

THE
PRESENT PROBLEM.

BY
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P R E F A C E.

MUCH of this story is true in detail. Knowledge of the temptations to which we are exposed, prepares us to meet them. We are dealing with social problems which present themselves more urgently than ever before. Intemperance and immorality are on every side. We have tacitly countenanced them in one sex, while we have condemned them in the other. The women of America are beginning to feel the magnitude of the evils they are called upon to meet, and the greatness of the work God has laid upon them. We must be strong for the right, earnest in our labors, and temperance and virtue will triumph.

SARAH K. BOLTON.

JUNE, 1874.

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CHAPTER I.

DEACON SHARON was dead and buried. The people of B—— mourned for him, as they mourned for any other who was both rich and good, packed the house at the funeral, went to the grave in elegant carriages, made great show of sorrow and sympathy, and went heartily to work next morning, buying and selling and getting gain, hoping that the good Lord would defer as long as possible calling them.

Mary Sharon, the only child, was now an orphan, left with a competency. The remainder of a large fortune had been given for the building of a beautiful church, which should serve as a monument to the good father and mother, and a place in which the daughter might be aided in her development into an earnest womanhood.

Sharon Church was a free church, where rich and

poor sat together, where every night the parlors were open to young and old for social converse, lectures; and happy pastime, where the people gave of their substance as they worshipped, and worshipped as they gave.

This church was built on business principles. It was a square, substantial block, of fine proportions and tasteful style. There was no spire: what need to let thousands of dollars lie idle in a stone shaft that should tell the people where the house of prayer was built? Places of sin needed no such advertising: why places of holiness? One hundred thousand dollars are expended on this street corner, and one hundred and fifty thousand on that, much of it coming dollar by dollar from the pockets of the poor, who can ill afford it, and the great buildings stand closed except on the Lord's day: there is no income, and the minister tires of asking the people to give, and the people tire of being asked. Many persons had said, in B——, that they could not afford to join a church, and it was doubtless true.

The lower portion of the Sharon building was rented to Christian men for offices; the upper portion was the home of the janitor, and contained also lodging apartments for the poor and the suffering, who needed a home before the gospel was preached to them.

In the large hall, in the second story, a godly man preached as pure orthodoxy as one could ask, and received so good a salary that life was a blessing rather than a burden.

It was a generous church. The members helped poor young men in the ministry, held up the hands of the fallen, and cared for the stranger and the widow.

Sharon Church was a good, true Presbyterian church except in one particular: it allowed women to speak in prayer meetings, even to lead in them; and what was still worse, there were as many deaconesses as deacons. In the mission schools—there were several under its jurisdiction—there were as many women superintendents as men. Indeed, everybody worked so much for the Saviour, that the question of sex seemed a minor one. If souls were only saved, they thought the Master would rejoice, by whatsoever hand they came.

Not far from the church lived Mr. William Harmon, otherwise known as Billy Harmon, a rich saloon-keeper. He had made himself very popular among the young men. Billiards, pictures, flowers, and the best of liquors had made his saloon a fashionable resort, a sort of genteel club-house, for what the world called good society. He began in a small way. His wife had tended bar, while he made himself agreeable to

his patrons. By-and-by, when money had flowed in, real estate was purchased, a fine home built, handsome carriage and span procured, and a good seat obtained in Sharon Church.

Selling at retail was at best unpopular, so, as money increased, the wholesale trade was attempted. Even this did not meet the approbation of B——; and as Billy Harmon had a son and a daughter, he was not oblivious to what the community said. At last, the grocery trade was combined with liquor-selling, and then his position was changed at once. The respectable ladies called upon his wife, his children were invited to parties, and Mr. Harmon was immediately established in good society. Soon the people began to talk of him for councilman; he was so well acquainted, and so popular. Sometimes he was a member of the school-board, sometimes of the board of improvements—always in some office of trust and honor.

The old desire to make money over the bar, and the excitement of constant meeting of friends, came back. To have kept an ordinary saloon would have been retrograding, so he decided to build an elegant hotel for the improvement of the city of B——, and have beautiful rooms, where the young men could drink and while away time at their pleasure. Strange to say, he never drank: he knew too well the effects,

from his life-long observation. His son, Ralph Harmon—a little fast, people said, but withal a favorite among the young—was about to marry a lovely girl of the common type of young-ladyhood. Camilla Scott had finished with school, had nothing to do, and was waiting for somebody to marry her. She would have denied this charge indignantly—what girl would not?—and yet of how many girls in high-life is not this true? It was not her fault. The Hon. Mr. Scott was a prosperous lawyer, very busy in getting money, fame, and political position. Mrs. Scott was very busy helping him, by social parties, friendly calls, and a happy conservatism that conflicted with nobody's opinions. Both were members of the church. Mr. Scott made excellent addresses in prayer-meeting, but about practical Christian work he knew little. Mrs. Scott sat silent, because she wanted to avoid all extremes that might hinder the success of her husband. Both wished Camilla to be like other young ladies. To work for herself would have made her singular and peculiar. They would have preferred to have her marry a man whose father was not in the liquor traffic; and yet Billy Harmon's influence was necessary to win votes, and Ralph had money, and they hoped he might, before he died, become a good member of Sharon Church.

Mary Sharon had cared for a sick father and

mother, had read much, studied much, and thought much, and was ready for work in any part of the vineyard. Camilla and Mary sat together in the large home out of which the good deacon had gone so recently.

"You must be lonesome here, Mary. When Hadley comes home from college, you will seem yourself again. I wish you were to be married this fall, at the same time with Ralph and myself."

"Are you wise in marrying Ralph? It is said that he drinks in his father's bar-room; and if so, he will make your life miserable."

"I don't believe it, Mary; and if I did, why, all young men must sow their wild oats. I have made up my mind it is pretty hard to find entirely moral men. Besides, I don't think he will drink after we are married. He perhaps drinks a little with his friends, but he will have me to be company for him by-and-by. They have temptations that we haven't, so we mustn't be too particular."

"There is no more reason for men to drink than for us, Camilla. It is as respectable for us to go into saloons, as it is for them. A woman who is intemperate, we debar from society: why not do the same by men? I should find out the facts about Ralph, and not marry in haste to repent at leisure."

Camilla patted her pretty foot, pouted a little, and was silent.

"Hadley comes to-morrow," said Mary, "doesn't he? I must brighten up this dreary home for him!"

"Oh, yes!" said Camilla, whose showers suddenly became sunshine; "and Ralph and I are going to meet him on the cars. He won't care much for seeing us, because you only will be in his mind."

Hadley Scott had just graduated from an Eastern college, and was coming home to study law. He had heard of Camilla's engagement, and did not think much of the family into which she was to marry, but he had seen little of Ralph for four years, and thought he might be a good-enough young man. Hadley was fine-looking, of aristocratic bearing, but with kind heart, and genial face. He had been a close student, had had comparatively few temptations, and came home, he thought, worthy of the pure love of Mary Sharon. She had developed more than he, though he was three years her senior. Her convictions had settled into principles, and her life had grown to be of stronger purpose and higher plan.

The meeting was a glad one that summer afternoon, under the grand old trees. He opened his heart to her afresh. They were to wait some years, he meantime studying his profession, and she devoting her time to books and good works. He respected her religious belief, though not himself a Christian, and

loved her as the best and noblest creation he had ever seen.

"I'm going to have a good time this summer, and take life easily. I like Harmon better than I expected. He is a generous fellow. I've promised him I'll go to the races to-morrow. I'm so tired of books, this half-abandon seems delightful."

"Hadley, don't trust Ralph too far. He is to be your brother, I know; but don't be drawn into too close friendship. I may seem prudish to you, but no good will come of your going to the races. Possibly they originated in laudable desires for the improving of animals, yet the results have been bad. The betting, swearing, drinking, and trickery that attend them—the crowd that gathers, some among them respectable, even Christian people, but most of them a shouting, dissatisfied rabble—the whipping of horses and the undue excitement, are all detrimental to every individual who goes."

"You are too good, Mary!" he said, as he kissed her and took her arm, leading down the shady walks.

Billy Harmon's hotel was full of sporting men. Pools were selling rapidly. Gamblers from all parts of the country were present, lounging about the door, and forming the acquaintance of as many well-to-do young men as possible. When Harmon kept a saloon, Hadley never entered it; but a large hotel, with a

stylish bar-room, was a different thing. Ralph could swear, tell some obscene stories, and drink with the rest. Hadley never swore, but his ears were well-accustomed to it from the college boys. He had taken wine occasionally at evening gatherings, but had no taste for liquor.

Twenty-five thousand persons were gathered to witness the simple trotting of horses, and the hurrah and bustle of a common crowd.

"Scott, let's try our hand! Clementine's bound to come in ahead. She's made of the right kind of stuff. Look at her legs, and how she steps. I'll bet fifty dollars on her. We'll make enough for extra drinks, and a present for our girls, besides!"

"Try it, Scott," said Judge Underwood, a large, elegant man of fifty, one of the leading attorneys of the State.

There would be no harm in betting once; he would give himself to pleasure this time.

"I'm not a good judge of horse-flesh, but Fullerton has good points. I'll wager forty dollars on him!"

Judge Underwood put thirty dollars against the field, and the pool was closed.

Pool after pool was sold, and wine and liquor were drunk freely. Everything was ready for the exciting sport of the afternoon. Ralph drove a beautiful span of young black horses, that were the special pride of all

the maidens of the town. The grounds were packed. Ladies in their elegant carriages, lewd women in their gay attire, devout worshipers at Sharon Church, and devotees of the worst gambling places in the State, mingled together on that grand gala-day. The horses came out prancing, excited, and eager for the race. There was a great deal of tiresome waiting, bickering, false starting, and swearing of drivers, and then the four horses started abreast. The crowd were hushed for a minute, and then, as one gained on the others, they shouted and clamored, while the drivers lashed their horses, as they came in foaming and trembling. Delicate ladies clapped their gloved hands, and the masculine portion retired for drinks between the heats, never thinking that what is torture to dumb beasts ought not to be sport to enlightened human beings.

Clementine won the race. Ralph put the hundred and twenty dollars in his pocket, and treated lavishly all his old friends, the Judge and Hadley included. The races were over for the day. The horses, tired and strained, were being bathed and blanketed, and the crowd was hallooing and racing homeward, or lounging still about the liquor saloons that had grown up like mushrooms in this most congenial soil. Ralph was too much intoxicated to drive his span. Hadley had drank but twice, and felt only those pleasurable sensations that come from the brain slightly excited.

Vice, however, did not seem so heinous to him as before. Ralph was not the one for Camilla, and yet he had a kind heart. He would help him to his room, stay with him through the night, and beg him to have control of himself in the future.

What good would it do to tell Camilla? She loved him; and men older and more intellectual, and with unsullied reputation, were guilty of the grossest immoralities. He was like too many of his sex; but if he loved her best of any, perhaps he would make her a good husband, so Hadley thought.

Ralph talked incoherently in his drunken sleep; and Hadley dreamed of Mary, and thought a great gulf was being dug between them.

CHAPTER II.

RALPH and Camilla were married. The wedding, like others in fashionable life, was a display of elegant dresses, handsome presents, music, and dancing, and a costly supper. After the introductions of the evening, when the dancers were merry, Hadley and Mary stole away to talk of another and a deeper union of hearts.

"This wedding seems a farce to me, Hadley. Ralph looks finely, and he is proud of Camilla, but sorrow must come to her. What is to be our future?"

"All I am, and hope to be, are yours, Mary! To me, you are the embodiment of purity and loveliness. I want to make a high position, for your sake. You will not be satisfied with low attainments."

"Let us make the most of ourselves. We were not made to be idle. Let us be leaders. There are so many persons who are content simply to be the filling, the woof of life!"

"Judge Underwood has been insisting that I shall study under him; and eventually, he says, I shall stand high in my profession, and have political preferment.

With you for my wife, to aid, encourage, and plan with me, life looks very bright."

"He is a brilliant scholar, and a gentleman in manner; but somehow I always shrink from him. I fear a little for his influence, but you have strength enough to be a man. I want a pledge from you, however."

"What is it, my Mary? anything, to the half of my kingdom!"

"That you will never taste wine, nor any intoxicating drink. I shall give you, so far as I can, an unsullied life, and I shall ask the same in return."

"I am not fond of liquor, and have only taken it now and then, when urged to do so, for the sake of company and friendship; but you outweigh all friendships!" and putting her white hands together like a cross, he kissed them, putting on again with a double pledge the ring that was the seal of their plighted troth. A promise with him was sacred, and he never broke this.

Four weeks from this time, Camilla Harmon sat in her lovely home one evening, waiting for her husband. The month had been a happy one. She knew he drank wine occasionally, but hoped, as many another woman has hoped, that her love would keep him from excesses. It was growing very late, and she was tired and anxious. Perhaps he had gone unexpectedly on a journey—perhaps he was not well.

It could not be that he had forgotten that she was waiting and longing for him.

At two o'clock there was low talking outside the door, then a knock.

She hurriedly asked, "Who is it?"

"We have brought your husband," said a voice, which she recognized as that of one of Ralph's friends.

She opened the door, and four young men brought in a helpless, stupefied sot, and laid him on the sofa. They were in good spirits, having been drinking freely, and had no thought of the sorrow of that young wife. Ralph's eyes were bloodshot, his coat and shirt filthy, his breath disgusting from whiskey and tobacco, and his whole being loathsome.

"Why, Camilla," he stammered, "is that you? Come here, till I tell you something!" and he made her sit down beside him, and take his useless hand, while he leaned heavily against her. He soon fell asleep, and toward morning, as the stupor wore off, he became crazy for liquor. She had spent a wretched and sleepless night. She had pictured to herself a life of which this was a sample, and she seemed unable to bear the thought. She had made a life's choice, knowing that he drank, and this was the bitter fruit. She had grown from a child to a woman in strength of purpose. She must lead him, rather than lean upon him for protection and love. She locked the

apartment where he was sleeping, and his rage knew no bounds. Liquor he would have. He beat furiously against the door with his fists and feet—cursed and swore, and would perhaps have killed his young bride, had she been within his reach—broke the elegant chairs to force his way, and finally succeeded. The liquor being once more secured at his father's hotel, the maudlin fit returned, and for a week he was worse than the lowest brute.

Camilla had gone home, nearly heart-broken. The Scott family were chagrined, and Hadley thoroughly aroused for his suffering sister. What could be done? A divorce was not to be thought of, because that would be a town scandal. They were inclined to think it was a mistake for the daughter of a Christian man to have married the son of a liquor-dealer, but that could not be helped now. Those mistakes unfortunately occur too often in society.

Ralph came back to his wife like a penitent child, sobbing and asking forgiveness. His training had been wrong, and his moral perceptions blunted. He had thought little of his ways, before binding to himself one who was to be disgraced or elevated according as he lived. Now he would give all he possessed to be a man, to cast off his evil associates, and make her happy whom he had sworn to love and protect.

Mr. Scott attended prayer-meetings oftener than

usual, and took part more earnestly. All knew his sorrow, and the kindly church gathered about him in their prayers.

Deacon Heavenrich perhaps prayed the most of any. He had become rich in the last few years. Mrs. Heavenrich was ambitious. They had lived in a small house, on a street not very well known. It seemed necessary, in order to get into good society, to build a nice house in a fashionable quarter. This was accordingly done, and plain Mr. Heavenrich soon found himself deacon, with a suddenly achieved reputation for wealth. This position naturally made him take a prominent part in the church. He was always there, because he felt the great responsibility of his new office, and always aided by his voice, whether the people desired it or not.

"Camilla, I had a good talk with Mary to-day!" said Ralph, one night as they sat at tea. "I always feel better after meeting her—feel as though I had capabilities for real manhood. I forget that she is near my own age, and look up to her with reverence. She is gentle in her manner, but has so much power. She asked me to go to Sharon Church to-night, and I promised for both of us. Was that right, dear? I want, for your sake, to be a nobler man."

"Yes, Ralph!" and tears fell upon his face as she kissed him.

That night, Camilla Harmon found where to put her trust, and, with the sweetness of a woman's nature, gave her heart into the keeping of her Saviour. Ralph's heart was touched. He was glad for his wife, but he saw only through a glass darkly. He could feel no hand leading him. He made good resolutions. He wept often, as his young wife knelt beside him and prayed. Camilla grew more womanly, and more earnest. Sometimes the sunny girlhood came back, tempered by Christian grace; then came the old fear, that in some of the slippery places the man of her choice might go down. A pretty child had come into their home; and but for the dark wings of the tempter, their cup would have been full.

Meantime Hadley Scott was studying with Judge Underwood.

"So you are going to marry that stately young heiress who called to-day, Scott! She is fine-looking, but she knows too much, and she'll hold you to very proper conduct. 'Twill do for you, perhaps; but I want a wife who hasn't an inquiring mind, or she might find out more than she would care to know. I don't think I have a penchant for intellectual women. I like a woman who is a rest after the stronger topics of the day; who will minister to my comfort, and make herself and the home attractive."

"You like a woman, not for companionship, but for your pleasure, then, Judge?"

"I'd have her finely educated, and not too easily won; but then one only has to find the defenceless points in character, and he conquers!"

"Miss Sharon is something more, then, than would meet your views. She is thoroughly interested in all my plans, and I consult with her as with a sister; 'only her interests are more thoroughly identified with mine than even those of one of my own home circle could be. She believes, and I with her, that women should be self-reliant, be able to support themselves, enter the professions if they have the desire, and not continue to be what they have so largely been, mere playthings to minister to our pleasure."

"They may do for preachers, perhaps, because the sex is made of pretty pure stuff; and I have no objection to their being doctors. I think I should like a lady, if I were ill—and might in that case continue ill for some time; but when they talk of entering law, they get decidedly beyond their sphere. Why, things come up constantly for trial that no woman ought to hear, much less to plead for!"

"And yet, Judge, most who come to us, in these cases you think so indelicate, are women, and would be benefited by the sympathy and voice and heart of a woman lawyer. I am not over-anxious, however,

because we like the loaves and fishes for ourselves. For a sweetheart or a mistress, such a woman as you have mentioned might be chosen; but for a wife, all the women I have ever met, would not equal Mary Sharon to me. She doesn't like men of your cast, Judge. You would stand a poor chance."

"As fair and as elegant have been my friends for a season!" said the accomplished man of the world, who laughed inwardly at the devotion the young lawyer had for his affianced bride.

Judge Underwood stood well in society, as do thousands of other men of elegant address, about whom women in their own circle know little, but the demi-monde a great deal. Men transacted business with him, and never gave his character a thought, or if they did, knew it was of no uncommon kind. Ladies invited him to their parties, where pretty girls waltzed with him, and matronly women glided with him through the graceful figures of the quadrilles, supposing he was what his manner purported, a chivalrous defender of the fair sex. His wife was gentle and domestic, and had all the comforts that money and an ignorance of the ways of mankind can bring. He stood high politically. He was hand in glove with the police, was the patron of courtesans, the friend of liquor-sellers and drinkers, and yet withal a shining ornament in society, and a prominent man of the State.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. HEAVENRICH decided to give a large party. Their house was handsome and must be shown. To that house they were indebted for position and for friends. No wonder it was dear to them. Fame is usually won by wonderful talent, or a grand achievement, or strange self-sacrifice for human good; but nothing is so sure to win a local reputation as a large and handsomely furnished house. It opens the doors to good society, to politics, to the church militant even—to every place save heaven, but there it fails. The widow with two mites given into the treasury, enters there before the matron with her thousands stored in a house with elegant adornments.

