



THE RESCUE. Page 5.

THE
TEMPERANCE DOCTOR.

BY
MARY DWINELL CHELLIS,

AUTHOR OF "DEACON SIM'S PRAYERS," "OLD SUNAPEE," ETC.



NEW YORK:
National Temperance Society and Publication House,
172 WILLIAM STREET.
1868.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868, by

J. N. STEARNS,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District
of New York.

ROCKWELL & ROLLINS, STEREOTYPERS AND PRINTERS,
122 Washington Street, Boston.

THE TEMPERANCE DOCTOR.

I.

Liberty and moderation;
Watchwords of the olden time,
When the bards of every nation
Sang the praise of sparkling wine;
Liberty, the mocking cry,
Liberty to drink and die.

THE usual group of idlers were lounging in the bar-room of the Eagle House, smoking cigars of the best brand to be found in the village. This occupation was varied by sipping iced-water, while an occasional newcomer indulged in a less cooling draught.

A sultry summer afternoon. The tiniest leaf motionless in the unclouded sunlight, and Nature's voices hushed, save the lazy droning of myriads of insects. Even the

landlord of this flourishing hotel tipped back in his chair, and contented himself with an occasional remark to his guests, rather than the accustomed flow of wit and anecdote.

But suddenly there was heard a murmur in the distance; then loud cries, as if for help, and every one sprang to his feet. "From the river," says one; "somebody is drowning!" and again came the cry, louder than before.

One horse stood saddled under the shed. It had been ridden there by Fred Randolph, and it was but the work of a moment to loose and mount him. Down the street, towards the river, dashed the horseman, followed by almost the entire village. A quarter of a mile was soon passed over, and, from the crowd of half-distracted boys, he learned that little Carl Gore had been drawn into the whirlpool, and Clarence Vane had already "been down three times to bring him up."

"Where is he now?" asked the young man, at the same time divesting himself of hat, coat, and boots.

"Down there," said one. "He's coming up," said another, as midway of the stream the boy appeared holding the body of little Carl Gore.

Two or three powerful strokes, and Fred Randolph took the burden, and turned towards the shore. Clarence Vane made a feeble effort to follow, but the undercurrent seemed too strong for him, and from those who watched, came the cry, "He's going down himself."

"Swim, swim for your life!" shouted a man who had just driven up, and, roused by the command, he, with desperate energy, placed himself beyond the reach of the treacherous eddy. This exhausted his remaining strength, and he was beginning to sink, when a strong arm was placed under him and he was borne to life and safety.

By this time the crowd of villagers had reached the scene of disaster. There was a confused questioning as to how it had all happened. But, amid the Babel of tongues, it was only understood that Carl, who was per-

fectly at home in the water, had ventured too near the eddy, and been drawn down.

"I told him better," said an older brother, anxious, even then, to exonerate himself from all blame in the matter.

But the father heard nothing, saw nothing, save the lifeless body of his child, which he clasped in his arms, and would thus have rushed home, had he not been prevented by those around him.

"Put them both in this wagon, and let me act as driver," said Dr. Hall.

"Clarence, too! Clarence dead, too!" said Mr. Gore, wringing his hands in impotent grief.

The orders were obeyed, and before the news had reached the Eagle House, the wagon, with its precious freight, was driven to the door, followed by half a dozen men, whose horses had been able to keep pace with the doctor's hot haste.

Clarence had revived somewhat during the ride, and, although perfectly helpless, was able to inquire for Carl.

"Did I save him?" he asked, too much confused to remember.

A single word in the affirmative satisfied him, and he relapsed into a half-unconscious state. He was placed in bed, enveloped in hot blankets, and then the whole attention was directed to the child who had given no signs of life.

The crowd came rushing back from the river; others, living a little outside the village, had heard the news and joined the excited throng. Only by the most imperative commands could they be prevented from forcing themselves up the stairs.

"See that not another person comes up those stairs," said Dr. Hall to a man standing beside him. "We must not be interrupted." But at that moment the crowd gave way, and up the stairs, almost at a bound, sprang a young girl with pale face, and long black hair floating over neck and shoulders.

"Where is Clarence?" she asked in a hoarse whisper.

"This way," was the reply, and through

the open door she caught sight of him, and, for the moment, thought him dead. Trembling, she reached out her hands instinctively for support.

"Don't be frightened, Genie. He's only tired. He'll be all right in an hour," said an elderly man, turning from the bed and going towards her. At this assurance, with what seemed strange inconsistency, she began to weep, and was led sobbing to her brother.

Just then a man entered the room, bearing a glass of dark liquid. "Here is something that will put you on your feet again," he said, as he raised the boy's head from the pillow.

"What is it?" asked Eugenia Vane.

"Brandy and water," was the reply.

"Then he must not drink it," she said in an excited tone.

"Why not?" was asked.

"Because he must not," she repeated still more emphatically.

"To be sure Clarence will drink it," said the gentleman who had met the sister at the door. "Dr. Walton has ordered it." Tak-

ing the glass in his own hands, he held it to the lips of Clarence Vane.

An instant more, and the glass was dashed to the floor. "He shall not drink it. He had better die," said the girl, turning her large black eyes full upon the face of him who had held the glass to her brother's lips.

"Hush, Genie!" said he, sternly. "You are too much excited to know what you are saying. Clarence needs a stimulant, and brandy is the best thing in the world for him."

"It is the worst thing in the world for him, Uncle Randolph. Mother wouldn't let him drink it."

"Mother," said the boy.

Mrs. Vane was there to speak for herself.

"Drinking brandy, Clarence!" she exclaimed, the blood rushing to her face and her whole manner revealing her horror of such an act.

"Not a drop," said Eugenia, without waiting for her brother to reply. "I broke the glass, and he didn't taste it."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the mother fervently, while the bystanders looked the astonishment they did not presume to speak.

In the adjoining room, physicians and parents made trial of every means that skill or affection could suggest to recall the spirit of little Carl Gore to its earthly tenement. Noiselessly and hurriedly passed the attendants from kitchen to chamber, giving to all inquiries the same reply, until hope died out in the hearts of the most sanguine. Even the parents felt that further efforts were useless, and this conviction was strengthened by Dr. Walton's assurance that "nothing but the last trump would arouse him."

But Dr. Walton was an old man, and his head not quite so clear as it might have been had his potations of brandy and water been less frequent. Dr. Hall was not so sure, and, asking the assistance of two upon whose promptness and perseverance he could rely, he was left with them to continue his exertions.

Not in vain. At length the child breathed;

his eyes slowly opened, then closed wearily; but life was there. He was saved, and no one dreamed it would have been better for him and for the world had Dr. Walton's prophecy proved true.

The overjoyed parents were ready to fall upon their knees in acknowledgment of the young doctor's skill. They thanked him again and again; thanked their neighbors and friends, then went to Clarence Vane, and thanked him for rescuing their darling from a watery grave; but in all this, there was no thought or word of thankfulness to Him who holds the lives of all in his hands. Mr. Gore said, to be sure, that he never before had such cause for thankfulness, and proposed, as a proper expression of his gratitude, to keep a free bar for the evening.

He was about to make the announcement, when Dr. Hall asked, as a personal favor, that it might not be done.

"Anything to oblige you, doctor," was the reply; "but I really feel as though I ought

to make some return to all these people for their kindness."

"Then do it by closing your bar for the evening. That would indeed be a blessing."

"I shan't quarrel with you to-night, doctor. I am under too great obligations to you; and I'll even close my bar to please you. I know you are one of the new-fashioned temperance men; but Dr. Walton, the 'squire, and myself belong to the old party who believe in liberty and moderation."

"I understand that," said the young doctor, "and some time I shall be glad to hear the reasons for your faith, and give you mine in return."

Feeling himself now at liberty to leave Carl, he looked in upon Clarence, whom he found anxious to go home. "I will take you in my buggy," said Dr. Hall, "and I can engage that a conveyance shall be provided for the ladies."

Eugenia was about to protest against any provision being made for her, when she remembered that she had neither hat nor shawl,

and that the fastenings of her hair were strown somewhere between her home and the hotel.

At this moment came in Esquire Randolph, who considered Eugenia and Clarence Vane as his especial charge, they having been his wards for ten years, and he gladly relieved Dr. Hall of all care on their account.

Meanwhile, the notice, "Bar closed for the evening," appeared in a conspicuous position, and it was soon understood that it was in compliance with a request made by the young doctor. There was no lack of comments upon so strange a proceeding. Some rejoiced openly that this was not to be made the occasion of drunken revelry; some had "nothing to say against the young man;" he was smart, of course; that had been proved; but "he'd better attend to his own business." A few gave utterance to their dissatisfaction in terms more expressive than refined, and declared their determination to employ the old doctor as long as he had "one foot out of the grave."

