

## **Three nights with the Washingtonians / by T.S. Arthur.**

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# THREE NIGHTS WITH THE WASHINGTONIANS

By T. S. Arthur, author of "Ten Nights in a Bar Room," &c.

## Night the First.—The Broken Merchant.

"COME," said a friend, one evening in the winter of 1841, "let us look in upon the Washingtonians."

"The Washingtonians?" I replied. "And pray, who and what are they?"

"Have you not heard about them?" "No."

"Then you are ignorant of one of the most remarkable facts in the history of the times."

"Explain yourself."

"With pleasure. About nine months ago, perhaps not quite so long, there were assembled in a drinking-house in this city (Baltimore), six men, well advanced in years, who had for a long time been confirmed drunkards, or at least, so wedded to the love of drink, as to have found it almost impossible to live without a daily resort to its stimulating influences. They had met accidentally, or rather, without any other design in repairing to the bar-room than that which had taken them there a hundred and a hundred times. But in the mind of each there was a feeling of sorrow for his enslaved and wretched condition. A strong desire to rise out of it—yet a painful, hopeless sense of weakness. How often, alas! how often had each made resolutions of reform. How often had each renounced the cup of confusion, only to seek again the bewildering draught and to sink still lower in the scale of human degradation!

"Thus they met as they had often met before; but neither seemed inclined to call for the subtle poison that had so many times stolen away their reason. Soon the feelings of each became known to the others, and they felt a sudden hope springing up in their minds—a hope in each one of that little company, that alone he could not stand. But together, shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, and heart to heart, they felt that though the struggle would be hard, they could, and they would conquer!

"In that moral pest-house, then, while inhaling with every breath the tempting fumes of the potations they loved, did this little band pledge themselves to each other, never again to drink of intoxicating drink—spirits, wine, malt or cider."

"They did not keep their pledge, of course," I said, interrupting him. "Who ever heard of a confirmed drunkard becoming a sober man? The hope for such a result has long since faded from the minds of the benevolent, and now all the efforts of temperance reformers are turned to the keeping of sober men from becoming lovers of strong drink. The drunkard will remain a drunkard to the end of his life; there is no hope for him."

"Do not jump to conclusions quite so hastily," my friend replied. "There is hope for the drunkard, let me tell you. But hear me out patiently. These six men, soon after they had pledged themselves to each other, determined that they would make an effort to increase their number. They accordingly organized a society, and called it the 'Washington Temperance Society.' Then they went to some of their old companions, told them what they had done, and invited them to join their society. A few were found to break away from their bondage and unite with them. Thus their power and influence became increased. Others soon followed their example, and it was not long before the society numbered over one hundred members, each one of whom had been for years in the habit of drinking, and most of them occasionally to intoxication."

"All this time, each member was using all his powers of reasoning and persuasion to induce his old companions to come in. Some would, on the nights of their meetings, station themselves near the grog-shops they had formerly been in the habit of visiting, and intercept those whom they knew, before they had reached the doors they were seeking. Then they would reason with them, and persuade them to come to the society; if not to join, at least to hear. In this way members were added. Such members as had no work, were aided as far as possible, and efforts were made to procure work for them."

"And thus the reformation has gone on, and now 'The Washington Temperance Society' numbers several hundred members, nearly every one of whom had been in the habit of drinking to the extent of seriously marring his prospects in life. Every week they meet regularly, for the reception of new members, and for mutual encouragement. And these meetings are of a highly interesting nature. Usually, some of the members relate their ex-

periences, and these are frequently affecting in a high degree."

"Surely you must be drawing on your imagination. The thing surpasses belief."

"I have not told you half. But come. Let us go to the meeting; this is the regular night."

There was no hesitation, of course. In a few minutes we entered a large room at the corner of Hanover and Lombard-streets, which we found crowded to excess, with men of all ages, mostly mechanics and working-men. We pushed our way close to the speaker's stand, and then turned to survey the countenances of the assembly. It was a sight to move the heart. There were men, old and grey-headed, and youths scarcely eighteen, into whose very vitals had been fixed the tooth of the destroyer. Men who had been slaves, some for a long series of years, to the most degrading vice. But now they stood up as freemen, and there was scarcely a face, marred sadly as some were, that had not an expression of serious, manly determination and confidence.

In a little while after our entrance, the preliminaries of the meeting being over, several of the members successively related their experiences. Sometimes these were humorous and amusing; but more frequently they portrayed scenes that touched the feelings, and often drew tears from the eyes. They were the simple unadorned histories of real life, told by the participants in them, and often with an eloquence of tone and manner that stirred the heart to its very depths.

To give any of these now is not my design. And so we will pass by this part of the meeting, and linger for a few moments over the scene that presented itself when the President invited all who wished to join the society to come forward and sign the pledge, which was read. It was in these words:—

"We whose names are annexed, desirous of forming a society for our mutual benefit, to guard against a pernicious practice, which is injurious to our health, standing, and families, do pledge ourselves as gentlemen, that we will not drink any spirituous or malt liquors, wine or cider."

A dead silence then ensued, which lasted only for a moment or two, when a slight noise was heard in a far distant corner of the room. Then there was a motion in the dense crowd, and presently a man was seen coming up the aisle. He was scarcely past the prime of life, but had a look of premature old age. His face was so swollen and disfigured, that the eye turned away from it involuntarily.

"Do you think there is any use in me signing it?" he asked, as he paused at the table on which the books of the society rested, trembling from head to foot, and gazing up, appealingly, into the face of the President. There were few who looked upon the wretched being who did not feel a rising emotion of tenderness and compassion.

"Yes, I do," was the prompt and positive reply. "It is the only thing that can save you. And it will save you."

"O sir, do you really think so?"

"I know it! Sign it at once, and you are a free man."

"I will, I will!" the poor creature said, in an earnest tone, taking the pen that the Secretary held out to him, and putting, with an eager, trembling hand, his name to the pledge.

"Abide by that and you are safe," said the President, smiling.

"I will try," responded the man, and his tones were steadier, and had something of confidence in them; and he seemed really like a changed being, full of hope and resolution, as he turned from the table and mingled in the crowd.

Then came another and another, until forty-nine had signed the pledge.

"Come along! We have room for another one. We must have fifty to-night," said the President, in a loud, cheerful, encouraging tone. "Come along with us, and we will do you good. Who will make up the fifty?"

For nearly five minutes the President waited, but no one came forward. Just as the pledge-book was about to be closed, there was a movement near the middle of the room, and then there came, tottering up the aisle, a feeble old man, with a head as white as snow. He seemed at least three-score and ten, for he was bent, and leaned

on his staff, and his face was that of one very far advanced in years, though it was painfully disfigured by signs that none could look upon and misunderstand. He came up slowly, letting his stick fall at every step, and evidently trusting to it for support. There was a deep and breathless silence. The President, who had been talking almost incessantly for half an hour, urging, inviting, and encouraging persons to come forward, ceased his rambling address, and stepped forward a pace or two to meet the old man.

"Let me sign—let me sign!" he said, in a low, agitated voice, and the Secretary handed him a chair, into which he sank feebly, and then took the pen that was offered him. Hurriedly, as if he feared that his resolution would fall him, did he subscribe to the pledge. As he lifted the pen, a tear fell upon his name.

Silently he then arose, and slowly retired. His clothes were old and worn, and his coat seemed, from its appearance, to have seen almost a quarter of a century. But it was whole in every part, though patched with almost innumerable pieces, and of various shades. The few thin white locks that covered his head were smoothly combed and parted. The bosom of his shirt was clean but coarse, and a white cravat was tied about his neck with a care that indicated plainly enough, as did his whole appearance, that a woman's heart had cared for him, and a woman's hand been busy about his person.

I felt naturally, as did every one, a strong interest in this old man, and when the meeting broke up, I kept my eye upon him, and followed out close behind him. At the door I parted with my friend, as it was late, and we had to go in opposite directions. The old man was but a few paces in advance of me, as I turned up Hanover-street; I lingered behind, half resolved to follow him home. When he came to Market-street, he crossed over, and proceeded on westwardly. I was but a few paces behind him when he came to the narrow street now called Little Sharp-street, mostly filled with poor and comfortless tenements, many of which are inhabited by blacks. Into this he turned, and scarcely yet determined as to what I should do, I followed closely after. It was past the hour of ten, and the night was very cold. A keen northwester was blowing, and, as I turned into this little street, the wind came rushing down with chilly violence. The old man seemed to shrink in the cold blast, as if its benumbing influence had penetrated his thin garments, and reached every part of his body. I had proceeded onwards but a few steps when a female figure darted past me, and paused at the old man's side.

"Oh, father!" said a low, anxious, trembling voice, "where have you been? I have searched after you for more than an hour."

The reply was made in so low a tone that I could not hear it.

"Are you not very cold?" the daughter asked, as the two moved on, the old man leaning upon the arm of his child for support.

"No, Kate," I could hear him say, "I am not very cold. But if you have been out for an hour, this bitter night, you must be chilled to the heart."

Just at this moment the two passed under a lamp, and I could see that the outer dress of the young woman was very poor and thin, and that it clung to her slender form as the wind swept past her, showing that beneath this were but few comfortable garments.

I felt the truth of what the old man said, for, although wrapped in a warm cloak, I was yet very sensible of the extreme cold. But the daughter made no reply.

No other word was spoken, or, at least none other caught my ear. In a few minutes the two stopped before a low frame house, of but a single story, with a loft, or attic, above. Into this they immediately entered, and the door was quickly closed after them.

If I had felt an interest in the old man, I now felt a far deeper interest in that gentle being who, under such painful and trying circumstances, could cling to him as she evidently did, like a guardian angel. There was a deep-toned, unutterable tenderness in her voice, as she murmured the word "father," that moved my feelings. And there was something in her manner and carriage, obscurely seen in the feeble glimmering of the street lamp, that told of better days.

I lingered for a minute or two, irresolute, after the door had closed upon them, and then turned away, resolved to know more about that old man and his daughter. What I subsequently learned, I will now present in the form of a simple, connected history. And if it makes the same impression upon the mind of the reader that it did upon my own, on turning the last page of the narrative, he will, even if he have said it a hundred times before, feel like saying more fervently still to the "Washingtonians," the

Jeffersonians," and others of kindred associations, "God speed you in your noble efforts!"

## The Broken Merchant.

AMONG the most prosperous young merchants of Baltimore, who engaged in a profitable trade between the years of 1800 and 1810, was Wilson Hamilton. Inheriting from his father a handsome property, which was speedily doubled by his business enterprise, at his marriage, at the age of thirty, he found his wealth increased so largely, by his wife's munificent portion, as to make him one of the richest men in the city. Of course, his social intercourse was with the highest class for wealth, refinement, and intelligence—and at that time, in Baltimore, the wealthy class combined, to a remarkable extent, refinement with a high degree of intelligence.

Then the custom of using wines and other stronger drinks, on almost all occasions, was generally practised, and none thought it an evil. If one gentleman called at the house of another, and liquor was not set out, it was esteemed a palpable breach of courtesy. No social circle, however select, assembled, without the accompaniment of glasses and decanters. On the dinner table of the private citizen was every day to be found wine and brandy, and all the members of his family, children and females, were in the habit of partaking freely. At weddings and funerals, and indeed on almost all occasions, the universal bottle-imp was present. Few, very few, had any fear of the consequences; and, indeed, at that time, the deplorable results that have since followed the general use of intoxicating drinks, were apparent in but rare instances. None seemed conscious of danger, or dreamed that any more evils were to be feared from the habitual use of drinking brandy or wine, than from taking ordinary food.

Mr. Hamilton was one of those who were particularly fond of a glass of generous wine. His cellar was stocked with many varieties, old and rare: not the artificial, drugged and brandied stuff that now so generally bears the names of wine, but the pure and genuine—its vintage known, and its quality certain.

We will pass over, with these observations, some seventeen or eighteen years of his life, from the time of his marriage until his only child, a daughter, had completed her sixteenth summer; only remarking that, as might be supposed, his attachment to his glass of wine had become, in that time, increased to a passion. Often and often, when he retired to his bed at night, would he be so much under its influence as to be scarcely conscious of anything. But few perceived it, for he was prudent; few imagined that the rich, respectable, and intelligent merchant was other than a sober man. During the early part of the day, his mind was clear and active; but a growing consciousness of his infirmity made him sensible that his interests would suffer if he gave any important attention to them while under the influence of wine, and therefore he had ceased to enter into any important business negotiations, or to close any bargains, in the after part of the day.

The mother of Kate Hamilton died when her only child was but ten years of age; and losing one affectionate and fondly loved parent, the little girl clung to the other with a love increased tenfold. Mr. Hamilton had almost idolized his child from her birth, and now that he was all in all to her, and she all in all to him, his love, like hers, became tenfold more intense. The best teachers were, of course, employed for little Kate, who, being of an intelligent mind, as well as of an affectionate disposition, progressed rapidly in all the varied branches of instruction. Thus carefully provided with everything necessary for her education and accomplishments, Kate Hamilton sprang up in a few years into young, blushing womanhood, beloved, admired, and honoured for her affectionate nature, beautiful person, high-toned feelings, and enlarged intelligence.

But, alas for her happiness! the light of rational thought and perception that dawned upon her mind at sweet sixteen, revealed that which made her heart shrink and tremble with an undefinable fear.

She had often seen her father asleep in his great arm-chair, and thus pass away the evening. But the true cause of this she had never dreamed. And on some few occasions after dinner she had known him to retire too bed, and to be too unwell to rise for tea. But no suspicion flashed across her mind that all was not right. Every tender sympathy of her nature was then alive for her father, but no emotion of shame for him crossed her innocent heart.

From this delusive dream she had a sudden and painful awaking. It was on the very day that she had attained her sixteenth birthday. A few friends dined with her father, and, as had been the custom for two years past, she presided at the table. The wine passed freely, and

Mr. Hamilton drank deeper than usual. The consequence was, that his mind grew obscured, and it became too evident to all present, except his daughter, that he was in the first stage of intoxication. But, even she, at length, could not help noticing that her father talked strangely, and had an expression of countenance that she could not understand.

One of the company, who observed that Kate's eye was fixed anxiously upon her father, endeavoured to divert her mind, and draw her away into conversation. She was becoming somewhat interested, when she noticed another person at the table glance with a slight contemptuous smile towards her father, and then at one of the party who sat opposite to him.

The blood rushed to her face, and her lip trembled with an instant rebuke. But she controlled herself with an effort. The individual who sat near her, and who saw what was passing, made a movement to rise from the table, which was followed by the rest of the company.

"Stop! stop!" cried Hamilton, in a thick voice—"wait until your host moves! Fill up your glasses again, gentlemen! And you, Kate (a consciousness of his real situation seeming to flash upon his mind), you can retire now; our friends here will excuse you."

"O certainly, certainly, Miss Hamilton!" was instantly responded. And the poor girl glided from the room, and hurried away trembling in every nerve, and her heart beating so rapidly as to produce a feeling of suffocation. As soon as she reached her chamber, she sank into a chair, and gave way to a passionate gush of tears. For more than an hour she sat there, in a state of dreary wretchedness, the real cause of which was dimly, and very dimly, perceptible to her mind. But from this she was aroused by a sudden and painful shock.

"Queer goings on in the parlour, John says," remarked one servant to another, with a low chuckling laugh, pausing near the chamber door, and unconscious that she was there.

"Indeed! What's the matter! Is the old fellow drunk again?"

"Yes, indeed! And they are making great sport of him down there."

"Well, I'm right down sorry," said the other, "specially for poor Miss Kate. It will break her heart if she should find it out. John must try and get him off to bed, and then she'll never know it."

"But she must find it out before long. He gets tipsy two or three times a week now, and never goes to bed at night, that he isn't as full as he can stick."

And then the two servants, after their word of gossip, glided away to attend to their respective duties.

If a painter could have seen Kate, as, starting to her feet, she stood listening with breathless eagerness, her face pale as death, her lips apart, her hand raised, and her eyes fixed with a wild stare, he might have sketched a picture that to look upon, would have made the heart shrink and tremble.

The servants passed to their separate duties, the words they had spoken forgotten by them in the moment after they were uttered. But upon the heart of Kate Hamilton, those words were written as with a pen of fire. The word "drunkenness" was, in her mind, associated only with the lowest earthly degradation. Long after the noise of their retreating footsteps had ceased to sound along the passages, did the poor girl stand in the position described, as if suddenly turned into stone. From this state she was aroused by footsteps on the stairs, heavy, irregular, and shuffling, the footsteps of those who evidently carried a burden of considerable weight. Her door stood ajar, and as she glanced eagerly through it, she saw the body of her father, borne in the hands of a servant and two of the visitors, merchants of the first standing in the city, with whose daughters she was on terms of the closest intimacy.

Her first impulse was to spring forward. But she remembered the cruel words of the servants. He was drunk!—and what could she do for him? In a few minutes the visitors and servants went down stairs, and then there was the sound of many footsteps in the passage below. After this came the opening and closing of the hall door, and then all was still. The guests of the dinner party had gone.

With a quick hand Kate swung open her chamber door, and glided with hurrying steps along the passages that led to her father's chamber. Entering this, she closed the door after her, and fastened it; and then went up to the bed, and looked down eagerly into her father's face. It was flushed with a deep red, and seemed swollen, and his breath came heavy and laboured. She had often seen him thus before, but had never dreamed that it was the result of intoxication.

"Father!—Father!—Father!" she said, in a tender,

earnest voice, laying her hand softly upon him. But she might as well have spoken to a stone.

"Father!" she repeated, in a louder voice, shaking him gently.

But the sleeper stirred not.

"O Father! Dear Father!" she again exclaimed in a still louder, and now trembling, choking voice, shaking him violently.

As well might she have called to the dead. For a moment longer she stood with a pale, agitated countenance bending over him, and then bursting into tears, sank down into a chair, covered her face with her hands, and burying both in the bed-clothes, continued to weep and sob for a long, long time. But the violence of her grief spent itself by its own power, and then there fell upon her spirit a deep, almost waveless calm, subsiding into a state of dreamy, half unconsciousness, that, in its turn, was followed by a profound slumber.

The dim shadows of evening were falling around as the heart-stricken girl awakened from this blessed sleep; blessed to her, because it brought forgetfulness. As she rose to her feet, the first object that met her eye was the still insensible form of the one she loved above all things upon the earth. Again she laid her hand upon him—again she called his name in the tenderest accents. But he heard her not. O, how cheerless and desolate did her heart feel as she turned away, and slowly passed from his room!

And now came thoughts of duty. Young as she was, she felt that she must control her feelings; that she must hide from other eyes all evidences of the canker-worm in her heart. Not even the domestics must know that the truth had been discovered to her. Descending to the parlour, she seated herself near the window, and there dwelt upon the only thoughts that could find a place in her mind; thoughts of her father and his degradation. But when the servant came in with lights, and it became necessary to give some directions, she did so with a calmness that surprised even herself. It would have required a close observer, indeed, to have detected, in the tone of her voice, that within was wretchedness the most profound. Her face she could not so easily school, and it was therefore partly turned away.

Frequently through the evening did Kate go up to her father's room, and endeavour to awake him, but in vain. And at ten o'clock she sought her own pillow with a sadder heart than had ever throbbed in her bosom: sadder far than it was when she parted with the mother she had loved with a most tender, and intense affection.

In the morning when she came down, she found her father in the parlour reading the newspaper. He did not look up as she entered, and she felt glad that he did not do so, for she dreaded to meet his eye, or hear his voice, now that she knew that he was perfectly in his rational mind. It was the feeling of the child that shrunk from perceiving in a parent the first evidence of conscious self-abasement.

When breakfast was announced, both proceeded to the dining-room without uttering a word, and the meal passed in the most profound, thoughtful, oppressive silence; for Mr. H. had a painful consciousness, he hardly knew why, that Kate had perceived the truth. How could a parent, who loved his beautiful, innocent child as Wilson Hamilton really loved, nay, almost idolized his Kate, ever again touch the maddening poison that could thus put between them a feeling of shame, and a feeling of sorrow, whose poignancy cannot be told in words? Alas! who knows the subtle enticements of the circean draught but he who has heard the voices of the syrens? The wine was placed on the dinner-table as usual, and as usual Mr. Hamilton drank of it freely, but not to intoxication.

When Kate went next into company, it was with new feelings. Nowhere, nor in any scenes, did she find the same unalloyed pleasure that had heretofore been her constant attendant. If, for a few moments, the bright attractions which ever present themselves before the minds of the young and ardent, would win her away into delightful anticipations, a single dark thought would call her back, and an inwardly breathed sigh attest the sad truth, that for her, indeed, had become changed the hues of all things earthly. Some noticed the change, but dreamed not of the painful cause. The more subdued and thoughtful tone of her mind, and its corresponding effect in her manner, were noted as one of the phenomena, unaccounted for by the mass, which result from a young and happy creature's first introduction into the world of men and women, where each acts and reacts upon others in a thousand different forms.

Young, beautiful, accomplished, and the daughter of one of the most wealthy merchants in the city, it is not to be supposed that Kate Hamilton would long remain without a suitor for her hand. Among those who sought her

favour, was a young man named Bailey, the son of a merchant, who, like her father, was rich. He was of attractive person and manners, liberally educated, and associated, though but just of age, with his father in business. Of all who had visited her, this young man won most deeply upon her feelings, which, touched as they were by the condition of a parent most dearly loved, were of a tender and confiding character. At the time his attentions became particular, Kate was about eighteen, two years having passed since she made the discovery—a fearful one to her—of her father's strange propensity. How far this young man was worthy of her, and how far she was reposing upon a just hope in leaning upon his apparent affection, will appear from the following conversation which took place between him and his father, on the occasion of young Bailey's declaring his wish to address Miss Hamilton.

"I don't know about that, James. I am a little afraid of Hamilton."

"Why so, father?" asked the young man, with something of concern in the tone of his voice.

"Do you know that he drinks rather hard?"

"No; and I cannot believe it."

"Seeing is believing, they say," was the sententious reply. "What do you mean, father?"

"Why, I mean that I have seen him drunk myself."

"You have?"

"Yes, I have; and more than once. And what is worse, he drinks deeper and deeper. It's my candid opinion that he hasn't gone to bed perfectly sober a single time for the last five years."

"But what has that to do with Kate, father?"

"Humph! A strange question for a young man like you to ask, truly! I will tell you what it has to do with her: If her father goes on as he has been going on for the last six months, he will not be worth a stiver in two years." "How so?"

"Why, he is not himself one half of his time, and therefore does a very unsafe business. Fifty thousand dollars will not cover his losses in the past six months, and all from the miserably blind speculations into which he has entered. Formerly he was one of the shrewdest merchants in the city. Then he never made a bad speculation; now he rarely makes a good one. The reason is obvious: He drinks too freely. For the past five years, you could never transact business with him after dinner, because he knew that he was in an unfit state to do anything judiciously. But now, he is all the while in that unfit state, and everything with him is in confusion."

"Poor Kate!" the young man said, sympathizingly.

"Yes, I pity the girl, too, for she is handsome and intelligent, and I have no doubt would make you a good enough wife. But I rather think you had better look somewhere else."

"But perhaps he would settle something on her."

"Not he. He's as proud as Lucifer, and if he were approached on that point, would be roused at once. No, no, James. You had better turn your thoughts somewhere else."

"But there is no one whom I like so well."

"Oh! as to that, liking comes natural enough after you are married. There is—'s daughter. Why don't you go and see her?"

"Because I don't like her."

"But her father is the richest merchant in the city: and she is his only child."

"I know. But I can never choose her."

"Well, there is old L—'s daughter, Angeline. Try her."

"I can't do it, father."

"You are too particular by half, James. I am afraid you are a little weak in this matter; and have got a notion in your head, that there must be a deal of red-hot love in the question. Red-hot nonsense."

"Well, perhaps I am a little weak that way; but I can't help it. Kate Hamilton is the sweetest girl in the town, that's clear. And I don't see but we shall have money enough, even if her father should go to the wall, which I hope will not be the case."

"Don't flatter yourself, boy," the old man said, with rather a severe expression of countenance. "He will go to the wall, that's clear. He's a confirmed drunkard—that's the plain A, B, C, of it, and there's no hope for him! Who ever heard of a reclaimed drunkard? I have lived some fifty years now, and I am sure I never have, nor any body else, I presume. No, no, James; poverty and degradation await Wilson Hamilton, and no human power can save him. And let me tell you, that with my consent, you never unite your fortunes with his. Once his son-in-law, and you become involved in his business when the pinch comes, and when he falls, you will fall with him."

"There is something in that, certainly," the young man replied in a thoughtful tone. "And it behoves me to pause and consider well what I do."

"That it does, my boy! spoken like the son of your father. Look before you leap, has always been my motto, and I have thus far kept out of the thorn bushes."

Still, James Bailey, when he made the effort to keep away from Kate, found that his feelings were involved far more than he had supposed. The trial was exceedingly painful, and, therefore, he determined that he would at least permit himself the gratification of being in her company frequently: and so he continued a regular visitor.

The description which his father had given of Mr. Hamilton's habits, must suffice for the reader. It was, alas! too true. The consequence was, as intimated, that his business was fast falling into confusion, and his losses were frequent and heavy. But none of these had the effect to make him give up, in any degree, the active cause. They only soured his mind, and deranged the true business perceptions that were left. Poor Kate was now the constant witness of her father's degradation. Rarely a day passed that he did not drink so deeply as to confuse his ideas, and there was scarcely a night that he did not go reeling, or have to be carried, in a state of insensibility, to bed.

About this time an important rise in the price of cotton was anticipated, and a few capitalists in various cities commenced purchasing and storing considerable quantities. Among others, Mr. Hamilton invested largely, buying, and giving his notes, with a recklessness as to the aggregate amount, that could only be accounted for from the fact that he was not one half of his time really in his right mind. The effect of such a proceeding was, of course, to run prices up, and Hamilton continued to purchase at the most advanced rates. Then came a pause in the market—a slight evidence of fluctuation, and the price fell half a cent. The wise ones sold immediately. But many, Hamilton among the rest, held on. The price "he knew would go up." He "would not sell for an advance of three cents per pound." But it went down, down, down, falling in the course of three months from twenty to ten cents per pound; and when Mr. Hamilton was compelled to sell, he was loser by one hundred thousand dollars. He could not meet all the engagements that he had entered into, and, of course, was compelled to make an assignment of his whole property—to become that dreaded thing a BROKEN MERCHANT. This nearly maddened, instead of sobering him, and caused him to drink deeper and deeper. For a week after he had passed over his property into the hands of trustees, he was almost constantly in a state of insensibility.

When this distressing event occurred, Kate was only at the tender age of nineteen, but wise, from suffering, far beyond her years. Only the evening before the failure of her father had Mr. Bailey called upon her, and sat with her until a late hour. In his conversation, and in his voice, during the time, were often words and tones that fell upon her heart with a peculiar and sweet melody, stirring thoughts and feelings of tenderness and affection. In his "good night," and in the parting pressure of his hand, were a language that she interpreted, to her own heart, and that caused it to tremble with delightful emotions.

Only once again did she look upon his face; only once again did she hear the sound of his voice. Her father's failure decided the question in his mind. He could not wed a portionless girl.

