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MADELINE,

OR

A DAUGHTER'S LOVE,

AND OTHER TALES.

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A DAUGHTER'S LOVE

"PLEASE, sir, give me a cent to buy my mother some bread," said a little girl, not over seven years of age, looking wistfully up into the face of a man who stood talking with a friend in the street.

The request of the child was, at first, unheeded. But a repetition of her appeal, made in an earnest, but peculiarly sweet, childish voice, caused him to look down at the supplicant. The moment he saw her countenance, he took from his pocket, a small silver coin, and placed it in her hand. Her fingers closed quickly upon it—"Thank you, sir!" she said, in the same sweet voice, and then turning away, ran off at full speed.

"Do you treat every little urchin who comes to you with a falsehood on her tongue, after that fashion?" asked the friend. "If you do, I have no doubt of your sixpences having a free circulation."

"O no," was replied. "I don't treat all just that way. But I heard something about this child, yesterday, that has given me an interest in her."

"Then you believe her story about wanting a cent to buy her mother a loaf of bread."

"No—yes."

"A negative and an affirmative in the same breath. How is that?"

"The child did not tell, strictly, the truth; and yet, she is innocent of a direct falsehood. She made her petition as she heard others make theirs. To her it was only a form of words, not a deliberately chosen untruth. In fact, she did not know what else to say."

"Then she has not a mother in want of bread?"

"No—but, I am told that she begs for a sick sister."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. And the history of that poor sister is a deeply touching one."

"You know it, then."

"It was related to me by a friend, who says that her family once moved in the first circle in our city.

"Indeed! and now reduced so low?"

* * * * *

About ten years ago, there lived in the city of P——, a merchant named Cameron, engaged in the East India trade. In the prosecution of this trade he had become rich. He had several children—both sons and daughters. The oldest, a daughter, named Madeline, was, at the time mentioned, not over fourteen years of age. She was mild and gentle in disposition, graceful in person, and had a face of more than ordinary beauty. Her health had been delicate from a child, and this circumstance had endeared her much to her parents. Her father loved her from this cause, more deeply than he loved any of the rest, who were more robust, and, therefore, drew less upon

the tenderer sympathies of the heart. They lived in a large and beautiful house on C—— street, which had a fine garden attached, where the choicest flowers gave perfume to the summer airs. All around them were clustered the comforts and elegancies of life. No want that money could procure was known—no wish remained ungratified. Too often it is the case that men who grow rich have moral defects that destroy the happiness of their families. Eager in the pursuit of wealth, money becomes the God they worship, and at the shrine of this Moloch they sacrifice all the gentle, sweet, tender charities of the heart. But Mr. Cameron was not such a man. He had an active, orderly mind, that was discriminating and intelligent. He had also, natural goodness of heart—the ground-work of many virtues. When business required his attention, he gave up his mind earnestly to its claims; but when the thought and care of the day ought naturally to cease, they did cease with him, and left him free to enjoy the pleasant sphere of home.

Such a man blesses his household. As he ought to have been, Mr. Cameron was loved tenderly by his wife and children, who looked up to him with the confidence that innocence reposes in wisdom.

"You go to Mr. Russell's to-night, I suppose," Mrs. Cameron said to her husband, one day, while they sat at the table after dinner.

"O yes. I must make one of the pleasant company that is to assemble there. But I wish the Russells had made a party of it at once, and invited our wives also. I never more than half enjoy myself, unless you are with me. But, as

the entertainment is for the sake of Mr. S——, I suppose it is all right. I will try and think so, at any rate."

"Certainly you must. Don't let a thought of my absence take from your sum of enioyment a single unit."

"I cannot promise all that. But no doubt, I shall have a pleasant time enough. Russell is a fine fellow to entertain company; and, as Mr. S—— is a man of some distinction, he will, I know, do his best."

A select number of wealthy, intelligent, and well educated men assembled on that evening, at the house of the person just named. Mr. Cameron made one of the number. Several hours were passed in animated conversation, and a splendid supper was served. Everything to gratify the appetite was prepared. Wines of every approved kind sparkled on the table, with stronger liquors in abundance.

We Americans are fond of the good things of life, and never hold back when the palate is tempted. If we desire to entertain a visiter, be he in the business, literary, or political world, we spread before him, as a matter of course, the choicest viands we can obtain, and invite our friends to eat with him. The feast of reason and he flow of soul, generally end in a feast of oysters and a flow of wine.

On the occasion referred to, the merchant forgot his schemes of profit, the man of science his darling theories, the lawyer his brief, and the physician his patient. All became absorbed in one pleasant idea,—all engaged in the same ear-

nest pursuit—that of appropriating the rich and tempting provisions so abundantly spread out before them. After they had eaten until nearly surfeited, and drank quite liberally, the table was cleared, except of the wine; and cigars introduced. Mr. Cameron was a general favourite, and from this cause, he was led on to drink very freely—almost every one present, at some time during the evening, asking him to take a glass of wine. Before he dreamed of danger, he had drank so much that his mind was confused. This was perceived by others, and felt by himself, though others saw the effect more clearly than he felt it. He was conscious that his mind did not act with its accustomed clearness; but he was satisfied that no one present had the least suspicion of the truth.

"Permit me to take a glass of wine with you, Mr. Cameron," still continued to reach his ear, and the invitation was always accepted, and his glass drained.

The result was, that by the time the company separated, that excellent man was so much intoxicated that he had to be supported home by a couple of friends, who were not in a much better condition than himself. Seating him upon the door-step, they rung the bell violently, and then hurried away. It was between one and two o'clock. Mrs. Cameron was the only one not in bed. She had been sitting up, awaiting the return of her husband. Startled by the loud sound of the bell, she opened the window and looked down. It was clear moonlight, and she could distinctly perceive that the man sitting on the marble steps that led up to the hall door was her husband. The sight

thrilled her with a sudden alarm. What could it mean?

Hurriedly descending, she opened the door, a suspicion of the real truth flashing over her mind at the moment she did so, and causing her heart to suspend, momentarily, its pulsations.

"Mr. Cameron!" she said, in a husky voice, stooping down, and placing her hand upon his shoulder.

A half-intelligent murmur, or rather grunt, for the sound cannot be designated by any more refined expression, was the only response made by the stupified husband.

"Come—come into the house, Mr. Cameron," the wife said, taking hold of his arm, and endeavouring to assist him to get upon his feet. But he did not meet this effort by a corresponding attempt to rise. He did not, in fact, seem to perceive it.

"Dreadful!" was the low ejaculation of Mrs. Cameron, as a quick shudder thrilled through her frame.

With more than mere human strength, she then, stooping over him, and drawing her hands under his arms, lifted him up so that he could stand upon his feet. Supporting him in this way, she succeeded in getting him into the house, and up stairs to their chamber, when he sank down, perfectly unconscious, upon a bed. As he did so, Mrs. Cameron dropped into a chair, weak as an infant. Full five minutes passed before she moved. The loud snoring of her stupified husband called back thought, feeling, and activity. She got up, slowly, and with something mechanical in her

movement,—stood for some minutes gazing upon the senseless form of the one she most loved and honoured in the world, and then covering her face with her hands, wept and sobbed violently for a long time. Nature, at length exhausted, sunk into a deep calm. Tears ceased to flow; her sobs came less and less frequently, like the brief sighs of a departing storm.

Quietly, now, but with a sad, yea, solemn face, the wife commenced removing her husband's garments, he remaining perfectly unconscious. After she had placed him beneath the bed clothes, she sat down beside him, in a large chair, and burying her face in her hands, spent two hours in deep abstraction of mind—two hours, the most painful ever spent by her in her whole life. After this, her thoughts became indistinct—confused, and ever-changing images floated before her mind—external objects were no longer perceived, her troubled spirit was at rest.

It was daylight when Mrs. Cameron awoke. She started up quickly, the occurrences of the last night seeming to her like a dream. But the garments of her husband thrown without order upon the floor; his loud, heavy snoring; her own condition—attested too painfully the sad, heart-sickening truth. He, whom she loved so devotedly; he, the honoured father of her children; he, of whom all men spoke with respect or esteem, had suffered his name to be tarnished. Among gentlemen, he had descended to the level of the drunkard, and had been brought home by servants, or watchmen, for aught she knew, and left in disgrace, at his own door. A high-minded and sen-

sitive woman, such thoughts made her shudder from head to foot.

It was past noon before Mr. Cameron awoke; his head aching and confused, and his thoughts indistinct. No one was in the room with him. It took him nearly ten minutes to collect his ideas sufficiently to have anything like a clear understanding of his condition. When the fact did become apparent, deep shame took hold of him. Mrs. Cameron came in. Gloomily he turned his face from her, and scarcely replied to her tenderly-asked questions. A cup of coffee was brought to him. He drank it, and then getting up, he dressed himself in silence, and leaving the house, went to his store.

This occurrence deeply mortified him. It was weeks before he was, even at home, the same cheerful man he was before.

Time passed on. The suddenly-awakened fears of Mrs. Cameron made her more observant of her husband, and this observation revealed the startling fact, that he was gradually increasing the quantity of wine usually taken at dinner time; and he rarely went to bed without a bottle, a thing of rare occurrence a few years before.

We will not trace Mr. Cameron's gradual descension from sobriety.

That would give but little additional force to the lessons we wish to convey. It is sufficient that he became enslaved to a fatal appetite for drink, and slowly but surely passed downward.

At the end of five years, to the astonishment of every one, he failed in business; and when his assets were examined, they were found insufficient

to meet all of his heavy liabilities. A few months subsequent to this event, a malignant fever, that prevailed very generally, released Mrs. Cameron from a life of suffering, and took with her three of her children, leaving only Madeline and their youngest child, a little girl between two and three years of age.

Madeline's health did not improve as she grew older. She was now nineteen years of age, but was too much of an invalid to go out, except in very fine weather, and then she could ride only for a short distance. The loss of her father's property, and the departure with it, of the many luxuries and comforts they had enjoyed, took from her even this means of healthful recreation. Their family carriage went with the rest of Mr. Cameron's effects.

The sudden death of her mother, with two brothers and a sister, broke down the spirit of Madeline. The deep infatuation of her father, which even all the jealous care of Mrs. Cameron could not conceal, had already saddened her young heart, and caused her to think of him with pain, mortification and anxiety. Her health, while it had not improved for two or three years, did not visibly decline. But very soon after her mother's death, Madeline began to sink. Her affliction was that fatal and incurable one, consumption, and its progress had been silent, but certain; ever since a severe cold in childhood, had quickened into life the latent seeds of this disease, sown hereditarily in her constitution.

When partially sober, Mr. Cameron perceived the condition of his child, whom he loved only

less than himself, and it half maddened him, for he saw that she was suffering ten-fold on account of his infatuation, that had reduced her to a condition in which she had but few external comforts.

After Mr. Cameron's failure, he got a situation as clerk in a mercantile house, at a salary of seven hundred dollars a year. This would have secured to his family, now so much reduced by death, at least the necessaries, and many of the comforts of life, if he could have given up his selfish, sensual indulgence. But he had not strength enough to do this. He had pushed out thoughtlessly, into a strong, rushing current, that was swiftly bearing him on to destruction.

He did not retain his situation more than seven or eight months. By that time he neglected his business so much, and came to the store in a state of intoxication so often, that he was discharged. At the time this took place, he had not over ten dollars ahead. He was living in a small house, at the northern extremity of the city, at a rent of one hundred and thirty dollars a year; and kept a single servant, who was a doer of all work. Madeline rarely left her room, except at meal times, and then she always forced herself to be present at the table on her father's account. Alas! he was most of his time in such a condition as to be utterly unable to reciprocate the pure love she bore him.

On receiving, unexpectedly, his discharge, Mr. Cameron returned home, a soberer man than he had been for a long time. A scanty provision for his family, had satisfied the demands of natural

affections; but now the means of doing even this were cut off. Madeline had come down from her room, and was sitting in their little parlour when her father came in. She saw that he looked disturbed; and she also saw that he was not so much under the influence of drink as usual.

The sight of his pale, suffering child, and the instant reflection that he was cut off from the means of affording her even the few comforts she now had, wrung his heart. He could not bear to speak to her—to look at her sweet, patient face, —he feared to hear the sound of her voice.

"Father," she said, as he glanced towards her, on entering.

Turning away quickly, Mr. Cameron left the house. He could not, even while but half-sobered, breathe the same air with his wronged child. It seemed as if it would suffocate him. Madeline called after him, but the sound of her voice only made him the more anxious to escape from her presence. But where could he go? Alas! when the poor inebriate seeks to flee from the rebuking presence of those he has wronged most grievously, and at the same time from himself, he sees no place of refuge but one,—and there his refuge is oblivion; oblivion found in the cup that steals away both thought and memory.

Mr. Cameron went from his own house to a tavern near by, and there drank until he was insensible. When he went in, there was a ten dollar bill in his pocket-book. He was thrust out of the tavern at twelve o'clock that night, while yet too much intoxicated to stand alone. There was nothing in his pocket-book on the next morning,

when he found himself sober and an inmate of the watch-house. Before the tavern-keeper turned him out into the street, he rifled the drunken man's pockets. There was no evidence of this fact. Cameron could not tell whether his money had been taken from him in the tavern, or while he lay in the street. He only knew that it was gone.

Half-maddened by the discovery that his little all was gone, the poor man wandered about the streets for several hours, enduring the pangs of a most intolerable thirst, that he had not the means of satisfying. At length he turned his steps homeward.

After her father had gone out, on the preceding day, Madeline sat awaiting his return with a feeling of the most intense anxiety. There had seemed to her eyes, something wild and strange in the expression of his face, as he came in at an unusual hour, and after looking at her for a moment or two, turned away abruptly and left the house. Her heart throbbed heavily for a long time afterwards, and then her pulse grew low, and she became so faint, that she had to go up into her chamber and lie down. The few hours that remained until nightfall soon passed away. Darkness fell upon the earth—the usual time for her father to return rolled round, but he came not. Again the daughter's heart began to throb wildly. But her anxiety availed not. He, for whom she felt such intense concern, did not return. Time passed on, until the hoarse cry of the watchman announced the hour of ten. But her father was absent still. Where could he be? What new

calamity awaited the already deeply stricken child? Eleven, twelve, one, two, three o'clock came and went, and still the eyelids of Madeline closed not, although her head pressed heavily upon her pillow, for she had become too weak and faint to sit up.

When day dawned, she arose from the bed and took a seat near the window. It had been to her a night of terrible anxiety; and now, she could just bear up, in the calm, renovating morning, with a tremulous fear in her heart, and await with a yet feeble hope, the return of one who was loved by her with a love that nothing could weaken or efface. From childhood up, he had been to her the tenderest of fathers. She had not only loved him for his goodness, but had honoured him for his intelligence, uprightness, and manly force of character. In her eyes, he had been perfect When evidences of his horrible infatuation first became distinct to her eyes,—when she saw him, for the first time, changed and fallen, Oh! it seemed to her as if madness would follow.

The day never afterwards dawned for her with so cheerful a light. Spring came with its bright flowers, and sweet perfume to gladden her drooping spirits; and they did gladden, but not as before. She would look with delight upon bud and blossom, and drink in their delicious odours; but, in a little while neither sense perceived the grateful offering of the glad young season. Her thoughts had wandered off to her father. After her mother's death, she felt, that, feeble as she was, and fast wasting away, she had a sacred duty to perform. She must now care for her in-

fatuated parent as her mother had cared for him. She must keep down paralyzing grief, and daily strive to render his lot less dreadful than his own conduct would, if all its effects were suffered to visit him, render it. And she did strive with a noble self-devotion. When he came home, she always endeavoured to meet him with a cheerful smile. Feeble though she was, and severe as the task proved, she would strive to make home pleasant to him in every possible way; as, by singing old airs that she knew he had loved in former years, while she accompanied herself on her guitar, the only one of her instruments of music that had been spared in the general wreck; or by reading, until her lungs became so oppressed that she had to lay aside her book, some volume that she knew had been to him a pleasant one.

And her reward for this—what was it! She never knew that her earnest efforts had the desired effect. No pleasure was expressed at her songs; no interest manifested when she read to the always half-stupified inebriate. Ah! hers was a hard task to perform—her trials hard to bear. But, with a love that nothing could abate, she intermitted not her efforts. She did not hope to change; she strove only to alleviate,—to make her father's lot less deplorable. Unhappy she knew he must be.

Since their removal into the small house where they now lived, Mr. Cameron had provided very poorly for his family. While Mrs. Cameron lived, she obtained from him a large proportion of what he earned; but after her death, he assumed the task of making regular provision for

the wants of his household. At first he provided tolerably well, but gradually fell off, until it often happened that Madeline found herself in want of almost necessary food to have prepared for their regular meals. She would then be compelled to ask her father for the needed supplies. But, whenever she did so, it seemed to half offend him, so that at last, she dreaded to call upon him for anything, and suffered many privations, rather than apply to him for money.

At the time of his discharge from the situation he had obtained, as mentioned above, he had neglected providing for his family to such a degree, that there was scarcely enough food in the house for another meal. He knew this, and that was what pressed so heavily upon him, when he became partially sobered, in consequence of so unexpectedly losing his situation. He had not the confidence nor the strength of mind to make some new exertion, but rushed to the cup of confusion, in which to drown all self-reproaches, and all anguish at the thought of his destitute family. How much better that relieved his condition has been seen.

Pale, anxious, and trembling inwardly, Madeline sat looking from the window, shortly after daylight, on the morning that her father was discharged from custody by the Mayor, who dismissed him with a few words of admonition. She had not been there long, before a slow moving figure far down the street caught her eye. She leaned forward eagerly. It was her father! His steps were slow, and every now and then he would stop, and appear as if he had lost something. Then he

would move on again, and again pause, and seem to be searching in all his pockets. At length he drew near to the house, and then Madeline could see that his clothes were soiled and in disorder. Her heart grew sick, and she leaned, faint, against the window-sill. When he was nearly at the door, she arose and went down stairs as quickly as possible and withdrew the fastenings, and then returned to her own chamber. In a minute after she heard her father enter, and go up to his own room. A deeply-drawn sigh, or rather groan, reached the ear of his daughter, as Mr. Cameron closed his chamber door after him, and threw himself, in an agony of mind, upon his bed.

Madeline bowed her head and wept bitterly. She knew that groan was extorted by anguish of spirit, not by bodily suffering; and that the former was not to be compared with the latter, her experience too fully testified.

Faint and sick from excitement, Madeline, so soon as her father had entered his chamber, was forced to lie down. She felt as weak as an infant. For a greater part of the night she had sat up or lain awake in a state of the keenest anxiety about him. He had at last arrived. Where had he been, she knew not; and dared scarcely guess. But he was unhappy:—there was anguish of spirit—bitter anguish—in the groan that had been extorted from him, as he threw himself upon his bed. The sound echoed and re-echoed in her heart, seeming as if it would never die away.

In about half an hour, though still feeling faint, Madeline got up, and dressed her little sister Agnes, who had awakened. Agnes was in her fifth year.

She had a sweet face, and as sweet a temper. Madeline loved her with a sister's purest love, and Agnes gave back affection in a full measure.

While she was dressing Agnes, their domestic came to the door, and said—

"We have no sugar for the coffee, this morning and no butter."

"Very well, Hetty, I 'll see about it."

"Breakfast is all ready, but the sugar and butter."

"You needn't ring the bell for a little while yet. I don't want father disturbed."

The servant retired. Madeline finished dressing her little sister, and waited for nearly half an hour longer. But there was no movement in her father's room.

"Go down to Hetty, and tell her to ring the breakfast bell," she said to Agnes.

The child went down and did as Madeline had desired her; but came up in a few moments with a message from Hetty that there was neither butter nor sugar for breakfast.

"I know that, dear; you go again and tell her that I want her to ring the breakfast bell."

Agnes went to the kitchen again, and presently the bell was rung. As the sound passed through the house, Mr. Cameron started up from the bed where he had thrown himself, and uttered a deep sigh, that reached the attentive ear of his daughter. In a little while he came out of his room, and went down stairs. Madeline followed quickly, and they met once more in the breakfast room.

Mr. Cameron's eyes fell under the earnest look of inquiry that Madeline cast upon him. But no

words were spoken, as they seated themselves at the table, upon which was bread and some cold meat, but no butter.

"There is no sugar nor butter for breakfast," said the officious domestic at this moment.

Mr. Cameron started and looked confused. Madeline turned her eyes upon him. He put his hand in his pocket.

"I have no change," he half muttered.

"It is no matter, we can do without butter for this meal," quickly interposed Madeline. "I never use sugar at all, myself."

"Here is the milkman's bill," said Hetty, coming in a few moments afterwards. "I like to forgot it. He says he wants the money left out for him to-morrow morning."

This was received in perfect silence, and Hetty retired. Both Madeline and her father tried to eat, but it was only by an effort that either of them could swallow a mouthful.

Not half his usual time of sitting at the table had expired, before Mr. Cameron pushed back his chair and got up.

"Won't you have another cup of tea, father?" asked Madeline.

He did not reply, but left the room and went up to his chamber, where he remained all the morning. About ten o'clock Hetty came to Madeline.

"There is nothing in the house for dinner."

"Very well, Hetty, I will see about it."

She waited for an hour, but her father did not make his appearance. Hetty again came up stairs.

"It is getting late, miss. If the meat and

things don't come soon, I can't get dinner ready in time."

"Don't be uneasy, Hetty. If the dinner should be late, no one will blame you. I don't think father is very well, and I don't like to disturb him."

It just then flashed across her mind that her father was staying from his business. Was he too sick to go out, or had he left his situation? If the latter, why was it? Had he been discharged? And was he now out of employment, and with no means of supporting his family?

Such thoughts startled the heart of Madeline, and filled her with a new anxiety. After deliberating for some time, she went to her father's room and tapped at the door. There was no answer. She tapped again.

"Come in," she heard, uttered in a low voice.

She slowly opened the door. Her father was sitting nearly opposite, with a contracted brow, and a wild, uneasy look. After hesitating a moment, Madeline said—

"We have nothing in the house for dinner, to-day."

"Buy something, then," was the reply, pettishly made.

"I have no money, father."

"Neither have I. Humph!"