Thus the crowd lost their treat; but a few,

whom Mr. Gore considered his especial friends, were quietly invited to the family sitting-room, to test the quality of his choicest liquors. Among those were Esquire Randolph and son, with Dr. Walton.

Direct from this room went the two first-named gentlemen to attend Mrs. Vane and her children. As Clarence appeared, leaning upon the arm of his sister, a hearty cheer from the bystanders testified their appreciation of his heroism.

"Like his father, always ready to risk himself for others. God keep him from all evil, and shield him from all harm!" said an old man, earnestly.

Everybody rejoiced in the rescue of Carl Gore, but there was little said of him. Clarence Vane was the hero of the hour. His fine personal appearance, his advanced scholarship, and his bravery, all were discussed. But there were ominous shakings of the head, remarks made in an under tone, and half-finished sentences, that revealed either fears or suspicions.

Dr. Hall stopped to hear none of these remarks, but hastened home, where the events of the afternoon were repeated to his wife. He had been settled in this village a little more than two years, and during the time had encountered much opposition, from the fact that he was, as Mr. Gore had said, "a new-fashioned temperance man."

Previous to this, Dr. Walton had been the only physician in town for forty years, and had never made himself obnoxious by setting up for a reformer. On the contrary, he clung to old habits and old opinions, and was popular among a majority of the people. But a few ventured to express the opinion that stimulants held too prominent a place in his practice, and queried if his patients ever so far recovered their health as not to require an occasional "glass of bitters."

This was not strange when the doctor thought it impossible to go through the business of a single day without a supply of brandy. Ever since he was a young man, he had been troubled with a "difficulty in the

stomach," that made the use of this stimulant indispensable. He always quoted himself as an example of the moderate and beneficial use of the good things of life, and would hold a tiny wineglass between his thumb and finger, saying, "This is my measure, which I never exceed."

One might have supposed, judging by the outer development, that an increased capacity would have required a corresponding increase of quantity, yet he gravely assured his friends that such was not the case.

But wineglass or goblet, there was no denying the fact that the old doctor was not always in a condition to prescribe for his patients. Even his best friends were forced to acknowledge this, and were willing that a younger practitioner should settle among them.

Dr. Hall had come there a stranger, and, with the assurance of one who had no doubt of success, purchased a house and a few acres of land. He repaired the house, put

the grounds in somewhat better condition, and then brought a bride to his home.

Mrs. Vane and her daughter were among the first who called to bid her welcome, and a close intimacy sprung up between the ladies. The young wife looked upon Mrs. Vane almost as a mother, while Eugenia was loved as a sister. They had required no professional services from the doctor, but he made frequent calls upon the family, and enjoyed their entire confidence. He knew much of their past history, and sympathized with the mother in her anxiety for her son.

There were two parties in town; one clinging to the old doctor, despite his growing incompetency, while the other strongly supported his rival, claiming that he was consistent both in principle and practice. His business was not extensive, but this did not seem to trouble him. He never rode through the village at breakneck speed, to stop in some out-of-the-way place, and administer to imaginary patients. The time not neces-

sarily devoted to his profession was spent in cultivating his land.

"He'll get a living," said the villagers. "If he can't do one thing, he will another;" and he really seemed in a fair way to make a model farmer.

"Let him farm. He is more fit for that than anything else," said Mr. Gore, who had a natural antipathy to quassia and cold water.

Yet his house would have been one of mourning, but for this same Dr. Hall, and he was forced by the circumstance to acknowledge his skill. He was too grateful to calculate the probable effect of the increased popularity of the young doctor, who was everywhere, and under all circumstances, an uncompromising temperance man. Had it been in his power, he would have closed every rum-shop in the land, and so blinded was he by prejudice, that it seemed to him no more respectable to sell liquors at the bar of the Eagle House, than in Dan Messer's groggery. Such was the man at whose request the bar

of the Eagle House, was, that evening, closed.

The crowd dispersed after a time, carrying to their homes tidings of all that had occurred, and speculating in regard to what would come of it. Dr. Walton was the last to leave, and it was observed that he walked very carefully.

"Now let us go over to Mrs. Vane's," said the young doctor's wife, when she thought her husband sufficiently recovered from his fatigue. "I am sure they will be glad to see us, and I am anxious in regard to Clarence."

"Yes, Annie, we'll go; but you must expect to meet the 'squire in all his dignity. He evidently considered me as interfering with his business when I proposed to take Clarence home. You know he never smiles upon me, and I am inclined to think him jealous of our influence over Genie."

A merry laugh was the reply to these remarks. Annie Hall appreciated her husband, and understood the reasons why he was

not a favorite with the 'squire. For the same reasons she would have come under the ban of his displeasure, as she was, of the two, the more zealous advocate of teetotalism. But there was something in the winning sweetness of her face, and the easy grace of her manners, that disarmed prejudice, and made even the 'squire and Mr. Gore treat her with a deference they were far from manifesting to her husband.

The doctor was not disappointed in his expectation of meeting Esquire Randolph, and an amused smile flitted across his face as he noted the cool reception given him by the gentleman.

Clarence was resting on a couch in an adjoining room, and the doctor's wife, with whom he was a great favorite, was soon seated beside him.

"So you have made yourself famous," she said lightly. "I hope I am not too late to congratulate you."

"I don't care for being famous," replied the boy, "but I am glad I saved Carl. They

would have let him die, though, after all, if it hadn't been for the doctor. I'm glad for him. They'll all like him now. Please ask him to come here. I have something to tell him," he added, after a short pause, in which he seemed to be thinking earnestly.

"Playing invalid, Clarence? I must see to this," said the doctor, cheerfully. "Let me count your pulse. Not very bad. We shall have you as well as ever to-morrow."

"I didn't drink the brandy. He told me I must," said the boy, in a low tone, pointing to the room in which his guardian was seated. "Genie spilled it; but I didn't mean to drink it, any way."

Dr. Hall did not utter the same ejaculation of thankfulness that had testified to the mother's joy in hearing this; but a closer clasp of the hand that rested in his, and words of earnest approval, told how great a value he attached to this abstinence.

"You must never drink it, never," he

added, placing a strong emphasis upon the repeated word.

Mrs. Hall left the room as this was said, leaving her husband and his young friend at liberty to continue their conversation. But they were soon interrupted by the entrance of Fred Randolph, who came to inquire for Clarence, and the doctor was preparing to take his leave, when a man came riding up, to say that Tim Allen, who lived in a remote part of the town, was "crazy as a loon. He thinks he's covered with snakes and all manner of critters."

"What kind of a man is he?" asked the doctor, not doubting that he was suffering from an attack of delirium tremens.

"You temperance folks would call him a drunkard. Dan Messer says he's a jolly fellow. You see," continued the man, "he's one of Dan's best customers. Used to go to the Eagle House till he began to look seedy; then Gore turned him off. That's the way he does, and folks call him a respectable man. I don't know much about it, but it seems to me Dan

is just as good as Gore. Any way, their business is the same."

These remarks were made near the door, and sufficiently loud to be heard by all in the house. The speaker had evidently been meditating during his lonely ride, and improved the first opportunity to relieve himself of his burden of thought.

The doctor turned back for his wife, and, when they reached the gate, they found the messenger still waiting. "They've always had the old doctor down to Allen's; but the women folks thought they'd send for you this time. One of the neighbors was in, and told what you did this afternoon, and they agree with you, too, about the drinking. Fact is, I guess most of the women are on your side, there."

How long the man would have continued to talk, had any one listened, is quite uncertain, but he was forced to silence by the want of an audience.

It required but a few minutes for the doctor to make preparations for his ride, and,

giving his wife a parting kiss, he started off. Passing the man who had summoned him, he received renewed directions as to the shortest road to Tim Allen's house.

It was at the foot of a long hill, a little off the main road, and so hidden by trees, that the doctor would never have thought of stopping there, had not his attention been arrested by the frightful screams that rang out upon the night air. Reining in his horse, he listened for a moment, peering through the darkness to discover the gateway.

There was such an accumulation of brush and old lumber that it was impossible to tell where this was intended to be, and he was about getting out of his buggy, to continue the search on foot, when a man appeared, carrying a lantern.

"This way, doctor," he said, raising the lantern above his head, that he might be sure whom he was addressing. "But perhaps you'd better wait a minute, and I'll lead your horse. Allen don't keep things very much

slicked up. My Betsey says he puts out the signs of his trade."

"What is his trade?"

"He's a blacksmith; but that isn't what I mean. He drinks rum pretty much all the time, and Betsey calls such a lot of rubbish the drunkard's sign."

The speaker seemed in no haste as he held the horse by the bridle and moved slowly towards the house. He had seen too many of "Tim Allen's tantrums" to consider them of much importance. But a woman's voice shouting, "Robert, Robert, come here this minute," caused him to quicken his steps, and, placing the lantern upon an old block, he said, "There's the tie-post. Betsey's calling, and I must go."