From the wreck of a large estate, the trustees, after settling every claim against it, and deducting their own fees for the management, paid over to Mr. Hamilton the meagre remnant of five thousand dollars. This sum, with the splendid furniture of his large mansion, was all that was left him at the age of fifty. A great portion of the latter was sold, and with his daughter, he sank at once into obscurity.

A new business was commenced on the small capital that he could command, but this soon became involved, as a natural consequence arising out of his unchanged habits. Two years after, he failed a second time, and what was worse, was considerably in debt, after every thing had been swept from him. Not only were the goods in his store taken, but the furniture of his dwelling shared the same fate, and, with his child, he was left with the most scanty household articles, merely such as are protected by the laws of Maryland from the creditor. But the evil stopped not here. One of the creditors, more selfish and cruel than the rest, persecuted him still further, and to run the full cup over, had him arrested, after a suit and the rendition of judgment, and carried to jail. This occurred a few weeks after every thing had been taken from them. He had carefully concealed from Kate

this danger that was lurking in his way, and when arrested, she had no intimation of it.

"Come back soon, father," she said, laying her hand tenderly upon his arm, as he was about leaving on that afternoon, while the tears came into her eyes. "Every thing is so dreary and desolate here"—and she glanced around the room, that was dismantled of nearly every article except a single table, and four common chairs. Carpets, looking-glasses, mahogany tables, sofas; in a word, everything but the articles named had been seized and carried off by the rapacious creditors, some of whom, could every heart-wrung tear of that innocent girl have been changed to a diamond, would have tortured her until the last farthing owed to them by her father had been paid.

"I shall be home soon," the old man replied, as he was closing the door after him.

Hour after hour the lonely girl sat near a window, leaning her head upon her hands; sometimes giving way to tears, and sometimes brooding with dark and desponding feelings over a condition that seemed almost bereft of hope. What distressed her most of all was the infatuation of her father. She felt that he would now sink lower and lower; and that, be his condition what it might, she must and would cling to him. Already had she begun to ponder on the means by which the labour of her hands could be made to support them both; but on this subject she thought and thought in vain.

"What *can* I do? What *shall* I do?" she said, after musing long, in an entire abstraction of thought from all things external. The sound of her own voice aroused her, and she perceived that the twilight was falling dimly around.

"Why does he stay so late?" she said, rising and looking out into the street. Then she turned away, and after lighting a lamp, proceeded to prepare the evening meal. Since the seizure and sale of their property, she had retained no domestic, performing all the duties required with her own hands, all unused as they were to toil.

The supper ready, she waited long in painful anxiety, but her father came not. Hour after hour passed, but she looked and listened in vain for some sign of his coming. How, or where to seek him, she knew not; for when she thought of doing so, it was past the hour of eleven. Seating herself by the window, she remained looking out into the street, and listening anxiously to every footstep that approached, until long after midnight. Then, as all hope of return before morning faded from her mind, she rested her arms upon the table near which she sat, and burying her head in them, she sunk into a troubled sleep. When she awoke from this, the broad light of day was streaming into the room.

Starting to her feet, her first impulse, after the full return of consciousness, was to go out and seek for her father.

"But where shall I go?"

This was a question that she could not answer, though she thought of it long and anxiously; for she had not the most remote idea what could keep him away.

"I will wait for an hour or two," she at length said—"by that time he will either come home, or I shall hear from him."

In the state of most distressing uncertainty, she remained until nearly nine o'clock, when she could bear it no longer. As she was just passing from the door, to seek for him, she knew not how or where, a rough-looking, hard-featured man stepped up to her, and said—"Is this where Mr. Hamilton lives?"

"Yes, sir. What of him? Where is he?" was the eager response.

"He asked me last night to hand you this," the man said, producing a letter, which Kate grasped as he reached it to her, and broke the seal with hasty but trembling hands. As she did so, the man turned away, and left her. The letter, or brief note rather, read thus:

*Baltimore Jail.*

"DEAR KATE:—The harpies have done their worst at last. On leaving the house this afternoon, I was arrested for debt and sent here. But do not, my dear child, let it break down your spirits, already well-nigh crushed to the earth. Hope for the best, and if you can feel to like coming to this dreadful place, I should like very much to see you."

There was no hesitation, no lingering on the part of Kate. The moment she had finished reading the note, she placed it in her bosom, and hurriedly leaving the house, bent her steps towards the city prison. The girl's wild and disordered look, as she hastened along the street, attracted many eyes, but she saw nothing, heard nothing—not even the remark of one who had known her, and been a companion—"As I live, that was Kate Hamilton!"

"Ah, indeed!" was the reply of the individual to whom

this was addressed, made in a tone half indifferent—"The daughter of old Hamilton, who failed about two years ago?"

"The same, and a sweet girl Kate was. I have never seen her before since she left our circles. What can be the matter with her now? Where can she be going? Poor thing! I am afraid, from her look, that she has become lost to virtue."

"Most likely," was the cruel rejoinder—cruel, could it have reached the ear of the unfortunate subject, but falling harmless where it was uttered.

"I am told," pursued the other, "that her father has been a common drunkard, and has been frequently seen of late, reeling about the streets in a state of intoxication. What a sad trial it must have been to Kate! But I suppose she is past that now. Ah me! it makes me sad to think of it."

While these remarks were passing, the subject of them was hurrying on her way, with a single painful idea in her mind—the idea of her father, imprisoned. A walk of some twenty-five minutes brought her to the outer gate of the gloomy building.

"Can I see Mr. Hamilton?" she asked with a hurried and agitated voice.

"I really can't say, Miss," replied the gate-keeper, in a careless tone. "Who is he, or what is he?"

To this strange question the daughter could not reply, for she did not understand its import, and she stood looking into the man's face with a bewildered air. "What is he in for? murder, stealing, or debt?" the gate-keeper now asked in a quiet, unfeeling tone, returning the earnest look of Kate with a bold stare.

The blood mounted to the neck, face, and temples of the daughter, as she replied with something of indignation in her voice—"He is in for debt, sir."

"Oh, well. You can see him then, if you wish,"—and the gate-keeper turned the key. The large iron gate was swung slowly open, and Kate passed through. As it closed with a loud clanking sound, the heart of the poor girl almost ceased its pulsations. Her limbs became feeble and unsteady, as she attempted to ascend the long acclivity and many steps that led to the prison. A dimness came over her eyes, and a faintness and languor spread through her whole frame. But one thought of her father—one impulse of pure affection—aroused her again, and she proceeded on with a slow but steady pace. On reaching the main entrance to the building she encountered some two or three of the turnkeys, who were lounging about that part of the jail. All eyes were instantly turned upon her, as she shrunk impulsively from each unfeeling glance. But a sense of duty aroused her, and the thought of her father dispelled every feeling of weakness.

"I wish to see Mr. Hamilton," she said.

"A debtor?" "Yes sir." "Come this way."

And she followed the speaker until both stood in front of a large iron-grated gateway, or door, opening into a long spacious hall, from each side of which went off the entrances to the different debtors' apartments. As they paused here, the turnkey called out in a loud voice, "Hamilton!"

"Hamilton!" responded a prisoner who was lingering in the large hall, or main avenue, just mentioned, and in a few minutes the old man emerged from one of the rooms, and came forward with a slow and feeble step. As he reached the iron door, Kate extended a hand between the bars and said, bursting at the same time into tears—

"Oh my father! my dear father!"

"My dear child! Do not give way so!"—sobbed the old man, while the tears gushed at the same time from his own eyes.

The turnkey, who had lingered a moment, although used to such scenes, felt touched, and moved away.

"Who has done this, father?" Kate soon found herself composed enough to ask. "Tell me, and I will go to him. He cannot be unmoved by the petition of a child for her father."

"He is a hard-hearted man, my child; I am sure he will not hear you."

"Yes, father, he will hear me, he *must* hear me. Who is it? Tell me!"

"Old Mr. Bailey is the man; and he has never been known to forgive a debtor."

"Surely it cannot be Mr. Bailey!" Kate said, in a tone of sad surprise—"Or, perhaps he knows nothing of the extremity to which you have been driven. Perhaps he does not know that you are here."

The old man shook his head, mournfully.

"He knows it but too well, Kate."

"But I will go to him, father. He cannot, he *shall* not put me off."

"You can go, child. But I fear the effort will be in vain."

"How much do you owe him?"

"Over two hundred dollars."

Again the true-hearted child extended her hand through the iron bars that imprisoned the dear object of her solicitude, and grasped with a strong pressure the hand of her father.

"I will be back again soon, dear father!" she said, trying to assume a cheerful voice—"And I feel confident that I shall bring you good news."

"I fear not. But still I will hope. And may heaven bless you, my child!" the prisoner uttered fervently.

"Be of good cheer!" and as the daughter said this, she pressed, again, affectionately, the hand that was held in hers, and then turning away, glided swiftly out of the prison.

Once beyond the walls of that gloomy abode, the first serious thoughts of the duty imposed upon herself, came up in her mind with painful distinctness. Mr. Bailey, the father of him who had won her heart, and whose image still lived in her memory a dear and cherished thing, was the man whose selfishness and inhumanity had thrown her own father into prison, and to him she must go, and sue for mercy. The very thought made her feel sick and faint. Since James Bailey had parted from her more than two years before, with a warmth and tenderness in his manner even unusual for him, she had neither heard his voice nor seen his face. The fear of encountering him, therefore, made her shrink from her duty with an inconceivably painful reluctance. But that duty could not be shunned, and she went onwards in the performance of it, with something of the same feeling with which it may be supposed the martyrs of old went up to the stake.

It was about eleven o'clock, on the same morning, that James Bailey turned his head away from the desk at which he was sitting, to glance towards the door of the counting room, and observe who it was that had swung it open. The visitor was a neatly dressed young woman, but her head was partly turned from him, so that he could not see her face. She closed the door after her quietly, and then moved towards the part of the room where old Mr. Bailey sat before a table covered with papers and packages. Here she paused, and the old man looked up into her face with a severe, frowning scrutiny. In vain did the visitor essay to speak her errand. Her tongue seemed paralysed, and refused to perform its office.

"Well, what do you want, young woman?" Mr. Bailey inquired, in a rough voice, and with a coarse familiar manner.

"My—my—my name is Kate Hamilton," stammered out the poor girl, whose heart fluttered in her bosom like a newly caged bird.

"Kate Hamilton!" ejaculated the old man, instantly rising to his feet, his whole manner becoming changed and excited. "And pray, Miss, what is your business with me?"

"My father"—was all that Kate could utter.

"Is in jail, and shall rot there!" exclaimed Mr. Bailey—still more excited as the interview proceeded.

"O, sir, do not say so," the daughter urged, her voice becoming calmer, and her self-possession beginning to return. "Remember that my father is old and poor. Keeping him in jail cannot pay the debt. The only hope for that, is in releasing him."

"Ha! ha!—And a precious hope that would be! No—no. He wilfully neglected his business, and, in consequence, cheated me out of more than two hundred dollars, and he shall be made an example of for the good of society. So go home, girl, and make yourself easy about it. My mind is made up. He shall die in jail—the drunken vagabond!"

Anger with Mr. Bailey was a species of intoxication, and under its influence, like others under the influence of wine, he said things that in sober moments he would not have uttered. But his last bitter sentence, was not, for this, any the less wounding to the feelings of Miss Hamilton. In spite of her strong effort at self-control, this cruel remark so touched her, that she hid her face in her hands, and wept and sobbed for a few moments passionately. From this she was aroused by the remark—

"You needn't suppose, Miss, that your tears can have any effect upon me. I have seen too many in my day. And now, I advise you to go home, and let this matter rest. Your father is a thousand times better off in jail than if he were out."

"I cannot go, sir," Kate now said, looking up, and endeavouring to dry her tears—"until you have consented to release my father."

"Go home, girl!"

"Let me implore you, sir. Remember what he once was. Remember the former condition of her who now pleads with you. Think how wrong her spirit must be and let those tears urge you. O, sir, do not thus harden your heart!"

"Go out of this office, I tell you!"

"O, sir, my father cannot stay there! Look at me! Here, I plead for him thus (sinking on her knees, and clasping her hands together). O, sir, hear me!—hear me!" and her voice sunk into a low choking sob.

"Away! I will not hear you!" the old man said, in voice loud and furious.

Then advancing towards her, he lifted her strongly by one arm to her feet—led her to the door—opened it, thrust her out, closed it, and then returned to his seat and commenced poring over his papers. But little, however, of their sense was apparent to his mind. As he did so his son turned from his desk, and went out through the back door of the counting-room.

Mechanically Kate Hamilton turned away from the merchant's counting-room, and moved along the pavement, scarcely conscious of her own identity. Her mind was bewildered, and her thoughts confused. From this dreamy state of obscurity and wretchedness, she was startled by the sound of a voice close to her ear—an old familiar voice, to which, even in memory, her heart had ever echoed with a quickened pulsation.

"Miss Hamilton!"

She paused and turned quickly. It was James Bailey who stood by her side.

"Take this," he said—"tell no one where it came from. And may God in heaven bless you!"

Thus saying, in an agitated tone, he slipped a small piece of paper into her hand, and turning away, glided as once from her sight.

The whole scene passed so quickly that it seemed like a bewildering dream. But the piece of paper in her hand attested its reality. Glancing down upon it, she saw with an emotion that made the tears spring to her eyes, that it was a cheque for two hundred and twenty-five dollars. Without a thought more, she turned her steps again towards the jail, and almost ran the whole of the way.

The cheque was for the exact amount of debt and costs, and was at once received by the warden, and old Mr. Hamilton set at liberty. This imprisonment had the effect to sober and subdue his mind. He inwardly resolved that he would drink no more. This resolution he did not communicate to his daughter. The subject of his love of drink was one to which the most remote allusion had never been made by one to the other. Neither could speak of it—the father nor the child. But she saw in a day or two that there had occurred a change, and her heart trembled in her bosom with a new hope. As this house in which they lived could not be retained, on account of the high rent, and because they had no furniture to put into it, a new home was sought. Far in the suburbs, a very small house was obtained at the low rent of five dollars a month, and into this, the once wealthy merchant and his beautiful and accomplished daughter, removed. No servant could, of course, be employed, for there were no means with which to pay one; and indeed, little prospect of even the barest necessities of life. All the work of the house, even the washing and ironing, as well as the cooking, fell upon Kate.

In the second week after their removal to this new home, if a home it could be called, and when both began to despond as to the means of obtaining the simplest necessities of life, a storekeeper in Franklin-street, who had at one time bought largely of Mr. Hamilton, and who had always felt a regard for him, that his misconduct could not entirely extinguish, offered him a situation in his store at four hundred dollars a year. This was gladly accepted. And now there was a glimmering of light upon the gloomy path of his child. Every night her father came home sober, and brought her each week the full amount of wages that he received. In their new condition, their wants were few, and some eight dollars each week supplied them all.

One evening, about three months after this happy change, Kate sat waiting for her father's return, with a feeling of unusual cheerfulness. She heard his hand last upon the latch, and rose to her feet to meet him with a smiling welcome. But a single glance at his face sufficed to tell the fatal truth, that he had again been drinking—this, his unsteady step confirmed, and her heart sank like lead in her bosom. No word was uttered by either. The meal passed in painful and oppressive silence, and after it was over, Mr. Hamilton took his hat and went out. It was after nine o'clock when he returned, in a state of reeling intoxication, and sought his bed. In the morning he went, as usual, to the store in which he was employed. At dinner time, it was plainly evident to the

quick eye of his daughter, that he had again been drinking; and at night he could scarcely walk straight when he came in. After supper he went out again, and stayed until late, and then returned as he had the evening before, and went reeling and stumbling up to his bed. When Saturday night came, he gave Kate but four dollars, instead of eight. She received it without any remark upon the smallness of the sum, and he gave it to her without any reason for the diminution. But oh, how sad, and wretched, and hopeless she felt!

Two months after he became so utterly unfit to be trusted, from incapacity, that he was discharged from his situation. When this fact became known to his daughter, she endeavoured to nerve herself up for severer trials. Though bent, and swayed, and bruised by the storm, her spirits were not altogether broken. There had been time enough for reflection since the utter ruin of their worldly prospects, and during that time she had not been entirely unthoughtful as to what course she would have to pursue, should her father entirely abandon himself to drink. Her pure, deep, unselfish love for him was the guide to her decision—a decision not in words, nor even, in her mind, in the form of words; but in the perception of her duty, flowing from the very love she bore him. That decision was a resolution (not, as has just been said, made in a form of words, even mentally spoken), never to leave him while she had life; to devote herself to him, and to take care of him through all the grades of human suffering through which she might have to pass; to die with him and for him, if she should be reduced to that extremity.

Such an instinctive resolution, when the time came for action, made her more thoughtful, and prompted her to cast about in her mind for the probable means of a support for them both. But here she found herself in a difficulty that seemed almost insurmountable. What could she do? How could she earn money? For herself, if there were none but herself to care for, she could readily perceive that it would be no hard matter to enter some family, and make herself useful in various ways, thus securing a home both comfortable and respectable. But under the circumstances in which she found herself placed, this was now out of the question. Her father needed, and would need more and more, her care and attention. Without her hands to provide for and minister to his wants, he must sink into a state, the bare idea of which made her heart sick.

It then became absolutely necessary that she should seek some employment by which she could earn money. While pondering this subject in her mind, a plan presented itself which she proceeded at once to adopt.

In one of the humble tenements near that in which she lived with her father, resided a widow, who, by her own exertions, supported herself and three small children. This woman, whose name was Erwin, had seen her own ups and downs in life, and being of a kind, benevolent turn of mind, had naturally a feeling of sympathy for Kate in her lonely condition. Very frequently she would drop in during an afternoon, and spend a little while in cheerful conversation. She was not herself a murmurer, and as Kate never alluded, even remotely, to her father's conduct, nor to her own painful feelings, these interviews were always pleasant. Gradually she began to have a tender regard for Mrs. Erwin, and to feel that her society was becoming more necessary to her. And especially did the fact that Mrs. Erwin could, by the labour of her own hands, support herself and children, encourage her to think that she might be equally successful.

A few days after her father had lost his situation, Kate called in to see Mrs. Erwin, for the purpose of making a few inquiries as to how she must proceed to get some kind of work.

"What is this you are doing, Mrs. Erwin?" she asked, lifting from the table the upper part of a shoe lined and bound.

"Binding shoes," Mrs. Erwin replied.

"Is it easy work?" Kate proceeded to ask.

"It is not very easy; but it is simple, and after you get used to it you can do very well at it."

"How much do you make at this kind of work?"

"Some two or three dollars a week—and even four, if I had nothing else to do."

"Can you get as much of it to do as you wish?"

"O yes."

Then came a pause, during which Kate was pondering whether the next question she wished above all to have answered, should be asked. At last she said, and her voice trembled—

"Do you think I could get any of it to do, Mrs. Erwin?"

"You, child? Why yes, I suppose so. That is if you know how to close and bind pretty well."

"But I don't know anything about it. Still, don't you think I might learn?"

"Certainly, child. And if you wish to learn, it will give me the greatest pleasure in the world to teach you."

"You are very kind, Mrs. Erwin," was Kate's simple, heart-felt acknowledgement.

"And if, in anything else I can aid you, Miss Hamilton," continued the warm-hearted woman, "speak it out freely. I never think it a trouble to help another all that is in my power."

"Will you show me now?" asked Kate.

"Certainly," and Mrs. Erwin proceeded to give her instructions in the humble art and mystery of closing and binding shoes. Her anxious desire to learn made the task an easy one, and before she rose up to return home she had performed the whole operation of closing and binding two pairs of ladies' shoes.

"Do you think they will do, Mrs. Erwin?" she asked earnestly.

"Yes, indeed! You have done them beautifully."

"And the next question is, do you think I can get work at once?"

"I should think so, Miss Hamilton. At any rate, I will speak for you, this very afternoon. I have to go down town, and can do it for you just as well as not."

Mrs. Erwin was as good as her word. When she returned from her errand "down town," she brought a dozen pair of shoes for Kate, which were received by her with emotions of heartfelt gratitude.

"What have you got here?" asked her father, coming in half an hour after, a good deal under the influence of liquor.

"Only some shoes to bind," Kate said, and her heart trembled as she felt that what she was doing was a keen rebuke to him, and might be so construed.

"And what are you doing with shoes to bind, pray?" he proceeded.

"I thought I would try and do a little of something, father. You know we haven't much."

"Do a little of something?—bind shoes?—Humph! Kate Hamilton bind shoes, indeed? Is the girl crazy?"

"But, dear father," she said, rising to her feet, and laying her hand soothingly upon his shoulder, while she assumed a smile, "you know we are very poor, and that I ought to do all I can to lighten your burdens, for you are old, and cannot do much now. I would rather do it, father."

"Bind shoes?" the old man repeated, with a bewildering, indignant surprise. "Kate Hamilton bind shoes for a living? The thing is preposterous! No—no—put them away, Kate. We shall be rich again; I know we shall."

To humour her father Kate did put the shoes away, but as he soon fell into a state of half stupefaction, she took a single one in her hand, and sat down near the window, with her back towards him, and went on with her work. After supper he went out, as was now his almost constant habit, and she was left alone to continue her humble employment.

But he never after attempted to interfere with her, in this or in anything else that she chose to do. By the most unremitting labour Kate now managed to earn from three to four dollars a week, nearly all of which it took to procure food and fuel, and pay the rent. As for her own clothing, she still had a good deal of her former stock left, and by much attention to her father's garments, she made out to keep him tolerably respectable in appearance. Thus she went on, for the long period of about ten years, during which time her father had become more and more degraded; not, however, without having made several efforts to reform himself, but without any permanent effect, and always sinking lower after every such struggle. The ardent thirst for liquor which was constantly upon him, caused him to resort to every means that suggested itself for earning a little money, that his desire might be gratified. The last of these, and the employment at which he had been engaged for more than a year prior to the time when we again introduce him to the reader, was that of turning a wheel. For this, a duty that he could perform as well when half intoxicated as when sober, he received three dollars a week, every cent of which was spent in drink. As the turning shop in which he thus worked was near the centre of the city, Kate removed with him to a hovel, in Little Sharp near Fayette-street, that had formerly been occupied by blacks. It was a mean, comfortless tenement; but it gave them shelter, and for her father's sake Kate entered it without a murmur.

Ten years have passed since Kate Hamilton made the first effort to earn money for the support of herself and her father, and since that time her toil has been, night and day, almost incessant. Let us look in upon her again

It is night—a night in December. We find her in a small room containing a bed, and a few articles of furniture, such as a pine table, two or three old chairs, &c. Still, there is an air of neatness, as far as neatness can be found in such a place: but no air of comfort. A few sticks are burning on the hearth, near which she is seated, and, by the light of a dim lamp, endeavouring to sew.

Can that indeed be Kate Hamilton? Alas! that such a change should ever pass upon a child of earth. How thin and pale her face! how attenuated her whole frame! How large, and bright, and almost unearthly in its expression, is her dark eye! And her lips compressed painfully together, and colourless. See her pause now, and press her hand to her side, while an expression of weariness and pain settles upon every feature of her face. Hark to that hollow, resounding, racking cough, and see how her whole frame is convulsed! Alas! alas! poor martyr to filial affection, the grave is surely almost ready for thee—and sweeter there will be thy sleep than any that has locked up thy senses for many, many weary years.

Thus as we have seen her, did she toil on, sometimes pausing wearily, and resting her head upon the little work-stand before her—sometimes holding her hand hard against her side, as if suffering acute pain, and sometimes giving way to a convulsive fit of coughing. As the evening passed on, the fire sunk lower upon the hearth, but instead of replenishing it, she only drew nearer and nearer. But she was evidently chilled, for a slight shudder would ever and anon run through her frame.

It was nearly ten o'clock when she put by her work. Having done this, she took from a closet her bonnet, and a thin, faded shawl, which she wrapped around her shoulders, and then passed out into the dark, narrow, deserted street. The night was very cold, and the wind penetrated her thin garments, and caused her to shrink shivering in the wintry blast. But she seemed not to heed this, as she directed her footsteps hurriedly towards Fayette-street, on emerging into which she passed along, until she came to Park-street, up which she steadily pursued her way. Just before she came to Lexington-street, she turned into one of the low taverns, or grog-shops which then existed in that part of the street, and perhaps exist there still.

"Is father here?" she said to the keeper of the house, not perceiving him she sought.

"No, he is not?" was the gruff reply.

"No, dear—he's not here"—half sung a drunken man, reeling towards her, with an air of familiarity, that caused her to turn and glide hurriedly away.

"Stop! stop!" he cried after her, opening quickly the door that she had closed. But his pursuit was only a feigned one.

Poor Kate trembled in every limb, as she retraced her steps down Park-street, until she came to the intersection of Liberty-street. There she entered a grog-shop that stands at the corner of an alley running up to Howard-street. As she did so, her eye fell upon her father, seated on a bench, and fast asleep. She went up to him, and after shaking him repeatedly, awoke him so far as to make him comprehend that she had come for him. Then he arose, mechanically, and followed her out, and walked by her side, until they had gained their humble dwelling. Here he only waited long enough to divest himself of his old, much worn and much patched coat, before he threw himself upon the bed. Ere he had done this, his daughter had turned down the clothes for him. Then she drew off his shoes, and covered him up snugly all around. As for him, he was fast asleep, almost the moment his head touched the pillow. Kate then went to the hearth, raked up the coals, threw on another stick, and resumed her work. It was nearly twelve o'clock when she had laid this by, evidently more from excessive weariness, than from any wish to abate her labours. She then threw an extra quilt over her father, tucked it in all around with a careful hand, and taking up her light, ascended to the loft above. There, upon the floor lay her humble bed. Bending meekly on her knees for a few minutes, she lifted her heart above, and prayed for more patience, and more submission under her hard lot. Then, quickly disrobing herself, she sought a few hours' repose. But, for a time, even this seemed denied her, for a racking cough kept her awake for nearly an hour. Finally, she sunk away, and slept soundly until the morning.

When she descended to renew her daily toil, she found that her father had arisen and gone out as usual. Until his nerves were steadied by a morning draught of his accustomed stimulus, he could not handle his knife or lift a cup to his mouth. The frugal meal was ready when he returned, and he ate it in silence. How painful and oppressive that silence;—but it was only a portion of that which ever brooded over their little household.

They seemed, that father and his child, like moving automata. Words rarely passed the lips of either. He came and went at stated intervals, and she ministered to his every want that it was in her power to meet, with an affectionate solicitude that showed how tenderly her heart clung to her parent, degraded and brutalized as he was. But she could not converse with him; for there was no topic upon which they could feel a mutual interest. Indeed, his mental perceptions had all become obtuse, and the action of his mind feeble. He seemed to have but one love—that of strong drink;—and but one system of reasoning—that which considered the means by which that love could be gratified. How like a living death must have been the whole tenor of that devoted daughter's existence! Possessing a refined and cultivated taste, yet surrounded with nothing but what tended to offend that taste; educated and intelligent, yet cut off from books and society; modest and virtuous, yet compelled to seek her father, night after night, in haunts where congregated the vile and the abandoned, and there to meet their insults and brave their ridicule! But she had never wavered a moment from her purpose, though more than once offered a home by some who had accidentally crossed her path, and felt and appreciated her worth and her deplorable condition. Without her constant care, that old man, her father, could not have survived, probably, a week, or, at best, would have been carried to the Almshouse. This she saw—this she felt. And her heart was strong in its filial purposes.