Madeline had never heard him speak in such a strange tone, nor look so wildly as he did.

"What is the matter? Are you not well, father?" She asked, advancing a few steps toward him.

"Well? Oh, yes! But go out, child. I don't

care about any dinner to-day. Pick up something for yourselves. I am too unwell to eat."

"But can't I do something for you, if you are sick?"

"No. I shall be well again after a little while. Only let me be quiet now, that is a good child."

Both the words and manner of her father were strange and unaccountable to Madeline. She went out of the room as he wished; but there was a weight upon her heart.

After he was left alone, Mr. Cameron became very uneasy. He arose to his feet, and walked the floor several minutes, every now and then stopping as if in deep thought. At last he went to a drawer, and opening it, began to look over its contents. There was in it, a small box containing many little articles once belonging to his wife, such as rings and breastpins, a bracelet and a locket, etc. In looking through the drawer, Mr. Cameron passed by this box several times. At length he took it up, and held it for some moments. Then turning the key he lifted the lid, and looked steadily in at the contents. A ring was first taken up—it was his wedding ring. It dropped from his finger as if just taken from the fire. Then a locket was examined; he knew that, also, too well: it contained the hair of his wife and mother. The wretched man uttered a feeble groan as that also dropped from his fingers; closing the lid of the box, he leaned his head down upon the bureau at which he was standing, while a cold, shuddering chill, went through his frame.

"Good heavens! Has it come to this!" he at

length exclaimed, in a low voice, starting off and beginning to pace the floor hurriedly.

In a little while the poor man's agitation measurably abated. He was suffering most intolerable anguish for want of his accustomed stimulus. His nerves were all quivering; he was on the very verge of temporary insanity.

"No—no—no—I cannot, I must not endur this; I shall go beside myself!" he said half solemnly, pausing, and looking toward the bureau "Something must be done! My children will starve, and I shall go mad."

Striding, then, resolutely back to the still open drawer, he lifted the lid of the box before mentioned, and taking from it a large, richly set pin, thrust it into his pocket. Without closing either drawer or box, he hastily turned away, put on his hat, and left the house. His steps were bent direct for the shop of a pawnbroker, where he pledged the pin for five dollars. With this money, he intended, after gratifying the intolerable longing for some stimulating draught that was half-maddening him, to buy some provisions for his family. He entered the nearest tavern, and eagerly called for brandy. A glass was pushed towards him, and a well-filled decanter set by its side. The glass was nearly filled with the raw liquor, lifted with a trembling hand, and poured down at a draught. After paying for it, Mr. Cameron seated himself at a table covered with newspapers, and commenced reading.

Madeline had heard every movement of her father in his room, which adjoined her own chamber. She heard him walking the floor; heard

him open the drawer; heard the sound of his voice in his muttered exclamations, when he suddenly left the room and hurried down stairs. She went to the window and followed his rapid steps with her eyes, until he was out of sight. Then she fell into a deep and painful reverie, from which she was aroused by the entrance of Hetty from the kitchen, who wished to know if anything had yet been obtained for dinner, as it was getting very late, and there certainly would not be any time to cook it.

"You needn't get any dinner to-day, Hetty," Madeline said, with forced calmness, "Father, I believe, will not be home, and I don't care for anything more than a cup of tea. Pick up something for yourself and Agnes. She will be satisfied with potatoes, if you will boil some, and mash them up nicely."

"But the potatoes are all out. I forgot to tell you so this morning."

"O, well, pick up anything. You need not get any regular dinner to-day."

Hetty looked curiously at Madeline for a moment or two, and then retired to the kitchen, saying as she did so, in an under tone—

"Humph! I guess they havn't got any money to buy a dinner. If it 's come to that, Hetty must begin to look out for other quarters. Let me see —how much is owing to me? Five weeks yesterday, since I was paid up: that is seven dollars and a half. Oh, dear! and nothing to buy food with? I can't stay here, no how."

The domestic seated herself in the kitchen and

conned this matter over and over again, for nearly half an hour.

"I feel sorry for Miss Madeline," she at length said to herself. "But I can't help it. I can't afford to stay here for nothing. I must tell her to look out for somebody else. The old gentleman acts very curious, it strikes me. If I 'm not mistaken he is tipsy more than half of his time. He wasn't home all last night, which doesn't look good."

Meantime, Madeline had gone into her father's room; the first thing that arrested her eye, was the open drawer, to which she went. Her mother's well-known little box of rare woods curiously inlaid, was in the bottom, with the lid thrown back. A suspicion flashed across her mind. She eagerly examined the contents. At first she thought all was safe. But no—the breastpin was gone!

All was understood in a moment, and the poor girl sank down upon a chair, faint as death. This then, was their extremity. Her father had been compelled to take a relic, dear for the sake of her who had owned it, and sell, or pawn it for—ah! for what? For food? It might be, and that was dreadful to think of; but worse, it would be sold to buy liquor, also, and perhaps, all be spent for the maddening poison.

Madeline's first thought was to remove the box; but on reflection, she was unwilling to do so. That would be to reveal to her father the discovery she had made, and to openly rebuke him for what he had done. The recollection of his sternness and self-determination, when any one who had no right to do so opposed him, would have prevented

the act, had not the tenderness of her filial love decided her not to touch the box, even if relics still more sacred were removed.

In a state of mental anguish hard to be conceived, the daughter had remained sitting where she had sunk down almost powerless, for a long time—how long she did not herself know, when the door opened, and Hetty again made her appearance. The girl hesitated for a time, and then said, evidently with reluctance,

"I think, Miss Madeline, that I shall leave you."

"Leave us, Hetty!" ejaculated Miss Cameron, in surprise. "Why do you wish to do so? Have I not been kind to you?"

"O, yes, miss, very kind. I have no particular fault. Only, I think I would like to change."

"Very well, Hetty. You shouldn't stay if you do not feel free to do so. Have you got a new place?"

"No. But I can easily get one."

"You really wish to go, then?"

"I thought I would rather change; though I like this place as well as any one I was ever in—I will say that, miss."

"How much wages is coming to you?"

"I am owed for five weeks."

"That is seven dollars and a half?"

"Yes."

"How soon do you wish to leave?"

"I thought I would like to go out this afternoon and see if I couldn't get a place. I heard my sister speak about one where they give two dollars a week."

"Very well, Hetty, you can go out if you wish. There is nothing particular for you to do. Your money shall be ready for you when you are ready to leave."

Hetty retired, half-sorry that she had proposed to go. Madeline's remark, that her money would be ready for her, took away more than half of her desire to get a new place.

Again left to herself, Madeline's thoughts reverted to her father. Something wrong had evidently occurred. The most probable idea presented to her mind, was, that he had lost his situation. And this the reader knows to be true.

Slowly and anxiously passed the whole day, and still Mr. Cameron did not return. As the shades of evening began to fall, the daughter's feelings overcame her so much that she was forced to lie down to keep from fainting. Notwithstanding she had slept scarcely any during the preceding night, her mind was too much agitated to sink into sweet unconsciousness. She lay, eagerly listening to each sound that broke upon the air, hoping for, yet dreading with an indefinable dread, her father's return.

Hetty had gone out, as she intimated that she wished to do; and did not return until after dark.

"What shall I get for tea, Miss Madeline?" she asked, coming into the room where Miss Cameron lay.

"Nothing for me, Hetty. I could not eat a mouthful; and I hardly expect father. But you had better keep the kettle boiling—he may come home to supper."

"There isn't any bread."

Madeline recollected, at the moment, that there was a ten cent piece in one of her drawers. She directed the domestic to get it and buy some bread.

"Hadn't I better get a little sugar while I am at the store?" asked Hetty.

"No. I expect father will bring home all we want, when he comes," was replied.

Eight, nine, ten o'clock came, but Mr. Cameron did not return. Overwearied, she fell into a temporary slumber, from which, about eleven o'clock, she was startled by a loud knocking at the street door, and the sound of many voices. Springing from the bed, feeble as she was, she ran down stairs half-wild with excitement, and hurriedly opened the door.

Three men carried her father in their arms. She saw only this, and uttering a heart-searching cry, sunk to the floor insensible.

After old Mr. Cameron had taken his first glass of brandy, he thought but little more of home, and the want and suffering there. He sat and read the newspapers for half an hour, and then drank again. After this he went out and walked about the streets for some time. His nerves were steadier, and he felt comparatively happy. Aimless at first, Mr. Cameron soon determined to seek after a new situation. For this purpose, he went into a store where he was well known. The two strong glasses of brandy, taken upon a stomach almost empty, had effected him a good deal, and gave to his whole appearance and manner, the air of a man more than half-intoxicated.

"How are you, Mr. B———," he said, going up familiarly to the owner of the store.

"Very well; how are you, Cameron?" returned the merchant, moving back a step or two; for his old friend pressed up closer to him than was agreeable.

"Just so, so, Mr. B———. I have called to ask if you didn't want more help about your store. I am in want of a good situation."

"I do want a good clerk," returned Mr. B———, speaking gravely, and looking with a contracted brow upon Cameron. "But I can't employ you, highly as I regard your ability, and much as I honour your integrity."

"Why so, Mr. B———?"

"For the best of all reasons, you are not a sober man."

"Do you wish to insult me?" was the quick retort of Mr. Cameron, while the blood flew to his face. Till this moment, never in his life had any one, for whose opinion he cared at all, hinted, even remotely, that he suspected him of the vice in which he was indulging to the destruction of both soul and body.

"No, I do not wish to insult you;" was calmly replied, "but to tell you the plain truth, which no man should be afraid to hear. If you were a sober man, I for one, would feel glad to employ you. But you are not; even at this moment, you are not yourself. It is strange——"

But Cameron waited to hear no more. Turning off abruptly he strode rapidly from the presence of him who had dared to insult him by telling the truth. Had the infatuated man been

sober, this would have deeply humbled him. But he had been drinking, and it made him very angry. From the store of Mr. B———, he went to a tavern, and indulged even more freely than he had already done.

Another attempt was made to obtain a situation, but his drunken condition was even more apparent than before. No one would employ him. And many treated him with great rudeness and want of consideration. At last, he called upon an old merchant, with whom he had been on intimate terms. They had sat together in the same Board of Directors for years, and had frequently been engaged together in effecting some heavy commercial operations. The condition in which Mr. Cameron was, when he called at his store, pained this old business friend very much. He asked him to walk up stairs into his private counting room, and there kindly held him in conversation, until Cameron began to show signs of drowsiness. To his great relief of mind, the poor man was presently fast asleep, reclining upon a sofa.

Here, he lay until the middle of the afternoon, when he awoke, suffering a most intolerable thirst. He was alone, and, for a time, much bewildered. Dimly, he at length began to perceive the truth. He remembered having called in to see the old friend in whose counting room he found he had been sleeping, and he also remembered a portion of the conversation that had passed between them.

A deep sense of shame for the exposure he saw that he had made of himself, caused his cheek to burn. Quietly leaving the room, he made his

way down stairs, and unperceived, left the store. A burning thirst led him to a tavern, where he again indulged freely. He had eaten nothing since morning, and felt no desire for food. Drink —drink—drink—it was all he cared for.

There were several idlers in the bar-room. To kill time, one of them proposed to play dominoes with Cameron. He consented. Anything was preferable to reflection. They played for liquor, and drank all the time they played. It was at last proposed to play for money, and agreed to. The stakes were trifling. But when the two men separated, Cameron had only about a dollar in his pocket.

He said nothing, but, in the disordered state of mind in which he was, believed that he had been cheated. On leaving the table where he had been playing, the old man called for some oysters, which he ate raw, and then went out. It was after dark. He walked towards home, scarcely thinking about where he was going. When nearly at his own door, he stopped, and turning quickly away, walked off in a contrary direction. He could not meet his daughter. For an hour or two he wandered about the streets. But habit and an insatiable desire for liquor, again took him to a drinking house. Here, he felt more at ease and happier. The whole atmosphere had in it something congenial. After drinking, he sat down to read, or chat with any one inclined to talk with a man who was half-intoxicated.

Thus passed the time until after ten o'clock, when one bar-room lounger after another retired, and but three or four remained. Cameron had

continued to drink, until he was scarcely able to stand.

"Come, old man," said the bar-keeper to him, roughly, "at this late hour, it is time all honest people were at home, and rogues a jogging."

Made angry by this speech, Cameron retorted with some bitterness. At the moment of his doing so, the door opened, and the man who had won his money at dominoes came in.

"Take care what you say, old fellow!" replied the bar-keeper, "or I 'll tumble you out of doors, neck and heels, in less than no time."

"Highty-ty-ty! What 's to pay here?" ejaculated the new comer, advancing close up to the bar-keeper and Cameron.

The latter turned around, and instantly recognised the individual who had spoken.

"Nobody asked for your interference," he said, with a scowl. "You'd better hand back the money you cheated me out of this afternoon."

"What?" And the whole aspect of the man changed. "Do you say that I cheated you?" taking hold of the collar of the old man's coat with a strong grasp, as he spoke.

"Be sure I do."

A heavy blow against the poor drunken creature's head, knocked him insensible to the floor, while the blood gushed from his mouth and nose.

The wretch who had committed this brutal outrage, was about following up the act by kicking Cameron in the face; but he was prevented doing so, by a stout, resolute man, who had sat looking on, and now sprang forward, and catching him by the shoulders, whirled him to the other side of the

room. The man was a coward at heart, and slunk away, on recovering himself, without saying a word.

Efforts were made to restore Cameron to consciousness, but without success. The gush of blood had restored the partial paralysis of the vital organs; but he was too much intoxicated to permit the activities of these organs to give power to the extremities of his body.

In this state he was brought home, as the reader has seen.

The men who carried home the insensible Mr. Cameron, when they saw the effect his sudden appearance had produced on Madeline, remained until the poor girl recovered from the shock that had temporarily deprived her of consciousness. Then they quieted her fears as best they could. The old man was taken to his chamber, and laid in bed. After they had retired, Madeline took a lamp and went up to her father, holding the light so that it would fall on his face. She shuddered as she saw blood upon his collar, and on the handkerchief which she took from his neck. His hair was, likewise, matted in places, with what was evidently blood.

With trembling anxiety, and a heart whose rapid pulsations almost suffocated her, the daughter sought eagerly for the wound from which this had flowed, expecting each moment to find some terrible gash. But nothing of the kind appeared. The skin was nowhere broken. Relieved from a suddenly-awakened and paralyzing fear, Madeline now regarded the face of her parent more closely than before. How changed its whole expression!

How pale and sunken his cheeks! How distorted every feature!

For a single instant, she wished that she had died when her mother died. But filial love as quickly dispelled this state of mind. If she were away, who would care for the old man, her father, who had estranged himself from all his former friends, and could make no more new ones? Who would watch over her little sister Agnes, and minister to the wants, and bear with the weaknesses of her childhood?

"No, no!" she murmured, rising to an erect position—"I have sacred duties yet to perform in this world. I wish not to delegate them to others."

This thought strengthened the heart of Madeline, and elevated her feelings into something like heroism. But alas! alas! there is little in the condition of a drunkard's child to sustain a feeling of heroism.

After becoming satisfied that her father was sleeping, she left him alone, and retired to her own chamber. Closing the door, she sunk on her knees by the bed-side, and remained thus for full ten minutes. Then arising, she disrobed herself and lay down upon her pillow, but not to sleep. Her mind was too much excited, and her anxieties too keenly alive. Thought remained busy for a long time; but the more she thought, the more hopeless did her condition seem. Towards midnight, she fell off into an unconscious sleep, and did not awake until long after the sun was up.

Arising as quickly as her feeble strength would

permit, she dressed herself, and went to her father's door. She knocked, but there was no answer. She knocked again. All remained still. She listened intently, but not the slightest sound of life from within, reached her attentive ears. She could not long endure a feeling of suspense. Opening the door, she entered her father's cham ber. It was tenantless! One of the drawers of a bureau stood out—the same that contained the little keepsakes left by her mother. She went to the drawers, and found the lid of the box that it contained, open. She examined the contents, and missed a pair of bracelets that her mother had worn in her earlier days, and which she had always prized, because they were a birth-day gift from her husband.

On making this discovery, Madeline staggered back, and dropped, half-fainting, into a chair. Could it be possible that her father had already fallen so low! The thought paralyzed both mind and body. How long a time passed as she sat in, or rather, partly lay across the back of a chair, she did not know, but she was restored to a per-ception of external things, by hearing her father's step and voice below. Quickly leaving his room, she went into her own, and listened with breath-less attention. He was speaking to Hetty, and Madeline quickly gathered that he was giving some directions about breakfast.

Mr. Cameron had, in fact, been out and pur-chased the various articles that he remembered were spoken of the day before. But where did he get the money? From the sale of his deceased wife's bracelets! Did he buy only food? Ah,

no! His trembling frame had to be restored to something like its wonted condition by a glass of liquor.

The bracelets he sold for three dollars. Their original cost was fifteen. After the articles he had purchased were handed over to Hetty, with a twenty-five cent piece to buy bread, Mr. Cameron retired to his room to shave himself, and arrange his clothes so as to make the best possible appearance at the breakfast table. When the bell rung, Madeline and little Agnes came down. Mr. Cameron joined them in a few minutes. He spoke kindly, and made an effort to converse, but Madeline's heart was too full to reply further than in monosyllables. In a little while, a deep silence pervaded the room where they had assembled to eat their morning meal, which continued until the meal was concluded.

Shortly after Mr. Cameron left the table, he took up his hat and went out. The history of one day that we have given in the life of the drunkard and his child, is the history of many days. We need not repeat it with its deeper shades, and sad variations. Enough for the reader, that Cameron made no effort to struggle against the tide that was bearing him down, but yielded passively to the current. All attempts to get employment, except at some menial occupations, failed. His family was reduced to the greatest want, and after sacrificing nearly everything, except one or two articles of her mother's which Madeline had concealed, they were literally turned into the street by the landlord of the house they occupied.

The anguish of mind produced by this extremity.

to which they were reduced, was so great that Madeline, who, with her little sister, had been taken into a poor neighbor's house, was made dangerously ill. It was weeks before she could sit up, and then she gained strength so slowly, that there was little prospect of her being able to help herself for many weeks to come. During all this time, she had neither seen nor heard from her father;—her anxiety on his account was almost insupportable. She imagined him in every varied condition of suffering, and exposed to every privation, and her imagination exceeded in its pictures but little, the sad reality.

The family into which the poor girl and her little sister had been received, was that of a poor day labourer, who had more than enough to do to get comfortable food and clothing for his wife and children, and pay his landlord when the rent became due. The commiseration of his wife had induced him to consent to give shelter to the sick daughter of Cameron. But he soon began to feel chafed at her prolonged illness, and the heavier burdens it imposed upon him. He frequently alluded to the subject when alone with his wife, and at last never mentioned it except with fretfulness or impatience. He had proposed something to the wife one night, in regard to Madeline and her sister, which she strongly opposed.

"O, no, no, I cannot think of such a thing." She replied.

"But we cannot keep them. It is impossible."

"Let us bear it a little longer. The poor girl is a something better."

"I don't see that she is. If we don't get rid

of them soon, we shall have them saddled on to us entirely."

"Do not think so. Madeline feels her situation deeply, and is anxious to relieve us."

"But she will never be able to help herself. Any one can see that. She is far gone in consumption, and will be in her grave before six months. She had better go where she will be well taken care of, and not be a burden to any one, as she is now."

"Indeed, indeed, I cannot bear the thought."

"Depend upon it, it is the best for her and us. Her drunken old father won't do anything for her, and as I have said, it is out of the question to think of her doing anything herself. She is not able, and never will be."

The wife looked sad, but made no reply.

But the husband continued to urge his proposition, whatever it was, to which the wife consented, at last, but with even a tearful reluctance.

The next day was a brighter one than usual; the woman with whom Madeline was staying, came into her room, soon after her husband had left in the morning, and said, with what seemed to her a slightly embarrassed air.

"This is a very fine day, and I think it would be the best thing in the world for you, if you could only take a ride out, and get some of the pure air."

"I have no doubt that it would," replied Madeline, languidly. "But that is not to be thought of."

"I don't know. Perhaps somebody who has a

carriage might feel willing to give you a ride. It would do you so much good."

Madeline made no reply.

"There is John Morgan, around the corner, who drives a cab. He is a clever sort of a man. When he comes home to dinner I think I'll just step in and see him, I know him very well, and put the question to him. It can do no harm. If he is not engaged, I am sure he will give you a little drive out."

Madeline objected to this, but the woman declared that she would do what she said, and when dinner time came, actually went round to see Morgan. On returning, she announced to Anna that she had seen John, who readily consented to do as she had desired. Still Madeline expressed reluctance, but the woman urged her so strongly that she at last consented.

"You will take Agnes along, of course," said the woman.

"I don't know. Perhaps I had better let her stay at home."

"O, no! The poor child has been shut up so long, it will do her good."

Madeline did not object further. The cab driver was to come at three o'clock, and Madeline assisted by the woman, prepared herself for the ride. The effort required to do this, made her feel so faint, that, after her clothes were on, she was compelled to lie down.

"I'm afraid I wont be able to bear the ride."

"O, yes, you will. It will make you feel stronger," returned the woman.

"Couldn't you go with me?" asked Madeline, faintly.

"That is out of the question. I cannot leave home. But I will fix a pillow so that you can almost lie down. Depend upon it, you will feel the better for a ride."

Madeline was passive. At three o'clock the cab came, and she, supported by the driver, entered it with little Agnes. The woman returned into the house as the vehicle drove off, and sinking into a chair, covered her face with her hands, and burst into tears.

"Oh, dear! It is a dreadful thing to be poor! She will think me the cruellest and most deceitful woman alive. But I couldn't help it. Poor soul! It will be a dreadful shock! But she will be better off. O, yes, a great deal better off."

The motion of the carriage caused Madeline to feel very sick. This continued for ten minutes. When it began to pass off, she raised her head, and looking from the window, perceived that they were crossing the permanent bridge. As they came forth on the other side, and the eyes of the invalid fell upon the green fields and woods, her spirits revived. Little Agnes was in raptures, clapping her hands, and uttering the pleasure she felt with childish volubility.