Mrs. Heavenrich desired to do all in her power to magnify the Heavenrich name. Everybody who moved in first circles was invited, and nearly everybody accepted. The house was brilliant from top to bottom; the trees about the grounds were hung with Chinese lanterns; finely dressed ladies filled the drawing-room, or sauntered down the walks leaning on the arm of husband or lover, and the whole scene was like a glimpse of fairy-land.

Mary was dressed handsomely, but not showily.

"Don't you wish to dance, Hadley? Don't let me keep you from any pleasure."

"Oh, no; I finished with that when I left college. Dancing may be good for exercise, but I have enough without. Come down to the arbor awhile, and we'll talk together."

Mary had come more for the entertainment of friends who were visiting her, than for her own pleasure.

"Now that we have those young damsels provided with beaux, we can have a pleasant time by ourselves. Mary, why do so many unmarried ladies and widows flock to your house? I very seldom have a gentleman visit me, and he hasn't time for more than a week's stay at best. Your friends remain for months. Don't you get talked out, or does it take womankind a long time to visit?"

"I suppose they come to see me partly from choice, and partly from necessity. Women, you know, are not situated like men. When they are through school, unless there is a husband waiting for them, there is little for them to do in life. They are made fun of if they enter the professions, they are shut out from everything that concerns the State or the Government, and disgraced if they earn their daily bread.

They rise to high social positions, only through their husbands."

"Why don't women enter the professions, and take position, instead of rusting out? 'The gods reward all earnest endeavors,' and the woman who braves all things, and works, will win."

"Very few have the courage, even if the thought comes to them; and many never think of anything beyond elegant toilettes, party-giving, and match-making. I often ask young ladies what they intend to do in life, and the surprised look they give in return is equivalent to saying, 'Are you so ignorant that you ask that question? What can we do but wait till somebody asks our hand in marriage? You would not have us work, surely. Papa supports us!'"

"And what are *you* going to do, my Mary?"

"Marry you, dearest, perhaps!"

"Why perhaps?"

"If you are the same Hadley Scott you are now, when the time comes I shall be glad to do my life's work, with you for counsellor and companion."

"You wouldn't say no, if I did a little wrong. You know, women forgive everything."

"Don't test me, Hadley. You know you are to me all that is good and true. My hopes centre in you. My very soul goes out to you—makes me watchful

lest some unhallowed influence mar your noble character."

"So you have a purpose and a work in life, you say?"

"Yes! to lift humanity all I can; to work for Temperance and Christianity, and for the elevation of woman."

"You can't make women read or think much. I never dare talk to a woman about the current topics of the day, the condition of countries abroad, or, indeed, of our own."

"They don't have much time, Hadley, absorbed as they are with household duties."

"That is kind of you; but I must see things as they are. A business-man, almost overwhelmed with cares, will find time to read a daily paper: women mustn't expect that we shall talk sense to them, until they make themselves intelligent. All the girls I know, care only to be told that they are pretty, or that they dance or play delightfully, and directly the mother is setting a snare to catch one of us for the daughter."

"You are not as gallant as Judge Underwood."

"I respect the sex more than he does, for he believes they are all frail and false. I reverence a true woman for your sake, Mary, but think they are few and far between."

"Yet their influence is mighty, circumscribed as

they are. Men make women what they want them to be. If they need intellect as well as beauty, they have but to let the world know it, and women will come up to a higher standard."

"You meet my ideal, my dear girl, and no one else does. All the devotion I give anything, aside from books, I give to you. Nobody perceives my capabilities as you do. Nobody so helps me guard against temptation. Our lives already seem one. I am thankful one woman was made just suited to me."

"That is the old story. All lovers think so," said Mary, laughing. "We seem so well satisfied with each other, that our friends will think we have forsaken them. Shall we go back?"

"I'm loth to go. The hours go by, and I cannot tell that they have gone. What would Mrs. Heavenrich say if she knew I kissed you in the arbor?"

"Say the world hadn't changed much since she and the deacon courted, I suppose!" said Mary, as she kissed him in return.

The parlors had fewer guests now than before. Mary Sharon excused herself to go about among her many friends, having a pleasant word with each.

Standing near Hadley was a young girl, perhaps seventeen years of age. Her face was singularly sweet and gentle in expression, and her form slight

and graceful. She seemed to be almost the only young lady not dancing. Hadley asked a friend to introduce him.

"Miss Heavenrich, a niece of our hostess, Mr. Scott."

"You are not dancing?"

"No! I am a stranger; besides, I don't know how to dance very well!" she said, frankly.

"Your coming must be a pleasure to your aunt, alone in this large house!"

"Perhaps so, though I stay only a few days. My father died about a year ago, and uncle wrote to me I could perhaps obtain work in this large city. Mother cannot support us all; and indeed, I would not let her, if she could."

"Perhaps I can help you get a situation, I know so many here. What could you do?"

"I should like a place in a store or a library, if I could have my choice. I have read many books, and should like to read more, evenings."

"Can you write a good hand?"

"I think so, sir!"

"I have been one of the managers of our Library, and perhaps I can secure you an assistant's place. Can you step into my office, if you are down town to-morrow?"

"You are very kind. I shall be glad to come."

Uncle doesn't seem to have much time to help me, and I hardly know how to try alone."

The grand party was over. Bessie Heavenrich dreamed about the dark-eyed and dark-haired young man who was to be her friend in a strange city; and Mary Sharon was restless and unsatisfied as she mused how lightly Hadley spoke and thought of woman.

The next day, Bessie dressed herself neatly, and called at the office at the appointed hour. She wrote well: her education, for a country town, was excellent.

"Who was that fresh-looking girl, Scott, just in here?"

"She is Deacon Heavenrich's niece, a poor girl trying to support herself, and they don't even give her a home in their nice house."

"'Twouldn't help the Heavenrich name to have anybody board there who works."

"I shall get her a place in the Library, I think, and a respectable place to board. She is a helpless little thing, and I am interested in her. Miss Sharon would take her home if I should tell her, but she has cares enough already."

The situation was obtained, and Bessie Heavenrich seemed happy. The work was rather trying; her feet ached often; there were very many persons to

please, but then she was caring for herself, and the family was partly dependent upon her exertions. The first five dollars she earned she sent to her widowed mother. Poor Mrs. Heavenrich cried as though her heart would break as she read the letter, and knelt down to thank God for such a precious child.

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CHAPTER IV.

"CARRIE," said Bessie one day to her companion in work, "I can't stay at my uncle's any longer. Could I possibly board with you? You have been so kind to me, and I have learned to love you."

"Why, yes, Bessie, if you can live as I do. You know I am very poor, with an old grandmother to support. I live in a little room on a back street, buy coal and oil myself, and get my meals at the home of a widow, where very common people go."

"Oh, yes, I can live in any way."

"I get only six dollars a week, and, in this large city, I have to economize very closely to keep from starving. So many of the girls, Bessie, have good clothes given them by the bad men of this city, that it makes it harder for us to be clothed even respectably. These men seem to think there is no wrong in ruining a girl who works for a living. Be on your guard, for you will see sin here as you never saw it in your quiet home. Come over to my house to-night, and see if we can arrange."

The room was small, but neat. Carrie started a fire, so as to have it comfortable when they should come

back from supper, and the two girls started out to the widow's home.

"Mrs. Carter, I've brought you a boarder, I think," said Carrie.

"I am glad," said the pale thin woman. "I've been wanting to get some clothes for my little girl, and I thought the money from one or two more would help me."

It was a good, wholesome meal. Only the poor struggling women who scarcely know how to make ends meet, but know that working-people must have hearty food, seem to have any conscience about boarding-houses. She worked very hard, charged low prices—else she could not get the people to come—took care of an indolent, spoiled boy, and a lovely girl of ten.

The persons around the table were evidently pleased with the new-comer. A horse-jockey, with a red necktie and a red face, desired to get into conversation with her; two men, who worked in a neighboring shop, were a little shy of so pretty a face; and another, who had evidently seen better days in early life, talked a little to see if she had any sense; for he disliked, he said, any other kind. As the friends hurried home, arm in arm, they passed a finely dressed young man, very erect, walking rapidly. Each recognized the other, and the gentleman turned back.

"Why, Miss Heavenrich, how is it that I find you here?" he said, giving her his hand with a genial smile.

Bessie blushed as she thought of the contrast between the poor street they were on, and the nice house in which he first met her.

"Auntie said it was something of an annoyance to her to have so many persons in Sharon Church ask about my working in the Library, and she thought the mouths of gossiping people might be stopped by my going away. Besides, she has a great deal of company, and did not like the extra care of another in the family."

"It wouldn't honor the Heavenrich name, maybe. You like the Library?"

"Yes, sir, and I am so grateful to you for getting the place for me."

His heart warmed toward the girl, and he almost resolved to tell Mary Sharon about her. He would certainly look after her. "You may expect me soon in the Library to see you."

Bessie's blue eyes showed that her young heart went out after the stranger. What right had she to think of him, when their positions were so far apart!

"I wonder what Mr. Scott came down here for; perhaps a law-case," she mused aloud.

"A splendid-looking fellow, Bessie, but I'm some-

how afraid of these men who are so kind to us poor girls. You will think so when you know as much of the world as I do."

"Oh, Carrie, he is as good as it is possible to be. I never saw anybody who seemed to love to do good so well. He'll be a great man too, because he is with Judge Underwood, and then he is talented. Wasn't he good to me?"

"Yes, but common humanity ought to prompt as much as that, unless one is very selfish."

They were soon at the room, and the fire blazed cheerfully.

"Now, Bessie, do you want to tell me about yourself and your life?"

And Bessie told of the mother left with her helpless children, and how she had made over her dresses till nearly all were gone; how she had lain awake at night to think by what means she could earn for their support; how she had eaten little and given the best to them; how she had worn poor shoes and bought good ones for little Bessie, because the children at school laughed at her. How at last she came to her rich aunt's in the city, and this kind young man had obtained for her this place, where she could earn and help the family.

"Now, Carrie," she said, "your life has been different from mine. Perhaps you haven't sewed so

much or been so poor as I have. I thought all the time I stayed at auntie's, how happy she ought to be in that nice home, and yet she didn't seem so."

"The big homes do not always hold the big hearts, dear; and people who are stingy, I believe, are never happy. You are better off than I. I haven't father or mother, brother or sister in the world. When my mother died I tried to sew for my living. I took shop-work, and much of the time lived on nothing but crackers, with a bowl of milk. That was my stent, and I could afford no more. I grew so faint from insufficient food, that I could not sew longer, and a gentleman, whose wife had befriended me, interceded for me here. I have worked steadily, and laid up a little money. My wages are to be raised soon, and then I shall be able to save enough for some simple but pretty things I shall want for my marriage."

"And are you engaged, Carrie?"

"Yes, to a noble man, whom I love as only one can who has nothing else on earth to love. He will be home soon, and then you will find another to fill my place."

"Oh, Carrie, don't go away, for I have just learned to love and trust you now. Who would be a friend to me?"

"Why, every one, you dear little body; some good ones, and some bad ones."

And so the evening wore away, and the girls retired to rest early.

"I must come, Carrie, and stay with you. I shall feel so safe then;" and she came.

Judge Underwood came into the Library oftener than usual now. He liked new, fresh faces, and there was a strange fascination in possessing everything that was tempting to look upon.

"This is a bad place for a young lady like you," he said to Bessie one day, after he came to know her quite well.

"Why, sir?"

"Because somebody will fall in love with such a lovely face as yours, pretty soon, and want it all his own. You mustn't win too much admiration here; but it hasn't seemed to spoil you yet."

"Oh no, sir! I have too good a mother for that."

"She must be very proud of you."

"She loves me very much."

"And so do others. I could tell you one."

Bessie's cheeks reddened, as she thought—could that one possibly be Hadley Scott; but she made no answer.

"I have some exquisite flowers in my hot-house, Miss Heavenrich, and if you will stop at the office to-night, as you go home, I will have some ready for you."

"Thank you, sir; but I should not be able to come to-night, because I have an engagement which will prevent."

"Then, to-morrow night?"

"Thank you. You are very thoughtful. I go to my aunt's, and will stop a moment."

"Scott, that's a nice piece of girlhood you have in that library. I expect you'll be giving up the talented Miss Sharon for such simplicity and sweetness. When the blood mounts up to her forehead, I feel just like kissing her."

"You better not do as you feel, Judge, or I should be compelled to resent it. She is sweet and lovely, and I wouldn't see her suffer for the world. But then Mary Sharon, compared to her, is like the ocean to the rivulet. Such love as Mary's lasts after passion has died, after the romance is gone, when the gray hairs and the wrinkles come. Bessie Heavenrich may be affectionate, but Mary Sharon has a wealth of love that blesses and brightens every life it touches. I wonder she loves me as she does, for I am not half worthy of it."

"Well, Scott, you better get your life insured, for you'll die of this sickness, if marriage doesn't cure you."

Judge Underwood staid later than usual at the office, the ensuing evening. The gas was lighted

about the city. The flowers were ready. A light knock on the door, and he welcomed in Bessie Heavenrich.

"You must be tired after your day's work: let me bring you some wine."

"I thank you, sir, I never drink it."

The Judge was nonplussed for a minute. The first act of the programme did not equal his expectations.

"Well, sit down awhile, and have a little chat. I never see you alone in the Library."

"Excuse me, sir, but I am late getting home, and your family must be waiting for you."

Very true, the Judge had a family, which fact he had quite forgotten until this minute.

"Here are the flowers for you," and he opened a large box of exquisite japonicas, tube-roses, geraniums, indeed every flower that might come from the conservatory of a man of wealth.

Bessie's large eyes brightened. Nobody had ever done such a kind act before, and she so loved flowers. He offered to escort her to the car. At the door he paused, then he suddenly drew her into his arms and kissed her! Dropping her flowers, she fled from him down the street like a frightened deer. She knew now what the man had in his heart, and she despised him. His very touch was like a serpent. For once he had misjudged his power.

A few days after, Mary Sharon came into the library. She had been a warm friend to Carrie: now and then, when they could be spared, she took the girls out for a ride, or a half-hour's pleasant, happy converse, hearing their plans—planning with and for them.

She had regained her cheery, sunny nature since Hadley had come back to brighten the desolate home, out of which all had gone. She laughed more, felt more energy for her work, keener sympathies for all she visited, and an overflow of love in her soul, that made her coming a real joy to them.

"Miss Sharon, may I come and see you to-night. I want to tell you something that has troubled me."

"Come by all means, and Carrie with you, to tea with me, and I will make the house look bright for you."

And so they found it: little bouquets were scattered about from her own conservatory. The table was covered with the nicest damask, and everything served was delicious.

After they had returned to the cosey parlor, Bessie unburdened her heart, and told the story of the Judge's insult—and how she feared further persecution.

Mary trembled all the while, fearful that her own love might not counteract the poison Judge Underwood might infuse into Hadley's veins.

"I told you, Bessie, how it would be. You have only learned the first lesson in insult," said Carrie. "Girls who work must expect these things, and be prepared for them. Men who would make the lowest obeisance to young ladies in the higher walks of life, often have little thought of showing courtesy to us."

"That will all change some day, girls, when all women work. When the rich girl ceases to make herself a burden, work will be an honor and a blessing. You know the old adage, 'Tis a long lane that knows no turning;' and I suspect it will turn into pleasant pastures for both of you."

Bessie could not help thinking, if Miss Sharon were not half so good and lovely, there might be a possible chance for her future to be bright with Mr. Scott. Carrie's life was roseate already with its prospects; she could bear some of the disagreeable things now with greater patience.

CHAPTER V.

THERE was a Temperance organization in B—. It numbered some forty or fifty members, young men and women, many of them from the working classes, and a few from the higher walks of life. It had done good work; it had brought in some hard drinkers, who sacredly kept the pledge. Some had fallen, but they were sincere in their efforts to reform. The rich young men seemed to feel it something beneath their dignity to pledge themselves to self-control; the elegant young ladies thought it was not very popular; good Christians found it much easier to pray than to do practical work; and the politicians were afraid of it, lest some voters might be prejudiced against them if they united with it.

Mary Sharon had joined the association, because she lived to lift humanity. She induced Ralph and Camilla to do the same. Mr. Scott felt exceedingly thankful that Mary would soon be in his family; one so willing to look after his wayward children would be a blessing. He advised Mrs. Scott to unite herself to this organization as a Christian duty; and would have done so himself, but for certain political

wires that were constantly working, and that might be broken by any undue devotion to principle. There was a power at the ballot-box, and Mr. Scott understood this thoroughly.

Temptation often came to Ralph, so strong that it seemed as though only superhuman aid could ward it off; then, when he was home, and the chubby fingers of his baby played about his face, and the hands of his pure wife smoothed his brow, he felt powerful enough to resist every attack of the enemy.

Hadley spent the greater portion of his evenings at Mary's home. He was a hard student, and these evening hours gave brightness and color to each succeeding day.

"Hadley," she said, one night, "we are very dear to each other, but we must not spend all these hours telling the same old story, however sweet it is to us. We have but one life, and our union will be so that together we may better solve its problems than if we walked alone."

"You are too good for me. I never shall come up to your ideal. Men get rough, and contaminated with the sin all about them; but *I will keep worthy of your trust*," he said, not knowing how the future would test that promise.

"I have been thinking that you and I must lend our influence against this great evil of whiskey-drinking.

Ralph stands on slippery ground. I tremble for him, much as he desires to be true to himself and Camilla. His appetite was fixed for it in youth. Such habits cling with a power that you and I know nothing of. Young men will seek some place of amusement, and if the door of the saloon, with its music, and social converse, and flowers, stand open, they will go in. I have been thinking that Sharon Church must move in this matter. You can help by your influence."

"Always thinking and planning for something good, Mary. I will work with you."

Just then Mr. Scott entered. This subject had been on his mind, and he had come to confer with Mary. Plans were matured. A special meeting of Sharon Church was called, to take into consideration the establishing of a Holly-Tree Coffee Inn; a place to be as delightful as money and taste could make it.

Deacon Heavenrich spoke most enthusiastically. He thought it was high time that the church was awakened to its duty in this matter of saving young men. Mr. Scott spoke earnestly, and to the point. After this a public meeting was called, at which, among other speakers, Hadley Scott proved himself both able and eloquent. A committee, of which Miss Sharon was a leading spirit, was appointed to solicit funds, and another committee for selecting a

suitable building and making it such as the necessities of the case demanded.

Deacon Heavenrich had talked so much and so earnestly about this matter, and had so recently built his fine home, that it was but natural that he should be solicited for the first subscription.

"Miss Sharon," he said, "I regret that you should have honored me by calling upon me first. I am always glad to assist in such grand work. I feel most keenly our duty as Christians in this matter. The world will of course be busy in getting gain, and in the building up their own families, and unless the church takes hold of temperance, there is little hope for the cause; but really, Miss Sharon, I have been using all my ready money in my house, and just now I can only pray for the success of your most laudable undertaking!"