When breakfast was over, Mr. Hamilton arose, and Kate rose also. She took down from a nail his old hat, the fur of which had long since disappeared, and drew, from habit, the sleeve of her dress across it. Then she took from the mantelpiece a hair-brush, and while the old man inclined his head towards her, carefully parted and smoothed the few grey hairs that still lingered, in wintry wreaths, about his aged temples. His cravat was likewise adjusted, and his old, thread-bare coat brushed. Then he placed his hat upon his head, and he turned from her, and she was left alone. All this passed in silence, and seemed as if it was only mechanical. But there was, on one side at least, a feeling heart and unwavering affection.

On leaving the house, old Mr. Hamilton went direct to the grog-shop from which his daughter had taken him the night before, and called for brandy and water. Off this he swallowed eagerly a quantity sufficient to make an ordinary drinker completely intoxicated. Then he proceeded to the turner's shop where he was employed, and took his station at the wheel. It was almost impossible to believe that that old man, as he sat all through the day, turning, turning that everlasting wheel, with his thin gray hairs rising and falling with the motion of his body, was the same with the rich merchant who, not over fifteen or twenty years previous, was accounted one of the most wealthy men in the city. Then moving in the highest circle—now scoffed in the street by boys, and despised by even the chimney-sweeper; then high-minded and intelligent, now acted upon by only one degrading passion, and sinking all rational thought in the simple contemplation of the means whereby to gratify his evil appetite. About every two hours he had to leave his place, and go out for his glass of brandy. This the owner of the shop had ceased to object to, for he knew that the miserable old man would not do without it. At night, when supper was over, he went out, as on the evening previous, and at ten o'clock Kate remitted her labour and sought for him in some one of the liquor stores in the neighbourhood. As soon as she came in, he always rose up, if not asleep, and went home with her without uttering a word. If asleep she would rouse him, and then he would accompany her.

The history of one day is the history of every day that was spent by Kate and her father. But her health was fast failing her, and she felt that she could not bear up much longer. This troubled her only on her father's account. For his sake she wished to live, and only as long as he lived. Beyond that she had nothing to desire.

It was about a month from this time that, on glancing over a part of a newspaper, which had been wrapped around some articles bought at a neighbouring grocery, her eye rested upon an article which gave a glowing account of a wonderful reformation then going on in this city—a reformation among drunkards. It stated, that hundreds of men, who had been for a long period of years addicted to drinking, had joined themselves to a society, entitled "The Washington Temperance Society," and had become sober men, and that large numbers were joining the society every week. It spoke of this movement, as well it might, as a most wonderful one—embracing old and young, and those of the most confirmed habits.

"O, if he would only join!"—she murmured involuntarily, and a faint hope, the first that had warmed her heart for years, trembled in her bosom.

The paper containing the article was carefully preserved, and placed in his way, time after time, but he had lost all inclination for reading, and poor Kate's feeble hope sank at last, and expired in her bosom, as she saw him take the precious document and tear it in two, preparatory to the operation of shaving himself.

It was early in the month of February, some three weeks after this, that Kate found her now feeble health rapidly giving way. The pain in her side had become so intense, and the debility of her system so great, that she could not sit over her work more than an hour or so at a time. The consequence was, that her earnings were reduced to about a dollar and a half a week; and did not suffice to procure even the necessary food, much less to provide wood, and pay the rent, &c.

In a most sad and gloomy state of mind, she sat one night about this time, hovering over the last few embers, made by her last piece of wood. Every cent of her money was gone; and there was, in the house, but a single loaf of bread. The night was exceedingly cold, and she had become, by nine o'clock, chilled through and through. Her father was out as usual, and she now arose, put on her bonnet, and drew her old thin shawl around her. She shuddered as she opened the door, and felt the keen searching blast without; but there was no avoiding—she could only brave it. She first turned her steps to the drinking house in Park, near Liberty-street.

"Is my father here?" she asked, on glancing around and not seeing him.

"No," was the surly answer.

"Has he been here to-night?" "No."

And she turned away with a feeling of disappointment. She next sought him in another grog-shop, near Lexington-street.

"Crazy Kate again!" ejaculated the bar-keeper, in a half sneering, half familiar tone, as she entered.

"Is my father here?" she asked, with a face and tone of anxiety, seeming not to heed the remark.

"Come in, dear, and we will see. Has old Hamilton been here to-night?" he continued, speaking to a boy who sat nodding on a chair, at the same time that he lifted him by one arm and pushed him half across the room.

"I d'no"—replied the lad, rubbing his eyes, and glancing at the bar-keeper with a look of indignation.

"Go off up stairs and see he is not asleep in one of the boxes!"

Then turning to the old man's daughter, he said as he passed to her side and laid his hand impudently upon her shoulder—"Well, Kate, how are you, dear?"

Poor Kate felt the blood mounting to her face, as she moved away from him. But she did not reply. All that she could say she felt would only subject her to more rudeness and outrage.

"Shy as a deer! Ha! ha! But come, Kate, try and smile a little—or pout if you will; but don't put on such an air of offended dignity. I can't bear it—ha! ha!"

"Stick up to her, Bill! She's only playing a little shy"—cried one of the loungers in the bar-room, rising to his feet, and coming forward.

"Be kind enough to say if my father is here," the poor distressed creature now said, appealingly. "If he is not, tell me, that I may go and seek him elsewhere."

"Wait a minute. Tom hasn't had time to find him yet."

"Stick up to her, Bill! Ha! ha! Your'e afraid."

Thus bantered, the bar-keeper again approached Kate. Touching her familiarly under the chin, while she shrunk still further from him, he said—

"Don't be afraid, my pretty duck."

"Kiss her, Bill! Kiss her! Your'e afraid to do that."

"No I aint."

"Yes you are."

"See if I am," and the bar-keeper again went towards the frightened girl.

"O sir," she said, "if you are a man, spare me these insults. If you have a mother or a sister, think of them, and for their sakes do not thus outrage a poor almost heart-broken creature. Tell me whether my father be here or not. It is late, and he is very old. If he is not here, he may be perishing in the street. Let me go then quickly."

"Kiss her!" ejaculated one of the company.

"Yes, kiss her, Bill!" cried another.

And the mean-spirited wretch again moved towards her.

"For shame!" said a voice at the moment. "For shame! Let her go!" And a man who had not heretofore spoken, arose from a chair and joined the group that had now surrounded Kate.

"Your father is not here, Miss Hamilton, and has not been here, I believe, to-night," he said in a tone of kindness and consideration.

The company looked surprised and indignant at this interference, and as each one of the group turned towards the individual who had last spoken, Kate glided from the room.

"I should like to know what business you have to interfere in this matter," the bar-keeper said with a frown.

"Because I never will stand by and see a decent woman insulted. I've got a sister; and if any man were to talk to her as some of you talked to Kate Hamilton to-night, I would pull his tongue out of his head." The face of the speaker flushed, and his tones were angry.

"Mighty fine," ejaculated one of the party, sneeringly, "Tom Dunn's going to turn pious."

"You may ridicule as much as you please," he replied, "but that don't alter the matter. My mother while she was living," and his voice slightly trembled, "has looked me up many a time, just as that girl is now looking up her father, and bad as I was, and am, I never did, and never can, feel anything but respect and consideration for that woman, mother, sister, wife, or daughter, who thus consents to enter a place like this in search of a beloved object. Kate Hamilton, let me tell you, is no common girl. Her father was, at one time, among the richest of our merchants, and she then moved in the first circles; and was beloved, I have been told, and admired by all. Think, then, what must be her feelings now, dragged down, as she has been, in clinging to her father, and compelled to enter a place like this, on such an errand as that which brought her here. Think of it, I say, and never again offer her an insult!"

There was something in the tone, manner, and words of the speaker that subdued the feelings of those he addressed, debased as they were, and they did not attempt to reply. The individual who had spoken, observing the effect of his words, turned away and resumed the newspaper and glass of punch that had occupied his attention before Kate Hamilton came in.

Meantime the anxious daughter turned away from the door of the grog-shop, murmuring—

"Where can he be?"

The wind came rushing down the street, and penetrated her thin garments, but she paused only a moment, and then turned up the street, pursuing her way steadily until she turned into Wagon Alley. A few doors from the corner stood a liquor store, the vile haunt of characters the most degraded and abandoned. Several times had she traced her father to this place, and again, with an instinctive reluctance, did she lift the latch and enter. As she passed up to the counter, she said to the woman who kept the shop, in a low, agitated tone. "Has Mr. Hamilton been here to-night?"

"No, he has not!" was answered in a loud voice. "And he'd better not venture here again, the old vagabond! See here!" pointing to sundry chalk marks on a board, "there's a score against him of a dollar, and he hasn't showed his face here for a month, the old cheat! And you can just tell him, miss, that I'll have the constable after him, so I will! The drunken old rascal!"

As the landlady went on, her wrath increased, and her words came thicker and faster. But Kate turned from the counter, and passing from the shop, was soon beyond the sound of the woman's voice.

"Oh, it is dreadful!" she murmured, as she regained the street, and paused a few moments to collect her scattered thoughts. Then she went on again, pursuing her search from shop to shop, and from cellar to cellar, until she had been to every drinking house and cellar in the whole neighbourhood. But he was in none of them; and all put her off with the short reply, that they "didn't know any thing about him," and some added, "nor didn't care either."

With a troubled heart she returned home, with the feeble hope in her mind that he might be there. But that idea was speedily dispelled. All was as still and desolate there as when she had gone out. Here she lingered but for a few moments, every fear becoming aroused for the safety of her parent. He was old and feeble, and now she remembered, or thought she remembered, something unusual in his manner at supper-time. Again she went out, but where to look for him, or where to direct her steps, she knew not. For more than half an hour she walked around and around the squares, in the vain hope of meeting him, and even ventured a second time into some of his accustomed haunts, only to receive a cruel rebuff.

Almost distracted in mind she was crossing Market-street, on her way home again, when she saw him turn into Little Sharp-street. Quick as thought she darted forward and drew up to the old man's side.

"O father!" she said, in a low, anxious, trembling tone; "Where have you been? I have searched after you for more than an hour."

"You have found me now, Kate," was his only reply, but the tone was different, and there was more of real affection in it than had greeted her ear for a long, long time.

"Are you not very cold?" she asked, as he leaned upon her arm.

"No, Kate," he said tenderly, "I am not very cold. But if you have been out for an hour this bitter night you must be chilled to the heart."

In a few moments they gained their cheerless home, and as the door closed upon them, the old man took both of the hands of his child in his own, and while the tears started from his eyes, said—

"Kate, my dear, good girl, I have cheering news to tell you. I have signed the pledge of the Washingtonians to-night."

"O father!" the almost heart-broken creature exclaimed, looking up into his face with a glance of unutterable love, while a light seemed almost to shine through her countenance. "Can it indeed be true?"

"It is true, my child. I am sober now; and have done it in a sober mood. And I will abide by it if I die! And now, Kate, can I, ought I, dare I, ask your forgiveness for the heart-breaking misery that I have brought upon you, while I bless you for the undeviating affection that has ever caused you to cling to a degraded and justly despised old man?"

"Do not talk so, father!" Kate said, looking up into his face imploringly, as she laid her cheek upon his bosom. "This moment compensates for all. O, we shall yet be happy!" and then the first warm gush of tears relieved a heart that was almost breaking for joy.

The promise of that blessed hour has not yet been mocked. More than a year has passed, and Mr. Hamilton is still a sober man, and old as he is, one among the most active in the cause of temperance.

It is remarkable how quickly the external condition changes after a man becomes temperate. Instead of turning a wheel, Mr. Hamilton has, by the aid of his temperance friends, obtained an easy situation in which he is usefully employed. It yields him the comfortable income of five hundred dollars a year. With the frugal habits of his daughter, who has learned economy in the severest school, it more than suffices to provide for all their wants. Their small dwelling, in a pleasant neighbourhood, presents an air of neatness and comfort that is truly delightful, in contrast with their household economy little over a year since. Kate's health is gradually improving, and her countenance, though sedate, wears a cheerful expression.

May no dark shadow ever again fall upon her heart. And confident are we, that it will not. The present wonderful movement is not the mere work of man, nor altogether under the control of man. Its cause lies deeply hidden in that invisible world of causes, whose mysterious action upon this visible world of effects, is often so incomprehensible. The era of intemperance, as a national curse, is past. Whatever of evil uses in society it has had to perform, we are bold to believe are accomplished, and, like the plague that once desolated London, will ere long live only on the pages of history a fearful wonder—an appalling mystery.

## Night the Second.—The Experience Meeting.

A FEW weeks after my first visit to the Washingtonians, I again attended one of their meetings. Even in that brief period their influence had become more largely extended. Hundreds had signed the total abstinence pledge, and coming in among them greatly increased their strength and importance. The eyes of the whole community were fixed upon them, with an expression of strange surprise and wonder. They were in the thoughts of all, and their doings were upon every tongue. If you met a friend in the street, the first words, after the greetings had passed, would almost certainly be—

"Have you been to any of these temperance meetings?" Or—

"These are wonderful doings, really, of our temperance men." Or—

"Would you believe it?" Mr.—has joined the teetotallers!"

As might be well supposed, the tavern-keepers were greatly alarmed, and used the weapons of ridicule, and sometimes of oppression, to counteract the movement. But their efforts were altogether vain. Every opposition but gave renewed power to the impulse.

How many a poor wife ejaculated, with freshly kindling hopes, O that my husband would join!"

And, perhaps the next man to sign the pledge would be he for whom the ardent wish was breathed. Into many an abode over which for years had hung thick clouds, the warm sunshine suddenly penetrated. Smiles lit up many an eye, too familiar with tears, and joy trembled in many a heart long the dwelling-place of sad despondency.

On the night of my second visit to the society, I found the large hall in which their meetings were held crowded to excess. As before, the interest I felt prompted me to push my way up as near to the speaker's stand as possible, and my position there enabled me to look almost the entire audience in the face. Really it was a sight that moved my feelings, in spite of myself! There sat an old man, whom I have seen staggering in the street, many and many a time—an old man with sons and daughters, and grand-children, moving in respectable stations. How many tears have been shed for that old man; vain, hopeless tears! How like an insupportable weight had his name and image rested upon the hearts of his children! Now his face was calm, and full of hope, and confidence. Though marks of the destroyer were still upon him, there was yet a moral dignity in the expressions of his countenance which I could not have believed he could ever have worn.

Near by was another, scarcely past the prime of life, whom I had known for ten years as a common drunkard. To have met him on a race course, gambling at a faro table, or bawling at the polls on an election day, or talking politics in a grog-shop, I should not have been surprised; but here in a temperance meeting, he seemed, at first glance, to be out of his place. But the more narrowly I observed him, the more probably apparent was the change that had taken place. He, too, whom all had considered past the hope of reformation, had renounced the cup of confusion!

"Really this is wonderful!" I said. "Surely I must be in a dream!"

But no; it was a blessed reality!

"There is Mr.—, as I live!" whispered a person sitting near me.

I turned towards the door with renewed surprise, and there, sure enough, came steadily up the aisle an individual, well known, as not only a drinking man, but a very bad man. His wife, an amiable woman, and three sweet children, had been for years utterly neglected; and this fact was notorious. And his conduct in other respects was too vile to admit a record here. His step was firm, and there was an expression of sad determination in his face, as he came up towards the head of the room, and sought a place in the crowd.

"And young M—also!" the same person said, surprise and pleasure in his tone.

Young M—was there, sure enough. He was a young man, scarcely twenty-five, who had only been married two years, and in that time been repeatedly intoxicated, and from neglect and abuse had well nigh broken the heart of his young wife, who had been compelled to leave him, and seek refuge in her father's house. I looked him steadily in the face for a few moments,—it was calm and serious.

"There is yet hope, young wife and mother!" I murmured with a thrill of emotion as I gazed upon M—: "there are yet brighter days in store for you!"

Subsequent events had proved the truth of that impression.

More than twenty others did I notice there, whom I had known for years, as moral plague spots on the community. How changed they seemed!

After the preliminaries of the meeting were over, the President announced that an hour would be spent in the recital of their experiences by such members of the society as felt inclined to speak. The first who arose was a middle-aged man, with a thoughtful, intelligent countenance. As he straightened himself up, all eyes were turned towards him, and there was a breathless interest manifested throughout the room.

## The Reclaimed.

"Mr. President,"—he began, in a clear, distinct, and emphatic tone,— "A man said to me, yesterday, that, for his part, he would be ashamed to tell of his miserable misconduct, if he had been a drunkard. Now, for my part, I am deeply grieved at and heartily ashamed of the life I have led for the past ten years—that grief and that shame I know to be sincere, and I wish them to be permanent, and one use in telling my history to others, is to confirm these feelings in myself, another use is to encourage others to lift themselves out of the pit from which I have been elevated. I will not, therefore, keep silence—

It seems to me, that if I were to do so, the very stones would cry out against me.

"Twelve years ago, Mr. President, I married a young woman, to whom I was deeply attached—(here the voice of the speaker trembled, and fell to a lower tone.) How purely, and fondly she loved one so unworthy of that love as myself, her unwavering devotion, her patient suffering, her uncomplaining endurance through many weary years, too abundantly testified! Ah, sir! it is a sad thing for a woman to be a drunkard's wife! (And the speaker dashed aside, hastily, a tear.)

"I am a mechanic. When I married, I was in business for myself, and doing very well. I furnished my house comfortably, and provided everything that persons in our circumstances could properly desire. And we were happy—at least so far as such a condition of affairs, united with a true regard for each other, could make us happy.

"I had not been to a place of worship for many years before our marriage, and had a strong disinclination to going. My wife was a religious woman, and at first I went to church with her, but so irksome did the task become, that I made first one excuse for staying at home, and then another, and finally declined going altogether.

"This I could see pained her exceedingly, more especially as I generally met some friends in a neighbouring tavern, and either sat and talked politics in the bar-room, or strolled out to some drinking gardens in the suburbs of the city. But I thought it very foolish in her to be thus pained, and, indeed, her evident disquietude of mind, at my conduct, irritated me, in spite of my better judgment and feelings, especially after I had been drinking, and caused me to think unkindly of her. It is very hard for us to cherish unkind thoughts, without their some time or other showing themselves in unkind words. I remember, as distinctly as I remember any occurrence of my life, the first time I spoke a harsh word to Mary. It was about a year after our marriage. She had been to church, the first time in many weeks, and I had been at the tavern, as usual, and I had drank rather freely. When I came in, I found her sitting with her baby, only a few weeks old, on her lap. The dinner table was all set out, and Mary had evidently been waiting for me for some time. She looked up, her face still pale from her recent sickness, and said, half smiling, half in earnest—'Oh, James, how can you spend your time on Sundays, as you do?'

"My wife, as I have just said, had been to church for the first time in many weeks. She was religious in her feelings, and conscientious in the discharge of all her duties, and, besides, felt deeply concerned for me. Absence from worship for many weeks had caused the services of the church to make a stronger impression on her mind than usual, and the natural consequence was, that she felt a more anxious concern for me, which prompted her to speak as she did. But I was not in a condition to appreciate fully her feelings. Had I not been drinking, I should have felt little, if at all annoyed at her gentle reproof. But blinded and excited by liquor, I became instantly aroused into anger, and replied sharply:

"'Mary, I won't submit to be catechised by you; and so, let this be the last time that you interfere in what does not concern you! If you relish going to church, go—I shall not hinder you—but don't, as you value your peace of mind, attempt again to dictate to me!'

"As I said, I felt angry with Mary, and spoke sharply. Poor creature! I shall never forget how pale and frightened she looked; nor how long after the shadow that then fell upon her countenance rested on her gentle face. Indeed, from that hour, I believe she was never again happy. She had suddenly awakened from a delusive dream, to a perception of painful realities; and the impression then made, time could not efface from her memory. I was instantly conscious of the wrong that I had done, but alas! had not the manliness to confess it. My pride, the weak, stubborn pride of a man under the influence of liquor, was offended, and shrunk from any thing like an acknowledgment. The dinner passed in oppressive, embarrassed silence. After it was over, instead of spending the afternoon with my wife, as I had hitherto done, I took my hat and went out. Of course, I joined my cronies at the tavern, where I passed several hours in drinking and talking politics.

"I came home towards nightfall, more under the influence of liquor than I had been since our marriage. The first glance at Mary's face told too plainly that the arrow had entered her soul. This indication, instead of softening my feelings, naturally kind, irritated and angered me.

"'It's all put on,' I said to myself, indignantly. 'But she needn't think to play off such tricks upon me!'

"As I seated myself near the window, moody and reserved, I was conscious that her eyes were upon me, but

I avoided meeting their earnest glances. I felt, in spite of my effort to throw her into the wrong, that her heart was yearning towards me. But such a consciousness did not soften me the least. I was, in a degree, insane from the influence of the liquor I had taken—insane, as every man is, who indulges in strong drink—and saw all things through a false and perverted medium. O, it is dreadful how men will give up the pure, generous freedom of calm and rational thought for a gratification so low and sensual, and become slaves to evil thoughts and evil affections! As I glance through a period of some ten years, occupying the position that I now do, and seeing things in such clear light, I can scarcely believe that I am the same being that I was. I seem like a man who has been partially deranged for a long series of years, while his memory has remained active. What I once was, and what I now am, a man of kind feelings to all, I seem to be my real character; but that dreadful period between, during which every good point in my nature was changed to an opposite, was the period of my insanity. O, sir, it is indeed dreadful to think of that wild and strange delusion! But to proceed:

"That moody silence, the silence as of the grave to Mary's gentlest affections, continued even while we sat at the tea-table. Once or twice she made a remark, but I did not reply. I was possessed of an evil spirit, and, conscious all the while of the wrong I had done, cherished a feeling of blame against her. After supper, I repaired again to the tavern, and drank to a state of partial intoxication. When I came home, about ten o'clock, Mary had gone to bed with her baby. I felt glad of this, for, but half conscious as I was, I was yet willing to avoid that distressed, appealing look, which had, in the evening, irritated instead of softening me. She seemed to be asleep as I entered the chamber, and perceiving this, I undressed myself very silently, and half intoxicated as I was, had sense enough remaining to get quietly into bed. I was soon lost to consciousness in profound slumber.

"It was daylight when I awoke, and Mary lay by my side as hushed as a sleeping infant. But I felt that she was not asleep—her breathing was too still. O, how wretched I felt! How painfully conscious of the deep wrong I had done! I would have given worlds, it seemed, if I had possessed them, could the events of the previous day have been utterly obliterated from the memory of both Mary and myself. But this was impossible. The arrow had sped, and the wound been made, and, even if healed, a scar, I felt, would ever remain.

"From these painful feelings, my mind naturally turned to thoughts of reconciliation. And I pondered long over what I should do, and what I should say, to restore the light and smile to Mary's face. But alas! some evil spirit was near to suggest thoughts of pride. It seemed as if it would be too humiliating for me, a man, to make confession of wrong to a woman. The moment this idea was presented, I turned myself away from the half-formed resolution to tell my fault openly, and thus relieve the heart upon which had fallen so heavy a burden.

"Then I got up and dressed myself, without uttering a word, and went down stairs. It was about half an hour after that Mary entered our little breakfast room where I was sitting. I lifted my eyes as she came in, and she looked me in the face with a calm, sad expression, that touched my heart. Then the impulse came upon me strong, to spring to her side, and folding her in my arms, confess the wrong I had done her—for I loved her tenderly. But I seemed held back by a powerful hand; and then pride came with its mean suggestions. Few and brief were the words that passed between us at the morning meal. When I left the house for my shop, I proceeded, as was my custom, to a neighbouring tavern, and drank a glass of brandy and water. Then I repaired to my business, still thinking of Mary, but less kindly. It occurred to me, during the morning, that she was only putting on a show of great distress of mind, merely to punish me. I felt irritated at the thought. Another glass of liquor confirmed more and more this impression, until I began, really, to believe it true.

"So much did this false idea irritate me, that it was with difficulty that I could restrain myself from rebuking her angrily, at dinner time, and more especially in the evening. Gradually, however, this little breach, instead of widening by another opening rupture, grew less and less. But, the unclouded sunshine of Mary's face never returned. Still, she was cheerful, and seemed to have forgotten the circumstance—but not cheerful as she once had been. No one can tell how deeply this change pained me at times; especially as, from the fact that she never afterwards expressed surprise or disappointment at any act or omission of mine, it was evident that an impression had been made that time could not efface.

"But she was ever even-tempered, mild, gentle, and affectionate. And though, through a long series of years, I neglected her, and debased myself, she never uttered a reproach, or neglected a duty. If I blamed her, or spoke in my drunken moments, unkind and cutting words, she did not reply. But, I am going ahead of my story.

"From drinking two or three glasses a day, my appetite for liquor increased, and soon demanded double that number. Still, I thought not of danger, until I was carried home from the tavern, one night, in a state of drunken insensibility. When I awoke in the morning, I endeavoured to recall the events of the preceding evening, but could recollect nothing beyond my sitting and drinking in the tavern. One glance at the face of my wife, confirmed the sudden thought that I had been drunk. How pale and distressed was the expression of that face, yet how full of anxious yearning affection, as she turned her eyes upon me!

"I asked her no questions, and she made no allusion to the condition I had been in. But I resolved to drink less.

"How feeble is such a resolution, when tempted by a single draught of liquor! Instead of six or eight glasses, I only drank four during that day; but on the next day I drank nine, and when I came home at night, could just make out to find my way to bed. For two weeks from that evening, I did not draw a sober breath! One night, about the end of that period, I came home in a feverish state of mind. My nerves had become excited to a high degree, from their long continued, excessive stimulation; I felt wild, restless, and irritable. It was three years after our marriage, and our only child, a little girl, was about two years of age. She was not well, and, in consequence, was very fretful. Her crying annoyed me exceedingly.

"Hush!" I said in an angry tone to her, a few minutes after I came in. But she cried on.

"Aint you going to hush?" I said, louder and more angrily. Still her crying did not cease. I now felt very much excited, and my whole body seemed to burn with anger against her.

"If you don't hush this moment I will half kill you!" I exclaimed, advancing towards the little girl I loved so tenderly when sober, but against whom I now felt a bitter indignation. But little Mary did not hush. Then I caught her up madly by one arm, and commenced beating her with all my strength—the strength of a nervous man inspired by intoxication and anger, exercised on a delicate child but two years old! One blow, such as I gave her, were enough, it would seem to have killed her. The poor child ceased crying on the instant; but I was in a rage, and ceased not my blows until her mother, terrified at the scene, sprung forward, and snatched the little creature from my hand that held her high above the floor. To this I responded with a powerful blow on the side of my poor wife's head, and she fell senseless to the floor, and at the same moment, I kicked my child, who was clinging to her mother's garments, half across the room.

"For a moment after, I seemed in the centre of a whirling and confused mass, then I became suddenly sober, and as perfectly conscious and rational as ever I was in my life. O, the agony of that terrible moment! I shudder and grow sick at heart, even now, when I think of it. There lay both wife and child, pale and insensible, and for all I knew dead, before me; and my hand had done the deed! My wife and child that I loved so tenderly! My gentle, uncomplaining wife, and sweet innocent child!

