ARTHUR TIMOTHY SHAY

THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF REAL LIFE

Timothy Arthur

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The Lights and Shadows of Real Life:

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T. S. Arthur
The Lights and Shadows of Real Life

PREFACE

To all, as they pass through the world, come "light and shadow." Though the sun may be in the heavens, clouds often intervene, and cast deep shadows about our footsteps. But, it is a truth which we cannot too deeply lay to heart, that, in our life, as in nature, the exhalations which form the obscuring cloud arise from below. They are not born in the pure heavens, but spring out of the earth beneath. If there was nothing evil in the mind, there would be no cloud in the sky of our being,—all would be "eternal sunshine."

If, therefore, in this book the lights and shadows are blessed; if, in a word, the clouds often hang heavy and remain long in the sky, the fault is in those whose histories we have written. But the sky does not always remain dark. As the heart becomes filled with better purposes through the trials and pains of adversity, or comes out purer from the furnace of affliction, the clouds disperse, and the blessed sunlight comes again. Lay this up for your consolation, all ye who are in trouble and affliction, and

look hopefully in the future. It will not always remain dark as in the present time.

PUBLISHER'S INTRODUCTION

ACCOMPANYING this volume, is a brief auto-biography. In circulating Mr. Arthur's "Sketches of Life and Character," the publisher met so frequently with an expressed desire to know something of one whose writings had made him a general favorite that he was led to solicit a personal sketch, to go with a new collection of his writings. It is but due to the author to say, that his concurrence in the matter was not without considerable reluctance. From this sketch it will be seen that Mr. Arthur is a self-made man, and that he has gained his present enviable position through long and patient labor, and against the pressure of much that was adverse and discouraging. In his elevation he has this pleasing reflection, that in seeking to gain a high place for himself, he has dragged no one down, but rather, sought to carry along, in his upward way, all who could be induced to go with him.

The portrait given in this volume, was engraved from one recently painted by Lambdin, and is considered a very good likeness. Mr. Arthur is now in his forty-second year, and looks somewhat younger than the artist has represented him.

For the information of those who wish to procure Mr. Arthur's Temperance Tales, the publisher would state, that in "Lights and Shadows of Real Life," are included all the stories contained in the recently issued edition of "Illustrated Temperance Tales,"

besides nearly two hundred pages of additional matter, thus making a larger, more miscellaneous, and more acceptable book for all readers.

BRIEF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In compliance with the earnest request of the publisher of this volume, I have, with a reluctance that I find it difficult to overcome, consented to furnish a brief sketch personal to myself. Although my name has been constantly appearing for some twelve or fifteen years, yet I have lost none of that, shrinking from notoriety and observation which made me timid and retiring when a boy. The necessity to write as a means of livelihood, and to write a great deal, has brought me so frequently before the public, that I have almost ceased to think about the matter as any thing more than an ordinary occurrence; but, now, when called upon to write about myself, I find that the edge of a natural sensitiveness is quite as keen as ever. But, I will call the feeling a weakness, and try to repress it until I have finished my present task.

I was born in the year 1809, near Newburgh, Orange County, New York; and my eyes first opened on the beautiful scenery of the Hudson. My earliest recollection is of Fort Montgomery, some six miles below West Point, on the river, where my parents resided for a few years previous to 1817. In the Spring of that year, they removed to Baltimore, which became my place of residence until 1841, when I came to Philadelphia, where I have since lived.

My early educational advantages were few. There were no

public schools in Maryland, when I was a boy, and, as my father had a large family and but a moderate income, he could afford to send his children to school only for a limited period. He knew the value, however, of a good education, and did all for us in his power. Especially did he seek to inspire his children with a regard for religious truth, and, both by precept and example, to lead them into the practice of such things as were honest and of good rest. In all this, he was warmly seconded by a mother who still survives; and for whom, it is but just to say, that her children feel the tenderest regard—and well may they do so, for they owe her much.

At school, I was considered a very dull boy. My memory was not retentive, and I comprehended ideas and formulas expressed by others in a very imperfect manner. I needed a careful, judicious, and patient teacher, who understood the character of my mind, and who was able to come down to it with instruction in the simplest and clearest forms; thus helping me to think for myself and to see for myself. Instead of this, I was scolded and whipped because I could not understand things that were never explained. As, for instance, a slate and pencil were placed in my hands after I had learned to read, upon which was a sum in simple addition for which I was required to find an answer. Now, in the word, "Addition," as referring to figures, I saw no meaning. I did not comprehend the fact, in connexion with it, that two and two made four. True, I had learned my "Addition Table," but, strangely enough, that did not furnish me with any

clue towards working out the problem of figures set for me on my slate. I was then in my ninth year; and I can remember, to this day, with perfect distinctness, how utterly discouraged I became, as day by day went by, and still I had not found a correct result to any one of my sums, nor gained a single ray of light on the subject. Strange as it may seem, I remained for several months in simple addition before I knew how to sum up figures, and then the meaning of addition flashed, in a sudden thought upon my mind, while I was at play. I had no trouble after that. During the next week, I escaped both scolding and "belaboring" (a favorite phrase of my teacher's), and then passed on to subtraction. Five minutes devoted to an explanation, in some simple form, of what "Addition" meant, would have saved me the loss of months, to say nothing of the pain, both mental and bodily, that I suffered during the time.

With such a mind and such a teacher, it is no wonder that I made but little progress during the few years that I went to school. Beyond reading and writing, Arithmetic and English Grammar included the entire range of my studies. As for Arithmetic, I did not master half the common rules, and Grammar was to my mind completely unintelligible.

In the end, my teacher, declared that it was only wasting time and money to send me to school, and advised my father to put me out to a trade. This was done. I left home and entered upon an apprenticeship shortly after passing my thirteenth year.

If I found it extremely difficult to comprehend ideas as

expressed in ordinary written forms, I was not without thoughts of my own. I had an active mind, and soon after entering upon my apprenticeship the desire for knowledge became strong. As food for this was supplied, even though in a stinted measure, the desire gained strength, and I began a system of self-education that was continued for years afterwards. Of course, the system was a very imperfect one. There was no one to select books for me, nor to direct my mind in its search after knowledge. I was an humble apprentice boy, inclined from habit to shrink from observation, and preferring to grope about in the dark for what I was in search off, rather than intrude my wants and wishes upon others. Day after day I worked and thought, and night after night I read and studied, while other boys were seeking pleasure and recreation. Thus, through much discouragement, the years passed by; and thus time went on, until I attained the age of manhood, when, defective sight compelled me to give up the trade I had been acquiring for over seven years.

Beyond this trade, my ability to earn a living was small. My efforts at self-education had been guided by no definite aims in life. I had read, studied and thought, more to gratify a desire for knowledge than to gain information with the end of applying it to any particular use. The consequence was, that on reaching manhood, I entered the world at a great disadvantage. My trade, to learn which I had spent so many years, could not be followed, except at the risk of losing my sight, which had failed for the three preceding years with such rapidity that I was now

compelled to use glasses of strong magnifying power. I had but slight knowledge of figures, and was not, therefore, competent, to take the situation of a clerk. At this point in my life, I suffered from great discouragement of mind. Through the kind offices of a friend, a place was procured for me in a counting room, at a very small salary, where but light service was required, and where I found but few opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of business. Here I remained for over three years, almost as much shut out from contact with the business world as when an apprentice, and with plenty of time on my hands for reading and writing, which I improved.

The necessity for a larger income caused me to leave this place, and accept of one in which a higher ability was required. In 1833 I went to the West as agent for a Banking Company; but the institution failed and I returned to Baltimore, out of employment. During all this time, I was devoting my leisure moments to writing, not that I looked forward to authorship as a trade—nothing could have been more foreign to my thoughts;—I continued to write, as I had begun, prompted by an impulse that I felt little inclination to resist.

At this point in my life, I was induced, in association with a friend who was as fond of writing as myself, to assume the editorial charge of a literary paper. And here began, in earnest, my literary labors, that have since continued with only brief periods of intermission.

As an author, I have never striven for mere reputation; have

never sought to make a name. Circumstances, over which I had little control, guided my feet, and I walked onward in the path that opened before me, not doubting but that I was in the right way. If other employment had offered; if I had received a good business education, and been able, through that means, to have advanced myself in the world, I would, like thousands of others who had an early fondness for literary pursuits, soon have laid aside my pen and given to trade the best energies of my mind. But Providence guided my feet into other paths than these. They were rough and thorny at times, and I often fainted by the way; yet renewed strength ever came when I felt the weakest. If my earnest labor has not been so well rewarded in a money-sense as it might have been had I possessed a business education at the time of my entrance upon life, my reward in another sense has been great. Though I have not been able to accumulate wealth, I have gained what wealth alone cannot give, a wide-spread acknowledgment that in my work I have done good to my fellow men. This acknowledgment comes back upon me from all directions, and I will not deny that it affords me a deep interior satisfaction. Could it be otherwise? And with this heart-warming satisfaction, there arises ever in my mind a new impulse, prompting to still more earnest efforts in the cause of humanity.

My choice of temperance themes has not arisen from any experience in my own person of the evils of intemperance, but from having been an eye and ear witness to some of the first results of Washingtonianism, and seeing, in the cause, one

worthy the best efforts of my pen. The temperance cause I recognized as a good cause, and I gave it the benefit of whatever talent I possessed. And I have the pleasant assurance, from very many who have had better opportunities to know than myself, that my labor has not been in vain. Thus much I have ventured to write of myself. Beyond this, let my works speak for me. I can say no more.

Philadelphia, May, 1850.

T. S. A.

THE FACTORY GIRL

THERE was something wrong about the affairs of old Mr. Bacon. His farm, once the best tilled and most productive in the neighbourhood, began to show evidences of neglect and unfruitfulness; and that he was going behindhand in the world, was too apparent in the fact, that, within two years he had sold twenty acres of good meadow, and, moreover, was under the necessity of borrowing three hundred dollars on a mortgage of his landed property. And yet, Mr. Bacon had not laid aside his habits of industry. He was up, as of old, with the dawn, and turned not his feet homeward from the field until the sun had taken his parting glance from the distant hill-tops.

A kind-hearted, cheerful-minded man was old Mr. Bacon, well liked by all his neighbours, and loved by his own household. His two oldest children died ere reaching the age of manhood; three remained. Mary Bacon, the eldest of those who survived, now in her nineteenth year, had been from earliest childhood her father's favourite; and, as she advanced towards womanhood, she had grown more and more into his heart. In his eyes she was very beautiful; and his eyes, though partial, did not deceive him very greatly, for Mary's face was fair to look upon.

We have said that Mr. Bacon was a kind-hearted cheerful-minded man. And so he was; kind-hearted and cheerful, even though clouds were beginning to darken above him, and a sigh

from the coming tempest was in the air. Yet not so uniformly cheerful as of old, though never moody nor perverse in his tempers. Of the change that was in progress, the change from prosperity to adversity, he did not seem to be *painfully* conscious.

Yes, there was something wrong about the affairs of old Mr. Bacon. A habit indulged through many years, had acquired a dangerous influence over him, and was gradually destroying his rational ability to act well in the ordinary concerns of life. As a young man, Mr. Bacon drank "temperately," and he drank "temperately" in the prime of life; and now, at sixty, he continued to drink "temperately," that is, in his own estimation. There were many, however, who had reason to think differently. But Mr. Bacon was no bar-room lounger; in fact, he rarely, if ever, went to a public house; it was in his own home and among his household treasures, that he placed to his lips the cup of confusion.

The various temperance reforms had all found warm advocates among his friends and neighbours; but Mr. Bacon stood aloof. He would have nothing to do in these matters.

"Let them join temperance societies who feel themselves in danger," was his good natured answer to all argument or persuasion addressed to him on the subject.

He did not oppose nor ridicule the movement. He thought it a good thing; only, he had in it no personal interest.

And so Mr. Bacon went on drinking "temperately" until habit, from claiming a moderate indulgence, began to make, so it seemed to his friends, rather unreasonable demands. Besides this

habit of drinking, Mr. Bacon had another habit, that of industry; and, what was unusual, the former did not abate the latter, though it must be owned that it sadly interfered with its efficiency. He was up, as we have said, with the dawn, and all the day he was busy at work; but, somehow or other, his land did not produce as liberally as in former times, and there was slowly creeping over every thing around him an aspect of decay. Moreover, he did not manage, as well as formerly, the selling part of his business. In fact, his shrewdness of mind was gone. Alcohol had confused his brain. Gradually he was retrograding; and, while more than half conscious of the ruin that was in advance of him, he was not fully enough awake to feel seriously alarmed, nor to begin anxiously to seek for the cause of impending evil. And so it went on until Mr. Bacon, suddenly found himself in the midst of real trouble. The value of his farm, which, after parting with the twenty acres of meadow land, contained but twenty-five acres, had been yearly diminishing in consequence of bad culture, and defective management of his stock had reduced that until it was of little consequence.

The holder of the mortgage was a man named Dyer, who kept a tavern in the village that lay a mile distant from the little white farm-house of Mr. Bacon. When Dyer commenced his liquor-selling trade, for that was his principal business, he had only a few hundred dollars; now he was worth thousands, and was about the only man in the neighbourhood who had money to lend. His loans were always made on bond and mortgage, and, it was a little

remarkable, that he was never known to let a sober, industrious farmer or store-keeper have a single dollar. But, a drinking man, who was gradually wasting his substance, rarely applied to him in vain; for he was the cunning spider watching for the silly fly. More than one worn-out and run-down farm had already come into his hands, through the foreclosure of mortgages, at a time of business depression, when his helpless victims could find no sympathizing friends able to save them from ruin.

One day, in mid-winter, as Mr. Bacon was cutting wood at his rather poorly furnished wood pile, the tavern-keeper rode up. There was something in his countenance that sent a creeping sense of fear to the heart of the farmer.

"Good morning, Mr. Dyer," said he.

"Good morning," returned the tavern-keeper, formally. His usual smile was absent from his face.

"Sharp day, this."

"Yes, rather keen."

"Won't you walk in and take something?"

"No, thank you. H-h-e-em!"

There was a pause.

"Mr. Bacon."

The farmer's eye sunk beneath the cold steady look of Dyer.

"Mr. Bacon, I guess I shall have to call on you for them three hundred dollars," said the tavern-keeper, in a firm voice.

"Can't pay that mortgage now, Mr. Dyer," returned Bacon, with a troubled expression; "no use to think of it."

"Rather a cool way to treat a man after borrowing his money. I told you when I lent it that I might want it at almost any time."

"Oh! no, Mr. Dyer. It was understood, distinctly, that from four to six months' notice would be given," replied Mr. Bacon, positively.

"Preposterous!" ejaculated the tavern-keeper. "Never thought of such a thing. Six months notice, indeed!"

"That was the agreement," said Mr. Bacon, firmly.

"Is it in the bond?"

"No, it was verbal, between us."

Dyer shook his head, as he answered,—

"No, sir. I never make agreements of that kind; the money was to be paid on demand, and I have ridden over this morning to make the demand."

"It is midwinter, Mr. Dyer," was replied in a husky voice.

"Well?"

"You know that a small farmer, like me, cannot be in possession, at this season, of the large sum you demand."

"That is your affair, Mr. Bacon. I want my money now, and must have it."

There was a tone of menace in the way this was said that Mr. Bacon fully understood.

"I haven't thirty dollars, much less three hundred, in my possession," said he.

"Borrow it, then."

"Impossible! money has not been so scarce for years. Every

one is complaining."

"You'd better make the effort, Mr. Bacon, I shall be sorry to put you to any trouble, but my money will have to be forthcoming."

"You will not enter up the mortgage?" said the farmer.

"It will certainly come to that, unless you can pay it."

"That is what I call oppression!" returned Mr. Bacon, in momentary indignation, for the utterance of which he was as quickly repentant.

"Good morning," said Dyer, suddenly turning his horse's head, and riding off at a brisk trot.

For nearly five minutes, old Mr. Bacon stood with his axe resting on the ground, lost in painful thought. Then he went slowly into the house, and sitting down before the fire, let his head sink upon his breast, and there mused on the trouble that was closing around him. But there came no ray of light, piercing the thick darkness that had fallen so suddenly.

Nothing was then said to his family on the subject, but it was apparent to all that something was wrong, for the lips that gave utterance to so many pleasant words, and parted so often in cheerful smiles, were still silent."

"Are you not well, to-day?" asked Mrs. Bacon, as the family gathered around the dinner-table, and she remarked her husband's unusually sober face.

"Not very well," he replied.

"What ails you, father?" said Mary, with tender concern in

her voice, and her eyes were turned upon him with affectionate earnestness.

"Nothing of much consequence, child," was answered evasively. "I shall be better after dinner."

And as Mr. Bacon spoke he poured out a larger glass of brandy than usual—he always had brandy on the table at dinner time—and drank it off. This soon took away the keen edge of suffering from his feelings, and he was able to affect a measure of cheerfulness. But he did not deceive the eyes of Mrs. Bacon and Mary.

"I wonder what ails father!" said Mary, as soon as she was alone with her mother.

"I don't know," answered Mrs. Bacon, thoughtfully, "he seems troubled about something."

"I saw that Mr. Dyer, who keeps tavern over in Brookville, talking with father at the wood-pile this morning."

"You did!" Mrs. Bacon spoke with a new manifestation of interest.

"Yes; and I thought, as I looked at him out of the window, that he appeared to be angry about something."

Mrs. Bacon did not reply to this remark. Soon after, on meeting her husband, she said to him,

"What did Mr. Dyer want this morning?"

"Something that he will not get," replied Mr. Bacon.

"The money he loaned you?"

"Yes."

"It's impossible to pay it back now, in the dead of winter," said Mrs. Bacon, in a troubled tone of voice, "he ought to know that."

"And he does know it."

"What did you tell him?"

"That to lift the mortgage now was out of the question."

"Won't he be troublesome? You remember how he acted towards poor old

Mr. Peabody."

"I know he's a hard-hearted, selfish man. I don't believe that there is a spark of humanity about him. But he'll scarcely go to extremities with me. I don't fear that."

"Did he threaten?"

"Yes. But I hardly think that he was in earnest."

How far this last remark of old Mr. Bacon was correct, the following brief conversation will show. It took place between Dyer and a miserable pettyfogging lawyer, in Brookville, named Grant.

"I've got a mortgage on old Bacon's farm that I wish entered up," said the tavern-keeper, on calling at the lawyer's office.

"Can't he pay it off?" inquired Grant.

"Of course not. He's being running down for the last six or seven years, and is now on his last legs."

"And so you mean to trip him up before he falls of himself." The lawyer spoke in an unfeeling tone and with a sinister smile.

"If you please to say so," returned Dyer. "I've wanted that farm

of his for some time past. When I took the mortgage on it my object was not a simple investment at legal interest; you know that I can do better with money than six per cent a year."

"I should think you could," responded the lawyer, with a chuckle.

"When I loaned Bacon three hundred dollars, of course I never expected to get the sum back again. I understood, perfectly well, that sooner or later the mortgage would have to be entered up."

"And the farm becomes yours for half its real value."

"Exactly."

"Are you not striking to soon?" suggested the lawyer.

"No."

"Some friend may loan him the amount."

Dyer shook his head.

"It's a tight time in Brookville."

"I know."

"And still better for my purpose," said Dyer, in a low, meaning, voice; "drunkards have few friends; none, in fact, willing to risk their money on them. Put the screws to Bacon, and his farm will drop into my hands like a ripe cherry."

"You can hardly call Bacon a drunkard. You never see him staggering about, nor lounging in bar-rooms."

"Do you remember his farm seven years ago?"

"Perfectly well."

"Look at it now."

"There's a great difference, certainly."

"Isn't there! What's the reason of this?"

"Intemperance, I suppose."

"Drunkenness!" said the tavern-keeper. "That is the right word. He don't spend much in bar-rooms, but look over his store bill and you'll find rum a large item."

"Poor Bacon! He's a good sort of a man," remarked the lawyer. "I can't help feeling sorry for him. He's his own worst enemy."

"I want you to push this matter through in the quickest possible time," said Dyer, in a sharp, firm voice.

"Very well. It shall be done. I know my business."

"And I know mine," returned the tavern-keeper.

On the next day, Mr. Bacon was formally notified that proceedings had been instituted for the satisfaction of the mortgage. This was bringing the threatened evil before his eyes in the most direct aspect. In considerable alarm and perturbation, he called over to see Dyer.

"You cannot mean to press this matter on to the utmost extremity," said he, on meeting the tavern-keeper, the hard aspect of whose features gave him little room for hope.

"I certainly mean to get my three hundred dollars," was replied.

"Can you not wait until after next harvest?"

"I have already told you that I want my money now," said Dyer, with affected anger. "If you can pay me, well; if not, I will get my own by aid of the Sheriff."

"That is a hard saying, Mr. Dyer," returned the farmer, in a subdued voice.

"Nevertheless, it is a true one, friend Bacon, true as gospel."

"I haven't the money, nor can I borrow it, Mr. Dyer."

"Your misfortune, not mine. Though I must say, it is a little strange."

"What is strange?"

"That a man who has lived in this community as long as you have, can't find a friend willing to loan him three hundred dollars to save his farm from the Sheriff. There's something wrong."

Yes, there was something wrong, and poor old Mr. Bacon felt it now more deeply than ever. Another feeble effort at remonstrance was made, when Mr. Dyer coldly referred him to Grant the lawyer, who had now entire control of the business. But he did not go to him. He felt that to do so would be utterly useless.

Regular proceedings were entered upon for the settlement of the mortgage, and hurried to an issue as speedily as possible. It was all in vain that Mr. Bacon sought to borrow three hundred dollars, or to find some person willing to take the mortgage on his farm, and let him continue to pay the interest. It was a season when few had money to spare, and those who could have advanced the sum required, hesitated about investing it where there was little hope of getting the amount back again except by execution and sale. For, Mr. Bacon, in consequence of his intemperance, was steadily running behindhand; and all his

neighbours knew it.

The effect of this trouble on the mind of Mr. Bacon was to cause him to drink harder than before. His cheerful temper gave place to a silent moodiness, when in partial states of sobriety, which where now of rare occurrence, and he lost all interest in things around him. A greater part of his time was spent in wandering restlessly about his house or farm, but he put his hand to scarcely any work.

Deeply distressed were Mrs. Bacon and Mary. Each of them had called, at different times on Mr. Dyer, in the hope of moving him by persuasion to turn from his purpose.

But, only in one way would he agree to an amicable settlement, and that was, by taking the farm for the mortgage and three hundred dollars cash; by which means he would come into possession of property worth from twelve to fifteen hundred dollars. This offer he repeated to Mary, who was the last to call upon him in the hope of turning him from his purpose.

"No! Mr. Dyer," said the young girl firmly, even while tears were in her eyes. "My father will not let the place go at a third of its real value."

"He over-estimates its worth," replied Dyer, with some impatience, "and he'll find this out when it comes under the hammer."

"You will not, I am sure you will not, sacrifice my father's little place,—the home of his children," said Mary, in an appealing voice.

"I shall certainly let things take their course," replied the tavern-keeper. "Tell your father, from me, that he has nothing to hope for from any change in my purpose, and that he need make no more efforts to influence me. I will buy the place, as I said, for six hundred dollars, its full value, or I will sell it for my claim."

And saying this, the man left, abruptly, the room in which his interview with Mary was held, and she, hopeless of making any impression on his feelings, arose and retired from the house, taking, with a sad heart, her way homeward. Never before had Mary, a gentle-hearted, quiet, retiring girl, been forced into such rough contact with the world at any point. Of this act of intercession for her father, Mr. Bacon knew nothing. Had she dropped (sic) a a word of her purpose in his hearing, he would have uttered a positive interdiction. He loved Mary as the apple of his eye, and she loved him with a tender, self-devoted affection. To him, she was a choice and beautiful flower, and even though his mind had become, in a certain degree, degraded and debased by intemperance, there was in it a quick instinct of protection when any thing approached his child.