Most of the wealthy women said they would consult with their husbands, and hoped they might be able to give by-and-by. Some of the good, devout people had all their money locked up in business. Indeed, it was wonderful how many had been obliged to borrow of late to keep up daily expenses. All had numerous calls, but felt the warmest sympathy in so noble a cause. All hoped she would succeed. Mr. Scott, however gave liberally. Among the most generous was Billy Harmon. He believed, just as she

did, that whiskey made mischief. The boys would go somewhere, and he was in favor of making as many pleasant places for them as possible. He never drank, and he was sorry Ralph did. He made his money easily, and liked to give to every good cause. He said he did not profess much, because he thought some of the folks down at Sharon Church didn't live as they professed; but he was willing to lend a helping hand. After many days of soliciting, the amount obtained seemed very small. Pockets were so hard to be reached. Mary made up the deficiencies. A building was leased, help secured, the rooms made attractive, meals furnished almost at cost, and the strength and sympathy of good men and women given, without hope of reward in this world. When the house was ready the public were invited to its opening.

There was a great deal of rejoicing that the good work had been consummated; more rejoicing than there had been giving. The place was certainly an honor to Christian love and enterprise. Some, who would have bought liquor at their meals, or instead of their meals, were kept away from temptation and saved. It was a pleasant, social home for scores. It did good. But what of the hundreds who had already learned to love liquor—those to whom the saloon was a home and a necessity? And

what of the young men who nightly were besought by their friends to join them over a friendly glass? The saloon-keepers were as much on the alert as ever. Human nature did not change because of Holly-Tree Coffee Inns. And what of the scores of men who belonged to the upper classes, who had their beautiful homes if they chose to be in them, or clubs where they could spend their evenings—who scorned the idea that they were not able to control themselves? What of the men, like Ralph Harmon? Such an institution did not reach them. He was glad for it, but never went there himself, and would not have found his friends there if he had gone. The army of wrecked lives seemed none the less in number, and the men who recruited the regiments grew richer and more indolent. The great problem, how shall sixty thousand men be kept from filling drunkards' graves every year, was as unsolved as ever.

Deacon Heavenrich and his wife were very much exercised about this matter. Mrs. Heavenrich was ambitious.

"Mr. Heavenrich, I don't think we have taken the position in Sharon Church that we ought. I desire to have you a burning and a shining light. I prefer, of course, to shine through you. Now Miss Sharon quite leads that church, and she only a woman, and young at that. I do dislike anything that borders

upon the strong-minded. Now that we have our beautiful home, we must increase our influence. The great matter for us in life must be to make the Heavenrich name honored."

"Just so, Mrs. Heavenrich. Since that Holly-Tree Coffee Inn has been established, I have been thinking about what we could do for the cause. I think we ought, as Christians, to go over to Billy Harmon's and talk with him about his business."

"That seems wise to me. Our influence is now so great, that I am sure it would do good."

Mrs. Heavenrich dressed in her best for the sake of influence. The Deacon took his gold-headed cane for the same reason, and repaired to the hotel. Billy Harmon received them very courteously in the parlor.

"Good evening, Mr. Harmon. This is my wife, Mrs. Heavenrich. I suppose you have heard of us?"

"Oh, yes! I soon learn about the people of wealth and position among us."

Mrs. Heavenrich almost repented their coming on such an errand, he was such an affable, kind-hearted man, and so discerning.

"You seem to have made a large fortune; but—ahem! ahem! do you quite like your present business? It would seem that a man of your refinement would like something different. You seem too good for such a place."

"No, I don't like it, except for the money. I meet many over the bar who are of course disgusting to everybody, but then I never sell to drunkards, or where the wife asks me not to do so. I find, however, Mr. Heavenrich, that the business doesn't make much difference with a man if he only has money. By this means I have been enabled to marry my son into the finest family of the place, dress my wife and daughter elegantly, and I seem about as much respected as the rest."

"That is too true, Mr. Harmon; but you must believe the business is wrong. It crushes families, and makes the men vagabonds."

"Yet, if I didn't sell, somebody else would, and the money is as good in my pocket as in theirs. How did you get your money at the start?"

Mrs. Heavenrich grew uneasy.

"Before we came to the city to live, I had vineyards!"

"Did you sell the grapes for wine?"

"I don't know that I ever asked that question, Mr. Harmon. I sold in large quantities, but I hope no wine was ever made from my grapes. I should have been very sorry to have heard of such a thing."

The genial hotel-keeper thanked them for their interest, thought it was a pretty good joke, and dealt

out his liquors a little more freely and joyously. The Deacon and his wife hoped they had done the great work of the season.

Billy Harmon was gaining popularity. Most of the well-to-do young men, as soon as they could get away from home influence, found their way into his handsome bar-room, where they played cards and billiards, and deposited their money in his bank. Saloons were springing up on every side. The moral and upright people of B. talked about it, and had a public meeting occasionally upon "the great and growing evil," prayed over it, and became again absorbed in making money and carrying out their own plans for self-aggrandizement.

Judge Underwood sat in the bar-room one evening smoking, surrounded by a coterie of his fast friends. He never got intoxicated, but he liked all the associations that come with a place like this.

"Harmon, you know I belong just inside the political ring, and I have been thinking what a capital man you would make for mayor of our city; progressive, hospitable, fond of a good time, you'd carry strong. Now I'm well known throughout the State, and I want to go to Washington, and you are just the one to work for me. I'll spend a thousand for you to get the mayorship. You're able to spend ten times that for me, you know. No small honor, friend Har-

mon, for one of us to win where there is so much temperance and religion as there is in this city. Talk the thing over to those who come in here, and I'll send men to every saloon in the town and learn what money they need to buy votes. No doubt about election, if you are nominated, and there is no doubt about the nomination if we work it right. I'll bet an oyster supper for the crowd. If you win you shall pay!"

All laughed cheerily, and Billy Harmon felt that honors were flowing in upon him, more than he had ever expected.

"I've heard that Scott wants the nomination. He'll work, and if he could get his Christian friends interested, they would carry the day, for they outweigh us in influence; but they'll be praying up at Sharon church while we are at the primary meeting, and we'll pack that for you."

Mr. Scott was a man of culture and of principle. Perhaps he was a little too politic for the sake of office; but in these days, when men are obliged to work for positions if they want them, he felt compelled to work somewhat after the same manner. All his friends professed to be interested. He would be an honor to the city. He would be true to temperance. He would enforce a Sunday liquor-law, so much needed. His friends, however, were most of them very busy when the night came for the primary meeting. The

pastor and people of Sharon Church had met to pray. They never postponed a meeting for anything so low as politics: a Christian should be above politics. Perhaps it would have been wise for each person to have made politics a part of his religion; to have made it his Christian duty to see that good men made the laws and executed them; to have insisted upon quiet Sundays and upright officials, correctly kept city finances and true men;—but they prayed for the Lord to keep the government pure, to reform the people and keep them out of the reach of temptation, and made no effort to have those prayers answered.

Deacon Heavenrich prayed most earnestly, and during his long address to the Father, did not forget to remind him of his paternal duty with regard to the primary meeting. He spoke afterward. He should have been there, but his duty to the church was *first*; after that, the good of the city and the nation. It never occurred to his mind that Christ is served by acting rightly as well as by praying.

Mr. Scott was not at the prayer-meeting, but then he was pardonably absent, because he was interested pecuniarily and personally. Mary Sharon prayed that women might be interested in all the great matters that concerned the city and State, and thus affect individual lives.

Mrs. Heavenrich put her hand over her face, as though she felt ashamed for her sex that one should take part publicly in meeting; but then she was ignorant, and had but lately come into cultivated society, and was not so much to blame for her opinions. She never read a newspaper; indeed, she was so busy trying to make her house look well, and her faded person look well, that she had no time.

The result of that primary meeting was as might have been expected. Every saloon-keeper in the ward was present. The good men were either praying when they ought to have been working, or were too tired with the labors of the day to get away from dressing-gown and slippers, even though the peace or misery of hundreds of families depended upon having good men in office.

Billy Harmon was nominated, and soon after elected to the mayorship. Deacon Heavenrich was very loud in his denunciation of such political corruption. Most of the good, honest citizens regretted that such a choice should have been made by the Republican party. There was even talk of getting up a new ticket; but that was vetoed as soon as suggested, because the party must be sustained, even if the city of B—— was submerged in whiskey.

CHAPTER VI.

THERE was a grand ovation to William Harmon, Mayor, on the night of the election. The hotel was one glare of light from top to bottom. The tables in the dining-hall were loaded with the finest meats, fruits, and the choicest wines. The bar was open for all, free of expense.

The Republican party were mostly there, for Mayor Harmon was a good Republican, and it would never do to scratch the ticket. Deacon Heavenrich was there, because he knew the Mayor personally, having talked with him. The Hon. Mr. Scott was there, because, having failed to get the nomination, he wanted to seem magnanimous, especially as Mr. Harmon was allied to his family. Hadley was there, because some young lawyers get the impression that if they keep themselves before the public, that good body must see, sooner or later, that their shoulders are eminently fitted to bear the responsibilities of government.

Judge Underwood was radiant at the good results. He saw good members of Sharon Church mingling with all the whiskey-makers, whiskey-sellers, and whiskey-drinkers of the city. The ring had got the

church just where it had been trying to get it for some years—under its thumb, in abject silence. Families had become so interlinked with the rum-sellers; business-men sold them lumber for their buildings, crockery-dealers sold them glassware, etc. etc., and business must not be crippled; ministers did not like to preach much against it, because some liquor-dealers attended the church, and might some time, if their feelings were not injured, become Christians; indeed, the upright people were afraid to say a word lest the balance of power be lost, and a Democrat gain the election. There were some persons, with advanced ideas, who would rather have been ruled by a good Democrat than a corrupt Republican, but they were in the minority.

Ralph Harmon was of course present. He was honored in his father's honor. Camilla wished he would stay at home with her and their little Jessie, or that she might go with him; but no ladies were allowed. Such political demonstrations were not appropriate for women. Their presence might have done good, but it was not the custom, and custom has made slaves of us all.

"How are you, Ralph? Have a drink with me? I never supposed I'd see you the son of a mayor!"

"I've left off drinking, Childs, since you took me

home to my wife drunk, six months ago. It came near breaking her heart!"

"You aren't tied down like that, I hope, to one woman's apron-strings? Women have to put up with such things. Besides, this event won't happen again in a lifetime. Don't make a fool of yourself, old boy!"

"No, Childs, you must excuse me. I have pledged myself!"

"You haven't joined one of those weak-kneed organizations known as Good Templars or Sons of Temperance? I thought you were more of a man than to have to bind yourself by a gridiron brand."

Ralph's face colored, but he answered, pleasantly, "I don't believe you have been initiated."

"I heard you'd become pious, too; joined that saintly Sharon Church, where they do so much praying?"

"No, I haven't. I think I am not good enough."

"Better than half there are in it. So you won't drink? Well, success to you, Ralph, in that pledge. Be good, and you'll be happy!"

Ralph felt stung to the quick. Judge Underwood soon came where he was standing.

"Harmon, I've been waiting to drink with you!" and before all the crowd, and before Ralph had time to refuse, he had poured a glass and raised it to his mouth.

"Here's health to the honored son of an honored sire, the Mayor of B——."

Ralph put the cup to his lips. It almost burned him at first; then he drained the glass, and conscience was dead. He drank again and again after this, and jested with the most abandoned.

The supper was eaten. Bottle after bottle of wine of all kinds, and whiskey for those who desired something stronger, had been drunk, when the crowd began to give cheers for the Mayor and call for a speech. Mayor Harmon felt that the duties of a gentleman devolved upon him. He had not been brought up in the business of speech-making, but he did well, considering that a large number of his audience were drunk, and he was sober. He reminded them how much the party owed Judge Underwood for his untiring devotion to principle, especially in this present crisis. He pledged himself to perform the duties of his office faithfully, and hoped nobody would have cause to regret his election.

Judge Underwood was loudly called for. The more the wine worked in their blood, the more ready were they to believe that the most commonplace remarks were eloquent. The applause was so constant that the Judge scarcely heard himself. There were other speeches—one from the president of the Liquor Union. At a late hour the crowd dispersed.

Camilla Harmon waited anxiously for her husband's return. She had a vague fear of some sad results. There was a quick, rough pull at the door-bell.

"A man's in here, drunk, Miss. I guess it might be your man. I never can git such a dead carcase as his in there. If you jist take hold of the head, I'll take the legs, and carry him up. I can go backwards!"

Camilla did not shriek nor faint.

"How did you know where he lived?" she asked of the hack-driver, as she offered him some money.

"The man what made a big speech told me, and I guess like enough he was ashamed to come too. I thank ye, Miss, but he paid me well 'fore I started. Nice man he is, I guess. Your man mebbe couldn't stand much. I've got lots of 'em to carry home to-night. 'Ta'n't no fool of a job, neither."

The door closed, and Camilla was left alone with her besotted husband. She went to her God and prayed. Her sorrow seemed great, but she wanted to bear it. She put chairs in front of the sofa, that he might not fall off, put a pillow carefully under his head, and went to rest with her pretty babe. She slept little, and the child was restless, as though from the mother's breast it had tasted her anguish.

In the morning, Ralph was furious. Liquor had made him him crazy. He sprang off the sofa and rushed to the bed, trying to beat his wife. The baby

opened its eyes and cried, and the brutalized father struck it with all his strength.

"Oh, Ralph!" gasped the mother, "you have killed our Jessie."

He looked stupefied for a moment, then seized his hat, and rushed out upon the street. The mother sprang out of bed and took the little creature to the air, but the temples were bruised and blackened. Jessie's cries had been stifled forever!

No sadder funeral was ever known in B—— than that of baby Jessie Harmon. Mary Sharon arranged the flowers about the casket, so that the marks of the father's hand might not be seen by a stranger's eye. The Scott family were crushed; even Mayor Harmon wept like a child, and thought he would stop his miserable business. The father was too drunk to know anything of it. The mother, pale, yet trusting in that Arm that had been more to her than husband or lover, saw the sods of the valley fall upon her only treasure, and felt that it was safe.

Again Mary Sharon's home opened to her who was to be a sister, and the poor desolate mother found sweet consolation in a sympathizing friend.

When Ralph came to his senses, and found his home closed, his baby gone, he was like one demented. He would spend hours repeating to himself Jessie's name, often in a wild paroxysm calling her frantically,

until the boarders in the hotel would rush to his room, where he secluded himself, to see if he were doing violence to himself. Sometimes he would go to his wife, and, falling on his knees before her, would implore her forgiveness and her intercession with God. Sometimes he would go with his clothes torn and his brain deadened by liquor, even then knowing but one thought: the horror of his deed nothing could wholly obliterate. Camilla was always kind, but the old love seemed to have died; the beautiful child that bound them together was gone!

Mr. Scott owned a portion of ground just outside the limits of the city, where, when the duties of life were not so pressing, he had hoped to build a lovely suburban home. Something must be done for Ralph. He would give that land for an Inebriate Asylum, if the good people of B——, especially the Christian people, would build the structure. It would cost at least twenty-five thousand dollars.

The churches held a union meeting. All deprecated the state of things in their midst. In a few more years B—— would be unfit to live in. Even from a business point of view, such a reformation was demanded. Deacon Heavenrich said, "This new enterprise is one of the very best things I have ever heard suggested. Some of the young men who have united themselves to Sharon Church have fallen away.

The Holly-Tree Coffee Inn, admirable though it is, does not seem to work any great reform. This liquor interest seems to be gaining power. Our young men are being drawn into this abominable net of the destroyer. Some of our brightest intellects are being ruined. We Christians of this city must put our hands to the plough. We are called to a great work. This appetite for strong drink must be cured, and we trust an Inebriate Asylum in our midst may be the means of this glorious reformation!"

Mrs. Heavenrich smiled approvingly, and hoped the Deacon's talk would make the Heavenrich name more respected. As usual, a committee was appointed to solicit funds. Billy Harmon gave five thousand dollars. He was interested. Deacon Heavenrich had been investing all his money quite recently. He and Mrs. Heavenrich would take the matter into prayerful consideration—which they did, with no tangible pecuniary results. All hoped the cause would succeed, but they had been buying new furniture, or new dress goods, or increasing their business, and prayed to be excused. There was no prospect that Mr. Scott's land would ever be accepted.

There had long lived in B—— a maiden lady, whose peculiarities of dress and habit had made her a notable character in the community. About this time, at the advanced age of sixty, she died. Her eccentric

ways were explained and the public interest in her was heightened by the story, which had become commonly known. Years before, it was said, she had a lover, to whom she was most devotedly attached. A short time before the day when they were to have been married, he died, giving her all his property. Because it was his, she had sacredly saved every penny of it, living entirely upon her own earnings. There were few who cared for her, and she cared for few. Mary Sharon went occasionally to see her, just as she went to other homes where no one else thought to go: a basket of fruit, or a book, or a bunch of flowers from her hand made many lives glad. This legacy had accumulated during these long years, and it was a matter of speculation among the people to whom the money would be left. She seemed to have no relations, and no friends who would be likely to inherit it. Mary had, during the old lady's illness, told her of the scheme to build an Inebriate Asylum, but had never asked for anything. When she was dead, a will was found in the hands of a neighbor, giving all her money, which amounted to eighteen thousand dollars, to build this home for the victims of intemperance. The few persons who had already given were glad; the many who had not given, were very glad indeed when they heard of this munificent bequest.

The institution was built. From all parts of the

State, rich men came, bringing their wrecked sons to see if a diseased and depraved appetite could be cured. They were willing to pay almost any price for board, so that they might have the care of able physicians.

Ralph Harmon was among the number. His father was glad to meet any expense that his only son might be reformed. Week after week, scores of young men and old—some almost in their graves, the effect of their debauched lives; others with comparatively strong physiques—sat on the porches, and told of their drunken revelries to each other. They got liquor occasionally, when they could by stealth; and as a rule made little progress. There were exceptions, of course. Some had come with the determination to be good men; and as their nerves were somewhat restored, and they were kept apart from temptation, they became able to conquer their grovelling appetites. Upon most, however, it was money thrown away. They returned to their homes too weak to resist temptation. The old band of evil associates remained about them, to lure them on; and the doors of sin, open all along the streets, with bands of music and flowers and games to draw thousands down to ignominy and death, were attractions they could not withstand. The great problem of saving young men was not solved yet.

Ralph staid for months, and as the poignant sorrow

for the great crime he had done, somewhat wore off, he seemed to get stronger mastery over himself. In his despair and desolation he had drank daily, seeming to want to bury himself and his affections in oblivion. When his young wife would come to see him, he would resolve once more to be a man for the sake of her who still clung to him. Their home was again opened, and the two, sadder yet still hopeful, set out together on the old pathway, full of pitfalls for any man who has yielded *once* to temptation.

CHAPTER VII.

"BESSIE, you are very good to help me in doing these last things before I am married. I am so tired sewing evenings, after working all day in the Library. Won't it be blessed to rest in the love of a noble man, have a neat home, and be through with this struggle for sustenance? I shall help, but the way will be so easy when a loving arm is about me!" said Carrie, as she and Bessie sat together.