The doctor followed directly, and, upon opening the door, it was apparent that Robert had not been called too soon. The suffering man in a paroxysm of rage freed himself from the grasp of the neighbor who was with him, and hurled a chair at the head of his wife. She was able to avoid the full force

of the blow, but the chair grazed her temple, inflicting a wound from which the blood flowed freely.

"Better give him some gin and have done with it," said John Wilson. "That'll settle him. It's what the old doctor always gives in such cases."

"Gin! gin!" shouted Tim Allen. "That's the stuff. Give me some gin!"

"Not a drop," said Dr. Hall, as he stepped to the bed. "You've had too much of that already."

"Betsey" gave a decided nod of approval, as this was said. "I told you so, Mrs. Allen. That's the kind of doctor for me." She couldn't forbear saying this, even while she sponged the blood from the face of the drunkard's wife.

Tim Allen declined taking the medicine prepared for him, but the peremptory command to "swallow it instantly," left him no alternative. "Now lie down and be quiet," said the doctor in the same stern tone, enforcing the command by corresponding ac-

tion. Then he sat down by the bed, looking steadily into the eyes of his patient.

There were some incoherent murmurs, an occasional groan, and a movement of the hands as if warding off attack; but gradually these ceased, and the doctor gave his attention to Mrs. Allen.

"Now you had better lie down," he said, when her wound was properly dressed. "You certainly need rest."

The worn and haggard looks of the poor woman were proof of this, and after some hesitation she went upstairs, Betsey promising to call her, if it was necessary.

By this time, Tim Allen, recovering a little from the doctor's influence, was again in a state of excitement, and it required the united efforts of the three men to keep him on the bed. Another portion of medicine, and the magnetic gaze of the dark hazel eyes quieted him, just as a loud "halloo" was heard outside.

"Smith's back," said John Wilson. "I'll go out now, doctor, and put up your horse,

if I can be spared. Guess they'll want you to stay all night."

"We can do without you," was the reply, and the man went out.

"He won't get that gin," said Betsey.

"Where is it?" asked her husband.

"Down the sink-spout. I knew Wilson'd be after it; but if he wets his lips it'll be at the pump, unless I've lost my faculty for hunting, and I believe I can smell liquor as far as anybody."

"Guess you can, Betsey," replied her husband, and he ought to have known.

The doctor was an interested listener to this short conversation, and when Wilson came into the room half an hour later, he was pretty sure his lips had been wetted in nothing stronger than water.

Smith didn't come in; but he heard how matters stood, and went whistling home, wondering if it was best to "cut square off," and give up his morning dram. Doctor Walton had ordered it some months before,

for a derangement of the stomach, and he had seemed to need it ever since.

John Wilson was very uneasy after he returned from the barn, and finally, after a good deal of "hitching about," and some preliminary remarks, he asked if he could not go home as well as not.

"Perhaps so," replied the doctor. "I don't think we shall have any more trouble here to night."

"You'd better stay," said Betsey. "There's no telling what may happen. Somebody may come for the doctor, and Robert and I don't want to be left here alone."

This decided the matter, and although he was "dreadful dry," he gave up all idea of going.

"Mrs. Halsey, it is unnecessary for you to sit up any longer," said Dr. Hall, when his patient appeared to be sleeping quietly. "You had better lie down with Mrs. Allen."

Giving a look around to make sure that all things were in order, the woman went upstairs, and reported "all quiet below."

Mrs. Allen had not slept. The heavy heart-pain would have prevented this, even without the pain of her wound, which seemed to increase.

There was something inspiriting in the very presence of Mrs. Halsey. Her cheerful words gave her neighbor hope for the future, and the application of cold water to her head relieved the pain. Sleep came at last; and when she awoke, the sunlight was streaming into the low room, and she was alone. Not recalling the incidents of the night, she raised her head from the pillow, but it fell back heavily.

Then all was remembered, — the frenzy of her husband, the blow she had received, and the visit of the doctor. She listened a moment, and was sure she could hear the quick footsteps of her friend, and from other sounds, she judged that breakfast was being prepared. Just as she was making an effort to rise, the door was softly opened, and Betsey Halsey looked in upon her.

"Lie right down again, Mrs. Allen," she

said. "There's no manner of need of your getting up. I've got breakfast most ready for the doctor, and I'll bring you a good cup of tea. Tim's all right, this morning," she added. "Pretty well sobered, and I guess it will do him good."

"But I must get up, Mrs. Halsey. I wish to see Dr. Hall before he goes; and you have work enough at home without doing mine."

"I'm in no hurry to go home. Robert went more than two hours ago, and the girls can do what is necessary with his help."

After talking some time longer, Mrs. Halsey went down. John Wilson had left; so there were only the doctor and Tim Allen below. The latter had been awake for a long time, and a more thoroughly mortified man it would be difficult to find. He, with others of like habit, had a great dislike for Dr. Hall, and his indignation at finding him at his bedside was unbounded.

This was apparent, but, nothing troubled, the doctor addressed him pleasantly, asking how he found himself.

An angry reply sprang to his lips, but it was unspoken.

"It is time for you to get up now, take a cold bath, and get ready for breakfast."

Some objections were made to this, but they were overruled. "I came here at somebody's request, and you are not quite through with my treatment," continued the doctor. "I suppose you know you are liable to be arrested for an assault upon your wife. You are almost a murderer."

This last remark settled the question, and the bathing was a thorough one. After this a dose, not of *bitters*, but the very *quintessence of bitterness* was administered, and swallowed without even a wry face.

"Now there is time for a good talk before breakfast," said Dr. Hall. "Mr. Allen, do you know the cause of your last night's attack?"

"I suppose I do," was the reply.

"And do you think it pays?"

There was no answer.

"Would it have paid if you had killed your wife?"

A shudder passed over the drunkard's frame. "Where is she?" he asked in a husky voice.

"You haven't answered my question yet," said the doctor, coolly, and he repeated it.

"Oh, no," groaned the man in reply.

"Where are your children?"

"I don't know."

"Why are they not at home?"

"They went away," said the father.

"Drive your children from home, and then kill your wife! You must have a fancy for living alone."

The man fairly writhed in agony, while great drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. But desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and our young doctor was not one to shrink from their application.

"How many attacks have you had like the one of last night?"

"I can't tell."

"And I suppose you can't tell how many

more you expect to have. Well, we won't say any more about that, now. I have a writing here that I wish you to sign. Then, I believe my duty as a physician in your case will be fully discharged."

"Where is Mary?" asked Mr. Allen, unable longer to restrain his anxiety in regard to his wife.

"When we get through with this business we can talk about her; but, at present, this writing must be attended to. Shall I read it?"

"Yes, read it," was the reply.

"Now, will you sign it?" asked the doctor, after reading as strong a temperance pledge as it was possible for him to write.

"I can't," said the man.

"What! Not write! I am astonished."

"I can write well enough; but I don't want to sign that paper. It's signing away my liberty. The 'squire says nobody has a right to ask a man to sign such a paper."

"But I have asked you, and you had better

do it. Great liberty, isn't it, to make a beast and murderer of yourself?"

"If I could only see Mary," groaned the half-distracted husband.

"I guess she's in no particular hurry to see you. At any rate, I shouldn't be if I was in her place."

Taking advantage of the impression produced by this last remark, the doctor insisted that the pledge should be signed; and, with a trembling hand, Tim Allen affixed to it his signature.

No more reproaches. These were exchanged for words of encouragement and earnest counsel.

Mrs. Halsey heard enough of the conversation to understand what was going on, and went upstairs to her friend. "I guess you'll hear some good news if you can come down," she said; "and breakfast is all ready."

Mrs. Allen was met kindly by the doctor, who gave her the pledge signed by her husband. Holding it in her hand, she went into

the room where he was, and closed the door behind her.

Breakfast waited for nearly half an hour, when Mr. Allen and his wife appeared and seated themselves at the table. The doctor and Mrs. Halsey ate heartily, but their companions seemed to have little appetite for the nicely prepared food before them.

Directly after breakfast, Dr. Hall went to the barn for his horse. Mr. Allen followed him, and, taking out his pocket-book, asked what was to pay.

"You didn't send for me," said the doctor.

"I didn't send for any one," was the reply.

"And if you had, it would have been for Dr. Walton."

"I suppose I should; but I'm glad you came, and I'm ready to pay your bill, whatever it is."

This matter was satisfactorily arranged, and, with a cheerful "good-morning" to "the women-folks," the doctor started for home. About a mile from the house he encountered Bill Smith, who, being in a talkative mood,

gave quite a history of the people with whom he had passed the night.

"There's Robert Halsey got a good farm and forehanded, but he came as near going over the bay as he could and miss it."