The cab continued on, and after driving through a portion of West Philadelphia, turned off to the left. In a few moments the eyes of Madeline fell upon the long ranges of white buildings that compose the Blockley Alms-house, from which they wandered off, first across the river to the city, and then to the grassy meadows, fruit-laden trees,

and blooming gardens around her. The noise, confusion, and close air of the city, were exchanged for a deep, soothing, quiet, and pure air, fresh from the hill-side, or sweet with odours from fields and gardens. Both body and mind revived under these influences; the sick girl sat up more firmly, and looked abroad with a calmer spirit.

Slowly the vehicle in which she rode, passed on, until it was opposite the range of buildings just mentioned, when the horse stopped. Madeline turned her head, and saw that they had driven up to a large gate, that a porter was just opening. As the gate swung back upon its hinges, the driver spoke to his horse, and they passed through, and moved down a broad, smooth lane.

A chill passed through the frame of Madeline, she hardly knew why. A foreboding of evil fell like a deep shadow on her heart. She sank back in the carriage, and closed her eyes. It was not many minutes before the driver reined in his horse, and backed up the cab to some stopping place. Madeline feared to think where. The door was opened, and a voice said—

"Come!"

Madeline started and opened her eyes. Several men, and one woman, were standing close up to the cab. One of the men held a paper in his hand.

"Where am I? What does this mean?" asked the bewildered girl, in a voice of touching anguish.

"O, nothing! nothing!" said the man half-indifferently. "You are sick, and we are going to take care of you."

The pale face of Madeline grew deadly pale, as she comprehended the cruel deception that had been passed upon her. It was the Alms-house, and she was henceforth to be one of its inmates! Her weak frame could not bear the shock. She fell forward, insensible into the arms of the driver, and was borne into the pauper's home.

Her name and history, when known to the Matron of the Institution, excited her deepest sympathy. She treated her with the greatest tenderness, and permitted her little sister to be much with her every day. At Madeline's earnest solicitation, she had inquiries made for her father, and learned that he was living a most wretched life,—houseless and homeless. She further, at the daughter's request, made such representations to the Guardians of the poor, that the old man was taken up and brought to the Alms-house. Here, however, he remained but a short time, managing to escape and return to the city. Several times he was sent out by the Mayor, but as often got away again. This caused Madeline, whose health seemed to improve, rather than decline, the greatest distress. Her imagination pictured her father as suffering every kind of privation, indignity, and degredation, and she began to feel a strong desire to get away from a place where she had many comforts and kind attentions—where she had no care in a provision for herself and sister—in order to devote the little strength that remained towards supporting her father.

This desire was made known to the matron, who would not listen to it for a moment. From that time, the poor girl began to pine for her liberty.

Night after night, she would dream of her father, and see him in the most deplorable circumstances, and day after day she would sit and think only of him.

At length her distress of mind and anxiety became so great, that she determined to seek an opportunity to steal away with Agnes. This determination she soon executed. Weak and faint, she made her way into the city late one afternoon; but where could she go! In an almost helpless state she wandered about the streets, until the twilight began to fall. She had become so exhausted, that she was compelled to seat herself upon a door-step, to keep from falling. Little Agnes, who was also worn out with fatigue, sat down beside her, and laid her head in her lap. In a moment or two the child was fast asleep.

One after another passed by, some glancing at the languid figure of the unhappy girl, as she sat with drooping head; others pausing a moment, but none asking any questions, or seeking to know why these poor creatures thus sat in the open street at night-fall.

Darkness came down—the current of home-bound people no longer set strongly past the homeless wanderers. The street was comparatively, silent.

"Agnes, dear! Come, Agnes! we must not stay here," Madeline said, trying to awaken the sleeping child.

But the senses of the little girl were deeply locked in slumber. The effort to awake her, was vain.

"But why awake the poor child?" she said,

after several ineffectual attempts to arouse her. "I have no bed upon which to place her; no roof to cover her innocent head. O, why! why, did I take her from her only home! Sleep! sleep, my happily unconscious sister! It is better for you to sleep."

Again, Madeline thought over all the people she had once known in the city.

"Yes, there is one heart that will receive me!" she uttered, half-aloud, and with a bounding impulse of thankfulness. "Come, Aggy dear, come! Wake up!"

But it was a vain effort. The child fell back heavily in her lap. Finding these attempts of no avail, Madeline arose with the child in her arms, and tottered off as hastily as she could go. It was before a house in Ninth street, that she had sunk down overwearied. Her steps were now directed southward. She passed Spruce and Pine streets, panting with exertion, and kept on until she was forced again to sit down. It was nearly five minutes before she felt strong enough to lift Agnes, and pursue her way. At the corner of Bonsal street she paused and ran her eye along the houses on the south side, eagerly. It was dark, but not so dark as to prevent her distinguishing the tenement she sought.

"If she has moved away, what shall I do?" murmured the almost fainting girl, and in turning the corner, she approached a small house that was, evidently, occupied by one of very humble condition. Stopping before it, she knocked timidly. The door was opened by an old coloured woman. Madeline stepped in past her, and laying

Agnes upon a bed that was in the room, dropped into a chair herself, and sat panting, and unable to speak for some moments.

"You don't know me, Rachel," she at length said, lifting her eyes to the face of the old woman, who stood looking at her in mute astonishment.

"My good Master!" was the answering exclamation. "Miss Madeline! can this be you?"

"Yes, Rachel. It is Madeline, and houseless and homeless, she comes to beg of you to shelter her, if only for a single night."

"Oh, mercy! Miss. No! It can't be my young Miss Madeline! What has happened? Is that sweet little Agnes? Goodness! But it is!"

While the old coloured woman was making these ejaculations, she was examining the face of Madeline, and the sleeping child, attentively. The result satisfied her that the children of Mr. Cameron, for whom she had been washer-woman for several years, were before her. The moment she was sure of this, her manner changed. Her countenance fell, and the tone of her voice became sad and tender.

"You are welcome, Miss Madeline, to the little comfort a poor old body like me can give," she said, commencing to untie her bonnet, and remove her shawl. "Oh, dear! To think that I should ever see you at my door, asking for a place to lay your head. It is dreadful! Where is your father?"

Madeline shook her head.

"Poor man! I saw him a few weeks ago, in the street. He wasn't as he used to be."

"You saw him?"

"Yes, dear."

"And not since?"

"No. Hav'nt you seen him in three or four weeks?"

Madeline shook her head mournfully.

"Bless me! Don't you know where he is?"

"No, but I have come to look for him, and to take care of him, while I have strength to keep up."

Old Rachel couldn't understand this. She knew nothing of the extremity to which the family of Mr. Cameron had been reduced, and little dreamed that Madeline was a fugitive from the Alms-house. All this was explained, to the heart grief of the kind old coloured woman, during the evening.

We cannot linger to portray the thoughts and feelings of Madeline Cameron, as she lay that night in the bed given her in charity by her mother's washer-woman. The reader must lift the veil for himself.

Through the aid of old Rachel, a couple of rooms were procured for her in a house in Dean street. She still had in possession when she was removed to the Alms-house, a few pieces of jewelry, remembrances of her mother. These had now to be sacrificed. Rachel sold them for her, and with the money obtained by the sale, bought the few articles of furniture that were absolutely necessary, not forgeting a bed for her father.

After Madeline had taken possession of these rooms, with little Agnes, Rachel went to some ladies and obtained sewing.

"One more favour, Rachel," Madeline said, after the kind creature had done all this for her.

"One more, and that shall be the last. You must find father for me. All this is for his sake. I have yet a little strength left, and that I must devote to him."

Rachel was reluctant to do this, but she could not resist the pleadings of Madeline. Her efforts to discover Mr. Cameron proved, however, ineffectual. She could learn nothing in regard to him.

"You are sure that careful search has been made for him, Rachel," Madeline would say earnestly, each time the old woman came.

"O, yes, Miss," was the invariable reply. "But I cannot hear a word of him."

Thus weeks and weeks passed away, old Rachel still calling in at intervals to see Madeline, but at intervals more and more removed from each other. All search for Mr. Cameron, had thus far proved vain.

Little Agnes had been shown the way, by Rachel, to the houses of the ladies from whom the old woman had procured sewing, and she regularly took home Madeline's work, receiving the pay for it, and bringing back other work, when any was ready. Of the money thus earned, never more than half was expended; the residue being carefully laid away, in order to gain more ability to make the father comfortable whenever he should be found—for this was the one end that sustained Madeline in her self-imposed duties, which weakness of body render doubly arduous.

At length the excitement of feeling which had kept the poor girl up, died away. The pains in her breast and side, that all along had been very

troublesome, increased to such a degree, that, often she would be compelled to put down her work and recline for an hour, or more, upon the bed. From exhausting night sweats, that seemed to grow more and more profuse, it was longer and longer each morning, before she could sit down to her work, without feeling a sick faintness and giddiness that only passed away when she threw herself upon the bed.

One, two, and three months went by, and still Madeline toiled on, unrewarded by the discovery of her father. By this time, her strength had declined so much, that she could only sit up, and sew for an hour or two each day. Her little store of money, the result of careful saving, she was compelled to draw upon to meet the absolute wants of herself and sister. It was with a melancholy feeling, that she saw this fund diminishing daily. At last it was all gone, and about the time that it failed, her strength failed, likewise. Rachel had not been to see her for many weeks. The old woman did not feel indifferent towards her, but the fact was, she had heard of Madeline's father, who was leading a most wretched and abandoned life. She knew that Madeline's first question, on visiting her, would be about the old man, and she did not wish to utter an untruth. Her own judgment was, that Madeline ought not, in her weak state, to be cursed with the presence, and burdened with the support of a drunken and unfeeling father. For this reason, she kept away from Madeline—and who can blame her?

With the poor girl, things soon assumed a frightful aspect. Starvation looked her in the

face. She was so weak that it would be impossible for her to go out, and Agnes was but a child.

Yet, child as she was, the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed, had matured her mind, much more than even her sister supposed. One morning, they arose without having a morsel of food to eat. Agnes did not know that everything, money and all, was exhausted; but seeing that Madeline looked paler than usual, and more dejected—and thinking, in her innocence, that this arose only from bodily weakness, she said—

"You go to bed sister, I will make up the fire and boil the kettle, and get breakfast. I can do it easy enough."

Tears gushed from the eyes of Madeline.

"Don't cry, sister, I can do it," urged the child.

After her feelings had exhausted themselves, Madeline drew Agnes to her side, and explained to her that all their money was gone, and that there was nothing in the house to eat. The child looked frightened at first—but this expression gave way to one of thoughtfulness.

"I'll go and get you some more work," she said, looking up earnestly into the face of Madeline.

"I have some work here that is not yet done, and I am afraid I am too sick to do it. But I will try. We will do without anything to eat to-day, and perhaps by to-night I will be able to finish this work. You will then take it home for me, and get the money."

It was some time before the child fully understood the meaning of all her sister had said--or

rather, could comprehend the fact that they were really without food, and that there was but little chance of their obtaining any. She saw Madeline get out her work-basket and try to sew. She also saw that in a little while her face became as pale as ashes, and that tears were coursing over her cheeks when she laid by her work and sunk down, with a deep-drawn sigh, upon the bed. That she had a duty to perform to this sick sister, now first crossed the child's mind. But how was she to perform it? Earnestly did she try to think, and many thoughts came with the effort, but the more she thought, the more was her tender mind bewildered. At last, a picture of what she had seen in the street, presented itself, and words that she had heard uttered, came up fresh in her memory. Going to a closet, she took down her little straw hat, quietly left the room, and passed into the street.

She walked on, looking at people that she passed, timidly, yet earnestly, for one or two squares. Sometimes she paused as she approached a foot passenger and moved her lips as if trying to speak, while the colour mounted to her face. But no one noticed her. At length an elderly man, with a benevolent countenance, approached. Him she stopped, saying, in sweet, but faltering accents: "Please sir, to give me a cent to buy my mother some bread."

The benevolent look changed into one of stern reproof, and the man passed on without a reply. Poor Agnes felt as if she would sink through the pavement. But a thought of Madeline gave strength to her young heart. The next that she

encountered, was a group of three or four young men, who came along laughing and chatting gaily.

"Please, sir, to give me a cent, to buy my mother some bread," again was spoken by the child.

Three of the young men were about passing on, but one of them, touched by the appearance and manner of the child, stopped, and said—

"What is the matter with your mother, my dear?"

"O, my mother is dead," innocently returned Agnes.

"Then what does she want with bread?" said one of the group, and all laughed heartily.

"I only said so," was the confused reply of Agnes.

"Only said so! What a little liar!"

"Hush Bill! You shouldn't speak so to a child," retorted the young man, whose feeling of pity had led him to attend to her petition, while the others were about passing on. Then addressing Agnes, he said—

"If your mother is not living, why did you say that you wanted money to buy her some bread?"

"I only said mother," was the artless reply—"for they all say that. I want to buy something for my sick sister to eat. We hav'nt had nothing to eat since yesterday. Sister tried to sew this morning, but she had to go to bed. Please give me a penny to buy my mo—"

Truth spoke too innocently and eloquently to be mistaken. More than one eye was wet. Each of the young men gave the child a quarter of a dollar, and after charging the little thing over and

over again, not to lose the money, nor to let any body get it from her, passed on.

Agnes, so soon as they left her, ran back, and went into the store where she had always gotten the few groceries they consumed. Here she bought a small quantity of tea, a loaf of bread, half a pound of butter, and some sugar, and then went home.

The surprise and pain of Madeline, when she heard from the child what she had been doing, may well be conceived. It humbled her still lower, and saddened her spirit with a profounder sadness.

From that time, Agnes procured in the same way, the means of subsistence for herself and Madeline. This, or starvation, was the choice. Deeply was Madeline grieved at the necessity, and anxiously did she watch the effect of this exposed and perverted life upon her innocent-minded sister. Happily, no vitiation appeared. Sometimes she would think of sending her to the Guardians of the Poor, to ask again to be received into the Alms-house, but the expectation of still seeing her father, and of making his lot less deplorable than it must be, united with the hope, that, in a little while longer, her health would improve, kept her from doing this. Thus time passed, and she was sinking, more rapidly than she imagined, towards the grave. Instead of being able to work, as she had hoped, she daily became less and less able to move even about the room. The slightest exertion overcame her.

Often and often, did she think of the kindness she had received at the hands of the Matron of the

Alms-house, who had felt a real interest in her; and often did she wish herself once more under her judicious care. Both for her own sake, and the sake of Agnes, she would gladly have gone back again. But her love for her father caused her still to remain where she was. True, Rachel did not come to see her. There was no one to look for her father; but, then, Agnes was in the street almost every day, and she might meet with him sooner or later. This hope caused her to bear all present ills, with patience and fortitude.

As for old Mr. Cameron, on escaping from the Alms-house, where he had been deprived of liquor, he felt the necessity of getting some kind of employment, in order to keep above the condition of a mere vagrant, and to secure a more certain and regular supply of the stimulating poison that was so sweet to his taste, yet so destructive of all bodily and spiritual health. For a short time he held the situation of bar-tender in a low groggery. But he drank so freely that he was turned away. After that, he was employed to open a store, sweep out, make fires, and go on errands, for three dollars and a half a week. On this he subsisted, after spending about one-half of it in drink.

Debased as the old man had become, there were times, when less under the influence of liquor, that he remembered the past, and thought of the present condition of his children with mental anguish of no light character. He believed that Madeline and Agnes were still inmates of the Alms-house, where, to his surprise he had found them on being taken there. The effect of such feelings was to cause him to plunge himself still

deeper into the vortex of sensual indulgence. He would drink to intoxication in order to stifle the voice of an upbraiding conscience. If he thought of reform, it was only for a moment. Reform, in his mind, was a hopeless thing.

One day, as he was about entering a tavern, a young man, whose face he did not recollect, stepped before him, and said,

"Don't go in there, Mr. Cameron."

The old man straightened himself up, and said, fretfully,

"What do you mean, sir?"

"What I have said,—don't go in there. It is the road to ruin."

"Do you wish to insult me?"

"O, no; I would not do that," replied the young man, with a smile. "I feel too strongly interested in you."

"In me? What do you know of me?"

"Hav'nt you a daughter?"

The old man started at this question, and looked confused.

"You have two, I believe; one, a young woman, and the other, a little girl not more than six or seven years old."

"Suppose I have. What is that to you?" Cameron said this in a voice meant to repulse the young man.

"Do you know where they are?" was asked, without the interrogator seeming to notice the old man's manner.

"If I don't, who do you think should?"

"Where are they?"

"That is none of your business, sir." As Ca-

meron said this, he turned away; but the young man laid his hand upon his arm, and whispered in his ear,

"They are not in the Alms-house."

The old man sprung round quickly.

"Then where are they?" he asked, his voice showing that he was disturbed by the last remark of the stranger.

"Come from here, and I will tell you all I know."

Cameron followed passively. The young man walked on for the distance of two or three squares, saying something now and then, to keep down his companion's impatience. At length he stopped by the door of a large warehouse, and asked Cameron to walk in, and sit down with him for a little while. He at first objected, but after some persuasion he went in. They were then alone, and removed from observation.

"Now tell me what you know of Madeline and her little sister," the wretched creature said, showing a good deal of interest.

"A day or two ago," began the young man, "I was asked by a sweet-faced, innocent child, in the street, for a penny. Struck with her appearance and manner, I made a good many inquiries of her, and learned that her name was Agnes Cameron."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the old man, suddenly striking both hands against his forehead. "But go on! Go on!"

"'Who sends you to beg in the street, my little girl?' I said.

"'Nobody,' she replied. 'I come out myself.'

"'What cause have you to beg?' I continued.

"'Sister is too sick to work.'

"'Does your sister send you out?'

"'No. She don't want me to come. But I will do it. We can't get money any other way. And they won't give us bread and tea and sugar at the store, without the money.'

"'What is your sister's name?' I asked.

"'Madeline,'" she replied.

Cameron groaned aloud.

"These are your children, I presume," said the young man.

The only reply was another deep groan. Then followed a long silence. At length the stranger said.

"Mr. Cameron, what are you going to do?"

"What!" and the wretched man looked up half-wildly. "Do? What can I do?"

"Become a sober man, and take care of your sick and suffering children."

"Sober! I can't be a sober man. I can't quit drinking. I've wanted to do so a hundred times, but it's no use for me to try."

"There is one way. Sign the pledge."

"It wouldn't be any use."

"Try it."

But he shook his head.

"The little girl I questioned, said that her sister was too sick to sit up long at a time. From what I could learn, she must be in the last stages of a consumption, and just ready to sink into the grave. Will you not for her sake, make an effort? Will you not throw one ray of light upon the last hours of her life? Oh, do not say no. Come! I have a pledge here. Sign it, and be a free man. Sign

it, and again bless the hearts that once loved you so tenderly. Sign it, and snatch your innocent child from the dangers that surround her. Let it not be said for an hour longer, that Cameron's child is a street beggar!"

The old man clasped his hands together, and looked with tearful eyes into the stranger's face.

"Who are you?" he at length said.

"The son of a man who was once your friend and companion. My name is P——. Your daughter Madeline, I have often met in other and better days for her. Shocked with the story of the child, to whom I gave money enough to keep her off of the street for a week, I have ever since been in search of you. And now, shall this search be vain? Do not say no!"

"There is no hope for me—I am lost!" was the mournful reply. "I am borne down towards destruction like a leaf upon the stream."

"It is not so, I tell you. You may reform. There is a power in the temperance pledge, of which you have never dreamed. Sign it, and you will prove the truth of what I say. Do you not wish to change?"

"God knows that I do!"

"Here is the way—hundreds have entered it, and are now walking happily therein. Come, and join this good company. You will never repent it."

Thus urged, the old man took the pen that was offered him, and with a trembling hand, after the pledge had been read to him in a clear and solemn voice, signed it.

"You are free!" ejaculated the advocate of

Temperance, in a voice so glad and confident, that it thrilled through every nerve of Cameron, and inspired him with a like confidence.

"Now, sir," he said, "tell me where I can find my children."

"You ought not to see them as you now are," was answered. "Go to them, when you do go, with change written on your dress as well as your face."

"But I have nothing except what I have on; and I must see my children."

Young P—— after thinking for a few moments, proposed to employ Cameron in his store, if he were willing to come, and named a salary. The offer was accepted. He then took him to a clothing shop, and bought for him a suit of clothes. After his old, soiled, and torn garments were thrown aside, Mr. Cameron said—

"Now tell me where I can find my children?"

But his unknown friend still objected.

"You should have a home for them. Wait until you can offer them a home, as well as renewed affection."

"O, sir! Do not trifle with me!" said the trembling old man. "I am weak—weak as a child. I have just stepped upon a narrow path of firm ground, running in the midst of a dreadful slough. A little thing may throw me off again, and then I am lost, lost for ever! Take me to my children."

This was said with real anguish, and a look that touched the young man's heart.

"You shall see them," he replied, unable to withstand this earnest appeal.

We will now return to Madeline. A few days

previous to this time, Agnes came home with ten silver half-dollars, and threw them on the bed where her sister lay.

"See there! see there!" she said, clapping her hands and jumping up and down, almost wild with delight.

"But, Aggy, dear! where did these come from?" asked Madeline, with a half-frightened look.

"Oh, a good gentleman gave them to me, and said I must not beg again for a week. And I promised that I would not."

Madeline closed her eyes, and lifted her heart in thankfulness, more for her sister's sake than her own.

"Who was the gentleman?" she at length asked.

"I don't know. But he asked me my name, and your name, and where we lived."

"Did you tell him?"

"Yes."

Madeline's heart fluttered for a moment or two. Then it again grew calm.

"All this may be for good," she meekly said.

One, two, and three days passed, and the sick girl seemed to be growing worse. She could neither lie down, nor sit up; but had to recline upon pillows.

On the third day, she felt a little better after she had taken a cup of tea in the morning, prepared for her by the hands of Agnes. She tried to sit up in a chair, and was able to do so, without her usual faintness. After her sister had cleared

away and washed up the breakfast things, and put the room in order, she said to her.

"Now, Aggy, get your book, and let me hear you say a lesson."