"It will be almost as good as heaven, won't it, Carrie? How lonesome I shall feel! I wish I had somebody to love me too. I could work so hard if somebody wrote to me, and thought of me, as Carson does of you."

"Doesn't your mother love you, child?"

"Oh, yes, dearly!" said Bessie, blushing; "but I feel so alone. I like somebody to tell things to, and to do things for. It would make me very happy."

"You would make the best little wife that ever lived, for a man whose thoughts are not absorbed in books. If one who desires a devoted wife, thoughtful of his comfort, and of all the little delights that make life happiest, would but ask me to tell him where to

find her, I'd bring him to you. You certainly will be my bridesmaid, Bessie?"

"It is very lovely in you to give me that place, surely; I accept it. Carson will be very proud of you, Carrie, and so shall I."

These joyous anticipations were to have a sad end. One week from that night found Carrie stricken by the cruelest blow. A telegram had come bringing the brief story that Carson West had been suddenly killed!

There was no line of light in Carrie's darkened sky; not a gleam to brighten the future, which now seemed to contain only a life-work unshared, and no love to brighten the struggle for existence.

With all the unselfishness of her heart, in the midst of this overwhelming grief she rejoiced that her love had been a help in keeping him from yielding to temptation where many had fallen; and that despite their separation he felt such confidence in her. How often he had written that he longed for her constant presence, that he looked forward impatiently to the moment when he should clasp a dear bride in his arms, who had waited so patiently for his coming. She was thankful that death came in a moment, that there was no time to think of the heart it would break.

That night, and the next, was but one long hour

of anguish to her. Kind friends watched over her, bathed her burning temples, and were silent.

When the morning came on which she was to have been married, she arose and put away all her wedding garments, then sat quietly down to make the suit of black which she had desired her friends to procure; and when done, went calmly back to her old duties in the Library. The dream of a home-nest, made cheery by her hands, was over. Thenceforward life was a reality, and work or starvation was the alternative.

By-and-by a small box came, containing some little treasures of the dead lover. In it were Carson's picture, a tiny Testament, a diary, and some of Carrie's letters. Each memento had its own language, as she pressed them over and over again to her heart, and laid them away among the pretty things that were to have been for her bridal.

The lady sold the house where Carrie and Bessie lived, and they were compelled to move. An old friend of Carrie's took her into her home, but was unable to take Bessie also; so she obtained a comfortable place elsewhere, after long searching, because nobody wanted to take a girl to board. This was scarcely to be wondered at. A man who boards, eats his meals, and seeks his store or his own room at night. A woman, somehow, gets the idea that she is taken for company. Accordingly she brings down her

sewing, every other day at least, into the family room; reads aloud extracts from books and papers; tells all about her friends and her plans; wants to wash and iron *just a few* handkerchiefs, stockings, ruffles, and laces; expects to have the exclusive use of the best parlor twice a week for a beau; and hopes, with all these privileges, to be charged only about half as much as a man. When women boarders, young or old, stay in the rooms they pay for, and keep themselves and their children, if they have any, out of kitchen and parlors, for which they do not pay, we shall not so invariably hear the response, "We never take lady boarders!"

Mrs. Leffingwell, with whom Bessie found a home, was a very intellectual, capable woman. She had married, early in life, a man whom she loved devotedly, and who was equally fond of her. Two children had been born to them. She had wonderful self-control, was wise in her planning, and calm and gracious in manner. She made her house a social centre. She won friends. She strove to make her husband successful in business. She kept him before the public. He was a lawyer, and more than ordinarily gifted. But his cases being few, he felt obliged to charge exorbitant fees; consequently, nobody ever wanted him the second time. She was

fitted to shine as the wife of a governor or a senator; fitted to wield an influence by her charming conversation and advanced ideas; but he had not the skill to place her in such a position. She longed to devote her life to study, but there seemed no opening. Money came slowly, and all the days brought the same tread-mill work, the same strong aspirations, and the same certain failure of their realization. She was very cheerful; nobody ever knew how the mind was wasted and worn by its longings and its struggles, till, the body sympathizing, her health partially failed. What was left but to take a few boarders, as congenial as she could find, to eke out a scanty living? It was a long walk for Bessie; but the good home at the end paid for that.

Mary and Hadley sat by the bright fire in the open grate in Sharon House, on the evening before Mary was to begin a long journey. She expected to be absent for weeks, perhaps for months. "Mary dear," he said, taking her hand in his, "I finish my course of reading law to-morrow, and I think I will accept a proposition which Judge Underwood has made me to form a partnership with him. I shall thus be brought immediately into very active work, and gain a position that will give honor and happiness to you. I know your feelings in regard to Judge Underwood, but I

must not throw away so valuable an opportunity. I win for your sake only."

"I can trust you, dear; and some time, perhaps, you may prefer to be in business alone. I hate to go and leave you; but you will find pleasure in doing good, and growing more fitted for your position. I shall have your letters to gladden the days that will sometimes seem long. How much time will you give me, Hadley? I wonder if as much as now?"

"Every evening, dearest, you shall see; but oh, it won't be like your presence! The hours passed in your home have been a sweet rest to me. I have grown nobler and purer by your words and your life. I shall be only half myself without you. I shall feel constantly the blessed influence of your prayers for me; and your love will make my life pure and complete. These days have seemed like a dream. I cannot bear to have the spell broken only for a little time."

"Our lives have seemed to flow together as one, Hadley. I don't know but that I have leaned too fully on you—even while I am strong myself. I have thought so much for you, and built air-castles for you, and moulded my life to be the complement of yours. Your love to me has been like a stream through a desert, brightening a whole country; like a sun that dispels all the mists of the early morning. Every spot about the home seems doubly sacred

since your feet have trodden it, and your voice has made it musical. We shall see each other again in a few weeks."

"I shall count the days till you come again, and then we will be united for life. We must have a little time of travel and rest and refreshment then. How much we shall enjoy together! I can work with you beside me. Sharon House will grow bright again with a wedding, won't it? We shall renovate it, but we cannot give up the dear old place. Get all ready for the time we have looked forward to for years. Keep well and strong, and we shall be happy!"

There were long last words, as lovers always have. There were tender caresses, that between pure lives are beautiful; sad good-byes, and half-whispered blessings. The meetings and the partings form much of the light and the shadow of life.

The first evening away from Mary was desolate. There was an unrest about his spirit, a vacancy of heart that was not filled. His life had been so full of satisfaction, he had hardly known how much he loved her. Now, if he could have her near him, though there was no word spoken, he would be content. The first night he wrote her, and the second, and the third. They told the old, old story, that his life was in hers, that she alone could fill his thoughts, help execute his plans, and make him a noble, successful man. He

missed the touch of her hand upon his brow, he missed her words of comfort in little annoyances, he missed the pure spirit that day by day was especially necessary to keep him on an exalted plane, when connected with so much to drag him down. He waited impatiently for her first letter, and when it came to the office, he went down by the water's edge to be alone—alone with Mary.

"Your letter, dear Hadley, was a joy to me. I read it, and re-read it. I am busy sight-seeing already, and thoughts of you crowd upon every view. Is it pleasant to you that some one far away watches every varying shade of your character, studies what place God intended you to fill in life, prays for you, and lives in you? I want to make you happy. I want to help make you a power in life. I am not content for you to win small things only. My hopes and plans centre in you. Together we can work earnestly and successfully. I trust you fully. I know you will not change. I shall try to be all to you any woman could be. I shall cling to you, and yet I know you will love to come to me for counsel and aid. I am looking forward to the time when we shall not have another separation during life.

* * * * *

"Aunt is very lonely and out of health, and I am glad I came to cheer and strengthen her. I shall

depend on your letters to make absence endurable. Write me of your reading, your law-cases, your plans; indeed, everything about yourself is of intensest interest to me. You have the disposition, the manners, the loving heart, the strong manhood, that have made you to me more than any other human being. Keep your lips pure by the kisses of little children, and your heart holy by noble deeds."

He went back to the office with a heart half glad and half sad. It was precious to be the idol of such a woman, but it was weary work to go to daily duties without her voice to cheer or face to look upon. He tired of constant study. He needed her companionship. True, he had a sister, but Camilla had other cares and thoughts to fill her life. Nobody lived for him, nor lavished upon him such a wealth of affection as Mary Sharon. The strong man seemed tossed about without a rudder. He stopped at the Library as he went home at night, thinking that little Bessie Heavenrich might be needing some kindly hand to aid her.

Bessie's eyes told how glad she was to see him.

"You have not been here for a long time. It is always a welcome sight to see you enter the room."

Hadley's heart warmed a trifle. Did any woman in the world, save Mary, care for him, or was glad at his coming? The Library was just being closed, and Hadley walked with Bessie toward her home.

"This is a long walk for you in the evening," he said; "and not very safe, is it?"

"Good men wouldn't hurt me, and I never speak to bad ones, sir, if I know it."

"Are you happy here?"

"Yes, as happy as anybody can be, who has to work very hard, and has no home."

"You have a home, and a mother?"

"Yes, but I must make my own home, you know. I wish I liked to be brave and struggle. Now Carrie is strong for both of us, and when I am with her I feel brave enough; but my solitary room makes me lonely when I return to it, and I often cry like a child."

"I would like to call upon you now and then, and help while away these long winter evenings."

"That would make me very happy, I assure you. But I would try to entertain you, and not make your visits seem a mere duty. I would like to sing to you, as I used to at home, but I have no piano. My father, though poor, wished to have his home happy, and obtained a piano, for which he was paying by instalments when he died. We could not afford to keep it. But I had it long enough to make a friend of it, and I long for it now when alone."

Bessie went to sleep that night with a lighter heart. One person was kind to her. She dreamed that she

sang and played for him, and that he too was made happy by it.

The next day Hadley rented a piano, and had it sent to her home. In the evening he called to hear her play. The girl was wild with delight. She played snatches of old songs, then gay waltzes, and then sad minor strains that made Hadley long more than ever for the soft hand of Mary Sharon upon his brow.

"Miss Sharon will be glad you did this, I think," said Bessie. "She is the noblest woman I ever saw!"

Hadley felt his face color like a girl's. The next evening he wrote Mary, telling her what he had done, of the detail of business, of his plans for her and himself; and letters came back in return full of womanly fervor and trust.

Very often now, Hadley spent an evening with Bessie. Her childish, loving nature seemed to fill a vague longing in his heart. He would never have thought of her for a wife; she was too much the child to help him attain what his ambition craved, but she made the evenings cheery, and it was a pleasure to know that he made some one supremely happy. Perhaps he never thought she was loving him too much. Perhaps he felt safe in the thought that she must know he was engaged to Miss Sharon. One night, after she had finished playing, he bent over

and kissed her. The girl looked up in his face, and tears filled her eyes. "What is it, Bessie?"

"Oh, it makes me so happy to know that some one cares for me even a little. The days are so much brighter, and I can work and earn now!"

A great many gifts came to her from Hadley's hands. Nobody gossiped about it, because nobody knew it save Mrs. Leffingwell, and she saw little of society, and did not know that he was the betrothed of another.

"Mr. Scott," said Bessie, one night, "I want you to go to my home when the holidays come. Mother would love to see you, because I have written about you so constantly. Would you go to a place that was small and plain?"

"Why, yes, my dear Bessie, the place would make no difference to me. You know it is not place, but people that I like. I should go because you are such a dear friend to me."

The little house in the country was swept and dusted a dozen times over, everything washed that could be, and all was in readiness for the noble young man who had been such a friend to Bessie. Perhaps he would one day be their son and brother.

The oldest boy, Charlie, had five chickens well grown. "Mother, you may have them for Mr. Scott. I thought I'd sell them for some Christmas

presents; but we must give him good things to eat, mustn't we?"

The greeting touched Hadley's heart; the gratitude expressed to him seemed to bring him closer to the family, and strengthen the feeling of responsibility for Bessie's happiness and success.

"We might not have been quite so poor," said Mrs. Heavenrich one night, as they were gathered about the stove, "if my husband's brother had been honest with us. We thought him good because he was a member in the church; and when he wanted to go into business, we mortgaged our home, and obtained for him fifteen hundred dollars. We had considerable land, and we could have raised almost enough to support us. When the money became due, Deacon Heavenrich had begun to build his elegant house, and could not pay. My husband besought him for the sake of his children to keep our property from being sold; but he could not, or did not meet his obligation. Our place was disposed of, and this very small one rented. It wore upon my good husband, so that he died not long after."

"Has the money ever been paid?"

"Never."

"He owes it to you yet!"

"Yes, sir, as the notes will show."

She put them into Hadley's hand.

"My husband felt ashamed to have a lawsuit with his own brother, though I don't know but he would have been obliged to go to that extremity if he had lived."

The poor widow could not make an objection when Hadley begged to be allowed to try to obtain the money from the Deacon. So he put the notes in his pocket, and promised his best efforts in securing the money so wrongfully withheld.

When Christmas came, Hadley hired the best span of horses in the place, and gave the whole family a sleigh-ride, going to a hotel in a neighboring town to get supper. On their way home, little Charlie whispered in his mother's ear to give *all* the chickens to Mr. Scott. He had thought at first he could spare but three of the five.

"Mother, isn't he the best man you ever heard of? Didn't I tell you he was handsome, and finely educated, and good?" said Bessie.

"Don't love him too much, my child, till you know that he loves you."

"I know already he is attached to me, because he kisses me, as though I were a pet sister."

"Is he a Christian man?"

"Maybe he isn't a member of any church, but he is good. You know Uncle Heavenrich belongs to Sharon Church, and we don't think he is *very* good."

The people of the town were very much interested that a young man from the city should come to visit poor Mrs. Heavenrich. Some said it was a wondrous streak of good luck; others said Bessie was pretty and lovely, and it was no wonder she had captured a city beau; and some shook their heads knowingly, and said no good would come of it.

That Christmas week was one ever to be remembered by the Heavenrich family. They had presents on Christmas day, and a turkey that Hadley bought. Bessie had a new dress, a thing she had not hoped for. Her life seemed full of joy. Hadley had never spoken of marriage to her, but he spoke of Mary Sharon less often.

"What will dear Miss Sharon say, that you come to visit me so much?"

"Oh, she trusts me fully. She is having a good time, I doubt not."

"I'm afraid I oughtn't to love you so much, when perhaps she loves you as much as she used to, although she is far away."

"Love me all you can, darling. My life would be prosy indeed without your sweetness."

The vacation week came to a close all too soon, and Bessie and Hadley went back to their duties; one to build a foundation for wealth and fame, the other to live on small wages and in her dreams of the future.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT his earliest convenience, Hadley sought the house of Deacon Heavenrich. That gentleman was busy beside his coal fire, looking over accounts. Since he had become high-toned and scriptural, and had gone out of the vineyard business, and had built his new house, he found it somewhat difficult to make ends meet. He had great sagacity, and was very saving in little things; so, by good thinking and sharp practicing, he managed to live. He found occasionally a man, who, when pressed for money, would pay high rates of interest; he found others who had money to lend; so, being a second or third rate broker, and selling a piece of land now and then, or reporting a man who wished to get his life insured, he managed to put some fair commissions in his pocket.

There was a heavy mortgage on his house, part of which must soon be cancelled. He must borrow some money, if possible: but nobody wanted to lend on second mortgage, even for a deacon. He had been troubled. He had laid the matter before Mrs. Heavenrich. She didn't know of anybody who could lend money save Miss Sharon. God's

providence seemed so strange to her. Miss Sharon was allowed to live in a large house, to hold a high position, and lend money as well and prudently as a man. Mrs. Heavenrich didn't know what need women had for money; and why, when they had it, they didn't put it in the hands of some man to manage for them. The Deacon would transact her business so admirably for her. But some persons would go out of their sphere, and be so efficient that it spoiled them. They were both busy planning when the door-bell rang, and Mr. Scott was ushered in.

"Good morning, Deacon. I have lately been at your sister's, making a little visit, and I found them in needy circumstances. I call to talk about a little money transaction you had with her husband."

The Deacon grew white, and his wife red in the face.

"Oh—ah—yes! I did borrow some of my brother when I built the house; and our expenses have been so heavy, that I have never seen my way clear to pay it."

"But their little home was sold in consequence, and the father grieved to death."

"I know there was such talk, but then circumstances alter cases. They lived in a very quiet way, and did not need the money as much as I did. With our position, a good house was a necessity. Children

in the country don't need much education nor clothes; but when people fill responsible positions, like Mrs. Heavenrich and myself, they need more."

"The note is greatly overdue, and I shall be obliged to collect it, Deacon."

"But I have no money just now, Mr. Scott!"

"Then you must borrow!"

"I was thinking this morning I would write to Miss Sharon, and solicit a loan for a few months."

"She has no money to lend; hers is all invested, either for herself or in good works."

"I fear I shall not be able to borrow, Mr. Scott. If my sister-in-law could wait a year or so, I think I might be able to meet it. I greatly regret to have them inconvenienced for the lack of it."

"I see no way, then, for you, but to sell your house, Mr. Heavenrich. This seems hard; but the law is stern in its requirements. I shall be obliged to sue, if the amount is not forthcoming. If you can sell your place, I will wait a short time before pressing the payment."

The Deacon trembled perceptibly. Mrs. Heavenrich was very angry; but remained silent. There was a long, stormy consultation after Hadley took his leave. Mrs. Heavenrich wept and scolded, and scolded and wept. She regretted that she ever saw the day when the Deacon crossed her path. She

might have married a man who could have put her in a good house on a good street, with the means to keep it. So few men were capable of getting a decent living! She wondered what she was ever made for—and the Deacon privately wondered the same thing. She preferred to die, if they were obliged to sell their nice house. The poor Deacon trembled worse than ever; but necessity knows no law. The mortgage and this note must be paid. That afternoon, a board was nailed to the fence in front of the house, and "For Sale" printed on it. Mrs. Heavenrich forgot to pray over it, she was so angry; and the Deacon neglected the regular prayer-meeting, he was so burdened in mind and heart. The reason for the sale soon became known. It was whispered that he never meant to pay his poor widowed sister. Some of the good people of Sharon Church talked this matter over privately, and when the next election of church officers came about, the Deacon was not re-elected. This was a very sad blow, next to being obliged to part with the house.

Mayor Harmon saw the sign one day as he was riding past, and bethought him what a good place it would be for Ralph and Camilla; got out of his carriage, went over the rooms, found them very convenient and attractive, obtained a refusal for a few days, and finally purchased it. The mortgage was paid,

and the money due the sister was given to Hadley; and the would-be aristocratic Deacon Heavenrich moved into a small house on a side street, and gave no more parties nor long addresses in prayer-meetings. Mrs. Heavenrich always told people that they were so begged to death because they had a handsome home on a nice street, that they preferred to live more quietly and not be so constantly annoyed.

Poor Widow Heavenrich was more than ever grateful to God, in whom she had trusted. That money seemed like a fortune. A neat home was purchased, where they could have a garden and raise their vegetables. Now, with Bessie supporting herself and sending a little money home, and one of the boys doing chores for a neighbor night and morning, and her own needle deftly plied, she was placed above real want. She was only sorry the Deacon had to sell his place, and did not know but she ought to have waited a while longer.

"Isn't Mr. Scott going to marry Bessie, mother?" said Charlie.