"But I cannot dwell longer here; I must pass on, or I shall not be able to finish my narrative—(and the voice of the speaker trembled, and his tones were husky). From that hour, my wife never smiled; and my little one seemed to me to have a sad expression in her dear young face: and I doubt not that the appearance was real. These changes always irritated me when I had been indulging to any considerable extent in drinking, and caused me to speak many an angry word to both. O sir!—well may strong drink be called a *devil*, for when it has once entered into us, we are possessed as of an evil spirit. For about a week after I had struck that blow, I was a sober man; but my reflections, while sober, were too terrible, and at last, to drown these, I drank to intoxication.

"Under circumstances like these, my business could not, of course, long remain prosperous. It gradually became involved, and the consequent perplexity caused me to drink still deeper. Six years from the day that I was married, I was sold out by the sheriff, and with two children and my wife, turned out upon the world without a dollar in my pocket. This, instead of sobering only caused me to drink the harder.

"From a master workman in a large business, I sank to the condition of a journeyman; and from a commo-

dious house, neatly furnished, my family retired to two small rooms, with but a few necessary household articles. I cannot tell you how this change really affected my poor wife, for I was too ill-natured to feel for and sympathize with her, and too much and too constantly bewildered by intoxication, to be able to make any correct observations on her appearance. But, that her sufferings must have been intense—beyond the power of human language to describe—may be inferred from the fact, that in one year she sank into her grave. Not from any sudden illness—not from that slow, but sure destroyer consumption—but, from the agonies of a wounded spirit, gradually wearing away the vital energies of her system. Ah! sir—How many a woman has sunk thus, into an early grave, during the last twenty years.

"When she was borne away from the comfortless tenement in which we lived, I was, would you believe it, sir, too drunk to attend her funeral! Three days after, I got one of our orphan asylums to take my two children; both girls, one six years of age, and the other four. I was then free to sink as low as I pleased, without the dread of encountering a pale, sad, suffering face, or meeting, daily, with two neglected children, to reprove me. I was freed, also, from the necessity of providing for them, and this left me a larger sum to spend for liquor, or, rather relieved me from the necessity of working so many hours in the day. Gradually I sank lower and lower, until I became really unfit to work at my trade, and then no one would employ me. This was two years after the death of my wife, and during this time, I had not once seen my children, nor did I care to see them. All natural affection seemed gone from my bosom. I loved only myself, and sought only the lowest sensual gratifications. How like a picture drawn by a sickly imagination does all this appear! It does not seem possible that a human being can become so utterly degraded. But alas! it is too true. Thousands of heart-broken wives, neglected children, and debased drunkards, covering by thousands the length and breadth of this land, attest the awful truth. I say awful—for it is awful to contemplate the wide-spread ruin of soul and body, that has been caused among the people of this country by drunkenness.

"Unable to get work at my trade, I resorted to any expedient that presented itself to earn a penny with which to buy liquor; for liquor I would have. Sometimes I broke stones on the turnpikes near the city; sometimes I scraped the streets as a common scavenger. But I usually soon lost even such employment from drunkenness; I was too worthless even for that! Then I would seek little jobs about—such as piling wood, holding horses, or carrying home market baskets. As for lodgings—Howard's woods, or some lumber yard, sufficed during the summer months; and in winter, I was an almost nightly tenant of the watchhouse. Thus I continued, sinking lower and lower, if it were possible to descend lower than the point I had reached, for three or four years.

"It was in the month of June last—on a warm, sultry evening, that I repaired, about nine o'clock, to Howard's woods, there to pass the night. Although the night was clear, there was no moon, and it was quite dark in the woods. I entered from the Falls road, and pursued my way up to the fence that encloses the garden of the old Howard mansion. I made out to climb over this, and then lay down just within it, and was soon sleeping as soundly as if I had been reposing on the softest bed.

"I suppose that I must have been sleeping about two hours, perhaps three, when I seemed to be suddenly awakened by some one laying a hand upon my shoulder, and calling my name aloud. Instantly, I was surrounded by a light, which appeared to emanate from three figures, all in white, that stood before me. One glance was sufficient to tell me who they were. I could not mistake the face of Mary, nor the forms of my two children. But how changed they were. Each was dressed in garments white and shining, and upon each face reposed a peaceful smile. Instantly, however, as their eyes rested upon me, when it seemed they became suddenly conscious of my presence, did that quiet, happy smile pass away, and a sad expression rested upon each lovely countenance. Then they fixed their eyes upon me reprovingly, and slowly faded from my sight. All around was thick darkness.

"My next perception was that of the rain falling heavily upon my face, as I lay upon the ground. I was perfectly sobered—more than I had been for years. For some moments, after rising to my feet, I mused upon the strange apparition I have mentioned, and the more I mused upon it, the more it troubled me. I could not, of course, lie again upon the wet ground. Nor could I find my way out of the wood. Suddenly however, a broad

flash of lightning blazed around, and in the instant that it lighted up the air, I saw the direction that it was necessary for me to take, in order to return to the city.

"The storm now began to rage violently. The rain fell in a heavy incessant shower; the lightning was frequent and flashed out with a fierce glare, running it seemed along the ground, now about my feet, and now circling some tree like a blazing serpent. How deep and solemn was the darkness that followed each flash—quickly succeeded by terrific peals of thunder, that jarred the earth upon which I stood, as if shook by an earthquake! And the war of the tempest in that old wood was loud and wild.

"As I groped my way along, guided by the frequent glare of the lightning, drenched with the rain, and shrinking at each tremendous crash that broke over my head, my heart sank within me, filled with an awful fear. At last I was clear of the woods, and turned my steps towards the city. As I reached Franklin-street, the storm began to subside, and, in the course of half an hour, the sky was cloudless, and the stars shone with a clearer brightness than before. I was standing at the corner of Howard and Lexington-street, irresolute as to which way I should go, when the clock rang out the hour of two. There were yet two hours before daylight, and I was wet to the skin, shivering with cold, yet raging with a most intolerable thirst for liquor. To abate, in some degree, the latter, I drank ladle full after ladle full of pure cold water from the pump near which I had paused. Then lying down upon a neighbouring cellar door, I tried again to sleep. But I was so chilled from the dampness of my clothes, and so much unnerved, that I sought in vain to sink into some unconsciousness, until near day-dawn. Then my sleep was brief and troubled, and I was awakened from it by finding myself shaken by a firm hand. I had been awakened thus, a hundred times before, and had ever met rude and irritating language. For this I was again prepared, and rose up with an angry scowl upon my face. But the first words disarmed me.

"What a dreadful life this must be for a man to lead!" the person who aroused me said, in a kind sympathising tone.

"This melted me right down. For years a kind word had never been spoken to me.

"O, it is dreadful!" I replied, earnestly, looking up into his face.

"Then, my friend, why do you lead such a life?" he asked, encouragingly.

"I wish I could lead a different one, for there is no pleasure in this—" I replied, in a desponding tone.

"You may, if you will," he said, and he spoke earnestly.

"But I shook my head, and answered—

"No—no. My case is hopeless. I cannot resist the intense desire for liquor. I must have it."

"But you can resist it," he said—"I know many who were as much enslaved as you are, who are now sober men."

"That cannot be," was my positive half indignant reply, for I thought he was trifling with me. "Who has heard of any one so far gone as I am, ever being reformed? No—no;—I shall fill a drunkard's grave"—and I shook my head in the bitterness of despair.

"I have heard—I have seen very many who were as little likely to be reclaimed as you are, who are now sober, industrious men, with their families again around them, and again happy. This is a new era, my friend, a new power is at work; and what was once considered hopeless, is now an every day occurrence. Hundreds of men, who have been in the constant habit of drinking, have renounced liquor altogether, and are banded together for mutual assistance. Come! Will you not join in with them?"

"Thus the stranger urged me, and I listened as if in a dream. After he had ceased, I said eagerly as I rose to my feet:

"O sir, do not trifle with me! Is what you say, indeed, true? Can a drunken wretch, debased as I am, be reclaimed?"

"He can, my friend!" was the emphatic answer. "For ten years I was a drunkard. It is now six months since I tasted liquor, and I have no desire for it."

"How strange all this sounded to me. And as he spoke, a new hope sprung up in my bosom. But this hope quickly faded, and I said in a sad tone:

"Others may reform, but I cannot. If I were to quit drinking what could I do? I have no home, no friends, no clothes that are even decent—all men would continue to shun me as a loathsome wretch, who had lost all claims to human consideration."

"Do you really wish to reform?" the stranger now asked me in a decided, serious voice.

"I do most sincerely."

"Then you can reform. Come with me." "Wherever there is a will, there is a way."

"I followed him mechanically. We soon came to a small two-story house in a narrow street or alley, running down south from the Lexington market. Into this we entered, when I was taken up into one of the chambers. Here I was supplied with plenty of clean water, a clean, coarse shirt, and a pair of coarse linen pantaloons. As the latter were produced the man said to me:

"Are you willing to sign a pledge never to drink any kind of intoxicating liquor? In a word—will you join the temperance society?"

"Will it be of any use?" I asked.

"Yes, if you wish to reform," he replied.

"Then I will join, and try my best," I said.

"Do so, and you are safe," was the cheerful and encouraging answer.

"After I had washed myself, and put on the clean dry clothes with which I had been furnished, I went down stairs. There I was invited to partake, with the family, of a warm and plentiful breakfast. The man had a wife and three children, and each seemed cheerful, and even happy. To me, they were all kindness and attention. After breakfast, I was invited to go up stairs and lie down, until my coat, which had been drenched with rain, could be dried. This offer I accepted, for now that I had taken no liquor since the day before, I felt quite weak. I soon fell asleep, and was conscious of nothing further, until my unknown friend came up and asked me to take some dinner with the family. Now I was in a calmer, and more rational frame of mind than I had been for years, and as I descended with him, and met his cheerful family at the table, I thought of my own children, sheltered in a charitable institution, and of my poor wife, long since laid in the peaceful grave. It was a bitter reflection.

"At the dinner table, the conversation turned upon the wonderful reformation that was going on among the drunkards—a reformation, the most distant whisper of which had never, before that morning, reached my ears. My unknown friend spoke of his own history; how he had been enslaved to the love of strong drink—how he had neglected his business and abused his family—how he had despaired of ever becoming reformed; at last he had been sought out by some of the Washingtonians, and persuaded to sign the total abstinence pledge. The result of this pledge, he pointed out in the changed and happy condition of his family.

"I was found by a Washingtonian," said he, "sleeping one morning on a cellar-door, as I found you; and I was persuaded by him to go and sign the pledge. His kindness and evident concern moved me, and I resolved that I would take his advice. And I did so. That night I went to one of their meetings and signed the pledge. Since then, every thing has gone well with me. And now, I get up early every morning, and look out for the drunkards on the cellar-doors, and in the market houses. I have already induced nineteen, whom I found thus, to sign the pledge; and if you go with me to-night to the meeting, as you have promised, you will make the twentieth."

"I went, of course, and signed. After I had put my name down, I felt a new power within me. I felt that I could keep the pledge. And I have kept it, and mean to keep it as long as I live.

"You must go home with me to-night," said this kind individual, touching me on the shoulder after the meeting was over—"and to-morrow we will see if we can get you something to do."

"I accepted his kind offer, gladly, and slept, for the first time in three years, on a comfortable bed. On the next day, sure enough, he went with me to three or four places where my business was carried on, and at last, obtained work for me. From that time I have had as much as I can do, and am now, earning twelve dollars every week.

"Soon after I was reformed, I went to see my children. I had not looked upon them for five long years. How changed they were! When told I was their father, they seemed scarcely to credit it, and evinced no affection for me. This touched my heart. I stayed but a few minutes the first time, for the interview was too painful to me, and, I saw, too embarrassing to them, to admit of being prolonged.

"In a week I called again, and then the distance and reserve of my children were in some degree broken down. Another week passed, and I paid them another visit—a smile lit up each face as I entered. O sir, words cannot express my delight, as I saw that smile! It was a ray of sunshine to my heart. Thus I continued to visit them regularly, until I could not let a day pass without looking upon their faces, and listening to their sweet voices. And they even greeted my coming with expressions of gladness.

"I now made application to the directors of the institu-

tion to have my children restored to me; but was positively refused. I represented that I was reformed—that I was earning ten and twelve dollars a week, and had already money enough to buy the few articles of furniture that we should want. But they would not trust me with my children. How wretched I felt as I turned away from those to whom my earnest petition had been addressed! But I determined never to rest until I could get my children. Every three or four weeks I renewed my petition, and every time the reluctance of the directors seemed in some degree to yield. Finally I prevailed, and this day, thank Heaven!—I received my children back again!"

Here the speaker's voice gave way, and he sat down and sobbed like a child.

There was a deep silence for nearly a minute after he had taken his seat, a silence of profound emotion. Every heart was moved, and almost every eye was wet. Then a man arose, whose appearance indicated that he was quite young. He dashed aside a tear as he took the floor; but it was soon evident that a light heart still beat in his bosom.

### The Man with the Poker.

"I can't tell you, Mr. President," he said, "so sad and moving a tale as my friend who has just taken his seat, and, Heaven knows, I don't wish to. I am now only twenty-six years of age—a young man you will say to be a reformed drunkard. That is true; and yet I have been a great drinker in my time. I began when a boy. My master, a bookbinder, didn't care anything about me, further than to see that my work was done. Of course I sought my own company and my own pleasures. The amusements of running to fires pleased me most. Every night I went to the engine house, and there learned to drink. Long before I was twenty-one years of age, I could take a dozen glasses through the day, and scarcely feel it.

"At last I was free. That long-looked for time finally came, and I was constituted my own master. But I was little fit to govern myself. As an apprentice, I had to attend to my work for a certain number of hours every day. But when I became free, this necessity was removed, and inclination led me away to the tavern or engine house, nearly half of my time. Of course, under such circumstances, my wages would not pay my expenses, and I gradually went behindhand. Then came annoying duns, and still more troublesome warrants. To keep from going to jail, I persuaded first this friend and then that one, to intercede for me; and the result was, of course, that they were compelled to pay my debts. I felt this keenly, but not keenly enough to make me give up the cause and attend to my work. The thirst for liquor soon became so strong, that it took every dollar I earned to satisfy it. Nothing less than ten to fifteen drinks a day would do me, and my wages were rarely over five dollars a week.

"In this way I got behind with my board, and had to leave my boarding house. And it was not long before I was turned out of the next for the same cause. My clothes had now become so dirty and ragged that no boarding house keeper would receive me, and then I was compelled to go and sleep in the engine house, with two or three as degraded and wretched as myself.

"One morning, about a year after I had become thus an outcast, I had very strange feelings. My mind was confused, and my hands trembled so that I was unable to use my tools, with anything like the required skill. I could not tell what was the matter with me—but thought that I at least knew what to do. And so I left the shop and went over to a tavern and drank three glasses of brandy and water. But I felt no better. My hands trembled none the less, and my mind was none the clearer. In an hour after I repeated the dose, but with no better success. I felt seriously alarmed, for my sensations were altogether new and peculiar. It was, I think, about one hour after I had returned from the tavern, that, in reaching out my hand for a small iron bar, it suddenly assumed the form of a serpent, while I was seized with the most horrible fear that the mind can imagine. I shrunk away from the bench at which I was standing, trembling from head to foot, my face, as I have been told, pale, and expressive of the most abject fear. There was only a boy, a stout lad, in the shop when this occurred, and he started for the door in alarm. Instinctively I turned to follow; but the standing-press was near the door, and as I went towards it, the large iron bar that stood leaning against the wall, began suddenly to writhe, and then, as a huge serpent, seemed to dart towards me. I sprang back with a scream of terror, and fell upon the floor. Here I lay for some time, unable, from the paralyzing influence of the dreadful fear that was on me, to rise. As I lay thus, I can remember distinctly that I

made an effort to reason with myself on the utter impossibility of two iron bars becoming snakes. This calmed my mind a good deal, so that I was enabled to raise myself up and look about me. There stood the long iron bar, in its usual place against the wall, and the small bar, as I glanced at the bench, was lying beside the screw press, a veritable piece of iron. I drew a long breath, and muttered between my teeth—

"I am going mad, surely!"

"For some moments I stood thus in the middle of the shop, looking first at one bar and then at another, expecting every moment to see each start into life, yet, at the same time reasoning with myself on the perfect absurdity of the thing. Finally I ventured up to the bench, and after looking steadily at the small bar as I stood bending over it, ventured at length to touch it, and then grasp it in my hand. It was a bar still! a cold, heavy iron bar. I lifted it up and examined it from end to end. It was the same bar that I had handled for years.

"Thus reassured, I attempted to resume my work. I placed some books in the press, and lifted the bar to screw them up. But I had taken only a single turn, when the bar dropped from my hand into the shaving tub, as if it really had been the serpent it suddenly appeared to be. O sir, I cannot describe the horror of that dreadful moment!—With my mind active, and my consciousness distinct, to be thus beset by appearances that had none the less terror because I could think of them as unreal—the mere creation of a distempered fancy. But if I was terrified at the serpent, how awful were my feelings when on glancing upwards, I saw a face of horrible malignancy, just over my head, and a dozen serpents and dragons, and monsters of all shapes, coming, as it seemed, with hellish delight towards me. With a single wild, prolonged scream I rushed to the door, and tumbled, rather than walked down the stairs. Once in the street, I passed over to the tavern. On entering, I went hastily up to the bar and called for brandy. As I turned the neck of the bottle towards the tumbler, and the liquor commenced running into it, both decanter and glass seemed instantly changed into a living monster, that I could feel writhing in my hands. I dropped both, and sprang backwards half across the bar-room. They were dashed to pieces on the floor.

"One of my old cronies was sitting close by, and instantly came forward, inquiring in a hurried, anxious tone, what ailed me.

"I'm going crazy, I believe!"—was my answer, attempting to rally myself.

"But what is the matter, Bill?" he asked, earnestly.

"That's more than I can tell," I said. "But everything I touch becomes a serpent or a terrible monster."

"What's the matter? What's the matter?" eagerly enquired half a dozen others coming up.

"Why, the man with the poker is after him, I believe!" said the person who had first spoken, in a half laughing, half serious tone.

"Poor fellow!" ejaculated one—

"Poor fellow, indeed!" said another.

"What do you mean?" I asked, half indignantly.

"O nothing, Bill. But you had better go home, and go to to bed; you are not well."

"I know I am not well, Jim," I said. "But what is the matter with me? Can you tell me that?"

"And as I asked the question, a horrible, grinning monster started up before me, and I drew back with an involuntary shriek of terror; and then shrunk into a corner of the room, hiding my face, and trembling from head to foot as violently as if in an ague fit. O, what a horrible fear was that which took possession of me! While I sat thus, shrinking closer and closer into the corner, a glass of pure brandy was placed to my lips, and I drank it all off at a single draught. Still I sat crouching upon the floor, fearing to rise, or look around. At length I turned my head slowly, peering over my shoulder to see if the object of my fear was gone. But instead of one terrible shape the room seemed filled with serpents and monsters and devils, all grinning at me, as if enjoying my terror with fiendish exultation.

"As I glanced thus around, one of the company came up, and said in a soothing tone—

"Don't be afraid, Bill. Nothing shall hurt you."

"But as he spoke his word of assurance, one of the monstrous shapes peered over his shoulder, and seemed to thrust its head almost into my face. I could not bear this, but starting up, ran out into the street, and took my way I knew not whither. But I will not detain you, to relate all my horrible sufferings for the next two days. Many here have experienced strange terrors, and for those who have not, words are too feeble to express them. Tortured by fears the most terrible—haunted by awful and malignant shapes—and unable to sleep, until, after the lapse of two days and nights, exhausted nature gave

way, I endured more, it seemed, than an age of horrors. At length I sunk into a state of insensibility, from which I awoke in the almshouse, whither some friendly hand had conveyed me.

"What has been the matter with me, doctor?" I asked, after I was able to go about.

"*Delirium tremens*," he replied, in a low, emphatic tone—

"What?" I said, for I did not understand him.

"*Delirium tremens*," he repeated.

"But I shook my head, for I could not understand him, never having heard of the dreadful disease he had named, although I had been a sad sufferer by it.

"He then, seeing that I was really ignorant of the nature as well as the name of the disease, carefully explained to me, that when, by a long continued resort to artificial stimulus, any one has weakened, to a certain degree, the vital energies of his system, the stimulus itself at last fails to keep up the apparently healthy action, and all things fall into disorder.

"But why did I see those terrible serpents, and monsters, doctor?" I asked, my heart sinking at the bare recollection.

"That is one of the unaccountable phenomena attending this strange disease," he replied, gravely. "For once, you have experienced its horrors, and I hope the effect is such on your mind, as to deter you from running the risk of another attack."

"Nothing shall tempt me to touch the accursed thing again!" I said, with the force of a strong determination; and, though often tempted since, I have thus far kept my resolution, and intend keeping it to the end of my life. It was enough for me to have had *the man with the poker* after me once. I have no desire to cultivate his acquaintance further.

"Well, after I was dismissed from the alms-house, I went back to the shop and obtained work again. It was, I think, about ten o'clock, on the morning of my first return to business, that a constable touched me on the shoulder, as I stood at the bench, and said—"I have a warrant against you, sir."

"Against me?"

"Yes; you owe Mr. — ten dollars, and he has ordered a warrant to be taken out against you."

"It was a grog bill."

"I can't pay it now," I replied, "but tell Mr. — that, if he will only wait, I will give him two dollars a week until the whole bill is settled."

"You must get it superseded," he said.

"I can't do it," I answered. "Nobody will be my security. Too many have suffered by me already."

"Then you will have to go to jail, that's all."

"I can't help it. I've got no money, and no one to be my security. So, when the time comes, I must go to jail, I suppose—but staying in jail won't pay debts."

"I promised to go to the magistrate's office at four o'clock on that afternoon and confess judgment, and, when the hour came, I went accordingly. I, of course, admitted the debt to be a legal one, though I told the landlord, who was present, that as to the justice of it, that was another question, for he had sold me the liquor when I was in a state little better than insanity. This aggravated him, and he ordered an execution and commitment to be made out on the spot. Under these I was carried over to jail, and a dollar and sixty cents paid for one week's boarding. It would detain you too long to relate the cruel torture of mind which I saw exhibited in the debtor's prison. One man I thought would go crazy. He had been suddenly torn away from his wife and children, who were utterly destitute—the former sick, and the latter young and helpless. He seemed deeply and tenderly attached to them, poor fellow! He walked the long avenue, into which the different apartments opened, backwards and forwards, hour after hour, in restless anguish of mind. We roomed together, and it seemed to me that he did not sleep an hour during the week that I was imprisoned. The debt was not originally his own; he had saved a friend from the jail, to be carried there in his stead. He was a sober man, and his friend intemperate. That tells the whole story.

"My creditor got tired of paying my board after the first week, and so I was turned out of the jail at its expiration. The poor fellow I have mentioned, came out on the same day.

"I returned to the shop again, and went to work. While I lay idling in jail, I had time for reflection. On counting up my debts, I found that I owed for old boarding bills, old tailors' and shoemakers' bills, grog bills, and for warrants that others had superseded and been compelled to pay for me, just about three hundred dollars. This large sum, I resolved should be paid, if I could only keep out of jail. As to my appetite for liquor, that came

back on me strong, but whenever I wanted a dram, I drank about a pint of pure cold water, and if that did not do, I repeated the dose, and so I finally drowned the desire out. It can't stand up against cold water. One man said to me, shortly after I came out of jail—

"Come, Bill, take a glass of beer, that can't hurt you!"

"But I said 'No. If I drink beer I shall want brandy.'"

"Take a little cider," he then urged.

"It's but the devil by another name," was my answer. "No—no—I will have nothing to do with anything that makes *drunk come*!"

"But I'm sure a little wine cannot hurt you—"

"You'll never get *the man with the poker* after me again, that's clear, was my positive reply. "I have just, as much of his acquaintance as I want, so don't talk to me about beer, cider, wine, or brandy. I've done with the whole of them. Hereafter I sing—

"Water for me, bright water for me,

And wine for the tremulous debauchee."

"I was not to be driven from my resolution. I was a sober rational man, and I meant to remain so; and what is better, I did remain so, and paid off all my debts within a year into the bargain. And how do you think I did that? Why, I lived for the whole time on half a dollar a week! Every Monday morning I went down to Mason's bake-house, and bought six cents' worth of broken navy and pilot bread. This was enough to last me a week, and when softened in water, with a little salt, was by no means unpalatable food. As for meat, I ate but little, never buying over a pound in a whole week. I made my coffee in the glue kettle, and, at night slept in the shaving tub! In this way I lived for a year; was perfectly healthy, and more contented than I had ever been before. At the end of that time, I was out of debt, and had a new suit of clothes to my back.

"But now, having accomplished the task I had set for myself, I began to have a desire for company. I felt often very lonely, and was frequently troubled with thoughts of the tavern and my old companions. But I hit upon a remedy for this too. And what do you think that was? Why, I got me a wife; and have never been lonesome or tired of myself since!"

He sat down amid shouts of prolonged applause. That man can be anything he pleases, said I to myself. He had only to will that a thing may be done, and no matter how high the aim, success is certain.

## The Drunkard's Bible.

"Mr. President," said a short stout man, with a good humoured countenance, and florid complexion, rising at the last speaker took his seat, "I have been a tavern-keeper."

At this announcement there was a movement through the whole room, and an expression of increased interest.

"Yes, Mr. President," he went on—"I have been a tavern-keeper, and many a glass have I sold to you, and to the secretary there, and to dozens of others that I see here."—(glancing around upon the company).

"That's a fact," broke in the President—"many a gin-toddy and brandy-punch have I taken at your bar. But times are changed now, and we have begun to carry the war right into the enemy's camp. And our war has not been altogether unsuccessful, for we have taken prisoner one of the rum-sellers' bravest generals! But go on, friend W—; let us have your experience."

"As to my experience, Mr. President," the ex-tavern-keeper resumed, "in rum selling and rum drinking, for I have done a good deal of both in my time, that would be rather too long a story to tell to-night—and one that I had much rather forget than relate. It makes me tremble and sick at heart whenever I look back on the evil that I have done. I, therefore, usually look ahead with the hope of doing some good to my fellow-men.

"But there is one incident that I will relate. For the last five years, a hard-working mechanic, who had a wife and several small children, came regularly, almost every night, to my tavern, and spent the evening in the bar-room. He came to drink, of course, and many and many a dollar of his hard earnings went to my till. At last he became a perfect sot—working scarcely one-fourth of his time, and spending all he earned in liquor. His poor wife had to take in washing to support herself and children, while he spent his time and the little he could make at my bar. But his appetite for liquor was so strong, that his week's earnings were usually all gone by Tuesday or Wednesday, and then I had to chalk up a score against him, to be paid off when Saturday night came. The score gradually increased, until it amounted to three or four dollars, over his regular Saturday night's pay, when I refused to sell him any more liquor until it was settled. On the day after I had thus refused him, he came in with a neat

mourning breast-pin, enclosing some hair—no doubt I thought—of a deceased relative. This he offered in payment of what he owed. I accepted it, for the pin I saw at once was worth double the amount of my bill. I did not think, or indeed care, about the question, whether he was the owner or not: I wanted my own, and in my selfish eagerness to get my own, I hesitated not to take a little more than my own.