"How so?" asked the listener.

"Why, you see, after Gore came here, the smartest men in town used to drop in to his bar-room to hear the news, read the papers, and get something to drink. When Halsey went to the village, he used to go in, and after a while got to be one of Gore's best customers. His farm would have gone to rack and ruin if it hadn't been for his wife. But she's smart, and she kept things up, in the house and out of doors. One night, about three years ago, he got so drunk he fell off his horse, and Tim Allen and I helped him home. Betsey was up, and she told us to lay him down on the back-room floor. We did as she said, and what happened after that I never knew; but Robert Halsey haint drank a drop of liquor since.

For the benefit of my readers, I will de-

scribe the scene which followed. After her neighbors had left, Betsey Halsey stood looking at her husband, with an expression of intense disgust upon her face. For nearly five years matters had been growing worse, during which time she had worked early and late, to make amends for her husband's want of thrift.

"I'm not one of the crying kind," she had once said to Mrs. Allen, "and as for getting down on my knees to a drunkard and begging him to stop drinking, I'll not do it. I can't degrade myself in that way."

She neither scolded nor wept. She was a good, true wife, loving the man to whom she had been married, but despising a drunkard. Their children were getting old enough to understand the character of their father; but hers was a well regulated household, despite opposing influences, and the farm was well managed.

One thing was certain. Not a drop of liquor could remain on the premises. If Betsey Halsey suspected its presence she made

vigorous search until it was discovered. Not a hiding-place in barn, house, or cellar, escaped her, so that her husband was obliged to do his drinking away from home. He was not in the habit of getting drunk, but the night in question he was entirely unconscious.

"Something must be done," thought Betsey, and she went to the old well and drew three pails of water. These she placed beside her husband, and then looked from the door to be sure that no one was within hearing.

Coming back, she took up a pail and dashed its contents full in the face of the prostrate man. This roused him somewhat. He muttered, sputtered, and finally sunk down again. The second douche produced more effect. He sat up, rubbed his eyes, and looked around him. The shock of the third and last "brought him to his senses," and he sprang to his feet, shaking himself like a huge water dog.

"Bill Smith and Tim Allen brought you

home," said the wife, in reply to some angry ejaculations. "You were dead drunk, and, Robert Halsey, I can't put up with this any longer. I believe you are pretty well sobered now and you know I have done my best to keep the farm and house as it should be. I have worked hard; but I shan't do it for a drunkard, another day. Good-night."

This speech made by some women would have amounted to very little, but the man who heard it knew that his wife was not in the habit of talking for effect. It was equivalent to saying that she should leave him to his fate, unless he reformed. He had the night to consider upon it, and when morning came, his decision was made.

It was late when his wife made her appearance.

"Well, Robert, how is it?" she asked.

"I have done with drink forever, Betsey."

God be praised!" she exclaimed. "Then I have not worked in vain." And from that time not a drop of intoxicating liquor had passed the lips of Robert Halsey.

II.

Once the demon enters,
Stands within the door;
Peace, and hope, and gladness
Dwell there nevermore.

THIRTY-FIVE years previous to the events recorded in my first chapter, Weston Randolph had come to this village, and established himself as a lawyer.

The first year his business was only sufficient to meet his expenses. Everything moved slowly. There was no strongly contested "will case," in which, by one masterly plea he could rise to distinction; no doubtful titles to be established, and, indeed, little opportunity for sharp practice.

But he was shrewd, calculating, affable in his manners, and soon became a favorite with the people. He was honest and upright in

transactions of business; yet not over-scrupulous where the interests of his clients were concerned. Neither enthusiastic nor impulsive, he was not likely to speak or act rashly. A close observer of men and things, he knew how to adapt himself to circumstances, and make the most of them. In short, he was just the man to succeed in the place and position he had chosen.

About three years after he had commenced practice, the death of a lawyer in an adjoining town threw a large amount of business into his hands, and he soon became a leading man in the county. He bought a good farm, married an amiable, accomplished woman, and considered himself fairly started in life. He met his friends cordially, and entertained them with an old-fashioned hospitality, seating them at a well-furnished table, and pledging them in the purest Cogniac.

In those days there were few scruples in regard to the moderate use of intoxicating liquors. Clergymen and laymen alike regarded it, as at worst, a foolish practice.

Esquire Randolph was no exception to the rule, yet he was a firm believer in temperance.

He despised the man who neglected his business and "guzzled liquor" all day, while he had little sympathy for him who refused a social glass, upon the plea that he was "better off without it."

Years passed on. His business increased until it became burdensome, and he looked about for a suitable partner. William C. Vane, a young man who had just completed his course of study, was recommended, and after a short correspondence and two or three personal interviews, the terms of partnership were arranged.

In a month, the young lawyer appeared, and found a temporary home in the family of Esquire Randolph. The two presented a striking contrast. The elder gentleman was tall and somewhat heavily built, while the younger was but little above the medium height, with a form straight and lithe as that of an Indian.

In feature and expression they were as unlike as in figure. Looking upon William Vane, one would have said that nature had designed him for an artist or a poet, rather than a country lawyer. Then, too, he was abstemious in his habits. His finely strung, nervous organization needed no stimulant. He worked better without it; indeed, he could not work well with it,—a fact of which he seemed fully aware.

An enthusiastic lover of books and nature, he yet labored industriously in the office, arranging and copying the most tedious details of the most "tedious suits."

He made friends rapidly among old and young, rich and poor; and after a few months, became the owner of a desirable house, a short distance from the village.

Here, he installed a young lady as mistress, and felt that he had a permanent home.

"Just the wife for him," said Mrs. Randolph, returning from her first call upon the bride. "With tastes and sympathies so much alike, they cannot fail to be happy."

For a time they were very happy. There was no home where the love-light shone more brightly or more constantly. At the end of the second year of their marriage a babe lay cradled on the bosom of the wife, and the young husband rejoiced in the new relationship of father.

"Eugenia Winslow," he called his little daughter, in memory of the mother he had lost in early boyhood; but this somewhat stately name was, by common consent, abbreviated to "Genie Win."

Genie Win was a wonder of a baby, not only to her doting parents, but to Mrs. Randolph's five boys, who lavished praises and caresses upon her without measure. As she grew older, living in such an atmosphere of love and tenderness, she sung and sported all day long like some bright-winged bird.

But a cloud was gathering over that home; the husband and father had yielded to the influence of others, and no longer refused the social glass. "I don't wish to be singular," he said, in reply to the remonstrances

of his wife. "I only take a glass of wine occasionally with a friend. I hope you are not afraid of my becoming a sot."

She turned away with the great fear in her heart unspoken. Everything was against her. His habits had provoked many criticisms, and his partner congratulated him upon having thrown off the trammels of a "foolish notion."

As I have said, William Vane was a hard worker, and his close application to business, with the great effort necessary to control an over-stimulated brain, made visible inroads upon his health. Dr. Walton was consulted, but his remedies only increased the trouble. Some days he accomplished but little, and would work half the following nights to make amends for his remissness. All this time he was perfectly aware that he was doing himself a great injury, but, with the perversity so common in such cases, he refused to acknowledge it.

Twice every year, during the sessions of the county court, he resumed his habits of

abstinence, when neither entreaty nor ridicule could prevail upon him to put the glass to his lips. Too much was at stake, and neither to gratify fashion nor appetite would he sacrifice the reputation he had gained.

Strange infatuation that caused him, despite all this, to go on wasting his life and strength! And yet he was not a sot, perhaps not even a drunkard. Many a man drank twice as much liquor as he without seeming either to himself or his friends to be injured thereby. But it was apparent to all that his fine intellect was often clouded, and by none was this more plainly seen than by his wife.

She was not like Betsey Halsey. She could not attend to the duties of both house and office. She was so unhappy that it was with difficulty she forced herself to perform her home duties. Having trusted her husband implicitly, when he failed her the very ground seemed to sink beneath her feet. Her silent grief moved the heart of Mrs. Randolph to the most sincere pity, a feeling

she presumed to manifest only by an added tenderness of manner to Genie Win, who every day grew more beautiful and charming.

She was four years of age when she clapped her tiny hands with delight at the announcement that she had a baby brother. But this new life brought no joy to the mother's heart. Her babe was baptized with tears, and she sometimes thought it would be a blessed thing to die. The weeks that followed were weeks of such suffering and wretchedness that life was a burden.

The husband and father could not look upon all this without being deeply moved; but for a time it seemed only to make him more reckless. Wild, weird fancies tormented him, and he sometimes wandered off alone, and set himself resolutely to combat them. At last he was conscious of the chains that bound him. He was a slave to the appetite for strong drink, and never did tyrant goad and lash his victim with greater cruelty. Most bitter was his humili-

ation. Again and again he resolved to be free, but in every contest the demon who held sway over his life proved the stronger.