"Hush, dear; we mustn't say a word about such a thing, because we do not know what will happen. He is a noble man, and Bessie loves him very much. He helped us get the money we had needed so long; but God helped most, in having him come here and become interested in us. We have been asking Him

to give us a better home, and He has done it. He never fails us."

The winter days lengthened into spring. The sweet arbutus opened among the snows, then the violets and the daffodils, then came grasses as soft and smooth as velvet. Hadley had received beautiful, earnest letters from Mary all through these months past, and had sent in return the most affectionate words his thoughts could find.

She had written him of all she had seen and heard. She told him of a young minister who had met her often, and had evidently admired her mind and heart. She described him as a man of fine presence, with remarkable intellectual gifts and conversational powers. She wrote of the enjoyment she found in his society, and how thoroughly she respected him. Finally came the story of his asking her to be his wife, despite her earnest effort to show him no encouragement. "How little," she wrote, "can the most brilliant charms and accomplishments of intellect sway my feelings, when I have no heart to give! You have my honest affection, my faith and troth. Your noble heart and earnest mind make up my world."

Had Hadley kept his troth as well? He loved Mary as much as ever, perhaps. He had no thought of giving her up. Bessie had made his winter very pleasant, and he could not help saying to himself that

he loved her, but not as he loved her to whom he was betrothed. At times he thought he had been selfish, and might have kept her from others, or that she might feel almost crushed when he married another; but then he solaced himself with the thought that other men had done the same, and that she would get over it by-and-by.

These bright spring days brought Mary home again. She had been a faithful nurse, and her aunt was well once more. She had made new friends, studied human nature, been, as always, interested in the poor and the degraded; and came back prepared to be a noble companion and wife.

The first evening after her return Hadley spent at Sharon House.

"I never saw you look so well, Mary," he said. "I believe refusing ministers agrees with you."

"Oh, Hadley! you surely do not mean that. Nothing in this wide world seems so wrong to me, as winning the affection of another, and then casting it aside. I have no respect for a man or woman who will do that. Such persons ruin souls as well as bodies."

Hadley's cheeks crimsoned for a moment.

"Well, your eyes are brighter, your cheeks fuller and fairer, your heart better, if possible, and I love you more than ever!" he said, kissing her fondly.

"Are you all ready for the blessed union we have been waiting for?"

"Not quite, for I have been so busy with aunt I have had little time to prepare for it; though I don't want to be foolish, and wear out my eyes and nerves, as some young ladies do, in making up garments that would spoil with age before they could be worn out."

"I want to do what will please you. I am anxious for a home, though, and feel that no place is such without you in it."

"I shall have many friends coming this summer, and if we wait till autumn, it will be a delightful time to go abroad; and that, you know, has been our cherished plan. We must not spend less than a year. We must go to be learners, rather than because it is the popular resort. I have been reading much with that project in view. We must devote several months to Italy: especially do I want to see France; and now more than ever Prussia and Spain."

"We can study social problems and political conditions for ourselves. Let us go alone. More than four never can travel together peaceably, there are so many tastes to be consulted; and two who love each other are enough in a world of their own."

And so the hours wore on, as they read and talked together, as in days gone by.

After being home a few days, Mary bethought her

of sweet Bessie Heavenrich, and went into the Library. Carrie showed great delight at seeing her old friend; but the color came and went in Bessie's cheeks, and she appeared timid and sad.

"What ails you, dear?" said Miss Sharon.

"I wish you would find out," said Carrie; "for I see the dear girl in tears whenever she is alone. She is losing her color, and her eyes look hollow. She says all are well at home, and I can't guess the sorrow at her heart."

"Come home with me, Bessie, for a few days, and get cheered up."

"I shall never feel any differently, dear Miss Sharon; but I can't give any reasons. I love you, you are so kind."

Miss Sharon came in oftener, and brought fruits and flowers, but the color did not come back to the cheeks, nor the lustre to the eyes.

"What has so blanched the cheeks of Bessie Heavenrich, Hadley? Surely nobody would add to the sadness of that girl's life. She is illy fitted for work at best, she is so frail and sensitive. Every night, when she goes to her room, fatherless and alone, Carrie thinks she cries half of the night."

"I suspect the truth is, she likes me a little more than she ought to!"

"I fear you may have encouraged her, though

perhaps unwittingly. My heart aches for the dear girl. Can't we do something for her?"

"She'll get over it very soon, I think." Hadley had been to see Bessie very little since Mary's return. Indeed, he had scarcely been in the Library, for his business was constantly increasing, and he was determined to succeed. One night when he went to her, Bessie clung to him and cried so bitterly, that he lay awake conscience-stricken half the night, and resolved to keep away in future.

Mary had been consulting with several of the older ladies of Sharon Church about developing some new branch of Christian work. During her absence, she had become intensely interested in the workings of a Foundling Asylum. Every week she had visited it, and inspected the long clean wards. She saw the little fatherless and motherless waifs in their cribs; fondled many a helpless little creature, thought of the agony of the poor heart-broken mother, led astray by some careless or unprincipled man; and how, but for this home, the pretty wee things might have been thrown into some alley or brought up in abject poverty or sin. The babies came to know and love her. What woman's heart, or man's either, could be unmoved when scores of worse than orphans look lovingly up into their faces, calling "mama" or

"papa!" - She talked of this matter earnestly with the women of the church.

"I really don't believe it such a charity, Miss Sharon," said Mrs. Heavenrich. "A woman who is so foolish as to be led away, does not deserve to be helped."

"But we are led perhaps into things, through blind devotion, that we would not be in our sober senses."

"I can't believe in any such self-forgetful affection."

"Yet you and I have known girls in this community, as pure as we are, who have become outcasts through a perfect trust. But what of the children? They are innocent, and helpless, and must be cared for!"

"'Bout as well die, I think. The truth is, Miss Sharon, I should be afraid to care for any child born out of wedlock, for fear that we were rearing a class in community who would have their fathers' low desires, and mothers' weakness."

"Would you advocate the destroying of those legitimate children whose fathers are known to be debased, for fear they would make bad members of society? We have no right to aid in destroying human life in either case. If we turn against such a mother, if we allow her to murder her child to conceal her shame, or relieve herself of the burden that she

may earn her living, we are direct abettors of the deed, and, I fear, answerable for it."

"I hope you don't intend to have a basket hung out, that anybody can go there and not be known? There would be no living in this city."

"You don't think, surely, Mrs. Heavenrich, that all the women of this city would rush into sin, unmindful of maternal agony and probable infamy?"

"No; but then I was thinking there might be more bad men, with such increased facilities for hiding their guilt."

"Men who are immoral, never weigh great moral questions in the balance with passion."

"Well, Miss Sharon, I'm glad you are so liberal; but I really wouldn't have a woman in my house who had been led away from virtue. I am afraid of women who can't resist temptation."

"I think you have no reason to be afraid of their power in your home. The Deacon seems very upright."

"Ah, yes, but then they might be very designing, and a woman with a child always draws out a man's sympathies."

In fine, Mrs. Heavenrich could not contribute any help to the scheme. It might, however, be a good undertaking. She would pray over it.

Most of the ladies were greatly interested. They

knew that in every city of fifty or one hundred thousand people, hundreds of young women become depraved, because they have no opportunity to cover up the first misstep. The church turned against them, the fashionable world drew their garments daintily aside from the contamination, nobody but the most abandoned offered them a home and the necessities of life. They knew that scores, who had been helped over the great gulf, made oftentimes noble members of society. They knew that scores of little children, that came into the world through anguish of body and bitter anguish of soul, lay bruised and blackened in the rubbish and the filth of the river. They knew that it was almost impossible for a woman to support herself and an infant—that nobody wanted her services.

Mayor Harmon, as usual, was very liberal. He loved children, but more especially since his son Ralph had killed his only grandchild—(this was kept as secret as possible, for of course no publicity could bring the child back to life)—he had loved little children most tenderly. He put his hand on dirty, matted heads on the street; and made many a little soul happy by giving him ten cents extra for a paper or a shine. He gave seven thousand dollars. It was a grand bequest; but he was rich and could afford it. Others became interested, and gave generously.

The land was purchased, and during the summer a commodious brick structure rose from the foundation. It did not commence, as most charities do, in dingy, tumble-down apartments, so uninviting that the poor and the bad rather suffer and sin than enter. It is the custom to rent a forlorn building, on a back street, generally, and give the occupants poor food, scrimp in the furniture, keep down the matron's salary, and make it as nearly like a prison as possible. We impress upon them the fact that they are poor and need only common things; that they have sinned above all others, and if they wish to reform, they must accept thankfully anything we can spare without feeling.

The Foundling Asylum was at last all ready for occupancy. It was Mary Sharon's pride. She too had given to it, till she feared Hadley might feel he was to marry a penniless bride. She loved to linger about the rooms as they were being finished and the little cribs were put in, wondering what chubby face would first rest against the pillow.

An excellent matron and assistants were obtained, and the clean new basket was put outside the door in the early autumn nights. About ten o'clock one night, during one of her calls, there was a quick pull at the bell. The matron and Miss Sharon hastened to the door, and saw a figure disappear rapidly in the distance. Then the quiet little bundle was taken out from the

basket—a round-faced, fair baby-girl, with brown hair and large brown eyes.

The little creature opened them, just before closed in sleep, and looked about, as though wondering where she had been brought. It was neatly, even daintily dressed, with a little note pinned on the breast: "The baby is nearly two months old. The mother is not strong enough to care for her, though she dearly loves her, and begs for the tenderest care. Will you please call her Bessie? The name of her father is Hadley Scott!"

CHAPTER IX.

A PALLOR, like that of death, crept over Mary Sharon's face, and the blood seemed to curdle in her veins. Hadley Scott, whom she loved and trusted as her ideal of manhood, was guilty of the worst of crimes. The whole story seemed to be at once revealed to her. He had won the affection of a guileless girl, whose lot of work and privation was hard at best, who was the first-born and pride of her struggling mother. He had blighted her prospects, spoiled her name, and wrecked a body, and perchance a soul. He had brought, to an already stricken family, misery and desolation, that no time could alleviate nor blot out. She might have loved him over-much, he might not have thought of the enormity of his sin, yet there was no excuse. He had strength of character, knew his duty, and should have been a man. He knew his sacred pledge to another, he knew he was crushing a pure clinging girl, who thought he could do no wrong.

Mary took the little creature in her arms, and half the night she held her to her breast, and rocked her, while she thought bitter thoughts of the burial of the

blessed love she had cherished in her heart. Baby Bessie slept sweetly, gaining for herself, hour by hour, the love that had been given to her father. Toward morning, Mary lay down to rest; but her brain throbbed, and her heart ached too much for sleep. Life was no longer a joyous hope, but a gloomy realization. Her plans were spoiled, her idols broken. Quite early, Hadley came in, as he went down to business. He too was interested to see what little one had perhaps come in the night to the keeping of the noble girl he was so soon to call wife.

"Why, Mary!" he said, in a startled tone, as she entered the room. "What has happened to you? You have grown a score of years older in a night!" and he kissed her tenderly.

She handed him the letter. He read it, and the paper fell from his hands. He seemed paralyzed. Before he had time to speak, she said:

"Hadley, this has been a fearful night with me. I loved you as fondly and purely as woman ever loved man. If anybody had told me this, I should have despised them; but the baby's face is yours. I loved you too well to think you could deceive me or any other. I did not think you could bring me a polluted life, and take a pure one in return. I did not think you could take a pretty, trusting girl, like Bessie, and trample her as you would a worm in the dust.

Hadley, you have crushed her life and mine, and perhaps your own. God forgive you, as I shall, but you and I must separate!"

"Oh, Mary!" he said, "this is too hard!" and overcome by her anguish, and his own remorse, he wept like a child.

"I did not measure the wrong I was doing Bessie. Like scores of other men, I treasured a girl's virtue too lightly. I have regretted it deeply a thousand times; but, Mary, I cannot give you up. Without you, my plans are nothing. I cannot bear this; you must forgive and forget. You must love me still, and I will be true to you for life. I am sorry for the reproach my sinful acts will cast upon your fair name, but we will go where no one has heard it, and I will devote my whole life to making you happy. Do you not love me, even yet?"

"Hadley," she said firmly, though her whole body trembled, "I warned you, years ago, what must come if you proved yourself unworthy. Do I love you yet? A love as deep as mine cannot be eradicated in a day; but I can never marry you. I care for no one else, I never shall, but we must walk alone till God calls us. I shall care for the child, your child, and help the poor mother, who henceforward will perhaps be an outcast and a wanderer!"

"I shall leave the city. I cannot stay where you

are, and never call you mine. In the far-off future, the God you trust may lead you to give back the old love to a repentant man."

"God bless you for repenting, but you must marry where you have wronged!"

"I can marry no one but you, Mary. Do not ask it. Wait for me, and see if my future life is not pure and upright."

"If I had lost my virtue, would you forgive and marry me?"

"I trust I might!"

"You would be an exception to the rule then. Women forgive too often, or there would be fewer bad men."

In vain he plead for her promise in a month, in a year, in five years; but to all she answered kindly:

"You and I must go out into the world alone. God keep you to be true to your manhood."

He took her hand, kissed it, and without the voice of either breaking the death-like stillness, he went out from the presence of the one woman who might have made his life a power had he been true to himself.

He bade his parents and Camilla a hasty good-by, told the Judge to settle up all business matters, and went out into the far West, to do, it scarcely mattered what.

For a few weeks, life seemed to Mary Sharon like a dense fog over a lowland; no gleam of sunshine, no ray of hope.

The story spread rapidly over the city. Some came to congratulate her that she had escaped a union with such a man, some to offer real consolation to a broken spirit.

She had taken little Bessie home to Sharon House. Every day she grew prettier and dearer. She would perhaps never see her father, and never know her mother; so she called her Bessie Sharon. Without that child to have cared for and loved, life would have been scarcely endurable. Camilla and Ralph loved her, as they had no child of their own; and Hadley's father and mother, who had been taken almost into their graves by the falsity of their son, made this child almost an idol. Sharon House grew brighter for the cooing of a pretty baby, and by-and-by even joyous, as the little feet pattered through the halls.

Many another little one was laid in the basket at the foundling asylum, and found there kind hearts and tender care. Sometimes the mothers came and begged to stay with their children, to nurse them, lest they should die. Many a childless mother and father found a little treasure there for themselves, and went away happy. Sometimes a poor girl came, for whom no home opened, no hospital, nothing save the poor-

house, and asked a resting-place during her time of trial; and she never asked in vain. So Mary Sharon's life went on, full of the work the Master loves, lifting the fallen, helping the needy, living a grand life, because outside of self.

CHAPTER X.

AND what of Bessie? A year ago, she and Hadley were spending a few happy days in the widow's home in the country. Those were crowded full of bliss, but days as full of misery had come since then. After coming back to the Library, the months went by slowly. Hadley came seldom. She had supposed that he loved her as fondly as she loved him. She had trusted his every word, and treasured his every caress. To please him was the law of her life. His coming was the rest and joy of the long day. He came to be the goal to which everything in life tended. She knew he had been attached to Mary Sharon, but she thought his love was transferred to her. If now and then she thought it might be wrong for him to love her, when he had been the reputed lover of another, she stifled the thought, and hugged to her heart the joy she was experiencing day by day. She was poor and alone. No wonder she could not give him up. As the truth broke upon her that he was going back to his old idol, life became torture. After all, he was not to be her husband, he to whom she had given her life. The bloom died out of her cheeks,

and the bright light from her eyes. She threw herself on the bed night after night to sob, but not to sleep. She would lose her place; she would be cast out from decent society, and her mother, poor woman, would die of a broken heart. If she could only destroy her life; but she feared God would not forgive that. Sometimes she prayed, begging God to take her; begging, perchance, for Hadley to love her again; begging for anything out of this dreadful torture of body and soul. In the Library, everybody asked with the kindest tone, "Are you ill, Bessie? can I help you?" The weeks grew into months.

About this time, Hadley went down for a little call, that she might not be entirely desolate.

Her heart beat wildly as he came.

"O Hadley, Hadley!" she groaned, "what shall I do? The world must know it all. If I only could give you up, but I can't. I thought you were to be mine. Why did you lead me into sin?"

"It was wrong, Bessie. I have rued it a thousand times. I cannot marry you, for I am pledged to Mary Sharon."

"Why didn't you tell me? I thought you loved me."

"So I did, and so I do now; but I love her better, because I knew her long before I knew you."

"When shall you marry her?"

"At the holidays."

"I hope I shall be in my grave then."

"Oh, no! you will be well and strong then, and marry some good man."

"Hadley, I shall love no one else; and don't you know that no virtuous man will want me?"

"Marry somebody, who, like yourself, has stepped aside into forbidden ways. I am sorry, Bessie, but I didn't think much about it. Such things are so common among men."

"Does it seem a little thing to a man to blight the whole life of a girl who loves him—to make it impossible for her to earn a living—to drive her into a life of sin?"

"They don't give it much thought. Affection to them is a pleasant pastime, for a day or a year."

"Why did I trust so blindly! I love you still, and I must see you or my heart will break. If I didn't love you with all my heart I should tell Mary Sharon of my sorrow."

"Why, Bessie, she is like all other women. She wouldn't believe anything wrong of me."

"Don't desert me utterly. If I can only see your face now and then, and hear your voice, it will make this dreadful sorrow a little easier to bear."

He rose to go. "I shall not forget you, Bessie. I wish I could undo some of the mistakes, but it is too

late." He bent over to kiss her, and the thin white hands clasped his neck closely.

"Don't go, Hadley!" she moaned. "I cannot let you! I shall die without you. God forgive us both, and give you to me. For the sake of my poor mother, for my sake, O Hadley, don't leave me!" The hands seemed clasped convulsively. He struggled to free himself; and when nature seemed exhausted, and they unclasped of themselves, he laid her on the sofa, and hurriedly left the house.

That night was a weary one to both. Hadley's heart reproached him despite the light way in which he had talked with her whom he had wronged, and in his sleep he felt her cold hands clasp his neck.

Bessie was weak and feverish, and Mrs. Leffingwell told her next morning she better go to her home for a few weeks and rest, she looked so ill.

She started on the early train, leaving a note for Carrie, saying that she was sick, and had gone away for a rest, and begged the Library superintendent would excuse her. Another young girl filled her place; fewer persons asked about her each day; and finally she faded out of the remembrance of the eager, bustling crowd. It is so easy to be forgotten!

Bessie's poor mother soon knew the sad story. The widow found it hard to live. The little farm could illy support so large a family. Bessie could

not help any, and the food must all be furnished by the mother. The poor girl wept day after day, till it seemed as though she must die. The mother was crushed; but she must be cheerful for them all. Now and then, Charlie had a few pennies given him; and would buy an orange for her. She scarcely left the house, for every eye was upon her, and every tongue busy about her.

There came a time of struggle, when the frail body was racked and strained to its utmost, when an immortal soul took on an earthly existence. Bessie felt, as all mothers feel, that her feet touched the waters of an unseen river; and only for the arms of a dear Saviour who forgives all who come to him, she would have sunk beneath the tide, and been seen no more. In those bitter hours she thought of Hadley Scott, the man who should have been the protector of an innocent girl, rather than her betrayer, the man who would some day answer for this sin at the judgment.