"I laid the breast-pin away, and all things went on smoothly, for awhile. But he gradually got behind-hand again, and again I cut off his supply of liquor. This time he brought me a pair of brass handirons, and a pair of brass candlesticks, and I took them, and wiped off the score against him. At last he brought a large family Bible, and I took that too—thinking that no doubt I could sell it for something.

"On the Sunday afterwards, having nothing to do—for I used to shut my bar on Sundays, thinking that it was not respectable to sell liquor on that day—I opened this poor drunkard's family Bible, scarcely thinking what I was doing. The first place I turned to was the family record. There it was stated that upon a certain day, he had been married to Emily—. I had known Emily—, when I was a young man, very well, and had once thought seriously of offering myself to her in marriage. I remembered her young face, and seemed suddenly to hear a tone of her merry laughter.

"Poor creature!" I sighed involuntarily as a thought of her present condition crossed my mind—and then with no pleasant feelings I turned over another leaf. There was the record of the birth of four children; the last record had been made recently, and was in the mother's hand.

"I never had such strange feelings, and turned over several leaves quickly. As I suffered my eyes to rest upon an open page, these words arrested my attention:

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; whose is deceived thereby is not wise."

"This was just the subject, that, under the feelings I had then, I wished to avoid, and so I referred to another place. There I read:

"Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath wounds? Who hath babbling? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine. At the last it biteth like a serpent, it stingeth like an adder."

"I felt like throwing the book from me. But once more I turned the leaves, and my eyes rested upon these words:

"Wee unto him that giveth his neighbour drink; that putteth thy bottle to him and maketh him drunken."

"I closed the book suddenly, and threw it down. Then, for half an hour, I paced the room backwards and forwards in a state of mind such as I had never before experienced. I had become painfully conscious of the direful evils resulting from intemperance, and still more painfully conscious, that I had been a willing instrument in the spread of these evils. I cannot tell you how much I suffered during that day and night, nor describe the fearful conflict that took place in my mind, between the selfish love of the gains of my calling, and the plain dictates of truth and humanity. It was about nine o'clock, I think, on that evening, that I opened the drunkard's Bible again, with a kind of despairing hope that I should meet there with something to direct me. I opened at the Psalms, and read two or three chapters. As I read on, without finding anything that seemed to apply directly to my case, I felt an increasing desire to abandon my calling, because it was injurious to my fellow men. After I had read the Bible, I retired to bed, but could not sleep. I am sure that during that night I thought of every drunken man to whom I had sold liquor, and of all their beggared families. In the brief sleep that I obtained, I dreamed that I saw a long line of tottering drunkards, with their wives and children in rags. And a loud voice said—"Who hath done this?"

"The answer, in a still louder voice, directed, I felt, to me, smote upon my ear like a peal of thunder:

"Thou art the man!"

"From this troubled slumber I awoke to sleep no more that night. In the morning the last and most powerful conflict came. The question to be decided was,—

"Shall I open my tavern, or at once abandon the dreadful traffic in liquid poison?"

"Happily, I decided never again to put to any man's lips the cup of confusion. My next step was to turn the spicket of every keg or barrel of spirits, wine, beer, or cider, and let the contents escape upon the floor. My bottles and decanters were likewise emptied. Then I came and signed your total abstinence pledge, and what is better, never rested until I had persuaded the man whose Bible had been of so much use to me, to sign the pledge likewise.

"And now, Mr. President, I am keeping, at my old

stand, a Temperance Grocery, and am making restitution as fast as possible. There are at least half a dozen families, that my tavern helped to make poor and wretched, to whom I furnish a small quantity of groceries every week, in many cases equal to the amount that used to be spent at my bar for liquor. Four of my oldest and best customers, have already signed the pledge by my persuasion, and I am not going to rest, until every man that I helped to ruin, is restored to himself, his family, and society."

A round of hearty applause followed this address, and then another of the reformed drinkers came forward.

## After to-day; or, Treating Resolution.

He was past the prime of life, and his whole appearance was that of a man with an original good constitution, broken down by dissipation. There was not that cheerful air about him, that had been exhibited by the last two speakers. When he spoke, there was something subdued and melancholy in his tone.

"I have never, before this moment," he began, "attempted to address an audience, and were it not that I feel constrained to do so, under the belief that what I have to say will be useful to some here, who may not yet have fully made up their minds to sign the pledge, I should most certainly hold my peace."

"Twenty years ago, Mr. President, three men sat drinking in the Theatre tavern, Holliday-street. For five or six years previous, they had met there, regularly, every evening, to drink, smoke, and talk politics. Of course, their love of liquor, from being thus regularly indulged, increased, until all three were usually two-thirds intoxicated every night. When I say two-thirds, I mean that near to perfect insensibility. One of these men, Mr. President, now addresses you. The other two are dead. But, I must not anticipate.

"On the night to which I allude, being somewhat at a loss for a subject, we commenced talking about our mutual capacity for imbibing liquor, and, finally, resolved to enter upon a regular contest.

"What kind of liquor shall we drink?" asked Joseph—or Joe, as we familiarly called him.

"I go in for pure brandy"—I replied—

"No—gin— responded the third, whose name was Henry.

"Good old Irish whiskey is my favourite," said Joe, "and at good old Irish whiskey I can put you both under the table."

"I doubt it," the other remarked. "But I'm for a better test than either brandy, gin, or whiskey."

"What is that, Harry?" I asked.

"Why, all these, one after the other, and ale, wine, and cider. That's the true test. First brandy, then wine, then whiskey, ale, gin, and cider, a glass every five minutes. What do you say to that?"

"I would rather not," I said—for I had once been drunk on brandy and ale together, and knew what it was.

"I'm agreed," Joe said—

"Well, what do you say?" Harry asked of me. "Not afraid, I hope? I thought you more of a man."

"I was just drunk enough to do almost anything if told that I was afraid, and so I agreed to the proposition. We then retired into a small room, in the centre of which stood a table, and arranging ourselves round it, called for three glasses of brandy. These were at once turned off, to begin with. Five minutes were allowed to pass, and then each drank half a pint of wine,—at the end of five minutes more a strong draught of whiskey was taken, and so on until we had drunk, besides these, ale, gin, and cider. This occupied just half an hour. By this time I began to feel a little light about the head. But I resolved not to be beaten, and so commenced and went through another course. By the time this was completed, the room seemed to be moving around; but brandy was again called for, and again the trial renewed. Four times did we drink, or, at least, did I drink through this villainous series. The last thing I remember, was the vain effort to get a glass of cider to my mouth in the fourth round. I do not know whether I succeeded or not. When next conscious, I was lying on a bed, at home, with a physician by my side. My feelings were awful. It seemed as if my head would burst with the rending pain that throbbed through my temples; and my whole body felt as if swollen and benumbed by the heat of a large fire before which I seemed to be roasting alive. As soon as my recollection returned fully I became dreadfully alarmed, for it seemed impossible that I could live after what I had done. But, a good constitution carried me safely through.

"On the third day I was able to go out. The first man I met was my friend Joe. He looked pale and feeble.

"I am really glad to see you, George!" he said, grasp-

ing my hand. 'I was afraid, from what I have myself suffered, that it was a gone case with you and Harry. How is he? Have you heard from him?'

'No, I have not,' I replied.

'Suppose, then, we go around and see him?'

'I assented, and we called at his house. His wife, for he was married, met us at the door. She was the picture of woe. Her eyes were red with weeping, and her face was pale, and wore an expression of deep, heart-aching distress.

'How is Mr. —?' we asked, anxiously.

'Come in and see,' she said, and gave way for us to enter. We followed, as she led on, and in a moment or two entered a chamber where our friend lay, without life or motion, upon a bed. His eyes were half closed, and his face had a ghastly expression. As I paused, and bent over him, I placed my hand upon his forehead. Instantly I started back. That forehead was rigid and cold like marble.

'Dead!' I exclaimed, striking my hands together, while my head reeled, and became sick and faint.

'Ah, sir! That was a terrible moment! When I had so far recovered my senses to look about me again, I saw his poor wife seated by the bedside, silent and tearless. One little girl, his eldest child, was sobbing in a corner of the room, and a little boy, not over two years of age, had crept to his mother's side, and crouching there, hid his face in her lap. As for her, the heart-stricken wife and mother, her grief seemed too deep for utterance. There was something cold and frozen in the expression of her eye and face—something that I could not comprehend—something that I do not like to think of even now.

'We lingered in the chamber of death but a short time, and then went away. In the afternoon, we returned, by agreement, to make such arrangements for the funeral as were required under the circumstances. We knew that Mrs. — had no one to perform these sad offices for her, and therefore, poorly as we both were, and much as we desired to shun so painful a scene as that which the house of our dead companion presented, we attended during that afternoon, and at the funeral, on the next day, to all the required arrangements.

'As the company that attended the remains of Mr. — to the grave, turned away from the little hillock of fresh earth that marked the place where he was laid, Joe and I lingered behind.

'I really feel awful about this,' I said, as we still remained standing near the spot where we had laid our friend.

'Not worse than I do, George.'

'If you'll agree,' I said—'we will pledge ourselves here over Harry's grave, never, after this day, to drink a drop of any kind of liquor. We can do without it, Joe, for neither of us, I believe, has tasted anything stronger than tea or coffee since that night. It doesn't do us any good—and has done us great harm.'

'Agreed,' was Joe's prompt response. And arm in arm we took our way, with slow steps, towards the city. Our temperance resolution dispelled, in some degree, the sad depression of our spirits, and by the time we came to the edge of the town we were conversing quite cheerfully. As we were passing the Vauxhall Gardens, in Light-street, Joe paused, and said:

'Come, George, let's have a drink!'

'Didn't we promise each other not to take any more liquor after to-day?' I replied.

'True! so we did.'

'Then, after a pause, he added:

'But it's to-day yet. After to-day we will not drink. So come along, let us treat resolution! This is a sad business that we have been on, and a little spirits will cheer us up.'

'The sight of the tavern in which I had drank so often, the idea of the liquor, suddenly conjured up in my mind, wrought so powerfully upon me, that it seemed almost impossible to resist the strong desire—I felt for another drink.

'You are right, I believe,' I said, after a single moment's hesitation. And then we went in and called for brandy and water.

'After drinking this, we sat down to look over the newspapers. I felt very comfortable, and quite happy in mind, as the pleasant excitement of the liquor began to pervade my whole body. Presently the appetite for another glass was felt, and I was just going to ask Joe to drink again, when he anticipated me, with—

'As this is our last day, George, we must make good use of it; so come, let us have another drink.'

'I was ready to join him, of course. A third, a fourth, and fifth drink followed in quick succession. And then we began to feel quite merry, and could even allude to our dead companion in a light and trifling way—

'Harry thought to use us up, all to pieces,' Joe said, laughing. 'But he wasn't half a man. I could kill a dozen like him.'

'To this, I remember, I responded with a loud laugh. It seemed exceedingly smart. And then both of us jested, gaily, about our recent drinking duel, as we called it.

'It was after ten o'clock when we left the Vauxhall, and then we staggered off home, arm in arm.

'On the next morning I felt wretched, and blamed myself for having violated the spirit and meaning of the pledge I had taken over Harry's grave. But during the morning I met Joe.

'Well, George,' he said, laying his hand familiarly upon my shoulder, 'are you going to drink any more after to-day?'

'No I am not,' I replied, positively.

'Then come, let us treat resolution, and have a glorious spree while to-day lasts.'

'Joe, you are trifling in a serious matter!'

'Not a bit. You ain't going to drink any more after to-day, neither am I; and surely we ought to have one good time before we bid our old friend brandy good-bye. So come along, George, for I'm awful dry.'

'And he caught me by the collar, and almost dragged me into a tavern near which we were standing. Once within the charmed precincts of a bar-room, all power of resistance was gone, and I drank eagerly and freely.

'I made no further effort to keep my twice-broken pledge. Whenever Joe and I met, after that, the question usually was,—

'Well, Joe! or, 'Well, George, when are you going to reform?'

'After to-day,' was, of course, the witty answer, and then came the response:—

'Well, come along, and let us treat resolution.'

'Since that time, until within a few weeks ago, Mr. President, I have been a regular drinker; becoming more and more enslaved every year to the debasing vice. But I will not detain this company by relating to them the particulars of an ill-spent, useless life; a life of wretchedness, and painful degradation. I sunk very low, sir, and I suffered much more than tongue can tell.

'It was about five years ago, that Joe entered the United States army, as a private soldier. He became so worthless that no one would give him work, and to prevent starving, or going to the poor-house, he enlisted.

'From the day I parted with him at the fort, a few weeks after his enlistment, until six weeks ago, I neither saw nor heard of Joseph —. I knew not whether he were living or dead.

'It is between one and two months since, that, as I was staggering up McLellan's alley, one night after having filled myself with liquor at Mrs. H—'s oyster house, I heard some one groan. I was near Fayette street, and the sound came from the entrance of the narrow alley that runs in the rear of the Fountain stables. I paused to listen, and the groaning was repeated. There was something in the sound that half sobered me, and produced an involuntary desire to go back a few steps and see who was suffering in such a deserted spot, at such an hour. As I obeyed this impulse, I became still further sobered.

'Who's there?' I cried, as I paused at the entrance of the alley.

'My question was answered by a deep groan, almost at my feet. I started, and looking more narrowly around, saw a dark mass near where I stood. A closer observation revealed the figure of a man. To my repeated questions, the only answer I could get was groan after groan, that seemed of mortal agony. I took hold of him, and attempted to lift him up. But he had only one leg! In endeavouring to support him thus, I grasped at his right arm, and found in my hand but a small protruding stump!

'I then laid him down gently, and went over to a house opposite, to get assistance. It happened to be the house of a temperance man.

'What do you want,' he asked, 'at this late hour?'

'I want help for a poor creature in the alley here, who is dying, I fear,' I replied.

'A drunkard, I suppose,' he said, as he reached for his hat. 'I should think so,' was my reply.

'He accompanied me at once, and we succeeded, in a few minutes, in getting the poor wretch into his house. He presented, indeed, a pitiable spectacle. He had but one arm and one leg; appeared to be drunk to unconscionableness; was sick, and perhaps dying. His face was shockingly distorted and disfigured by exposure and the effects of habitual drunkenness. Really I felt appalled as I looked at him, and thought that all this was rum's doings.

'What ails you?' asked the kind individual who had taken him in, as he laid him down before a good warm fire.'

"But the drunkard murmured something incoherent. 'Are you sick?' he inquired.

"Yes," was half articulated, showing that he was in some degree conscious.

"What ails you? what can we do for you?" continued the man.

"Give me, ah—give me, ah—drink," he replied, in a thick, muttering, drunken tone.

"A glass of water was held to his lips, as I raised him, myself scarcely able to stand from intoxication.

"Ugh!" he ejaculated, as the water entered his mouth, starting back, and discharging what he had taken, with the strongest indications of disappointment and disgust.

"Gin, whiskey, rum, anything!" he now said with an earnest, rapid articulation, endeavouring to support himself with his hand—"Give me liquor or I shall die."

"I cannot give you liquor. But you shall have coffee, tea, anything you want, but liquor," his stranger-friend replied, soothingly and kindly.

"No—no—no! Give me liquor," was the earnest response.

"Liquor will do you no good," my friend, he replied, "and therefore I cannot give it to you. You must stop drinking or it will kill you."

"So I will stop, after to-day! Ha! ha! ha! Wasn't that a good joke?" And the poor wretch swung his single arm around his head in momentary excitement; but, alas! like the flashing up of the dying taper, it was the last feeble glimmer of life. He fell back, as his arm returned nerveless to his side, and, in a minute after, was a ghastly corpse.

"Once again, in many years, I was perfectly sober. And I stood, horror-stricken, by the side of the mutilated, disfigured, and lifeless body of my old friend Joe—. But the sight was too painful, and I turned away and left the house, sick at heart. I still had a home left; thanks to a neglected, abused, and sorrow-stricken creature, who clung, despite the remonstrances, advice, and anger of her friends, to the debased, unfeeling wretch she still called by the name of husband. But for her tender care, her unswerving affection, I should long ago have been dead. To my home I returned; my poor, comfortless home, and entered, just as the clock struck twelve. I found my patient wife still sitting up, and sewing by the light of a small dimly burning lamp. As I entered, she lifted her pale, thin face, and looked into my own with something so sad, so tender, so heart-touching in its expression, that I was affected almost to tears. How many, and many a time, no doubt, has she looked at me thus, and I, too drunk to perceive or feel its import.

"Sarah," I said, walking steadily towards her, for I was never more perfectly sober in my life: "Sarah, I've quit drinking; from this moment I will never touch liquor again!"

"O, sir, if you could have seen that poor creature, as I did, start to her feet, and stand looking at me, for a moment or two, her face agitated with doubt and hope, fear and joy, you would have been moved to tears! But she saw that I was in earnest; she felt that I was in earnest, and springing to my side, she laid her head upon my shoulder, as I drew my arm tightly around her, and wept, and sobbed passionately. But her tears were tears of joy and hope.

"On the next day, I signed the pledge; and though still a sad, yet I trust, that I am a better and wiser man. As for my home, there has been sunlight there ever since. O, sir! This pledge—"

But the man's voice trembled—tears sprung to his eyes; and, overcome by emotion, he was forced to take his seat.

### Signing the Pledge.

The time had gone on until nearly ten o'clock, and as the last speaker took his seat, Mr. Mitchell, the president, rose, and in a brief, but pertinent address, invited and urged those who had not yet done so, to come forward and sign the pledge. The secretary was then directed to read the pledge, which was done. After this followed a scene hard to be described.

"Come along," cried the president, as the secretary resumed his seat. "Who will sign first to-night? Ah! there he comes! The very man for whom I have been waiting these two months. That's right, friend L—. I thought we should get hold of the same end of the rope again. Many a drinking frolic, and fishing frolic have we been on, together! And now we strike hands again;" grasping the hand of the individual he was addressing, who had, by this time, reached the secretary's table—"and shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, and heart to heart, will we wage together a war of extermination against old KING ALCOHOL and all his emissaries!"

The man who had gone forward was one well known in the community. He was an old drinker, and, although he had, from a strong resolution, been able, thus far, to keep from sinking into a low and abandoned state, yet, his example and encouragement had been exceedingly pernicious, and very many, who had commenced drinking with him, had already become mere sots. For a time, he had sneered at the temperance movement. But he had now yielded to its imposing claims.

"You never did a better deed than that in your life, friend L—" the President said in a lively, exulting tone, as the man rose from the secretary's table. "And now who will come next?"

"Come along!" I heard a man say in an under-tone, near me, and I turned to observe him. He had a miserable looking creature—bloated, disfigured, ragged, and filthy—by the arm, and was endeavouring to urge him to go up and sign. But the drunkard hesitated and held back.

"Come! come! Go up, now! You will never repent it!" urged the temperance man.

"I don't think its any use," the poor creature said. "I'm sure I can't keep it."

"O yes you can! I know you can! There's old B—, who drank harder than you ever did. He signed last night."

"Did he?" in tones of surprise.

"Certainly he did! And so did Mr.—, who hadn't drawn a sober breath for fifteen years."

"But they can't keep it; I know they can't."

"You don't know any such thing! I know that they can keep it, and will keep it. And there's Mr. F—, there, you know what a sot he was? He signed two months ago. He's well dressed, looks cheerful, and hasn't a carbuncle on his nose, that used to be as rough as the Liberty road, and as red as scarlet. Now do come along and sign to-night!"

"If I thought—"

"Don't think anything about it. Go right up and sign, and you are safe."

And as he said this, he gave the drunkard's arm a slight pull, and he yielded, and suffered himself to be led up to the secretary's table, where he sat down and signed.

"Now don't you feel better?" asked his persevering friend, as the two returned to their seats near me. "Yes, I do,—a great deal better."

"Of course; and you are not sorry that you have signed, I know."

"O no, I'm glad now, and I feel that I can keep it."

The smile that lit up his disfigured face, and the air of confidence that he assumed, were indeed pleasant to look upon.

"Ten names already!" the president now cried out, loud and cheerfully, "and the table crowded. Come along! we have room for hundreds and thousands: we'll stay here all night if you'll keep coming."

For about a quarter of an hour the table was crowded with men of all conditions in life, and of all grades of drunkenness; from the moderate drinker of two and three glasses a day, to the wretched inebriate whose intolerable thirst forty or fifty 'drinks' a day could not satiate.

"Sixty names!" said the president, as the space in front of the secretary's table became once more vacant. "We must have more than that number to-night. Yes, come along my friend!" he continued, his voice changing, to one of encouragement and sympathy, as he looked steadily towards the door, "Come along, my friend, and we will do thee good!"

I glanced, as did many others, in the direction his eye indicated, and there, just within the door, stood a man, who seemed half intoxicated. A woman, evidently his wife, was holding on to his arm, and apparently urging him to go forward and sign the pledge. Still he hesitated, and she urged with an earnestness that seemed all unconscious of the presence of a crowd. There was an immediate, profound silence throughout the room.

"Do go, John!" I could now hear the woman urging. "Do go! and we shall be so happy!"

"Yes, John, come along!" the president said, taking up the earnest persuasion of his wife—"and we shall all be so happy. Come along, my good man!"

The poor wife, thus suddenly conscious that all eyes were upon her, seemed painfully confused, and shrunk into the shadow of the entrance to the room. Her husband felt the general impulse, and started forward towards the secretary's table. All was again hushed into profound silence. As he took the pen into his hand, and commenced writing his name, a sudden burst of weeping, half suppressed, was heard, distinctly, at the door. I am sure that there was not a dry eye in the house. My own were running over with blinding tears. But they were tears of joy. Who can tell—who can imagine the glad-

ness of that poor wife's heart? After the man had signed he returned to the door, and went out.

"O John, how happy I feel!" I could hear the wife say; and then both disappeared together.

"I can't stand that!" a man muttered in a low, but earnest voice, near me, rising to his feet as he spoke. "I must make my poor wife happy, too."

And he walked resolutely up to the table and signed.

"Come along, waiting!" again urged the president.

"Don't put it off a single day. Come along, and make your wives happy, as John did just now. None of you like to see their faces clouded, and yet how can sunshine rest there while you are neglecting and abusing them? Come along! Why, eighty signed at the last meeting, and here we have only sixty-two. Surely we haven't got all the drunkards yet! O no. I see three or four down there that ought to sign. So come along, my boys! If you want excitement, come and get a little of this teetotal excitement. It makes one feel a thousand times better than rum excitement and produces no after consequences but good ones. Ah! there comes another!—and another! and another! That's the way. One helps another. You don't know how much good you may do by coming forward. You influence one, and he another, and he another, and they others, until, from the impulse given by a single individual, hundreds are brought in. There were only six at first, and now we have hundreds upon hundreds. Suppose these six had held back, where would we all have been? Come along then, and do your duty to yourselves and society."

To this about ten more responded.

The last but one who signed, was, like many who had inscribed their names before him, poorly clad, and miserable in appearance. He came up reluctantly, urged and argued with, at almost every step of the way, by a person who seemed to take a deep interest in him.

"You must sign, Thomas! I shall never give you a moment's rest until you sign," I heard him say to the reluctant drunkard, who paused near where I was sitting. "I have helped to ruin you, and I shall have no peace until you are reclaimed."

"Let me have another week to think about it, Mr. W—."

"Another week, Thomas! Surely your poor wife and children have suffered enough already! Think of them, and be a man."

This had the effect to cause the drunkard to move onward. But he paused again and again. At last, however, the table was reached, the pen placed in his hand, and his name inscribed.

How light was his step! How cheerful and resolute his air as he came down the aisle! I could hardly realize that it was the same individual.

"Ain't you glad that you have done it, Thomas?" his friend said, as he passed me.

"Indeed I am! But it was a hard struggle. I wanted to do it, and yet it was not easy to give up the liquor. But it's done now, and I am glad enough!"

"Yes, one more at least," said a man near the door, rising to his feet. "You've just got my last customer, and now you might as well have me. I've sold liquor for fifteen years. But you temperance folks have broken me up, and now I am forced to try some better and honester means of getting a living."

And so saying, he walked resolutely up to the table, and signed the pledge.

"And now, friend P—," the president said to him, "what are you going to do with the liquid fire you have on hand?"

"What am I going to do with it?" in a tone of surprise. "Yes, what are you going to do with it?"

"As to that," the man replied, "I never gave the subject a thought." "You won't sell it, I hope?"

"And why not?" "Sell poison!"

"What shall I do? Give it away?"

"O no. That would be as bad."

"Well, sir, what would you do, if you were in my place?"

"Why, I would throw every drop of it in the gutter. It will hurt no one there. You needn't be afraid of the hogs getting drunk, for a hog won't touch it."

"My liquors cost a good deal."

"No doubt of it. How much do you think?"

"Two hundred dollars, I should suppose."

"No more?" "I think not."

"There must be some mistake in your calculation," the president said; "you have forgotten the sighs and tears of abused and neglected wives and children. The money that bought your liquor cost all these, and more."

The man paused a moment, and then said, emphatically: "I'll do it! I've made enough men drunk in my time!"

And thus saying, he turned away and mingled with the crowd.

The books were then closed, seventy-five having signed the pledge that night. A few remarks were added by the president, and then the meeting broke up, and I returned home.

"How many a heart has been made glad to-night!" I said, as I threw myself upon my bed, and lay for hours, musing over the wonderful things I had seen, before my senses were locked in slumber.

## Night the Third.—The Tavern Keeper.

"Come, friend W—," said the President, during the evening on which I paid my third visit to the Washingtonians, "let us have your experience. That story about the 'Drunkard's Bible' has gone right home to the hearts and consciences of two or three tavern-keepers already, and there is no telling how much good may result from your coming out openly, and relating all you know of the evils of rum selling."

It was some moments before the individual thus addressed responded to the call made upon him by the President of the society. He was, evidently, unwilling to recall the past. But at length he arose, and proceeded to give his experience. It contained much of deep and painful interest, but many touching scenes were glanced at so briefly that I was far from being satisfied when he resumed his seat. I called upon him afterwards, and prevailed upon him to relate, more minutely than he had done at the meeting, the incidents that had struck me as of a peculiarly interesting character. These I now give in such form as I think calculated to make the deepest and most salutary impression. I trust that no tavern-keeper (seller of intoxicating drinks) will turn away from this history under the fear that I am going to overwhelm him with an effusion of gall and bitterness. I design only to lift for him a mirror, in which he may see his own reflection—and surely he will not shut his eyes to this pictured image, when all men look upon him and see him as he really is.

## The Tavern Keeper.

"I shall not attempt to justify myself," he said, "for having been a tavern-keeper. I might make many plausible excuses, but I will not conceal the fact that my reasons for first commencing, and afterwards continuing the traffic, were thoroughly selfish. I sought to benefit myself only, regardless who might be injured. It is true that I thought but little of the consequences to others, unless the subject was presented to me by some friend of temperance and humanity, and then I sought excuses; or if these did not avail to check his expostulations I would get angry and tell him, perhaps, that he had no business to meddle with what did not concern him."