The child, who had been learned to read by Madeline, took her book, and standing by the side of her sister, said over her lesson. They were thus engaged, when there was a loud knock at the street door, which was presently opened by some one below. A few words passed that Madeline could not hear, and then a man's foot was heard upon the stairs. Her heart began to throb wildly. The footsteps ascended. She knew their sound. The door opened, and a well-dressed man stood in the entrance.

"Father!" she exclaimed, springing up, and starting forward. But her strength failed her, and she would have fallen forward upon the floor, had not Mr. Camaron, for it was he, caught her in his arms. When he laid her upon the bed, she was pale as death, and unconscious. For some moments he wept over her, and then turning to the frightened Aggy, took her in his arms, and kissed her over and over again with a thrilling emotion, ever and anon clasping her tightly to his breast.

When Madeline recovered from her temporary suspension of thought and feeling, her father was seated by her side, holding one of her hands in his.

"Am I dreaming?" she murmured, looking eagerly around.

The tone in which this was said, touched the father's heart deeply.

"No, you are not dreaming, Madeline," he said, bending over and kissing her. "It is your father who has come to you, and who will never again leave you to want, neglect, and sorrow."

The old man's frame quivered, and the tears gushed from his eyes, unbidden.

But we must draw a veil over this scene, lest our words fail to picture it truly.

The daughter's love had its full reward. Mr. Cameron is still in his right mind. He is providing comfortably for Madeline and Agnes, who are happy. But Madeline cannot remain long here, she is sinking slowly, but surely. May no cloud darken the evening of her departing day!

THE TEMPERANCE TRACT.

"Do hush, will you, Poll! I'm sick to death of your eternal preach—preaching. Why can't you let me stay at home in peace, when I want to?"

The poor, dejected-looking creature, to whom this was addressed, in a half angry tone of voice, by a man past the prime of life, but whose disfigured face, and worn, patched, faded, and discoloured garments, showed that he had lived to little good purpose, shrunk away and became silent. She had, in one of those more sanguine moments, when even the drunkard's wife feels the impulses of hope stirring in her bosom, ventured to speak a word suggestive of reform. It was but a little word, and spoken with hesitation, and an effort to throw much tenderness into the tone of her voice. But it was met, as has been seen, by a quick, impatient repulse.

Job Williams, that was the man's name, whose selfish indulgence of a mere sensual appetite had reduced himself and family, to a state of indigence and degradation, was not a man of bad temper, nor disposed, even when under the influence of liquor, to quarrel with his family, or personally abuse them. But no one who is conscious of doing wrong, and, thereby injuring another, likes to be

told of that wrong by the one injured, particularly if he have not resolution enough to change his course of life. Especially is a drunkard sensitive in regard to his wife—the one most injured, and the one, therefore, who has most cause to complain. He cannot bear anything from her. This was Job's state of mind. Whenever his wife said a word, he grew impatient, and generally silenced her by a reply something like the above.

On the occasion now introduced to the reader's notice, Job had come home from the tavern quite early in the evening, a thing unusual with him, for he had gained that stage in his downward course at which he could find no pleasure at home, for home presented to his eyes too many rebuking images. The reason of his having left a place so attractive as the tavern and his boon companions, for so unattractive a place as home and his sad-faced wife and neglected children, we will briefly state. While engaged with an old crony in a game of dominoes, with his third glass half emptied by his side, the door of the bar-room slowly opened, and a thin, haggard-looking creature entered and glanced slowly, but keenly about the room. She could not have been over twenty-five, although something more than years had marked her face with strong lines, thinned her young cheek, and caused her bright eyes to shrink far back into their sockets. Her dark, uncombed hair, fell in tangled masses about her neck and shoulders, from beneath a faded bonnet that had once been of rich material. An old, much worn, and soiled shawl of fine Cashmere, was drawn loosely about her person, and seemed to have been thrown on

hurriedly, and without any thought of its appearance. Her face had once been beautiful, and it still bore traces of loveliness, which not even the sad change that suffering or crime had wrought, could efface. As she came into the room, she paused, and looked steadily around from face to face, evidently in search of some one.

"That 's Phil Rigby's wife, I declare!" whispered the companion of Job Williams. "Deuce take the women! why don't they stay at home? If my wife was to come after me in that way once, she 'd never want to do it again, I know!"

While this was uttering, the individual who had entered, and whose peculiar appearance instantly excited the interests of all, continued her earnest examination of every face in the room. A short, half-restrained sigh, or rather sob, attested her disappointment on concluding this scrutiny. She then walked up to the bar-keeper, and asked in a voice, loud enough to be heard by all, if Mr. Rigby had been there during the evening.

"Has any one seen Phil Rigby, to-night?" called out the bar-keeper, in a loud, careless voice.

"No"—"No"—"He 's not been here this evening," were replied from various parts of the room.

With a disappointed air, the young creature turned away, and walked towards the door. There she paused, as if but half satisfied that him she sought was not there, looked slowly and steadily around for some moments, and then passed out of sight.

"Thunder and scissors! who 's that?" cried

the tavern-keeper, as soon as the apparition had vanished.

"That 's Phil Rigby's wife," replied one of the company.

"Phil Rigby's *wife!* Oh, no. That cannot be!" returned another. "She isn't broken down like that, surely. Why, five years ago, when Clara Barker married Rigby, she was the loveliest creature I ever saw, and her heart was as light as the wing of a humming bird, as Rigby himself often used to say. Oh, no. You must be mistaken. That cannot be his *wife!*"

"Yes, but it is, though," persisted the other. "I know her well enough. Rigby has thrown himself to the dogs, and reduced his wife to the external condition you have just seen. What the state of her heart is—how it appears—how many moss-covered ruins, or sharp, bare fragments of newly-shattered hopes are there, God only knows!"

"Hush, will you, Shea!" said the tavern-keeper pettishly, to a short, bloated, tattered specimen of a grog-shop lounger, who had risen to his feet, warmed into eloquence by the scene that had just passed, and his recollection of the better days of the heart-broken wife who had just turned away, disappointed in her vain search for her husband. His fine broad forehead, and brightly sparkling eyes, showed that there was mind and fire within him. And his mellowed voice, as it rose in his expression of the sentiment just uttered, and his chaste, poetical, strongly enunciated and finely modulated words, indicated his power over language as a medium of communicating thought. Indicated, in fact, the man of education and fine

talents, enslaved, polluted, degraded by habitual intoxication.

The tavern-keeper's rebuke did not have its desired effect. Shea's mind, where fire slumbered as in the flint, had been struck, and the sparks had kindled up a blaze of thoughts, ideas, and images that were not to be left to go out for want of utterance. Turning quickly towards the man who had imperatively enjoined silence, he eyed him for a moment keenly and contemptuously, and then said:

"O yes! The wolf, as his fangs entered the tender breast of the lamb, might well grow indignant because it uttered the natural language of pain! Or, because another half expiring victim joined in a wail of sympathy! Hush, will you? No! I will not hush!"—And the excited individual moved towards the centre of the room. "While we stand patiently and let you drain away the blood that animates our system, it is all well enough—but when our exhausted vitals begin to throb—when nature reacts upon wrong with pain, and we cry out, we are commanded to keep silence! If I were to keep silence now, the very stones would cry out!"

As Shea said this, the tavern-keeper, whose face had grown dark with anger, strode towards him with a look of determination. He was a large strong man, and could have handled the physically exhausted inebriate as if he had been a boy of ten. But Job Williams, and two or three others, with whom Shea was a favourite, and who had been touched as he had been by the entrance of the woman, instantly sprang forwards, and ordered the

tavern-keeper to keep his hands off of him at his peril. Not wishing to quarrel with so large a number of his good customers, the man paused; and then retired, muttering to himself, behind his counter. As he did so, the half-sobered individual, whose natural burst of sympathy had at first irritated him, said, stretching forth his arm, and assuming the attitude of an orator:

"Look at that poor creature, who has just flitted before our eyes, the pale mockery of what she was a few years ago! I knew her, when innocence, beauty and love, beamed from her countenance. When her heart was a mirror, whose clear surface had never been obscured by the image of anything that was not bright and lovely. Look at her now!—and ask yourselves what demon has breathed upon her his withering breath? Who has blighted the sweet blossoms that sprung upon her path, and strewn along the way she has now to tread with naked feet, thorns and thistles, and sharp stones to lacerate them? It is the Demon of the Still! Yes, fellow-sufferers! the Demon of the Still has wrought this ruin. But is Clara Rigby the only victim? Alas!" And the speaker's voice trembled; but came up full and clear in a moment. "Alas! Would to Heaven it were so? But I know one darkened hearth—one house made desolate—one heart more than crushed—aye!—*more than crushed*—BROKEN! There is a little mound, covered not with flowers, but the long rank grass that springs up wildly, in a secluded enclosure, close upon the borders of our city, beneath which sleeps"—again his voice trembled,—choked—but rallied once more—"Sleeps, did I

say? Yes, thank Heaven! sleeps sweetly and unconsciously now,—one who loved me—yes, loved the effigy of humanity you see here,—and I promised solemnly to love, cherish, and keep her until life's last sand should follow its fallen brethren. Did I keep that vow? That grass-covered mound"—his voice sunk into a low, exquisitely touching murmur—"tells the sad history. No!"—with quick, reviving energy; "*I broke her heart!!* I?—No—no" and again his voice fell into the same tone of tenderness—"it was not I! I loved her too well! But the Demon of the Still possessed me fully, until I became a mere automaton in his hands, and he wrought the ruin!"

Just at this moment a man entered hastily; he was one of the nightly frequenters of that den of pollution. He seemed agitated.

"What do you think?" he said in an excited voice. "Phil Rigby has drowned himself! They have just recovered his body. I saw it a moment ago."

This intelligence was like an electric shock to each one of that company of inebriates, for there was not one present who did not indulge in the vice of drinking to excess. A deep, solemn, thrilling silence, followed the startling enunciation—startling, coming as it did, upon a state of peculiar excitement. This was broken by Shea, who said in a husky voice,

"*It was rum that killed him,—accursed rum!* Another victim has fallen! Whose turn will it be next? God help us!"

As he uttered this last sentence, in a tone of

deep despondency, his feelings broke down, and he burst into tears.

Williams, who had been startled by the apparition of Mrs. Rigby, and much affected by what Shea had said, could bear no more. He rose up and strode hastily out of the tavern—an example followed by nearly all, leaving the landlord and his man alone with their bottles, and their not very pleasant thoughts. It was nearly two hours earlier than Job Williams was in the habit of going home. To return to his family, would very naturally attract attention, and of all things Job disliked to have his wife's attention drawn towards him. And, besides, to sit for two long hours amid the rebuking evidences of his wanton abuse of his family, was an ordeal he had no wish to pass through. But where could he go? He had no more taste for the pleasures of the bowl, that night. The thought of Rigby, and the thought of his own miserable condition, made him turn from these with a shudder.

For nearly half an hour he wandered about, or stood lingering and irresolute at the corners of the streets, reluctant to go home, and yet anxious to shrink away there and hide himself, if possible, even from his own thoughts.

"My friend, you seem to be in trouble," said a mild voice at his side, as he stood not far from his miserable abode, in this undetermined mood, leaning against a post, with his eyes upon the ground.

Williams started, and looked up. A stranger was beside him. The intrusion worried him, and he said pettishly—

"I didn't tell you that I was"—

"There is a language as easily understood as spoken words," replied the intruder in the same mild voice. "I have been used to reading that language, and am never deceived. But don't be angry—I want to do you good. You are in trouble, and I can help you out of your trouble."

"Indeed!" returned Job, half contemptuously "And pray what ails me?"

"What once ailed me, but of which, happily, have been cured. Do you understand?"

"No! how should I understand?" returned Job impatiently.

"Too much drink. That, I am afraid, is the evil. From that springs your present trouble. Isn't it so?" and the man laid his hand upon the drunkard's arm familiarly.

At this Williams became very angry. "I won't allow any man to insult me," he said, with as much sternness as he could assume, turning quickly away as he spoke, and striding off; not, however, before the stranger had dexterously slipped a small pamphlet, or tract, into his pocket.

"That may do some good in a sober moment, perhaps," the benevolent individual murmured, as he gazed after the wretched inebriate, hurriedly escaping from his well-meant admonitions and proffered good offices.

"The devil has broken loose to-night, I believe!" muttered Job Williams, as he walked on in the direction of home, where he soon arrived, opened the door without pausing, and went in. His wife, who was seated near a small stand, and engaged in sewing by a dim light, the best she could afford, lifted her eyes as her husband entered. Her look of

surprise did not escape, nor fail to annoy him. But she said nothing, and he seated himself, gloomily, in a far corner of the room.

Poor Mrs. Williams's heart instantly began to beat quicker, her hand to tremble, and her bosom to labour oppressively. For her husband to return home at that early hour was something so unusual, that its occurrence plainly indicated some change in him, whether for good or bad, she dared not permit herself to imagine. Years had passed away since he had been pursuing his downward course, and often during that long period of trial, had there been seasons when the wretched man would pause, and resolve to change the whole course of his life. But these seasons had always been of short duration, and followed, invariably, by relapses into lower and more degraded states of abandonment. Notwithstanding this, and the longer and longer periods that intervened between these lucid moments, they never occurred, that Mrs. Williams did not permit her heart to grow buoyant with hope—soon, alas! to sink into deep despondency. It was now more than a year since her husband had shown the least disposition to give up his degrading indulgence, and during that time, he had sunk more rapidly than ever. He had, in the last few months, grown almost entirely regardless of his family, leaving upon her nearly the whole burden of their support. Wasted and weakened by sickness, privation, and toil far beyond her strength, Mrs. Williams found her increased duties more than she could bear. Daily she perceived that her strength was wasting away, and that she was growing less and less able to perform her

accumulating tasks. This being the case, her mind caught eagerly at even the feeblest glimpse of a change in her husband; and in spite of former disappointments, she soon permitted herself to hope that his earlier return was a good omen.

Buried in his own troubled and accusing thoughts, Williams had remained for about half an hour, when his wife, anxious to know his state of mind, ventured to say—

"Job, won't you stay home now, every night? It will be so much better, and I know you will be happier."

It was this that called forth the half-angry rebuke with which our story opens. As it was uttered, and Williams arose to his feet with a frown upon his brow, and commenced walking the floor, his poor wife's heart sunk heavily in her bosom. She trembled, lest he should leave the house, and return to his cups and his companions, driven there by what she had said.

Dropping her eyes quickly that had been lifted to his face with a tender expression, she resumed her task. In a little while, the tears blinded her so that she could not see to guide her needle. Hard had been her struggle to repress these, lest the sight of them, as they had often done before, should cause him to leave the house. To prevent his now seeing them, she turned herself partly from the light, and continued to move her hand backwards and forwards, as if still sewing, although she did not take a single stitch.

The instant Williams had spoken, he repented of his words. But he could not recall them, though he wished to do so. He was not prepared to

humble himself thus before his wife, nor to make the promises of amendment, which she would of course expect him to make, if he did so. He kept his eye, however, upon her, to see the effect of his words. Her little *ruse* did not deceive him. He saw that she was weeping, and yet doing her best to conceal from him her tears. This smote him heavily, and caused him severe self-reproaches. But still, he could not take back what he had said. He was not yet prepared for that—although he wished that he had kept silence, or replied to her words in a less harsh manner.

Nothing further was said by either. After awhile, Mrs. Williams regained control over her feelings, and went on with her work in a more efficient manner; and Job resumed the chair he had left, and again relapsed into a gloomy reverie. Thus silently passed the rest of the evening, when the unhappy husband and wife retired to bed. But it was a long time before either of them slept. His mind was excited by what had passed in the tavern, and as he had not taken over one half of his usual potations, his nervous system was less inert than usual. These causes combined to keep him awake many hours, during which time thoughts that he in vain strove to shut out from his mind, pressed themselves upon him, and racked him with consequent self-reproaches. While his wife, from newly awakened hopes, feeble though they were, over which her mind brooded, and upon which fancy built airy castles of happiness, was alike unable, until a late hour, to find rest in unconscious sleep. At last, however, both their troubled hearts were quiet.

By day dawn, Mrs. Williams arose, and after taking up and dressing her three youngest children, (the rest of a family of seven, had been thrust out into the world to provide for themselves in hard service at tender ages)—prepared their frugal morning meal. Job got up about an hour after his wife, with wretched feelings. He eat sparingly, for he had but little appetite, and then went out. His usual direction, when he first left home in the morning, was, by the nearest route, towards the drinking house in which we have already seen him. This his wife knew, and she could not help looking out at the window, to see whether he would take this direction now. The feeble ray, that had been glimmering in her mind went out, as she saw him turn without pausing, in the old way that led to the City of Destruction. A deep sigh struggled up from her bosom. She looked around upon her meagerly-clad, neglected, abused children, for whom she had again permitted herself to hope, only to be again more bitterly disappointed; and the sight melted her to tears.

"Poor little ones!" she murmured, as she seated herself and began her daily toil. At this moment the door was opened, and a child entered, who looked as if she might be about eleven years of age. She was coarsely clad, with uncombed hair, soiled clothes, and dirty skin. Her eyes were red and swollen, as if she had been crying.

"Why Julia!" exclaimed Mrs. Williams, in a tone of surprise, as the little girl came in, "What is the matter? Why have you come home?"

The child burst into tears, and while still weeping, showed her arms, shoulders, and back, which

were of a dark, angry purple, with the skin here and there slightly broken, and small lines of blood distinctly marked in various places.

"What has done this?" asked the mother, for this was her child, in a voice of assumed calmness.

"They beat me almost to death," was the sobbing reply.

"Why did they beat you, Julia?"

"They sent me to carry the big lamp down into the kitchen, and I fell and broke it all to pieces. And then they beat me oh, so long!" was the artless reply, the large tears continuing to roll over her young cheeks.

With an emotion that she could not control, the mother threw her arms around her child, and drew her to her breast, and held her there in silent anguish of spirit. What could she say? What could she do?

"You won't make me go back, will you, mother?" Julia at length asked, disengaging herself from her mother's arms. "I don't want to go back. They will whip me again, for coming away; and I don't want to be whipped any more, they whip me so hard—and it hurts me so bad."

"No, my child, you shall not go back there again," Mrs. Williams replied in a resolute voice.

"But won't father make me go back?" said Julia—"You know he made me go there, when you didn't want me to go?"

"He won't make you go back, when he knows how badly you have been treated"—was the mother's assurance, although she had little expectation that her child would receive from her father

any consideration. This quieted Julia's mind. Her tears ceased to flow, and she felt happier by her mother's side, than she had felt for many weeks.

In the meantime, Job Williams walked on in the direction usually taken every morning, scarcely conscious of what he was doing, until the tempting signs of good cheer met his eye as he looked up, and found himself within a few steps of the tavern he daily and nightly frequented. Suddenly pausing, he said, half aloud—

"Where am I going? not here, surely!" and turning about quickly, he retraced his steps for about half a square, and then took another street. Along this he walked for some distance, with his eyes upon the pavement. At last he turned into an old frame building and went up stairs. This was a large cabinet-ware manufacturing establishment, in which he worked a few hours every day, when he was sober enough to work. It was the proceeds of this labour that enabled him to pay for the large quantity of liquor it daily took to quench his inordinate thirst.

"Hallo, Job!" cried one of the workmen, as he entered, "What 's broke loose now? Has old Fleecetoper's groggery been burnt up or blown down, that you are routed out at this time of day?"

Williams made no reply, but went to his bench and commenced work.

"Why, look here, old fellow!" said another, with some surprise in his tone of voice, "I heard you were pulled out of the dock last night, dead as a herring. Let me see! Is this Job Williams or his ghost?" taking hold of his shoulders, and

turning him roughly around as he spoke. "Veritable flesh and blood, as I live! And so it isn't all up with you, as I supposed? Well, I'm glad of it, Job. A living ass is better than a dead lion, any day. Ha! ha!"

"Oh, no, it was not Job that took to water, at last," interrupted another, "it was Phil Rigby."

"Not Phil Rigby?" said one of the former speakers.

"Yes, Phil Rigby. He was away from home all day yesterday, and last night his body was discovered floating in an eddy among the docks. Poor fellow! he had the best heart in the world!"

"To abuse and beggar the sweet girl he made his wife, a few years ago," was the reply to this. "Don't tell me that a man who will do that has a good heart. I saw her in the street, a few days ago, shrinking along, as if afraid to be seen by some old friend or acquaintance, and the change in her from what it used to be, made me sick to think about. A good-hearted man never abuses a lovely woman in that way."

"Well! well!" retorted the other, somewhat impatiently, "they'll settle that matter between themselves, now, I suppose. For they're both gone the same road. When his dead body was brought in, it is said that she uttered one long, wild, strange cry of agony, and sunk to the floor. She never spoke again. Long before midnight she was with her husband."

"I hope not!" ejaculated a workman who had listened in silence, and with compressed lips, to what had been said.

"Why?" was the prompt inquiry.

"Drunken husbands, and abused wives, don't go to the same place, it is to be hoped."

No one replied to this,—the only remark made, was the ejaculation, as the different workmen separated with changed, and somewhat saddened feelings,

"Accursed infatuation!"

All knew Phil Rigby and his wife, and had known them for years. She had been at one time a belle among them—and a particular favourite. The one whose emphatic "I hope not!" with his subsequent remark, closed the conversation, had loved her devotedly. But she had declined his offer, and accepted the hand of Rigby. He never married. This fact was known to all—and this was why his words were received in silence. All sympathized with him, and understood his feelings.

Instead of leaving his work several times during the morning to go out and get a drink, Williams, whenever the desire for liquor began to be felt, quenched it in copious draughts of water from the shop can. Although he did this, still, there was, in his mind, no settled determination to enter upon a reform of his evil habit. He did not, in fact, purpose anything. The incidents of the last night had startled his mind into a new and vivid perception of the evils of drunkenness, and under this state, rendered more impressive by the clearer action of his mind upon a body not stupified by liquor, he refrained from present indulgence. For the future he had no promises to make. He did not definitely resolve to remain sober a single hour. When dinner time came, he laid aside his tools,

took off his apron and put on his tattered coat, and then proceeded homeward.