As soon as possible she must earn for herself. What could she do? The little one must be cared for and loved. It must have sufficient clothing for the cold winter. No store could employ her; she could not sew with a child. There remained only the position of servant in some family in their town. She was not strong at best, but if a place could be

found, she would try to do the work of the family, and care for her babe. Leaving the child with her mother, she started, with heavy heart and tearful eyes, to find a home.

At one house, they urged her to come in, asked her all the questions possible about herself, and concluded they didn't want anybody with a baby. Some of the women were afraid that a girl once fallen might ruin their husbands. Others had tender sons to be reared away from temptation, not knowing that such a thing is an impossibility; that we are made strong only by battles with the world, and battles with self. Some were so nervous they could not bear the crying of a child. Some thought she wasn't strong enough to work much. Some even, that she better go to the poor-house, till the baby was old enough to be given away. Some felt sorry for her, and gave her a little money, which she hated to accept; but most shrugged their shoulders, and thought a girl as well brought up as she had been, should have kept out of the reach of temptation. Even the wife of the minister, who had a small child, and needed help very much, feared to take her, lest some of the people should make remarks about it, and she would thus lessen her influence.

Day after day, with tired feet and a weary heart, with faded cheeks and tearful eyes, she sought the

means of support; but there was no open door. Every night, after the disappointments of the day, she would sit beside her mother, telling her all, and they, with nobody but God to hear, would weep and pray with each other. When the widow lost her home and buried her husband, that was sad; but this was sadder a thousand times.

"Mother," she said, one night, "I must go back to B——. Perhaps in a large city I could find a place."

"Oh, child, I fear for you! Perhaps Hadley might cross your path, or somebody try again to win you."

"Nobody can think me worse than they do now."

"But God would, dear. He forgives you now, but he might not another sin."

The morning was cold and gloomy when Bessie, with the scantily dressed baby in her arms, started for the city. Poor Widow Heavenrich kissed her over and over again, and the baby too. Only for the sake of her children, death would have been a relief. "The young man never could have dreamed of the misery he was causing," was all she could ever be led to say about Hadley. "God forgive him!"

Bessie would scarcely have been known, she looked so much older and sadder. The good-natured, kind-hearted conductor said, "Bessie, where are you going?"

"To the city, for work."

"I'm bad enough, you know, for I drink some, and swear some; but there are men whose souls ought to be an awful long time burning up. I believe in that doctrine. The Lord knew what he was about when he got the thing made up for such fellows. Here's some money; put it in your pocket: you know I'm pretty short all the time, 'cause I spend it so fast; but I never wronged a woman yet, and I never will. Look out for the sharks up there. There are lots of 'em—men, and women too!"

At the dépôt, a hackman asked her if he should take her to any place. She was anxious for work. She would go to some cheap boarding-house till she could find it.

"Yes, he was here to help in all such cases!"—was the hired tool of a house of infamy. He drove rapidly to No. —, High Street. A cheerful, kind-faced woman met her at the door. The baby was blue with cold and faint with hunger.

"Tell me your story, child," said the woman; and Bessie, glad to have one human being interested in her, told her all.

"I know him!" said the woman, "and the girl he is to marry. She is a noble young lady. I don't let many church women in here, for I don't like 'em; but I like her, and she comes here now and then. She

knows I don't believe as she does, but she's wondrous kind."

Bessie told her how she had tried to get work, but there was no opening.

"You don't suppose Christians will help anybody who has sinned, do you, child? Why, Christianity in B—— means to have a seat in a handsome church, and dress in silks and diamonds, and hear a beautiful sermon once a day, and never do anything for the poor, nor the outcasts. Christianity itself, I guess, is a pretty good thing. I like that picture of Christ forgiving the woman taken in adultery. He must have been good, but his followers are dreadfully unlike him. I've thought a good many times, when they got up to the door, and only those went in who lived as He lived, what a sorry lot would be left standing out in the cold. You don't know the world as well as I do, or you wouldn't expect any help from a woman. Why, all the money these Society ladies have is earned for them, and they are sometimes only one of many mistresses, and yet they pull up their dainty trains whenever a fallen woman comes near them. Whenever you see a woman trying to save those of her own sex who are lost, make up your mind that the Lord has got her 'most ready for the kingdom, and she won't stay here long."

There were about a dozen girls in the house, and

all with one accord contributed money toward some warm clothing for the little one, commissioned one of their number to go to the store and buy, and the poor half-frozen child, by rubbing and flannel covering, soon began to look sweetly, and comfortably. Bessie was ill for days. Over-strain of nerves and intensest anxiety, with poor food, had so weakened her system that rest was imperative.

Everybody was thoroughly kind to her. Cad Romer, as everybody called her, told her what kind of house she was in—told her, as many another girl has been told, that there was no use now in trying to live a virtuous life. The story of her shame would follow her. She advised giving away the child, so that it might be well brought up. She was frail at best, could not work hard, and deserved a living at the hands of the sex that had ruined her.

Cad Romer had lived though the same old story, had become bitter against virtuous women and Christianity, but would give for some destitute woman or child till there was not a cent left in her pocket. She lived with a man whom she idolized. He drank, and was untrue to her, but she earned money for him to spend lavishly, and was true to him as the needle to the pole. It was a strange infatuation. It might have been a weakness in her character, it might have

been an uncontrolled passion, but it held her bound like a slave.

Bessie hated to part with the child, but she could support it but poorly, and for its sake she must sacrifice her own affection. Its little face close to hers at night, was the greatest comfort, its voice was company; but some one might love it almost as well as she, if they had none of their own, so she consented to its being carried to the Foundling Asylum.

She had found the world cold, and women unsympathizing. She must go away where her shame was not known if she would support herself—far from her child and her mother. She could earn little even then. Here, she might know something of her child, and might not lose all knowledge of Hadley Scott. She had prayed at home, but nobody prayed here. It was a godless house.

Mary Sharon had become more devoted to good works than ever. Such an experience as hers shuts out youth, and puts one into the practical work of life without many sunny preparation-days. One day she bethought herself of Cad Romer. She had helped many a sick girl there, and pointed more than one to a forgiving Saviour.

Cad met her at the door.

"You're just the one I've been wanting to see. Now, Miss Sharon, you know me well, and you know

I don't believe much in the prayers of Sharon Church; but I believe in you, because you do good. If I should ever be a Christian, I think I'd be one of the doing kind, rather than the praying. You know some of my kind of women are mean all through, and wouldn't scruple to get a pretty girl in any way possible, but I won't do that. Now, there is a young girl here, who is wretched. I try to cheer her up, but she cries so much, she ain't much use anyway. I wish you could see her, and perhaps you could help about getting her something to do. She'll fret herself to death, if she stays here."

"I'd like to see her. You have a kind heart, and I do wish you would leave this life. You know as well as I do about the future that must come to you."

"Yes, that's so; but then there's my friend. I love him, and I've got to support him, or he won't stay with me. I'll have this young girl come in?"

"Yes."

She returned in a few minutes with a pale, neat-looking girl behind her.

"Miss Sharon, this is Bessie Heavenrich!"

Bessie turned deadly pale and almost fainted. Mary took her hand tenderly.

"Why, Bessie, I'm so glad I've found you! That has been my prayer day by day. I knew your heart must be crushed, and I longed to comfort you."

"You can't forgive me? I ought never to have allowed Mr. Scott to come to my house, when he loved you; but I thought he really loved me."

"Bessie, we all make mistakes. I have taken your little child home to love and care for always, and shall rear her as my own. I need your care and love for it too, and I want you to come to my home and live."

"I thank you with all my heart, but I have wronged you too deeply; besides, I could never stay where Hadley Scott is. And you will marry him soon, won't you?"

"Never. He has gone far away, and I never expect to see him again. I could never marry a man who had neither been true to himself nor to me. I loved him, and I love him still; but he betrayed *my* trust, and he might another as fond as I. Will you come home with me now? You will be happy with the baby, and I can help your mother considerable. I earn something myself."

"You don't *work*, Miss Sharon? Why, ladies who have money, in your circle, never work?"

"I have been assistant city missionary for some months, and as I have enough to support me well, I have all this salary extra to use benevolently. I have something to do in life now; and a woman who fritters away her existence, must answer for it as strictly as a man. To have a life given us to use, and then give

it back to the Master with nothing accomplished by it, will merit and receive sad punishment. If our time were our own, it might be different; but it is only lent us to be used for the good of the Creator. You see I am so busy, you will have enough to employ you all the time." Mary then took the thin face in both her hands and kissed it.

Cad Romer wept like a child.

"If all the church women were like you, Miss Sharon, I'd like them. If none of them would marry a man who was bad, there wouldn't be so many houses like mine, for there wouldn't be anybody to patronize them."

Bessie's things were quickly put in a little parcel, and bidding Cad good-by, and thanking her for the kindness she had shown her, the saved and the saver went to the cheerful home at Sharon House.

Bessie fondled her own pretty baby with the joy only a mother knows, and Mary went to her daily work, happy in the happiness of the two whose only home was with her.

CHAPTER XI.

HADLEY SCOTT was a wanderer. He had stopped awhile in one city, then in another. He could not rest. He had no plan in life. Everything seemed in confusion. He had never dreamed but that his marriage with Mary Sharon would prove a blissful reality. He could not give her up. With her, he might be all he hoped; without her, nothing.

At one time in life, love is more to a woman than to a man, but she bears the loss of it better. One name was on every page he read. One face, like that of Calais on Queen Mary's, was stamped upon his heart. He remembered, like a sleep that has been broken by a frightful nightmare, a life spoiled by an unholy love. He saw a white, tear-stained face, that seemed to cling convulsively to his. He heard the wail of an innocent child that called no one father. Sometimes in his sleep, Mary Sharon came back granting forgiveness, and he was happy. When he awoke, life was a dark reality. He cared no more for a name, unless she shared it. What was money, unless she enjoyed the comforts it brought? He came to a lovely Western city, and determined to settle in his profession.

He would work hard for years, and then go back, and perhaps Mary would marry him. He secured a pleasant boarding-place, advertised his office, and began anew.

Business was slow to reach a young stranger, however talented he might be. Books cannot always give companionship. His head grew weary, his brain feverish. For weeks he knew no one, and talked little, except as he asked over and over again for Mary Sharon. The good woman with whom he boarded sent for her.

"I am going away, Bessie, perhaps for several weeks, and you will look after things for me. I shall miss you both so much!"

Mary did not tell where she was going, lest the girl, who still loved him, might be troubled and anxious.

A day and a night she travelled, and came to his bedside.

He did not know her. He called impatiently for her in his moanings. A soft white hand smoothed his forehead, and ministered to his wants. Gradually the fever died out of the wasted body, the mind took on its former clearness. He felt the touch of her hand, he heard her voice, he saw her eyes, and he knew her. It was a moment of supreme joy. Would it could last forever!

He seemed to want nothing but her presence. He was satisfied so she held his hand in hers and was near him. They talked little together at first, but as he grew stronger, the days grew full of happiness. To get well now, with her, would be a joy beyond measure—without her, death would have been as welcome.

"Hadley, you should see my little Bessie now," she said, one day, as he was sitting by the window, after he had recovered. "She is so lovely and winning. I love her as though she were my own."

"I wish you had brought her, and then perhaps I could keep you both always."

"Her mother is with me too!" And Hadley trembled as she told over the story of sadness and almost starvation, and worse than death, and a home at last with her.

"I have made Bessie's life one long night!" he said. "I am having my punishment now. Mary, I did not hope you would come. Mary, if you only could forgive and forget the past, and love me as you used to love me! I cannot bear this separation!"

"Hadley, I deplore the gulf that separates us! I have my duties; I can never leave my two at home. Besides, I feel sometimes that I must do my work quickly, for I may not have many years to do it in. There is a bond between us, and must ever be. I shall

always think of you, and pray for you. If I can help you again, send for me, and I shall come, though the ocean be between us. Your marriage-vows belong to another, and not to me."

Why tell of that parting, sadder even than the first. One went back bravely to do her duty, even though the body were frail and might be laid aside before the work seemed done;—the other blasted and broken, like a tree after a lightning stroke. A cruel crime was receiving its legitimate reward. We must keep life whether we will or not, and Hadley had his life in his hands and must use it. He went on in the shadows, hoping against hope, that by-and-by he might see, toward the end of the vista, the light of Mary Sharon's face.

CHAPTER XII.

THE affairs of the Library had changed somewhat. Carrie's hand had been sought in marriage by an educated Christian gentleman; and she was fitting herself to be his companion, by a year or more of study.

Deacon Heavenrich and his wife were seldom heard of. A back street is not so conducive to popularity as a fashionable avenue, even if the dwellers thereon were saints. Ralph and Camilla Harmon were living in the handsome house purchased by the Mayor. Ralph loved his family not less; but the wine-cup more. He made the best resolutions; but he was not strong enough to resist temptation. Mr. Scott was troubled for his daughter. Her life, in the midst of riches, was wretchedness. Her pride was humbled; her affection blasted. Mr. Harmon's term of office as Mayor had expired. He had become very popular with the liquor interest; and his name was mentioned prominently for the Legislature, and Judge Underwood's for Congress. The latter understood his business well. He had friends in every saloon in the county; made no scruple of asking men to vote for

him and work for him at primary meetings. He had his tools in the central committee, to whom he was pledged for goodly favors if he should win the election. Indeed, in this great State, as in others, the best men were scarcely ever thought of for political positions. Availability was the qualification. If a man drank whiskey with the drinkers, only so little that he was a friend to their cause; if he avoided excesses, so that he was regarded a friend to temperance and morality; if he attended church one part of the day, so as to seem to have great respect for the Sabbath, and went to ride with a few of his friends the other part, so that he should not be thought puritanical; if he had never given an opinion upon any important question, principally because he never had any; if he was so well known as not to be obscure, and so little known that there could not be much gossip; if he had few positive qualities and few original ideas—as a rule, that man was an available man.

True, the city of B—— had been under the whiskey rule for years. Caucuses were packed, conventions were packed, and nobody dared bolt a ticket. Principle was swallowed up in party. At one time, they had a good law that closed the saloons at nine o'clock in the evening; but the council, elected by the whiskey ring, repealed that. The minority of Temperance men had been able through much struggling to obtain a

Sunday ordinance, whereby those who loved and honored the Sabbath had a day of rest and peace unbroken by drunken revelries, bands of music, or boisterous hilarity.

The poor wives and children, whose husbands and fathers spent on that day all that they earned through the week, loved this good law. Christians loved it. The world's people too, tired of the rush of business and the whirl of society, were glad for the rest and the quiet. Even the poor besotted victims of their own appetites said it was an untold blessing to them and to their families. All wanted it to stand, save the saloon-keepers. This was the best day for money, of the whole week, to them. They had power. They had an association among themselves, with full treasury. They could buy votes, could defend law-suits; and help each other if their business was disturbed. No councilman ever returned, who favored any law against their interests. Every man desired to hold office after being elected; and knew the position he must take upon all moral matters. So the Sunday law was repealed. Very wonderfully, but very unfortunately for the whiskey-dealers, a man in Ohio had the idea that a person should be responsible for his acts. The Bible had promulgated the same doctrine some years before. A man has the right to do as he pleases, provided he interferes with the rights of no other

person. He must treat his animals kindly, or the law arrests him. He must not over-punish even his own children, for they belong to the community, and to a higher power, as well as to himself. He has no right to drink, if thereby he renders himself a nuisance or a burden to the community; and the law provides a place for him to work out the penalty for exercising the right to make a brute of himself. He has no right to sell intoxicating spirits, if thereby the community is injured; if pauperism and crime are more than quadrupled; and if taxes are proportionably increased. Therefore a righteous law proposes to restrain him rather than grant him license to do it.

Such a case as this has been known. The people, by a vigorous effort, put a clause into their State Constitution that: "No license should ever be granted to sell intoxicating liquors." Then—because they fell asleep for a score of years, after they had asked the Lord to take care of the matter, while they did nothing,—upon waking at the end of the second decade and found a saloon at every corner, some of them sighed for a repeal of the old law, and asked for the license system.

True, this system had been tried during three hundred years both in this country and in the old; and utterly failed to decrease the use of liquors, and its evil consequences. In Maine, under the license

system, saloons had so multiplied and drunkenness so increased that the people became thoroughly aroused. Under the present law, Governor Sidney Perham says: "I think it safe to say that the liquor trade is very much less than before the enactment of the law; probably not one-tenth as large."

Wolcott Hamlin, Superintendent of the Internal Revenue District of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont says: "The beer trade is not more than one per cent. of what I remember it to have been; and the trade in distilled liquors is not more than ten per cent. of what it was formerly."

William P. Frye, Ex-Attorney General, General Chamberlain, President of Bowdoin College, and scores of others testify to the same improvement since the new prohibitory law. Shall license be granted when restriction has achieved so much greater results?

The three prohibitory States, Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts, with twenty-five thousand more inhabitants than the four licensed States, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Maryland, and Wisconsin, sell only one-third as much liquor. In Vineland, New Jersey, where, in the sale of lots, a clause was inserted in each deed, forever prohibiting the public sale of all intoxicating liquors, the police expenses for 1872 were twenty-five dollars, and poor expenses three hundred and fifty dollars. It has twenty school-houses, ten churches, and

fifteen manufacturing establishments. In Bessbrook, Ireland, where three thousand Irish working-men are employed in the mills, there is no poorhouse, jail, or constable, because the proprietor prohibits the sale of intoxicating drinks.

In Massachusetts, after prohibition had been the law for several years, license was obtained by the liquor interest. What was the result? Says the Rev. William Thayer, Secretary of the Massachusetts Temperance Alliance: "The United States tax on liquors in the Boston revenue district No. 3, which includes most of the rum-selling portion, before the license law of the fall of 1867 was reduced from twenty-two thousand dollars per month to about six thousand dollars. The month immediately succeeding the election, the receipts at the same office advanced again to nearly twenty-two thousand dollars."

Was the *amount sold decreased* under license?

The same gentleman says: "There were less than nine hundred places in Suffolk County where liquor was sold on the first of September, 1867, and in most of these places in a clandestine manner. On the first day of September, 1868 (under license), nearly twenty-five hundred liquor-shops were open on the same territory."

The Rev. Mr. Davies, City Missionary, says: "Of the one hundred and thirty-two rum-shops on North

Street, all had been closed, save two hotels. Under license, I counted one hundred and sixteen."

Was the real object of the advocates of license to decrease *the number* of open saloons.

The Chief of Boston Police reports for the last quarter of 1868 (license) over nine thousand more arrests and lodgers than for a corresponding period in 1867.

The Board of State Charities, of which only one member was identified with the Temperance cause, report, on page 433: "The whole number of paupers and vagrants was thirty-three thousand eight hundred and ninety-six more under license than during the year preceding, and the cost of supporting them seventy-five thousand dollars more."

The prisons became full, drunkenness was open and shameful, and the people, after one year of license, voted it down at the ballot-box.

In Connecticut, under license, the amount of liquor sold per capita is sixty-five dollars; in Massachusetts, nineteen dollars.

In New Haven, a city of sixty thousand people, there is one arrest for every twelve persons; in Hartford, with forty thousand people, one for every eight persons; while in Worcester, Mass., with fifty thousand, the arrests are one in eighteen, and in Lowell, with a like population, one in sixteen.