Slowly and thoughtfully, with her eyes bent upon the ground, did Mary Bacon pursue her way homeward; and she was not aware of the approach of footsteps behind her, until a man stood by her side and pronounced her name.

"Mr. Green!" said she, in momentary surprise, pausing as she looked up.

Mr. Green was a farmer in easy circumstances, whose elegant

and highly cultivated place was only a short distance from her father's residence. He was, probably, the richest man in the neighbourhood of Brookville; though, exceedingly close in all money matters. Mr. Bacon would have called upon him for aid in his extremity, but for two reasons. One was, Mr. Green's known indisposition to lend money, and the other was the fact that he had several times talked to him about his bad drinking habits; at which liberty he had taken offence, and retorted rather sharply for one of his mild temper.

The colour mounted quickly to Mary's face, as she paused and lifted her eyes to the countenance of Mr. Green. The fact was, she had been thinking about him, and, just at the moment he came to her side, she had fully made up her mind to call upon him before going home.

"Well Mary," said he, kindly, and he took her hand.

Mary's lips quivered, but she could not utter a word.

Mr. Green moved on, still holding her hand, and she moved by his side.

"I'm sorry to hear," said Mr. Green, "that your father is in trouble. I learned it only an hour ago."

"That is just what I was coming to see you about," replied Mary, with a boldness of speech that surprised even herself.

"Indeed! Then *you* were coming to see me," said Mr. Green, in a voice that was rather encouraging than otherwise.

"Yes, sir. But father knows nothing of my purpose."

"Oh! Well, Mary, what is it you wish to say to me?"

The young girl's bosom was heaving violently. Some moments passed ere she felt calm enough to proceed. Then she said—

"Mr. Dyer has a mortgage on father's place for three hundred dollars, and is going to sell it."

"Mr. Dyer is a hard man, and your father should not have placed himself in his power," remarked Mr. Green.

"Unhappily, he is in his power."

"So it seems. Well, what do you wish me to do in the case?"

"To lend *me* three hundred dollars," said Mary, promptly. Thus encouraged to speak, she did not hesitate a moment.

"Lend *you* three hundred dollars! returned Mr. Green, rather surprised at the directness of her request. "For what use?"

"To pay off this mortgage, of course," replied Mary.

"But, who will pay me back my money?" inquired Mr. Green.

"I will," said Mary, confidently. "You! Pray where do you expect to get so much money from?"

"I expect to earn it," was firmly answered.

Mr. Green paused, and turning towards Mary, looked earnestly into her young face that was lit up with a beautiful enthusiasm.

"Earn it, did you say?"

"Yes, sir, I will earn and pay it back to you, if it takes a lifetime to do it in."

"How will you earn it, Mary?"

Mary let her eyes fall to the ground, and stood for a moment or two.

Then looking up, she said—

"I will go to Lowell."

"To Lowell?"

"Yes, sir."

"And work in a factory?"

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Green moved on again, but in silence, and Mary walked with an anxious heart by his side. For the distance of several hundred yards they passed along and not a word was spoken.

"To Lowell?" at length dropped from the lips of Mr. Green, in a tone half interrogative, half in surprise. Mary did not respond, and the silence continued until they came to a point in the road where their two ways diverged.

"Have you thought well of this, Mary?" said Mr. Green, as he paused here, and laid his hand upon a gate that opened into a part of his farm.

"Why should I think about it, Mr. Green?" replied Mary. "It is no time to think, but to act. Hundreds of girls go into factories, and it will be to me no hardship, but a pleasure, if thereby I can help my father in this great extremity."

"Is he aware of your purpose?"

"Oh, no sir! no!"

"He would never listen to such a thing."

"Not for a moment."

"Then will you be right in doing what he must disapprove?"

"It is done for his sake. Love for him is my prompter, and that

will bear me up even against his displeasure."

"But he may prevent your going, Mary."

"Not if you will do as I wish."

"Speak on."

"Lend me three hundred dollars on my promise to you that I will immediately go to Lowell, enter a factory, and remain at work until the whole sum is paid back again from my earnings."

"Well!"

"I will then take the money and pay off the mortgage. This will release father from his debt to Mr. Dyer, and bring me in debt to you."

"I see."

"Father is an honest and an honourable man."

"He is, Mary," said Mr. Green. His voice slightly trembled, for he was touched by the words of the gentle girl.

"He will not be able to pay you the debt in my stead."

"No."

"And, therefore, deeply reluctant as he may be to let me go, he cannot say nay."

"Walk along with me to my house," said Mr. Green, as he pushed open the gate at which he stood, "I must think about this a little more."

The result was according to Mary's wishes. Mr. Green was a true friend of Mr. Bacon's, and he saw, or believed that he saw, in his daughter's proposition, the means of his reformation. He, therefore, returned into the village, and going to the office

of Grant, satisfied the mortgage on Mr. Bacon's property, and brought all the papers relating thereto away and placed them in Mary's hands.

"Now," said he, on doing this, "I want your written promise to pay me the three hundred dollars in the way proposed. I will draw up the paper, and you must sign it."

The paper was accordingly drawn up and signed. It stipulated that Mary was to start for Lowell within three weeks, and that she was to have two years for the full payment of the debt.

"My brave girl!" said Mr. Green, as he parted with Mary. "No one will be prouder of you than I, if you accomplish the work to which you are about devoting yourself. Happy would I be, had I a daughter with your true heart and noble courage."

Mary's heart was too full to thank him. But her sweet young face was beaming with gratitude, as she turned away and hurried homeward.

Mr. Bacon was walking uneasily, backwards and forwards in the old porch, when Mary entered the little garden gate. She advanced towards him with a bright face, holding out as she did so, a small package of papers.

"Good news, father!" she exclaimed. "Good news!

"How? What, child?" eagerly asked the old man, his mind becoming suddenly bewildered.

"The mortgage is paid, and here is the release!" said Mary, still holding out the package of papers.

"Paid! Paid, Mary! Who paid it?" returned Mr. Bacon, with

the air of a man awaking from a dream.

"I have paid it, father dear!" answered Mary, in a trembling voice; and she kissed the old man's cheek, and then laid her face down upon his breast.

"You, Mary?" Where did you get money?"

"I borrowed it," murmured the happy girl.

"Mary! Mary! what does this mean?" said the old man, pushing back her face and gazing into it earnestly. "Borrowed the money! Why, who would lend you three hundred dollars? Say, child!"

"I borrowed it of Mr. Green," replied Mary, and as she said this, she glided past her father and entering into the house, hurried away to her mother. But ere she had time to inform her of what she had done, the father joined them, eager for some further explanations. When, at last, he comprehended the whole matter, he was, for a time like a man stricken down by a heavy blow.

"Never," said he, in the most solemn manner, "will I consent to this. Mr. Green must take back his money. Let the farm go! It shall not be saved at this price."

But he soon comprehended that it was too late to recall the act of his daughter. The money had already passed into the hands of Dyer, and the mortgage been cancelled. Still, he was fixed in his purpose that Mary should not leave home to spend two long years of incessant toil in a factory, and immediately called on Mr. Green in order to make with him some different arrangement for the payment of the loan. But, to his surprise and grief, he found

that Mr. Green was unyielding in his determination to keep Mary to her contract.

"Surely! surely! Mr. Green, "urged the distressed father," you will not hold my dear child to this pledge, made under circumstances of so trying a nature? You will not punish—I say *punish*—a gentle girl like her for loving her father too well."

"If there is any hardship in the case," replied Mr. Green, calmly, "you are at fault, and not me, Mr. Bacon."

"Why do you say that?" inquired the old man.

"For the necessity which drove your child to this act of self-sacrifice, you are responsible."

"Oh sir! is this a time to wound me with words like these? Why do you turn a seeming act of kindness into the sharpest cruelty?"

"I speak to you but the words of truth and soberness, Mr. Bacon. These, no man should shrink from hearing. Seven years ago, your farm was the most productive in the neighborhood, and you in easy circumstances. What has produced the sad change now visible to all eyes? What has taken from you the ability to manage your affairs as prosperously as before? What has made it necessary for your child to leave her father's sheltering roof and bury herself for two long years in a factory, in order to save you from total ruin? Go home, Mr. Bacon, and answer these questions to your own heart, and may the pain you now suffer lead you to act more wisely in the future."

"My daughter shall not go!" exclaimed the old man, passionately.

"I hold her written pledge to repair to Lowell at the expiration of three weeks, and to repay the loan I made her in two years. Will you compel her to violate her contract?"

"I will execute another mortgage on my farm and pay you back the loan."

"Act like a wise man," said Mr. Green. "Let your daughter carry out her noble purpose, and thus relieve you from embarrassment."

"No, no, Mr. Green! I cannot think of this. Oh, sir! pity me! Do not force my child away! Do not lay so heavy a burden on one so young. Think of her as your own daughter, and do to me as you would yourself wish to be done by."

But Mr. Green was deaf to all these appeals. He was a man of great firmness of purpose, and not easily turned to the right nor to the left.

During the next three weeks, Mr. Bacon tried every expedient in his power, short of a total sacrifice of his little property, to raise the money, but in vain. Except for a circumstance new in his life, he would, in his desperation, have accepted Dyer's offer of six hundred dollars for his farm, and thus prevented Mary's departure for Lowell—that circumstance was his perfect sobriety. Not since the day when Mr. Green charged upon him the responsibility of his child's banishment from her father's house, had he tasted a drop of strong drink. His mind was therefore clear, and he was restrained by reason from acts of rashness, by which his condition would be rendered far worse

than it was already.

Bitter indeed were the sufferings of Mr. Bacon, during the quick passage of the three weeks—at the expiration of which time Mary was to leave home, in compliance with her contract—and the more bitter, because his mind was unobscured by drink. At last, the moment of separation came. It was a clear cold morning towards the latter end of March, when Mary left, for the last time, her little chamber, and came down stairs dressed for her journey. Ever, in the presence of her father and mother, during the brief season of preparation, had she maintained a cheerful and confident exterior; but, in her heart, there was a painful shrinking back from the trial upon which she was about entering. On going by the door of Mary's chamber, a few minutes before she came down, Mrs. Bacon saw her daughter kneeling at her bedside, with her face deeply buried among the clothes. Not till that moment did she fully comprehend the trial through which her child was passing.

The stage was at the door, and Mary's trunk strapped up in the boot before she came down. In the porch stood her father and mother, and her younger brother and sister, waiting her appearance.

"Good bye, father," said the excellent girl, in a cheerful voice, as she reached out her hand.

Mr. Bacon caught it eagerly, and essayed to speak some tender and encouraging words. But though his lips moved, there was no sound upon the air.

"God bless you!" was at length uttered in a sobbing voice. A fervent kiss was then pressed upon her lips, and the old man turned away and staggered rather than walked back into the house.

More calmly the mother parted with her child. It was a great trial for Mrs. Bacon, but she now fully comprehended the great use to flow from Mary's self-devotion, and, therefore, with her last kiss, breathed a word of encouragement.

"It is for your father. Let that sustain you to the end." A few moments more, and the stage rolled away, bearing with it the very sunlight from the dwelling of Mr. Bacon. Poor old man! Restlessly did he wander about for days after Mary's departure, unable to apply himself, except for a little while at a time, to any work; but his inquietude did not drive him back to the cup he had abandoned. No, he saw in it too clearly the cause of his present deep distress, to look upon and feel its allurement. What had banished from her pleasant home that beloved child, and sent her forth among strangers to toil from early morning until the going down of the sun? Could he love the cause of this great evil? No! There was yet enough virtue in his heart to save him. Love for his child was stronger than his depraved love of strong drink. A few more ineffectual efforts were made to turn Mr. Green from his resolution to hold Mary to her contract, and then the humbled father resigned himself to the necessity he could not overcome, and with a clearer mind and a newly awakened purpose, applied himself to the culture of his farm, which, in a few months, had a

more thrifty appearance than it had presented for years.

In the mean time, Mary had entered one of the mills at Lowell, and was doing her work there with a brave and cheerful spirit. Some painful trials, to one like her, attended her arrival in the city and entrance upon the duties assumed. But daily the trials grew less, and she toiled on in the fulfilment of her contract with Mr. Green, happy under the ever present consciousness that she had saved her father's property, and kept their homestead as the gathering place of the family. At the end of three months, she came back and spent a week. How her young heart bounded with joy at the great change apparent in every thing about the house and farm, but, most of all, at the change in her father. He was not so light of word and smilingly cheerful as in former times, but he was sober, perfectly sober; and she felt that the kiss with which he welcomed her brief return, was purer than it had ever been.

On the very day Mary came back, she called over to see Mr. Green, and paid him thirty-seven dollars on account of the loan, for which he gave her a receipt. Then he had many questions to ask about her situation at Lowell, and how she bore her separation from home, to all of which she gave cheerful answers, and, in the end, repeated her thanks for the opportunity he had given her to be of such great service to her father.

Mr. Green had a son who, during his term at college, exhibited talents of so decided a character that his father, after some deliberation, concluded to place him under the care of an eminent lawyer in Boston. In this position he had now been

for two years, and was about applying for admission to the bar. As children, Henry Green and Mary Bacon had been to the same school together, and, as children, they were much attached to each other. Their intercourse, as each grew older, was suspended by the absence of Henry at college, and by other circumstances that removed the two families from intimate contact, and they had ceased to think of each other except when some remembrance of the past brought up their images.

After paying Mr. Green the amount of money which she had saved from her earnings during the first three months of her factory life, Mary left his house, and was walking along the carriage way leading to the public road, when she saw a young man enter the gate and approach her.

Although it was three years since she had met Henry Green, she knew him at a glance, but he did not recognize her, although struck with something familiar in her face as he bowed to her in passing.

"Who can that be?" said he to himself, as he walked thoughtfully along. "I have seen her before. Can that be Mary Bacon? If so, how much she has improved!"

On meeting his father, the young man asked if he was right in his conjecture about the young person he had just passed, and was answered in the affirmative.

"She was only a slender girl when I saw her last. Now, she is a handsome young woman," said Henry.

"Yes, Mary has grown up rapidly," replied Mr. Green,

evincing no particular interest in the subject of his remark.

"How is her father doing now?" asked Henry.

"Better than he did a short time ago," was replied

"I'm glad to hear that. Does he drink as much as ever?"

"No. He has given up that bad habit."

"Indeed! Then he must be doing better."

"He ran himself down very low," said Mr. Green, "and was about losing every thing, when Mary, like a brave, right-minded girl, stepped forward and saved him."

"Mary! How did she do that, father?"

"Dyer had a mortgage of three hundred dollars on his farm, and was going to sell him out in mid-winter, when nobody who cared to befriend him had money to spare. On the very day I heard about his trouble, Mary called on me and asked the loan of a sum sufficient to lift the mortgage.

"But how could she pay you back that sum?" asked the young man in surprise.

"I loaned her the amount she asked," replied Mr. Green, "and she has just paid me the first promised instalment of thirty-seven dollars."

"How did she get the money?"

"She earned it with her own hands."

"Where?"

"In Lowell."

"You surprise me," said Henry. "And so, to save her father from ruin, she has devoted her young life to toil in a factory?"

"Yes; and the effect of this self-devotion has been all that I hoped it would be. It has reformed her father. It has saved him in a double sense."

"Noble girl!" exclaimed the young man, with enthusiasm.

"Yes, you may well say that, Henry," replied Mr. Green. "In the heart of that humble factory girl is a truly noble and womanly principle, that elevates her, in my estimation, far above any thing that rank, wealth, or social position alone can possibly give."

"But father," said Henry, "is it right to subject her to so severe a trial? It will take a long, long time, for her to earn three hundred dollars. Does not virtue like hers—"

"I know what you would say," interrupted Mr. Green. "True I could cancel the obligation and derive great pleasure from doing so, but it is the conclusion of my better judgment, all things considered, that she be permitted to fill up the entire measure of her contract. The trial will fully prove her, and bring to view the genuine gold of her character. Moreover, it is best for her father that she should seem to be a sufferer through his intemperance. I say seem, for, really, Mary experiences more pleasure than pain from what she is doing. The trial is not so great as it appears. Her reward is with her daily, and it is a rich reward."

Henry asked no further question, but he felt more than a passing interest in what he had heard. In the course of a week, Mary returned to Lowell and he went back to Boston.

Three months afterwards, Mary again came home to visit her parents, and again called upon Mr. Green to pay over to him what

she had been able to save from her earnings. It so happened that Henry Green was on a visit from Boston, and that he met her, as before, as she was retiring from the house of his father. This time he spoke to her and renewed their old acquaintance, even going so far as to walk a portion of the way home with her. At the end of another three months, they met again. Brief though this meeting was, it left upon the mind of each the other's image more strongly impressed than it had ever been. In the circle where Henry Green moved in Boston, he met many educated, refined, and elegant young women, some of whom had attracted him strongly; but, in the humble Mary Bacon, whose station in life was that of a toiling factory girl, he saw a moral beauty whose light threw all the allurements presented by these completely into shadow.

Six months went by. Henry Green had been admitted to the bar, and was now a practising attorney in Boston. It was in the pleasant month of June and he had come home to spend a few weeks with his family. One morning, a day or two after his return, as he sat conversing with his father, the form of some one darkened the door.

"Ah Mary!" said the elder Mr. Green rising and taking the hand of Mary Bacon, which he shook warmly. "My son, Henry," he added, presenting the blushing girl to his son, who, in turn, took her hand and expressed the pleasure he felt at meeting her. Knowing the business upon which Mary had called, Henry, not wishing to be present at its transaction, soon retired. As he did so, Mary drew out her purse and took therefrom a small roll of

bank bills, saying, as she handed it to Mr. Green,

"I have come to make you another payment."

With a grave, business-like air, Mr. Green took the money and, after counting it over, went to his secretary and wrote out a receipt.

"Let me see," said he, thoughtfully, as he came back with the receipt in his hand. "How much does this make? One, two, three, four, five quarterly payments. One hundred and eighty-seven dollars and a half. You'll soon be through, Mary. There is nothing like patience, perseverance, and industry. How is your father this morning?"

"Very well, sir."

"I think his health has improved of late."

"Very much."

"And so has every thing around him. I was looking at his farm a few days ago, and never saw crops in a finer condition. And how is your health, Mary."

"Pretty good," was replied, though not with much heartiness of manner.

Mr. Green now observed her more closely, and saw that her cheeks were thinner and paler than at her last visit. He did not remark on it, however, and, after a few words more of conversation, Mary arose and withdrew.

It was, perhaps, an hour afterwards, that Henry said to his father,

"Mary Bacon doesn't look as well as when I last saw her."

"So it struck me," returned Mr. Green.

"I'm afraid she has taken upon her more than she has the strength to accomplish. She is certainly paler and thinner than she was, and is far from looking as cheerful and happy as when I saw her six months ago."

Mr. Green did not reply to this, but his countenance assumed a thoughtful expression.

"Mary is a good daughter," he at length said, as if speaking to himself.

"There is not one in a thousand like her," replied Henry, with a warmth of manner that caused Mr. Green to lift his eyes to his son's face.

"I fully agree with you in that," he answered.

"Then, father," said Henry, "why hold her any longer to her contract, thus far so honorably fulfilled. The trial has proved her. You see the pure gold of her character."

"I have long seen it," returned Mr. Green.

"Her father is thoroughly reformed."

"So I have reason to believe."'

"Then act from your own heart's generous impulses, father, and forgive the balance of the debt."

"Are you certain that she will accept what you ask me to give? Will her own sense of justice permit her to stop until the whole claim is satisfied?" asked Mr. Green.

"I cannot answer for that father," returned Henry. "But, let me beg of you to at least make the generous offer of a release."

Mr. Green went to his secretary, and, taking a small piece of paper from a drawer, held it up, and said—

"This, Henry, is her acknowledgment of the debt to me. If I write upon it 'satisfied,' will you take it to her and say, that I hold the obligation no farther."

"Gladly!" was the instant reply of Henry. "You could not ask me to do a thing from which I would derive greater pleasure."

Mr. Green took up his pen and wrote across the face of the paper, in large letters, "satisfied," and then, handing it to his son, said—

"Take it to her, Henry, and say to her, that if I had given way to my feelings, I would have done this a year ago. And now, let me speak a word for your ear. Never again, in this life, may a young woman cross your path, whose character is so deeply grounded in virtue, who is so pure, so unselfish, so devoted in her love, so strong in her good purposes. Her position is humble, but, in a life-companion, we want personal excellences, not extraneous social adjuncts. You have my full consent to win, if you can, this sweet flower, blooming by the way-side. A proud day will it be for me, when I can call her my daughter. I have long loved her as such."

More welcome words than these Mr. Green could not have spoken to his son. They were like a response to his own feelings. He did not, however, make any answer, but took the contract in silence and quickly left the room.

The reader can easily anticipate what followed. Mary did not

go back to Lowell. A year afterwards she was introduced to a select circle of friends in Boston as the wife of Henry Green, and she is now the warmly esteemed friend and companion of some of the most intelligent, refined, right-thinking, and right-feeling people in that city. Her husband has seen no reason to repent of his choice.

As for old Mr. Bacon, his farm has continued to improve in appearance and value ever since his daughter paid off the mortgage; and as he, once for all, banished liquor from his house, he is in no danger of having his little property burdened with a new encumbrance. His cheerfulness has returned, and he bears as of old, the reputation of being the best tempered, best hearted man in the neighborhood.

TWO PICTURES

Two beautiful children, a boy and a girl, the oldest but six years of age, came in from school one evening, later than usual by half an hour. Both their eyes were red with weeping, and their cheeks wet with tears. Their father, Mr. Warren, who had come home from his business earlier than usual, had been waiting some time for their return, and wondering why they stayed so late. They were his only children, and he loved them most tenderly. They had, a few weeks before, been entered at a school kept by a lady in the neighborhood—not so much for what they would learn, as to give occupation to their active minds.

"Why, Anna! Willy!" exclaimed Mr. Warren, as the children came in, "what's the matter? Why have you stayed so late?"

Anna lifted her tearful eyes to her father's face, and her lip curled and quivered. But she could not answer his question.

Mr. Warren took the grieving child in his arms, and as he drew her to his bosom, said to Willy, who was the oldest—

"What has made you so late, dear?"

"Miss Roberts kept us in," sobbed Willy.

"Kept you in!" returned Mr. Warren, in surprise. "How came that?"

"Because we laughed," answered the child, still sobbing and weeping.

"What made you laugh?"

"One of the boys made funny faces."

"And did you laugh too, dear?" asked the father of Anna.

"Yes, papa. But I couldn't help it. And Miss Roberts scolded so, and said she was going to whip us."

"And was that all you did?"

"Yes, indeed, papa," said Willy.

"I'll see Miss Roberts about it," fell angrily from the lips of Mr. Warren. "It's the last time you appear in her school. A cruel-minded woman!"

And then the father soothed his grieving little ones with affectionate words and caresses.

"Dear little angels!" said Mr. Warren to his wife, shortly afterwards, "that any one could have the heart to punish them for a sudden outburst of joyous feelings! And Anna in particular, a mere babe as she is, I can't get over it. To think of her being kept in for a long half hour, under punishment, after all the other children had gone home. It was cruel. Miss Roberts shall hear from me on the subject."

"I don't know, dear, that I would say any thing about it," remarked the mother, who was less excited about the matter, "I don't think she meant to be severe. She, doubtless, forgot that they were so very young."