Mrs. Williams had waited for the return of her husband with a good deal of anxiety. She could not give up the faint hope that had been awakened in her mind by his early return and comparative sobriety on the preceding evening. And she was, moreover, anxious to see what effect the presence of Julia, and the knowledge of her cruel treatment would have upon him. If he should come home as much in liquor as usual, she knew that she would have a strong contest with him in regard to the child; for he would at once say that she had been careless, and bad, and deserved all she had received—and that she must be sent back again. When she heard his footsteps at the door, and his hand upon the latch, her heart almost ceased to beat. He entered, a single glance took a mountain weight from her bosom. He had not tasted a drop since morning! Her eye never deceived her in regard to a question like this. It was, alas! too well educated. The presence of Julia caused Williams some surprise, and he asked why she was at home. His brow slightly contracted when her mother related the reason of her return, and the pitiable condition in which she had found her. But he said nothing. What could he say? What right had he to say anything? A state of sobriety left his mind too clear in regard to the true relation he bore to his family, to permit him to express indignation at the treatment his child had received. Had he been less selfishly given up to a base indulgence of a mere appetite, that little girl would never have been

forced out among strangers at so tender an age. He felt this. But as he had not made up his mind to abandon that indulgence, and could promise nothing, therefore, he said nothing. It would have been but the mockery of words, and he was too sane to offer this.

After dinner, he returned to the shop, and worked until night. Then he came home again, still sober; but as the time approached when he regularly met a few old cronies at the tavern, to play dominoes, drink, and enjoy some lively chit chat, he began to feel the usual inclination to meet them. Home was, at the best, a very dull place. There was nothing there to interest him, or make him feel at all comfortable. After supper he took his hat, and walked out as usual. To this hour his wife had looked with peculiar anxiety. If he should remain at home, then there would be some surer ground of hope. But, mind and body both sunk down, almost nerveless, as he took up his hat and went out, without uttering a word. "Despair is never quite despair." There was still something left for the poor wife to build upon. He might return early, as he had done on the night before, and as then, unstupified by drink. But hour after hour passed, and he did not come. The loud, hoarse cry of the watchman, "Past ten o'clock!" at length fell upon her ear like the sound of a death knell.

"All hope is vain!" she murmured, letting her work fall into her lap, and pressing one hand to her aching side. But a thought of her little ones —of Julia's bruised and lacerated back,—soon aroused her. With a half-uttered groan, she

looked for a moment upon the poor couch where her four sleeping children were huddled together, and then resumed her toil, though her head and chest ached so that she could scarcely endure the pain.

When Job Williams went out, it was with the intention of going directly to the tavern where he had been on the evening previous; he had walked nearly half the distance, when a thought of the death of Rigby passed through his mind, and caused him to pause suddenly, as the whole scene and impressions of the last night came up before him with startling distinctness. Slowly turning off by another street, he wandered away, he thought not whither. He was more wretched than he had been for a very long time. For nearly an hour he walked first down one street, and then up another, until he finally came back near to the place he had started from, more than half resolved to go to the tavern, as he had first intended, and take at least one glass, to make him feel better. Habit and inclination prevailed. He reached the door of the drinking house, and entered without allowing himself time to reflect. Here he found nearly the same company with whom he had mingled on the previous evening. Shea, too, was there, notwithstanding the warning death of his friend and his friend's wife, and the sentiments he had poured forth on the night before. And notwithstanding the little breeze that had sprung up between the tavern-keeper and some of his customers, that individual was as smiling, as jocular, and as attentive as ever.

Williams, Shea, and three others, then present,

usually took a glass together, in a small room adjoining the bar, every evening, and, there chatted and smoked for an hour, replenishing their glasses in the mean time, as often as they deemed it necessary. Into this they all now retired, ordering, as they did so, cigars and a bottle of ale a-piece. As they entered this room, Williams, in taking his handkerchief from his pocket, drew out some thing which fell to the floor, and was instantly picked up by Shea.

"Hallo! what's this, Job?" he said, as he lifted a small pamphlet.

"I'm sure, I don't know—where did it come from?"

"Out of your pocket."

"No, I reckon not."

"Yes it did, though. I saw it drop this moment."

"I didn't put it there, then, that's all I've got to say; but what is it, any how?"

"Let me see." And Shea held it to the light, and read—"*A voice from the Alms House!*"

"The devil! Well, as I'm on that road, I should like to learn what this voice says. What say you, gents? Suppose I read it for the information of all. I believe we are alike candidates for graduation at that school, and therefore interested."

No objection being made, Shea drew up to a light, opened the pamphlet, and commenced reading aloud. It proved to be a temperance tract, containing a temperance narrative or story; but this did not appear in the first of it, so that before its drift was discovered, the whole party had become so much interested, as not to be driven off by its gradual development of facts and sentiments

bearing very hard upon them and the life they were leading. Strange to say, the bottles of ale which had been brought in some time after the story was commenced, remained untouched, while each ear drank in the exciting narrative, which was read with fine effect by Shea. The reading of it consumed more than half an hour. When the last leaf was turned, Job Williams, said, rising to his feet and wiping his eyes,

"Well, after all, ain't we a set of most cursed fools! I wish I had died before I ever saw a glass of liquor!"

"Amen to that!" responded one of the party.

Another lifted a little bell and rung it in a decided manner.

"Take away these bottles and glasses," he said to the bar-tender, who had instantly obeyed the call.

No one opposed this order. In a little while the table was cleared, and they all sat round it, looking at each other with serious faces.

"And now, what is to be done?" asked Williams.

"Take another road," replied Shea. "I don't like the sound of that '*voice.*'"

"Which road?"

"To Jefferson Hall, and sign the pledge."

"Agreed," fell as one voice from every lip.

"Come then!" and Shea arose and led the way. All arose likewise, and all followed him, unhesitatingly, not only from that little room, but, in silent procession, from the house. No word was spoken, as they marched with a determined air on the road they had chosen to go. A brisk walk of

ten minutes brought them to Jefferson Hall. Without pausing they entered, asked for the secretary, took the book, and each signed his name, with a resolute hand, to a pledge of total abstinence.

"Redeemed, emancipated, and disenthralled!" shouted Shea, in a clear, glad, eloquent voice, as the last name was signed. "Thank Heaven! I feel like a man again."

This expressed not his feelings alone, but the feelings of all. It was, to each one of that little company, a happier hour than had been experienced for years.

Mrs. Williams, as we have seen, resumed her wearying toil, with pain in her head and chest, and a severer pain in her heart, after a brief struggle with her feelings on bidding adieu to the last glimmer of her newly awakened hope. She had bent down over her work only a few moments, when the door opened, and her husband entered. She only half glanced towards him, for she did not wish to look upon the confirmation of her worst fears. He was, of course, intoxicated, as he always was, when he came in at that hour. Still, she was more agitated than usual, and her hand trembled so that she could scarcely hold her needle. For a moment or two he stood behind her. But she did not turn towards him. Then he took a chair, and placed it close beside hers. This caused her to lift her eyes suddenly, and with surprise.

"Look at that, Polly," he said, handing her a piece of paper, as he seated himself in the chair—"and tell me what you think of it."

It was his pledge.

The startled wife reached out and eagerly clutched the paper, with her trembling hands.

"God in Heaven be praised!" she ejaculated, as her distended eyes took in its meaning, sinking nervelessly forward upon the table by which she sat.

"Yes, let Him be praised," Williams returned solemnly; "for his hand is in it."

Enough has now been told. The reader's imagination can supply the rest. The fire that came suddenly down upon that darkened and desolate hearth, did not again go out. There is warmth and light there still—happy hearts and cheerful faces.

WHAT SHALL I DO?

"You won't go out this stormy evening," Mrs. Merrill said to her husband, who had commenced putting on his overcoat.

"If I can do any good, I shall not care for the rain," Mr. Merrill replied, cheerfully, as he buttoned his coat up close to his chin.

"But the wind drives the rain so. You will be wet through."

"No matter. I am neither butter nor salt," smilingly returned the husband. "Don't you remember that it was just such a night as this, two years ago, that a good Samaritan picked me up in the street, and took me to Union Hall?"

The tears were glistening in the eyes of the wife as she replied,

"Go, Harry, if you think you can do any good. I should be the last to object."

Mr. Merrill kissed, tenderly, the cheek of his wife, who was still in the bloom of young womanhood, and then taking his hat and cane, went forth. It was indeed a stormy night. The wind came rushing along with a dismal howl, and the rain fell heavily. But few persons were in the street, and they were hurrying homeward, anxious to escape the war of elements.

"The storm is heavy, sure enough. I shall not find many at the Hall," Merrill said, half aloud, as he walked quickly along. His way was through a part of the town inhabited by persons of the poorer class. In almost every block of this section, were to be found one or two little taverns, with either a glaring red curtain, or an inviting transparent sign, telling of the good cheer within. From many of these was heard the loud laugh, or the bacchanalian song, and, as they fell upon the ear of Merrill, he sighed for his infatuated fellow men, who sought brief and exciting sensual pleasures, at the expense of health, character, and happiness. Sometimes he would pause, half tempted to go in among them, and beseech them to stop in their career of folly, ere it was too late. But the recollection of several fruitless efforts of the kind, caused him to forbear.

Just about the time that Merrill left his house, a little scene was passing in an humble tenement, that stood directly in his way to Union Hall, whither he was going. To a spectator acquainted with all the circumstances, that scene would have been a very affecting one. There was a sick child upon a bed, and the father and mother standing beside it. The mother looked anxious and careworn; the father's face had a troubled expression. All around indicated poverty.

"Her fever is much higher. It has increased rapidly during the last hour," said the mother, looking earnestly in her husband's face.

"Hadn't I better go for Dr. R——?"

"Hetty is very sick. But we havn't settled

the last bill yet, and I don't like to see Dr. R—— until that is paid."

The husband said nothing in reply to this, but stood looking down upon his sick child, with something stupid in his gaze. At length the young sufferer began to toss about, and moan, and show painful symptoms of internal distress.

"I'm afraid she's dangerous," murmured the mother.

"I will go for the doctor. We cannot see our child die, even if his bill is not paid." As the father said this, he took up his hat, and moved towards the door.

"It storms dreadfully, James, and we have no umbrella."

The wife laid her hand upon her husband's arm, and spoke earnestly.

"No matter. I'm not afraid of the rain. I've stood many a worse night than this."

"Suppose you wait awhile, James. Perhaps she will be better." And the wife's hand still rested on her husband's arm. "I don't like to have you go out."

"O, that's nothing. I don't care for the rain. Hetty is very ill, and we ought to call in the doctor by all means."

Seeing that he was in earnest about going, she said, looking with a tender, half-imploring expression into his face—

"You'll come right back again, James?"

"Certainly I will. Do you think I'd remain away, and Hetty so sick?"

"Well, do come home as quick as you can. And don't stop anywhere,—will you?"

"No—no. Never fear."

And he went out, leaving the mother alone with her sick child.

Without pausing an instant, he pursued his way steadily along, bowing his head to the pelting storm, and sometimes cringing, as the fierce gusts drove suddenly against him. In about ten minutes he reached the doctor's office, and found him absent, but expected in momently. He sat down, dripping with wet, to await his return; but soon grew restless.

"I'll come back in a few minutes," he at length said to the attendant, rising and going out. Again on the street, he seemed irresolute. At first he stood thoughtfully, and then moved on a few paces. There was, evidently, a struggle going on in his mind. Some propensity was pleading hard for indulgence, while reason was arguing strongly on the other side. This debate continued for some time, he walking on for a short distance, and then stopping to reflect, until he found himself in front of a small tavern, with a tempting display of liquors in the window.

"I'll take just one glass,—and no more," he said, to himself.

"But, you know, if you touch a drop, you will never leave that house sober," spoke a voice within his own bosom.

This made him hesitate. But a depraved appetite urged him on to self-indulgence, and he was about placing his hand upon the door to enter, when the image of his sick child came up before him so vividly that he started back, uttering aloud, in the sad consciousness of inability to struggle

against the fierce thirst that was overpowering him—

"What shall I do?"

As he said this, a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice said—

"Sign the pledge."

The man turned in surprise. Our friend Merrill stood before him.

"Come with me, and I'll tell you what to do," he said, in a cheerful, encouraging voice.

"It 's no use. I can't keep it," was despondingly answered.

"But you can keep it. I'll go bond for that. Hundreds, nay, thousands, have done so, and I am sure you will not be the only exception. So come along. I'm just on my way to Union Hall, and have the pledge book here under my arm."

"My child is sick, and I must go for the doctor."

"What doctor?"

"Doctor R——."

"Just in the way. It won't take you three minutes."

"If I thought there was any use in it. But I've tried to reform too many times. I can't do it. I'm afraid I'm too far gone. Heaven help me! What shall I do?"

There was something very desponding in the man's voice as he spoke.

"Don't listen for a moment to such suggestions," returned Merrill. "They are from an enemy. If you have tried to reform and failed in the attempt, it is because you have not tried in the right way."

He had already drawn his arm within that of

the poor desponding drunkard, and they were walking away from the charmed spot that had well nigh proved fatal to a wavering resolution.

"Last Thursday night," Merrill went on to say, "no less than twenty signed the pledge, and at least five of them were more deeply enslaved than I can believe you to be. We found them in the street, and brought them in, and now they are sober men, and will remain so. It appears like a miracle; but we have seen hundreds and hundreds of such miracles. They are occurring every day."

By this time they had reached the Hall, and Merrill, pausing, said,

"This is the place. Come in with me and sign the pledge, and you are safe."

But the man held back. The thought of giving up his liberty—of binding himself down by a solemn pledge, not even to taste a drop of the pleasant drink that was so sweet to his lips, made him hesitate. The pleadings of appetite for a little more indulgence was strong.

"You are teetotallers?" he at length said.

"Certainly. Our pledge covers the whole ground," Merrill replied. "For such as you, there is no hope but in total abstinence. Do you think it possible for you to drink a glass of wine, beer, or cider, without having your desire for stronger liquors so excited as to render your further abstinence impossible? Think! Have you never tried to 'regulate' yourself?"

"O, yes. Many and many a time!"

"You have tried two glasses of beer a day?"

"Yes."

"And before three days were intoxicated?"

"It is, alas! too true. Sometimes, in an hour after I took the first glass of beer."

"Then it must be total abstinence, or nothing. In this lies your only ground of safety. Come, then, and put your hand to the pledge that makes you a freeman. Come! The rain is drenching us to the skin while we stand here. Come, sign at once, and go home with medicine for your child and joy for the heart of your poor wife. Come, my friend. Now is the great turning point in your life. Health, prosperity, happiness are welcoming you with smiles on one side; sickness, poverty, and wretchedness are on the other. Just two years ago I stood on this very spot, urged as I am now urging you to sign; I yielded at last, and have been prospered ever since. I have plenty at home, and plenty with content. Before, all was wretchedness. Come then, my friend—come with us, and we will do thee good!"

"Yes, come," said a third person, pausing at the door of Union Hall, just at the moment and taking hold of the poor man's arm.

The slight impulse of the hand upon his arm, decided his wavering resolution. He went in with them, and going up between them to the secretary's desk, put his hand to the pledge.

"There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance," said the president of the meeting in a serious voice. "My friend, you have all Heaven on your side, for Heaven is on the side of good resolutions. Look up and be strong. They that are for you are more than all who are against you."

A thrill of pleasure ran through the soul of the redeemed inebriate, such as he had not known for a long, long time. He left the Hall, feeling more like a man than he had felt for six years, and hurried away to the office of Dr. R——. The doctor was in, but, at first, seemed little inclined to go out on so stormy a night, especially to visit the family of a man who drank up his earnings and neglected to pay his bills.

"I will call round in the morning, Simpson. It rains too hard to-night."

"But my little girl is very sick. She might die before morning."

"No danger. I'll be round early."

"But doctor, I wish you would see her to-night. We feel very much troubled."

"No doubt," the doctor returned, a little petulantly. "You are anxious enough to see me when anything is the matter; but as soon as all is straight again, I'm never thought of."

"But you shall be thought of, doctor. I know I have not treated you well; but hereafter you shall not have cause to complain."

"I don't know, Simpson. Men like you are always full of fair promises. But a sight of the next tavern makes you forget them all."

"I know—I know. But there'll be nothing more of that. See!" And he drew from his bosom a neatly-folded paper, and handed it to the doctor, who took it and glanced his eye over its contents.

"Ha! What is this? A pledge?"

"Yes, doctor."

"When was this done?"

"To-night. Not ten minutes ago."

"And are you really in earnest, Simpson?"

"I feel like dying by that pledge. It was hard to take; but now that it is taken, I will never violate it. I feel that I can stand by it like a man."

"Go home, Simpson," replied Dr. R——, in a changed voice, as he handed him back his pledge. "Go home, and tell your wife that I will be there in ten minutes. Good-bye, and stand by your pledge."

"I will do it, doctor."

On his way home, Simpson did not notice a single one of the tempting red curtains, and bottles of liquor that filled so many windows. He thought only of his wife, and the heart he was about to make happy.

The joy that filled the bosom of the poor wife, who had begun sadly to fear that her husband, whose weakness she too well knew, had been tempted to take a glass on his way to the doctor's office, need not be described. It was deep, trembling, and full of thankfulness to Him, who is the Great Restorer of all things to order from disorder. Even though her child remained ill through the night, she felt a warmth of joy in her heart such as she had not known for many years.

In a few weeks, everything about the person and dwelling of Simpson became remarkably changed. He was a good workman, and could earn fair wages at his trade. Instead of idling half of his time, and spending more than half of what he earned in drink, he worked all of his time, and placed in the hands of his prudent wife

every dollar he made. This accounted for the change.

Thus matters went on for nearly a year, when, the excitement of experience meetings, and other external means of keeping up an interest among the reformed men, and occupying their minds, having subsided, Simpson began to feel restless and lonesome, and was often strongly tempted to drop in to some of his old places of resort, and pass an evening in good fellowship with former associates.

Such thoughts always produced a feverish state; for a contest would arise in his mind between the truth, which he had obeyed for a year, and the specious, but false reasonings of inclination, and the force of old habits not yet eradicated. The consequence was, that Simpson became unhappy. He wanted something to interest him—some excitement to keep him up. He had told his own experience, and heard others relate theirs, until he was tired. That was well enough for a time; but it would not satisfy always. He had never been very fond of reading, and had not that resource, so elevating and strengthening to the mind, lifting it up into the higher regions of intellectual thought, instead of leaving it to sink down amid the mere allurements of sense.

As this state of dissatisfaction increased, Simpson became really more and more unhappy. He wanted something to sustain him. Something extra to his mere pledge. Deeply conscious of this, and conscious that he was in imminent danger of falling, he became anxious, gloomy, and desponding.

One evening, after sitting at home for an hour,

and reading over the newspaper of the day, even to the advertisements, he took his hat, and said—

"I believe I'll walk out for a little while. I feel so dull."

His wife looked up at him, and tried to smile. But, she felt troubled; for she had noticed, for some time, that he was not altogether himself What the cause was, she did not really know But a wife is never far wrong in her conjectures.

"You won't stay out long!" she merely said.

"O, no. I shall be back in a little while. I only want to take a short walk."

When Simpson left his house, he walked away, with his eyes upon the pavement, undetermined where he should go. He had gone out merely because he felt too restless to sit at home. Now that he was in the street, he was as dissatisfied as ever. Moving on with a slow, measured tread, he had gone for the distance of two or three squares, when his ear caught the sound of music issuing from a noted drinking establishment, but a short distance ahead. Quickening his pace, he was soon in front of the house, when he paused to listen. The music was from a hand organ, the owner of which had been paid a certain sum by the proprietor of the tavern to play him a number of tunes, as a means of drawing in customers. The plan succeeded to his entire satisfaction, and had like to have succeeded in enticing Simpson within the charmed circle of his bar-room. But, just as his hand was on the latch, his better sense came to his aid, and he tore himself away.

Walking on again, with his head down, he felt still more wretched. The danger he had just es-

caped, made him fearfully aware of the dangers that beset him on every side. So wrought up in mind did he become, under a sense of his condition, that, shuddering from a vivid picture of himself again an abandoned drunkard, which his imagination had conjured up, he stopped suddenly, and said, aloud,

"God help me! What shall I do?"

A hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice, that he had heard before, said, in surprised accents—

"Simpson! Is it you? What is the trouble now?"

It was Merrill, who had encountered him again, just at a critical moment. Simpson turned quickly when he felt the hand upon his shoulder, and looked into the face of the intruder half sternly.

"What ails you now, my friend?" resumed Merrill. "A good temperance man should never be in trouble of mind."

"You think so. Well, perhaps not."

"You 're a good temperance man."

"I am not so sure of it."

"What!" In a quick, surprised voice. "You have not broken ——"

"No, no. Not yet! But heaven only knows how soon I may do so. I am beset with temptations that it seems impossible for me to withstand."

"It was not so at first."

"No. The excitement of meetings, and concerts, and the relation of experiences, occupied my mind. But these have died away; and I am thrown back upon myself again—my weak, weak self. If I do not fall, it will be a miracle. I see

every tavern I pass in the streets, and think, spite of all my efforts to keep such things out of my mind, of the mixed liquors that would thrill upon my taste like nectar, which are there to be obtained. What shall I do? I feel as if evil spirits were leagued to destroy me, and that, unless I receive more than human strength, I will inevitably fall."

"And so you will," was the solemnly spoken reply.

"Merrill! Why do you speak so?" Simpson said, quickly. "You will drive me at once to destruction. I want encouragement, not a prophecy of ruin. You saved me once—cannot you do so again?"

"Do you remember what was said to you on the night you signed the pledge by our President?" asked Merrill.

"No. What was it?"

"'Look up and be strong! They that are for you are more than all who are against you.'"

"I had forgotten."

"You have not looked up then."

"How, up?"

"Up to Him who can alone give power to every good resolution. If you have been striving in your own strength, no wonder that you are on the eve of falling. External excitements and reasons of various kinds may sustain a reformed man for a time, but until he place his cause in the hands of the All-Powerful, he is in imminent danger."

"But how shall I do this? I am not a religious man."

"Why have you refrained from drinking?"

"Because it is a debasing vice; a vice that, if indulged, will beggar my family, as it has once, already, done."

"You must abstain from a higher motive."