More and more of the office work devolved upon Esquire Randolph, who felt constrained to allude to the fact.

His partner made no attempt to deny or extenuate his fault.

"If you will have patience with me for one month, I will try what I can do," was his only reply to the man whose example and influence had well-nigh proved his destruction.

He went home to his wife, confessed his sin, acknowledged the ruin which threatened him, and implored her aid.

Gladly she responded. What would she not do to save her husband?

"But you must ask God's help, or you will fail," she said.

"Oh! that is what my mother taught me. My sainted mother! How far have I wandered from the path in which she led me!"

Strength came in answer to prayer, and as

time went by, in the oft renewed conflict the young lawyer came off conqueror. Abstaining from the use of all stimulants, he retrieved the reputation he had so nearly lost, and his home was once more the abode of happiness.

In the three years that followed he was conspicuous as one who never yielded his convictions of right, and who, at all times, consulted principle rather than feeling. Some might have thought him even stronger and better for the suffering through which he had passed; but he ever looked back with a shudder.

"If I could bear it all myself, my punishment would be light," he often said to his wife, as, looking upon their boy, his eyes, would fill with tears. "God grant I may live to restrain and counsel him!"

This dread of the future for his son was sometimes almost overpowering, and very early was the child taught lessons of self-control. The mother endeavored to combat what she considered a morbid fancy of her

husband, never doubting that, under his guidance, Clarence would realize their fondest hopes.

Alas for human wisdom! True it is that "man proposes and God disposes." William Vane was prostrated with a sudden and severe illness, that rendered him unconscious. Nothing could save him from death; but a lucid interval was mercifully given, in which he was able to speak some parting words to his wife and children. Then, as before, his anxiety was for Clarence, and his last words were a prayer that he might be saved from the sin which had darkened his whole life.

Eugenia was then eight years of age, and Clarence four. According to the expressed wishes of their father, their guardianship was committed to Esquire Randolph, who gladly accepted the trust. Under his judicious management, the property left by his partner had more than doubled in value, while the income had been amply sufficient to meet the wants of the family.

Genie had always been his especial pet

ever since when, a wee toddling thing, she had shouted with joy at his approach, and grieved at his departure. Clarence occupied a place in his heart second only to that of his own sons, and he looked upon the handsome, gifted boy with a father's pride. He had no fears for the future. The boy was smart, and that satisfied him.

Not so with the mother. It was apparent to her, while her son was yet very young, that he inherited a tendency to intemperance. In combating this, she could look for no assistance from his guardian, but in answer to direct appeal she received a promise that he would never place temptation in his way.

Mrs. Randolph sympathized with the mother. She knew, from her own observation, that there was cause for deep solicitude. As for her own sons, their father managed them, and she considered them safe, expecting that while conforming to the customs of society, they would become intelligent, enterprising men.

Mrs. Vane had found it necessary to take Eugenia into her confidence, and in order to

do this, was forced to recall some sad passages in the lives of her husband and herself.

"I will help you, mother," said the noble girl, even while her eyes were blinded with tears. "Clarence shall be saved; but don't tell him of father," she added.

From that time, she became her brother's constant companion, shared his sports, and even his labors. She interested herself in all his studies, and with her exuberant wit and fancy was always entertaining and attractive. Instead of lowering herself to his capacity, she had elevated him to her own standard, so that, when twelve years of age, he was as mature in thought and feeling as most boys at fifteen.

One morning, when he was about thirteen, he asked his mother's permission to join a fishing-party. Some boys from the academy proposed spending the day on a pond about two miles distant from the village. Mrs. Vane was willing he should go, but Genie urged him to give up the project and go with her the next week.

He would gladly go with her at any time ; but the excursion with his school-mates promised so much of pleasure, that he was unwilling to give it up. "I can stay at home, Genie, dear, but I wish very much to go," he said. "You know I love you better than all the world beside, except mother, and if you say so, I never'll go fishing in all my life."

Mrs. Vane chose that he should go. He could not be always with his sister, and there was certainly no harm in his spending a day on the pond. Even if he was exposed to temptation, he must sometime test the strength of his powers of resistance, and the trial might as well be made then as ever.

He went whistling down the walk, swinging his basket of lunch, and turned round at the gate to kiss his hand to Genie, who stood watching him earnestly. The morning was fully occupied, but the afternoon wore away slowly. Nothing seemed to interest the sister. Even her music, which was such a con-

stant resource, failed her, for once. She had been wishing for several days to find time to practise a new piece, but she was unable to fix her attention upon it.

Her mother having gone out, she had no one to criticise her movements, and she wandered restlessly about the house, looking often from the windows that opened in the direction of the pond. Later, when her mother returned, she succeeded in appearing somewhat at ease.

Towards evening, as they were expecting Clarence, one of the fishing-party, with whom Genie was well acquainted, came to the door. Without waiting to be summoned, she hastened to meet him. The name of her brother was the first word upon her lips.

"He is safe," was the reply to an eager question ; "but he acts strangely, and I thought I would come and tell you."

"Where is he?"

"At the pond."

"What did you have to drink there?" she asked, almost in a whisper.

"Cider, and" — He hesitated a moment.
"There was a bottle of wine."

"Did Clarence drink any?"

"The boys say that he did."

"Then, that's the trouble," she said.
"Can't he come home?"

"He can't walk, and refuses to ride."

"Then I will go to him. But first I must see mother."

Mrs. Vane, occupied in a remote part of the house, knew nothing of the conversation between her daughter and Selwyn Barnes. He came often to the house, and she was not surprised when Genie told her she was going to ride with him to the pond. "We shall take in Clarence, if we meet him," she said.

They did not meet him; but they found him seated upon the ground, and leaning against a tree, his face flushed, and his whole appearance indicating a state of partial intoxication. At sight of his sister, he covered his face with his hands.

She could have sat down beside him and wept; but it was no time for that.

"Clarence," she said, by a great effort mastering her emotion, "will you ride home with us?"

He shook his head without looking up.

"But you must, brother." She laid a hand upon his shoulder as she said this, and his companions walked away. "You must go home to mother. This is no place for you. It will soon be night."

Without speaking, he attempted to rise.

"God help us!" exclaimed Genie, as he fell back.

This was worse than Selwyn Barnes had expected; but he was strong, and believed he could manage the boy. Once in the carriage, he would be safe from observation until he reached home.

"Come, Clarence," he said cheerfully, "let me help you a little."

"Oh, don't let mother see me," sobbed the boy, without heeding the offer of assistance.

It was repeated, a friendly arm was thrown around him, and he stood upon his feet.

"I can't go home," he said, staring vacantly at his sister.

"You must," she replied decidedly, leading the way to the carriage. To get him seated in this was a work of some difficulty; but it was accomplished, and they drove towards home.

Not a word was spoken until they reached the gate. "I had better drive to the side-door," said Selwyn Barnes.

Genie sprang from the carriage, opened the gate, and ran forward to prepare her mother for the sad reception. A single sentence told all that was necessary; but Mrs. Vane scarcely heard it. She fainted, and was only saved from falling by her daughter, who succeeded in placing her upon the sofa, while Clarence was assisted to his room, where he was safely disposed of for the night.

"Can I do anything more for you, Genie?" asked Selwyn Barnes, as he met her at the foot of the stairs.

"Nothing," was the reply. "Mother is better now, and we shall do very well. I

thank you," she added, after a pause, "but I can never repay you."

The young man, for such he really was, being a year the senior of Eugenia Vane, was only too happy to have served her. He would gladly have offered sympathy and consolation, but the words died on his lips. "Clarence will be none the worse for this in the morning," he said, at length. "No one will think the less of him, and I'm sure it will never happen again."

He had enough of honor and manliness to keep the whole affair a profound secret; but the news had already spread through the village, and it was generally known that Clarence Vane had been "carried home drunk."

The blow had come sooner than was expected, and the mother found herself wholly unprepared to meet it. "What shall we do with Clarence in the morning?" she asked of her daughter.

"Talk to him seriously, and tell him the whole truth," was the prompt reply.

"But think of his mortification."

"He must bear that, mother. He has brought it upon himself."

Oh, the wretched morning that followed, when mother and daughter, rising from sleepless pillows, scarce dared to meet each other's gaze!

"It is time to call Clarence, Genie," said Mrs. Vane, when breakfast was nearly ready.

She lingered in the hall and on the stairs, delaying the painful meeting. A low knock upon the door of her brother's room elicited no response.

"Clarence, dear, may I come in?" she asked.

There was no reply; but the sister's quick ear caught the sound of half-stifled sobbing, and waited no longer.

"O Genie, can you ever forgive me?" he asked, as she clasped him in her arms.

"I can, and do," she replied; "but it will kill me if it happens again."

"It shall never happen again," he said in a voice of agony. "Does mother know?"