"I was a journeyman mechanic when I first went into the business of selling liquor, and could earn, regularly, about thirteen dollars a week. I had two children, and was living very comfortably. But I was dissatisfied because I could not get ahead in the world. I wanted to make money fast. For some time I debated the propriety of commencing my business as a master-workman; but I had no capital, and dreaded getting into debt. At last it occurred to me, suggested no doubt by an evil spirit, that the most certain way to make money would be to open a small liquor store. Almost every one of my friends and acquaintances drank, and I thought they might as well spend their money with me as with any one else. I talked with them, and they encouraged me to enter the business, promising me their custom."

"From only one individual did I meet with opposition, and that individual was my wife."

"Ann," said I to her one day after I had pretty well made up my mind to open a grog-shop. "I believe I will try something else for a living; I have to work very hard now, and only make a bare subsistence."

"But what will you do?" she asked with an expression of concern.

"I've been thinking of opening a small tavern: it requires hardly any capital, and money can be made at the business. There is Wartman, who keeps down in the Marsh Market Space; he commenced with only five dollars, and now he is making money like dirt."

"Indeed I would not, Thomas," she replied, earnestly while a shadow fell upon her face.

"But why would you not, Ann? I'm sure it is the easiest and most profitable business now going."

"That may be; but still, Thomas, I wouldn't go into it."

"You must give me some reason for your objection, Ann," I said—"I have all the burden of providing for the family, and unless you can show me it is wrong to keep a tavern, you ought not to make any opposition."

"I am afraid it is wrong, Thomas," she replied in a more serious tone.

"Wrong, Ann! how can you possibly make that out?"

"There are so many drunken husbands and fathers now, and so many suffering wives and children in consequence, that I feel it would be wrong for us to engage in the sale of liquor."

"But don't you see, Ann," I urged, "that we have nothing to do with that? These men will drink, anyhow. If I do not open a shop, they will drink none the less in consequence; and why should I lose all the benefit to be derived from the sale of liquor because a few wretched creatures abuse a good thing, and make beasts of themselves?"

"Still, Thomas," urged my wife, "I would rather that you would not open a shop; I am sure we are getting on very well: I have all that I want, and am very happy in our present lot."

"But don't you see that our family is increasing?" I said, "and by and by we shall not be able to get along so comfortably as we now do."

"Let us trust in Providence, Thomas, and continue in a useful calling, from which no harm can possibly come to our neighbour," Ann replied, not at all convinced by my method of reasoning.

"But my mind was so nearly made up, that no argument or persuasion on the part of my wife could move me. In a short time I found a small house in Water-street, into which I moved, with my family, and opened a liquor store."

"Among my first customers were three of my fellow-workmen, all steady men, and temperate in their habits. They did not belong to a temperance society, for we had no temperance societies then; but they were not fond of drinking, and rarely went to a tavern. They were all married men, and all had children. As soon as I opened, these three men became regular visitors; they seemed to feel it a duty to encourage me, and drank more with that end in view than from any fondness of the liquor. But I could soon perceive that an appetite was forming; and this discovery pleased me very much, and at the same time it produced in my mind a feeling of contempt for their weakness. It pleased me, because, as I had only a purely selfish end in view, I was gratified with every indication that the end I had proposed to myself would be attained. I saw, that from selling them only a glass or two every evening, I should ere long come to sell them a dozen or two glasses every day! These were the kind of customers I wanted—men who spent some four or five dollars a week at my counter, regularly."

"The names of my three friends were Harrison Williams, Gustavus Ensler, and Manning Gray. Williams, at the time I opened my shop, had three children, a girl and two boys; the girl ten years old, and the boys, who were twins, seven years of age. His wife was a tidy woman, and took great pleasure in having everything around her neat and comfortable. She was tenderly attached to her husband, and loved her children with a mother's earnest affection."

"One evening, about five months after I had commenced my new business, my wife said to me:

"I saw Mrs. Williams in the street to-day, and she seemed so changed; she was pale, and had such a distressed look, my heart has ached for her ever since. What can the matter be? Something has gone wrong. She used to be so tidy and cheerful."

"It's not so much to be wondered at," I replied,—"Williams has taken to drinking like a fish."

"O, Thomas! is it possible?" my wife said, with an expression of pain in her countenance; "he didn't drink a few months ago; for it is not long since I heard Mrs. Williams speak about her husband's being so steady and attentive to his family."

"I did not reply to this, for I remembered, rather too keenly, that for this declension I was responsible. But I dismissed the thought instantly. On the next day, while on the street for a few minutes, I met the wife of Williams returning from market. The day was a cold one, but she was poorly clad. How sad and distressed was the expression of her countenance! I can remember it, even now, for the recollection has been rendered vivid by many and many a dream, in which her troubled face was presented."

"I felt uneasy in mind for hours after. There was something in her countenance when I met her that, once seen, could not soon be forgotten. It haunted me like an upbraiding spectre. That evening her husband came in as usual to drink in my bar-room. I looked at him as he came up to the counter and called for his first glass, more attentively than I had regarded him for some time. His face was not red and bloated as are the faces of many who drink to excess, but was thin and pale. Just as he

was about to lift to his lips the liquor I had poured out for him, he was seized with a violent fit of coughing. That cough was as familiar to my ear as his voice; I had heard it in that room a hundred times, but had never remarked it particularly before.

"That's a very bad cough," I said.

"Yes, and I'm afraid it will kill me," he replied.

"It most certainly will, unless you quit drinking," I had it on my tongue to say. But the thought of the four or five dollars a-week that I had received from him, regularly, choked the humane admonition!

"If he hasn't sense enough to see what's for his own good, he must go on as he is; it is no concern of mine, and I shall not meddle with it," I said to myself, as I turned to wait on another customer. How often have I reasoned thus myself, when the victim of the allurements which I had displayed for the weak and the unwary has stood before me!

"After this, I never could hear the loud, hollow, convulsive cough of my old fellow workman without an unpleasant sensation."

"You had better see a doctor about that cough, Williams," I would say to him sometimes: or, "You had better take care of that cough," or, "Do try, and have something done for that cough?" But I never could bring myself to say,—"you had better quit drinking, Williams, or that cough will kill you."

"In about a year from the time I opened my grog shop, Williams became a perfect sot. Between ill health, brought on by drinking, and his indisposition, from intemperate habits, to work, he abandoned all attempts to provide for his family. The burden, of course, fell upon his wife; a burden which she was not able to bear. From a comfortable, well-furnished house, she was driven, with her children, to a single room, in the garret of an old building in Commerce-street. Alas! what a change for one short year to accomplish! Ah! sir, the thought of that ruined family has been a thorn in my pillow many and many a time. But, with a resolute effort, I steadily endeavoured to harden my heart against the weakness, as I esteemed it, that made me feel troubled at such things."

"I am not responsible," I would argue, "for these consequences: I do not tell men to get drunk and abuse their families; I do not wish them to do so. Liquor is good in its place, and so is bread and meat; but either used to excess is injurious. If I were to sell a man a razor, and he were to cut his throat, or a pistol, and he were to blow his brains out, surely I would not be responsible! If I don't sell liquor somebody else will, and as people will buy it, I can see no reason why I should not have the profit to be gained in the sale of it, as well as any one else."

"Thus would I drive back and stifle the remonstrances within; and every time I did so, these remonstrances grew weaker and weaker."

"At last Williams became so feeble from the disease, the predisposing cause to which had been excited by drink, that he could only just creep about. He would come to my shop when he had no money and almost beg for liquor, which I would give him sometimes, and often refuse him. I could see the evil of his condition far more clearly when he had no money to pay me for liquor, than I could when from one to five dollars of his money went into my till weekly. I could say to him now—

"Williams, you had better stop drinking, or you cannot live; it is drink that excites your cough; try and quit it now, and I have no doubt but that you will recover again."

But my advice came too late; both the disease and appetite were too deeply rooted. Unlike many wives, during this period of dreadful trial, Mrs. Williams never upbraided, never spoke unkindly to her husband; and he was, I have learned, never ill-tempered at home.

"For a time the wife and mother was enabled, through incessant toil, early and late, to procure food for her children: but they were often reduced to pressing extremities. Sometimes the children would come to my shop for their father. I never liked this, for there was about them a look of patient suffering that troubled my conscience. They seemed to love their father tenderly, and their presence always appeared to awaken kind feelings in his bosom, enslaved as he was to the dreadful vice that had ruined himself, and entailed upon his family privation and misery in their worst forms. The daughter, then about eleven years of age, had the saddest face that ever I saw worn by a child. It was not disfigured, or rendered in its expression intensely painful, but in its quiet, unobtrusive, yet patient look of hopeless suffering, there was something that must have excited tears in any one, not hardened as I already was."

"It was, I think, about eighteen months after Williams had commenced visiting my shop regularly, that he failed to make his usual daily visits. I felt relieved at this, for

his presence had worried me for some time. He rarely had any money to spend for liquor, and there was already a score against him which I knew it was impossible for me to collect. But, besides all this, I could not shut my eyes to the fact, that in him was presented one of the first fruits of my experiment in tavern-keeping. Reason as I would, I could not make it appear, even to my own mind, that I was altogether guiltless in his ruin.

"For nearly two months I saw nothing more of him. And I never made inquiry, for I dreaded to hear his name mentioned. But, one morning, about this time, his little girl came in. How I did shrink from this unwelcome apparition. She looked pale and distressed—was poorly clad and barefoot.

"Mr. W——," she said, coming up to the bar, "father wishes to see you, if you will please to come down to our house."

"I can't spare the time, little girl," I replied. "Why can't your father come and see me?"

"Because he's sick. And he's been sick for a good while." "Is he very sick?" I asked.

"O yes. He can't sit up but a little at a time, and then he coughs, oh, so dreadfully!"

"What does he want to see me for?"

"I don't know, sir. But he does want to see you so bad! Do come, Mr. W——!"

"There was something in the manner and tone of the child that I could not resist, and so I promised that I would call down and see her father in the course of the morning. It was about two hours after that I entered one of those old brick houses that used to stand in Commerce above Pratt-street—now displaced by a row of large warehouses. On asking for Williams's family, I was directed to ascend to the garret. Up three pairs of dirty and dilapidated stairs I went, until I reached the attic. There I paused, before entering one of the apartments, into which I could see, though unperceived myself. I shall never forget what I there witnessed, though I have tried hundreds and hundreds of times to drive it from my memory. The noise of my ascending steps had been drowned to the inmates of that meagrely furnished room, by the convulsive cough that racked the frame of poor Williams.

"Let me get up, Mary," I heard him say, as the cough subsided. "I shall die if I do not sit up!"

"Then I could see him trying to raise himself from the bed, while his wife gently drew her arm around him, and then let his head fall upon her bosom.

"There, that will do, will it not?" she said tenderly, as his head reclined a little backwards.

"O no, no, Mary! I shall suffocate! Let me get up and sit in a chair for a little while."

And then his cough returned, agitating his whole frame violently.

"When this subsided, his wife assisted him to get upon the floor, and then, for the first time in many weeks, I saw his face. O, how thin and pale it was! And in it there was the ghastly expression of death!

"There, that will do," he said in a feeble voice, as he sunk into a chair, and let his head recline upon the bosom of his wife, while she held his body in an erect position.

"All was in a few moments as still as if no living beings were in that miserable room. His two little bare-footed boys seated themselves near him, with an earnest affection that his conduct towards his family had not been able to change, and while one looked up to him with a sorrowful countenance, the other hid his face, and wept noiselessly. As for the daughter who had called for me, her heart seemed touched by a consciousness that the worst had come. She stood near, weeping, but in silence.

"For a moment or two I hesitated whether to enter or retire. 'Why does he wish to see me?' I asked of myself. Perhaps to upbraid me with having ruined him and beggared his family, was the inward response.

"I could not but shudder at such thoughts, as I stood with Williams's distressed family before me; for I felt conscious that I had, indeed, been the cause of all this—and conscious, likewise, that death was very near, even upon the threshold of that humble apartment.

"I debated the question only for a few moments. Another violent fit of coughing disturbed the deep silence of the room, when I retired, the noise of my footsteps unobserved. Thus coward-like I retreated, for I could not face that man in life's last extremity, amid the sad mementoes of the ruin I had occasioned.

"He died in an hour after. I have never known why he wished to see me. As for his distressed family, they were taken away from the city by some friends who lived in a neighbouring town, and I have never, since that moment, seen one of its members. But, if not present to my bodily eyes, they were, for many months afterwards, ever present to my mental vision.

"Ah, sir, is not the ruin of that family's hopes and happiness a terrible thing to have upon a man's conscience? I feel it so. For, look at it as I will, reason about it as I will, I cannot convince myself that I am not altogether responsible for Williams's degradation, and the ruin of his family. He was, as I have said, a temperate, industrious man, kind and provident to his family, when I opened my shop. And he came to my shop, at first, only under the kind and friendly impulse of assisting me by his custom in my new business. But in so doing, the appetite for liquor was formed, and he was lost and his family ruined. A strange return indeed did I make him for his kind and generous feelings.

"If I ever repented seriously of having opened a shop for the sale of liquor, it was after the death of Mr. Williams. For weeks I was a sadder man. But gradually, as I resisted the impulse which I felt to give up the ruinous traffic, that impulse became weaker and weaker, and, at last, I could again pour out and mix liquors for a thirsty drunkard, who was reducing himself and his family to a state of ruin and degradation, without a single reproving emotion.

"I never felt so bad in my life, as I did yesterday," remarked Gustavus Ensler, one of my old fellow workmen, mentioned as among my earliest customers, coming in for his glass on the day after Williams's funeral.

"Why?" I asked, not thinking, at the moment, to what he alluded.

"To see poor Williams carried out of that garret as he was!"

"Is Williams dead?" inquired one who had often seen him drinking at my bar.

"Yes, poor fellow!" Ensler said. "He has gone to his long home."

"I thought he couldn't stand it a great while the last time I saw him," the other said.

"What ailed him?"

"Consumption," I replied, quickly.

"Consumption brought on by drinking?" Ensler said, coolly and deliberately, looking me steadily in the face. "That was it, I believe, Mr. W——. Don't you think so?"

"No! I do not think so," I responded, in a positive tone of voice.

"Well, I do then. And what is more, I know so! Before you opened this shop, Mr. W——, he hadn't a sign of a cough. And you know that he didn't drink a drop then, once in a month. But after he began drinking pretty hard, his cough commenced and grew worse and worse, until it killed him."

"Well, I don't believe a word of it!" I said, doggedly. "He would have died anyhow."

"Not in a garret, at least!" Ensler said, looking at me significantly.

"What do you mean?" I asked in an angry tone, for I felt that more was implied than were contained in his words.

"I'll tell you what I mean," said my old fellow workman, now a little excited by liquor, straightening himself up, and eyeing me steadily, and somewhat contemptuously. "I mean, that if you hadn't taught him to love liquor in this confounded grog shop of yours, and then taken away all his money that should have gone to the support of his family, he wouldn't have died in a garret. That is what I mean!"

"Truth bites sore," is a homely but expressive adage. I felt the truth of what Ensler said, and it roused me into a violent passion.

"Go out of my shop, you insulting scoundrel!" I responded, loud and angrily, coming out from the bar, and confronting him in the middle of the room.

"I'll go out when I please," was his cool reply.

"If you don't go out I will kick you out!" This I said with a determination to do what I threatened.

"Two can play at such a game, remember," he said, calmly, still eyeing me without the slightest apparent sensation of fear. Seeing that I hesitated to put my threat into execution, he added, as he took a deep inspiration,—

"And now, Mr. W——, that I feel in the humour, I will tell you a piece of my mind that I have long wished to speak out. In my opinion you are little better than a land-pirate. It is true, you don't kill bodies for money—but you do worse. You corrupt and ruin souls, and trifle with the hopes and happiness of whole families for gain. You kill the better part for gold! Eighteen months ago, there were, in this city, three happy families, at the heads of which were three sober, industrious, and kind husbands and fathers. At that time you opened this shop, and invited those husbands and fathers to come up and help you to get along in the world. And they came. They bought your liquor, not because they loved to drink it, but because they wished to encourage their fellow-workmen. But, they soon got to love it, and you encouraged

them to drink. You saw their danger, and instead of warning them, you spread new allurements in their way, thus wooing and wooing them on to ruin, that you might build yourself up upon their downfall. You have increased in worldly goods—and they have decreased. Yesterday one of your victims was buried from a garret—was taken out from amid his half-starving wife and children, and buried in the potter's field! The other I saw staggering in the street as I came here this morning; and here is the third, a poor, fallen, debased drunkard! Look at your handy work?"

"And the poor creature drew himself up and stood confronting me.

"Out of my house this instant, or I will be the death of you!" I cried passionately, advancing a step towards him in a menacing attitude.

"But he did not move a foot or change a muscle.

"There is little left to kill," he said in a mournful tone, seeing that I hesitated. "You have begun the work, it is but meet that you should finish it. Strike! I am ready!"

"There was a moral dignity in the voice, manner, and expression of the poor wretch whom I had been instrumental in ruining, that subdued me. I could not touch him. My anger subsided, and I felt as I never felt before. O, how wretched, and conscience-stricken!"

"Go away, Gustavus," I said in a changed voice. "Go away, and do not come here any more. If I have been the cause, as you say that I have, of your ruin, be your own saviour from that ruin. Go away! Quit drinking and be a man again."

"I felt some touches of kindness towards him, and my voice expressed my feelings. He looked at me for a moment or two, and then bursting into tears, said—

"I will be a man again! From this hour I will never drink a drop!"

"Then he turned away slowly and left my house.

"Why what in the world has come over our old crony Gus?" said Manning Gray, the other individual of the trio of friends whom my shop had ruined, on the next morning as he came in.

"What is the matter with him?" I asked, in some concern.

"He's sworn off, he says," Gray replied, laughing in great glee at what seemed to him a good joke.

"Sworn off from drinking?" I inquired.

"Yes, he says he's not going to touch another drop of liquor as long as he lives! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Well, Manning, do you know what I would do if I were in your place?" I said.

"No, what would you do?"

"Why I would follow his example."

"Swear off?" "Yes."

"You're joking?"

"I never was more serious in my life," I said. And I was serious. I had seen enough of Williams and Ensler. I had found that it was no light thing to be instrumental in ruining a friend. Not that I cared for others—I cared only for myself from unpleasant consequences.

"You have drunk long enough and hard enough," I continued. "Stop now, while there is some little power left."

"Ha! ha!" he responded gaily. "Our landlord has turned temperance preacher; that is too good! No, no, friend W——, you don't come it over me in that way. Give us a gin toddy, and make it good and strong."

"No, Manning, I will do no such thing," I replied. "I have sold you the last glass of liquor that you will ever drink at my bar."

"You are not in earnest, W——," he said, his manner becoming instantly changed.

"Yes, I am in earnest, was my positive answer.

"It was fully half an hour before I got him to leave my house. During that time he used towards me the severest and most insulting language that he could utter, all of which I endeavoured to bear in the best way that I could. It availed nothing that I steadily persisted in not selling him liquor. He still continued to drink and neglect his family, and died finally in the street, a drunkard to the last.

"But Ensler became a sober, industrious man, and in the course of a year or two, had everything around him again comfortable.

"As for myself, I found the sale of liquor to be profitable, and commenced gradually to accumulate money. Two years after I had opened my grog-shop in Water-street, I was offered the tavern on — road, about six miles from the city. It was represented to have a good wagon and travellers' custom, and as I had money enough already laid by to purchase the necessary furniture, I accepted the proposition and moved out. My family then consisted of my wife and three children, the eldest a boy about eleven years of age.

"While moving in my furniture, a venerable old man waited on me, and introduced himself as a minister, who had lived in the little town upon the edge of which the tavern stood, for the last thirty years. I of course received him kindly, and invited him to walk in and sit down.

"So you are to be our new tavern keeper," he said with a smile, after we were seated alone.

"Yes," I replied, with a feeling of self satisfaction at the position of importance that I was evidently about to occupy in the village. "I have come here for that purpose."

"Well, tavern-keepers are very useful people," the old man said. "But there is one thing about which I should like to talk with you, before you open your house. All who have been here before you, have kept a bar for the sale of liquors; and it has done great harm in our village. Now, as a lover of mankind, I feel bound to approach you thus early upon this subject, and I do hope that you will regard my remonstrance against the sale of liquor."

"But that would never do, sir," I replied. "Whoever heard of a tavern without a bar?"

"I know," he said, in a mild tone, "that it is usual for those who keep houses of entertainment for travellers and the public, to sell intoxicating liquors; but I never could see why this was necessary."

"It is necessary, for, in its sale, lies the principal source of profit derived from the business."

"But, surely, my friend," the old man urged—"a mere question of dollars and cents should never decide any one to do a thing that will injure his neighbour. And, certainly, to tempt those who are weak to resist an inclination thus tempted, is to do a very great injury."

"You would have me to be too disinterested," I replied. "I might starve to death for the good of my neighbours, and they wouldn't thank me for it. And besides, if I didn't sell liquor to people who wanted it, they would go somewhere else and get it."

"I know, my friend," the minister said, in his mild, yet earnest way—"that your last argument is thought to be a very strong one. But it will not apply with its usual force here. We have no place in our village where liquor is sold."

"You have a store, I'm sure," I said, interrupting him.

"True. But the man who keeps it has a conscientious regard to the good of his neighbour. He does not sell liquor."

"Why, I never heard of such a thing!" I responded, inwardly delighted at the idea that I should have a monopoly of the business.

"Still it is true in this instance. And I most earnestly hope that I shall be able to prevail on you to follow so good an example."

"At this I shook my head.

"I do not profess to be quite so disinterested," was my answer, "as all that comes to. I keep a tavern for my own benefit, the same as you preach for your benefit. People are free agents, you tell us, and if they want liquor, they should be free to drink it. I shall, therefore, most certainly keep it, and sell it to all who wish to buy."

"The old man looked deeply and painfully concerned at this, and once more attempted to influence me.

"Surely," he urged, "you cannot speak your real sentiments. Every man is bound to regard the effect which his conduct will have upon others. I cannot think that you are so thoroughly devoted to gain, as to shut out from your mind every benevolent feeling. The man who robs another of his money, only acts independent of law, upon the same principle that you profess to act under the protection of the law. He has only a regard for himself, and looks upon all mankind as fit subjects of plunder. You, acting upon such motives as you declare, in engaging in a traffic that injures your fellow men, do not really stand, in a moral point of view, upon a higher basis. He takes away their money forcibly, while they are in a rational state of mind—you render them, in a certain sense, irrational, and take the money, which they freely tender while in that state. Now seriously, my friend, discriminate, if you can, between the moral guilt of the two actions. Both are under the promptings of a selfishness that has no regard for others. The one takes the money of his victims by violent means—the other, by allurements spread forth for a depraved appetite, secures to himself their money, and not only beggars those who yield it, even if it be given voluntarily, but brutalizes them, and entails the deepest misery, and often the greatest sufferings, upon their families. Ah, sir! viewed in this aspect the effect of the man's acts upon society who sells intoxicating liquor, is a thousand times more injurious than that of the robber who takes only the gold of the individual he plunders."

"There was a power of truth in what that old man said. But the truth, when brought into opposition to what a man not only wishes, but is resolved to do, always irri-

tates him. I, of course, felt very angry at what the minister said, and replied in an excited tone:

"I cannot suffer myself to be insulted in my own house, even by an old man and a minister! You class me with thieves and robbers, and then try to influence me, even while you declare that I am worse than those outlaws, who plunder society. I will not hear such language, sir!"

"Pardon me," the old man said, meekly, "if I have offended you. I did not wish to do so. I only presented, in the strongest possible light, your act as a seller of intoxicating drink, in the hope that such a view would influence you. If you did not see that view to be the correct one, I cannot but regret it exceedingly. The consequence to many in this village, if you persist, will be, I know, deplorable." And the old man's voice trembled, and had in it something very mournful.

"To this, I made some angry reply that cut short the interview, and then the minister retired. Of course his visit troubled me. But I shook off its influence as well as I could, and went on to arrange my bar, and make as handsome a display of my liquors as possible. In a few days I was ready to open my tavern and receive customers. I had everything very neatly arranged, so as to make my house attractive as a place of resort, both to the young men of the village, and for the reception of such visitors as I expected from the city during the summer season.

"On the evening of the day upon which I announced, by handbill, that my tavern was open, and my bar well stocked with the choicest liquors, I had about a dozen visitors, principally residents of the village. They admired the arrangements of my bar, complimented me on my taste, and drank and paid for my liquors freely, which they pronounced to be of the very best quality.

"Among them was a young man, whose appearance interested me at once. He was not, apparently, over twenty years of age. His dress, manners, and language, indicated that he was far superior in education to any of those with whom he associated. I observed that he drank freely—the consequence was that he became partially intoxicated early in the evening.

"Now give us a song, Samuel," said one of the company, about nine o'clock, slapping him on the shoulder.

"Yes, a song! a song! Nobody can sing a song like Sam Harman!" responded another.

"Would you prefer a song to a hymn tune, or a hymn to a song tune?" the young man replied, with a grave air.

"Oh, a hymn to a song tune, of course!" replied one.

"No—no—" said another, "a song to a hymn tune."

"At last the matter was settled, and a song was sung with fine effect.

"Now let us have a sermon," cried one.

"Yes, a sermon! a sermon!" ran round the room.

"And in a few moments the young man was mounted on a chair. He took a text, and went on to preach for about ten minutes, in a strain that indicated a finely cultivated mind, but alas! sadly perverted. Sometimes he would utter the most imposing and solemn truths, in a way that made the blood seem to trickle coldly through my veins—and then he would go off into a burlesque caricature, or light and witty declamation, that set the whole room in a roar of laughter.

"What would the old gentleman think of that, if he had heard it?" said one of the company.

"He would think his son quite a promising young man, I suppose," replied Harman, laughing. "I was set apart for a minister, you know, and I'm only trying to get my hand in a little."

"This was met, of course, by an encouraging laugh. It was nearly eleven o'clock when my company went away, and then the young man just alluded to, had to be supported by two of his drinking companions.

"On counting the money in my drawer, I found that I had made a very good beginning. My visitors understood the art of drinking. It was very certain that they were no strangers to a bar-room.

"I have done very well indeed," I said to my wife, on closing my house for the night, "I shall have plenty of custom here, I have not the least doubt."

"Who was the young man that sung so sweetly?" my wife asked.

"I don't know who he is. But he is a smart fellow, that is certain. He preached a sermon to-night equal to any minister."

"But ain't it a pity," my wife remarked, "that such a young man should throw himself away?"

"It does seem a pity. But he is young, and will be all the wiser, after a few years, for having sowed his wild oats."

"I hope so. But young men who drink, rarely become less fond of liquor as they grow older."

"Well that's no concern of mine," I replied, a little warmly.

"My wife understood my humour, and said no more on the subject."

Wishing, for greater effect, to combine incidents learned from the tavern-keeper and facts gathered from another source, I will, for a time, let him step aside, and relate things in my own way.

About nine o'clock on the evening succeeding the day, on which W—— had opened his tavern, in the village of —, as had been above noted, the venerable old man, who had called upon him to remonstrate against the sale of liquor, sat conversing with his wife, likewise well stricken in years. The subject that occupied their thoughts seemed to be a painful one, for upon each aged countenance rested an expression of deep concern.