"She'd no business to forget it. I've no idea of my children being used after this fashion. The boy that made them laugh should have been kept in, if any punishment had to be inflicted. But it's the way with cruel-minded people. The weakest are

always chosen as objects of their dislike."

"I am sure you take this little matter too much to heart," urged the mother. "Miss Roberts must have order in her school, and even the youngest must conform to this order. I do not think the punishment so severe. She had to do something to make them remember their fault, and restrain their feelings in future; and she could hardly have done less. It is not too young for them to learn obedience in any position where they are introduced."

But the over fond and tender father could see no reason for the punishment his little ones had received; and would not consent to let them go again to the school of Miss Roberts. To him they were earth's most precious things. They were tender flowers; and he was troubled if ever the winds blew roughly upon them.

Seven years have passed. Let us visit the home of Mr. Warren and look at him among his children. No; we will not enter this pleasant house—he moved away long ago. Can this be the home of Mr. Warren! Yes. Small, poor, and comfortless as it is! Ah! there have been sad changes.

Let us enter. Can that be Warren? That wretched looking creature—with swollen, disfigured face and soiled garments—who sits, half stupid, near the window? A little flaxen-haired child is playing on the floor. It is not Anna. No; seven years have changed her from the fairylike little creature she was when her father became outraged at her punishment in Miss Roberts' school! Poor Anna! That was light as the thistle down to what she has since received from the hands of her father. The child on

the floor is beautiful, even in her tattered clothes. She has been playing for some time. Now her father calls to her in a rough, grumbling voice.

"Kate! You, Kate, I say!"

Little Kate, not five years old, leaves her play and goes up to where her parent is sitting.

"Go and get me a drink of water," said he in a harsh tone of authority.

Kate takes a tin cup from a table and goes to the hydrant in the yard. So pleased is she in seeing the water run, that she forgets her errand. Three or four times she fills the cup, and then pours forth its contents, dipping her tiny feet in the stream that is made. In the midst of her sport, she hears an angry call, and remembering the errand upon which she has been sent, hurriedly fills her cup again and bears it to her father. She is frightened as she comes in and sees his face; this confuses her; her foot catches in something as she approaches, and she falls over, spilling the cup of water on his clothes. Angrily he catches her up, and, cruel in his passion, strikes her three or four heavy blows.

"Now take that cup and get me some water!" he cries, in a loud voice, "and if you are not here with it in a minute, I'll beat the life half out of you! I'll teach you to mind when your spoken to, I will! There! Off with you!"

Little Kate, smarting from pain, and trembling with fear, lifts the cup and hurries away to perform her errand. She drops it twice from her unsteady hands ere she is able to convey it, filled

with water, to her parent, who takes it with such a threatening look from his eyes, that the child shrinks away from him, and goes from the room in fear.

An hour passes, and the light of day begins to fade.

Evening comes slowly on, and at length the darkness closes in. But twice since morning has Warren been from the house, and then it was to get something to drink. The door at length opens quietly, and a, little girl enters. Her face is thin and drooping, and wears a look of patient suffering.

"You're late, Anna," says the mother, kindly.

"Yes, ma'am. We had to stay later for our money. Mr. Davis was away from the store, and I was afraid I would have to come home without it. Here it is."

Mrs. Warren took the money.

"Only a dollar!" There was disappointment in her tones as she said this.

"Yes, ma'am, that is all," replied Anna, in a troubled voice. "I spoiled some work, and Mr. Davis said I should pay for it, and so he took half a dollar from my wages."

"Spoiled your work!" spoke up the father, who had been listening.

"That's more of your abominable carelessness!"

"Indeed, father; I couldn't help it," said Anna, "one of the girls —"

"Hush up, will you! I want none of your lying excuses. I know you!

It was done on purpose, I have not the least doubt."

Anna caught her breath, like one suddenly deprived of air. Tears rushed to her eyes and commenced falling over her cheeks, while her bosom rose and fell convulsively.

"Come, now! None of that!" said the cruel father sternly. "Stop your crying instantly, or I will give you something to cry for! A pretty state of things, indeed, when every word must be answered by a fit of crying!"

The poor child choked down her feelings as best she could, turning as she did so from her father; that he might not see the still remaining traces of her grief which it was impossible at once to hide.

Not a single dollar had the idle, drunken father earned during the week, that he had not expended in self-indulgence; and yet, in his brutality, he could roughly chide this little girl, yet too young for the taskmaster, because she had lost half a dollar of her week's earnings through an accident, the very nature of which he would not hear explained. So grieved was the poor child at this unkindness, that when supper was on the table she shrunk away from the room.

"Come, Anna, to your supper," called the mother.

"I don't wish any thing to eat," replied the child, in a faint voice.

"Oh, yes; come and get something."

"Let her alone!" growls the father. "I never humor sulky children.

She doesn't deserve any supper."

The mother sighs. While the husband eats greedily, consuming, himself, more than half that is on the table, she takes but a few mouthfuls, and swallows them with difficulty.

After supper, Willy, who is just thirteen, and who has already been bound out as an apprentice to a trade, comes home. He has a tale of suffering to tell. For some fault his master has beaten him until the large purple welts lie in meshes across his back from his shoulders to his hips.

"How comes all this?" asks Mr. Warren. There is not the smallest sign of sympathy in his voice.

Willy relates the cause, and tells it truly. He was something to blame, but his fault needed not the correction of stripes even lightly applied.

"Served you right!" said the father, when the story was ended. "No business to have acted so. Do as you are told, and mind your work, and you'll escape flogging. Otherwise, I don't care how often you get it. You've been spoiled at home, and it'll do you good to toe the mark. Did your master know you were coming home to-night?"

"No, sir," replied the boy, with trembling lips, and a choking voice.

"Then what did you come for? To get pitied? Do right and you'll need no pity."

"Oh, James, don't speak so to the child!" said Mrs. Warren, unable to keep silence.

This was answered by an angry look.

"You must go back to your master, boy," said the father, after a pause. "When you wish to come home, ask his consent."

"He doesn't object to my coming home," said Willy, his voice still quivering.

"Go back, I tell you! Take your hat, there, and go back. Don't come here any more with your tales!"

The boy glanced towards his mother, and read pity and sympathy in her countenance, but she did not countermand the order; for she knew that if she did so, a scene of violence would follow.

"Ask to come home in the morning," said she to her boy, as she held his hand tightly in hers at the door. He gave her a look of tender thankfulness, and then went forth into the darkness, feeling so sad and wretched that he could not repress his tears.

Seven years. And was only this time required to effect such a change! Ah! rum is a demon! How quickly does it transform the tender husband and parent into a cruel beast! Look upon these two pictures, ye who tarry long at the wine! Look at them, but do not say they are overdrawn! They have in them only the sober hues and subdued colors of truth.

BRANDY AS A PREVENTIVE

THE cholera had made its appearance in New York, and many deaths were occurring daily. Among those who weakly permitted themselves to feel an alarm amounting almost to terror, was a Mr. Hobart, who, from the moment the disease manifested itself, became infested with the idea that he would be one of its victims.

"Doctor," said he to his family physician, meeting him one day in the street, "is there nothing which a man can take that will act as a preventive to cholera?"

"I'll tell you what I do," replied the doctor.

"Well, what is it?"

"I take a glass of good brandy twice a day. One in the morning and the other after dinner."

"Indeed! And do you think brandy useful in preventing the disease?"

"I think it a protection," said the doctor. "It keeps the system slightly stimulated; and is, besides, a good astringent."

"A very simple agent," remarked Mr. Hobart.

"Yes, the most simple that we can adopt. And what is better, the use of it leaves no after bad consequences, as is too often the case with medicines, which act upon the system as poisons."

"Sometimes very bad consequences arise from the use of brandy," remarked Mr. Hobart. "I have seen them in my time."

"Drunkenness, you mean."

"Yes."

"People who are likely to make beasts of themselves had better let it alone," said the doctor, contemptuously. "If they should take the cholera and die, it will be no great loss to the world."

"And you really think a little good brandy, taken daily, fortifies the system against the cholera?"

"Seriously I do," replied the doctor. "I have adopted this course from the first, and have not been troubled with a symptom of the disease."

"I feel very nervous on the subject. From the first I have been impressed with the idea that I would get the disease and die."

"That is a weakness, Mr. Hobart."

"I know it is, still I cannot help it. And you would advise me to take a little good brandy?"

"Yes, every day."

"I am a Son of Temperance."

"No matter; you can take it as medicine under my prescription. I know a dozen Sons of Temperance who have used brandy every day since the disease appeared in New York. It will be no violation of your contract. Life is of too much value to be put in jeopardy on a mere idea."

"I agree with you there. I'd drink any thing if I thought it would give me an immunity against this dreadful disease."

"You'll be safer with the brandy than without it."

"Very well. If you think so, I will use it."

On parting with the doctor, Mr. Hobart went to a liquor

store and ordered half a gallon of brandy sent home. He did not feel altogether right in doing so, for it must be understood, that, in years gone by, Mr. Hobart had fallen into the evil habit of intemperance, which clung to him until he run through a handsome estate and beggared his family. In this low condition he was found by the Sons of Temperance, who induced him to abandon a course whose end was death and destruction, and to come into their Order. From that time all was changed. Sobriety and industry were returned to him in many of the good things of this world which he had lost, and he was still in the upward movement at the time when the fatal pestilence appeared.

On going home at dinner time, Hobart's wife said to him, with a serious face—

"A demijohn, with some kind of liquor in it, was sent here to-day."

"Oh, yes," he replied, it is brandy that Doctor L—ordered me to take as a cholera preventive."

"Brandy!" ejaculated Mrs. Hobart, with an expression of painful surprise in her voice and on her countenance, that rather annoyed her husband.

"Yes. He says that he takes it every day as a preventive, and directed me to do the same."

"I wouldn't touch it if I were you. Indeed I wouldn't," said Mrs. Hobart, earnestly.

"Why wouldn't you?"

"You will violate your contract with the Sons of Temperance."

"Not at all. Brandy may be used as a medicine under the prescription of a physician. I wouldn't have thought of touching it had not Doctor L—ordered me to do so."

"You are not sick, Edward."

"But there is death in the very air I breathe. At any moment I am liable to be struck down by an arrow sent from an unseen bow, unless a shield be interposed. Such a shield has been placed in my hands. Shall I not use it?"

Mrs. Hobart knew her husband well enough to be satisfied that remonstrance and argument would be of no avail, now that his mind was m de up to use the brandy; and yet so distressed did she feel, that she couldn't help saying, with tears in her eyes—

"Eaward,(sic) let me beg of you not to touch it."

"Would you rather see me in my coffin?" replied Mr. Hobart, with some bitterness. "Death may seem a light thing to you, but it is not so to me."

"You are not sick," still urged the wife.

"But I am liable, as I said just now, to take the disease every moment."

"You will be more liable, with your system stimulated and disturbed by brandy. Let well enough alone. Be thankful for the health you have, and do not invite disease."

"The doctor ought to know. He understands the matter better than you or I. He recommends brandy as a preventive. He takes it himself."

"Because he likes it, no doubt."

"It is silly for you to talk in that way," replied the husband, with much impatience. "He isn't rendered more liable to the disease by taking a little pure brandy, for he says that it keeps him perfectly well."

"A glass of brandy every day may have been his usual custom," urged Mrs. Hobart. "In that case, in its continuance, no change was produced. But your system has been untouched by the fiery liquid for nearly five years, and its sudden introduction must create disturbance. It is reasonable."

"The doctor ought to know best," was replied to this. "He has prescribed it, and I must take it. Life is too serious a matter to be trifled with. 'An ounce of preventive is worth a pound of cure,' you know."

"I am in equal danger with yourself," said Mrs. Hobart; "and so are the children."

"Undoubtedly. And I wish you all to use a little brandy."

"Not a drop of the poison shall pass either my lips or those of the children," replied Mrs. Hobart, with emphasis.

"As you please," said the husband, coldly, and turned away.

"Edward!" Mrs. Hobart laid her hand upon his arm. "Edward! Let me beg of you not to follow this advice."

"Why will you act so foolishly? Has not the doctor ordered the brandy? I look to him as the earthly agent for the preservation of my health and the saving of my life. If I do not regard his advice, in what am I to trust?"

"Remember the past, Edward," said the wife, solemnly.

"I do remember it. But I fear no danger."

Mrs. Hobart turned away sadly, and went up to her chamber to give vent to her feelings alone in tears. Firm to his purpose of using the preventive recommended by the doctor, Mr. Hobart, after dinner, took a draught of brandy and water. Nearly five years, as his wife remarked, had elapsed since a drop of the burning fluid had passed his lips. The taste was not particularly agreeable. Indeed, his stomach rather revolted as the flavor reached his palate.

"It's vile stuff at best," he remarked to himself, making a wry face. "Fit only for medicine. Not much danger of my ever loving it again. I wish Anna was not so foolish. A flattering opinion she has of her husband!"

The sober countenance of his wife troubled Mr. Hobart, as he left home for his place of business earlier by half an hour than usual. Neither in mind nor body were his sensations as pleasant as on the day before. The brandy did something more than produce an agreeable warmth in his stomach. A burning sensation soon followed its introduction, accompanied by a feeling of uneasiness that he did not like. In the course of half an hour, this unnatural heat was felt in every part of his body, but more particularly about his head and face; and it was accompanied by a certain confusion of mind that prevented his usual close application to business during the afternoon.

Towards evening, these disagreeable consequences of the glass of cholera-preventive he had taken in a great measure

subsided; but there followed a dryness of the palate, and a desire for some drink more pleasant to the taste than water. In his store was a large pitcher of ice-water; but, though thirsty, he felt no inclination to taste the pure beverage; but, instead, went out and obtained a glass of soda water. This only made the matter worse. The half gill of syrup with which the water was sweetened, created, in a little while, a more uneasy feeling. Still, there was no inclination for the water that stood just at hand, and which he had daily found so refreshing during the hot weather. In fact, when he thought of it, it was with a sense of repulsion.

In this state, the idea of a cool glass of brandy punch, or a mint julep, came up in his mind, and he felt the draught, in imagination, at his lips.

"A little brandy twice a day; so the doctor said." This was uttered half aloud.

Just at the moment a slight pain crossed his stomach. It was the first sensation of the kind he had experienced since the epidemic he so much dreaded had appeared in the city; and it caused a slight shudder to go through his frame, for he was nervous in his fear of cholera.

"A little mint with the brandy would make it better still. I don't like this feeling. I'll try a glass of brandy and mint." Thus spoke Mr. Hobart to himself.

Putting on his hat, he went forth for the purpose of getting some brandy and mint. As he stepped into the street the pain was felt again, and more distinctly. The effect was to cause a slight

perspiration to manifest itself on the face and forehead of Mr. Hobart, and to make, in his mind, the necessity for the brandy and mint more imperative. He did not just like to be seen going boldly in at the door of a refectory or drinking-house in a public place, for he was a Son of Temperance, and any one who knew this and happened to see him going in, could not, at the same time, know that he was acting under his physician's advice. So he went off several blocks from the neighborhood in which his store was located, and after winding his way along a narrow, unfrequented street, came to the back entrance of a tavern, where he went in, as he desired, unobserved.

Years before, Hobart had often stood at the bar where he now found himself. Old, familiar objects and associations brought back old feelings, and he was affected by an inward glow of pleasure.

"What! you here?" said a man who stood at the bar, with a glass in his hand. He was also a member of the Order.

"And you here!" replied Mr. Hobart.

"It isn't for the love of it, I can assure you," remarked the man, as he looked meaningly at his glass. "These are not ordinary times."

"You are right there," said Hobart. "A little brandy sustains and fortifies the system. That all admit."

"My physician has ordered it for me. He takes a glass or two every day himself, and tells me that, so far, he has not been troubled with the first symptom."

"Indeed. That is testimony to the point."

"So I think."

"Who is your physician?"

"Dr. L—."

"He stands high. I would at any time trust my life in his hands."

"I am willing to do so." Then turning to the bar-keeper, Mr. Hobart said—"I'll take a glass of brandy and water, and you may add some mint."

"Perhaps you'll have a mint julep?" suggested the barkeeper, winking aside to a man who stood near, listening to what passed between the two members of the Order.

"Yes—I don't care—yes. Make it a julep," returned Hobart. "It's the brandy and mint I want. I've had a disagreeable sensation," he added, speaking to the friend he had met, and drawing his hand across his stomach as he spoke, "that I don't altogether like. Here it is again!"

"A little brandy will help it."

"I hope so."

When the mint julep was ready, Hobart took it in his hand and retired to a table in the corner of the room, and the man he had met went with him.

"Ain't you afraid to tamper with liquor?" asked this person, a little seriously, as he observed the relish with which Hobart sipped the brandy. Some thoughts had occurred to himself that were not very pleasant.

"Oh, no. Not in the least," replied Mr. Hobart. "I only take

it as a medicine, under my physician's order; and I can assure you that the taste is quite as disagreeable as rhubarb would be. I believe the old fondness has altogether died out."

"I'm afraid it never dies out," said the man, whose eyes told him plainly enough, that it had not died out in the case of the individual before him, notwithstanding his averment on the subject.

"I feel much better now," said Mr. Hobart, after he had nearly exhausted his glass. "I had such a cold sensation in my stomach, accompanied by a very disagreeable pain. But both are now gone. This brandy and mint have acted like a charm. Dr. L— understands the matter clearly. It is fortunate that I saw him this morning. I would not have dared to touch brandy, unless under medical advice; and, but for the timely use of it, I might have been dangerously ill with this fatal epidemic."

After sitting a little while longer, the two men retired through the back entrance to escape observation.

"How quickly these temperance men seize hold of any excuse to get a glass of brandy," said the bar-keeper to a customer, as soon as Hobart had retired, laughing in a half sneer as he spoke. "They come creeping in through our back way, and all of them have a pain! Ha! ha!"

"I've taken a glass of brandy and water, every day for the last five years," replied the man to whom this was addressed, "and I continue it now. But I can tell you what, if I'd been an abstainer, you wouldn't catch me pouring it into my stomach now. Not I!

All who do so are more liable to the disease."

"So I think," said the bar-tender. "But every one to his liking. It puts money in our till. We've done a better business since the cholera broke out, than we've done these three years. If it were to continue for a twelve month we would make a fortune."

This was concluded with a coarse laugh, and then he went to attend to a new customer for drink.

For all Mr. Hobart had expressed himself so warmly in favor of brandy, and had avowed his freedom from the old appetite, he did not feel altogether right about the matter. There was a certain pressure upon his feelings that he could not well throw off. When he went home in the evening, he perceived a shadow on the brow of his wife; and the expression of her eyes, when she looked at him, annoyed and troubled him.

After supper, the uneasiness he had felt during the afternoon, returned, and worried his mind considerably. The fact was, the brandy had already disturbed the well balanced action of the lower viscera. The mucous membrane of the whole (sic) alementry canal had been stimulated beyond health, and its secretions were increased and slightly vitiated. This was the cause of the uneasiness he felt, and the slight pains which had alarmed him. By ten o'clock his feelings had become so disagreeable, that he felt constrained to meet them with another "mouthful," of brandy. Thus, in less than ten hours, Mr. Hobart had wronged his stomach by pouring into it three glasses of brandy; entirely disturbing its healthy action.

The morning found Mr. Hobart far from feeling well. His skin was dry and feverish and his mouth parched. There was an uneasy sensation of pain in his head. Immediately upon rising he took a strong glass of brandy. That, to use his own words, "brought him up," and made him feel "a hundred per cent better." During the forenoon, however, a slight diarrhoea manifested itself. A thrill of alarm was the consequence.

"I must check this!" said he, anxiously. And, in order to do so, another and stronger glass of brandy was taken.

In the afternoon, the diarrhoea appeared again. It was still slight, and unaccompanied by pain. But, it was a symptom not to be disregarded. So brandy was applied as before. In the evening, it showed itself again.

"I wish you would give me a little of that brandy," said he to his wife. "I'm afraid of this, it must be stopped."

"Hadn't you better see the doctor?"

"I don't think it necessary. The brandy will answer every purpose."

"I have no faith in brandy," said Mrs. Hobart. Poor woman! she had cause for her want of faith!

"I have then," replied her husband. "It's the doctor's recommendation. And he ought to know."

"You were perfectly well before you commenced acting on his advice."

"I was well, apparently. But, it is plain that the seeds of disease were in me. There is no telling how much worse I would have

been."

"Nor how much better. For my part I charge it all on the brandy."

"That's a silly prejudice," said Mr. Hobart, with a good deal of impatience. "Every one knows that brandy is a remedy in diseases of this kind; not a producing cause."

Mrs. Hobart was silent. But she did not get the brandy. That was more than she could do. So her husband got it himself. But, in order to make the medicinal purpose more apparent, he poured the liquor into a deep plate, added some sugar, and set it on fire.

"You will not object to burnt brandy at least," said he. "That you know to be good."

Mrs. Hobart did not reply. She felt that it would be useless. Only a disturbance of harmony could arise, and that would produce greater unhappiness. The brandy, after having parted with its more volatile qualities, was introduced into Mr. Hobart's stomach, and fretted that delicate organ for more than an hour.

"I thought the burnt brandy would be effective," said Mr. Hobart on the next morning. "And it has proved so." In order not to lose this good effect, he fortified himself before going out with some of the same article, unburnt. But, alas! By ten o'clock the diarrhoea showed itself again, and in a more decided form.

Oh dear!" said he in increased alarm. "This won't do. I must see the doctor." And off he started for Doctor L—'s office. But, on the way he could not resist the temptation to stop at a tavern for another glass of brandy, notwithstanding he began to

entertain a suspicion as to the true cause of the disturbance. The doctor happened to be in. "I think I'd better have a little medicine, doctor," said he, on seeing his medical adviser. A stitch in time, you know."

"Ain't you well?"

"No," and Mr. Hobart gave his symptoms.

"An opium pill will do all that is required," said the doctor.

"Shall I continue the brandy?" asked the patient.

"Have you taken brandy every day since I saw you?" inquired the doctor.

"Yes; twice, and sometimes three times."

"Ah!" The doctor looked thoughtful.

"Shall I continue to do so?"

"Perhaps you had better omit it for the present. You're not in the habit of drinking any thing?"

"No. I haven't tasted brandy before for five years."

"Indeed! Yes, now, I remember you said so. You'd better omit it until we see the effect of the opium. Sudden changes are not always good in times like these."

"I don't think the brandy has hurt me," said Mr. Hobart.

"Perhaps not. Still, as a matter of prudence, I would avoid it. Let the opium have a full chance, and all will be right again."

An opium pill was swallowed, and Mr. Hobart went back to his place of business. It had the intended effect. That is, it cured one disease by producing another—suspended action took the place of over-action. He was, therefore, far from being in

a state of health, or free from danger in a cholera atmosphere. There was one part of the doctor's order that Mr. Hobart did not comply with. The free use of brandy for a few days rekindled the old appetite, and made his desire for liquor so intense, that he had not, or, if he possessed it, did not exercise the power of resistance.

Sad beyond expression was the heart of Mrs. Hobart, when evening came, and her husband returned home so much under the influence of drink as to show it plainly. She said nothing to him, then, for that she knew would be of no avail. But next morning, as he was rising, she said to him earnestly and almost tearfully.

"Edward, let me beg of you to reflect before you go further in the way you have entered. You may not be aware of it, but last night you showed so plainly that you had been drinking that I was distressed beyond measure. You know as well as I do, where this will end, if continued. Stop, then, at once, while you have the power to stop. As to preventing disease, it is plain that the use of brandy has not done so in your case; but, rather, acted as a predisposing cause. You were perfectly well before you touched it; you have not been well since. Look at this fact, and, as a wise man, regard its indications."

Truth was so strong in the words of his wife, that Mr. Hobart did not attempt to gainsay them.