"Yes, brother, and she is waiting to see you."

They went down together. Clarence knelt at the feet of his mother, and implored her forgiveness.

Freely, lovingly, was it given, and the boy rose from his humble position.

"We'll not talk about it now, my son. There will be plenty of time this evening. Let us forget it until then."

They seated themselves at the table, but they could not forget.

"I cannot eat," said Clarence. "Do please excuse me, mother, and let me go away by myself."

Genie soon followed, and Mrs. Vane had no heart to remain alone. Some comfort was gained from the reading of the Scripture lesson. There was still hope for the future.

The family appeared in church that day, as usual. Genie would have it so. She knew they would be the objects of universal attention; but she knew, also, that a disagreeable position fairly met is more than half con-

quered, and nothing could be gained by seclusion. It was a severe trial to Clarence, but he accepted it as a part of his deserved punishment.

I will not detail the conversation of the evening. It is sufficient to say that the unfortunate boy was made to comprehend his danger, and to see that there was safety only in the most rigid abstinence.

On Monday morning the students of the academy were wondering in regard to Clarence Vane, and those who had expected some particular demonstration of feeling were surprised to see him chatting with Selwyn Barnes, as he walked leisurely down the street. His hat was lifted gracefully as ever, as he bowed to his teachers, and there was nothing in his appearance to indicate that anything unusual had occurred.

Do not suppose from this that the event of Saturday was forgotten. On the contrary, Clarence was painfully conscious of his disgrace, and it had seemed impossible to meet his companions that morning. Selwyn

Barnes called for him, and thus supported by the first scholar in school, he was able to pass the ordeal.

Of course, no one presumed to mention the affair in his presence, and, after a few days, it ceased to be mentioned at all.

He went through the term of school with great credit, and received the unqualified commendation of his teachers.

Still, his mother and sister watched him anxiously; and Dr. Hall, who was aware of this, improved a favorable opportunity while in conversation with his young friend, to introduce the subject of teetotalism.

The boy met him frankly, acknowledged his unfortunate appetite, and received just the advice which he needed. A mutual confidence was thus established between them, and Clarence was accustomed to quote the opinions of the doctor on all occasions.

Genie acquired the same habit, much to the annoyance of her guardian. The scene in the chamber of the Eagle House, when his authority was set aside, and the glass

dashed to the floor, roused his displeasure, and had it been possible for him to be really angry with his fair ward, this would have been sufficient provocation.

"It's all nonsense to make such a fuss about drinking a little brandy," he said to his wife. "Mrs. Vane and Genie seem insane upon the subject of temperance."

"I don't wonder at their anxiety," was the reply. "Mrs. Vane suffered enough to make any woman insane, and she knows that Clarence inherits his father's temperament."

This allusion was particularly disagreeable to the 'squire. He never understood the conduct of his partner, and refused to acknowledge that total abstinence was necessary, even in his case.

He was vexed that Dr. Hall should have presumed to interfere with Mr. Gore's arrangements, and, when they met in the evening, it cost him something of an effort to refrain from speaking of what was uppermost in his mind. His emotions during the conversation, in which Bill Smith bore so

conspicuous a part, can be better imagined than described.

In his opinion the Eagle House was a respectable hotel, and its landlord, a gentleman, pursuing a legitimate business. Dan Messer, he heartily despised, and considered his groggery the worst place in town.

This was true in one sense. It was frequented by the lowest drunkards, and no one was so poor or vile as to be excluded, provided only they had wherewith to pay for the poison dispensed from its bar. Yet the proprietor was accustomed to say that Gore helped him to a great deal of business, and he chuckled in his bachelor quarters over the prosperity of the landlord.

There was an awkward silence in Mrs. Vane's parlor after the doctor had taken his leave, and Esquire Randolph so far forgot himself as to commence pacing the floor nervously.

At a sign from her mother, Genie seated herself at the piano and commenced playing. Fred Randolph recovered his self-possession

sufficiently to compliment her, and Clarence called for his favorite Grand March.

"Bravo, Genie! you never played that half so well before," he exclaimed, coming to her side as she struck the last notes.

The eloquent face of the boy told how keenly sensitive he was to all outer influences. Well was it for him that the mother who watched him so anxiously was gifted with fine instincts and clear vision.

"Music has a wonderful effect upon you," said the 'squire.

"It has," was the reply. "My heart always keeps time with it; but when Genie plays that march, I feel like a conqueror waiting for his crown."

"A poetical idea, truly," said Fred Randolph. "But how is it when you play yourself?"

"The crown seems farther off."

"Strange boy, truly," thought his guardian. "I should hardly know what to do with him if he really belonged to me."

Often, during that evening, had Mrs.

Vane's heart been lifted to God in thankfulness, and she was glad to be left alone with her children, that she might give utterance to this emotion.

It was late when they retired; later still when they slept. Clarence was too much excited to close his eyes. His peril in the water would have been sufficient to engross his thoughts; but this seemed of little consequence in comparison with the still greater peril from which his sister had saved him. He did not wish or intend to drink the brandy, but its subtle fumes appealed to his senses, and he trembled as he remembered his weakness.

"Better die than drink it!" Words uttered in a moment of intense excitement, but he knew that they expressed the real sentiments of his sister.

Long before his usual time for rising, he went below stairs, threw open the windows, and looked out upon a landscape flushed with the first rays of the morning sun. Genie soon joined him, and they had a long con-

versation in regard to the events of the previous day.

"Mr. Gore will expect me to call upon Carl, to-day," said Clarence; "but I feel as though I could never go there again in my life, and I am sure mother don't wish to have me."

"I can go with you," said Genie, "and then mother will make no objections."

For once Mrs. Vane gave her consent that Clarence should call at the Eagle House. She had never allowed him even to go upon the piazza, and while most of the academy boys stopped there, on their way to and from school, he passed by on the other side.

"My guardian angel goes with me," he said, playfully, throwing an arm around his sister. "By the way, Genie, you had better give Fred Randolph a little sisterly advice. He goes to the Eagle House pretty often."

"I am sorry for it," was the quiet reply, but I have no influence."

"Other people don't agree with you. I heard" —

"Don't talk nonsense, brother," she said, a little impatiently, just as the young gentleman in question passed them with uplifted hat, and a pleasant "good-morning."

"Handsome, isn't he, Genie?"

"Perhaps so," was the absent reply.

"Any way he saved my life, and I owe him something for that."

"So you do, Clarence. I had almost forgotten it. We must all thank him for that."

Dr. Hall saw the brother and sister coming, and waited at the door to speak to them.

"Come in," he said, cordially. "Annie is busy now, but she'll be at liberty soon."

"We can't stop this morning, doctor," said Genie. "We are going to see Carl Gore."

"But I must see Clarence. A little pale this morning," he said, looking steadily at his young friend. "Guess you didn't sleep much last night."

"Not a wink, doctor, and I feel now, as though I should never sleep again."

"You'll change your mind before midnight comes round. I prescribe a sleeping potion in the shape of a long ride." I am going to consult with another physician, about ten miles from here, this afternoon, and shall be glad to have you go with me."

While the doctor was prescribing for Clarence, Genie had found the lady of the house. and there was danger of her forgetting the object for which she had left home.

"I must go now," she said, at length, as her brother called her.

Eugenia and Clarence Vane had only entered the hall of the Eagle House, when Mr. Gore met them with extended hands, and welcomed them most cordially.

"Carl has been talking about you all the morning," he said, as he led the way to the sitting-room, where the boy lay, bolstered up upon a couch.

He was looking pale and haggard, not much like "a little Dutchman," as his father was accustomed to call him.

As Clarence entered the room, he sprang up and cried out, —

"How good you were to go down into that dreadful place after me! Mother told me all about it. Were you afraid?" he asked, without waiting for a reply to his first exclamation.

"I was afraid you would be drowned; and you came very near it."

"I know. Mother told me all about it," again said the boy, as he lay back upon the pillows.

By this time, Genie was seated, and Mrs. Gore came into the room. It was the first time she had received a call from one of Mrs. Vane's family, and she expressed her gratification frankly, while she renewed her thanks to Clarence.

Carl held his hand and talked constantly. The little fellow had a loving heart, and was anxious to make some suitable expression of his gratitude. "Please, mother, give Clarence some of my wine," he said, and, before

Clarence had time to reply, decanter and glasses were placed upon the table.

"Excuse me, Mrs. Gore," he said, "but I never drink wine."

"Never!" she repeated in a tone of surprise. "But you surely will drink some this morning with Carl?" and she proceeded to fill the glasses.

"It is good, Clarence," said the boy, earnestly. "I know you'll like it, if you only take a little taste."

"But I can't take a little taste," was the reply.

"I want you to drink with me. I thought you would," continued Carl. "Won't you?"