"Can there be a higher one?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"To refrain from doing an evil act, because it is a sin against God, is a much higher motive, and one that will give a striving spirit power over all its enemies. You acknowledge a God?"

"O yes."

"And that he is ever present?"

"Yes."

"And a rewarder of them that diligently seek him?"

"So the Bible tells us."

"It is all true. Whatever power we have to oppose evil, is from Him. If we look to ourselves, and claim the little strength we possess as our own, we will too soon find that we are weakness itself. But, if we strive to act in all things from a religious principle—that is, in the acknowledgment that all we have is from the Lord, and in the endeavour to shun every evil of life because it is a sin against him, we will receive all the strength we need, no matter how deeply we may be tempted. From this hour, then, my friend, resolve to put your trust in Him who careth for you. After all, this is the reformed man's only hope. The pledge is a mere external, temporary safeguard, that must be superseded by a deeply-grounded religious principle, or he will be every

hour in danger of falling. We must be supported from the centre, and not from the circumference. The pledge is a hoop, that is liable at any time to break, but obedience to God is a strong attraction at the centre, holding in perpetual consistence all things that are arranged in just order around it. Will you not then look up?"

"I feel that it is my only hope."

"Take my solemn assurance that it is. Go home, and carry with you this truth, that if you will strive to act from the higher motive I have given you, all will be right."

It was, perhaps, half an hour from the time Simpson left his house, that he re-entered it. His wife looked up with some concern in her face as he came in. But a first glance dispelled the fears that had stolen over her spirit. Before going to bed that night, Simpson got the family Bible, and read a chapter aloud. In doing so, he felt a sweet tranquillity pervade his mind, such as he had not experienced for a long time. On the next day he tried to elevate his thoughts to the Power above in which he wished to put his trust. He found it much easier to do so than he had expected. It was not long before, in addition to the reading of a chapter in the evening, before retiring, a brief prayer was said. From that time, a deep religious sentiment took possession of the mind of Simpson. Light broke in upon him. He saw clearer the path before him, the dangers that surrounded him, and the way of escape. Some years have passed, and he is still a sober man. He does not think of his pledge, nor of the degradation of drunkenness as a reason for abstinence; but

deems it a sin against God to touch, taste, or handle that which would unfit him for those duties in life, which, as a man, he is bound to perform.

Let every reformed man look up to the same All-sustaining Source, and he is safe from danger.

JACK KETCH.

Not long since, under the sentence of his country's violated laws, a wretch, whose hand had been lifted against his fellow man, and imbrued in his blood, suffered death upon the gallows. Although the execution occurred in my native town, I did not go with the crowd to witness the solemn sacrifice made upon the altar of justice. My taste did not lie in that way.

I was not a little surprised, a day or two afterwards, on calling upon some ladies, at being interrogated on the subject of the execution, with the manifestation of no little interest. More particularly, as it soon appeared that the ladies had witnessed the appalling scene. It had excited their nerves to such a degree, that nothing which did not appertain in some way to the "hanging," possessed for them a particle of interest. In vain did I attempt to get away from the revolting subject. I struggled like a bird tied to a stake, moving in a circle, and ever returning and returning to the same point.

"How I wanted to knock that Jack Ketch off of the scaffold, when he went up and fixed the rope around the poor fellow's neck, with such

professional coolness!" remarked one of these ladies, during the conversation.

"Yes, so did I," was the response. "After the drop fell, the wretch had to be protected from the indignation of the crowd by the police. No wonder there should be so instinctive a hatred of the hangman. Debased, indeed, must that man be, who, for hire, will perform such a service!"

"Was there anything wrong in his acting in simple obedience to the law? Was he any more censurable than the rope, or the beam that sustained the rope?" I asked. "He did not condemn the man to die. He was not the law—but the mere executor of the law, and therefore irresponsible."

"All that may be," was retorted. "But it does not take away the cold, blood-thirsty feeling that must possess the man who can, for the mere sake of money, perform such a service. None but he who would commit murder himself, could be induced to do such an act."

"In your opinion," I could not help saying.

"Yes, in my opinion; and that, I presume, is worth something," was a little warmly replied.

"He 'll never come to any good, of course," said another of the ladies. "How could he? A Jack Ketch! Horrible!" And the lady shuddered.

In about a week I called again, hoping that some new and less revolting subject had, by this time, pushed aside the absorbing interest of the execution. But no. The first words, after the compliments of the day, were these:

"Didn't I say that fellow would come to an evil end?"

"What fellow?" I asked of the speaker, not comprehending her.

"Why, the fellow who acted as Jack Ketch!"

I was thrown all aback. "Oh, yes!" I returned, showing as little distaste, as I well could to the subject, out of mere politeness. "Well, what of him?"

"He is dead!"

"Dead! How have you learned that?"

"We have heard it from a true source. He went home that night, and died in horrible agonies. A just punishment of heaven!"

"Why do you call it a just punishment of heaven?" I asked.

"Because the deed was one that heaven cannot look upon with approval. The man who puts the rope about the neck of a poor criminal, and launches him off into eternity, must have a heart as hard and as black as the heart of a demon."

"If the heart of the man you now allude to had been so hard and black, it is not presumable that he would have died from any horrible agonies resulting from the deed he had been called upon to do. Demons, instead of repenting an act of cruelty, delight in its contemplation. So sudden a death, accompanied by agonies of mind, indicates something more than you seem to imagine. Poor wretch! While execrated by the multitude for his agency in a deed as revolting, perhaps, to his soul as to theirs, his own mind has doubtless been maddened, as calm reflection came, and showed him the depths of degradation into which he had fallen. As I am inclined to look at the matter, the hangman is much more to be pitied than exe-

crated. He performs one of the most painful and revolting duties that society requires of any of its members."

This sort of reasoning did not, however, appear to have much weight with my gentle friends. Their sympathies were all committed in favour of the criminal who had suffered; and, as poor Jack Ketch had been the instrument of inflicting the horrid death, for him, of course, they had none left. After battling with them for a time, I drew off from the contest, apparently, but not really, silenced.

A short time subsequent to the event which had awakened into so much activity the sympathies of my lady acquaintances, I happened to learn the history of the individual whom they had execrated so bitterly. It interested me deeply. And, as if to afford one of those striking moral lessons so useful to society, I have determined to put it upon record.

The clergyman who attended the criminal in prison and upon the scaffold, was my personal and intimate friend. It was several days after the execution before I met with him. When I did, I found that the whole scene, trying as all such scenes must necessarily be to the minister of the gospel whose duty calls him to a position from which all our natural feelings shrink, had deeply affected his mind. After detailing, with a minuteness that was painful, the conduct of the criminal through the whole terrible scene, he paused, and remained silent for some time, breathing heavily all the while. At length he said,—

"But I witnessed another scene on that same

day that touched my feelings with acuter anguish. You remember Fennel, who, a few years ago, was a merchant of wealth and standing in our city?"

I replied that I knew nothing of the person to whom he alluded, except that I remembered to have seen his sign up many years before.

The history of that man and his family, resumed the clergyman, is an affecting one. They were members of my church, and this relation brought me into immediate contact with them. Mr. Fennel was a man of great probity. I have rarely met any one immersed in business, and tempted as all business men necessarily are, whose sense of honour and honesty was so acute as his. He never was known to take any advantage in bargaining—a mercantile virtue of too rare occurrence. The manly, generous tone of his character, was proverbial. His word was as good security as his bond.

Not less admired in her own sphere of action, was his accomplished wife. Amiable, intelligent, yet strong-minded, her character presented that combination of qualities that causes us to love as well as revere their possessor. It was, to me, always a pleasure of no ordinary kind to spend an hour in her company. The sphere of her mind's quality surrounded her as the sphere of the quality of a rose, in its odour, surrounds that flower, and I never approached her that I was not penetrated and affected by this sphere. It was felt in a peculiar elevation of thought and feeling. Well might it be said of her,—

> "None knew her but to love her—
> Or named her but to praise."

Mr. and Mrs. Fennel had two children, daughters. At the time to which I am now referring, the oldest was about eight years of age, and the youngest six. A younger child, a son, had died about a year before. This loss had been felt acutely, and had thrown over Mrs. Fennel's character a shade of thoughtfulness that, sometimes, deepened into sadness. Instead of finding this pensive tone of mind wearing off as time passed on, I was pained to see that it increased. It was not a rare occurrence for me, on visiting her, to find the traces of tears upon her cheek. For a time I was under the impression that all this was occasioned by the loss of her child. But it's long continuance, and increase, rather than diminution, led me to fear that there was for it a deeper cause. What the cause was, I could not imagine.

One afternoon, I called in, and found Mr. and Mrs. Fennel alone in the parlour. They received me with unusual reserve, and in an embarrassed manner. The eyes of the latter were swimming in tears. I sat for half an hour, during which all of us exerted ourselves to converse, but there was no freedom of intercourse. I went away at the end of that period, perplexed, and much troubled. I saw that there was a cause deeper, and more active, than the loss of their child a year before, operating upon their minds. What could this be?

On the next Sabbath, they were at church as usual, with their children. Mr. Fennel looked graver than common — at least I thought so. There was no mistaking, however, the meaning of his wife's countenance. That was sad, very sad. What could be the reason? I felt so acutely

this change, that I was oppressed during the service. Guard myself as I would, ever and anon I found myself looking too steadily upon the pensive face of Mrs. Fennel, as she sat leaning forward, her head resting upon her hand, and her earnest eyes fixed upon her minister, as if seeking consolation and hope from heaven through him.

All this was a mystery to me—a painful mystery. So sudden a change in that quarter, I could not account for in any way. This was about midsummer. During the next week they left town for the springs, and remained away from the city for a month. I looked for their return with a good deal of anxiety. One Sunday morning, they, unexpectedly to me, came into church, and took their accustomed place. I had not been apprised of their having left the springs. I saw them enter, and come up the aisle, but as Mrs. Fennel was behind her husband, I could not get a view of her face until she was seated in the pew. As she did this, I almost started at the change that a single month had wrought in her usually placid face. For a little while, I could hardly believe that it was indeed my much esteemed and valued parishioner. There was an anxious, care-worn look about her, with a dreaminess that told of some internal source of trouble that preyed deeply upon her mind. As for her husband, he, too, was changed. But I could not define to myself the character of that change, nor draw any inferences from it. Its predominant trait was coldness, that bordered on to something stern. I noticed that the husband and wife did not sit in the pew just in the order that had formerly been regularly ob-

served. Their two daughters had always entered first, so that Mr. and Mrs. Fennel could sit side by side and use the same book. This time the wife sat at one extremity of the pew, and her husband at the other—the daughters were of course in the middle.

I was more than ever perplexed and troubled. On the next morning I called to see Mrs. Fennel. She was glad to meet me, and made, as I could see, a strong effort to appear cheerful. But this was impossible. That which weighed upon her spirits, be it what it might, pressed too heavily. I felt anxious to know what had wrought so sudden a change in her, that I might offer those consolations of religion peculiarly suited to her case. But she did not seem inclined to confide anything to me, although I endeavoured to open the way for her. This only increased the solicitude I felt.

A week after I met her in company, with her husband. Over both had passed a pleasing change. She was cheerful, even animated, and threw around her that inexpressible charm that delighted every one. Mr. Fennel was not quite so much his former self as was his wife. Still, no one would have remarked the shade of difference but one whose attention, like mine, had been particularly called to it. On the next Sabbath, their old relative positions were resumed. Mrs. Fennel looked like herself again. I could see that as she sat while I read, or stood while the congregation sung, her body was slightly inclined towards her husband.

Evidently, such was my conclusion, there had existed some cause of coldness between them,

that had been put away. It was painful, however, to think, that between such a man as Mr. Fennel, and such a woman as his wife, any cause of coldness could exist.

Nothing occurred to draw my thoughts more than usually towards them for several months, when, to my great grief, I saw Mrs. Fennel enter the church one Sabbath morning, accompanied only by her two children. Her countenance was anxious and even haggard. She seated herself far back in the pew, and sat throughout the whole service, the most part of the time with her eyes upon the floor, and her hand shading her face. I called upon her on the day following. No change had taken place in her appearance. Her face was pale and anxious.

"My dear madam," I said as I took her hand, "I am grieved to find that, from some cause or other, a shadow has fallen upon your heart. Is it in my power to offer you words of comfort?"

Her lip quivered a moment. But self-control was soon acquired.

"There are causes of pain," she replied calmly, "that you can reach. Wounds for which you have a healing balm. But the trouble that oppresses me I cannot utter—no mere human agency can minister to it. I can only look up in the silence of my own heart, and pray for the sufferer's portion—patience and resignation."

There was a solemn earnestness about Mrs. Fennel that deeply depressed me. I knew not what to reply. For a time I remained silent. Then I said—

"You do well to look up for strength, to Him

from whom alone, all strength can come. He will hide you in the cleft of the rock, and keep you under the shadow of his wings. Pour out your soul to him, and he will regard your prayer, and send you the healing balm of consolation."

She did not reply, and I could only—to break the embarrassing silence that followed, more than with the hope of saying anything that would minister to her mysterious grief of mind—repeat to her various encouraging passages from the Bible, to which she listened with meek attention.

This interview perplexed me greatly. It was evident to my mind that there was a coldness between herself and her husband. But the cause of that coldness I could not imagine. On the next Sabbath, Mr. Fennel came to church. But I noticed that his wife did not sit by his side. I saw her face but a few times during the services. It was anxious and troubled.

Months passed, and the mystery was yet unravelled. I conversed with several of my parishioners on the subject. All had noticed the change—but of its cause, they were ignorant. Many conjectures were ventured. Some more suspicious, or less guarded than the rest, suggested reasons that my mind could not entertain for a moment. Of the real cause, I had not the most remote suspicion until about a year after I had first noticed the depression of Mrs. Fennel's spirits, and ascertained that it did not arise from the bereavement she had months before been called upon to suffer. During that time, there had been periods, when the cloud had lifted itself up, and the sun had looked down with some of his brightest smiles.

But these periods were not of long duration. A deeper obscuration of light always succeeded.

A large party had been given by a wealthy parishioner, and I attended it. Mr. and Mrs. Fennel were there. The latter appeared quite cheerful. I sat by her side, and conversed with her for some time, charmed, as I had often been before by the pure beauty of her sentiments, that flowed forth in language that of itself delighted the ear. Mr. Fennel was rather graver and thoughtful. Something evidently weighed upon his mind. During the progress of the evening, however, he became cheerful, and seemed to enter into the social pleasures that surrounded him with a lively satisfaction. It did not escape my notice, that the eye of his wife was frequently turned towards him, and with a look of anxiety. The meaning of that look I could not understand. As the evening progressed, and wine had been once or twice handed round, I noticed that Mr. Fennel's manner changed more and more, until, from the grave reserve that had, at first, distinguished him, he became more talkative than I had ever before seen him.

A new suspicion glanced through my mind, half-corroborated by an expression of strange meaning on the face of his wife, as I noticed her with her eye fixed upon him. There was a sideboard covered with liquors and refreshments in an adjoining room. To this, I now remembered that I had seen him go two or three times already. While pondering the matter over in my mind, I observed him to pass out with two or three of his mercantile friends. My curiosity led me to follow. He was at the sideboard again.

I went back into the parlour. Mrs. Fennel looked troubled. I sat down by her side and entered into conversation with her. But there was little life in it. Her thoughts were wandering. Five minutes elapsed and her husband re-appeared. He was talking in rather a loud voice, to one of his friends, and seemed quite animated. In less than a quarter of an hour, I missed him from the room again. Shortly after, I saw him on the floor dancing with all the activity of a young man of twenty-five.

So great a change as had taken place in him during the evening, I at once saw could only be accounted for on the presumption that he had been drinking too freely. The troubled expression of Mrs. Fennel's countenance, as her eyes sought, every now and then, the form of her husband, confirmed my already too well strengthened conclusions.

"I don't like to see that," remarked an elderly lady, who happened to be seated near me, as her own eye rested upon Mr. Fennel, moving lightly through the cotillion.

"Don't like what?" I asked.

"Don't like to see Mr. Fennel quite as gay as he is to-night," was her reply.

"This is a festive occasion," I replied, wishing to draw her out—"You would not have him continue as grave as he was for the first hour after he came in."

The old lady looked at me a moment inquiringly, and then said.

"I suppose it is hardly necessary to tell you, that he is not himself just at this moment."

"Do you think he has been taking wine too freely?" I asked.

"I am sorry to say that I do," was the reply. "Have you not noticed a great change in Mrs. Fennel in the past year?"

I replied that I had.

"And have you not known the reason?" she added.

"No," I returned. "The great change in her has been to me a painful mystery. Not once until this evening, have I had a suspicion of what I now presume to be the real cause."

"I have known it for many months past," she said. "And it has grieved me deeply. Its effects upon his wife are painful in the extreme. I think I have never known any one who has changed as much as she has changed in so short a time."

"But, surely," I said, "Mr. Fennel cannot have become so much enslaved, already, as to have lost the power of self-control. He is a man of strong mind. A distinct consciousness of danger must be all that is necessary to prompt him to place himself beyond the reach of that danger at once and for ever."

"I have thought so. And have more than once resolved to speak to you on the subject, and declare my conviction that you are the one who can best and most effectually perform the duty of warning him."

"Me?" I said, in surprise.

"Yes, you," was the firm answer. "As his minister, you can venture upon ground with him, that no other man dare tread. He may listen to you in a matter that would cause him to spurn in-

terference in any other quarter with indignation. It is then, it seems to me, clearly your duty to go to him alone and remonstrate in the most solemn manner against his present course. You may save him."

This unequivocal declaration as to my duty, choked me up. My natural feelings shrunk away from the performance of such a task with instinctive reluctance.

"I will see you to-morrow, and have a fuller and freer conversation with you about this matter," I said.

On the next day I called upon this lady, and conferred with her more seriously. I learned that Mr. Fennel had been, within the last six months, several times so much intoxicated as to be obliged to go to bed. And that his daily indulgence in drinking, was uniformly carried to excess. This she had learned from undoubted sources.

The whole truth, when I became fully conscious of it, stunned me. The more I reflected on the sad condition into which his appetite, too freely indulged, had brought him, the more distinctly conscious was I, that I had a duty to perform towards him and his family, painful as it might be to my feelings, from which I dare not shrink. To the immediate performance of this duty, I was strongly urged by the individual who had first apprised me of the extent of Mr. Fennel's dereliction. Reluctantly I prepared to obey the prompting voice which would not let me be at peace.

It took me some time to decide when and how, and where I should begin. The settlement of these preliminaries were longer delayed than they

would have been, if I had felt the slightest affection for the duty I was called to perform. But I shrunk away, and made excuses for putting off the painful task. At length conscience smote me so hard that I was compelled to go forward in the only path that lay before me.

It was nearly two weeks from the time when I became apprised of Mr. Fennel's derelictions, before a sense of my obligations as a minister to him and his family, drove me into the way of duty. Even then, I should not have gone forward, if I had not chanced to meet him in the street so much under the influence of liquor as not to know me. On the day succeeding this, I called, under a feeling of oppressive reluctance, at his store, and asked the favour of a private interview at his house or mine, whenever it would be most convenient for him.

"We will be perfectly alone here," he said, closing the door of his counting-room that communicated with the store. "If you have anything particular to say to me, I am entirely at your service."

There was now, no way of escape. The duty which I had continued to look at as in the future, suddenly became a present duty. It was some moments before I could collect my thoughts, during which time the merchant looked at me steadily and inquiringly. At length, with an embarrassed manner, I began—

"Mr. Fennel, I have come to you, urged by the high obligations of my sacred calling, to perform a very painful duty,—nothing less than to admonish you as one of my parishioners."

"To admonish me!" the merchant replied, looking into my face with surprise.

"Yes, sir—that, as I have said, has become my painful duty."

"Speak out then, fully and freely." As Mr. Fennel said this, he compressed his lips, and fixed his eyes upon me with a sort of stern defiance. I felt choked up. But there was no retreat.

"I am afraid, sir," I said, coming at once to the point, "that you have, unwittingly, fallen into the habit of indulging too freely in wine."

I paused, for the face of the merchant became instantly pale. Before I had time to proceed, he replied in a quick, half-angry voice—

"Mr. ——, I permit no one, not even my minister, the liberty you are now presuming upon. I am responsible to no man for my conduct; and cannot, therefore, suffer any man to take me to task. If that is the subject of your interview with me, I beg that it be instantly concluded."

I attempted to remonstrate, and thus soften him down, but he was firm: and threw me off with even more decided language. When I left him, it was with painful and gloomy feelings. Most reluctantly had I gone forward at the imperious call of duty, to meet a stern repulse.

On the next Sabbath he did not come to church. Mrs. Fennel had a care-worn look. She sat, through most of the service, with her eyes upon the floor. My heart ached for her. But I could do nothing to ward off the danger that threatened utterly to destroy her peace. From that time forth, her husband came but rarely into the house

of God. His too excessive indulgence in drinking soon became known to all.

Thus matters went on for two or three years, during which time the deep distress of Mrs. Fennel urged me to repeated remonstrances; but all to no purpose. I was, at each attempt, repulsed with anger.

At last I was startled by the intelligence that he had failed in business. Long before this, the unhappy wife had unburdened to me her whole heart. I could, therefore, call upon her at once, and as a friend into whose ear she could pour out all her feelings. I found her in deep distress, as I had expected. The extent of the disaster that had befallen her husband's business she did not know. For months Mr. Fennel had maintained towards her a strict reserve. As well as I could, I strove to encourage her.

"This disaster, I trust, will awaken him to a distinct consciousness of his true condition. It will cause him to feel the absolute necessity of preserving a well-balanced mind in order to recover himself and regain the business position he has lost."

"I hope it may be so," she replied, despondingly. "But I fear a different result. Trouble of mind too often drives men who are at all given to drinking, into greater indulgence. The apprehension of this, distresses me deeply. If it would cause him to reform the course of life he has pursued for some time past, I could say, cheerfully, come reverses, and welcome them as my friends."

"Let us hope for the best, my dear madam," I said. "All events are in the hands of a wise and

good Providence, who, out of seeming evil, is ever educing good. He never visits us with the loss of earthly blessings, such as wealth, or friends, that the end is not to bestow upon us some higher and purer gifts. Look up for them. One of them, perchance, may be the full restoration of your husband to his right mind."