"I believe you are right," he replied with a good deal of depression apparent in his manner. "I wish the doctor had kept his brandy advice to himself. It has done me no good."

"It has done you harm," said his wife.

"Perhaps it has. Ah, me! I wish the cholera would subside."

"I think your fear is too great," returned Mrs. Hobart. "Go on in your usual way; keep your mind calm; be as careful in regard to diet, and you need fear no danger."

"I wish I'd let the brandy alone!" sighed Mr. Hobart, who felt as he spoke, the desire for another draught.

"So do I. Doctor L—must have been mad when he advised it."

"So I now think. I heard yesterday of two or three members of our Order who have been sick, and every one of them used a little brandy as a preventive."

"It is bad—bad. Common sense teaches this. No great change of habit is good in a tainted atmosphere. But you see this now, happily, and all will yet be well I trust."

"Yes; I hope so. I shall touch no more of this brandy preventive. To that my mind is fully made up."

Mrs. Hobart felt hopeful when she parted with her husband. But she knew nothing of the real conflict going on in his mind between reason and awakened appetite—else had she trembled and grown faint in spirit. This conflict went on for some hours, when, alas! appetite conquered.

At dinner time Mrs. Hobart saw at a glance how it was. The whole manner of her husband had changed. His state of depression was gone, and he exhibited an unnatural exhilaration of spirits. She needed not the sickening odor of his breath to tell the fatal secret that he had been unable to control himself.

It was worse at night. He came home so much beside himself that he could with difficulty walk erectly. Half conscious of his condition, he did not attempt to join the family, but went up stairs and groped his way to bed. Mrs. Hobart did not follow him to his chamber. Heartsick, she retired to another room, and there wept bitterly for more than an hour. She was hopeless. Up from the melancholy past arose images of degradation and suffering too dreadful to contemplate. She felt that she had not strength to suffer again as she had suffered through many, many years. From this state she was aroused by groans from the room where her husband lay. Alarmed by the sounds, she instantly went to him.

"What is the matter?" she asked, anxiously.

"Oh! oh! I am in so much pain!" was groaned half inarticulately.

"In pain, where?"

"Oh! oh!" was repeated, in a tone of suffering; and then he commenced vomiting.

Mrs. Hobart placed her hand upon his forehead and found it cold and clammy. Other and more painful symptoms followed. Before the doctor, who was immediately summoned, arrived, his whole system had become prostrate, and was fast sinking into a state of collapse. It was a decided case of cholera.

"Has he been eating any thing improper?" asked Doctor L—, after administering such remedies, and ordering such treatment as he deemed the case required.

"Has he eaten no green fruit?"

"None."

"Nothing, to my knowledge, replied Mrs. Hobart. "We have been very careful in regard to food."

"Nor unripe vegetables?"

Mrs. Hobart shook her head.

"Nor fish?"

"Nothing of the kind."

"That is strange. He was well a few days ago."

"Yes, perfectly, until he began to take a little brandy every day as a preventive."

"Ah!" The doctor looked thoughtful. "But it couldn't have been that. I take a little pure brandy every day, and find it good. I recommend it to all my patients."

Mrs. Hobart sighed. Then she asked—"Do you think him dangerous?"

"I hope not. The attack is sudden and severe. But much worse cases recover. I will call round again before bed time."

The doctor went away feeling far from comfortable. Only a few hours before he, had left a man sick with cholera beyond recovery, who had, to his certain knowledge, adopted the brandy-drinking-preventive-system but a week before; and that at his recommendation. And here was another case.

At eleven o'clock Dr. L—called to see Mr. Hobart again, and found him rapidly sinking. Not a single symptom had been reached by his treatment. The poor man was in great pain. Every muscle in his body seemed affected by cramps and spasms. His

mind, however, was perfectly clear. As the doctor sat feeling his pulse, Hobart said to him—

"Doctor L—, it is too late!"

"Oh, no. It is never too late," replied the doctor. "Don't think of death; think of life, and that will help to sustain you. You are not, by any means, at the last point. Hundreds, worse than you now are, come safely through. I don't intend to let you slip through my hands."

"Doctor," said the sick man, speaking in a solemn voice, "I feel that I am beyond the reach of medicine. I shall die. What I now say I do not mean as a reproach. I speak it only as a truth right for you to know. Do you see my poor wife?"

The doctor turned his eyes upon Mrs. Hobart, who stood weeping by the bedside.

"When she is left a widow, and my children orphans," continued the patient, "remember that you have made them such!"

"Me! Why do you say that, Mr. Hobart?" The doctor looked startled.

"Because it is the truth. I was a well man, when you, as my medical adviser, recommended me to drink brandy as a protection against disease. I was in fear of the infection, and followed your prescription. From the moment I took the first draught my body lost its healthy equilibrium; and not only my body, but my mind. I was a reformed man, and the taste inflamed the old appetite. From that time until now I have not been really

sober."

The doctor was distressed and confounded by this declaration. He had feared that such was the case; but now it was charged unequivocally.

"I am pained at all this," he replied, "In sinning I sinned ignorantly."

But, ere he could finish his reply, the sick man became suddenly worse, and sunk into a state of insensibility.

"If it be in human power to save his life," murmured the doctor —"I will save it."

Through the whole night he remained at the bed-side, giving, with his own hands, all the remedies, and applying every curative means within reach. But, when the day broke, there was little, if any change for the better. He then went home, but returned in a couple of hours.

"How is your husband?" he asked of the pale-faced wife as he entered. She did not reply, and they went up to the chamber together. A deep silence reigned in the room as they entered.

"Is he asleep?" whispered the doctor.

"See!" The wife threw back the sheet.

"O!" was the only sound that escaped the doctor's lips. It was a prolonged sound, and uttered in a tone of exquisite distress. The white and ghastly face of death was before him.

"It is your work!" murmured the unhappy woman, half beside herself in her affliction.

"Madam! do not say that!" ejaculated the physician. "Do not

say that!"

"It is the truth! Did he not charge it upon you with his dying breath?"

"I did all for the best, madam! all for the best! It was an error in his case. But I meant him no harm."

"You put poison to his lips, and destroyed him. You have made his wife a widow and his children orphans!"

"Madam!—"The doctor knit his brows and spoke in a stern voice. But, ere he had uttered a word more, the stricken-hearted woman gave a wild scream and fell upon the floor. Nature had been tried beyond the point of endurance, and reason was saved at the expense of physical prostration.

A few weeks later, and Doctor L—, in driving past the former residence of Mr. Hobart, saw furniture cars at the door. The family were removing. Death had taken the husband and father, and the poor widow was going forth with her little ones from the old and pleasant home, to gather them around her in a smaller and poorer place. His feelings at the moment none need envy.

How many, like Mr. Hobart, have died through the insane prescription of brandy as a preventive to cholera! and how many more have fallen back into old habits, and become hopeless drunkards! Brandy is not good for health at any time; how much less so, when the very air we breathe is filled with a subtle poison, awaiting the least disturbance in the human economy to affect it with disease.

THE TEMPERANCE PLEDGE

"I WANT a quarter of a dollar, Jane."

This was addressed by a miserable creature, bloated and disfigured by intemperance, to a woman, whose thin, pale face, and heart-broken look, told but too plainly that she was the drunkard's wife.

"Not a quarter of a dollar, John? Surely you will not waste a quarter of a dollar of my hard earnings, when you know that I can scarcely get food and decent clothes for the children?"

As the wife said this, she looked up into her husband's face with a sad appealing expression.

"I must have a quarter, Jane," said the man firmly.

"O, John! remember our little ones. The cold-weather will soon be here, and I have not yet been able to get them shoes. If you will not earn any thing yourself, do not waste the little my hard labor can procure. Will not a sixpence do? Surely that is enough for you to spend for—"

"Nothing will do but a quarter, Jane, and that I must have, if I steal it!" was the prompt and somewhat earnest reply.

Mrs. Jarvis laid aside her work mechanically and, rising, went to a drawer, and from a cup containing a single dollar in small pieces, her little all, took out a quarter of a dollar, and turning to her husband, said, as she handed it to him—

"Remember, that you are taking the bread out of your

children's mouths!"

"Not so bad as that, I hope, Jane," said the drunkard, as he clutched the money eagerly; something like a feeble smile flitting across his disfigured and distorted countenance.

"Yes, and worse!" was the response, made in a sadder tone than that in which the wife had at first spoken.

"How worse, Jane?"

"John!" and the wife spoke with a sudden energy, while her countenance lighted up with a strange gleam. "John, I cannot bear this much longer! I feel myself sinking every day. And you —you who pledged yourself—"

Here the voice of the poor woman gave way, and covering her face with her hands, she bent her head upon her bosom, and sobbed and wept hysterically.

The drunkard looked at her for a moment, and then turning hurriedly, passed from the room. For some moments after the door had closed upon her husband, did Mrs. Jarvis stand, sobbing and weeping. Then slowly returning to her chair near the window, she resumed her, work, with an expression of countenance that was sad and hopeless.

In the mean time, the poor wretch who had thus reduced his family to a state of painful destitution, after turning away from his door, walked slowly along the street with his head bowed down, as if engaged in, to him, altogether a new employment, that of self-communion. All at once a hand was laid familiarly upon his shoulders, and a well-known voice said—

"Come, John, let's have a drink."

"Jarvis looked up with a bewildered air, and the first thing that caught his eye, after it glanced away from the face of one of his drinking cronies, was a sign with bright gold letters, bearing the words, "EAGLE COFFEE-HOUSE." That sign was as familiar to him as the face of one of his children. At the same moment that his eyes rested upon this, creating an involuntary impulse to move towards the tavern-door, his old crony caught hold of his coat-collar and gave him a pull in the same direction. But much to the surprise of the latter, Jarvis resisted this attempt to give his steps a direction that would lead him into his old, accustomed haunt.

"Won't you drink this morning, Jarvis?" asked the other, with a look of surprise.

There was evidently a powerful struggle going on in the mind of the drunkard. This lasted only for a moment or two, when he said, loudly, and emphatically—

"No!"

And instantly broke from his old boon companion, and hurried on his way.

A loud laugh followed him, but he heeded it not. Ten minutes' walk brought him to the store of a respectable tradesman.

"Is Mr. R—in?" he asked, as he entered.

"Back at the desk," was the answer of a clerk.

And Jarvis walked back with a resolute air.

"Mr. R—, I want to sign the pledge!"

"You, Jarvis?" Mr. R—said, in tones of gratified surprise.

"Yes, me, Mr. R—. It's almost a hopeless case; but here goes to do my best."

"Are you fully sensible of what you are about doing, Jarvis?"

"I think I am, Mr. R—. I've drunk nothing since yesterday morning, and with the help of Him above, I am determined never to drink another drop as long as I live! So read me the pledge and let me sign it."

Mr. R—turned at once to the constitution of the Washington Temperance Society, and read the pledge thereunto annexed:

"'We, the undersigned, do pledge ourselves to each other, as gentlemen, that we will not, hereafter, drink any spiritous liquors, wine, malt, or cider, unless in sickness, and under the prescription of a physician.'"

Jarvis took the pen in his hand, that trembled so he. could scarcely make a straight mark on paper, and enrolled his name among the hundreds of those, who, like him, had resolved to be men once more. This done, he laid down the quarter of a dollar which he had obtained from his wife, the admission fee required of all who joined the society. As he turned from the tradesman's store, his step was firmer and his head more erect, than, in a sober state, he had carried it for many a day.

From thence he proceeded to a hatter's-shop.

"Well, Jarvis," was uttered in rather a cool, repulsive tone, as he entered.

"Are you not in want of a journeyman, Mr. Warren?"

"I don't want you, Jarvis."

"If you will give me work, I'll never get drunk again, Mr. Warren."

"You've said that too many times, Jarvis. The last time you went off when I was hurried with work, and caused me to disappoint a customer, I determined never to have any thing more to do with you."

"But I'll never disappoint you again," urged the poor man earnestly.

"It's no use for you to talk to me, Jarvis. You and I are done with each other. I have made up my mind never again to have a man in my shop who drinks rum."

"But I've joined the temperance society, Mr. Warren."

"I don't care if you have: in two weeks you'll be lying in the gutter."

"I'll never drink liquor again if I die!" said Jarvis, solemnly.

"Look here, you drunken vagabond!" returned the master hatter in angry tones, coming from behind the counter, and standing in front of the individual he was addressing—"if you are not out of this shop in two minutes by the watch, I'll kick you into the street! So there now—take your choice to go out, or be kicked out."

Jarvis turned sadly away without a reply, and passed out of the door through which he had entered with a heart full of hope, now pained, and almost ready to recede from his earnest resolution and pledge to become a sober man and a better husband and

father. He felt utterly discouraged. As he walked slowly along the street, the fumes of a coffee-house which he was passing, unconsciously, struck upon his sense, and immediately came an almost overpowering desire for his accustomed potation. He paused—

"Now that I try to reform, they turn against me," he sighed bitterly. "It is no use; I am gone past hope!"

One step was taken towards the tavern-door, when it seemed as if a strong hand held him back.

"No—no!" he murmured, "I have taken the pledge, and I will stand by it, if I die!" Then moving resolutely onward, he soon found himself near the door of another hatter's-shop. Hope again kindled up in his bosom, and he entered.

"Don't you want a hand, Mr. Mason?" he asked, in a hesitating tone.

"Not a drunken one, Jarvis," was the repulsive answer.

"But I've reformed, Mr. Mason."

"So I should think from your looks."

"But, indeed, Mr. Mason I have quit drinking, and taken the pledge."

"To break it in three days. Perhaps three hours."

"Won't you give me work, Mr. Mason, if I promise to be sober?"

"No! For I would not give a copper for your promises."

Poor Jarvis, turned away. When he had placed his hand to the pledge, he dreamed not of these repulses and difficulties.

He was a good workman, and he thought that any one of his old employers would be glad to get him back again, so soon as they learned of his having signed the total-abstinence pledge. But he had so often promised amendment, and so often broken his promise and disappointed them, that they had lost all confidence in him; at least, the two to whom he had, thus far, made application.

After leaving the shop of Mr. Mason, Jarvis seemed altogether irresolute. He would walk on a few steps, and then pause to commune with his troubled and bewildered thoughts.

"I will try Lankford," said he, at length, half-aloud; "he will give me work, surely."

A brisk walk of some ten minutes brought him to the door of a small hatter's-shop in a retired street. Behind the counter of this shop stood an old man, busily employed in ironing a hat. There was something benevolent in his countenance and manner. As Jarvis entered, he looked up, and a shade passed quickly over his face.

"Good morning, Mr. Lankford," said Jarvis, bowing, with something like timidity and shame in his manner.

"Are you not afraid to come here, John?" replied the old man, sternly.

"I am ashamed to come, but not afraid. You will not harm me, I know."

"Don't trust to that, John. Did you not steal, ay, that is the word—did you not steal from me the last time I employed you?"

The old man was stern and energetic in his manner.

"I was so wicked as to take a couple of skins, Mr. Lankford, but I did very wrong, and am willing to repay you for them, if you will give me work. I was in liquor when I did it, and, when in liquor, I have no distinct consciousness of the evil of any action."

"Give you work, indeed! O, no! John; I cannot give you another chance to rob me."

"But I will not get drunk any more. And you know, Mr. Lankford, that while I was a sober man, and worked for you, I never wronged you out of a sixpence worth."

"Won't get drunk any more! Ah! John, I have lived too long in. the world, and have seen too much, to heed such promises."

"But I am in earnest, Mr. Lankford. I signed the pledge this morning."

"You!" in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, *I* signed it."

"Ah, John," after a pause, and shaking his head. incredulously, "I cannot credit your word, and I am sorry for it."

"If I have signed the pledge, and if I am really determined to be a reformed man, will you give me work, Mr. Lankford!"

The old man thought for a few moments, and then said, half-sorrowfully—

"I am afraid of you, John. You are such an old offender on the score of drunkenness, that I have no confidence in your power to keep the pledge."

"Then what *shall* I do!" the poor wretch exclaimed, in tones

that made the heart of the old man thrill—for nature and pathos were in them. "Now that I am trying in earnest to do better, no one will give me a word of encouragement, nor a helping hand. Heaven help me!—for I am forsaken of man."

Mr. Lankford stood thoughtful and irresolute for some moments. At length, he said—

"John, if you will bring me a certificate from Mr. R—, that you have signed the total-abstinence pledge, I will give you another trial. But if you disappoint me again, you and I are done for ever."

The countenance of Jarvis brightened up instantly. He turned quickly away, without reply, and hurried off to the store of Mr. R—, the secretary of the society he had joined. The certificate was, of course, obtained.

"And you have joined, sure enough, John," Mr. Lankford said, in a changed tone, as he glanced over the certificate.

"Indeed I have, Mr. Lankford."

"And you seem in earnest."

"If I was ever in earnest about any thing in my life, I am in earnest now."

"Keep to your pledge, then, John, and all will be well. While you were a sober man, I preferred you to any journeyman in my shop. Keep sober, and you shall never want a day's work while I am in business."

The poor man was now shown his place in the shop, and once again he resumed his work, though under a far different impulse

than had, for years, nerved him to action.

Two hours brought his regular dinner-time, when Jarvis, who began to feel the want of food, returned home, with new and strange feelings about his heart. One impulse was to tell his wife what he had done, and what he was doing. But then he remembered how often he had mocked her new springing hopes —how often he had promised amendment, and once even joined a temperance society, only to relapse into a lower and more degraded condition.

"No, no," he said to himself, after debating the question in his mind, as he walked towards home; "I will not tell her now. I will first present some fruit of my repentance. I will give such an assurance as will create confidence and hope."

Mrs. Jarvis did not raise her eyes to the face of her husband, as he entered. The sight of that once loved countenance, distorted and disfigured, ever made her heart sick when she looked upon it. Jarvis seated himself quietly in a chair, and held out his hands for his youngest child, not over two years old, who had no consciousness of his father's degradation. In a moment the happy little creature was on his knee. But the other children showed no inclination to approach.

The frugal meal passed in silence and restraint. Mrs. Jarvis felt troubled and oppressed—for the prospect before her seemed to grow more and more gloomy. All the morning she had suffered from a steady pain in her breast, and from a lassitude that she could not overcome. Her pale, thin, care-worn face, told a sad

tale of suffering, privation, confinement, and want of exercise. What was to become of her children she knew not. Under such feelings of hopelessness, to have one sitting by her side, who could take much of her burdens from her, were he but to will it—who could call back the light to her heart, if only true to his promise, made in earlier and happier years—soured in some degree her feelings, and obscured her perceptions. She did not note that some change had passed upon him; a change that if marked, would have caused her heart to leap in her bosom.

As soon as Jarvis had risen from the table, he took his hat, and kissing his youngest child, the only one there who seemed to regard him, passed quickly from the house. As the door closed after him, his wife heaved a long sigh, and then rising, mechanically, proceeded to clear up the table. Of how many crushed affections and disappointed hopes, did that one deep, tremulous sigh, speak!

Jarvis returned to his work, and applied himself steadily during the whole afternoon. Whenever a desire for liquor returned upon him, he quenched it in a copious draught of water, and thus kept himself as free from temptation as possible. At night he returned, when the same troubled and uneasy silence pervaded the little family at the supper-table. The meal was scanty, for Mrs. Jarvis's incessant labor could procure but a poor supply of food. After the children had been put to bed, Mrs. Jarvis sat down, as usual, to spend the evening, tired as she was, and much as her breast pained her, in sewing. A deep sigh heaved

involuntarily her bosom as she did so. It caught the ear of her husband, and smote upon his heart. He knew that her health was feeble, and that constant labor fatigued her excessively.

"I wouldn't sew to-night, Jane," he said. "You look tired. Rest for one evening."

Mrs Jarvis neither looked up nor replied. There was something in the tone of her husband's voice that stirred her feelings;—something that softened her heart towards him. But she dared not trust herself to speak, nor to let her eye meet his. She did not wish to utter a harsh nor repulsive word, nor was she willing to speak kindly to him, for she did not feel kindly,—and kind words and affected cheerfulness, she had already found but encouraged him in his evil ways. And so she continued to ply her needle, without appearing to regard his presence. Her husband did not make another effort to induce her to suspend her labors; for, under existing circumstances, he was particularly desirous of not provoking her to use towards him the language of rebuke and censure. After sitting silent, for, perhaps half an hour, he rose from his chair, and walked three or four times backwards and forwards across the room, preparatory to going out to seek a coffee-house, and there spend his evening, as his wife supposed. But much to her surprise, he retired to their chamber, in the adjoining room. While still under the expectation of seeing him return, his loud breathing caught her quick ear. He was asleep!

Catching up the light, as she arose suddenly to her feet, she passed, with a hasty step, into the chamber. He had undressed

himself, was in bed, and sound asleep. She held the candle close to his face; it was calmer than usual, and somewhat paler. As she bent over him, his breath came full in her face. It was not loaded with the disgusting fumes that had so often sickened her. Her heart beat quicker—the moisture dimmed her eye—her whole frame trembled. Then looking upwards, she uttered a single prayer for her husband, and, gliding quietly from the room, sat down by her little table and again bent over her work. Now she remembered that he had said, with something unusual in his tones—"I would not sew to-night, Jane; you look tired; rest for one evening"—and her heart was agitated with a new hope; but that hope, like the dove from the ark, found nothing upon which to rest, and trembled back again into a feeling of despondency.

On the next morning, the unsteady hand of Jarvis, as he lifted his saucer to his lips at the breakfast-table, made his wife's heart sink again in her bosom. She had felt a hope, almost unconsciously. She remembered that at supper-time his hand was firm—now it was unnerved. This was conclusive to her mind, that, notwithstanding his appearance, he had been drinking. But few words passed during the meal, for neither felt much inclined to converse.

After breakfast, Jarvis returned to the shop and worked steadily until dinner-time, and then again until evening. As on the night before, he did not go out, but retired early to bed. And this was continued all the week. But the whole was a mystery to his poor wife, who dared not even to hope for any real change

for the better. On Saturday, towards night, he laid by his work, put on his coat and hat, and went into the front shop.

"So you have really worked a week, a sober man, John?" Mr. Lankford said.

"Indeed, I have. Since last Sunday morning, no kind of intoxicating liquor has passed my lips."

"How much have you earned this week, John?"

"Here is the foreman's account of my work, sir. It comes to twelve dollars."

"Still a fast workman. You will yet recover yourself, and your family will again be happy, if you persevere."

"O, sir, they shall be happy! I *will* persevere!"

Another pause ensued, and then Jarvis said, while the color mounted to his cheek—

"If you are willing, Mr. Lankford, I should like you to deduct only one-half of what I owe you for those furs I took from you, from this week's wages. My family are in want of a good many things; and I am particularly desirous of buying a barrel of flour to-night."

"Say nothing of that, John. Let it be forgotten with your past misdeeds. Here are your wages—twelve dollars—and if it gives you as much pleasure to receive, as it does me to pay them, then you feel no ordinary degree of satisfaction."

Mr. Jarvis received the large sum for him to possess, and hurried away to a grocery. Here he bought, for six dollars, a barrel of flour, and expended two dollars more of his wages in sugar,

coffee, tea, molasses, &c. Near to the store was the market-house. Thence he repaired, and bought meat and various kinds of vegetables, with butter, &c. These he carried to the store, and gave directions to have all sent home to him. He had now two dollars left out of the twelve he had earned since Monday morning, and with these in his pocket, he returned home. As he drew near the house, his heart fluttered in anticipation of the delightful change that would pass upon all beneath its humble roof. He had never in his life, experienced feelings of such real joy.