In New York city, where on Sunday the liquor

traffic was restrained by the Excise Law, the Board report: In thirteen months, two thousand five hundred and fourteen arrests were made; and on Tuesdays, when the five thousand saloons enjoyed license, there were six thousand and twenty-one arrests. When there was no legal restraint, on the Sabbath more were intoxicated than on any other day. And yet, in connection with the whole liquor interest, some Christian people are in favor of a license law! To suppose that the liquor-dealers are all as one man crying out for license because they desire to cripple their business, or make it difficult for drinkers to gratify their appetites, is an absurdity. It is of course unpleasant to be liable to prosecution, and license would give the shielding and protecting power of the law. The cry always is for a heavy license fee, but such a thing has never been, and can never be obtained, while the liquor interest has the controlling power; and under no other power is license ever obtained by a State.

What if a few of the smaller and lower saloons are closed? It is the so-called respectable ones that do the harm, those that draw in men of brain and influence, that start men on the road to ruin. Let us give the poor man, led into selling liquor because of poverty and a family to support, an equal chance with the man who, with thousands stored up, can pay any license sum demanded.

"The licensed dealers would prosecute the unlicensed." Such an occurrence probably never has been known, and never will be. Every saloon is a new market for whiskey, and a new political centre. Instead of prosecuting, they are pledged to uphold each other.

The principle of licensing evil is wrong; and even if good could result from it, as scarcely any one really believes, a book written some years ago, and not entirely obsolete, forbids doing evil that good may come. Gambling was respectable in Germany till she made laws prohibiting it. Lotteries were respectable till the whole country, save Kentucky, denounced them.

Scarcely any person, in this day of reading, believes that alcohol is food. Baron Liebig says: "There is no drop of alcoholic liquor in healthy and unchanged nature. God has not made alcohol in any other sense than he has made carrion meat and rotten eggs. It is the product of sugary substances, decomposed, decaying." It prevents digestion. A miner, in England, ate a hearty dinner, and made himself drunk. In twenty-one hours he was accidentally killed. Dissection proved that digestion had not commenced. It prevents men from enduring extreme heat or cold. In Russia, soldiers starting on a winter march are refused rations of liquor. It wastes nerve-power. It shortens life. The mortality of drinking men from twenty to thirty, is four times as great as among temperate men. In

epidemics, as in the cholera at Montreal, fifteen hundred drinkers were buried before one teetotaler. Every one knows, who is familiar with insane asylums, that liquor is the chief cause of insanity, as well as of idiocy. Seven-eighths of all the crime and pauperism result from it. Says Warden Haynes, of Massachusetts, in his "Pictures from Prison Life": Since I have been connected with the prison, we have had twenty-one here for killing their wives, two for killing their fathers, and one for killing his mother. Of these twenty-four, *all but one* were not only habitual drunkards, but actually drunk when they committed the crime."

It is a wasteful traffic. From statistical reports of Commissioner Wells, we spend for liquors at retail \$1,500,000,000, besides the waste of grain and fruit, valued at \$50,000,000, and wages and value of time of dealers and employees, \$300,000,000. The retail sales alone would pay for 200,000,000 barrels of flour—five barrels to every man, woman, and child. This flour, if placed in wagons, ten barrels each, would require 20,000,000 teams, reaching nearly four times around the earth; and this money is worse than wasted. Women and children suffer in destitution and ignorance, and yet we fold our hands and talk of licensing such a mighty evil!

One million drunkards stagger along the streets,

two millions of helpless children bear the disgrace of the world and the beatings of brutal fathers; and yet we talk of giving it protection by license! Years ago, a company of legislators said, "If the business is right, it needs no license; and if wrong, ought not to have any." Men in legitimate business never have to buy permission to carry it on; and a State or town ought never to sell its morality for a few paltry dollars. Cities, full of corruption, will vote for a license law; but towns, where fashion does not so control its men and women, and where hearts are kept nearer the great centre of all purity and principle, will stand by the right, and save the commonwealths for their children and the nation.

Some who have considered this question, have declared against distilled liquors; but, believing that men must have stimulants, have proposed that the land should be set out to vineyards and barley-fields. Very few have advocated the use of these things for women, though their nerves were ever so nearly exhausted, and their brain and body faint from over-work. If with them it had become part of the code of politeness to treat, possibly men would long ago have revolted at the drink habit.

Professor Liebig, the greatest of chemists, told his own German people that a person must drink twenty-three barrels of beer to obtain as much nutriment as

there is in a five-pound loaf of bread or three pounds of meat; and yet some persons argue that beer is nutritious.

Doctor Playfair, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, analyzed a specimen of beer, and found that of blood-forming matter it contained exactly one part in 1,666 parts. In a pint of beer, you have fourteen ounces of water, part of an ounce of extract of barley, and nearly one ounce of alcohol. Wine is of course worse than beer, because in its pure state it contains from thirteen to twenty-three per cent. of alcohol, while beer contains from six to twelve per cent.

A very large percentage of wine and beer is impure. In the adulteration of beer—sugar, molasses, etc., are used for malt; alum, opium, quassia, aloes, nux-vomica, and immense quantities of *cocculus indicus*, are used for hops; saltpetre, marble-dust, bruised green copper-as, etc., to prevent acidity. In wine—beet-whiskey, elderberry-juice, potato-whiskey, strychnine, belladonna, stramonium, logwood, and sugar of lead, are largely used. There is sold one hundred times as much port wine as is produced. Only thirty thousand barrels of wine are made on the Island of Madeira, and fifty thousand barrels are purchased in this country alone. Dr. Cox, the celebrated chemist, who was appointed inspector of liquors in Ohio for two years,

found *ninety-nine per cent.* of it adulterated by the vilest poisons.

Do these enliven the mind? Everybody knows, with De Quincey, "that they disorder the mental faculties and unsettle the judgment." A man who runs a steam-engine is not considered a safe engineer if he takes a drop of liquor; but a man who controls a country or a State, can legislate for his constituents with his brain inflamed with wine or stupefied with beer. A policeman may not step inside a place where liquor is sold; but a Governor or a President may be drunk at a clubhouse, and the matter is kept as quiet as possible, but he does not appear in public till his judgment is settled.

Do these habits prolong life?

In statistics of Glasgow hospitals for 1864, by Dr. Gairdner, mortality lessened exactly as the dose of wine or alcohol diminished. Of two hundred and nine children under fifteen years of age treated without spirits, not one died, though the same class of cases treated with stimulants had a mortality of six per cent. In the British army reports from India, the use of wine quadrupled the natural mortality; and the use of beer doubled the natural mortality.

Do they lessen the use of distilled liquors?

In Prussia, with a full supply of Rhine wine and lager-beer, the increase in distilled liquors (from 1850 to 1866) was sixty per cent. in sixteen years. "Carl-

ton," of the Boston Journal, ascertained that England spent yearly \$100,000,000 for beer; and yet with the Ale and Beer Act passed forty years ago, giving them permission to open beer-houses, and fifty thousand were opened in four years, the increase of distilled liquors has been one hundred and seventy-five per cent. Dr. Fowler, President of the Northwestern University, says: "Paris, where more wine is consumed than in any city in the world — 1,089,000,000 gallons yearly—consumed more brandy and other distilled liquors per head than any other nation on earth."

Commissioner Wells says: "California, with her cheap wines so universally used, in the year 1862 sold fourteen times per head as much alcoholic stuff as Maine, and more than any other State."

In the United States, the increase of beer-drinking the past decade has been five hundred and seven per cent., and yet the yearly increase in internal revenue collections on distilled liquors is over two million dollars.

The Christian men who went into vineyard-raising for the purpose of benefiting humanity, are using their lands for other purposes, now that the question has been answered by a long experiment.

Do wine and beer lessen drunkenness and crime?

Dr. Kirk, of Boston, says: "I never saw such systematic drunkenness as I saw for sixteen months in France."

Dr. Warren, of Boston, seven years in Germany, says: "Drunkenness is very common here."

Lord Acton, Supreme Judge of Rome, said nearly all the crime of that city came from wine.

In Martineau's History of England, page 360, we read: "When the troops (of Wellington) passed the wine-vaults of Torquemada, they lost all discipline, and twelve thousand men were seen drunk at one time."

In 1869, all the governors and chaplains of prisons, and all the chief constables and superintendents of police, throughout Great Britain, were interrogated as to the effects of beer-drinking upon the people; and *all*, in the report presented to Queen Victoria, refer to it as one cause, and most of them the greatest cause of intemperance in England. Can two thousand three hundred and twenty-two of her best men all be mistaken?

Judge Pitman, of the Superior Court of Massachusetts, reports, after eight months of the free sale of beer, as compared with 1871, when it was restricted, an increase of *sixty-eight per cent. of crime*, and over *one hundred and twenty per cent.* increase of drunkenness. That is the testimony of the short space of eight months.

Dr. Day, who has probably the largest experience of any man in the world, of cases of drunkenness,

states "that a large majority of the four thousand cases of inebriety I have treated, commenced their course by the use of wine and beer."

The California papers say that "wine-making has paved the way for poverty and drunkenness only."

Nobody who has been at fashionable watering-places but has seen drunkenness resulting from the use of wine; and no person who has lived where lager-beer saloons are common, but has seen drunkenness, brutal assaults, and the most beastly revellings resulting from even lager-beer. Shall this state of things be upheld by respectable people, or tolerated for political power?

Some of the good people have been constantly working for better laws, to obtain heavier penalties for selling liquor to minors, to drunkards, or when drunk on the premises—for instance, penalties of not less than fifty dollars for the first offence, nor more than one hundred dollars and imprisonment in the county jail not less than three months nor more than six months. The fines could be easily paid by the liquor union helping each other; but one brother dealer does not care to be imprisoned for another, even though he may feel a tender attachment on account of similarity of business tastes. Some have been anxious for another wholesome law, that whenever a man is

arrested for drunkenness, if he acknowledges where he obtained the liquor, he is retained as a witness, the seller arrested and fined, and he discharged from custody.

Almost every Temperance man, however, had his own peculiar ideas of the way in which the grand reformation was to be effected—the great mass of the people drank some, or were thoroughly indifferent—and so the good cause has languished, while wickedness has flourished on every side.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE people of B—— and of the State had suffered from liquor as many years as it seemed possible to endure it. Wives wept and prayed because husbands spent hard-earned fortunes at club-houses or saloons; but held their peace, and went down to early graves. Mothers agonized for the boys for whom they had suffered and toiled through long years—boys who were the pride and support of many a failing hand and loving heart; they plead with their God and their children, and, with hair too early whitened with sorrow, dropped out of the line of march and were buried. Young girls gave their affections to young men who had, through the influence of associates, looked upon the wine-cup when it was red, and learned, alas, too late, what it is to be a drunkard's wife. Like the houses of the Egyptians, there was scarcely one home where there was not one dead; and that, often the first-born son. Not the death that brings one sad parting; but the living death, that keeps hearts constantly crushed and torn!

Politicians often bought their way into power by giving men liquor, and the suffering women cried out

in their agony; but there was no redress. Men, for love of gain, regardless of the ruin they were bringing to countless homes, regardless of the broken-hearted wives and famishing children, built their gilded saloons on every corner, forgetting that there must come a day of retribution. The land had become full of poverty and wretchedness. The weeping of the wives of a million drunkards, and the anguish of as many desolate mothers, and worse than fatherless children, was being heard at the Throne, and the time came for an answer of peace.

In Washington Court-House, in the southern part of Ohio, one Christmas night, Dr. Dio Lewis, of Massachusetts, suggested that woman, so loved of the Saviour, should, in the spirit of Him who said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" go to her persecutors in prayer. It was asking the deepest humility, the divinest consecration. Could she pray for a man who had knowingly ruined her home and blighted her life? Nobody save woman could have said: "Here am I; send me!"

The next morning the church was crowded with men and women, who had come to pray and ask the Lord for guidance. Could women, unused to praying in public, go out upon the streets, laughed at and jeered by the crowd, to the place where many a husband and father had taken the step that goes down to

death; and if refused admittance, kneel on muddy pavements and ask God's pardon of a sinning soul?

There were a few devoted, earnest ones, who said, "We can go anywhere the Lord seems to lead in a cause like this;" and rising to their feet, while a hymn was sung, amid the tears and prayers of the assembled throng, the first brave company of women went out to do duty for humanity in the Temperance Crusade. Old women with tottering steps and whitened hair; mothers and wives who had suffered, and those who had not, but wanted to "bear one another's burdens," and so fulfil the law of Christ; young women who had brothers or lovers in danger, went out two by two on this wonderful mission. At the close of every prayer among the men, the bell of the church tolled out, that the heroic band might know that there were warm hearts in sympathy with them, and supplications going up constantly to the Throne.

At most of the saloons they were admitted and kindly received. Places where the voice of woman, much less the voice of prayer had never been heard, that Christmas morning of 1873 became consecrated ground. Men, women, and children gathered by hundreds to listen. Hats were taken off, and eyes unused to weeping filled with tears. Men whom the community judged heartless and past redemption, wept as they heard the earnest, fervent petitions for them and their

families. Sometimes a mother prayed, whose boy had been ruined in the saloon where she knelt; sometimes a wife who had been made worse than widowed; sometimes even a child pleaded whose home had been made wretched by liquor. Occasionally a man with less heart than the others closed his doors in the women's faces with rude language, and then they knelt upon the pavement and asked God's blessing upon him. After all had been visited, two by two, silently and solemnly, the band went back to the church to thank God together for the strange providences of that blessed day.

When the next morning came, the same company, increased and reconsecrated, were ready for duty. Men gave up their business and met to pray. Nothing was talked of on the street or in the homes, but the work of the praying women. Young men, just learning to drink, signed the pledge to abstain hereafter. Christian men signed it for the sake of the good example to others.

The next day a prayer-meeting was held in the church all day long, and Sunday all the churches united in one grand mass meeting. On Monday the women were blest with answers to prayer. One man took his goods to the railway station for removal, and another agreed to pour out his liquors next day.

Tuesday morning, when all the bells rang, and

an immense concourse of people gathered, the barrels of liquor belonging to one of the saloon-keepers were rolled into the streets, broken open with axes, their contents turned into the gutter by the women, and the barrels set on fire. Such shouting and singing and weeping was never seen before in the quiet town, and among those who seemed most thankful was the man who owned the liquor.

All the adjacent towns seemed suddenly awakened to the great question of saving young men. Prayer-meetings were started by the women, and immediately all the saloon-keepers set their houses in order, for all knew that a prayer-meeting was but the beginning of active work. Churches were crowded Sundays and week-days. Mass meetings were so packed that no church or hall could hold the people. Ministers and laymen preached and prayed. The clergy, almost as one man, advocated the cause of the praying women. All through Southern Ohio, thousands of brave Christian women through the snow and rain made their daily visits to the saloons of their towns. Sometimes they went in the evening to hold a prayer-meeting, and were surprised to meet many of their acquaintances, who were equally surprised to meet them. Sometimes, when the dealers long resisted the power of prayer, some of the good women remembered that watching was coupled with prayer in the Bible.

and could not be amiss in such an important matter; so, bringing their camp-chairs, they would sit by the saloon doors by twos or threes, from eight o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock at night, getting the names of the visitors as they passed in, and, as they came out, learning what they drank, if possible. Sometimes they built tabernacles before the doors of the saloons, singing and praying in them through long hours, till some judge would issue an injunction, "forbidding any singing, praying, or exhorting, or making a noise or disturbance in front of said place, or on the sidewalk, or in any manner interrupting his said business," which of course the courts dissolved, convinced that prayers and singing could be no worse annoyance to the liquor-seller than his business was to law-and-order-loving people.

In one town, where there were eight saloons, their proprietors determined to resist the pleadings of the women. The leader among them, a man of influence in the German church, who had refused the praying band admittance, allowing them to sing and pray upon the sidewalk, was the first to sign the pledge to discontinue forever the sale of all liquors, wine, and beer, while the rest have given up the business.

In another town, where the women labored six weeks daily, and sometimes during the evening, one of the saloon-keepers, where at first the men danced

and sung, and jeered, and drank, allowed his liquors to be turned into the street: while many were weeping, he wept with them, saying he was glad for the decision he had made. His glasses and tables were at once offered at auction, one tumbler was sold three times to the same man, bringing in all seventeen dollars. Unable to lose all he had invested in his saloon, being a poor man, the people in this manner aided him, so that he has been able to start a meat-market, and the good people cordially patronize him.

In one city, where there were forty-two saloons, at the close of the second week's work twenty-five had given up the business, and all the others have since surrendered. One saloon-keeper, a German, who refused admittance for eleven days to the praying bands, his wife making sport and laughing mockingly, at last admitted them, and told them he had sold the last drop he should ever sell.

In one of the large towns a wholesale dealer assured them he should use powder and lead if he were visited; but with brave hearts the good women met before his door to pray. The occupants of his saloon were noisy as well as rude; but after a week he made his appearance at a mass meeting and signed the pledge, and on the following Sabbath attended church for the first time in five years. Another, who was loud in his denunciations of interference with his business,

three days after the first prayer-meeting at his place, appeared in the church meeting, signed the pledge to abstain both from drinking and selling, and has become an ardent supporter of the Temperance cause: he has made some telling speeches, and given evidence of a contrite heart. Several have become converted, and united with Christian churches.

Meantime the northern part of the State became electrified. The public mind seemed completely absorbed by the Temperance Crusade. Men everywhere were signing the total abstinence pledge. Property-holders were signing a pledge not to lease any building in the future, where intoxicating liquor might be sold. Men engaged in the traffic said: "Let a committee of two or three ladies come and consult with us, and we will gladly talk with them; but don't come as a praying band. The suggestion that our business is such as to make us need the prayers of the people, gives it a disreputable appearance; whereas before this our families have moved in good society, and we have accounted ourselves as good as others." But the praying bands came. Women of the highest social standing were in them. Women, so timid before that they could do nothing in public, felt called by the Master to do everything possible in so great an uprising of the people. Men, who were at first unwilling their wives should join the bands,

soon became urgent for them to be numbered among them. In many of the towns, where the people of wealth and culture felt that it was not proper for women to kneel and pray where their husbands and their sons became drunken, after having tried other methods, invariably decided that prayer had succeeded when all other measures failed.

The proprietor of one saloon, not feeling quite able to meet one or two hundred women on the subject of liquor-selling, decided to take his vacation earlier in the season than usual, leaving his assistant in charge, with especial directions not to surrender. The young man received one visit, heard the prayers, and telegraphed for the owner, assuring him he could not hold out another day. Quite disgusted with human weakness, the proprietor returned, strung bottles across his windows, had new and showy signs painted, and closed his doors on the praying bands; but, anxious to hear the services, stole out among the crowd. When he heard the prayers for himself, the tears would come into his eyes in spite of his determination not to have any feeling. The precious hymns reverberated in his ears, not only all the day, but long after he had retired at night. He said "Rock of Ages" was in one ear, and "cleft for me" in the other. In a few days the bottles were taken down from the

windows, the large signs removed, and the saloon doors were closed forever.