"No, Carl, you must not ask me to do that."

Mrs. Gore had no better success with the sister, and, after all, Carl was obliged to drink his wine alone.

"You will feel better now, darling," said the mother, as she took the empty glass.

"Yes, it always makes me feel better," was the child's reply.

The call was no longer than civility required, and when Eugenia Vane went out of that house, she resolved that her brother should never enter it again, if she could prevent it.

"O Genie," he said, when they were quite by themselves, "why will people urge me to drink wine? It is so hard to refuse."

"Think how much harder it would be to yield and make us all so wretched."

"So it would, Genie, dear. I will try never to forget that. I must talk with the doctor about it. He always helps me."

The long ride that afternoon furnished a good opportunity for the talk, and Clarence was made stronger to resist temptation by the counsel he received.

The doctor's route was by the house of Tim Allen, and after he was quite past he heard a woman's voice, calling upon him to stop.

"No more trouble, I hope, Mrs. Halsey," he said, as he recognized his acquaintance of the previous night.

"The trouble is with Mrs. Allen, now," was the reply. "She has a severe headache, and seems feverish. Tim has gone to the shop. I told him I'd stay with his wife."

Mrs. Allen was in a worse condition than she or her neighbor had thought. There was every reason to fear a severe sickness. "I'll see Mr. Allen as I go along," said the doctor. "He may prefer to send for Dr. Walton."

"He'll get a piece of my mind if he does," replied Betsey Halsey. "I know just how things will go, and Tim will be drunk within a week."

"Guess not," was the laconic reply.

When Dr. Hall drove up to the blacksmith's shop, Tim Allen was trying to shoe some oxen, and very poor business he made of it. His hands trembled like those of an old man, and the owner of the oxen was obliged to do most of the work.

"Mrs. Halsey asked me to call and see your wife," said the doctor. "She will probably have a fever. I thought I would tell

you, so that you can send for your family physician at once."

This information was given in the least possible time, and the speaker drove off, leaving the blacksmith pale with affright. Recovering from his surprise, he shouted to the doctor at the top of his voice, and desired him to return.

"Are you going back?" asked Clarence.

"I think I must," was the reply as the horse was turned. "What's wanted, Mr. Allen?"

"I want you to go back and see to my wife. For God's sake, don't let her die," he added in an undertone.

"That would be rather bad for you just at this time," was the consoling reply. "I'll do the best I can."

The second call at the house was somewhat longer than the first, and all necessary directions were given for the treatment of the sick woman. Tim Allen stood at the door of his shop when the doctor drove past, but he received no attention.

"I can see him when I come back," was the reply to Clarence's expression of surprise.

It was late in the evening when Dr. Hall reached home, and then only to find that he must ride still farther before allowing himself time to rest. "You'll not lie awake to-night if you are half so sleepy as I am," he said on parting from his young companion.

"I shall sleep if I can only forget my danger."

"Danger!" repeated the doctor. "Never talk of danger, Clarence, when everything depends upon your own decision. With God's help you will come off conqueror."

Left alone, the boy bowed his head reverently, and uttered the petition, which should be often upon all human lips, "Lead us not into temptation."

III.

No rest for the drunkard's wife,
No respite from sin and sorrow;
Each day of a wretched life
But heralds a darker morrow.

SUMMER had passed. The hoar frost lay thick upon the crisp, brown grass, and the leafless trees stood like grim sentinels against a leaden November sky.

This month, so often stigmatized as "saddest of all the year," was, indeed, the gladdest; for the earth had yielded richly of its abundance, filling storehouse and granary with plenty for man and beast.

"We've had a glorious harvest," said one farmer to another, as he threw open the wide barn-doors, revealing the heavy shocks of corn, piled to the very eaves. "I never saw

such a sight as that in my barn before. There'll be work in husking, this year."

Merry work, too, it proved, as the glad strains of "Harvest Home" echoed and re-echoed among the time-stained rafters. "No danger of hunger this winter. Enough and to spare," were the words upon every tongue.

Yet there *was* danger of hunger in some homes, where poverty was a sin,—drunkards' homes, where was no comfort for the present, and no provident care for the future.

One such home I will describe; not because it was more wretched than many another, but because the culture and refinement of its inmates made the wretchedness more conspicuous. The place was known as the "Ruggles Farm," and was situated about two miles from the Eagle House. Early in the spring, a Mr. Hosford, having rented the house and a few acres of land, moved there with his family, consisting of a wife and four children. He was a young man,—not more than thirty-five years of age,—and though plainly dressed, gave unmistakable proofs of

having seen better days. Mrs. Hosford was evidently accustomed to good society, and in taste and good-breeding was much superior to her neighbors. The children were well-behaved, good scholars, and somewhat remarkable for their strong mutual attachment, which was manifested on all occasions.

The ground of Mr. Hosford was as well prepared and as early planted as that of any farmer about him. This being done, he found time to do an occasional day's work for others, when his application and goodwill made amends for an evident want of skill, which is gained only by long-continued practice.

Wherever he went he attracted attention by refusing to taste liquor of any kind, not even making an exception in favor of cider, the universal New England beverage.

"I don't exactly know what to make of him," said the wife of a farmer for whom he worked. "He is a gentleman without dressing like one, and he looks entirely out of place when he comes in with the other men."

After a time the story became current that Mr. Hosford was a broken-down merchant, and some said that he had been a hard drinker; but this was not easily credited.

Two or three women, noted for their "inquiring turn of mind," took their knitting and went to spend an afternoon with his wife, hoping to learn something in regard to the antecedents of the family.

But in this they were disappointed, as was manifest by the dissatisfaction expressed on their way home.

"Miss Hosford's a mighty close woman," said one; "I thought I'd cornered her two or three times, but she slipped out of it easy as could be, and I don't know no more about her than I did before."

"I know one thing," was the reply; "she's the best hand with her needle I ever see, and she's promised to cut and make my new silk."

"Well," broke in the third, "I guess they're poor enough by the looks of her table. Only one kind of cake, and not even a piece of

cheese to eat with the bread and butter. I asked her to make me a visit, and I mean to show her what I call a good supper. I wonder what the children had to eat."

Her curiosity would have been gratified had she looked into Mrs. Hosford's kitchen, where the four children were eating corn-bread and milk with evident relish.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hosford was noticed by some of the more intelligent men of the village. Esquire Randolph met him accidentally, as he was passing the farm, entered into conversation with him, and found, to his surprise, that he was a graduate of a New England college, and had once commenced the study of law.

The 'squire took advantage of every opportunity to cultivate the acquaintance thus commenced, and called at the Ruggles Farm with his wife. Mr. Hosford was absent from home, but Mrs. Hosford met them cordially and entertained them pleasantly. No apology was made for the work which covered her table, and which had been laid aside at the

entrance of her guests. The children were seated near the house, under the shade of a large tree; the older ones engaged in braiding straw, while the younger braided grass, in imitation of their sisters.

"What a sad face the oldest girl has!" said Mrs. Randolph to her husband, as they rode away. "Her mother says she is only ten years old, but she looks as though she had seen a great deal of sorrow for a child of that age."

"I didn't notice her particularly," was the squire's reply. "I was looking at the boy. He is the very image of his father."

"And Hattie looks like her mother. They must be poor," she added, after a pause.

"I suspect they are," replied her husband. "There seemed to be nothing superfluous about the house, and I heard some one remark that Mrs. Hosford is very glad to do any kind of sewing for her neighbors. The children seemed industrious."

"Too industrious for such children," said Mrs. Randolph; "and I couldn't help think-

ing, as I looked at them, that they are too old for their years. Not because they are bold or forward, but their faces have a mature look."

This call was made the last of June, just as haying had commenced, and, for the next few weeks, everybody in this farming community was busy in securing the heavy crop of grass. Mr. Hosford worked constantly. Early and late was he in the hay-field. The heat of the sun was almost unendurable; but he steadily refused to drink either rum, whiskey, or gin; and this was done with such dignity that few presumed to urge him.

"You'll give out, some day," said one of the men with whom he worked. "It takes something stronger than tea and coffee to get a man through haying."

"When I can't work on that, I'll stop," was the decided reply.

There came a day when he did stop. A large quantity of grass was down, and nearly ready for the barn, when signs of rain appeared; and Mr. Ellis, for whom Mr. Hos-

ford was at work, urged his men to the greatest exertions. The air was heated as by a huge furnace, and one after another of the workmen, fairly panting for breath, declared they could do no more.

Only the "tea and coffee man" remained at his post, and the last load of hay was being driven from the field by his employer when he sank down, utterly exhausted.

The first drops of rain had fallen when the hoofs of the oxen rang upon the barn-floor, and Mr. Ellis looked back for his companion. Not seeing him, he sprang from his high position, released the tired animals, and went to the field.