A few moments brought him to the door, and he went in with the quick step that had marked his entrance for several days. It was not quite dark, and his wife sat sewing by the window. She was finishing a pair of pantaloons that had to go home that very evening, and with the money she was to get for them she expected to buy the Sunday dinner. There was barely enough food in the house for supper; and unless she received her pay for this piece of work, she had no means of getting the required sustenance for herself and children—or rather, for her husband, herself and children. The individual for whom it was intended was not a prompt pay-master, and usually grumbled whenever Mrs. Jarvis asked him for money. To add to the circumstances of concern and trouble of mind, she felt almost ready to give up, from the excessive pain in her breast, and the weakness of her whole frame. As her husband came in, she turned upon him an anxious and troubled countenance; and then bent down over her

work and plied her needle hurriedly. As the twilight fell dimly around, she drew nearer and nearer to the window, and at last stood up, and leaned close up to the panes of glass, so that her hand almost touched them, in order to catch the few feeble rays of light that were still visible. But she could not finish the garment upon which she wrought, by the light of day. A candle was now lit, and she took her place by the table, not so much as glancing towards her husband, who had seated himself in a chair, with his youngest child on his knee. Half an hour passed in silence, and then Mrs. Jarvis rose up, having taken the last stitch in the garment she was making, and passed into the adjoining chamber. In a few minutes she came out, with her bonnet and shawl on, and the pair of pantaloons that she had just finished on her arm.

"Where are you going, Jane?" her husband asked, in a tone of surprise, that seemed mingled with disappointment.

"I am going to carry home my work."

"But I wouldn't go now, Jane. Wait until after supper."

"No, John. I cannot wait until after supper. The work will be wanted. It should have been home two hours ago."

And she glided from the room.

A walk of a few minutes brought her to the door of a tailor's-shop, around the front of which hung sundry garments exposed for sale. This shop she entered, and presented the pair of pantaloons to a man who stood behind the counter. His face relaxed not a muscle as he took them and made a careful examination of the work.

"They'll do," he at length said, tossing them aside, and resuming his employment of cutting out a garment.

Poor Mrs. Jarvis paused, dreading to utter her request. But necessity conquered the painful reluctance, and she said—

"Can you pay me for this pair to-night, Mr. Willets?"

"No. I've got more money to pay on Monday than I know where to get, and cannot let a cent go out."

"But, Mr. Willets, I—"

"I don't want to hear any of your reasons, Mrs. Jarvis. You can't have the money to-night."

Mrs. Jarvis moved slowly away, and had nearly reached the door, when a thought of her children caused her to pause.

"I cannot go, Mr. Willets, without the money," she said, suddenly turning, and speaking in an excited tone.

"You *will* go, I'm thinking, madam," was the cool reply.

"O, sir," changing her tone, "pay me what you owe me; I want it very much."

"O, yes. So you all say. But I am used to such make-believes. You get no money out of me to-night, madam. That's a settled point. I'm angry now—so you had better go home at once; if you don't, I'll never give you a stitch of work, so help—"

Mrs. Jarvis did not pause to hear the concluding words of the sentence.

"What *shall* I do?" was the almost despairing question that she asked of herself, as she hurried towards her home. On entering the house she made no remark, for there was no one to whom she

could tell her troubles and disappointment, with even the most feeble hope of a word of comfort.

"Does Mr. Jarvis live here?" asked a rough voice at the door.

"Yes, sir," was the reply.

"Well, here is a barrel of flour and some groceries for him."

"There must be some mistake, sir."

"Is not this Mr. Jarvis's?"

"Yes."

"And number 40?"

"Yes."

"Then this is the place, for that was the direction given me."

"Yes, this is the place—bring them in," spoke up Jarvis, in an animated tone.

The drayman, of course, obeyed. First he rolled in the barrel of flour; then came a number of packages, evidently containing groceries; and, finally, one or two pieces of meat, and sundry lots of vegetables.

"How much is to pay?" asked Jarvis.

"Twenty-five cents, sir," responded the drayman, bowing.

The twenty-five cent piece was taken from his pocket with quite an air, and handed over. Then the drayman went out and that little family were alone again. During the passage of the scene just described, the wife stood looking on with a stupid and bewildered air. When the drayman had departed, she turned to her husband, and said—

"'John, where did these things come from?"

"I bought them, Jane."

"You bought them?"

"Yes, I bought them."

"And pray, John, what did you buy them with?"

"With the quarter of a dollar you gave me on Monday."

"John!"

"It is true, Jane. With that quarter I went and joined the Washington Total-Abstinence Society, and then went to work at Mr. Lankford's. Here is the result of one week's work, besides this silver," handing her all that remained, after making the purchases.

"O, John, John," the wife exclaimed, bursting into tears, "do not again mock my hopes. I cannot bear much more."

"In the strength of Him, Jane, who has promised to help us when we call upon Him, 'I will not disappoint the hopes I now revive,'" said Jarvis, slowly and solemnly.

The almost heart-broken wife and mother leaned her head upon the shoulder of her husband, and clung to his side with a newly-revived confidence, that she felt would not be disappointed, while the tears poured from her eyes like rain. But her true feelings we cannot attempt to describe—nor dare we venture to sketch further the scene we have introduced. The reader's imagination can do it more justice, and to him we leave that pleasing task, with only the remark, that Mrs. Jarvis's newly-awakened joys and hopes have not again been disappointed.

TIME, FAITH, ENERGY

"I DON'T see that I am so much better off," said Mr. Gordon, a man who had recently given up drinking. "I lost my situation on the very day I signed the pledge, and have had no regular employment since."

"But you would have lost your situation if you hadn't signed the pledge, I presume," said the individual to whom he was complaining.

"Yes. I lost it because I got drunk and spoiled my job. But to hear some temperance people talk, one who didn't know would be led to believe that, the very moment the pledge was signed, gold could be picked up in the streets. I must confess that I haven't found it so. Money is scarcer with me than it ever was; and though I don't spend a cent for myself, my family haven't a single comfort more than they had before."

"Though there's no disputing the fact that they would have many less comforts if you hadn't signed the pledge?"

"No, I suppose not. But I cannot help feeling discouraged at the way things go. If I had the same wages I received before I signed the pledge, I could be laying up money. But, as it is, it requires the utmost economy to keep from getting in debt."

"Still, you do manage to keep even?"

"Yes."

"On about half your former income?"

"A little over half. I used to get ten dollars a week. Now I manage, by picking up odd jobs here and there, to make about six."

"Then you are better off than you were before."

"I hardly see how you can make that out."

"Your family have enough to live upon—all they had before—and you have a healthier body, a calmer mind, and a clearer conscience. Isn't here something gained?"

"I rather think there is," replied Gordon, smiling.

"And I rather think you are a good deal better off than you were before. Isn't your wife happier?"

"O! yes. She's as cheerful as a lark all the day."

"And doesn't murmur because of your light wages?"

"No, indeed! not she. I believe if I didn't earn more than three dollars a week, and kept sober, she would make it do, somehow or other, and keep a good heart. It's wonderful how much she is changed!"

"And yet you are no better off? Ain't you better off in having a happy wife and a pleasant home, what I am sure you hadn't before?"

"You are right in that. I certainly had neither of them before. Oh! yes. I am much better off all around. I only felt a little despondent, because I can't get regular employment as I used to, and good wages; for now, if I had these, I could do so well."

"Be patient, friend Gordon; time will make all right. There are three words that every reformed man should write on the walls

of his chamber, that he may see them every morning. They are 'Time, Faith, Energy.' No matter how low he may have fallen; no matter how discouraging all things around him may appear; let him have energy, and faith in time, and all will come out well at last."

Gordon went home, feeling in better heart than when he met the temperance friend who had spoken to him these encouraging words.

Henry Gordon, when he married, had just commenced business for himself, and went on for several years doing very well. He laid by enough money to purchase himself a snug little house, and was in a good way for accumulating a comfortable property, when the habit of dram-drinking, which he had indulged for years, became an over-mastering passion. From that period he neglected his business, which steadily declined. In half the time it took to accumulate the property he possessed, all disappeared—his business was broken up, and he compelled to work at his trade as a journeyman to support his family. From a third to a half of the sum he earned weekly, he spent in gratifying the debasing appetite that had almost beggared his family and reduced him to a state of degradation little above that of the brute. The balance was given to his sad-hearted wife, to get food for the hungry, half-clothed children.

Nor was this all. Debts were contracted which Gordon was unable to pay. One or two of his creditors, more exacting than the rest, seized upon his furniture and sold it to satisfy their claims,

leaving to the distressed family only the few articles exempt by law.

Things had reached this low condition, when Gordon came home from the shop, one day, some hours earlier than usual. Surprised at seeing him, his wife said—

"What's the matter, Henry? Are you sick?"

"No!" he replied, sullenly, "I'm discharged."

"Discharged! For what, Henry?"

"For spoiling a job."

"How did that happen?" Mrs. Gordon spoke kindly, although she felt anxious and distressed.

"How has all my trouble happened?" asked Gordon, with unusual bitterness of tone. "I took a glass too much, and—and —"

"It made you spoil your job," said his wife, her voice still kind.

"Yes. Curse the day I ever saw a drop of liquor! It has been the cause of all my misfortunes."

"Why not abandon its use at once and for ever, Henry?"

"That is not so easily done."

"Hundreds have done it, and are doing it daily, and so may you. Only make the resolution, Henry. Only determine to break these fetters, and you are free. Let the time past, wherein you have wrought folly, and your family suffered more than words can express, suffice. Only will it, and there will be a bright future for all of us."

Tears came into the eyes of Mrs. Gordon while she made this

appeal, although she strove hard to appear calm. Her husband felt a better spirit awaking within him. There was a brief struggle between appetite and the good resolution that was forming in his mind, and then the latter conquered.

"I will be free!" he said, turning towards the door through which he had a little while before entered, and hurriedly leaving the house.

The hour that passed from the time her husband went out until he returned, was one of most anxious suspense to Mrs. Gordon. Her hand trembled so that she could not hold her needle, and was obliged to lay aside the sewing upon which she was engaged, and go about some household employments.

"Mary, I have signed the pledge, if that will do any good," said Gordon, opening the door and coming in upon his wife with his pledge in his hand. "There," and he unrolled the paper and pointed to his name; "there is my signature, and here is the document."

He did not speak very cheerfully; but his wife's face was lit up with a sudden brightness, followed by a gush of tears.

"Do any good!" she replied, leaning her head upon his shoulder, and grasping one of his hands tightly in both of hers. "It will do all good!"

"But I have no work, Mary. I was discharged to-day, and it is the only shop in town. What are we to do?"

"Mr. Evenly will take you back, now that you have signed the pledge."

"Perhaps he will!" Gordon spoke more cheerfully. "I will go and see him to-morrow."

Mrs. Gordon prepared her husband a strong cup of coffee, and baked some nice hot cakes for his supper. She combed her hair, and made herself as tidy as possible. The children, too, were much improved in their looks by a little attention, which their mother felt encouraged to give. There was an air of comfort about the ill-furnished dwelling of Henry Gordon that it had not known for a long time, and he felt it.

On the next morning, after breakfast, Gordon went back to the shop from which he had been discharged only the day previous. Evenly, the owner of it, was a rough, unfeeling man, and had kept Gordon on, month after month, because he could not well do without him. But, on the very day he discharged him, a man from another town had applied for work, and the spoiled job was made an excuse for discharging a journeyman, whose habits of intoxication had always been offensive to the master-workman.

When Gordon entered the shop for the purpose of asking to be taken back, he met Evenly near the door, who said to him, in a rough manner—

"And what do you want, pray?"

"I want you to take me back again," replied Gordon. "I have signed the pledge, and intend leading a sober life hereafter."

"The devil you have!"

"Yes sir. I signed it yesterday, after you discharged me."

"How long do you expect to keep it?" asked Evenly, with a

sneer.

"Long enough to reach the next grogshop?"

"I have taken the pledge for life, I trust," returned the workman, seriously. He was hurt at the contemptuous manner of his old employer, but his dependent condition made him conceal his feelings. "You will have no more trouble with me."

"No, I am aware of that. I will have no more trouble with you, for I never intend to let you come ten feet inside the front door of my shop."

"But I have reformed my bad habit, Mr. Evenly. I will give you no more trouble with my drinking," said the poor man, alarmed at this language.

"It's no use for you to talk to me, Gordon," replied Evenly, in a rough manner. "I've long wanted to get rid of you, and I have finally succeeded. Your place is filled. So there is no more to say on that subject. Good morning."

And the man turned on his heel and left Gordon standing half stupified at what he had heard.

"Rum's done the business for you at last, my lark! I told you it would come to this!" said an old fellow workman, who heard what passed between Gordon and the employer. He spoke in a light, insulting voice.

Without replying, the unhappy man left the shop, feeling more wretched than he had ever felt in his life.

"And thus I am met at my first effort to reform!" he murmured, bitterly.

"Hallo, Gordon! Where are you going?" cried a voice as these words fell from his lips.

He looked up and found himself opposite to the door of one of his old haunts. It was the keeper of it who had called him.

"Come! Walk in and let us see your pleasant face this morning. Where were you last night? My company all complained about your absence. We were as dull as a funeral."

"Curse you and your company too!" ejaculated Gordon between his teeth, and moved on, letting his eyes fall again to the pavement.

"Hey-day! What's the matter?"

But Gordon did not stop to bandy words with one of the men who had helped to ruin him.

"It's all over with us, Mary. Evenly's got a man in my place," said Gordon, as he entered his house and threw himself despairingly into a chair. "But won't he give you work, too?" asked Mrs. Gordon, in a husky voice.

"No! He insulted me, and said I should never come ten feet inside of his shop."

"Did you tell him that you had signed the pledge?"

"Yes. But it was no use. He did not seem to care for me any more than he did for a dog."

The poor man's distress was so great that he covered his face with his hands, and sat swinging his body to and fro, and uttering half-suppressed moans.

"What are we to do, Mary? There is no other shop in town,"

he said, looking up, after growing a little calm. "Doesn't it seem hard, just as I am trying to do right?"

"Don't despair, Henry. Let us trust in Providence. It is only a dark moment; yet, dark as it is, it is brighter to me than any period has been for years. A clear head and ready hands will not go long unemployed. I do not despond, dear husband, neither should you. Keep fast anchored to your pledge, and we will outride the storm."

"But we shall starve, Mary. We cannot live upon air."

"No," replied Mrs. Gordon; "but we can live upon half what you have been earning at your trade, and quite as comfortably as we have been living. And it will be an extreme case, I think, if you can't get employment at five dollars a week, doing something or other. Don't you?"

"It appears so. Certainly I ought to be able to earn five dollars a week, if it is at sawing wood. I'll do that—I'll do any thing."

"Then we needn't be alarmed. I'll try and get some sewing at any rate, to help out. So brighten up, Henry. All will be well. It will take a little time to get things going right again; but time and industry will do all for us that we could ask."

Thus encouraged, Gordon started out to see if he could find something to do. It was a new thing for him to go in search of work; and rather hard, he felt, to be obliged almost to beg for it. Where to go, or to whom to apply, he did not know. After wandering about for several hours, and making several applications at out of the way places with no success, he turned

his steps homeward, feeling utterly cast down. In this state, he was assailed by the temptation to drown all his trouble in the cup of confusion, and nearly drawn aside; but a thought of his wife, and the bright hope that had sprung up in her heart in the midst of darkness, held him back.

"It's no use to try, Mary," he said, despondingly, as he entered his poorly-furnished abode, and found his wife busy with her needle. "I can't get any work."

"I have been more successful than you have, Henry," Mrs. Gordon returned, speaking cheerfully. "I went to see if Mrs. Hewitt hadn't some sewing to give out, and she gave me a dozen shirts to make. So don't be discouraged. You can afford to wait for work even for two or three weeks, if it doesn't come sooner. Let us be thankful for what we have to-day, and trust in God for to-morrow. Depend upon it, we shall not want. Providence never forsakes the man who is trying to do right."

Thus Mrs. Gordon strove to keep up the spirits of her husband. After dinner, he went out again and called to see a well-known temperance man. After relating to him what he had done, and how unhappily he was situated in regard to work, the man said—

"It won't do to be idle, Gordon; that's clear. An idle man is tempted ten times to another's once. You will never be able to keep the pledge unless you get something to do. We must assist you in this matter. What can you do besides your trade?"

"I have little skill beyond my regular calling; but then, I have health, strength, and willingness; and I think these might be made

useful in something."

"So do I. Now to start with, I'll tell you what I'll do. If you will come and open my store for me every morning, make the fire and sweep out, and come and stay an hour for me every day while I go to dinner, I will give you three dollars a week. Two hours a day is all your time I shall want."

"Thank you from my heart! Of course I accept your offer. So far so good," said Gordon, brightening up.

"Very well. You may begin with to-morrow morning. No doubt you can make an equal sum by acting as a light porter for the various stores about. I can throw a little in your way; and I will speak to my neighbors to do the same." There was not a happier home in the whole town than was the home of Henry Gordon that night, poor as it was.

"I knew it would all come out right," said Mrs. Gordon. "I knew a better day was coming. We can live quite comfortably upon five or six dollars a week, and be happier than we have been for years."

When Gordon thought of the past, he did not wonder that tears fell over the face of his wife, even while her lips and eyes were bright with smiles. As the friend had supposed, Gordon was employed to do many errands by the storekeepers in the neighborhood. Some weeks he made five dollars and sometimes six or seven. This went on for a few months, when he began to feel discouraged. The recollection of other and brighter days returned frequently to his mind, and he began ardently to desire

an improved external condition, as well for his wife and children as for himself. He wished to restore what had been lost; but saw no immediate prospect of being able to do so. Six dollars a week was the average of his earnings, and it took all this, besides what little his wife earned, to make things tolerably comfortable at home.

Gordon was in a more desponding mood than usual, when he indulged in the complaint with which our story opens. What was said to him changed the tone of his feelings, and inspired him with a spirit of cheerfulness and hope.

"Time, Faith, Energy!" he said to himself, as he walked with a more elastic step. "Yes, these must bring out all right in the end. I will not be so weak as to despond. All is much improved as it is. We are happier and better. Time, Faith, Energy! I will trust in these."

When Gordon opened the door of his humble abode, he found a lad waiting to see him, who arose, and presenting a small piece of paper, said—

"Mr. Blake wishes to know when you can settle this?"

Mr. Blake was a grocer, to whom ten dollars had been owing for a year. He had dunned the poor drunkard for the money until he got tired of so profitless a business, and gave up the account for lost. By some means, it had recently come to his ears that Gordon had signed the pledge.

"Some chance for me yet," he said, and immediately had the bill made out anew, and sent in; not thinking or caring whether

it might not be premature for him to do so, and have the effect to discourage the poor man and drive him back to his old habits. What he wanted was his money. It was his due; and he meant to have it if he could get it.

"Tell Mr. Blake that I will pay him as soon as possible. At present it is out of my power," said Gordon, in answer to the demand.

The lad, in the spirit of his master, turned away with a sulky air, and left the house.

Poor Gordon's feelings went down to zero in a moment.

"It's hopeless, Mary! I see it all as plain as day," he said. "The moment I get upon my feet, there will be a dozen to knock me down. While I was a drunkard, no one thought of dunning me for money; but now that I am trying to do right, every one to whom I am indebted a dollar will come pouncing down upon me."

"It's a just debt, Henry, you know, and we ought to pay it."

"I don't dispute that. But we can't pay it now."

"Then Blake can't get it now; so there the matter will have to rest. A little dunning won't kill us. We have had harder trials than that to bear. So don't get discouraged so easily."

The words "Time, Faith, Energy!" came into the mind of Gordon and rebuked him.

"There is sense in what you say, Mary," he replied. "I know I am too easily discouraged. We owe Blake, that is clear; and I suppose he is right in trying to get his money. We can't pay him now; and therefore he can't get it now, do what he will. So we

will be no worse for his dunning, if he duns every day. But I hate so to be asked for money."

"I'll tell you what might be done," said Mrs. Gordon.

"Well?" inquired the husband.

"Mr. Blake has a large family, and no doubt his wife gives out a good deal of sewing. I could work it out."

Gordon thought a few moments, and then said—

"Or, better than that; perhaps Blake would let me work it out in his store. I have a good deal of time on my hands unemployed."

"Yes, that would be better," replied Mrs. Gordon; "for I have as much sewing as I can do, and get paid for it all."

This thought brightened the spirits of Gordon. As soon as he had eaten his dinner he started for the store of Mr. Blake.

"I've come to talk to you about that bill of mine," said Mr. Gordon.

"Well, what of it?" returned the grocer. "I wish to pay it, but have not the present ability. I lost my situation on the very day I signed the pledge, and have had no regular employment since. So far, I have only been able to pick up five or six dollars a week, and it takes all that to live upon. But I have time to spare, Mr. Blake, if I have no money; and if I can pay you in labor, I will be glad to do so."

"I don't know that I could ask more than that," replied the grocer. "If I did, I would be unreasonable. Let me see: I reckon I could find a day's work for you about the store at least once a week, for which I would allow you a credit of one dollar and a

quarter. How would that do?"

"It would be exactly what I would like. I can spare you a day easily. And it is much better to work out an old debt than to be idle."

"Very well, Gordon. Come to-morrow and work for me, and I will pass a dollar and a quarter to your account. I like this. It shows you are an honest man. Never fear but what you'll get along."

The approving words of the grocer encouraged Gordon very much. On the next day he went as he had agreed and worked for Mr. Blake. When he was about leaving the store at night, Blake called to him and said—

"Here, Gordon; stop a moment. I want you to put up a pound of this white crushed sugar; and a quarter of young hyson tea."

Gordon did as he was directed. Blake took the two packages from the counter, and handing them to Gordon, said—

"Take them to your wife with my compliments, and tell her that I wish her joy of an honest husband."

Gordon took the unexpected favor, and without speaking, turned hastily from the grocer and walked away.

"Behind *that* frowning Providence
He hid a smiling face,"

said Mrs. Gordon, with tearful eyes, when her husband presented her the sugar and tea, and repeated what the grocer had said.

"Yes. It was a blessing sent to us in disguise," returned

Gordon. "How little do we know of the good or ill that lies in our immediate future!"

"Do not say ill, dear husband—only seeming ill; if we think right and do right. When God makes our future, all is good; the ill is of our own procuring."

"Right, Mary. I see that truth as clear as if a sunbeam shone upon it."

"Time, Faith, Energy!" murmured Gordon to himself, as he lay awake that night, thinking of the future. Before losing himself in sleep, he had made up his mind to go to another creditor for a small amount, and see if he could not make a similar arrangement with him to the one entered into with the grocer. The man demurred a little, and then said he would take time to think about it. When Gordon called again, he declined the proposition, and said he had sold his goods for money, not for work.

"But I have no money," replied Gordon.

"I'll wait awhile and see," returned the man, in a way and with a significance that fretted the mind of Gordon.

"He'll wait until he sees me getting a little ahead, and then pounce down upon me like a hawk upon his prey."

Over this idea the reformed man worried himself, and went home to his wife unhappy and dispirited.

"I owe at least a hundred and fifty or two hundred dollars," he said; "and there is no hope of inducing all of those to whom money is due to wait until we can pay them with comfort to

ourselves. I shall be tormented to death, I see that plain enough."

"Don't you look at the dark side, Henry?" replied his wife to this. "I think you do. You owe some eight or ten persons, and one of them has asked you for what was due. You offered to work out the debt, and he accepted your offer. To another who has not asked you, you go and make the same offer, which he declines, preferring to wait for the money. There is nothing so really discouraging in all this, I am sure. If he prefers waiting, let him wait. No doubt it will be the same to us in the end. As to our getting much ahead or many comforts around us until our debts are settled off, we might as well not think of that. We will feel better to pay what we owe as fast as we earn it; and, more than that, it will put the temptation to distress us in nobody's way. If one man won't let you work out your debt, why another will. I've no doubt that two-thirds of your creditors will be glad to avail themselves of the offer."