"He has not been out so late as this for a week," remarked the old man, breaking in upon a silence of some moments.

"No, but perhaps he is spending the evening in Mr. Willmot's family," was the doubting suggestion.

"There is little hope of that, I am afraid. To-day that wretched drinking-house at the lower end of the town was again opened, and I tremble lest our boy has been tempted to go there."

"Surely my child will not again visit a place that has, already, well-nigh ruined him!"

"I hardly dare hope," and as he said so, the old man drew towards him a large family Bible that lay upon the table near which he was sitting, and slowly turned over its sacred pages. It was the hour for evening prayer, and their youngest born, and only remaining child, was away; and worse than all, they feared, within the fangs of the destroyer. Before the father commenced reading, he paused, and listened for the sound of approaching footsteps. But he listened in vain. Then, with a sigh, he turned to the holy book before him, and read a portion of its sacred truths. The prayer that succeeded was offered up in a deeply fervent, trembling voice.

"Father of mercies!" he said, as he drew near the close of his petition, and his tones were full of touching pathos. "Remember the child of many prayers! Regard the one so prone to wander away from Thee, seeking pasture upon the bleak and barren mountain of sin. O, bring him back, Good Shepherd, to thy fold, and incline his heart to love Thy counsels! Thy servants are now well stricken in years, and are waiting patiently for their change. Let not their grey hairs go down in sorrow to the grave. Let them not see the son of their old age still straying from Thee, enticed away by the allurements of the wicked one. Thus we pray Thee, for the son of our love. Hear us, and regard us, and pardon us, if in our earthly affections we presume to ask unwisely."

After they had arisen from their knees, they sat silent and thoughtful for a long time, each listening intently for the sound of approaching footsteps.

"There he comes!" half whispered the mother, as a distant sound caught her ear.

And they both sat, half bending forward, noticing each foot-fall that drew nearer and nearer, yet still unable to determine whether it was their boy or not who was almost at their door, and with hearts beating audibly, they half arose from their seats, expecting, yet fearing, to see their child enter. But, alas! the sound went by, and grew fainter and fainter, until all was again hushed in deep and oppressive silence. A long, tremulous sigh, attested the disappointment that chilled their hearts, as they sunk back into the chairs from which they had half arisen.

A whole hour passed in anxious expectation, and still the son came not. At the end of that time the old man said—

"You had better go and lie down, Rachel; I will wait for Samuel."

"No—I will sit up with you. I could not sleep if I were to go to bed. But where can he be?"

"Let us prepare our hearts for the worst, Rachel," the old man said, meekly bowing his head, and endeavouring to lift his heart upwards. "Our child is in the hands of One who cares for him, and who loves him with a purer love than our weak hearts are capable of feeling, and let us trust him there. I know, for myself, that I have made an idol of that boy. He was our youngest, most beautiful, and most innocent child. How often have I looked into his gentle face, and trembled lest he should be taken away. He seemed too lovely, too pure, in his early years, to live in this world of sin and misery. Alas! that his garments should be soiled! That he should fall in love with evil!"

The maternal response to this was a gush of tears, accompanied by a low, suppressed moan, and then all was again as silent as death. Another hour passed slowly away, and yet there was no indication of the approach of

the absent one. Who can tell, who can imagine all, nay even a tithe of what the hearts of that aged couple must have suffered during that hour of painful suspense!

"I can bear this no longer," the old man said, as the clock rang out with, to them, startling distinctness, the hour of eleven, rising at the same time, and taking up his hat and cane.

"Hark!" ejaculated the eagerly listening, expectant mother, as the sound of the clock died away, and there fell around them again a deep, oppressive silence.

"What?" asked the father in a deep whisper, bending his ear towards the door, "I don't hear anything."

"There, don't you hear that?" the mother said, as a distant but almost imperceptible sound came borne on the sluggish air.

"I cannot hear anything," the father responded in a disappointed tone as he raised himself up from his listening attitude.

"There it is again!" ejaculated the mother—"it is like a distinct laugh. There, don't you hear it?"

"Yes, I do now distinctly: some drunken revellers, no doubt, from W——'s tavern. Pray heaven our boy be not among them!"

The sounds that had in their far-off, low murmur, been perceived by the mother's quick ear, became louder and more distinct. Now some snatches of a song could be heard, now a loud laugh, and anon a wild scream, rising on the still air and dying away in distant echoes.

The minister's house stood upon the principal street of the village, and along this street the party of noisy revellers were approaching. As they drew nearer and nearer the father and mother listened anxiously for the voice of their son. Now it seemed to them that its familiar tones came upon their ears, but still they doubted and trembled in heart with an uncertain fear.

A few moments passed, the sounds drawing nearer and nearer, and then all was hushed into silence. Presently there was hurried whispering close by the window. In the next moment the door opened, and their boy, their youngest born and dearest one, was thrust in, and came reeling across the floor!

Neither the father nor the heart-stricken mother uttered a word, although both instantly arose to their feet as their son came in thus, bearing about him the indubitable evidences of having again been indulging a vice to which, even thus early in life, he had shown a strange inclination. For a moment the old man looked at his boy, and in that moment there was in his heart a powerful struggle with emotions that well-nigh mastered him; then he took him calmly by the hand and led him away to his chamber, where he left him in silence and in darkness.

Side by side, with sleep banished from their eyelids, did the aged minister and his wife lie for hours, but neither could suggest to the other a thought of comfort. It was nearly daydawn when wearied nature sought refuge in a troubled slumber.

On the next morning Mr. Harman felt a painful sense of weakness and incompetency, as he thought of his son, and of his duty in regard to him. That son had now arrived at years of rationality, and he could not, therefore, use any measures of compulsion; and remonstrance and persuasion he felt to be almost in vain, where shame seemed to be impotent in its influence over him. He did not, when he met him at the breakfast table, make any allusion to the occurrence of the previous evening; but he could not be familiar with him, nor cheerful in his manner. As for the mother, her countenance was a sad index of the anguish of her mind. The morning meal passed, of course, in painful, embarrassing silence, and was quickly over. After rising from the table, the young man took down his hat and was moving towards the door, when his father said in a low, but meaning tone—"Samuel!" The son turned quickly round and looked at his father inquiringly in the face.

"Where are you going, Samuel?" Mr. Harman asked in a voice that sounded mournful to the ear of his son.

"Nowhere in particular," was the answer, in a respectful tone.

"Then, if you have no particular reason for going out, Samuel, why not stay at home? there is danger abroad, my child."

The son laid down his hat and stood thoughtful some moments: at length, as a tear fell upon his hand, he said in a voice that trembled—

"I know that I am almost breaking your hearts. I think about my conduct oftener than you imagine, and sometimes it seems as if these reflections would drive me crazy. But I am led on, it seems to me, at times, by an almost irresistible impulse."

"Only keep away from temptation, my child, and you are safe," the father said, going up and grasping the young man's hand.

"O yes, Samuel, do keep away from temptation!" the mother urged, coming to his side, and taking the other hand between both her own.

The tears that gushed from the young man's eyes were tears of heartfelt repentance.

"I could curse the man who opened that tavern!" he said with bitterness, as he grew calmer. "I have felt no inclination to drink since the house was closed two months ago. But the moment I saw the announcement that it would open yesterday, I felt an almost irresistible desire to go there. With this desire I struggled all day. At night I was too weak to resist it. And much I fear, my dear parents, (and his voice trembled again, and was deeply pathetic and tender) that I shall not be able to control the desire which at times comes over me. Were it not for your sakes, I feel that I should give up the contest without another effort. I do not care for myself. Indeed, it seems to me that the degraded life of a drunkard cannot make any one more miserable than will the struggle to which I shall be subjected, with this temptation daily before my eyes. I speak the truth when I say, that I wish that man had died before he came to this place to tempt men's souls to ruin."

"But, surely, Samuel, the successful struggle against such an evil desire, is worth all the pain of mind it may cost you," the old man said. "In good resolutions, when they flow down into an effort to resist what is wrong, there is always a power from heaven. And there is a power that must conquer, when, in the good resolution, there is trust in the Lord. Look up to Him, then, in your conscious weakness, and He will be your almighty strength. When you feel tempted, raise your thoughts to Him in an acknowledgment of your own helplessness, and pray, 'Deliver us from evil,' and He will be present with you in that prayer, and give strength to support you. Try, my son, in this way; cast aside all confidence in yourself, and trust in Him who will ever be present to help you in your good resolutions."

The son did not reply, and there followed many minutes of oppressive silence. Then the mother retired from the room, and in a little while the father also, and the young man was left alone. He had been designed by his father to fill the sacred office that he himself held—the office of minister,—and had been educated to that end under the father's care. But for a year or so past, it had become apparent, that the moral tone of the young man's mind was becoming strangely perverted. He not only associated with low company, but frequented the tavern, and often drank to partial intoxication.

When this fact became apparent to Mr. Harman, it inflicted a pang, the poignancy of which few can imagine. As to the mother, the shock seemed more than she could bear. For a time remonstrance was tried, but it produced little effect. As the young man's rational mind developed itself, it seemed that his evil propensities had become stronger, and his inclination to resist them less active. At times he would seem to make an earnest struggle against the current that was bearing him on to ruin, but the struggle was always brief, and unsuccessful. He was gradually growing more and more dissipated, more and more neglectful of his books, and more and more disinclined to look into those works of doctrine and religious precept, which formed a portion of his studies. The good old man, his father, was beginning to despair of his son, when the tavern-keeper moved, and the establishment was broken up. There being no other drinking house in the village, there was no other place of resort to tempt the idle and infatuated; and Samuel Harman became at once, apparently, a changed young man. He resumed his studies with an attention and assiduity, that made the hearts of his father and mother thrill again with hope. This he continued for two months, when W—— re-opened the house. The sequel is known.

A few brief sentences will tell the rest of this sad tale. After tea on the evening of the day succeeding that in which W—— opened the tavern, Samuel found means to go out unobserved by his parents. At eleven o'clock he was brought home drunk to helplessness and insensibility! On the next night the same thing occurred. And so on the next and the next.

On the morning of the fourth day the minister went over to see the tavern-keeper, and remonstrated with him.

"Mr. W——," he said, "I have a favour to ask of you. You have already refused me one, but do not refuse my present request."

"I shall not promise," W—— replied, coldly, "but say on."

"My request is, then, that you will not sell my son any more liquor."

The tavern-keeper shook his head.

"I do not feel authorised," he replied, "to refuse any one who calls for liquor at my bar. My house is one of

public entertainment, and I am, therefore, bound to entertain the public. Why, you might as well say that I shouldn't sell a man an axe, if I were keeping a store, because he might kill himself with it."

"You certainly should not sell it to him if you knew he were going to kill himself with it. That is clear. Neither should you sell liquor to my son, when you know that he is destroying both body and soul by the use of it. A druggist will not sell any one laudanum, unless he has conclusive evidence to his own mind that no improper use is going to be made of it. And yet you will sell a poison that as surely destroys life as laudanum, though less rapidly, and you not only sell it to those who intend making an improper use of it, but encourage them to drink it in your very presence. Surely, sir, you do not reflect on what you are doing!"

W—grew angry at this, and replied in so insulting a style to the old man, that he retired, hopeless of moving the landlord by any humane considerations.

The downward course of young Harman was rapid from this time forth. In six months he died of that dreadful disease, delirium tremens, his father and mother heart-broken witnesses of his last awful ravings and horrible fears.

But a few days, and those full of trouble, passed, before they too went down in sorrow to the grave.

"I saw," said W—, "both funeral processions pass my tavern. First, that of the son, and in a few months afterwards, that of the father and mother, both borne out at the same time, and laid side by side."

"They have gone where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest," said, with a sigh, one of the villagers, who had already become a daily frequenter of my tavern, as he came in from the door at which he had observed the passing funeral.

"I felt that there was more than the expression of a simple sentiment in what the man uttered. I was conscious, as he passed by me, and seated myself, in gloomy silence, that he was thinking of me—and that he was thinking of me as one of the wicked who had troubled that old man's peace. But I was not long held in suspense."

"W—," he said suddenly, and with emphasis, "I would not have on my conscience the sin of bringing that good old man's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave, not for ten thousand worlds!"

"Nor would I," was my response; but my words seemed to choke me as I uttered them, and I felt strangely confused.

"But the sin is on your conscience!" the man said, rising to his feet, and coming up to me, his countenance expressing anger and pain. "You have killed that good old man! You are his murderer, sir!"

"I cannot, and I will not permit any one to use such language to me!" I replied, confronting him with a stern look.

"You will have to permit it, in this instance at least," was his cool answer, while he continued to look me steadily in the face. "And remember," he added, "that it is the truth that accuses you, not I. Before you came here and opened this accursed place, Samuel Harman had been tempted with liquor, and had fallen. But the man who had tempted him went away, and then he was himself again, and did not seem to desire what had so well-nigh been his ruin. Hope had again begun to spring up in the hearts of his parents, when, alas! some evil spirit sent you here with your mean, selfish love of gain, that would not hesitate to rob even the dead! That kind old man, so deeply beloved by all, remonstrated with you, but in vain. He might as well have spoken to the north wind! Your first victim was his beloved child. Then he begged you would not sell liquor to that infatuated boy. But with a feeling that a devil might have envied, you still held the cup to his lips! At last the boy died—and do you think, sir, that you were not his murderer? If ever a man was guilty of the blood of another, you are guilty of the blood of that boy! And not of his only, but the blood of his parents clings to the skirts of your garments!"

The man paused, and I was too excited with anger to reply before he resumed.

"Think, sir, for one moment," he said, "how lost to every humane emotion you must be, when you can, day after day, mix your poisons for the souls and bodies of men, and hand it to your deluded victims, with your smiles and gentle words, even while you are conscious that many of them are fast losing all power over themselves. Do not imagine, sir, that you are guiltless in regard to these men! Their blood will yet rise up and curse you! The day will come, in this world, or in the next, when you will reap the whirlwind. And now, sir, we part for ever. From this hour I am a free man—from this hour, I neither touch, taste, nor handle the unclean

thing! Others may dally with the serpent whose fangs are just ready to penetrate their vitals—others may encourage, by inducements and example, the weak ones around them to sin, but I will be guiltless of so dreadful a crime."

And thus saying, with a calm energy that subdued the storm of passion pent up within my bosom, the man, who had been among my best customers, turned away, and slowly left my house. His feet never again crossed the threshold of my tavern.

"It would be doing injustice to myself were I to say, that I felt altogether indifferent about the death of the minister, his wife and son. Nor could I drive from my mind the painful consciousness that I was too deeply involved in the guilt of their premature removal under circumstances of so much pain. For a time, there was a struggle in my mind between a perception that I was doing wrong to tempt my neighbours, and a selfish love of gain. But my selfishness prevailed, and then I went on again, calmly, in the course I had already chosen with deliberation. But, in my case, at least—I cannot speak for others—there was always occurring something to bring up distinctly before my mind, a sense of the evil I was doing in society. The current of my life did not run smoothly on, notwithstanding I was gradually accumulating this world's goods. I am sure, that the aggregate of unhappiness which I suffered while a tavern-keeper, consequent upon the evil growing out of my sales of intoxicating liquors, overbalanced a hundred times all the delight I experienced from a gratified love of gain. A far happier man would I have been as a poor, industrious mechanic, seeking my pillow, nightly, with a quiet mind, than I have been, a seller of liquid poison, with the fearful burden of ruined souls upon my conscience. Ah, sir! when I recall the past, I feel it almost vain for me to place any hope upon the future. It seems as if I had sinned past forgiveness. How can I meet my victims in the next world? Is not that a fearful thought?"

And the tavern-keeper shuddered and grew pale.

"But to proceed with my story that I now regret having begun. I was fondly attached to my eldest boy, then about twelve years of age, and took great pains to have him well educated. He was a beautiful boy—mild in his disposition and intelligent. I had two children beside, a boy and a girl, and I loved them very much. There was a man who was engaged in hauling stones past my tavern who stopped to get a dram every time he was on his way by. Sometimes the children would climb up into his cart, while he was in the bar getting a drink, but as his horse was gentle, I paid little attention to them, not apprehending any danger.

"One day while I was in town, this man came past as usual, and as usual stopped to get some liquor. It so happened that my oldest child was home from school, and was amusing himself with two or three playmates. The moment the driver went into the tavern, they, with my youngest boy, eight years old, got into the cart and commenced hallooing to the horse. The animal started off, and the children set up a loud cry of alarm. When the driver came out he saw the horse dashing off at full speed, and instantly started in pursuit. But before he could overtake him, the cart was upset, and my youngest boy killed instantly! The elder having fallen out before, his mother came up to him while the driver pursued the horse, and lifting him up in her arms, found that his back was broken.

"Something troubled me as I returned from the city on that day. The nearer I drew towards home the more uneasy did I become. It was in vain that I strove to shake off the gloomy impression that had taken possession of my mind, it grew more and more painful the nearer I came to the village. At last I entered my house, to find my vague fears terribly realised. There was my youngest boy, dead, his tender body torn and bruised and broken—and there was my eldest, upon whom I had so often looked with pride, screaming in pain, and shockingly disfigured. But if I suffered, how was the heart of their mother riven with anguish?

"Strange as it may seem, not one of the three children who were in the cart with my own, was injured. On the next day we buried our little one out of our sight. But the disfigured body of the other was ever before our eyes, and for a long time, the memory of his groans and cries of pain in our ears. Neither my wife nor myself felt again happy in the village of —, and in a few months after, we removed to the city, where I opened a larger and more attractive drinking house in — street. Here I remained for fifteen years, gradually accumulating money, and added house to house and lot to lot.

"Many a sad tale could I tell you, of young men who during that time have frequented my house. I will not say that I ruined them, or even that I taught them to

drink. They came most of them to my house after the taste had been formed; but this much I did, I used every means in my power to allure them to my house, and to make them feel pleasant while there. That I was accessory to their ruin, I cannot deny.

"There was young P—, you knew him, no doubt. He was the youngest son of P—, the wealthy merchant. His father gave him, of course, the very best education. No young man I am sure ever commenced the world with fairer prospects than he did. He was a lawyer, you remember. Well, when he was admitted to the bar, and argued his first case, the whole court-room was electrified with the sudden burst of powerful eloquence that he poured forth. It was not, I have heard it said, a mere declamatory appeal, but a soundly rational argument that he presented, clothed with a richness of language, that made it irresistible. On that very night he came to my house, with half a dozen companions, flushed with the excitement of success, and before ten o'clock had drunk to intoxication.

"What a pity!" remarked an elderly man, leaning against the counter, and sipping his brandy and water.

"Indeed it is!" I said in a tone of assumed pity. "But this is only a little frolic. He will sow his wild oats, by and by."

"I hope so," was the response, in a concerned tone, and then he walked away.

"From this time forth, there were few evenings that young P— did not come to my tavern. But it was some years before his habits made any apparent impression on his prospects. At last it was not to be concealed, even from his most indulgent friends, that the light of a strong intellect was growing dim; that the promise of early years was fading. Then came the remonstrances of those who could venture to remonstrate—the persuasions and gentler efforts of parents and sisters; but alas! all was vain. The ardor of an insatiable desire, was more potent than the strongest reason, or the most tender allurements; down, down, down, slowly, but regularly, step by step, did he go, and at last sunk to the grave in the bloom of manhood, the few green laurels that he had won, already faded upon his brow!

"Is it not a fearful thing to trifle with intoxicating drinks? Who can tell the moment when the equilibrium of his mind will be destroyed—the moment when the power to refrain from the cup of confusion will leave him? It has left, and is still leaving, hundreds, daily, who but a week before would laugh at your suggestion of danger. And when this equilibrium is destroyed, with what a fatal energy, despite the highest, the holiest, the tenderest considerations, does the victim go on his downward way! Since I have abandoned the wicked traffic, and have been able to look at these things, free from the selfishness that had for years beclouded my mind, I experienced such an overpowering solicitude for those who are venturing on the enchanted ground, that I feel as if I could lift up my voice and cry, 'beware!' at the corners of every street. But to proceed with my rambling narrative.

"I can count up fifty or sixty young men, the flower of our city, who have been ruined by drink. There is scarcely a family of any distinction among us, into which the destroyer has not entered at some point. Scarcely a mother's heart that has not trembled with fear, or been wrung with the keenest anguish. And who is responsible for these things? For there is responsibility somewhere. Great evils like these are not the result of chance. I point, with confidence, to two classes in society, and am bound to consider them responsible. These two classes are the distillers and the vendors of intoxicating liquors. I as one of the latter class, feel that I have my weight of responsibility to bear, and a fearful one, I am conscious, that it is. But I must bear it, and so must all who are now, or have been, engaged in the traffic.

"There are but two circumstances more to which I shall allude, and those two are, to me, the most painful of any I have related. I told you that my eldest boy, a promising lad, was crippled by a fall from a cart, while the driver was drinking at my bar-room. It was a long time before he was able to get about, and then he was, to all eyes but those of his parents, a loathsome object. Not only was his body disfigured, but his countenance, once regular and beautiful in contour and expression, became distorted and painful to look upon. His disposition, too, was changed. From a cheerful, generous, light-hearted boy, he became fretful, self-willed, and envious. Occasionally, before his fall, he would go to the bar, and draw for himself a glass of cider, or beer, but he did not seem to have any particular love for liquor. After he was able to go about the house again, there were for him, of course, fewer sources of amusement, and he resorted more regularly, as a kind of relief to the moping monotony of his

life, to the bar. I took no notice of this, until his mother said to me one day:

"I'm afraid that John goes to the bar too often."

"I reckon not, Ann," I replied. "I haven't noticed anything wrong in that respect."

"I have, then, Thomas. Of late I've noticed that he mixes brandy and water half a dozen times a day."

"Is it possible? I must put a stop to that," I replied in alarm—the idea of my crippled child becoming a drunkard, presenting itself with painful and revolting distinctness.

"But I found it no easy thing to do so. The objects of temptation were round him, and the appetite already formed. Threats, remonstrances, persuasion, punishment, were all in vain. If not allowed to drink openly, he would do so by stealth. If I had not been a tavern-keeper, I might have prevented his obtaining liquor until his desire for it had passed away; but, with the temptation ever before his eyes, and the fumes of the bewitching draught ever in his nostrils, I found that to prevent his drinking was impossible.

"At the age of sixteen, it was no uncommon thing for me to see him carried off to bed in the middle of the day, drunk and insensible. At twenty, he was a loathsome object even to my eyes. All natural affection for him retired from my bosom, and I would have spurned him from the house, had it not been for his mother and sister, whose affection seemed to cling closer and closer to the unhappy and debased object they still looked upon as a child and a brother. At the age of twenty-two he died. Let me draw a veil over the last scene. I would forget it."

The tavern-keeper's voice here fell to a low and mournful tone. Leaning his head upon his hand, and shading his eyes, he sat silent for a long time. Then rousing himself with an effort, he resumed:

"For years before he died, he had not seemed to me as a child. But when the spirit had fled—when I saw him pale, cold, and insensible in his coffin, then the obstructed waters rushed over my soul, and overwhelmed me. Ah, sir! it would be a vain effort for me to attempt to make you conscious of my feelings, when I looked my last look, ere the coffin-lid passed over his face for ever. I felt that he was my child then. And worse, that I had been the serpent in his path—that I had cursed my first-born, and sent him marred in body and soul to an early grave!

"But let me hasten on. After my child passed away from my sight, I felt that now I must have quiet; that everything would go on as smoothly as the waters of a pleasant stream. Ellen, my daughter, had sprung up to womanhood, with a spirit as gentle as that of the mother who had borne her. There was nothing about her that did not inspire affection. No expense had been spared in her education, and waiving all a parent's fond partiality, I can say, that few were more intelligent and accomplished than she was.

"Mr. W—," said a young man to me one day, who had occasionally visited my bar, and whose habits I knew well, "I should be glad of a little private conversation with you."

"There was something singular and embarrassing in his manner, and I instantly suspected why he wished to converse with me.

"Upon what subject do you wish to converse?" I asked coldly.

"About your daughter, Ellen," he said, in a hesitating whisper.

"I do not wish to converse with you on that subject," was my stern response.

"The young man turned hastily away and left me.

"Here comes more trouble!" I muttered between my teeth, with bitter emphasis.

"When I went home to dinner, I narrowly observed the expression of Ellen's countenance. I could not mistake its concerned import. It was too painfully evident to my mind, that she had not only been countenancing the young man's attentions, but had consented that he should approach me with an offer for her hand.

"Ann," said I to my wife, after we were alone, for Ellen did not sit long at the table, and could not, I saw, eat anything—"has Joseph Hilton been in the habit of visiting Ellen?"

"Why, yes," she replied, slightly embarrassed—"he has visited here quite regularly of late."

"And did you know of his intention to ask for Ellen's hand?"

"Not until yesterday, when Ellen told me of his offer."

"Here is more trouble!" I said, rising from the table, and pacing the room backwards and forwards.

"How so?" inquired my wife. "Is not Joseph Hilton of a good family, and himself an estimable young man?"

"There is no doubt as to the respectability of the con-

nection so far as his family is concerned; but, Ann, you would not wish to see your child a drunkard's wife!"

"Merciful heavens!" she ejaculated, clasping her hands together, and rising quickly to her feet. "A drunkard's wife! I would a thousand times rather see her laid in her grave."

"Then, Ann, if she marries Joseph Hilton, she will be that heart-broken thing. I can tell long before his nearest friends discover it, when a young man has passed the point of self-control: and that point Hilton passed many months ago."

"A long and painful silence followed. At last I said—

"Do you think it would be a hard matter to convince Ellen that this young man is unworthy of her?"

"I am afraid it will," my wife replied. "He has never exhibited, while here, the slightest indication of being under the influence of liquor, and it will, therefore, be difficult to convince Ellen that, on this point, there is any real objection to the young man. And if, as I have every reason to believe, she is strongly attached to him, I need not tell you how vain all remonstrance may be, even were she to see him intoxicated."

"Vain all remonstrance!" I ejaculated, my feelings much excited and indignant. "I tell you, Ann, she shall not marry him! I had rather see her dead first!"

"Do not get excited about it, Thomas," my wife said, in a mournful tone. "Any thing rash, any very apparently decided step on our part, may confirm her affection for him beyond the power of change. Especially, if we attempt to disparage him utterly, will there be great danger. She sees him only with the partial eye of affection, and cannot be induced to think unfavourably of him."

"What, then, is to be done?" I asked, in a calmer tone.

"I cannot tell," was my wife's sad reply. "You are certain that Hilton is all you fear him to be?"

"Certain! Ann, I cannot be mistaken in a matter like this, and what is worse, when under the influence of liquor, he is ill-tempered and quarrelsome. I shudder when I think of our Ellen as the wife of such a man. There would not only be neglect and crushed affections, but ill treatment and intense suffering. You have seen many a drunkard's wife, Ann; I need not describe their miserable heart-breaking condition."

"A gush of tears attested the vividness of some pictures of suffering upon my wife's imagination. To her I left the task of effecting, if possible, a change in Ellen's feelings towards the young man. But all her efforts were in vain. She would not believe, even though assured that I had often seen him partially intoxicated, that Hilton drank to excess."

"But he drinks moderately, Ellen: let us assume that as a fact which you will readily admit," my wife urged upon our daughter.