"God grant it!" she ejaculated, fervently, lifting her eyes upward, as she spoke.

"Amen!" was my heart-felt response.

Our earnest hope proved fallacious. The settlement of his affairs left him without a dollar in the world. His beautiful residence, with all its rich and tasteful furniture, was sold under the hammer, and himself and family thrown upon the world. Instead of rousing up, and going through the trial like a man, he was more than half-intoxicated during the whole period that elapsed from the time his paper was dishonoured, until his creditors released him from all obligations, and turned him penniless out of house and home.

With a scanty portion of furniture, all that remained of past luxurious elegance, Mrs. Fennel retired with her two daughters into a small house which her husband had rented, in an obscure neighbourhood. He procured employment as a collector of moneys for a large estate, from which he had an income of nearly a thousand dollars. If he had then only abandoned at once and for ever the use of wine and strong liquors, he would soon have risen again; for he had great force of character, activity, and a thorough knowledge of business. "If Fennel would only quit drinking," said a merchant to me who was engaged largely

in trade, "I would give him an interest in my business to-morrow. He could increase the profits ten thousand dollars in the first year."

But the accursed appetite of the drunkard had been formed, and it proved an overmastering temptation. A few days after the afflicted family had removed to their new abode, I called in to see them. Mr. Fennel was not at home. I found the change indeed a sad one. From a large, elegantly furnished mansion, replete with everything that a refined and luxurious taste could desire, the mother and her two daughters, young girls ten and twelve years of age, now occupied a small house, poorly built and greatly out of repair, in which, to them, there was scarcely a single convenience. The scanty remnant of their rich furniture formed an unsightly contrast with the dark, coarse, soiled paper on the walls, and the wooden mantel-pieces, window sills and wash boards from which the paint had long since been worn. As I took the hand of Mrs. Fennel, she burst into tears, and wept bitterly for some time.

"It is, indeed, a sad change," I said.

"I could bear all this change with patient resignation," she replied, after she had gained control over her feelings, "if *he* were only as he once was. If he came in and went out with the calm, pure, well-balanced mind he once possessed. But, alas! I fear this will never be. Daily he seems to sink lower and lower. I can scarcely believe at times, that I am not in the midst of a frightful dream."

She paused, for, at that moment, Annetta, her eldest daughter, came in. My feelings were

touched as I looked into the innocent face of the child, over which was cast a shade of unnatural grief. The young and pure hearted should be happy. It is the dower of innocence. Sad, sad indeed it is to see them robbed of this precious dower! She came up to me and took my offered hand, with downcast eyes; and then shrunk close to the side of her mother. I did not speak to her, for I could not. Words, I felt, would be but an empty mockery. In a little while after, her sister Marion came in also, and after taking my hand in silence, like Annetta sought her mother's side. It was long, very long, before the picture of that grief-touched mother and her two children nestling closely to her side, was effaced from my imagination. As for me, I was choked up. What could I say? For a little while I sat in embarrassed silence, and then, feeling the insufficiency of all mere human efforts to mingle in this cup of affliction even a single drop of peace, I said—

"Let us pray."

He who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb—He who loveth his children with unutterable tenderness—gave, I trust, to the afflicted mother and her children, while I lifted up to him my earnest supplications, strength to bear their hard lot. This I know—that when I pressed the hand of Mrs. Fennel at parting, her face wore a serener aspect than when I came in—but the serenity was derived from a resolution to *bear* her affliction as sent from Him who loveth whom he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth—and this derivation was painfully apparent.

From this time the downward career of Mr.

Fennel was steady and rapid. For two or three years, while he retained his position as collector, he supplied, scantily, the wants of his family. But constant and free indulgence of his appetite during that period, gradually increased that appetite, until he became really unfit to attend to business, and was removed from his place.

Now came severer trials for his family. No employment offering, the duty of procuring the means of subsistence at once devolved upon Mrs. Fennel, and Annetta, now fifteen years of age. During the rapid decadency of Mr. Fennel, the mother had devoted many hours of each day to the instruction of her two daughters. Well-educated and accomplished herself, she was able to do this with success. Annetta had shown from early years a talent for music, which, looking forward, as she well might, to the time when she would be thrown upon her own resources for a support, Mrs. Fennel had led her, since their removal, to cultivate with steady assiduity. At the age of fifteen, she was, therefore, far in advance of most young ladies, and, indeed, able to give lessons in the art. Family afflictions always have the effect to develope early the characters of children, and to give them thoughts, resolution, and decision beyond their years. They had this effect upon Annetta. While her mother was in sad doubt as to what she would now do, after her husband's loss of his situation, and even before any settled plan of action was fixed, Annetta said to her—

"I believe, mother, that I could give lessons in music."

Mrs. Fennel looked at her child, her mind half-

bewildered, for some moments, really unable to think with sufficient directness of thought, to decide what reply to make. Annetta continued.

"Father has nothing to do now, and perhaps will not get anything to do for some time. We shall have to support ourselves. I am sure that I could give lessons in music, at least to young scholars, and, if you are willing, I will go to Mrs. Whitmore, who will do anything she can for us, and ask her to try and get me some scholars."

Reluctantly Mrs. Fennel consented that her generous, noble-minded child, should make the effort she proposed; should go out at her tender age, and enter the world in contention for a living with the great onward struggling mass. She was successful as she deserved. In a little while, several who knew her, and could esteem and love her for her purity of character, engaged her to give lessons in their families at regular hours. This brought in a slender income—far less than was required for the support of the family. To add to this, the mother took in sewing, and devoted many hours of each day closely to her needle, while the youngest daughter attended to the household. But with all this, they were able to do little more than provide food and clothing. Rent could not be paid.

My visits as clergyman were regular to this afflicted family. Sometimes I met Mr. Fennel. But he invariably left the house as soon as I came in. Several times I tried to converse with him. But he turned a deaf ear. About six months after the loss of his situation, I called in. There was a change in the appearance of the little parlour, that

at first I could not make out. Something was wanting. What could it be? Ah! The exquisitely toned instrument, which had been spared them by the creditors, was gone. Annetta's piano was not in its wonted place! I understood in a moment the meaning of this. It had been sold! Rent day had come round, and there was nothing to satisfy the landlord.

My heart ached, as it is too often made to ache over human distresses, as I turned away from my parishioners' humble abode. They had not yet gotten to the base of the declivity. Their feet were not yet upon solid ground.

"How much lower are they doomed to sink?" I said, half-aloud, as I walked slowly away, with my eyes upon the pavement.

Alas! I dreamed not of the bitter dregs that lay at the bottom of the cup they were drinking.

One morning about six months from that time, a domestic entered my study, and informed me that a lady was in the parlour, and wished to see me. It was Mrs. Fennel. When I met her, I found her in tears, and much agitated.

"Is there anything serious the matter?" I asked, with much concern.

"O, yes," she said. "Last evening Mr. Fennel did not come home. We sat up all night for him, in much alarm. Daylight came, and he was still away. I then went out to look for him, and soon learned the distressing news that he had been sent to jail by a man who had trusted him for liquor, until he had a bill of thirty dollars against him. I saw the man and plead with him to re-

lease him—but he peremptorily refused, adding gross insult to his refusal."

I knew not what reply to make to this. The first thought I had, was, that this imprisonment might be productive of good. Its tendency might be to restore him to his senses. One, two, three, or four months of confinement, with his mind unexcited and unobscured by inebriation, would afford time for calm and serious reflection. But I saw that his wife was not prepared to take this view of the subject; and I hesitated to present it for her consideration. When I did, she could not bear it.

"Oh, no, no," she said, the tears gushing from her eyes, "he cannot, he must not be in jail. My husband in jail for debt! Oh, no. It must not be!"

It was to no purpose that I urged the use to him of this incarceration. Her woman's heart could not endure the idea. Reluctantly, and against my better judgment, I offered, at length, to see a few of his old friends and obtain, through them, his release. I found no difficulty in doing this. The sum to be raised was but a small one. I took it myself to the magistrate who had committed him, paid the debt, and obtained an order for his release. With this in my pocket, I went to the jail. The appearance of Mr. Fennel affected me a good deal. He was deeply humbled. When the keeper told him that he was free to return to his family, he covered his face with his hands, and stood, for a moment or two overcome with emotion. I hardly knew what to say to him, or where to begin. To endeavour to deepen and

make permanent the impression for good now made, was my duty. In every previous attempt at expostulation I had been sternly repulsed. It might be so again. But there was only one way before me, and rough, and thorny, and full of difficulties though it might be, I could do no less than walk in it. The iron door was swung open by the jailor, and Fennel walked forth a free man. I was by his side, and, as he came out, moved on in silence, searching for some form of words by which I might most safely address him. While yet in doubt, he broke the embarrassing reserve, by saying, with much feeling.

"It seems to me as if I had been spell-bound by some evil power, for the last few years. I have been in a horrible state, Mr. — -. But I have this day resolved, that if I possess the power, I will burst at once and for ever the bonds by which I have been so long held. I go home to my much enduring, much abused family. How shall I meet them? How can I look in the face of my patient, long suffering wife, and my neglected, abused children? My heart fails me when I think of doing so."

I encouraged him in the best way I could, and by many varied precepts and illustrations, endeavoured to give to his mind some basis for his incipient and hastily formed resolutions to rest upon. He listened with fixed attention, and then assured me, again and again, that he was resolved to enter at once upon a course of reformation. I promised all the assistance that it was in my power to give him.

The scene, when we reached his home, affected

me to tears. I entered with him and said, smiling, as I advanced by his side towards Mrs. Fennel, who had started to her feet glad, but irresolute—

"Receive back your husband, again free, I trust, in mind as well as body!"

"Yes, free in both senses!" was his emphatic response. "From this hour I am resolved to be as I once was. To have a sound mind in a sound body."

For a brief period Mrs. Fennel seemed bewildered. But she quickly understood the words, and tone, and manner of her husband.

"God be thanked!" she ejaculated, and then springing forward, threw her arms about his neck and laying her head upon his bosom, sobbed aloud.

When I left them, it was with a lively hope. I looked forward with pleased anticipation to the future days of peace, prosperity and happiness, for this long tried, much enduring family. Alas! The sun that shone out with sudden brightness, was soon buried again in thick clouds. For a few days Mr. Fennel remained sober, and during that time obtained employment. But, in a week the morbid appetite which long indulgence in drink had created, proved too strong for him. He again fell, and into a lower depth.

I will not pain and disgust you with a minute detail of the gradations through which he passed in his still further descent—nor with the too vivid pictures which I could present of his family's exquisite sufferings during a period of two more years. One scene more, and that to which all else I have related has only led me, I will relate.

Twice he was cast into prison for debt, and as often released by my efforts, stimulated by the urgent importunities of his wife. Again a liquor seller who, in spite of repeated remonstrances, continued to trust him, had him committed to jail, under the confident hope that some of his old friends, as they had done before through my intercession, would pay off the paltry debt. But this time he was mistaken. I steadily refused to yield to Mrs. Fennel's tears and entreaties, once more to procure his liberation. He had been in jail about two weeks, at the time the execution alluded to took place.

On the evening succeeding that horrible tragedy, I remarked that I had not seen Mrs. Fennel for several days. She had left my house, at our last interview, when I had positively declined to make any effort to procure her husband's liberation, the image of sorrow. Nothing but the all-absorbing duty I had to perform, in attending the culprit, soon to expiate his crime on the gallows, could have driven that image from my mind. It returned again, vividly, when that solemn duty was done. The feelings it produced, determined me at once to go and see her.

I found Mrs. Fennel deeply depressed. Annetta, and her sister, were sad and gloomy. I had spoken only a few words, when the street door was opened quietly. We listened. The sound of well known footsteps was heard along the passage. Fennel himself, in the next moment stood before us. His appearance was frightful. His complexion, naturally ruddy, was now of a pale, sickly hue; his eyes almost protruding from his

head, and his lips wan as his cheek, drawn tightly across his teeth. Mrs. Fennel sprang to her feet as he entered; but he did not seem to notice her, and seated himself slowly and mournfully in a chair. To the eager questions put to him, he made no reply, but muttered in a low, alarmed tone, something which we could not at first understand. Every now and then he would start back and shudder, and shrink as from the effort of some invisible thing to get hold of him. Annetta burst into tears and wept violently, while her sister covered her face with her hands, and turned away from the dreadful sight. With my assistance, Mrs. Fennel got him upon the bed, and at last soothed him into something like rationality. The first word that indicated anything like returning reason, was his eager exclamation to his wife, of "Oh, is it you?" and his clinging to her arm like one awakened from a terrible nightmare. Gradually he became composed, and there was a calmness and intelligence of manner about him, such as I had not observed for a long time. But on his countenance sat an unearthly expression; and when he called his wife and children around him and told them in mournful tones that he was about to die, I felt the truth of his situation. As we all stood by his side, the poor man raised himself up, and spoke his last words, the import of which I can never forget. Upon the hearts of those neglected ones who wept beside him, they must have been graven as with a pen of iron. Oh, how my heart bled for them.

"Let me lean on you, for I feel myself growing very weak, and I must say something before I die"

—began the poor creature looking up into his wife's face, and leaning his head back upon her. "You have been a good wife to me—too good, and I have repaid you sadly for your devotion. And you, my dear child, Annetta, give me your hand—how poor it is!—your father has not cared for you as he should have cared for you, yet he always loved the sight of your sweet, patient face, though he felt so guilty in your presence that he could not speak to you familiarly and pleasantly, and was often rough and apparently unkind to stifle feelings of mortification that came over him when he looked upon the child he had so terribly wronged. And Marion too; can you forgive the father who has broken your young spirits, and made your lot hard to be borne? I would not offer excuse for my dreadful conduct, but must say, that the conflicts and agonies of mind I have endured from time to time have been awful. There have been many moments in which it seemed that reason must desert its throne—but old habits and confirmed appetites have over mastered my resolutions, and I have gone on and on, ever intending to stop somewhere, until I have come now to the final hour of my life, and my last days have been worst of all."

"Oh, father—dear father! say no more about it—you will break my heart if you talk so," said Annetta, with tears rolling in great drops down her pale cheeks.

"Bless you my good child for those kind words! It is long, long since I have heard you say 'dear father.' But I have that to tell which I must utter, though I would fain spare you all a keener

anguish than you now feel. I have been almost forced, through my degradation, to do an act that has broken my heart. I knew not that old feelings would come back upon me so overwhelmingly —I had begun to think myself callous to all emotion; but the current was checked, not altogether dried up. You all know that I have been confined in jail for two weeks; but you know not how I have been liberated."

Here the poor man shuddered, and covering his face with his hands, wept bitterly as a child. After a few moments he recovered himself—and continued:—

"There seemed no chance of my speedy liberation, as the hard-hearted man who had put me in jail, seemed determined to spend in my confinement, through anger, as much money as I owed him. The first three days of my confinement, as I was allowed no liquor, came very near driving me mad. Oh! I cannot describe the intolerable thirst I endured through three sleepless nights and days. You came to see me, but you knew nothing of my sufferings. I begged the keeper, I begged you for liquor, but it was denied me, while I endured what seemed a hell of torments. I wonder that I survived the struggle—hundreds have died in it. A little laudanum which I succeeded in procuring, probably saved me from a terrible death. It stimulated me just sufficient to keep off *delirium tremens*, and saved me from death in that awful state in which the drunkard dies. But nature had been exhausted and could not rally, and I awoke at once to the fearful condition in which I was placed. Unless I could get out and get to my

home I feared that hope was gone. Here I fondly thought I might be mended up a little, through your kind ministrations. The fatal cup I was enabled in firm resolution to renounce, though I felt that it was death almost to do so. My purpose was fixed to retrace, as far as power was given, my former steps, and if I perished in my resolution, I would perish. Only one way was offered me of escape, and such a way! The Sheriff proposed to pay my debt if I would relieve him from the hangman's duty. I could have spurned him to the earth when he first made the proposition, but hope of deliverance being almost gone, and finding myself sinking fast, I at length reluctantly consented. For three days before the execution, I neither eat nor slept. My food I could not swallow, and I sought the sweet oblivion of sleep in vain. This morning, I nerved myself for the dreadful task, conscious that I was doing my last work on earth —I did shrink for a moment, but the thought of liberty was sweet, and I wanted to die at home—even though I had brought there sorrow and desolation. In the final arrangements I adjusted the rope, and placed with a steady hand the fatal knot beneath the victim's ear, while he, poor wretch, shook with a worse than mortal agony. When I drew the cap over his eyes, and shut out from him for ever the light of the sun, I felt as if I was myself suffocating; but I shrunk not from my fearful task, and when the moment had come, knocked away the fatal prop that had supported the slender plank upon which rested the criminal's feet. Poor wretch! he surely did not suffer more than his executioner. How bitterly did I repent

me of what I had done, when I saw his dreadful struggles in the air! But I had finished my work, and hastening back to the prison, threw off my disguise, and in a few moments was breathing the air as a freeman. From that time until a few minutes since, I have been utterly unconscious of existence. Where I have been I know not, but I am here now, and I feel that it is to die."

The poor wretch then sunk back upon his pillow with a deep groan. His words were prophetic. Death had indeed marked him for his victim. Nature could no longer endure the shocks she had been compelled to sustain. An hour after, and we stood around the bed upon which lay the mortal wreck of one who had been a bright and shining light in society for a time—but whose light, alas! had long before grown dim.

The next time I called upon my lady friends, who had been so bitter in their invectives against poor Jack Ketch, I related my friend the clergyman's story. They knew him well, and also the family to which his story related. The current of their sympathies receding, turned into a new channel. I ventured to read them a little homily on appearances and realities, which they bore quite patiently, and then proposed some action for the relief of Mrs. Fennel and her family, in which I encouraged them. These kind attentions, I am happy to say, did not remain unproductive in their minds. Mrs. Fennel and her two daughters were soon after placed in a situation much more suited to their tastes and feelings, and are now supporting themselves comfortably, surrounded by many kind and congenial friends.

THE CLUB ROOM.

"I AM going down to Leland's, Anna," said William Snyder, taking up his hat one evening after tea, and moving towards the door.

"To Leland's!" replied the wife in a voice of surprise, turning pale as she spoke. And well she might turn pale; for Snyder was a reformed man, and Leland's was a tavern near by, where he had, in former times, squandered hundreds of dollars in brutalizing self-indulgence, that should have been expended on his wife and children.

"Yes, to Leland's," said Snyder, smiling at his wife's sudden alarm. "But not to drink, Anna. Never fear that."

"Then why do you visit so dangerous a place?"

"Oh! don't you know? We have our Head Quarters there."

"What Head Quarters, William?"

"The Head Quarters of our party in —— Ward. The —— Club meets there to-night, and I thought I would drop in and see how things look. The election will take place in about ten days."

"But why do you have your Head Quarters at a tavern?"

"It ought not to be there. But it is very difficult to get a hall anywhere else. Those who have

such places to let, do not like to make them so public, except tavern keepers, and they are always ready to accommodate either party with rooms, as election times draw near."

"Why are they so very accommodating? Surely not from their disinterested love of serving the public."

"Oh no! but from their love of serving themselves. It is one means of drawing a crowd, and where there is a crowd, especially when congregated for electioneering purposes, you will always find enough ready to drink."

"I understand now." And Mrs. Snyder's face brightened: "but as a temperance man, I really think I would not be seen at any Head Quarters, or Club rooms, if they were in taverns."

"I think it wrong to have them there," the husband said, in a serious voice; "but we can't expect to reform everything in a day. The success of our principles, at the coming election, I feel to be a matter of great importance; and so does every intelligent man in the party. We must have a rallying point at some public accessible place, and are compelled to take the best that offers."

"It may be all right; I hope it is." Mrs. Snyder remarked, doubtfully. "But I am afraid that some weak ones may be led estray by this device of the enemy."

"There may be danger to certain of our temperance men who are not as much governed by principle as they should be. But the evil cannot be abated at once. By the next election, I hope we shall have a reform even in this matter."

"I hope so," returned the wife thoughtfully.

"Good night, Anna; I shall not be gone long," William Snyder said, in a cheerful voice, turning away, and leaving the house.

Anna drew a long, sighing breath, and resumed her needle, that had rested idly in her fingers, while she held the above brief conversation. As she did so, she felt a weight upon her heart. She tried to throw this off, and chid herself for the doubt of her husband's firmness to the temperance principles he had espoused, that it involved. But she could not help feeling troubled.

When Snyder reached Leland's tavern, he found the bar, through which he was compelled to pass in his way to the meeting room, filled with loud talking and hard drinking politicians.

"If here isn't Bill Snyder!" exclaimed an old crony, as he entered. "Why, hallo! Bill—How are you? Give us your fist, old fellow! I declare, it does one's eyes good to see you here. Many a jolly time you and I have had in this spot before the temperance chaps caught you. Come! you shall drink with me to Auld Lang Syne."

And he caught Snyder by the arm and attempted to pull him towards the bar.

"No—no—Larry! when I signed the pledge, I meant to keep it," he replied firmly, although he felt a great deal confused. "I don't drink any more."

"You don't! They said you did'nt; but I never just believed it. I was sure you took a little on the sly. And I believe it still. Bill Snyder can no more do without liquor than a fish can do without water. Isn't it so? old coon! Say? Speak out like a man, and tell the truth."

Seeing that the man was half intoxicated, Snyder turned from him, and went up stairs to the club room. Here he met with a large number of the friends of the party, who were reading extracts from distant papers containing election returns, and commenting upon them; and others in earnest conversation on the ways and means necessary to be adopted to swell the party vote. With one and the other of these, as suited his feelings, Snyder mingled, and became as fully absorbed in the discussions that were going on as any in the room. He took no note of time,—hours passed away, and he was still unwearied.

"Eleven o'clock, as I live!" remarked an individual with whom he was conversing, glancing at his watch.

"It is impossible!" returned Snyder.

"It is too true. I had no idea it was as late as even nine. I must hurry home."

"So must I. Who could have dreamed that time would pass so rapidly?"

There were not many besides themselves in the room, nor in the bar below, through which they had to pass to reach the street. As they descended and walked near the bar, behind which stood Leland himself, ready to serve his customers, and looked into the tavern-keeper's face, they felt a slightly unpleasant sensation. Both were temperance men.