Thus re-assured, Gordon felt better. On the next day he tried a third party to whom he owed fifteen dollars. This man happened to keep a retail grocery and liquor store. That is, he had a bar at one counter, and sold groceries at the other. Two-thirds of the debt was for liquor. "I want to wipe off that old score of mine, if I can, Mr. King," said Gordon, as he met the storekeeper at his own door.

"That's clever," replied Mr. King. "Walk in. What will you take?

Some brandy?"

And Mr. King stepped behind the counter and laid his hand upon a decanter.

"Nothing at all, I thank you," replied Gordon quickly.

"Why how's that? Have you sworn off?"

"Yes. I've joined the temperance society."

The storekeeper shrugged his shoulders. "I didn't expect that of you, Gordon. I thought you were too fond of a little creature comfort."

"I ruined myself and beggared my family by drink, if that is what you mean by creature comfort. Poor comfort it was for my wife and children, to say nothing of my own case, which was, Heaven knows, bad enough. But I have come to talk to you about paying off that old score. Now that I've given up drinking, I want to try and be honest if I can."

"That's right. I like to see a man, when he sets out to be decent, go the whole figure. Have you got the money?"

"No. I wish I had. I have no money and not half work; but I have time on my hands, Mr. King."

"Time? That is what some people call money. You want to pay me in time, instead of money, I presume? Rather rich, that, Gordon! But time don't pass current, like money, in these diggins, my friend. There are a plenty who come here—and throw it away for nothing. I can get more than I want."

"I have no wish to throw my time away, nor to pass it upon you for money, Mr. King. What I want is, to render you some service—in other words, to work for you, if you can give me something

to do. I have time on my hands unemployed, and I wish to turn it to some good account."

"O, yes. I understand now. Very well, Gordon; I rather think I can meet your views. Yesterday my barkeeper was sent to prison for getting into a scrape while drunk, and I want his place supplied until he gets out. Come and tend bar for me a couple of weeks, and I will give you a receipt in full of all demands."

Gordon shook his head and looked grave.

"What's the matter? Won't you do it?"

"No, sir. I can't do that."

"Why?"

"Because I have sworn neither to taste, touch, nor handle the accursed thing. Neither to drink it myself, nor put it to the lips of another. No, no, Mr. King, I can't do that. But I will sell your groceries for you three days in the week, for four weeks. Part of my time is already regularly engaged."

"Go off about your business!" said the store-keeper, his face red with anger at the language of the reformed man, which he was pleased to consider highly insulting. "I'll see to collecting that bill in a different way from that."

By this time Gordon was learning not to be frightened and discouraged at every thing. His wife had so often showed him its folly, that he felt ashamed to go to her again in a desponding mood, and therefore cheered himself up before going home.

In other quarters he found rather better success. Not all of those he owed were of the stamp of the two to whom application

had last been made. In less than six months he had worked out nearly a hundred dollars of what he owed, and had regular employment that brought him in six dollars every week, besides earning, by odd jobs and light porterage, from two to three dollars. His wife rarely let a week go without producing her one or two dollars by needle-work. Little comforts gradually crept in, notwithstanding all their debts were not yet paid off. This was inevitable.

By the end of twelve months Gordon found himself clear of debt, and in a good situation in a store at five hundred dollars a year.

"So much for 'Time, Faith, Energy,'" he said to himself, as he walked backwards and forwards, in his comfortable little home, one evening, thinking of the incidents of the year, and the results that had followed. "I would not have believed it. Scarcely a twelvemonth has passed, and here am I, a sober man and out of debt."

"Though still very far from the advanced position in the world you held a few years ago, and to which you can never more attain," said a desponding voice within him. "A man never has but one chance for attaining ease and competence in this life. If he neglects that, he need not waste his time in any useless struggles."

"Time, Faith, Energy!" spoke out another voice. "If one year has done so much for you, what will not five, ten, or twenty years do? Redouble your energies, have confidence in the future, and

time will make all right."

"I will have faith in time; I will have energy!" responded the man in Gordon, speaking aloud.

From that time Gordon and his wife lived with even stricter economy than before, in order to lay by a little money with which he could,—at some future time, re-commence his own business, which was profitable. There was still only a single shop in town, and that was the one owned by his old employer, who had, in fact, built himself up on his downfall, when he took to drinking and neglecting his business. On less than a thousand dollars Gordon did not think of commencing business. Less than that he knew would make the effort a doubtful one. This amount he expected to save in about five years.

Two years of this time had elapsed, and Gordon had four hundred dollars invested and bearing interest. He still held his situation at five hundred dollars per annum. The only shop yet established in the town for doing the work for which he was qualified both as a journeyman and master workman, was that owned and still carried on by his old employer, who had made a good deal of money; but who had, of late, fallen into habits of dissipation and neglected his business.

One evening, while Gordon was reading at home in his comfortable little sitting-room, with his wife beside him engaged with her needle, and both feeling very contented, there was a rap at the door. On opening it Gordon recognized Mr. Evenly, and politely invited him to come in. After being seated, his old

employer, who showed too plainly the debasing signs of frequent intoxication, said—

"Gordon what are you doing now?"

The reformed man stated the nature of his occupation.

"What salary do you receive?" asked Evenly.

"Five hundred dollars a year."

"Do you like your present employment?"

"Yes, very well. It is lighter than my old business, and much cleaner."

"Would you be willing to come to work for me again?" further inquired Evenly.

"I don't know that I would. My present situation is permanent, my employer a very pleasant man, and my work easy."

"Three things that are very desirable, certainly. But I'll tell you what I want, and what I will give you. Perhaps we can make a bargain. There is no man in town who understands our business better than you do. That I am free to admit. Heretofore I have been my own manager; but I am satisfied that it will be for my interest to have a competent foreman in my establishment. If I can find one to suit me I will give him liberal wages. You will do exactly; and if you will take charge of my shop, I will make your wages fifteen dollars a week. What do you say to that?"

"I rather think," replied Gordon, "that I will accept your offer. Five dollars a week advance in wages for a poor man is a consideration not lightly to be passed by."

"It is not, certainly," remarked Evenly. "Then I may consider

it settled that you will take charge of my shop."

"Yes. I believe I needn't hesitate about the matter."

So the arrangement was made, and Gordon went back to the shop as foreman, from which he had been discharged as a journeyman three years before.

Firmly bent upon commencing the business for himself, whenever he should feel himself able to do so, Gordon continued his frugal mode of living for two years longer, when the amount of his savings, interest and all added, was very nearly fifteen hundred dollars. The time had now come for him to take the step he had contemplated for four years. Evenly received the announcement with undisguised astonishment. After committing to such competent hands the entire manufacturing part of his business, he had given himself up more and more to dissipation. Had it not been for the active and energetic manner in which the affairs of the shop were conducted by Gordon, every thing would have fallen into disorder. But in a fair ratio with the neglect of his principal was he efficient as his agent.

"I can't let you go," said Evenly, when Gordon informed him of his intention to go into business for himself. "If fifteen dollars a week doesn't satisfy you, you shall have twenty."

"It is not the wages," replied Gordon. "I wish to go into business for myself. From the first this has been my intention."

"But you haven't the capital."

"Yes. I have fifteen hundred dollars."

"You have!"

"Yes. I have saved it in four years. That will give me a fair start. I am not afraid for the rest."'

Evenly felt well satisfied that if Gordon went into business for himself, his own would be ruined, and therefore, finding all efforts to dissuade him from his purpose of no avail, he offered to take him in as a partner. But to this came an unexpected objection. Gordon was averse to such a connection. Being pressed to state the reason why, he frankly said—

"My unwillingness to enter into business with you arises from the fact that you are, as I was four years ago, a slave to strong drink. You are not yourself one half of the time, and hardly ever in a fit condition to attend to business. Pardon me for saying this. But you asked for my reason, and I have given it."

Evenly, at first, was angry. But reflection soon came, and then he felt humiliated as he had never felt before. There was no intention on the part of Gordon to insult him, nor to triumph over him, but rather a feeling of sorrow; and this Evenly saw.

"And this is your only objection?" he at length said.

"I have none other," replied Gordon.

"If it did not exist you would meet my proposals?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Then it shall no longer exist. From this hour I will be as free from the vice you have named as you are."

"Will you sign the pledge?"

"Yes, this very hour."

And he did so.

A year afterwards an old friend, who had joined the temperance ranks about the time Gordon did, and who had only got along moderately well, passed the establishment of EVENLY & GORDON, and saw the latter standing in the door.

"Are you in this concern?" he asked, in some surprise.

"Yes."

"And making money fast?"

"We are doing very well."

"Gordon, I don't understand this altogether. I tried to recover myself, but soon got discouraged, and have ever since plodded along in a poor way I live, it is true; but you are doing much better than that. What is your secret?"

"It lies in three words," replied Gordon.

"Name them."

"Time, Faith, Energy!"

The man looked startled for a moment, and then walked away wiser than when he asked the question. Whether he will profit by the answer we cannot tell. Others may, if they will.

FLUSHED WITH WINE

"WASN'T that Ernestine Lee that we passed this moment?" asked Harvey Lane, a young M.D., of his friend James Everett, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, I believe it was—"Everett returned, rather coldly.

"You believe it was! Surely, James, nothing has occurred to destroy the intimacy that has for some time existed between you."

"You saw that we did not speak."

"I did."

"And, probably, shall never be on terms of friendship again."

"What you say pains me very much, James. Of course there is a reason for so great a change. May I ask what it is?"

"It is, no doubt, a good deal my own fault. But still, I cannot help thinking that she has taken offence too suddenly, where no offence was intended. You know that I have been long paying attentions to her?"

"Yes."

"If I remember rightly, I told you last week, that my intentions towards her were of a serious character. In a word, that I had fully made up my mind to ask her hand in marriage."

"O, yes,—I remember it very well. And that is the reason why I felt so much surprised at seeing you pass each other, without speaking."

"Well, a few evenings ago, I called, as usual, intending, if

a good opportunity offered, to make known my true feelings towards her. Unfortunately, I had dined out that day with some young friends. We sat late at table, and when I left, I was a *little flushed with wine*. It was a very little, for you know that I can drink pretty freely without its being seen. But, somehow, or other, I was more elated than is usual with me on such occasions, and when I called on Ernestine, felt as free and easy as if everything was settled, and we were to be married in a week. For a time, we chatted together very pleasantly; then I asked her to play and sing for me. She went to the piano, at my request, and played and sung two or three very sweet airs. I don't know which it was that elated my feelings so much—the wine, or the delightful music. Certain it is, that at the conclusion of a piece, I was in such rapture, that I threw my arms around her neck, drew back her head, and kissed her with emphatic earnestness."

"Why, James!"

"You may well be surprised at the commission of so rude and ungentlemanly an act. But, as I have said, I was flushed with wine."

"How did Ernestine act?"

"She was, of course, deeply indignant at the unwarrantable liberty. Springing from the piano-stool, her face crimsoned over, she drew herself up with a dignified air, and ordered me instantly to leave her presence. I attempted to make an apology, but she would not hear a word. I have since written to her, but my letter has been returned unopened."

"Really, that is unfortunate," the friend of Everett said, with concern. "Ernestine is a girl whom any man might be proud to gain as a wife. And, besides her personal qualifications, a handsome fortune will go with her hand."

"I know all that too well, Harvey. Fool that I have been, to mar such prospects as were mine! But she must have known that I was not myself—and ought to have charged the fault upon the wine, and not upon me."

"Such a discrimination is not usually made."

"I know that it is not. And for not making it in my case, I certainly cannot help blaming Ernestine a little. She must have known, that, had I not been flushed with wine, I never would have taken the liberty with her that I did. As it is, however, I am not only pained at the consequences of my foolishness, but deeply mortified at my conduct."

"Is there no hope of a reconciliation?"

"I do not think there is any. If she had accepted my written apology for the act, there would have been some hope. But the fact of her returning my letter unopened, is conclusive as to the permanency of the breach. I can now make no further advances."

"Truly, it is mortifying!" the friend remarked. Then, after a pause, he added, with emphasis—

"What fools this wine does make of us, sometimes!"

"Doesn't it? Another such a circumstance as this, would almost drive me to join a temperance society."

"O, no, hardly that, James."

"Well, perhaps not. But, at least, to eschew wine for ever."

"Wine is good enough in its place; but, like fire, is rather a bad master. Like you, I have injured my prospects in life by an over-indulgence in the pleasures of the cup."

"You?"

"Yes."

"When did that happen?"

"Since I last saw you."

"Indeed! I am sorry to hear you say so. But how was it?—tell me."

"You know, that as a young physician, I shall have to struggle on in this city for years before I can rise to any degree of distinction, unless aided by some fortunate circumstance, that shall be as a stepping-stone upon which to elevate me, and enable me to gain the public eye. I am conscious that I have mastered thoroughly the principles of my profession—and that, in regard to surgery, particularly, I possess a skill not surpassed by many who have handled the knife for years. Of this fact, my surgical teacher, who is my warm friend, is fully aware. At every important case that he has, I am desired to be present, and assist in the operation, and once or twice, where there were no friends of the patient to object, I have been permitted to perform the operation myself, and always with success. In this department of my profession, I feel great confidence in myself—and it is that part of it, in which I take the most interest."

"And in which, I doubt not, you will one day be distinguished."

"I trust so; and yet, things look dark enough just now. But to go on. A few days ago, I dined with some friends. After dinner, the bottle was circulated pretty freely, and I drank as freely as the rest, but was not aware of having taken enough to produce upon me any visible effects. It was about an hour after the table had been cleared for the wine, that an unusually loud ringing of the door-bell attracted our attention. In a few moments after, I heard a voice asking, in hurried tones, for Doctor Lane. Going down at once to the hall, I found old Mr. Camper there, the rich merchant, in a state of great agitation.

"'Doctor,' said he, grasping my arm,—'a most terrible accident has happened to my daughter!—thrown from a carriage!—My physician cannot be found, and as I have often heard your skill warmly alluded to by him, I desire your instant attendance. My carriage is at the door—Come along with me, quickly.'

"Catching up my hat, I attended him at once, and during our rapid drive to his princely residence, learned that his only daughter had been thrown from a carriage, and dreadfully injured; but in what way, could not ascertain. Unaccountably to myself, I found my mind all in confusion,—and, strange, unprofessional omission! forgot to request that I be driven first to my office for my case of instruments. We had not proceeded half the distance to Mr. Camper's residence, before I noticed that the old man became silent, and that his eye was fixed upon me with a steady, scrutinizing gaze. This added to the confusion of mind

which I felt. At length the carriage stopped, and I accompanied Mr. Camper to his daughter's chamber, hurriedly, and in silence. As I paused by the bed upon which she lay, I again noticed that he was regarding me with a steady searching look, and an expression of face that I did not like, and could not understand.

"I proceeded, however, at once, to examine the condition of my patient, who lay in a kind of stupor. There was a deep gash on the side of her face, from which the blood had issued profusely. By the aid of warm-water, I soon cleared the wound from a mass of coagulated blood that had collected around it, and was glad to find that it was not a serious one. I then proceeded to examine if there were any fractures. All this time my hands were unsteady, my face burned, and my mind was confused. *I was conscious that I had taken too much wine.*

"'There is no apparent injury here,' I at length said, after examining the arms and chest. 'She is probably only stunned by the concussion.'

"'But she could not stand on her feet when first lifted after the fall, and fainted immediately upon attempting to sustain her own weight,' Mr. Camper replied.

"I then made further examination, and found sad indications of her fall, in a fractured patella. The knee was, however, so swollen, that I could not ascertain the nature, nor extent of the fracture.

"'What do you find the matter there, doctor?' Mr. Camper asked, after I had finished my examination.

"'A very serious injury, sir, I am sorry to say,' was my reply.

"'Of what nature?' was his somewhat stern inquiry.

"'Her knee-pan is fractured, sir; but so much swollen, that I cannot, now, fully ascertain the extent of the injury.'"

"Henry!" cried the old man in a quick, eager tone to an attendant, "go again for doctor L—; and if he is not in, go for doctor R—; and if you cannot find him, call on doctor T—, and ask him to come instantly."

The attendant hurriedly departed, when Mr. Camper turned slowly towards me, with a mingled expression of anger, pain, and contempt, upon his face, and said, in a stern voice,

"'Go home young man! and quit drinking wine, or quit the profession!

You are in no fit state to undertake a case like this.'

"It came upon me like a peal of thunder from an unclouded summer sky. It was the knell of newly-awakened hopes—the darkening of newly-opening prospects. Silently I turned away under the cutting rebuke, and left the house."

"Really, that was most unfortunate!" his friend Everett remarked, with earnest sympathy.

"Could anything have been more unfortunate, or more mortifying. Her case was one that I fully understood; and could have treated successfully. It would have brought me into contact with the family for six months, or more, and the *eclat* which I should have derived from the case, would have given me a prominence as a young surgeon, that I am afraid the fact of my

losing the case under such mortifying circumstances, will prevent me ever attaining in this city."

"Really, Harvey, I do feel exceedingly pained at what you have told me. Confound this wine! I believe it does more harm than good."

"Too free an indulgence of it does, no doubt. Our error has lain in this. We must be more prudent in future."

"Suppose we swear off for ever from touching it."

"No, I will not do that. Wine is good in its place, and I shall continue to use it, but more moderately. A physician never knows the moment he may be called upon, and should, therefore, always be in a state to exercise a clear head and a steady hand."

"Certainly, we have both of us had lessons not soon to be forgotten," was the reply; and then the two young men separated.

Two weeks from the day this conversation took place, doctor Lane and his friend James Everett met at a supper-party, where all kinds of liquors were introduced, and every kind of inducement held out for the company to drink freely. Both of the young men soon forgot their resolutions to be guarded in respect to the use of wine. As the first few glasses began to take effect, in an elevation of spirits, each felt a kind of pride in the thought that he could bear as much as any one there, and not show signs of intoxication.

By eleven o'clock, there was not one at the table who was not drunk enough to be foolish. The rational and intelligent conversation that had been introduced early in the evening, had

long since given place to the obscene jest—the vulgar story—or the bacchanalian song. Gayest of the gay were our young men, who had already, one would think, received sufficient lessons of prudence and temperance.

"Take care, James!" cried Lane, across the table to his friend Everett, familiarly, late in the evening. "You are pouring the wine on the table, instead of in your glass."

"You are beginning to see double," was Everett's reply, lifting his head with a slight drunken air, and throwing a half-angry glance upon his friend.

"That is more than you can do," was the retort, with a meaning toss of the head.

"I don't understand you," Everett said, pausing with the decanter still in his hand, and eyeing his friend, steadily.

"Don't you, indeed! You see yourself in a state of blessed singleness—ha! Do you take?"

"Look here, James,—you are my friend. But there are things that I will not allow even a friend to utter. So take care now!"

"Ha! ha! There comes the raw. Do I rub too hard, my boy?"

"You 're drunk, and a fool into the bargain!" was the angry retort of Everett.

"Not so drunk as you were when you hugged and kissed Ernestine Lee!

How do you like—?"

Lane could not finish the sentence, before the decanter which Everett had held in his hand glanced past his head with fearful

velocity, and was dashed into fragments against the wall behind him. The instant interference of friends prevented any further acts of violence.

It was about ten o'clock on the next morning that young doctor Lane sat in his office, musing on the events of the previous night, of which he had only a confused recollection, when a young man entered, and presented a note. On opening it, he found it to be a challenge from Everett.

"Leave me your card, and I will refer my friend to you," was his reply, with a cold bow, as he finished reading the note. The card was left, and the stranger, with a frigid bow in return, departed.

"Fool, fool that I have been!" ejaculated Lane, rising to his feet, and pacing the floor of his office backwards and forwards with hurried steps. This was continued for nearly half an hour, during which time his countenance wore a painful and gloomy expression. At last, pausing, and seating himself at a table, he murmured, as he lifted a pen,

"It is too late now for vain regrets."

He then wrote a note with a hurried air, and dispatched it by an attendant. This done, he again commenced pacing the floor of his office, but now with slower steps, and a face expressive of sad determination. In about twenty minutes a young man entered, saying, as he did so—

"I'm here at a word, Harvey—and now what is this important business which I can do for you, and for which you are going to

be so everlastingly obliged?"

"That will tell you," Lane briefly said, handing him the challenge he had received.

The young man's face turned pale as he read the note.

"Bless me, Harvey!" he ejaculated, as he threw the paper upon the table. "This is a serious matter, truly! Why how have you managed to offend Everett? I always thought that you were friends of the warmest kind."

"So we have been, until now. And at this moment, I have not an unkind thought towards him, notwithstanding he threw a bottle of wine at my head last night, which, had it taken effect, would have, doubtless, killed me instantly."

"How in the world did that happen, doctor?"

"We were both flushed with wine, at the time. I said something that I ought not to have said—something which had I been myself, I would have cut off my right hand before I would have uttered—and it roused him into instant passion."

"And not satisfied with throwing the bottle of wine at your head, he now sends you a challenge?"

"Yes. And I must accept it, notwithstanding I have no angry feelings against him; and, but for the hasty step he has now taken, would have most willingly asked his pardon."

"That, of course, is out of the question now," the friend replied. "But I will see his second; and endeavour, through him, to bring about a reconciliation, if I can do so, honourably, to yourself."

"As to that," replied Lane, "I have nothing to say. If he insists upon a meeting, I will give him the satisfaction he seeks."

It was about half an hour after, that the friend of Lane called upon the friend of Everett. They were old acquaintances.

"You represent Everett, I believe, in this unpleasant affair between him and doctor Lane," the latter said.

"I do," was the grave reply.

"Surely we can prevent a meeting!" the friend of Lane said, with eagerness.

"I do not see how," was the reply.

"They were flushed with wine when the provocation occurred, and this ought to prevent a fatal meeting. If Lane insulted Everett, it was because he was not himself. Had he been perfectly sober, he would never have uttered an offensive word."

"Perhaps not. But with that I have nothing to do. He has insulted my friend, and that friend asks a meeting. He can do no less than grant it—or prove himself a coward."

"I really cannot see the necessity that this should follow," urged the other. "It seems to me, that it is in our power to prevent any hostile meeting."

"How?"

"By representing to the principals in this unhappy affair, the madness of seeking each other's lives. You can learn from Everett what kind of an apology, if any, will satisfy him, and then I can ascertain whether such an apology will be made."

"You can do what you please in that way," the friend of

Everett replied. "But I am not disposed to transcend my office. Besides, I know that, as far as Everett is concerned, no apology will be accepted. The insult was outrageous, involving a breach of confidence, and referring to a subject of the most painful, mortifying, and delicate nature."

"I am really sorry to hear that both you and your friend are determined to push this matter to an issue, for I had hoped that an adjustment of the difficulty would be easy."

"No adjustment can possibly take place. Doctor Lane must fight, or be posted as a coward, and a scoundrel."

"He holds himself ready to give Mr. Everett all the satisfaction he requires," was the half-indignant reply.

"Then, of course, you are prepared to name the weapons; and the time and place of meeting?"

"I am not. For so confident did I feel that it would only be necessary to see you to have all difficulties put in a train for adjustment, that I did not confer upon the subject of the preliminaries of the meeting. But I will see you again, in the course of an hour, when I shall be ready to name them."

"If you please." And then the seconds parted.

"I am afraid this meeting will take place in spite of all that I can do," the friend of doctor Lane said, on returning after his interview with Everett's second. "The provocation which you gave last night is felt to be so great, that no apology can atone for it."

"My blood probably will,—and he can have that!" was the

gloomy reply.