In a large city, when many doors were shut to the praying bands, a young man made them welcome to his saloon for a meeting. He was the son of a clergyman, had been unfortunate in business, and had lost all. He found it difficult to obtain work, and, with a family to support, stifled the remembrances of the teachings of his early years, and entered upon a course he knew was wrong, because there was money to be made in it for him as well as for others. In the bar-room was a white-haired man, who had buried all who were dear to him. He was a man of talent, an editor, but for thirty years had been a devotee of the wine-cup. He had lost his self-control, had ruined his health; he was without home or friends, and had been cared for by this young man, who, though a saloon-keeper, had a generous and manly heart. The white-haired man sang a beautiful hymn, precious to his mother long since buried, and signed the pledge, hoping for strength to keep it. He has since become an earnest Christian. The young man's heart was softened. Two or three days after, he gave up business, trusting to the God of the praying women to open up a better way in which he might walk. Then followed a praise-meeting, and the assembled throng joined in the songs of thanksgiving in the clean and

renovated saloon. A coffee-house has been fitted up for him, and the praying bands hold their service there every Sabbath.

At some saloons, women had dirty water or beer poured on them as they prayed. At other times they were followed by a rabble, singing obscene songs; sometimes their lives were threatened if they did not desist. Aged women were pushed, kicked, trodden upon, and dogs were set on them as they prayed; but still the devoted bands prayed on day after day, through rain and sleet, never thinking of ceasing their labors—telling their daughters, if they died before the work was finished, to carry it on to the end. Other States caught the inspiration. The women of Indiana and Illinois, where license-law prevailed, felt that there was a higher law than that of the State—a law that said to the mothers, "Look after the sons God has given you, as long as you are spared on earth!" Twenty-one years cannot sever the relation between mother and son. If somebody is working his ruin through liquor, go and beseech him not to sell, even though a thousand State laws allow it to be sold. From the Atlantic to the Pacific one low sweet prayer was heard: "God pity and save the man who ruins my boy by the traffic of intoxicating liquor." Men and women had a new baptism of the Spirit. Ministers of the gospel became St. Pauls in bravery and devotion. Little

children gathered by the hundreds and thousands on the sidewalks to hear the familiar hymns, and listen to the touching prayers. Open-air meetings were held by the women, and Christ was offered to those who never entered a church. The highways and hedges became sanctuaries of the Most High.

The great cities became stirred from centre to circumference. They had become full of corruption. Most of them had become subject to the liquor power. Mayors, councils, police departments, saying nothing of State officials, had been elevated to position by the money and influence of those favoring the liquor traffic. The hands of good men were tied. Their mouths were stopped. Legislatures were bought and sold; and men voted with what they supposed to be the strongest party.

Business men drank to make themselves popular, to increase their trade, to seem manly and generous and social; and to avoid all look of puritanism or piety. Women plead with their husbands and sons not to drink, but a thousand forces were at work on the other side. Women had worked for years amidst the vice and poverty of large cities, providing homes for the wives and children of drunkards, and for drunkards even—gathering homeless and ragged children into mission schools; still the open saloons were swelling the army faster than it could be cared for.

There was need for another kind of work, and, hard as the struggle was, it was seen that it must be begun. Mayors issued proclamations, forbidding the praying women to kneel and pray upon the sidewalks, though crowds were allowed to stand for an hour, completely blocking the way, while a meeting was being held inside a saloon. Sometimes they were forbidden to march upon the streets, refused the protection of the police from an excited and sometimes drunken crowd. They were compelled to observe the strictest laws, while saloon-keepers had broken them daily for years. They were subject to criticism by some men and women, who should have been thankful for any movement in the cause of temperance, no matter how strange or unprecedented; and yet the bands, five hundred strong, of the best and noblest women, wives of statesmen, of governors, of ministers, of professors, women from all the ranks of life, were willing to be martyrs for the cause of right.

In four months, seventeen hundred saloons had been closed in Ohio, and thousands of men and women were sending up songs of thanksgiving. In scores of towns there was not a single saloon left. In one large city, after six weeks of effort, about five thousand ladies had become members of the Temperance League, prayer-meetings had been held repeatedly in four hundred and fifty saloons, beside mass meetings

in churches, and religious meetings in warehouses, vacant lots, ship-docks, and saloons whose proprietors had surrendered. Between seventy-five and one hundred liquor-dealers had signed the pledge to discontinue the business, and several hundred property-owners pledged themselves not to lease buildings where intoxicating liquors could be sold. Many thousands had signed a total-abstinence pledge, some of whom had been drunkards even while filling the highest positions in society: they had become reformed in body and soul, enthusiastic in the cause of Temperance, and devoted helpers of the praying women.

The spirit of the Master seemed to be moving mightily upon the people. One young bar-keeper (and he is only one among scores of similar cases) sat in his room reading. Suddenly he said to himself, "I have spent a great deal of money for liquor. I will sign the pledge, and stop my saloon." He hastened down the street, signed the pledge, told his wife they must stop the business, and when she pleaded their poverty, and could not bear to destroy what little they had invested, he would leave the house every time a glass was sold. Soon she poured out all they had, signed the pledge, both began to read and pray, and have given their hearts to the Saviour.

The results of the crusade soon became manifest. Some wholesale grocers, who had connected the wholesale liquor-trade with their business, decided to sell only that which should be for the best interest of community, even though their coffers were not so rapidly filled as before. To build a structure on the downfall of others is to build something that must crumble to ashes in the light of eternity. Some hotel-keepers concluded to keep such houses as might be safe for a mother to board in with her sons—that would be an honor to its proprietor, and a blessing to the city. Wholesale liquor-dealers began to feel that the business was not as respectable as they had thought. Many small houses closed for lack of patronage, some from fear of wholesome law, and many because their hearts were touched by earnest prayer. The trade was greatly crippled, the revenue from this source falling off thousands of dollars monthly. Men drank less than before, because they were ashamed of the habit. The trade in tobacco likewise greatly decreased. Young women united themselves into leagues, pledging never to use intoxicating liquors nor offer them to young men, and to use all their influence against the selling and the drinking of intoxicating liquor. The bread of life was taken to the masses—to some who had not, as they themselves

said, heard a prayer for fifteen years. Children were taught that there is death in the cup.

A public sentiment was created that can never retrograde. Prohibitory ordinances were passed in a large number of cities and towns of Ohio. In one city, the pen with which the president of the council signed the ordinance was sold at auction for two hundred and fifty-two dollars.

There were some self-willed men, or those whose consciences seemed dead from living long years in sin, who were apparently unmoved by women's prayers and entreaties. These seemed to be reached only by law. Committees were appointed to gather testimony, money subscribed, the best legal talent obtained, suits brought to trial, and offenders punished.

The people are still praying for and looking forward to a higher education, which shall teach men that as a beverage, intoxicating liquors are the greatest possible evil, and as a medicine rarely necessary—looking to the time, however they may differ about the methods of obtaining it, when no State shall allow it to be made or sold save for useful purposes; looking, indeed, far into the future, to the utter extermination of all that can intoxicate—that time not to come, perhaps, till the dawn of the Millennium, when a world sitting in darkness shall come into the light of the Sun of Righteousness.

The hundred thousand women in the praying bands have lost none of their refinement in their contact with evil. On the contrary, they have become more consecrated to Christian work. Whatever new and untried duties are before them in the future, whether or no they are ever permitted to cast their ballots to sustain the cause for which they have nobly struggled, they will be true to their womanhood, to the great cause of Temperance, and to the religion which has given them the place they occupy in this nineteenth century.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE prayer movement had touched the city of B—. It was a conservative, wealthy city. People supposed it would be touched slightly. That the cultured pastors would preach some excellent sermons on Temperance, and that the ladies of the first families would ride around in their satin-cushioned carriages and obtain property-holders' pledges. It was barely possible that some women, who were always foremost in every new idea, and some poor persons who were themselves bordering on a state of starvation, would dare go to some of the smaller and lower saloons in a praying band. What, then, was the surprise of the multitude when three hundred women, two by two, went solemnly out of their church, to visit the wholesale dealers and elegant hotels, for the purpose of praying with and for the proprietors. Eyes unused to weeping wept at the strange scenes. Men unused to prayer, listened with uncovered heads, and sometimes joined when "Our Father" was said, or hymns sung which they had learned in their childhood.

Mayor Harmon had met a committee of two ladies the day before, upon this important subject. He sold

liquor only to the best people, never to men who could not afford it, never to minors nor drunkards. His story was just the same that every liquor-dealer tells: that each man must decide for himself whether he would drink, and he was sorry for a man who had not the power of self-control—he should always receive the ladies as became a gentleman—he considered liquor-selling in a hotel a necessity for men who were his patrons—women had no need for like courtesies—he thought his business quite respectable, though there were some annoyances in connection with it—when others would discontinue the sale of intoxicating liquors he should be happy to do so.

Some time before, a mother who supported herself, five children, and a drunken husband, had brought suit against him and recovered two thousand dollars damages.

When the praying band came to his door, he felt perceptibly weaker than he had for years. Perspiration gathered on his forehead. He had not expected them so soon. They were welcome, however. He looked over the company; Mrs. Scott was there, Mary Sharon, and a score of others whom he well knew. The singing took him back to his childhood, to the days when he learned his prayers at the knee of a mother gone home to her reward. After the hymn, a white-haired woman stepped out from the

throng, and knelt upon the carpet. The room was quiet as the chamber of death. She prayed for him and his boy Ralph; prayed that his daughter might never have a husband who drank liquor; that he might never be called to lay an only son in a drunkard's grave, at twenty-one, as she had done. Then, while the tears streamed down her cheeks, she begged forgiveness for the man before her, who had sold her boy his first glass; who had taken away her hope and her dependence, who had made her childless. She had longed for death when her son died, but she was glad to live to pray for him, who had, perhaps thoughtlessly, ruined the boy she had loved and caressed. She asked God to make an open door for him into the heaven her boy had lost for all eternity.

Mayor Harmon's heart softened. He began to think he had done some harm in the world; that gaining money might, after all, be useless, if he lost his soul. Many a cheek was wet when the prayer was over. Then a few verses were read from the Bible, and they seemed to have a new meaning for him. They were about to sing again, when a small, gentle-looking lady, in deep mourning, knelt to pray. Mayor Harmon knew that voice, but he had never heard it in prayer; neither had anybody else, save Jehovah. The voice was singularly sweet and persuasive.

She thanked the Master for the generous heart of the man who had bid them welcome; thanked Him for the strange though sad way in which he had led his family, because it had brought her nearer the Throne; begged, for the sake of his son, who had striven again and again to break the fetters, but without avail—for the sake of the little girl, his only grandchild and her only child, who, in the innocency of her babyhood, had given her life in consequence of the liquor drunk in his house—for her sake who knelt there—for the sake of other mothers and children, she begged the Lord to lead him to give up that which was doing harm.

When Camilla rose from her knees the father was overcome. He wept like a child.

"Come another day!" he said; "I cannot talk now!" and silently and tearfully the devoted band went out upon their mission.

Other places were visited. Those who had come for curiosity or fun grew earnest as they listened, took off their hats, sometimes wept, sometimes sang the beautiful hymns, and sometimes knelt and prayed with the praying women.

Mayor Harmon thought over the matter for hours. Many of his friends drank, and would ridicule him if he surrendered to women or to the voice of prayer. His place had been a political centre, and he was

ambitious. His expenses were great, and he desired to make money. He felt as though a Temperance House might not be a success financially. His friends might desert him. He believed in a hereafter, but thought about it just as little as possible, because it was not a pleasant subject. He knew the business was bad, but unpopular only among a small conservative class, until this movement. Others would sell liquor, and might it not better be sold by good men like himself than by others. But then these prayers had touched his heart. His wife and daughter were anxious for him to give it up. The Christian women, with only kindness in their hearts, had besought him. He was ashamed to be known through the press everywhere as a liquor-dealer. He began to think he was indeed what the law declared him to be, directly responsible for the results of his selling, whether by the quantity or by the glass. To conform to the State law, when the higher law of God so greatly transcends it, might not be, after all, a true man's whole duty. He had intended to be generous all his life, but he knew the evil had more than counterbalanced the good. Had his money been really made through the poverty and sorrows of so many homes? Had young men learned to drink at his respectable bar, and gone down to drunkards' graves? Had he caused so many tears to flow?

He was sorry his Ralph ever drank. Every man was sorry he had ever learned the habit. He would as soon bury his daughter as have her marry a drinking man. Everybody was better off without liquor. Women did not need it, or use it often; why should men require it more than they? If he made much in this world, all he could carry with him beyond the grave was the character he had made for himself. Did keeping a bar ennoble that character? Would it bring a good record to take up to the great day of accounts?

He decided for the right—he would do nothing more to debase humanity, if he did nothing to lift it higher. His kind heart and the women's prayers had triumphed, and Mayor Harmon's bar was closed forever.

Some of his old companions laughed, some swore, and some of them said he had taken a noble stand for the community and they were glad. It created a sensation in the city of B—. Good people gathered about him and thanked him heartily. He began to enjoy their society better than that of his former friends. His wife and daughter were loved and appreciated more than ever before. Some other liquor-dealers said, if Harmon had yielded to the wishes of the better part of the community, they would be as honorable as he. Men began to say they would control

themselves, rather than let appetite control them; that it was a man's duty to pledge himself to upright living, not so much because *he* needed it, as that some others might be influenced by his action. Men and women began to realize that living for self is manlike—living for others, Christlike.

Ralph became a better man. He wanted to do right. He would have been cured perhaps by Holly-Tree Coffee-Inns, Inebriate Asylums, churches even, if he had been strong enough to resist temptation. The appetite had been formed too early. The religion of Christ in the heart does give men strength, if they lean upon Him fully; but we have no right to urge people to become Christians, unless we try to remove the pitfalls into which so many stumble after they think they are safe. The great temptation to Ralph had been removed. Weakness gradually became strength, and the man who was a sorrow and a burden became a companion and a comforter.

CHAPTER XV.

LITTLE Bessie Sharon had grown to be an active, beautiful child, with the handsome face of her father, and the grace and sweetness of her mother. Scarcely a tear had ever wet her cheeks. Hers was as happy a childhood as comfort and care and love could give. There was a shadow hanging over her, which somebody in the future, without doubt, would draw down upon her pathway; but as yet she knew only the cheeriest sunlight. Let all the childhoods be as sunny as possible; the labor and sorrow come soon enough!

The mother, with her gentle nature, lived wholly in the child. A stronger character could have done something of the great work of lifting humanity, and given her child all the care and thought she needed or ought to have; but with her it was not possible. To forget one's individuality, and have no personal ambition, no desire to make the most of one's self, because one is a mother, is a great mistake. We ask more than we grant. We urge others to do something which will make us proud of them, and *we* sink into nothingness, not remembering that a child loves to be proud of its parents.

The Foundling Asylum was doing blessed work. Women, who supposed their time was fully occupied in what their families should eat and wear, found that by a wise economy of time, they could do much for the helpless and the destitute. Women of society grew more liberal toward the unfortunate and the down-trodden; they had less pride in their hearts, and more of Christ in their lives. Homes in B—— into which no little feet had ever walked, were brightened by pretty children, who would otherwise have been homeless.

Mary Sharon was very busy. The poor came for aid, and those in trouble for counsel. No work wears upon one like that which requires sympathy. The summer had come. Sharon House looked lovelier than ever, as the great trees along the walks took on their varied shades of green. Clusters of red geraniums brightened the lawn, and the tube-roses and mignonette made the air full of fragrance.

In a room, looking out upon the terrace, where Hadley had so often sat, Mary Sharon lay on a sick-bed. She had been gathering precious fruit in her young life, and was soon to bear it up to the Master.

"Bessie!" she said, one day, "you know it doesn't matter much about the length of life, so that the work is well done. I have been thinking I should go away soon. I made my will some time ago, leaving all I

have to you and little Bessie, save a good present to the old sexton, Jemmy Gray. He has worked hard, and loves the church that father built. Keep this home, and live in it, and bring up the little one to a life that has a purpose for good.

"I should like to see Hadley once more. He wronged us both, but he has repented; and I have some things to say to him before I die. Telegraph, and he will come at once. Say I am not well, and would like to see him."

Two days after, Hadley, with uncovered head, entered the room where, years before, there was to have been a bridal rather than a parting. Both were changed. He looked older, and she thinner and paler, but more pure and consecrated. He took her hand, and the tears flowed down his cheeks.

"Hadley," she said, when both were calm, "I wanted to see you and talk with you before I should go away. You and I have been much to each other. We are still. I shall not forget you in the great future. You know how much I love little Bessie—she has my name, too, and perhaps you will love her more for that—and how much I love her mother! She still loves you, and you could make her life very bright. She is worthy of you. We all make mistakes in life, and we must remedy them as far as we can. You, or any other man or woman, if rightly

and wisely married, are happier. You need a home—some one to love you and help you."

"Dear Mary, you were to have been that one. Why must the plan be broken? The fault is mine. I might have saved all, but I have lost all."

"Some things are strangely ordered, or permitted, in this life. If we sin, we must suffer. God himself could not keep us from it, and leave us still free to act. In the great eternity, there will be no marrying nor giving in marriage, and if you and I ask forgiveness, we shall be as the angels of God. I will meet you there."

"God help me!"

"Bessie needs a husband, and little Bessie a father. I want the best things to come to all of you. If angels come back, I shall long to come and see you prosper, and build up a manhood worthy of yourself. You will have but a few years, even at the longest, and you must make every day tell for the future."

Those were precious days—days when one was getting nearer and nearer the celestial city, and the other, with heart broken and bleeding, was trying to drink from the same spring of consolation from which she found strength and refreshment.

Every hour was dearer and more valuable. The time for the journey was close at hand. The day had been clear and balmy, and the last rays of the sun

lay lovingly upon Mary Sharon's couch. Hadley and Bessie stood beside the bed, with little Bessie between them. The child was sobbing, as though half-conscious of a great sorrow about to come upon them.

Each one bent over, and kissed the white face tenderly.

"Hadley," she said, "I know Bessie's heart, and I know yours. Be to her what you would have been to me. Be watchful, and careful of our darling child. Keep close to the dear Saviour! Work for Him! Good-by!" and holding little Bessie's hand in hers—that tender bond between the three—Mary Sharon went out of life into the life beyond.

Out on the hillside, away from the din of the city, a sad-hearted company carried their dead. The rich and the poor came together to testify their grief. There was a simple service, and then Jemmy Gray, a white-haired, tender-hearted old man, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, spread over the top of the coffin a whole armful of mignonette, which he had brought from his home. "It didn't seem so hard," he said, "to shovel the dirt into the grave, when flowers kept it from touching her!"

Sharon House seemed desolate. Hadley's hope, that could not die before, was buried now forever. What was left for him but to carry out Mary's wishes, and make Bessie Heavenrich happy?—happy as a life

can be, that is full of sad memories, that no love nor time can obliterate. The world had branded both. It was well to outlive the stigma by true, earnest lives.

"Bessie," he said one night, when he came to see her and his child, "can you forgive all the past, and love me? I am more of a man since Mary Sharon's death. I believe I can make you very happy!"

The old trust came back into her heart. There was a quiet marriage, made sacred by pure motives and noble purposes. Little Bessie climbed upon his knee, and for the first time said, very sweetly, as she kissed him, "Papa;" and Hadley pressed her to his heart, and, while the tears filled his eyes, called her by her true name, "Bessie Sharon Scott."

THE END.