"Really, it made me feel downright mean to walk through the bar, and not spend a cent with the man who has given us the use of his fine room for a mere song," remarked the companion.

"So it did me," replied Snyder. "I wish our

club would get a meeting room somewhere else. I dislike dreadfully to go through that bar, especially when I do not feel at liberty to call for anything."

"We can't get a room anywhere else. So this must be borne with. The elections will soon be over. Old Leland gets well paid, I'll guarantee, or he would not let us have it. There are enough who drink with him."

"Yes—I suppose so. Enough, and more than enough." As Snyder said this, the two men parted, and took different directions to their respective homes.

In spite of all she could do to keep down her feelings, the wife whom we have seen left alone, found it impossible not to be troubled. The shock which her husband's sudden declaration had given her, had unsettled her nerves, and she struggled in vain to recover the even flow of spirits that had blessed her for many days, and weeks and months. Ever and anon the thought would intrude itself, that her husband might be tempted to break his pledge. As often as it did so, she would reject it with self-upbraidings; but in spite of every effort, the fearful idea would again present itself, to be again rejected.

Thus the evening passed.

"So late!" she suddenly exclaimed, dropping her work and starting to her feet as the watchman's cry of "past ten o'clock," fell unexpectedly upon her ear. "What can keep him?"

She went to the door, and stepping out upon the pavement, looked long and intently in the direction from which her husband should come, but

his form could not be distinguished. At last she went into the house, sighing heavily as she closed the door after her, and sitting down by her little work table, attempted to sew. But her mind was too much troubled to continue this employment—she laid aside the garment upon which she was employed, and leaning her head upon her hand as she bent over the table, listened for her husband's approach. Soon her mind began to go back to former days—days of which she had not thought, except in pleasing contrast, for now more than two years. For a long, long time—a time that to think of seemed an age, Anna Snyder had been that wretched creature, a drunkard's wife. Earth has many, alas! too many forms and conditions of misery, and in the most acute of these, woman has the severest part to bear: but I know not, if there be anything in the cup of human woe that woman has to drink to the dregs, so full of bitterness, as that which passes the lips of the drunkard's wife. You who see only the staggering inebriate, or hear only his senseless tattle, can form no idea of what impression he makes at home. You cannot feel how cold and dark the shadow of his presence makes the heart of his wife. You know nothing of what she thinks and suffers while he is away and she anxiously awaits his delayed return, hoping, yet with too certain fears well nigh suffocating all hope:—nor of the shuddering chill that passes through both body and soul, as he enters with the red mark of the beast upon him. Ah! But this is not all. There is the pure love of early years, turned into hatred—the words of endearment changed to bitter invective, and the hard,

cruel blows for the tender caress! These, all these, and more, has the poor wife to bear. These, all these, and more, had Anna borne for years, while her husband worshipped at the bacchanalian shrine. Well might she tremble at the terrible fear that haunted her.

For nearly half an hour she sat leaning her head upon her hand, as we have seen, dark images of past times crowding in, and pressing down upon her heart with an unendurable weight. At last, arousing up, and turning away, shuddering from some fearful image, she clasped her hands together, and lifting up her large dark eyes, that were filled with tears, murmured—

"Father in heaven, forbid it! Keep him from the fowler's snare! Save him from the horrible pit!"

Then bowing her head again, she let it fall even to the table, and wept passionately. After awhile this emotion subsided, and a deep calm fell upon her spirits. But this could not long remain. There were causes of disquiet that would not be inactive. Just as her feelings were again about rising into agony, the door was quietly opened by her husband. One look satisfied her that all was right. Instinctively she felt the propriety of not permitting him to see how much his prolonged absence had disturbed her. With a strong effort she controlled herself, and said only,

"William, how could you stay out so?"

"I didn't dream that it was eleven o'clock," he replied kindly; "I was so interested in conversation that I never thought of time. But I'll take better care in future."

Anna could not help upbraiding herself for her foolish fears, that reflected so much upon her husband's integrity.

"I am a weak, foolish woman, I know, but how can I help it?" she said to herself, as she lay awake for a long time after retiring to bed. The excitement under which she had laboured, prevented sleep from stealing sweetly over her senses.

On the next night, Snyder remained home as he had long been in the habit of doing, and read aloud, while his wife was engaged in sewing. But on the succeeding evening, he told Anna that he was again going down to the Head Quarters of the —— Club.

"How can you go to such a place as Leland's?" his wife said with a tender, coaxing voice, laying her hand upon his arm, and looking at him earnestly.

"I don't like to go, Anna. But our Head Quarters you know are there, and there is no avoiding it. By the next election, I sincerely trust that we shall be able to make a much better selection than a tavern.. It is disgraceful. Were it not that I feel it to be my duty as a good citizen to promote the interest of our party, I should not put my foot into the place. But I shall be home early, so good-bye, Anna."

"Yes, do come home, soon. Don't be out after ten o'clock." She said, as he was closing the door.

To Leland's, Snyder went direct. In passing through the bar, he was again taunted by one of his old cronies with his temperance principles.

"Don't you like the very smell of this place?"

said the half tipsy bar-room lounger. "Yes, I know you do. Come, take a drink!"

Snyder felt a good deal annoyed by this, and, a little to his own surprise, half ashamed of his position as a teetotaller. But he escaped up stairs to the club room as quickly as possible, followed by a hearty peal of laughter.

"It 's a downright shame to have our Head Quarters in a rum hole like this, where every temperance man must be insulted if he venture to come," he said, indignantly, to a friend whom he met above.

"Or, worse, be sorely tempted, if there be about him a lingering weakness, as some of our folks too evidently have."

"It is a great evil."

"There is no doubt of it. If at least a dozen temperance men in this ward do not go back from their good principles and good habits before the election, it will be a miracle. Appearances are strongly against them."

"Can you mention any?"

"I could, but had rather not. I hope the result may be different; but I am afraid. Already I have seen a number buying cigars at the bar; and one or two taking lemonade with friends who drank brandy and gin. I don't like to see this. A reformed man should never, if possible to avoid it, come into a bar-room, much less stand beside the bar, and drink there even a glass of cold water. There is power in old associations, and a very dangerous power, when these have been connected with allurements to evil. There is only one law for us; the law of, *Touch not, taste not, handle*

not. Standing beside this we are safe. But if we take one step from it, we are in the midst of a down-rushing river. Nothing but super-human strength can save us."

"There—there—that will do," said one who had been standing by. "We don't come here to have discussions on Temperance."

"Have you heard the news from ——— ?"

"No! what is it ?"

"We are bearing everything before us. S—— has been elected, by a thousand majority. Last year we were beaten there by two thousand. Glorious, isn't it ?"

"Cheering news, truly. When did it come ?"

"By the cars, this afternoon. And then, the accounts from the south and west are all of the most gratifying character. Everything begins to brighten. We shall beat everywhere."

Others joined the little group of three, an animated conversation and discussion followed, which continued for an hour, when some one drew Snyder by the arm and whispered in his ear.

"Come, let's go down stairs, and have some oysters."

For a moment he hesitated. When the other said—

"We can eat, if we can't drink, certainly. It 's mean to use Leland's house if we don't recompense him in some way."

Snyder hesitated no longer. He went down stairs, and retired with his friend to a box, after they had ordered two plates of oysters, fried. In the course of ten minutes the oysters were served.

They had eaten about half of them, when the friend laid down his knife and fork, and said,

"This is confounded dry eating, Snyder!"

"It 's a fact," was the unhesitating reply. "I wonder if they have any coffee at the bar?"

"We 'll see." And the table bell was rung.

"Any coffee?" was asked of the attendant, who answered the summons.

"Yes, sir."

"Bring us two cups, then."

The coffee was served.

"Ah, yes. This helps the matter amazingly," said Snyder's friend. "Oysters must have something to wash them down, or they 're not worth having."

"True," was the acquiescing response.

After they had eaten their oysters, the two men sat conversing for some time. They were both signers of the pledge. Snyder objected to the fact of meeting in a tavern. But his friend vindicated it, on the ground that a much larger number of persons would congregate at a public house,—persons of no decided political principles, who might be brought to see the leading claims of the party for support.

"Besides," he added, "it is very difficult to get a room for this purpose anywhere else. But I am not one who sees so great an objection as you do to holding our meeting here. We need not drink without we choose."

"But, remember, that there are a great many weak ones."

"I would not give a fig for a temperance man who could'nt stand the sight and smell of a brandy

bottle for a month. Not I! He'll violate his pledge, sooner or later, at the best. It's no use, Snyder, to keep liquor out of the sight of men who still hanker after it,—if it does not come to them, they will in the end, go to it, you may depend."

Snyder shook his head at this. He had felt stronger temptations since coming into Leland's bar-room, than had assailed him, from the hour he put his hand to the pledge.

"It is much better to keep out of harm's way," he simply remarked.

"What? Are you afraid of yourself?"

"No. I cannot say that I am. I alluded to the weak ones I spoke of just now. But, as I live, it is ten o'clock; I must go home."

The two left the box together, and went to the bar to pay for their coffee and oysters.

"Ah! How are you, Snyder? I am glad to see your face again," said Leland, smiling, and reaching over his hand.

Snyder felt reluctant, but he could not help taking the landlord's proffered hand.

"I hope this is not the last time I shall see you here," Leland continued. "I still keep the best oysters, and my coffee is famed. A great many of your temperance men visit me. I make ten gallons of coffee now where I used to make one."

Snyder said very little in reply to this, and got away as quickly as he could. In walking home, he did not feel the quiet that was usually his portion. The sayings and doings of the evening had disturbed his state of mind. He was conscious that there was danger in visiting the club room, and yet he could not entertain, for a moment, the

thought of not going there. In fact, he felt strongly drawn to the place he had for two years avoided with a settled aversion.

On entering his comfortable little home, he found his wife engaged, as was her custom, in sewing. There was something in the expression of her eyes, as they rested steadily upon him, that he did not understand fully. Was it a suspicion of his faithfulness to his pledge? This was the first thought presented to his mind, and doubtless, because such was the real truth.

The pleasant smile, that in an instant after beamed over Mrs. Snyder's countenance, dispelled the forming cloud.

For two or three nights after this, William Snyder remained at home with his wife;—but,

"I believe I will step down to Head Quarters, for a little while this evening," the dreaded words for his wife's ear, at length came.

"O no, William, don't go," Anna said, almost without thought. It was feeling that spoke.

"Why not?" Snyder's brow slightly contracted as he made the interrogation.

"Because I want you to stay home with me."

"Have'nt I stayed home with you every night, for a long time? Election comes only once a year, and I am sure you might spare me a few times, then."

"Yes, I know I ought not to be selfish. But indeed, William," and she looked into his face with a glance of deep love, "I am never so happy as when you are with me. All through the day, I know you have to be absent, and a sense of duty reconciles me to this. But I feel that I have a

right to you in the evening, and it goes hard with me to relinquish that right. Besides, I had a dream last night, that has troubled me all day. I wish you would stay at home, William."

"Don't be foolish, Anna, dreams are nothing. I really thought you were a woman of strong mind." Snyder said this with some impatience of manner. "But good night," he added, in a gentler tone. "Good-night—I shall not be long away."

The door that was closed after her husband, jarred on the heart of Mrs. Snyder. She sat down, from a sudden physical exhaustion. Why she should feel so deeply troubled she knew not. But deeply troubled in spirit she was. She would not permit herself to think that her husband could be tempted to break his pledge. If thoughts of this nature presented themselves, they were instantly rejected, with something of indignation. And yet she was suffering deeply, and the real cause, acknowledged to herself, was dread lest he should enter into and fall into temptation. After a time, she turned mechanically to her usual evening occupation. She had three children, between the ages of four and twelve, and to do the sewing for these, was no light task. For an hour, she forced herself to keep plying her needle; but after that, her internal agitation became too strong. She laid her work aside, and, taking a candle, went up stairs to the room where her children were sleeping, and holding it so that the light would fall upon their faces, stood over them for some time. Then turning away with a sigh, she went down stairs, and tried again to sew. But the attempt was use-

less. She had so little heart to work, that her fingers refused to perform the task assigned them.

Meantime, William Snyder was mingling with his political friends at Leland's, and feeling much more at home in the old place, than he had supposed it possible for him to be.

"Come! Let's go down and take a drink," were words so frequently said in his hearing, that they had ceased to affect him unpleasantly. But the too oft repeated jibe at his temperance principles, by some old crony, worried him a good deal.

Towards nine o'clock, he, with three political friends, one of them a teetotaller, went down into the bar to get some oysters.

"We must have something to drink," said one of the company, after the oysters were served. "What will you take, Snyder?"

"A cup of coffee."

"What?"

"Coffee."

"Brandy toddy, you mean."

"No, coffee."

"Good brandy is the only thing fit to go with oysters," said the first speaker, emphatically. "Bring four brandy toddies, waiter."

"No—no—not for me," interposed Snyder. "I will take coffee. I don't drink brandy."

"Oho,—now I see. You have signed the pledge. Well,—bring three brandies, waiter, and one coffee."

Although Snyder had persevered in his resistance to the friends' wish to have him take brandy, he was, nevertheless, sorely tried. There was

something a little sarcastic in the allusion to him as a pledged man, that annoyed him, and made him feel something akin to shame. The other temperance man, had less firmness than Snyder. He did not oppose the order for brandy toddy, although he inwardly determined not to drink it.

Three glasses of brandy toddy, and a cup of coffee, were placed upon the table. Two of the company put their glasses to their lips and drank freely—the third let his glass stand untasted—while Snyder, feeling a little mean, (as it is said), commenced quietly pouring out his cup of coffee.

"What! Ain't you going to drink with us?" asked the individual who had ordered the brandy, addressing the reformed man, whose glass still remained untouched.

"I did not say that I was not," was the evasive reply.

"Then drink, man! What are you afraid of? These are election times, when even a teetotaller ought to pledge the nation in good brandy."

Snyder felt that, if a glass of liquor were then before him, and he were thus urged, he would hardly be able to resist. He was not surprised, though deeply pained, to see the tempted man slowly lift his glass, and sip the enticing compound.

"Good, isn't it?" said one encouragingly.

"I have tasted brandy before," was the brief reply.

The struggle was still going on, vigorously, in the man's mind. When he raised the glass to his lips, it was not with the intention of drinking. He merely meant to taste the liquor, and thus get

rid of the importunities of his false friends. But that taste had helped speedily to decide the contest. It was nectar to his lips. Nothing before had ever been so sweet.

"Try it again."

That simple exhortation was the atom that turned the scale. He did try it again, and emptied half the tumbler at a draught. Will the reader be at all surprised to learn that in half an hour the man who had broken his pledge was intoxicated? No—he would be more surprised if such were not the result.

The moment he saw the eagerness with which the reformed man drank the brandy, Snyder awoke as from a dream, and shuddered at the thought of his own danger and providential escape. He pushed his untasted oysters from him, and rising from the table, took hold of his friend and said—

"Come away, for heaven's sake! This is no place for either you or I."

But it was too late. His friend resisted the interference angrily, by saying—

"If you are content with your coffee, drink it; but don't trouble yourself about me. I know what I am about."

Then lifting his glass again, he drained it to the bottom. Snyder could not help again shuddering from head to foot. He saw that his friend was in a vortex, and rapidly whirling towards the centre. For a moment he stood looking at him, undecided how to act. Then he retired slowly from the box. On re-ascending to the club room, he met two reformed men, to whom he related what had just occurred. They held a brief counsel, and then

went down for the purpose of getting their fellow member away from his dangerous companions. But they received only abuse for their unwelcome interference, both from his drinking friends and himself. Nothing, they soon found, could be done, except to wait quietly until his associates separated themselves from him, which they knew would be the case so soon as the poor fellow became intoxicated. This result soon occurred. The first glass of brandy seemed to set him on fire. The appetite that had remained dormant for nearly three years, quickened into instant life, and urged him to farther indulgence, with an irresistible longing for the potations once so sweet to his thirsty lips.

"Try another glass, gents'," he said, lifting, as he spoke, the little table bell and ringing it.

"Three more brandies," was gaily said, as the waiter responded to the call.

Brandy was again supplied. The glass of the reformed man was soonest emptied.

"Who's afraid? not I," fell from his lips, as he smacked them with the last drop of his second tumbler lingering pleasantly on his nerves of taste.

If he was not afraid to drink, his tempters soon became reluctant to drink with him. They saw that he was no longer a sane man; that the brandy had taken away his reason; that he was rushing on madly to intoxication.

"No, no—no more," one of them said, laying his hand upon the bell, as it was about being rung for the third supply of brandy. "We've had enough."

"Enough! Two glasses enough! You're not fit to drink with an old bruiser like me. Come! you must take another glass. I'll bet five dollars that I can put you all under the table, and then walk home as sober as a judge. Ha! ha! You don't know anything about drinking. Here! give me that bell."

But he was not allowed to touch it.

"Hallo, waiter!" he cried in a loud voice, looking out from the box—"three more brandy toddies, and make 'em strong. Don't be afraid of your liquors."

Snyder, and his temperance friends, heard this loud, distinct call. It made the former tremble, for he was conscious how deeply he had been tempted, and how nothing less, in his mind, than a miracle could have saved him, had a glass of brandy been by his side, instead of the coffee he had ordered.

"We must not leave him here," he said, in a low voice, to one of his companions.

"No—no. He must be got home in some way."

"Poor Mrs. P——! It will break her heart. They have been so happy, and have been doing so well for these three years. The thought of her makes me sick."

"It is my last visit here."

"I can say the same, from the bottom of my heart. This is no place for reformed men. We never secure good to our country by any act that endangers our standing as useful citizens. No—no. If Head Quarters must be in a tavern, then I never go there."

"With all my heart do I respond to that," was the earnest reply.

For a full hour, his friends tried to get the man who had broken his pledge, away from Leland's bar. Then he became so noisy that the landlord thrust him into the street. Snyder and two others followed, and lifting him from the pavement, where he had fallen, supported him home. He was nearly insensible when he arrived there. A light was glimmering in an upper room, from whence some one was heard descending, to open the door in answer to their knock. It was the wife. She had been watching by the bed of a sick child. When she saw her husband held up between two men, and comprehended fully the meaning of what was before her, she uttered a low, deep, thrilling cry, and fell forward senseless.

That cry, that heart-penetrating cry, how it startled every nerve in the body and soul of William Snyder! Lifting Mrs. P—— in his arms, he carried her up to the room from which she had descended.

"Mother—mother," called out the sick child, feebly, as he entered with his senseless burden, rising up, and looking around in alarm.

Without noticing the child, he laid her mother's body upon a bed, and then went down to assist in the disposal of the drunken husband and father, who was fast asleep.

It was a long time before Mrs. P—— showed signs of returning life. When the swoon passed off, it left her only half-conscious, but in a state of painful distress. She sobbed, moaned, cried, and wrung her hands incessantly, without appearing

to know the cause of her agony. The friends of her husband, who could so fully understand the position of affairs, were distressed beyond measure. They knew how sadly P—— had, in former years, abused his family, and they knew that he would abuse it again. They knew what blasting visions had instantly risen up before the mind of his wife, when she saw that he was intoxicated, and they did not wonder at their effect.

It was after midnight, when Snyder turned his steps homewards, his heart lying almost as heavily in his bosom, as if made of lead. One of the friends who had assisted to bring P—— home, remained with the family all night, so that, when the infatuated man should awake from his drunken sleep, he could be with him, and make an effort to save him from the destruction into which he would naturally be inclined to rush.

Let us now return to Mrs. Snyder. The reader has seen, that on this night, her mind suffered more than usual disturbance. She could not, in the absence of her husband, remain at her accustomed employment. Until ten o'clock, her time was passed, in wandering about like a restless spirit, or in vain attempts to compel herself to work. She had hoped that William would return before that hour, though she did not fully expect him. But, after that period, the anxiety became so great, that she felt like one about to be suffocated. It seemed that she were suffering in a terrible nightmare. In vain did she go to the door and look eagerly down the street. In vain did she listen for the sound of *his* footsteps—no other could deceive her quick ear. Thus hour after

hour passed—eleven—twelve o'clock came. The poor wife of the reformed man was in an agony of fear and suspense. The prolonged absence of her husband, knowing as she did, that he had gone voluntarily into the way of temptation, was almost like proof positive that he had been betrayed to certain ruin. Images that had before been dispelled, ere they came forth into full form, now grouped themselves in her excited imagination with paralyzing distinctness. She saw herself again a drunkard's wife—a drunkard's slave—and her children again in rags, defenceless, and abused.

"Oh, it will kill me! It will kill me!" she said, rising with a shudder, and turning her body away, as if by that motion, to turn from the image in her mind.

Walking the floor, and wringing her hands did little towards quieting her internal anguish.

Half an hour more went by, and still Snyder was away. His wife had ceased to manifest her distress by walking the floor, or by any strong external signs. Hope had well nigh become extinguished in her bosom. She was now seated by her work table, her face buried in her arms, and her thoughts turned inward, eating into the substance of her mind.

When Snyder left the dwelling of the poor, fallen wretch, who could not stand up in temptation, he found that it was nearly one o'clock. A thought of his wife made him bound forward with a quick step. On reaching his house, he entered quietly, locked the door after him, and went into their little breakfast room. Here he found Anna

sitting as the reader has last seen her, perfectly motionless. She had heard her husband enter; but she dared not look up. For a moment or two there was a deep silence. Then Snyder, laying his hand gently upon her, said, in a voice of tenderness,

"Anna, dear?"

With a sudden spring did the almost paralyzed wife rise to her feet, and throw herself upon the bosom of her husband.

"It is all well, Anna. Do not fear me," murmured Snyder, who understood what all this meant. "I should not have staid away so long, had I not been anxiously seeking to get away from the accursed place where our club meets, poor P——, who has, alas! fallen in the snare set for our unwary feet. Never—never again will I cross the door stone of that house!"

"Thank God! for that resolution," was the wife's response, yielding to a gush of tears.

We need say no more of William Snyder, and his wife. They are still happy; and will, we are sure, remain so. Poor P—— never awoke from his drunken sleep. That last act, seáled his earthly state.