A troubled silence ensued, which was at last broken by the question,

"Have you decided, doctor, upon the weapons to be used?"

"Pistols, I suppose," was the answer.

"Have you practised much?"

"Me! No. I don't know that I ever fired a pistol in my life."

"But Everett is said to be a good shot."

"So much the worse for me. That is all."

"You have the liberty of choosing some other weapon. One with which you are familiar."

"I am familiar with no kind of deadly weapons."

"Then you will stand a poor chance, my friend; unless you name the day of meeting next week, and practise a good deal in the meantime."

"I shall do no such thing. Do you suppose, that if I fight with Everett, I shall try to kill him? No. I would not hurt a hair of his head. I am no murderer!"

"Then you go out under the existence of a fatal inequality."

"I cannot help that. It is my misfortune. I did not send the challenge."

"That is no reason why you should not make an effort to preserve your own life."

"If we both fire at once, and both of our balls take effect, the fact that my ball strikes him will not benefit me any. And suppose he should be killed, and I survive, do you think I could ever know

a single hour's happiness? No—no—I choose the least of two evils. I must fight. But I will not kill."

"In this you are determined?"

"I certainly am. I have weighed the matter well, and come to a positive decision."

"You choose pistols, then?"

"Yes. Let the weapons be pistols."

"When shall the meeting take place?"

"Let it be to-morrow morning, at sunrise. The quicker it is over, the better."

This determined upon, the friend went again to the second of Everett, and completed all necessary arrangements for the duel.

It was midnight, and young doctor Lane sat alone in his chamber, beside a table, upon which were ink and paper. He had, evidently, made several attempts to write; and each time failed from some cause to accomplish his task. Several sheets of paper had been written upon, and thrown aside. Each of these bore the following words:—

"_My Dear Parents:—_When these lines are read by you, the hand that penned them will be cold and nerveless—"

Thus far the unhappy young man could go, but no farther. Imagination pictured too vividly the heart-stricken father who had so often looked down upon him when a boy with pride and pleasure, and the tender, but now agonized mother, as that appalling announcement met their eyes.

Again, for the fifth time, he took up his pen, murmuring in a low tone, yet with a resolute air,

"It must be done!"

He had again written the words:—

"My Dear Parents—"

When his ear caught the sound of steps, strangely familiar to his ear, ascending the stairs, and approaching his chamber. He paused, and listened with a heart almost stilled in its pulsations. In a brief space, the door of his room opened, and a grey-haired, feeble old man came slowly in.

"My father!" exclaimed Harvey, starting to his feet in astonishment—scarcely, for the moment, being able to realize whether it were indeed his father, or, only an apparition.

"Thank heaven! that I have found my son alive—" ejaculated the old man, uncovering his head, and lifting his eyes upward. "O, Harvey, my child!" he then said, with an earnest pathos, that touched the young man's heart—"how could you so far forget us as to think even for a single moment of the dreadful act you are preparing to commit?"

"I had hoped to be spared this severest trial of all," the young man said, rising and grasping the hand of his father, while the tears sprang to his eyes. "What officious friend has taken the pains to disturb both your peace and mine—dragging you thus away from your home, in the vain effort to prevent an act that must take place."

"Speak not so rashly, my son! It cannot, it must not, it shall

not take place!"

"I have no power to prevent it, father."

"You are a free agent."

"Not to do a deed of dishonour,—or, rather, I am not free to suffer dishonour."

"There is no honour in wantonly risking or taking life, Harvey."

"I insulted a friend, in the grossest manner."

"*That* was dishonourable. But why did you insult him?"

"I was *flushed with wine*."

The old man shook his head, sadly.

"I know it was wrong, father. But it can't be helped now. Well, as I said; I insulted him, and he has demanded satisfaction. Can I do less than give it to him?"

"If you insulted him, you can apologize. And, from what I know of

James Everett, he will at once forgive."

"I cannot do that now, father. He threw a bottle of wine at my head, and then precipitately challenged me. I owe at least something to myself."

"And something, I should think, to your mother, if not to me," replied the old man, bitterly. "How, think you she will receive the news of your death, if the combat should terminate fatally for you? Or, how, if your hands should become stained with the blood of your friend?"

"Talk not thus, father! Talk not thus!" ejaculated the young

man, rising up quickly, and beginning to pace the floor of his chamber with hurried steps. "Is not my situation dreadful enough viewed in any light? Then why seek to agonize my heart with what I would gladly forget? I am already racked with tortures that can scarcely be endured—why seek to run my cup of misery over?"

"I seek but to save you, my child," the father replied, in a voice that suddenly became low and tremulous.

"It is a vain effort. There is but one course for me, and that is to go on, and meet whatever consequences ensue. The result may not be so bad as feared."

"Harvey!" old Mr. Lane said, in a voice that had somewhat regained its steadiness of tone. "This meeting must not take place. If you persist in going out tomorrow morning, I must take measures to prevent it."

"And thus dishonour your son."

"All dishonour that will appertain to you, Harvey, appertains to you now. You insulted your friend. Neither your death nor his can atone for that offence. If reparation be truly made, it will come in some other form."

"It is vain to urge that matter with me," was the reply to this. "I must give James Everett the satisfaction he requires to-morrow morning. And now, father, if I should fall, which heaven forbid for others' sakes more than my own," and the young man's voice quivered, "break the matter to my mother as gently as possible—tell her, that my last thoughts were of her, and my last prayer

that she might be given strength from above to bear this heavy affliction."

It was a damp, drizzly morning, just at break of day, when Harvey Lane, accompanied by his friend, and a young physician, entered a close carriage, and started for the duelling-ground, which had been selected, some four miles from the city. Two neat mahogany cases were taken along, one containing a pair of duelling pistols, and the other a set of surgical instruments. As these were handed in, the eye of Lane rested upon them for a moment. They conjured up in his mind no very pleasant thoughts. He was very pale, and silent. Nor did his companions seem in much better condition, or much better spirits. A rapid drive of nearly three quarters of an hour brought them upon the ground. The other party had not yet arrived, but came up in a few minutes afterwards. Then commenced the formal preparations. The ground was measured off—ten paces. The seconds prepared the deadly weapons which were to heal the honour that had been so dreadfully wounded, and arranged all the minor provisions of the duel.

During all this time, neither of the young men looked towards each other, but each paced rapidly over a little space of ground, backwards and forwards, with agitated steps—though evidently with an effort to seem composed.

"Ready," said Lane's second, at length, close to his ear.

The young man started, and his cheek blanched to a pale hue. He had been thinking of his father and mother. With almost

the vividness of reality had he seen them before him, and heard their earnest; tearful pleadings with him to forbear for their sakes, if not for his own. But he took the deadly weapon in his hand mechanically, and moved to the position that had been assigned him. The arrangement was, that the seconds should give the words—one—two—three—in slow succession, and that the parties should fire as soon after "three" was uttered, as they chose.

Their positions taken, the young men's eyes met for the first time—and for the first time they looked again upon each other's faces. The word one had been given, at which each raised his pistol,—*two* was uttered—and then another individual was suddenly, and unexpectedly added to the party, who threw himself in front of Harvey Lane, in range of both the deadly weapons. Turning, then, towards Everett, he said, lifting his hat, and letting his thin grey hairs fall about his forehead—

"We cannot spare our son, yet, James! We are growing old, and he is our only child. If he were taken thus away from us, we should not be able to bear it. For our sakes, then, James, if he has injured you, forgive him."

Already had the face of his old and long-tried friend, as he met its familiar expression, softened in some degree the feelings of Everett, and modified the angry vindictiveness which he still continued to cherish. The apparition of the father, and his unexpected appeal, completely conquered him, and he threw, with a sudden effort, his pistol away some twenty yards.

"I am satisfied!" he said, in a low tone, advancing, and taking the old man's hand. "You have conquered the vindictive pride of a foolish heart."

"I know that I grossly insulted you, James"—Harvey Lane said, coming quickly forward, and offering his hand. "But would I, could I have done it, if I had been myself?"

"No, Harvey, you could not! And I was mad and blind that I would not see this"—Everett replied, grasping the hand of his friend. "We were both *flushed with wine*, and that made both of us fools. Surely, Harvey, we have had warning enough, of the evil of drinking. Within the last two weeks, it has seriously marred our prospects in life, and now it has brought us out here with the deliberate intent of taking each other's lives."

"From this hour, I solemnly declare, that I will never again touch, taste, or handle the accursed thing!" Lane said, with strong emphasis.

"In that resolution I join you," replied Everett, with a like earnest manner. "And let this resolution be the sealing bond of our perpetual friendship."

"Amen!" ejaculated Harvey Lane, solemnly,—and, "Amen!" responded the old man, fervently, lifting his eyes to Heaven.

SWEARING OFF

"JOHN," said a sweet-faced girl, laying her hand familiarly upon the shoulder of a young man who was seated, near a window in deep abstraction of mind. There was something sad in her voice,—and her countenance, though, lovely, wore an expression of pain.

"What do you want, sister?" the young man replied, without lifting his eyes from the floor.

"You are not happy, brother."

To this, there was no reply, and an embarrassing pause of some moments ensued.

"May I speak a word with you, brother?"—the young girl at length said, with a tone and manner that showed her to be compelling herself to the performance of a painful and repugnant task.

"On what subject, Alice?" the brother asked, looking up with a doubting expression.

This question brought the colour to Alice's cheeks, and the moisture to her eyes.

"You know what I would say, John," she at length made out to utter, in a voice that slightly trembled.

"How should I know, sister?"

"You were not yourself last night, John."

"Alice!"

"Forgive me, brother, for what I now say," the maiden rejoined. "It is a painful trial, indeed; and were it not that I loved you so well—were it not that, besides you, there is no one else in the wide world to whom I can look up, I might shrink from a sister's duty. But I feel that it would be wrong for me not to whisper in your ear one warning word—wrong not to try a sister's power over you."

"I will forgive you this time, on one condition," the brother said, in a tone of rebuke, and with a grave expression of countenance.

"What is that?" asked Alice.

"On condition that you never again, directly or indirectly, allude to this subject. It is not in your province to do so. A sister should not look out for her brother's faults."

A sudden gush of tears followed this cold, half-angry repulse; and then the maiden turned slowly away and left the room.

John Barclay's anger towards his only sister, who had no one, as she had feelingly said, in the wide world to look up to and love, but him, subsided the moment he saw how deeply his rebuke had wounded her. But he could not speak to her, nor recall his words—for the subject she had introduced was one so painful and mortifying, that he could not bear an allusion to it.

From long indulgence, the habit of drinking had become confirmed in the young man to such a degree that he had almost ceased to resist an inclination that was gaining a dangerous power over him. And yet there was in his mind an abiding resolution one

day to break away from this habit. He did not intend to become a drunkard. Oh, no! The condition of a drunkard was too low and degrading. He could never sink to that! After awhile, he intended to "swear off," as he called it, and be done with the seductive poison altogether; but he had not yet been able to bring so good a resolution into present activity. This being his state of mind—conscious of danger, and yet unwilling to fly from that danger, he could not bear any allusion to the subject.

Half an hour, passed in troubled thought, elapsed after this brief interview between the brother and sister, when the young man left the house and took his way, scarcely reflecting upon where he was going, to one of his accustomed places of resort—a fashionable drinking house, where every device that ingenuity could invent, was displayed to attract custom. Splendid mirrors and pictures hung against the walls, affecting the mind with pleasing thoughts—and tempting to self-indulgence. There were lounges, where one might recline at ease, while he sipped the delicious compounds the richly furnished bar afforded, never once dreaming that a serpent lay concealed in the cup that he held to his lips—a serpent that one day would sting him, perhaps unto death!

"Regular as clock-work,"—said an old man, a friend of Barclay's father, who had been dead several years, meeting the young man as he was about to enter the attractive establishment just alluded to.

"How?" asked Barclay in a tone of enquiry.

"Six times a day, John, is too often for you to be seen going into the same drinking-house,"—said the old man, with plain-spoken honesty.

"You must not talk to me in that way, Mr. Gray," the other rejoined sternly.

"My respect and regard for the father, will ever cause me to speak plainly to the son when I think him in danger," was Mr. Gray's calm reply.

"In danger of what, Mr. Gray?"

"In danger of—shall I utter the word in speaking o' the son of my old friend, Mr. Barclay? Yes; in danger of—drunkenness!"

"Mr. Gray, I cannot permit any one to speak to me thus."

"Be not offended at me, John. I utter but the truth."

"I will not stand to be insulted by any one!" was the young man's angry reply, as he turned suddenly away from his aged friend, and entered the drinking-house. He did not go up at once to the bar, as had been his habit, but threw himself down upon one of the lounges, took up a newspaper, and commenced; or rather, appeared to commence reading, though he did not, in fact, see a letter.

"What will you have, Mr. Barclay?" asked an officious attendant, coming up, a few moments after he had entered.

"Nothing just now," was the reply, made in a low tone, while his eyes were not lifted from the newspaper. No very pleasant reflections were those that passed through his mind as he sat there. At last he rose up quickly, as if a resolution, had been

suddenly formed, and left the place where clustered so many temptations, with a hurried step.

"I want you to administer an oath," he said, entering the office of an Alderman, a few minutes after.

"Very well, sir. I am ready," replied the Alderman. "What is its nature?"

"I will give you the form."

"Well?"

"I, John Barclay, do solemnly swear, that for six months from this hour, I will not taste a drop of any kind of liquor that intoxicates."

"I wouldn't take that oath, young man," the Alderman said.

"Why not?"

"You had better go and join a temperance society. Signing the pledge will be of as much avail."

"No—I will not sign a pledge never to drink again. I'm not going to make a mere slave of myself. I'll swear off for six months."

"Why not swear off perpetually, then?"

"Because, as I said, I am not going to make a slave of myself. Six months of total-abstinence will give me a control over myself that I do not now possess."

"I very much fear, sir," urged the Alderman, notwithstanding he perceived that the young man was growing impatient—"and you must pardon my freedom in saying so, that you will find yourself in error. If you are already so much the slave of drink

as to feel yourself compelled to have recourse to the solemnities of an oath to break away from its bewitching power, depend upon it, that no temporary expedient of this kind will be of any avail. You will, no doubt, keep your oath religiously, but when its influence is withdrawn, you will find the strength of an unsupported resolution as weak as ever."

"I do not believe the position you take to be a true one," argued young Barclay—"All I want is to get rid of present temptation, and to be freed from present associations. Six months will place me beyond the reach of these, and then I shall be able to do right from an internal principle, and not from mere external restraint."

"I see the view you take, and would not urge a word against it, did I not know so many instances of individuals who have vainly opposed their resolutions against the power of habit. When once an appetite for intoxicating drinks has been formed, there is only one way of safety—that of taking a perpetual pledge of total-abstinence. That, and that alone is the wall of sure protection. Without it, you are exposed to temptations on every hand. The manly and determined effort to be free will not always avail. In some weak and unsuspecting moment, the tempter will steal quietly in, and all will be again lost."

"It is useless, sir, to argue the point with me," Barclay replied to this. "I will not now take the pledge—that is settled. I will take an oath of abstinence for six months. If I can keep to it that long, I can keep from drinking always."

Seeing that further argument would be useless, the Alderman

said no more, but proceeded to administer the oath. The young man then paid the required fee and turned from the office in silence.

When Alice left the room in tears, stung by the cutting rebuke of her brother, she retired to her chamber with an oppressed and aching heart. She loved him tenderly. They were, sister and brother, alone in the world, and, therefore, her affections clung the closer to him. The struggle had been a hard one in bringing herself to perform the duty which had called down upon her the anger of one for whom she would almost have given her life; and, therefore, the result was doubly painful, more particularly, as it had effected nothing, apparently, towards a change in his habits.

"But perhaps it will cause him to reflect.—If so, I will cheerfully bear his anger," was the consoling thought that passed through her mind, after the passage of an hour, spent under the influence of most painful feelings.

"O, if he will only be more on his guard," she went on, in thought—"if he will only give up that habit, how glad I should be!"

Just then she heard him enter, and marked the sound of his footsteps as he ascended to his own room, with a fluttering heart. In the course of fifteen or twenty minutes, he went down again, and she listened to observe if he were going out. But he entered the parlours, and then all was, again, quiet.

For some time Alice debated with herself whether she should go down to him or not, and make the effort to dispel the anger

that she had aroused against her; but she could not make up her mind how to act, for she could not tell in what mood she might find him. One repulse was as much, she felt, as she could bear. At last, however, her feelings became so wrought up, that she determined to go down and seek to be reconciled. Her brother's anger was more than she could bear.

When she entered the parlours, with her usual quiet step, she found him seated near the window, reading. He lifted his head as she came in, and she saw at a glance that all his angry feelings were gone. How lightly did her heart bound as she sprang forward!

"Will you forgive me, brother?" she said, laying her hand upon his shoulder as she stood by his side, and bent her face down until her fair cheek almost touched his own.

"Rather let me say, will you forgive me, sister?" was his reply, as he kissed her affectionately—"for the unkind repulse I gave you, when to say what you did must have caused you a most painful sacrifice of feeling?"

"Painful indeed it was, brother. But it is past now and all forgiven."

"Since then, Alice," he said, after a pause, "I have taken a solemn oath, administered by an Alderman, not to touch any kind of intoxicating drink for six months."

"O, I am so glad, John!" the sister said, a joyful smile lighting up her beautiful young face. "But why did you say six months? Why not for life?"

"Because, Alice, I do not wish to bind myself down to a kind of perpetual slavery. I wish to be free, and act right in freedom from a true principle of right. Six months of entire abstinence from all kinds of liquor will destroy that appetite for it which has caused me, of late, to seek it far too often. And then I will, as a free man, remain free."

"I shall now be so happy again, John!" Alice said, fully satisfied with her brother's reason.

"So you have not been happy then of late?"

"O, no, brother. Far from it."

"And has the fact of my using wine so freely been the cause of your unhappiness?"

"Solely."

"Its effects upon me have not been so visible as often to attract your attention, Alice?"

"O, yes, they have. Scarcely a day has gone by for three or four months past, that I could not see that your mind was obscured, and often your actions sensibly affected."

"I did not dream that it was so, Alice.'

"Are you not sensible, that at Mr. Weston's, last night you were by no means yourself?"

"Yes, Alice, I am sensible of that, and deeply has it mortified me. I was suffering acutely from the recollection of the exposure which I made of myself on that occasion, especially before Helen, when you alluded to the subject. That was the reason that I could not bear your allusion to it. But tell me, Alice, did you perceive

that my situation attracted Helen's attention particularly?"

"Yes. She noticed, evidently, that you were not as you ought to have been."

"How did it affect her, Alice?" asked the young man.

"She seemed much pained, and, I thought, mortified."

"Mortified?"

"Yes."

A pause of some moments ensued, when Barclay asked, in a tone of interest,

"Do you think it has prejudiced her against me?"

"It has evidently pained her very much, but I do not think that it has created in her mind any prejudice against you."

"From what do you infer this, Alice?"

"From the fact, that, while we were alone in her chamber, on my going up stairs to put on my bonnet and shawl, she said to me, and her eyes were moist as well as my own, 'Alice, you ought to speak to your brother, and caution him against this free indulgence in wine; it may grow on him, unawares. If he were as near to me as he is to you, I should not feel that my conscience was clear unless I warned him of his danger.'"

"Did she say that, sister?"

"Yes, those were her very words."

"And you did warn me, faithfully."

"Yes. But the task is one I pray that I may never again have to perform."

"Amen," was the fervent response.

"How do you like Helen?" the young man asked, in a livelier tone, after a silence of nearly a minute.

"I have always been attached to her, John. You know that we have been together since we were little girls, until now we seem almost like sisters."

"And a sister, truly, I hope she may one day become," the brother said, with a meaning smile.

"Most affectionately will I receive her as such," was the reply of Alice. "Than Helen Weston, there is no one whom I had rather see the wife of my dear brother."

As she said this, she drew her arm around his neck, and kissed him affectionately.

"It shall not be my fault, then, Alice, if she do not become your sister—" was the brother's response.

Rigidly true to his pledge, John Barclay soon gained the honourable estimation in the social circle through which he moved, that he had held, before wine, the mocker, had seduced him from the ways of true sobriety, and caused even his best friends to regard him with changed feelings. Possessing a competence, which a father's patient industry had accumulated, he had not, hitherto, thought of entering upon any business. Now, however, he began to see the propriety of doing so, and as he had plenty of capital, he proposed to a young man of industrious habits and thorough knowledge of business to enter into a co-partnership with him. This offer was accepted, and the two young men commenced the world with the fairest prospects.

Three months from the day on which John Barclay had mentioned to his sister that he entertained a regard for Helen Weston, he made proposals of marriage to that young lady, which were accepted.

"But how in regard to his pledge?" I hear some one ask.

O, as to that, it was kept, rigidly. Nothing that could intoxicate was allowed to touch his lips. Of course, he was at first frequently asked to drink by his associates, but his reply to all importunities was—

"No—I have sworn off for six months."

"So you have said for the last six months," remarked young man, named Watson, one day, on his refusing for the twentieth time to drink with him.

"Not for six months, Watson. It is only three months this very day since I swore off."

"Well, it seems to me like six months, anyhow. But do you think that you feel any better for all this total-abstinence?"

"O as to that, I don't know that I feel such a wonderful difference in body; but in mind I certainly do feel a great deal better."

"How so?"

"While I drank, I was conscious that I was beginning to be too fond of drinking, and was too often painfully conscious that I had taken too much. Now, I am, of course, relieved from all such unpleasant feelings."

"Well, that's something, at least. But I never saw you out of

the way."

"Do you know the reason; Watson?"

"No."

"I'll tell you. You were always too far gone yourself, when we drank freely together, to perceive my condition."

"So you say."

"It's true."

"Well, have it as you like. But, see here, John, what are you going to do when your six months are out?"

"I'm going to be a sober man, as I am now."

"You never were a drunkard."

"I was precious near being one, then."

"Nonsense! That's all some old woman's notion of yours."

"Well, be that as it may, I certainly intend continuing to be as sober a man as I have been for the last three months."

"Won't you drink a drop after your time is up?"

"That'll be just as I choose. I will drink or let it alone, as I like. I shall then be free to drink moderately, or not at all, as seems agreeable to me."

"That is a little more sensible than your perpetual total-abstinence, teetotal, cold-water system. Who would be such a miserable slave? I would rather die drunk in the gutter, than throw away my liberty."

"I believe I have said as much myself."

"Don't you feel a desire to have a good glass of wine, or a julep, now and then?"

"No, not the slightest. I've sworn off for six months, and that ends the matter. Of course, I have no more desire for a glass of liquor than I have to fly to the moon,—one is a moral, and the other a physical impossibility; and, therefore, are dismissed from my thoughts."

"What do you mean by a moral impossibility?"

"I have taken an oath not to drink for six months, and the violation of that oath is, for one of my views and feelings, a moral impossibility."

"Exactly. There are three months yet to run, you say. After that, I hope to have the pleasure of taking a glass of wine with you in honour of your restoration to a state of freedom."

"You shall have that pleasure, Watson, if it will really be one —" was Barclay's reply, as the two young men parted.

Time wore on, and John Barclay, besides continuing perfectly sober, gave constant attention to business. So complete a change in him gave confidence to the parents and friends of Helen Weston, who made no opposition to his wish for an early marriage. It was fixed to take place on the evening of the very day upon which his temporary pledge was to expire.

