set on fire by the flames of hell."

A sharp reply was always ready for those who advocated the license system. For years he had argued that such a system was simply a "league

with hell and a covenant with the devil. It legalizes drunkard-making, places the business under the protection of law, and makes every citizen of the State a silent partner of the saloon-keeper in his soul-destroying work. For every man killed, for every boy ruined, for every family desolated, for every mind robbed of reason, for every criminal sent to prison, for every pauper sent to the county poor-house by liquor, the State is responsible. . . . I would as soon favor the licensing of murder, robbery, prostitution, gambling, or prize-fighting as to favor licensing liquor-selling, because all these evils follow in the train of strong drink, and to advocate license is indirectly to license them all. Alcohol murders men and makes murderers of men. Alcohol leads to robbery and all other crimes. I can favor no such atrocious monster."

Haddock firmly believed that prohibition had been successful in Maine, if the opinions of such men as James G. Blaine and many other noted citizens of that State counted for anything. The results of license laws in the other States, he asserted, was clearly demonstrated by the conditions within those States. "Some three thousand drunkard factories in the United States. Some eight millions of habitual liquor-drinkers who are gradually being transformed from men into beasts.

Some fifty thousand graves dug for drunkards every year. About one billion of dollars annually spent for poisonous beverages by thousands of drunkards whose homes are being robbed all over the country. Insane asylums, poor-houses, jails, and prisons crowded by the victims of alcohol. All this the direct, legitimate fruit of license. Why, in view of all these facts, do men clamor for license? Is it because they really expect that license will put any restraint upon the business, or lessen the evils that flow from it?"

Almost every day Reverend Haddock read of some "atrocious murder", of "gigantic robberies or defalcations by bank officials, and mobs and riots", resulting in the loss of life and destruction of property. "We seem to be in the midst of a carnival of crime", he declared. To combat these trends he believed right-thinking people should "support and encourage all enterprises and institutions that tend to develop the intellectual and moral strength of the people, such as churches, schools, colleges, Sunday-schools, and public libraries".

His terrific indictment of the saloon men and the license law gave little comfort to his Sioux City enemies. With biting sarcasm he declared: "Note what good men liquor-sellers are required to be. The liquor-seller must be a good moral man; he

must give bonds that he will behave himself and keep a good place for the manufacture of drunkards, in a nice, pleasant, respectable manner; all mischief must be done according to law; the devil must be slicked up and made to appear very gentlemanly and agreeable, so that if people will keep his company they may not be offended by the sight of his horns and hoofs and the smell of sulphur; if people will take the downward track, let them go as easily as possible in a palace-car."

Nor was the fiery crusader alone in his opinion, for on January 14, 1886, Governor William Larabee branded the saloon as "the educational institution which takes no vacation or recess and where the lowest and most pernicious political doctrines are taught. Its thousands of graduates may be found in all positions of wretchedness and disgrace, and are the most successful candidates for our poorhouses and penitentiaries. It is the bank where money, time, strength, manliness, self-control and happiness are deposited to be lost, where drafts are drawn on the widows and orphans, and where dividends are paid only to his Satanic Majesty. Let it perish."

But his Master had decreed that George Haddock must first perish before the saloon would pass away in Sioux City. Had he not said to his wife, "When God's arm is removed, my work will

be done"? It was this sublime faith which formed the bulwark of that courage at which men marvelled.

On the night of August 3rd, he drove with Reverend C. C. Turner to a neighboring village to secure evidence against the liquor interests. On his return he had insisted upon taking Reverend Turner home first before putting up the horse at the livery stable. Observing a group of men on the street, he reëntered the stable and inquired if any one had asked for him. He was told that he had been wanted. Unarmed and unafraid, he went out into the street saying, "Well, I can take care of myself and them, too." The next moment a pistol shot rang out. Reverend Haddock was found dying in the gutter. He spoke no word, for before any one could reach him his lips were sealed by death.

Though ten men were eventually apprehended, the ringleader escaped conviction. Only a friendless henchman was sent to the penitentiary for being implicated in the "most dastardly and indefensible crime" ever committed in Sioux City.

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