"I have no doubt of that," was her reply—"all young men do so, I believe. I know that father does, and has done so ever since I can remember, and he is not a drunkard."

"But still, Ellen, there is great danger of every young man who drinks becoming a drunkard. Hilton, your father says, has often been in his bar-room in a state of partial intoxication."

"And did he sell him liquor when he knew that he was in so much danger? I cannot understand that, mother."

"You should not allude to your father in that way, Ellen," my wife replied gravely.

"Whether I speak of it or not, mother, it still seems as strange to me. If it is wrong for young men to drink—if, in drinking, there is so much danger, is it not wrong for father to sell liquor?"

"That is not to the point, my child; the question now is, whether you will cast off this young man, or become a drunkard's wife."

"I cannot see it in that light; I am not afraid that Joseph Hilton will ever become a drunkard."

"I am sorry that you seem thus disposed to follow your own inclinations, Ellen, rather than be guided, in a matter of so much importance, by your parents. Much as we regret to do so—much as it may pain us to cross you in anything, we must, from this time forth, positively prohibit that young man from visiting you."

"This declaration was met, of course, by a flood of tears. For a week or two there was a gloomy shadow resting over our dwelling. It was painfully evident that the impression on Ellen's mind was too deep to be easily, if at all, erased. After a while, however, there was a change in her manner; she seemed less borne down; although there was about her no expression of cheerfulness. At this I began to take hope."

"She is rising above her weakness," I said to myself—"she will yet be able to cast his image from her mind as something unworthy."

"Thus I congratulated myself at the very moment when

the calmness around only preceded the coming tempest. On the night following this very self-congratulation at the passing away of a danger that threatened shipwreck to our peace, I came home from my bar-room about half-past ten o'clock.

"Has Ellen gone to bed?" I asked, looking around, and missing her familiar form.

"No, she has not come home yet, and I begin to feel uneasy about her."

"Where did she go?" I asked, an instinctive feeling of alarm arising in my mind.

"She said she was going to spend the evening at Mrs. Allen's, and I have just sent over to see if she is there."

"At that moment the servant came in with the information that Ellen was not there, nor had been during the evening."

"Where *can* she be?" ejaculated my wife.

"Do you know whether she has ever met that young man since I forbade him the house?" I inquired, with assumed calmness.

"She has not, to my knowledge."

"Do you know, Harriet?" I said, sternly, turning to the servant.

"I believe she has, sir," was the hesitating reply.

"Did you take a bundle to any place for her to-day?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did you take it?"

"To—to—to Mrs. Power's."

"I waited to hear no more, but putting on my hat strode from the house, and in a few minutes was pulling with a nervous jerk the door-bell of Mrs. Power's dwelling."

"Can I see Mrs. Power?" I asked, in an excited tone, of the servant who came to the door.

"She has gone to bed," was the reply.

"Ask her, then, if she knows where Ellen W—— is?"

"O, sir," the servant replied, with a broad smile, "she was married this evening to Mr. Hilton, and has gone out to Ellicott's Mills."

"I said not a word in reply, but turned away, feeling as weak as a child. It seemed as if I had been stunned by a powerful blow. Slowly did I walk towards my house, that seemed, now, a cheerless spot, since the bright light that had given to it a life and a joy was gone—and gone, as a ray of sunshine, I felt, for ever."

"Ah, sir, you cannot imagine the feelings of a father, who loves his child tenderly, under a trial like this. My anger, which had burned, in anticipation of such an event, was all gone; and I felt something like what we feel towards one who is dead."

"You will not cast her off?" my wife said, after I had communicated the painful intelligence, with a tender, appealing look, while the tears fell like rain from her eyes.

"Cast her off, Ann?" I replied,—"O, no! More than ever now does she require our kindest care. We must not shut our eyes to the fact that her husband cannot make her happy. We must not flatter ourselves with the hope that he will pause in the downward road that he has taken. I am fearfully conscious, that here there is nothing to hope. Ellen will be a drunkard's wife, and will have her cup filled with gall and wormwood."

"My head pressed a sleepless pillow that night. In the morning, I went with my wife early to Ellicott's Mills in search of our fugitive child. I found her and her newly constituted husband, and we received them kindly, much to their relief. As soon as I could get the young man alone, I explained to him fully, that my only objection to him was the fact of his drinking, and warned him of his danger, while I conjured him to give up the use of all kinds of liquor. He confessed his weakness, and promised faithfully to abandon the use of strong drinks."

"Against my wish the young couple went to house-keeping. I furnished them out in handsome style, and they commenced the world under promising auspices. For a time Ellen's face wore its usual happy aspect. But after the passage of a few months I could detect something musing and dreamy in the expression of her eye. She did not smile as often; and when she did smile, the light faded more quickly away."

"I'm afraid something is wrong," I said to my wife.

"I am sure Ellen is not happy."

"So it seems to me. But when I allude to it, she says it is only my imagination—that she is happy," was her reply.

"But I was not satisfied. And soon my fears were confirmed. Two or three days had passed since Ellen had been round to our house, when I proposed one evening that we should go and see her. Much to our surprise and pain, we found her with her eyes red and swollen, as if from weeping, and her whole appearance indicating deep distress. The moment she saw us, there was an evident effort on the part of Ellen to rally her feelings and assume a cheerful air. But the effort was vain."

"Ellen, child, what ails you?" her mother asked, in an earnest tone.

"O nothing," was her reply.

"Something must be the matter, Ellen, or you would not look so troubled. Tell us freely of anything that gives you pain, my child," I urged tenderly. "Let there be no concealments with your parents."

"Indeed, father, it is nothing of much consequence. I know that I am weak and foolish," she said. But the gush of tears that followed, told too plainly that there was something wrong, and that of no light character.

"Where is Joseph?" I asked, after her feelings had grown a little calmer.

"She hesitated a moment, and then said he was up stairs. That he was not very well, and had retired to bed."

"I must know the worst, Ellen," I said, rising and taking up a light, with which I proceeded to her chamber. One look was sufficient to tell me that her husband was sleeping in drunken insensibility! And it was only six months since they were married!

"You must go home with us, Ellen," I said, in a sad, but decided tone, as I came down stairs.

"When?" she asked, looking up eagerly into my face.

"To-night, Ellen," was my firm reply.

"And leave him here? O, no, I cannot do that, father!"

"You must not stay with him to-night alone, Ellen."

"Why not, father?" and as she asked this question, she looked me inquiringly in the face, as if fearful that my reason involved what she dreaded I would know.

"Because I do not think it safe for you to be left alone with him in his present condition."

"He will not hurt me, father," she replied, with a forced, sad smile.

"Hurt you, Ellen?" I responded, with something of excitement in my tone. "It would not be well for him to do so. But come, you had better go home with us."

"No, father, I cannot go," was her decided reply.

"Then we will have to stay here with you."

"Indeed, father, there is no necessity for you doing that. I am not at all afraid."

"But I insisted upon doing so, and consequently we remained all night in the house. It was, I think, about three o'clock in the morning, that I was awakened by a noise in the adjoining chamber, where my daughter and her husband slept."

"I was out of bed instantly, and had partly dressed myself, when I heard Ellen say, in a low, imploring tone:—

"O, don't, don't, don't, Joseph!" at the same time that the sound of two or three blows came distinctly upon my ear.

"It seemed, sir, in that moment, as if I were on fire. I sprang into their chamber with a fierce energy of hate towards Hilton, such as never before or since, burned in my veins for any one. I found my daughter standing on the floor, with one hand of her husband entangled in her hair, while with the other he was brandishing a stick over her head, his face flushed, his eyes starting wildly from his head, and every action and expression indicating a madman. With one powerful blow I knocked him senseless to the floor. That blow seemed to take equal effect upon Ellen, for she fell likewise, and lay in a state of apparent lifelessness."

As soon as the day dawned, at which time Hilton was perfectly sober, and Ellen had recovered from her fainting fit, I removed her to my house; forbidding, as I did so, her husband ever to cross its threshold. Of course my child was not happy under this state of separation, and soon left us to join her husband, whose penitence deceived her into the belief that all would be well again.

"On the night that her first child was born, Hilton came home drunk, and crazy, as he always was when intoxicated. It was with the utmost difficulty that we could keep him from dragging Ellen out of bed, so strangely bitter were his feelings towards her when thus excited. The agitation which was the consequence, had like to have cost her her life, and I have often, since, had a strange involuntary wish that she had then died."

"I cannot dwell upon her sufferings and our trials for the next five years, during which she continued to live with her husband. At the end of that time we prevailed upon her to come home, with her three children, and then she once more entered our house a pale, emaciated, heart-broken creature, and moved before our eyes daily, a living evidence of the horrors involved in, and consequent upon, the traffic in which I was engaged. And she still lives, and her husband still lives, a perpetual source of trouble to her. Sometimes he will quit drinking for a few weeks, and make almost daily overtures to her for a reconciliation. Sometimes he will threaten to get possession of his children by law, and once or twice has attempted to pick them up in the street and carry them off. Poor creature! her existence is a living death."

"With all these things daily before my eyes, with my own heart burdened and oppressed, I regarded no others. I had a strange indifference to the sufferings of all the rest of mankind. Daily did I gather in the substance drawn from neglected wives and suffering children, and hoard it away without a pang. My conscience was well-nigh seared as with hot iron. But the shock came at last—the power of that Divine Book had in it a virtue to waken remorse, that resided in no dispensation, not even the most afflictive that ever reached me."

"In looking back upon my life for the last twenty years," he remarked to me, near the close of our interview, "I ask myself, sometimes, what I have gained by way of compensation, for all that I have been compelled to sacrifice. A few thousand of dollars make up the sum of that gain. How freely would I scatter them to the winds, could such a sacrifice recall the bloom to the cheek of my daughter—or restore to me the children in moral and physical health, who have perished so terribly. Nor is this all. When the secrets of the grave are revealed, then only can be known how much of moral degradation, of sorrow and pain, and intense suffering, the wealth of a tavern-keeper has cost. A fearful price, is it not? I sometimes wish that I had died before I was induced to open a shop for the sale of intoxicating drinks."

"You do not always feel so badly?" I said.

"Not always. I could not stand it long if I did. The fact of looking back and reviewing my life had excited my feelings a good deal. But I feel bad enough at any time, even though I assume a cheerful exterior—even though some call mine a happy countenance. How could it be otherwise?"

Truly, how could it be otherwise? It seems to me, that if there is one curse of a man's existence greater than another, it must be the remembrance of having put the cup of confusion to the lips of his brother, and caused that brother to fall.

*Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken.—HAB. ii. 15.*

## The Unmeant Rebuke.

Charles Nelson had reached his thirty-fifth year, and at that age he found himself going down hill. He had once been the happiest of mortals, and no blessing was wanted to complete the sum of his happiness. He had one of the best wives, and his children were intelligent and comely. He was a carpenter by trade, and no man could command better wages, or be more sure of work. If any man attempted to build a house, Charles Nelson must "boss" the job, and for miles around people sought him to work for them. But a change had come over his life. A demon had met him on his way, and he had turned back with the evil spirit. A new and experienced carpenter had been sent for by those who could no longer depend upon Nelson, and he had settled in the village, and now took Nelson's place.

On a back street, where the great trees threw their green branches over the way, stood a small cottage, which had been the pride of the inmates. Before it stretched a wide garden, but tall rank grass grew up among the choking flowers, and the paling of the fence was broken in many places. The house itself had once been white, but it was now dingy and dark. Bright green blinds had once adorned the windows, but now they had been taken off and sold. And the windows themselves bespoke poverty and neglect, for in many places the glass was gone, and shingles, rags, and old hats had taken its place. A single look at the house and its accompaniments told the story. It was the drunkard's home.

Within, sat a woman yet in her early years of life, and, though she was still handsome to look upon, the bloom was gone from her cheek, and the brightness had faded from her eyes. Poor Mary Nelson! Once she had been the happiest among the happy, but now none could be more miserable! Near her sat two children, both girls, and both beautiful in form and feature; but their garbs were all patched and worn, and their feet were shoeless. The eldest was thirteen years of age, her sister a few years younger. The mother was hearing them recite a grammar lesson, for she had resolved that her children should never grow up in ignorance. They could not attend the common school, for thoughtless children sneered at them and made them the object of sport and ridicule; but in this respect they did not suffer, for their mother was well educated, and devoted such time as she could spare to their instruction.

For more than two years, Mary Nelson had earned all the money that had been used in the house. People hired her to wash, iron, and sew for them, and besides the

money paid, they gave her many articles of food and clothing. So she lived on, and the only joys that dwelt with her now, were teaching her children and praying to God.

Supper time came, and Charles Nelson came reeling home. He had worked the day before at helping to move a building, and thus had earned money to find himself in rum several days. As he stumbled into the house, the children crouched to their mother, and even she shrank away, for sometimes her husband was passionate when thus intoxicated.

O, how that man had changed within two years! Once there was not a finer-looking man in the town. In frame he had been tall, stout, compact, and perfectly formed, while his face bore the very beau-ideal of manly beauty. But all this was changed now. His noble form was bent, his limbs shrunken and tremulous, and his face all bloated and disfigured. He was not the man who had once been the fond husband and doting father. The loving wife had prayed, and wept, and implored, but all to no purpose; the husband was bound to the drinking companions of the bar-room, and he would not break the bands.

That evening, Mary Nelson ate no supper, for of all the food in the house, there was not more than enough for her husband and children; but when her husband had gone, she went out and picked a few berries, and thus kept her vital energies alive. That night the poor woman prayed long and earnestly, and her little ones prayed with her.

On the following morning Charles Nelson sought the bar-room as soon as he arose, but he was sick and faint, and the liquor would not revive him, for it would not remain on his stomach. He drank very deeply the night before, and he felt miserable. At length, however, he managed to keep down a few glasses of hot sling, but the close atmosphere of the bar-room seemed to stifle him, and he went out.

The poor man had sense enough to know that if he could sleep he should feel better, and he had just feeling enough to wish to keep away from home; and so he wandered off towards a wood not far from the village, and sank down by a stone wall, and was soon buried in a profound slumber. When he awoke, the sun was shining down hot upon him, and raising himself to a sitting posture, he gazed about him. He was just on the point of rising when his motion was arrested by the sound of voices near at hand. He looked through a clink in the wall, and just upon the other side he saw his two children picking berries, while a little further off were two more little girls, the children of the carpenter who had lately moved into the village.

"Come, Katy," said one of these latter girls to her companion, "let us go away from here, because if anybody should see us with those girls, they'd think we played with 'em. Come."

"But the berries are so thick here," remonstrated the other.

"Never mind—we'll come out sometime when these little, ragged, drunkard's girls are not here."

So the two favoured ones went away hand in hand, and Nelly and Nancy Nelson sat down upon the grass and cried.

"Don't cry, Nancy," said the eldest, throwing her arms around her sister's neck.

"But you are crying, Nelly."

"Oh, I can't help it," sobbed the stricken one.

"Why do they blame us?" murmured Nancy, gazing up into her sister's face. O, we are not to blame. We are good, and kind, and loving, and we never hurt anybody. Oh, I wish somebody would love us, I should be so happy."

"But we are loved, Nancy. Only think of our noble mother. Who could love us as she does?"

"I know—I know, Nelly; but that ain't all. Why don't papa love us as he used to do? Don't you remember when he used to kiss us and make us happy? O, how I wish he could be so good to us once more. He is not—"

"Hush, sissy! don't say anything more. He may be good to us again; if he knew how we loved him, I know he would. And then I believe God is good, and surely he will help us sometimes, for mother prays to him every day."

"Yes," answered Nancy. "I know she does; and God must be our Father sometime."

"He is our Father now, sissy."

"I know it, and He must be all we shall have, by-and-by, for don't you remember that mother told us that she might leave us some of these days? She said a cold dagger was upon her heart, and—and—"

"Hush, don't, don't, Nancy; you'll—"

The words were choked up with sobs and tears, and the

sisters wept long together. At length they arose and went away, for they saw more children coming.

As soon as the little ones were out of sight, Charles Nelson started to his feet. His hands were clenched and his eyes were fixed upon a vacant point with an eager gaze.

"My God!" he gasped. "What a villain I am! Look at me now! What a state I am in, and what have I sacrificed to bring myself to it? And they love me yet, and pray for me!"

He said no more, but for some moments he stood with his hands still clenched, and his eyes fixed. At length his gaze was turned upward, and his clasped hands were raised above his head. A moment he remained so, and then his hands dropped by his side, and he started homeward.

When he reached his home he found his wife and children in tears, but he affected to notice it not. He drew a shilling from his pocket—it was his last—and handing it to his wife, he asked her if she would get him some porridge. The wife was startled by the tone in which this was spoken, for it sounded as in days gone by.

The porridge was made nice and nourishing, and Charles ate it all. He went to bed early, and early on the following day he was up. He asked his wife if she had milk and flour enough to make him another bowl of porridge.

"Yes, Charles," she said, "we have not touched it."

"Then, if you are willing, I should like some more."

The wife moved quickly about the work, and ere long the food was prepared. The husband ate it, and he felt better. He washed and dressed, and would have shaved had his hand been steady enough. He left his home and went at once to a man who had just commenced to frame a house.

"Mr. Manly," he said, addressing the gentleman alluded to. "I have drank the last drop of alcoholic beverage that ever passes my lips. Ask me no more questions, but believe me now while you see me true. Will you give me work?"

"Charles Nelson, are you in earnest?" asked Manly, in surprise.

"So much so, sir, that were death to stand upon my right hand, and yonder bar-room upon my left, I would go with the grim messenger first."

"Then here is my house lying about us in rough timber and boards. I place it all in your hands, and shall look to you to finish it. While I can trust you, you can trust me. Come into my office and you shall see the plan I have drawn."

Charles Nelson took the plan, and having studied it for a while, he went out where the men were at work getting the timber together, and Mr. Manly introduced him as their master. That day he worked but little, for he was not strong yet, but he arranged the timber, and gave directions for framing. At night he asked his employer if he dared trust him with a dollar.

"Why you've earned three," returned Manly.

"And will you pay me three dollars a day?"

"If you are as faithful as you have been to-day, for you will save me money at that."

The poor man could not speak his thanks in words, but his looks spoke for him, and Manly understood them. He received his three dollars, and on his way home he stopped and bought first a basket, then three loaves of bread, a pound of butter, some tea, sugar, and a piece of beef-steak, and he had just one dollar and seventy-five cents left. With this load he went home. It was sometime before he could compose himself to enter the house, but at length he went and set the basket upon the table.

"Come, Mary," he said, "I have brought something home for supper. Here Nelly, you take the pail and run over to Mr. Brown's, and get two quarts of milk."

He handed the child a shilling as he spoke, and in a half bewildered state she took the money and hurried away.

The wife started when she raised the cover of the basket, but she dared not speak. She moved about like one in a dream, and ever and anon she would cast a furtive glance at her husband. He had not been drinking—she knew it—and yet he had money enough to buy rum with if he had wanted it. What could it mean? Had her prayers been answered? O, how fervently she prayed then.

Soon Nelly returned with the milk, and Mrs. Nelson set the table out. After supper Charles arose and said to his wife:—

"I must go up to Mr. Manly's office to help him to arrange some plans for his new house, but I will be at home early."

Just as the clock struck nine, the well-known foot fall was heard, strong and steady. The door opened and Charles entered. His wife cast a quick keen glance into

his face, and she almost uttered a cry of joy when she saw how he was changed for the better. He had been to the barber's and hatter's. Yet nothing was said upon the whole important subject. Charles wished to retire early, and his wife went with him. In the morning the husband arose first and built the fire. Mary had not slept till long after midnight, having been kept awake by the tumultuous emotions that had risen up in her bosom, and hence she awoke not so early as usual. But she came out just as the tea-kettle began to boil, and breakfast was soon ready.

After the meal was eaten, Charles arose, put on his hat, and then turning to his wife he asked:—

"What do you do to-day?"

"I must wash for Mrs. Bixby."

"Are you willing to obey me once more?"

"O—yes."

"Then work for me to-day. Send Nelly over to tell Mrs. Bixby that you are not well enough to wash, for you are not. Here is a dollar and you must do with it as you please. Buy something that will keep you busy for yourself or children."

Mr. Nelson turned towards the door and his hand was upon the latch. He hesitated, and turned back. He did not speak, but he opened his arms; and his wife sank upon his bosom. He kissed her, and then having gently placed her in a seat, he left the house. When he went to his work that morning he felt well and very happy. Mr. Manly was by to cheer him, and this he did by talking and acting as though Charles had never been unfortunate at all.

It was Saturday evening, and Nelson had almost been

a week without rum. He had earned fifteen dollars, ten of which he had in his pocket.

"Mary," he said after the supper table had been cleared away, "here are ten dollars for you, and I want you to expend it in clothing for yourself and children. I have earned fifteen dollars during the last five days. I am to build Squire Manly's great house, and he pays me three dollars a day. A good job, isn't it?"

Mary looked up, and her lips moved, but she couldn't speak a word. She struggled a few moments and then burst into tears. Her husband took her by the arm and drew her on his lap, and then pressed her affectionately to his bosom.

"Mary," he whispered, while the tears ran down his own cheeks, "you are not deceived. I am Charlie Nelson once more, and will be while I live. Not by any act of mine shall another cloud cross your brow." And then he told her of the words he had heard on the previous Monday, while he lay behind the wall.

"Never before," he said, "did I fully realise how low I had fallen, but the scales dropped from my eyes then as though some one had struck them off with a sledge. My soul started up to a stand-point from which all the temptations of earth cannot move it. Your prayers are answered, my wife."

Time passed on, and the cottage assumed its garb of pure white, and its whole windows and green blinds. The roses in the garden smiled, and in every way did the improvement work. Once again was Mary Nelson among the happiest of the happy. And her children choose their own associates now.

THE END.

## PASSAGES

### FROM THE HISTORY OF A WASTED LIFE.

#### CHAPTER I.

YES—by that appellation, and by that alone, shall the author of the following chapters from *REAL LIFE* be known. Why should I attach my name to these confessions, for such they will prove to be? It is enough for the reader to be assured that they will be veritable chronicles. "Truth," said Byron, "is stranger than fiction." He was right. Some one else has declared with equal force, that any person who should write a faithful history of his own career could not fail to produce an interesting volume. What need, I would ask, have we of "thrilling tales of romance," as the cant of the day has it, when the materials for "startling developments" abundantly exist in our memories? But dare we be candid? How few have the resolution to chronicle their faults and failings. And how many shrink from making a public display of their miserable experiences, after a deliverance from danger, owing to a fear of being accused of glorying in their past shame and of exhibiting "the pride that apes humility." I confess I am no great admirer of platform confessions—but herein I differ from many good men who deem it advisable to minutely describe the horrors of the pit from whence they were digged. Into this question, however, I will not enter, but address myself at once to my subject.

To comprehend this chapter, however, and those which succeed it, it will be necessary for me to briefly refer to my past position. What my present standing is, concerns no one. It may so happen that certain incidents will suggest my identity to some reader; for I shall write truthfully, and so cannot well fail now and then to drop a clue which may be discerned by an observing eye. No matter; such a contingency would but verify my story. Of my birth, my parentage, education, and such like, I need not speak minutely. At the proper age, I was articled to a member of one of the learned professions, a fact which is of itself sufficient to show that my father

occupied no mean position; for in the "land where I was born" the gates to the practising Courts of Law, Physic, and Divinity, are only to be opened with a golden key.

Without vanity I may say that the years of student life having past, I entered on the great race of life as well qualified, mentally and socially, as most young men. For a time all was well;—but why blink the truth?—I DRANK! at first in my family—then in the jovial circle—lastly everywhere; but not with every-body, for I was not quite without pride. The result may be guessed at. Embarrassment and then ruin came—retrievable ruin as I thought then, and so to drown my care I drank the deeper. "*Facilis descensus averni*," says the ancient poet, and so I found it to be. At length, forbearance having had its limits, friends looked cold; and, too proud to seek for aid from those whom I had known in "better days"—I made a desperate effort—scraped a few pounds together, and having obtained a passage as surgeon in an emigrant ship, found myself one fine morning in New York, with but a few dollars in my pocket; and among the thousands who hurried by me not a single familiar face.

Will it be wondered at that in my vague desolation, I again sought refuge in intoxication? but rapidly became worse, until at last hope well nigh forsook me. God and the angels only know what I suffered in that city—some future time I may record my experience there. Time flew on, and when at length all seemed hopeless, a ray of light beamed upon my soul's darkness. By a mighty effort I signed the pledge, and ere long a brilliant career opened before me. But this was not to last. With excellent prospects I revisited my home, became once more domesticated, and spent twelve months of unalloyed happiness. So rapidly did I recover lost ground, that three months after reaching England, my company was sought by some of the brightest and best of London society. The ball of success was at my foot, and I might have kept it rolling until now—but one fatal day as I was passing &c., &c.

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# THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD, BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

## CHAPTER I.

*The description of the family of Wakefield, in which a kindred likeness prevails, as well of minds as of persons.*

I WAS ever of opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single and only talked of population. From this motive, I had scarcely taken orders a year, before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife, as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but for such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured notable woman: and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who could show more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving, and cookery, none could excel her. She prided herself also upon being an excellent contriver in house-keeping; though I could never find that we grew richer with all her contrivances.

However, we loved each other tenderly, and our fondness increased as we grew old. There was in fact, nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had an elegant house situated in a fine country, and a good neighbourhood. The year was spent in moral or rural amusements, in visiting our rich neighbours, and relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo. All our adventures were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the herald's office; and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt among the number. However, my wife always insisted that as they were the same flesh and blood, they should sit with us at the same table. So that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, or the wings of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of; upon his leaving my house, I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes a horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like: but never was the family of WAKEFIELD known to turn the traveller or the poor dependant out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness, not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which Providence sends to enhance the value of its favours. My orchard was often robbed by schoolboys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children. The Squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated courtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days began to wonder how they vexed us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well formed and healthy; my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who, in Henry II.'s progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valu-

able present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named GEORGE, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Grissel; but my wife, who during her pregnancy had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called OLIVIA. In less than another year we had another daughter, and now I was determined that Grissel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand godmother, the girl was, by her direction, called SOPHIA; so that we had two romantic names in the family: but I solemnly protest I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and after an interval of twelve years, we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny my exultation when I saw my little ones about me; but the vanity and the satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would say, "Well, upon my word, Mrs. Primrose, you have the finest children in the whole country." "Ay, neighbour," she would answer, "they are as heaven made them, handsome enough, if they be good enough; for handsome is that handsome does." And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarcely have remembered to mention it, had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriance of beauty, with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring. The one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successively repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features, at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers, Sophia to secure one. Olivia was often affected with too great a desire to please. Sophia even repress excellence, from her fears to offend. The one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquette into a prude, and a new set of ribbons has given her younger sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son George was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all, and properly speaking, they had but one character, that of been all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

## CHAPTER II.

*Family Misfortunes.—The loss of Fortune only serves to increase the pride of the worthy.*

THE temporal concerns of my family were chiefly committed to my wife's management; as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own directions. The profits of my living, which amounted to but thirty-five pounds a year, I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for having sufficient fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance, and the bachelors to matrimony; so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield, a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and ale-houses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its happiness: but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting; for I maintained with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second, or, to express it

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