To the expiration of this pledge, Barclay had never ceased, from the moment it was taken, to look forward with a lively interest. Not that he felt a desire to drink. But he suffered himself to be worried with the idea that he was no longer a free man. The nearer the day came that was to terminate the period for which he had bound himself to abstinence, the more did his mind dwell

upon it, and the more did he desire its approach. It was, likewise, to be his wedding-day, and for that reason, also, did he look eagerly forward. But it is doubtful whether the consummation of his marriage, or the expiration of his pledge, occupied most of his thoughts. The day so long looked for came at last.

The day that was to make Barclay a free man, and happy in the possession of one of the sweetest girls for a wife he had ever seen.

"I shall not see you again, until to-night, John," his sister said to him, as he was about leaving the house, after dinner, laying her hand as she spoke upon his arm, and looking into his face with a quiet smile resting upon her own lovely features.—"I have promised Helen to go over and spend the afternoon with her."

"Very well, sis'."

"Of course we shall see you pretty early,"—an arch smile playing about her lips as she made the remark.

"O, yes, I shall be there in time," was the brother's smiling reply, as he kissed the cheek of Alice, and then turned away and left the house. He first proceeded to his store, where he went through, hurriedly, some business that required his attention, occupying something like an hour. Then he went out, and walked rapidly up one of the principal streets of the city, and down another, as if on some urgent errand. Without stopping anywhere, he had nearly returned to his own store, when he was stopped by a friend, who accosted him with—

"Hallo, John! Where are you going in such a hurry?"

"I am on my way to the store."

"Any life and death in the case?"

"No.—Only I'm to be married to-night, as you are aware; and, consequently, am hardly able to tell whether I am on my head or my heels."

"True enough! And besides, you are a free man today, are you not?"

"Yes, Watson, thank Heaven! that trammel will be off in half an hour."

"You must be fond of trammels, John, seeing that you are going to put another on so soon after getting rid of this—" the friend said, laughing heartily at his jest.

"That will be a lighter, and far pleasanter bondage I trust, Watson, than the one from which I am about escaping. It will be an easy yoke compared to the galling one under which I have toiled for the last six months. Still, I do not regret having bound myself as I did. It was necessary to give me that self-control which I had well-nigh lost. Now I shall be able to act like a rational man, and be temperate from principle, and not from a mere external restraint that made me little better than a machine."

"Your time will be up, you say, in half an hour?"

"Yes—" looking at his watch—"in ten minutes. It is later than I thought."

"Come, then, let us go over to R—'s—it is full ten minutes' walk from here—and take a drink to freedom and principle."

"I am ready to join you, of course," was Barclay's prompt reply, as he drew his arm within that of his friend, and the two turned their steps towards the drinking establishment that had been named by the latter.

"A room, a bottle of sherry, and some cigars," said Watson, as they entered the drinking-house, and went up to the bar.

In a few minutes after, they were alone, with wine and glasses before them.

"Here's to freedom and principle!" said Watson, lifting his glass, after having filled his own and Barclay's.

"And here's to the same high moral (sic) atributes which should ever be man's distinguishing characteristics," responded Barclay, lifting his own glass, and touching with it the brim of that held in the hand of his friend. Both then emptied their glasses at a draught.

"Really, that is delicious!" Barclay said, smacking his lips, as the rich flavour of the wine lingered on his palate with a sensation of exquisite delight.

"It's a pretty fair article," was the indifferent reply of Watson —"though I have tasted better in my time. Long abstinence has made its flavour peculiarly pleasant. Here, let me fill your glass again."

Without hesitating, Barclay presented his glass, which was again filled to the brim. In the next moment it was empty. So eager was he to get it to his lips, that he even spilled a portion of the wine in lifting it hurriedly. Suddenly his old, and as he

had thought, extinguished desires, came back upon him, roused into vigorous activity, like a giant awakening refreshed by a long repose. So keen was his appetite for wine, and stimulating drinks, thus suddenly restored, that he could no more have withstood its influence than he could have borne up against the current of a mighty river.

"Help yourself," said his friend, ere another minute had elapsed, as

Barclay took up the bottle to fill his glass for the third time.

"Long-abstinence has no doubt made you keen."

"It certainly has, or else this is the finest article of wine that has ever passed my lips."

'It's not the best quality by a good deal; still it is pretty fair.

But won't you try a mint-julep, or a punch, by way of variety?"

"No objection," was the brief response.

"Which will you choose?"

"I'll take a julep."

"Two juleps," said Watson to the waiter who entered immediately afterwards.

The juleps were soon ready, each furnished with a long straw.

"Delicious!" was Barclay's low, and delighted ejaculation, as he bent to the table, and "imbibed" through the straw a portion of the liquid.

"Our friend R—understands his business," was Watson's brief reply.

A silence of some moments ensued, during which a painful

consciousness of danger rushed through the mind of Barclay. But with an effort he dismissed it. He did not intend to drink beyond the bounds of moderation, and why should he permit his mind to be disturbed by idle fears?

* * * * *

"It is time that brother was here," Alice said to Helen Weston, as the two maidens sat alone, near a window in Helen's chamber, the evening twilight falling gently and with a soothing influence.

"Yes. I expected him earlier," was the reply, in a low tone, while Helen's bosom heaved with a new, and exquisitely pleasurable emotion. "What can keep him?"

"He is lingering at his toilet, perhaps," Alice said, with a smile.

All was silent again for many minutes, each gentle and innocent heart; busy with images of delight.

"It's strange that he does not come, Alice, or sister, as I must call you," Helen remarked, in a graver tone, as the shadowy twilight deepened until everything wore a veil of indistinctness.

"There! That must be him!" Alice said. "Hark! That is certainly his voice! Yes—And he is coming right up to your room, as I live, as boldly as if the house belonged to him."

While Alice was yet speaking, the door of the chamber in which they sat was swung open with a rude hand, and her brother entered. His face was flushed, and his whole person in disorder.

"Why, brother! what has kept—," but the sister could utter no more. Her tongue was paralyzed, and she stood, statue-like, gazing upon him with a look of horror. He was intoxicated! It

was his wedding-night, a portion of the company below, and the gentle, affectionate maiden who was to become his bride, all attired and waiting, and he had come intoxicated!

Poor Helen's bewildered senses could not at first fully comprehend the scene. When she did realize the terrible truth, the shock was more than she could bear.

Over the whole scene of pain, disorder, and confusion, that transpired on that evening, we must draw a veil. Any reader of even ordinary imagination can realize enough of the exquisite distress which it must have brought to many hearts, without the aid of distinct pictures. And those who cannot realize it, will be spared the pain of its contemplation.

One week from that night, at about nine o'clock in the evening, as old Mr. Gray was passing along one of the principal streets of the city where the occurrences we are relating took place, a young man staggered against him, and then fell at full length upon the pavement, from whence he rolled into the gutter, swollen by a smart shower that had just fallen. Too drunk to help himself, he must have been drowned even in that insignificant stream, had there not been help at hand.

Mr. Gray came at once to his relief, and assisted him to rise and get upon the pavement. But now he was unable to stand. Either hurt by the fall, or unnerved by the liquor he had taken, he was no longer able to keep his feet. While Mr. Gray stood holding him up, undetermined how to act, another young man, not quite so drunk as the one he had in charge, came whooping

along like an Indian.

"Hallo! Is this you, John, holding up old Mr. Gray? or is it old Mr. Gray holding you up! [hiccup.] Blast me! If I can tell which of you is drunk, or which sober. Let me see? hic-hic-cup. Was it the Whale that swallowed Jonah, or Jonah the Whale? Is it old Mr. Gray—hic-cup—that is drunk, or John Barclay?"

"John Barclay!" ejaculated the old man, in a tone of surprise and grief. "Surely this wretched young man is not John Barclay!"

"If he is not John Barclay, then I am not—hic-cup—not Tom Watson. He's a bird, though! aint he, old gentleman?—hic-cup—Look here, I'll give you five dollars,—hic-cup—if you'll stop these,—hic—these confounded hic-hic-hic-cups—There now—There's a chance for you!—hic—blast 'em! He swore off for six months, ha! ha! ha! And it's just,—hic—just a week to-night since the six months were up. Hurrah for freedom and principle! Hur—hic—hurrah!"

"Thomas Watson!—"

"Don't come your preaching touch over me, mister, if you please. I'm free Tom Watson,—hic-hic-hic-cup—I'm—hic—I'm a regular team—whoop! John, there, you see, would drink to freedom and principle,—hic-cup—on the—hic—day his pledge was up. But the old fellow was—hic—too strong—hic-cup—for him. He's been drunk as a fool ever since—hic-cup!—"

Just at that moment a cab came by which was stopped by the old man.

Young Barclay was gotten into it and driven to Mr. Gray's

dwelling.

When brought to the light, he presented a sad spectacle, indeed. His face was swollen, and every feature distorted. His coat was torn, and all of his clothing wet and covered with mud. Too far gone to be able to help himself, Mr. Gray had him removed to a chamber, his wet garments taken off, and replaced by dry under-clothing. Then he was put into a bed and left for the night. When the morning broke, Barclay was perfectly sober, but with a mind altogether bewildered. The room in which he found himself, and the furniture, were all strange. He got up; and looked from the window; the houses opposite were unfamiliar.

"Where am I? What is the meaning of all this?" he said, half-aloud, as he turned to look for his clothes. But no garments of any kind, not even his hat and boots, were visible.

"Strange!" he murmured, getting into bed again, and clasping his hands tightly upon his aching and bewildered head. He had lain, thus, for some minutes, trying to collect his scattered senses, when the door of his chamber was opened by a servant, who brought him in a full suit of his own clothes; not, however, those he remembered to have worn the day previous.

As soon as the servant had withdrawn, the young man, who had felt altogether disinclined to speak to him, hurriedly arose, and dressed himself. On attempting to go out, he was surprised, and somewhat angered, to find that the door of the room had been locked.

Ringing the bell with a quick jerk, he awaited, impatiently, an

answer to his summons, for the space of about a minute, when he pulled the cord again with a stronger hand. Only a few moments more elapsed, when the key was turned in the door, and Mr. Gray entered.

"Mr. Gray! Is it possible!" Barclay ejaculated, as the old man stepped into the room, and closed the door after him.

"I can hardly believe it possible, John," his father's friend said, as he turned towards him a sad, yet unreproving countenance.

"But what is the meaning of all this, Mr. Gray? Where am I? And how came I here?"

"Sit down, John, and be calm. You are in my house. Last night I took you from the gutter, too much intoxicated to help yourself. You would have drowned there, in three inches of water, had not a friendly hand been near to save you."

"Dreadful!" ejaculated the young man, striking his hand hard against his forehead, while an expression of shame and agonizing remorse passed over his face.

"It is, indeed, dreadful to think of, my young friend!" Mr. Gray remarked, in a sympathizing tone. "How wretched you must be!"

"Wretched? Alas! sit, you cannot imagine the horror of this dreadful moment. Surely I have been mad for the past few days! And enough has occurred to drive me mad."

"So I should think, John. But that is past now, and the future is still yours, and its bright page still unsullied by a single act of folly."

"But the past! The dreadful past! That can never be recalled —never be atoned for," Barclay replied, his countenance bearing the strongest expression of anguish and remorse. "To think of all I have lost To think how cruelly I have mocked the fondest hopes, and crushed the purest affections—perhaps broken a loving heart by my folly. O, sir! It will drive me mad!"

As the young man said this, he arose to his feet, and commenced pacing the room to and fro with agitated steps. Now striking his hands against his forehead, and now wringing them violently.

"Since that accursed hour," he resumed, after a few minutes thus spent, "when I madly tempted myself, under the belief that I had gained the mastery over a depraved appetite by an abstinence from all kinds of liquor for six months, I have but a dim recollection of events. I do, indeed, remember, with tolerable distinctness, that I went to claim the hand of Helen Weston, according to appointment. But from the moment I entered the house, all is to me confusion, or a dead blank. Tell me, then, Mr. Gray,"—and the young man's voice grew calmer,—"the effect of my miserable conduct upon her whom I loved purely and tenderly. Let me know all. I ask no disguise."

"The effect, John, has been painful, indeed. Since that dreadful night, she has remained in a state of partial delirium. But her physician told me, yesterday, that all of her symptoms had become more favourable."

"And how is her father, and friends?"

"Deeply incensed, of course, at your conduct."

"And my sister? How is Alice?"

"She keeps up with an effort. But oh, how wretched and broken-hearted she looks! Is it not dreadful, John, to think, how, by a single act of folly, you have lacerated the hearts that loved you most, and imposed upon them burdens of anguish, almost too heavy to be borne?"

"It is dreadful! dreadful! O, that I had died, before I became an accursed instrument of evil to those I love. But what can I do, Mr. Gray, to atone, in some degree, for the misery I have wrought?"

"You can do much, John, if you will."

"If I will, Mr. Gray?"

"Yes, John, if you will."

"There is nothing that I am not ready to do, Mr. Gray—even the cutting off of my right hand, could it be of any avail."

"You swore off, as I believe you called it, for six months, did you not?"

"Yes."

"Had you any desire to drink, during that time?"

"None."

"Sign a pledge of perpetual total-abstinence, and you are safe from all future temptations. Time will doubtless heal the present painful wounds."

"And make a slave of myself, Mr. Gray. Surely I ought to have power enough over myself to abstain from all intoxicating drinks,

without binding myself down by a written contract."

"That is true; but, unfortunately, you have not that control over yourself. Your only safety, then, lies in the pledge. Take that, and you throw between yourself and danger an insurmountable barrier. You talk about freedom; and yet are a slave to the most debasing appetite. Get free from the influence of that eager, insatiable desire, and you are free, indeed. The perpetual total-abstinence pledge will be your declaration of independence. When that is taken, you. will be free, indeed. And until it is taken, rest assured, that none of your friends will again have confidence in you. For their sakes,—for your sister's sake, that peace may once more be restored to her troubled heart—for the sake of her, from whose lip you dashed the cup of joy, sign the pledge."

"I will sign it, Mr. Gray. But name not her whom I have so deeply wronged. I can never see Helen Weston again."

"Time heals many a wound, and closes many a breach my young friend."

"It can never heal that wound, nor close that breach," was the sad response. "But give me a pen and ink, and some paper; and let me write a pledge. I believe it is necessary for me to sign one."

The materials for writing were brought as desired, and Barclay wrote and subscribed a pledge of perpetual abstinence from all that could intoxicate.

"That danger is past," he said, with a lighter tone, as he arose from the table at which he had been writing. "I can never pass another such a week as that which has just elapsed."

"Now come down and take a good warm breakfast with me," Mr. Gray said, in a cheerful voice.

"Excuse me if you please," Barclay replied. "I cannot meet your family this morning, after what has occurred. Besides, I must see my sister as quickly as possible, and relieve, as far as lies in my power, her suffering heart."

"Go then, John Barclay," the old man said. "I will not, for Alice's sake, urge you to linger a moment."

It was still early when Mr. Barclay entered his own home. He found Alice sitting in the parlour so pale, haggard, and wretched, that her features hardly seemed like those of his own sister. She looked up into his face as he came in with a sad, doubting expression, while her lips trembled. One glance, however, told her heart that a change had taken place, and she sprang quickly towards him.

"Alice, my own dear sister!" he said, as her head sank upon his breast. "The struggle is over. I am free once more, and free for ever. I have just signed a pledge of total-abstinence from all that can intoxicate—a pledge that will remain perpetually in force."

"And may our Father in Heaven help you to keep it, John," the maiden murmured, in a low, fervent tone.

"I will die before it shall be violated," was the stern response.

One year from that time, another bridal party assembled at the residence of Mr. Weston. Helen long since recovered from the shock she had received, had again consented to be led to the altar, by John Barclay, whose life had been, since he signed the pledge,

of the most unexceptionable character. Indeed, almost his only fault in former times had been a fondness for drinking, and gay company. Not much of boisterous mirth characterized the bridal party, for none felt like giving way to an exuberance of feeling,—but there was, notwithstanding few could draw a veil entirely over the past, a rational conviction that true and permanent happiness must, and would crown that marriage union. And thus far, it has followed it, and must continue to follow it, for John Barclay is a man of high-toned principle, and would as soon think of committing a highway robbery, as violating his pledge.

THE FAILING HOPE

"SHALL I read to you, ma?" said Emma Martin, a little girl, eleven years of age, coming up to the side of her mother, who sat in a musing attitude by the centre-table, upon which the servant had just placed a light.

Mrs. Martin did not seem to hear the voice of her child; for she moved not, nor was there any change in the fixed, dreamy expression of her face.

"Ma," repeated the child, after waiting for a few moments, laying, at the same time, her head gently upon her mother's shoulder.

"What, dear?" Mrs. Martin asked, in a tender voice, rousing herself up.

"Shall I read to you, ma?" repeated the child.

"No—yes, dear, you may read for me"—the mother said, and her tones were low, with something mournful in their expression.

"What shall I read, ma?"

"Get the Bible, dear, and read to me from that good book," replied

Mrs. Martin.

"I love to read in the Bible," Emma said, as she brought to the centre-table that sacred volume, and commenced turning over its pages. She then read chapter after chapter, while the mother listened in deep attention, often lifting her heart upwards, and

breathing a silent prayer. At last Emma grew tired with reading, and closed the book.

"It is time for you to go to bed, dear," Mrs. Martin observed, as the little girl showed signs of weariness.

"Kiss me, ma," the child said, lifting her innocent face to that of her mother, and receiving the token of love she asked. Then, breathing her gentle,

"Good-night!" the affectionate girl glided off, and retired to her chamber.

"Dear child!" Mrs. Martin murmured, as Emma left the room. "My heart trembles when I think of you, and look into the dark and doubtful future!"

She then leaned her head upon her hand, and sat in deep, and evidently painful abstraction of mind. Thus she remained for a long time, until aroused by the clock which struck the hour of ten.

With a deep sigh she arose, and commenced pacing the room backwards and forwards, pausing every now and then to listen to the sound of approaching footsteps, and moving on again as the sound went by. Thus she continued to walk until nigh eleven o'clock, when some one drew near, paused at the street door, and then opening it, came along the passage with a firm and steady step.

Mrs. Martin stopped, trembling in spite of herself, before the parlour door, which a moment after was swung open. One glance at the face of the individual who entered, convinced her that her

solicitude had been unnecessary.

"Oh, James!" she said, the tears gushing from her eyes, in spite of a strong effort to compose herself,—"I am so glad that you have come!"

"Why are you so agitated, Emma?" her husband said, in some surprise, looking inquiringly into Mrs. Martin's face.

"You staid out so late—and—you know I am foolish sometimes!" she replied, leaning her head down upon his shoulder, and continuing to weep.

A change instantly passed upon Mr. Martin's countenance, and he stood still, for some time, his face wearing a grave thoughtful expression, while his wife remained with her head leaning upon him. At last he drew his arm tenderly around her, and said—

"Emma, I am a sober man."

"Do not, dear James! speak of that. I am so happy now!"

"Yes, Emma, I will speak of it now." And as he said so, he gently seated her upon the sofa, and took his place beside her.

"Emma"—he resumed, looking her steadily in the face. "I have resolved never again to touch the accursed cup that has so well-nigh destroyed our peace for ever."

"Oh, James! What a mountain you have taken from my heart!" Mrs. Martin replied, the whole expression of her face changing as suddenly as a landscape upon which the sun shines from beneath an obscuring cloud. "I have had nothing to trouble me but that—yet that one trouble has seemed more than I could possibly bear."

"You shall have no more trouble, Emma. I have been for some months under a strange delusion, it has seemed. But I am now fully awake, and see the dangerous precipice upon which I have been standing. This night, I have solemnly resolved that I would drink no more spirituous liquors. Nothing stronger than wine shall again pass my lips."

"I cannot tell you how my heart is relieved," the wife said. "The whole of this evening I have been painfully oppressed with fear and dark forebodings. Our dear little girl is now at that age, when her future prospects interest me all the while. I think of them night and day. Shall they all be marred? I have asked myself often and often. But I could give my heart no certain answer. I need not tell you why."

"Give yourself no more anxiety on this point, Emma," her husband replied. "I will be a free man again. I will be to you and my dear child all that I have ever been."

"May our Heavenly Father aid you to keep that resolution," was the silent prayer that went up from the heart of Mrs. Martin.

The failing hope of. her bosom revived under this assurance. She felt again as in the early years of their wedded life, when hope and confidence, and tender affection were all in the bloom and vigour of their first developement. The light came back to her eye, and the smile to her lip.

It was about four months afterwards, that Mr. Martin was invited to make one of a small party, given to a literary man, as visiter from a neighbouring city.

"I shall not be home to dinner, Emma," he said, on leaving in the morning.

"Why not, James?" she asked.

"I am going to dine at four, with a select party of gentlemen."

Mrs. Martin did not reply, but a cloud passed over her face, in spite of an effort not to seem concerned.

"Don't be uneasy, Emma," her husband said, noting this change. "I shall touch nothing but wine. I know my weakness, and shall be on my guard."

"Do be watchful over yourself, for my sake, and for the sake of our own dear child," Mrs. Martin replied, laying her arm tenderly upon his shoulder.

"Have no fear, Emma," he said, and kissing the yet fair and beautiful cheek of his wife, Mr. Martin left the house.

How long, how very long did the day seem to Mrs. Martin! The usual hour for his return came and went, the dinner hardly tasted; and then his wife counted the hours as they passed lingeringly away, until the dim, grey twilight fell with a saddening influence around her.

"He will be home soon, now," she thought. But the minutes glided into hours, and still he did not come. The tea-table stood in the floor until nearly nine o'clock, before Mrs. Martin sat down with little Emma. But no food passed the mother's lips. She could not eat. There was a strange fear about her heart—a dread of coming evil, that chilled her feelings, and threw a dark cloud over her spirits.

In the meantime, Martin had gone to the dinner-party, firm in his resolution not to touch a drop of ardent spirits. But the taste of wine had inflamed his appetite, and he drank more and more freely, until he ceased to feel the power of his resolution, and again put brandy to his lips, and drank with the eagerness of a worn and thirsty traveller at a cooling brook. It was nine o'clock when the company arose, or rather attempted to arise from the table. Not all of them could accomplish that feat. Three, Martin among the rest, were carried off to bed, in a state of helpless intoxication.

Hour after hour passed away, the anxiety of Mrs. Martin increasing every moment, until the clock struck twelve.

"Why does he stay so late?" she said, rising and pacing the room backwards and forwards. This she continued to do, pausing every now and then to listen, for nearly an hour. Then she went to the door and looked long and anxiously in the direction from which she expected her husband to come. But his well-known form met not her eager eyes, that peered so intently into the darkness and gloom of the night. With another long-drawn sigh, she closed the door, and re-entered the silent and lonely room. That silence was broken by the loud and clear ringing of the clock. The hour was one! Mrs. Martin's feelings now became too much excited for her to control them. She sank into a chair, and wept in silent anguish of spirit. For nearly a quarter of an hour her tears continued to flow, and then a deep calm succeeded—a kind of mental stupor, that remained until she was startled again

into distinct consciousness by the sound of the clock striking two.

All hope now faded from her bosom. Up to this time she had entertained a feeble expectation that her husband might be kept away from some other cause than the one she so dreaded; but now that prop became only as a broken reed, to pierce her with a keener anguish.

"It is all over!" she murmured bitterly, as she again arose, and commenced, walking to and fro with slow and measured steps.

It was fully three o'clock before that lonely, and almost heart-broken wife and mother retired to her chamber. How cruelly had the hope which had grown bright and buoyant in the last few months, gaining more strength and confidence every day, been again crushed to the earth!

For an hour longer did Mrs. Martin sit, listening in her chamber, everything around her so hushed into oppressive silence, that the troubled beating of her own heart, was distinctly audible. But she waited and listened in vain. The sound of passing footsteps that now came only at long, very long intervals, served but to arouse a momentary gleam in her mind, to fade away again, and leave it in deeper darkness.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.