Here he found Mr. Hosford stretched upon the ground, apparently unconscious. Fortunately, as the farmer thought, a jug, which had been forgotten, was standing near, and, upon examination, he found it contained a few drops of liquor. This was administered, and, after a few struggles, the suffering man drew a long breath, and closed his lips tightly.

By this time a daughter of Mr. Ellis had reached the field in answer to a call from him as he was hastening on, and she was sent to bring water from the brook that flowed near. By a liberal application of this, Mr. Hosford was so far restored, that, after a few minutes, he was able, with the assistance of Mr. Ellis, to reach the house.

Here, he was offered a glass of brandy, which he did not refuse.

"Had to come to it at last," said one of the men in a low tone to a companion. "I knew how 'twould be. The only wonder is he held out so long."

It rained heavily until nearly night; and then, contrary to his usual custom, Mr. Hosford seemed in no haste to go home. After he started he stopped frequently, and paused even on the threshold of his own door. He entered the room where his wife was sewing, with a hesitating step, which caused her to look up quickly.

"God pity me!" she exclaimed, after a

moment's scrutiny of his face, and bowed her head upon the table before her.

"O John, is it possible you have broken your pledge again?" she asked, after a long silence.

"I drank a glass of brandy as medicine," he replied; but he knew that he was uttering a falsehood, for he had drank the brandy, not because his health, but his appetite, demanded it.

Small consolation was this to his wife; and when she resumed her sewing, it was with a heavy heart and weary hands.

"Don't work any more to night, Susan," said her husband. "You are tired enough now."

"I am tired," was the reply; "but before you came in I had not thought of fatigue."

"May I tell you all about it?" he asked, drawing his chair to her side.

"Yes, tell me," she said, looking him full in the face.

An account of the day's work was given, with its attendant circumstances.

"But, John, it was not necessary for you to drink the brandy," said Mrs. Hosford, as her husband concluded his narration. "I am sorry you did that."

"I am sorry, too, wife; but you need not fear for the future. It is the last time."

"The last time!" How often had she trusted those words, only to find that she had been cruelly deceived! What wonder that she now received them coldly, and turned from him who uttered them!

He might sleep that night, but she could not. Sitting alone, she sewed until the work fell from her nerveless hands. She opened her Bible and read, then went out and gazed upon the star-spangled sky, wondering if there was rest for her this side of heaven.

The next day passed wearily. Mr. Hosford was from home, and his wife found it impossible to employ herself as usual. But when he returned early in the evening, and met her without hesitation, she knew that he had been true to himself.

The next week, it was necessary for him

to go to the village on business, and here he met Esquire Randolph, who invited him to go into the Eagle House and discuss the news.

He declined at first, offering as an excuse his want of time; but this was not accepted, and, after considerable hesitation, he for the first time entered the hotel, and was introduced to the smiling landlord.

"If my office was not so far away, I should have invited Mr. Hosford there," said the squire.

"I am very glad it is no nearer," was the bland reply, as the door was thrown open to an apartment adjoining the bar-room, and the gentlemen invited to enter. It was just the place for a pleasant gossip, and a quiet discussion of news.

Mr. Gore understood his business too well to intrude, but, after a few minutes, he returned and placed some wine upon the table. Esquire Randolph filled the glasses, and set one before his companion, while he continued

the conversation, sipping occasionally from his own glass.

"You have not tasted your wine," he said at length to Mr. Hosford.

"I seldom drink wine," was the evasive reply.

"You certainly will not refuse to drink to our better acquaintance," said the squire, in a confident tone. "I am a temperance man, but I think an occasional glass of wine good for the health of both mind and body."

The tempted man thought for a moment of wife and children, but he yielded, and went out of that room with the painful consciousness that he had again perjured himself.

Mrs. Hosford had made unusual preparations for supper that evening, and for once the children were not to eat bread and milk. They were somewhat impatient, but "Not till father comes," was the mother's reply to their repeated inquiries. When the head of "Old Dobbin" was seen through the trees, they ran into the house to announce the fact,

and then hastened to assist in unloading the wagon.

Mr. Hosford had been generous in his outlay that afternoon, and brought home many comforts to which his family had long been unaccustomed. After the supper was eaten and complimented, he employed himself out of doors until late in the evening.

Having escaped the observation of his family in this instance of indulgence, he ventured again to yield to the solicitations of his companions, and the clamorous demands of his appetite. Whenever he was in the village, he visited the Eagle House, where he was sure to meet a cordial reception and congenial company. His presence in the bar-room was considered quite an attraction; and, flattered by the attentions he received, his visits became more frequent.

Of course he did not go there and make himself singular by refusing to patronize the bar. He gradually became one of Mr. Gore's best customers, neglecting his home duties, and leaving his wife and children to

provide for themselves. His earnings were spent for his own gratification, and he was so often idle that these hardly sufficed to meet the demands made upon them.

His wife watched his downward course almost in silence, redoubling her own exertions. She had become quite popular as a dress-maker, and had more work crowded upon her than she could well perform. She was needed, too, out of doors. The crops, that had so amply repaid the labor bestowed upon them, must be secured from the frost. Her husband failed to do this, and, with the aid of her children, she attempted the additional labor.

He must have been mortified when he saw this; but who ever knew the mortification of a drunkard to work any good results? He must have remembered when he had stood at the altar with his bride, promising to love and cherish her through life; but what are such vows to the drunkard? What cares a drunkard for the suffering and degradation of his family? Mr. Hosford, educated and

refined as he really was, proved no exception to the brutalizing effects of intoxicating drinks. He was as regardless of the happiness of his wife and children as the coarsest, most illiterate man could have been. Yet he managed to maintain a tolerably respectable appearance, and, though rarely sober, was never seen absolutely intoxicated. For this he was indebted to his wife, who preferred that he should drink at home, if he must drink at all, and many a night she plied the needle while he slept the heavy, unnatural sleep of the drunkard.

Mrs. Hosford was a proud woman, too proud to parade her sufferings or the faults of her husband. She had neighbors who would gladly have assisted her; but she would neither ask the assistance nor acknowledge the need.

Apples and vegetables were easily disposed of, for the children could do much in garden and orchard. But there was a fine piece of corn that had stood uncut quite too long; and when she mentioned it to her husband, he

gruffly told her, if she wanted the corn, she might harvest it herself. She had not thought this possible; but under the circumstances she resolved to try what she could do. She chose a moonlight night, when she considered herself in no danger of being observed, to make her first experiment, and succeeded far better than she had expected. Not in one night or two was this accomplished, but at last, after much labor, the corn was cut. Then it must be carried into the barn; and she hoped her husband could be persuaded to attend to that.

"You've begun the job, and you may finish it," was the only reply he vouchsafed.

He was very angry when he said that, — angry because his wife had refused to let him have money, which she well knew would be worse than wasted.

"No, John Hosford," she said, "I have earned what money I have, and I will keep it for myself and children. You can drink up your own earnings, but you shall never again drink mine."

Mr. Hosford was going to the village, and the money, could he have obtained it, was to be paid to Mr. Gore. His brandy-flask was empty, and must be replenished. He had never asked for credit at the bar of the Eagle House; but, for once, he resolved to do it. The landlord was happy to oblige him, and the first charge was placed against his name. Then he went home and drank worse than usual, terrifying his children, who fled from his presence.

Nothing could be hoped from him, and his wife resolved that the corn should go into the barn. She waited that evening until her children were asleep, and then took a wheelbarrow to the field. She found much difficulty in loading the corn, still more in carrying it, and only the imperative "must" caused her to persevere.

But help came from an unexpected source. Dr. Hall was passing the Ruggles Farm, on his return from a late visit, when his curiosity was excited by seeing a woman in the field. Looking closely, he felt sure that it was Mrs.

Hosford carrying shocks of corn in a wheelbarrow. He did not need to be told the reason of this. He understood it instantly.

To ride on, and leave that woman at work there, alone in the moonlight, was more than he could do; and, without stopping to think how awkward would be the meeting, he went towards her. She recognized him, and, thankful that it was "only the doctor," experienced a feeling of relief.

"This is a late hour to work," he said, quite at a loss how to commence the conversation.

"All hours are alike to a drunkard's wife," she replied, with bitter emphasis.

"But you need rest," he continued.

"There is no rest for a drunkard's wife."

"Is this the only way your corn can be harvested?" asked the doctor.

"My husband will not do it, and I will not ask the assistance of my neighbors. I cut it myself." Noticing her companion's look of astonishment, she continued, "I have done nearly all kinds of work within the last five

years; but this is new to me, and I am almost discouraged."

"Let me wheel this to the barn, and tomorrow morning I will come over early, with a wagon, and take care of the rest."

"I thank you, but that would make me a world of trouble," said the wretched woman. "My husband would be angry, and, besides, I'm too proud to have it talked of."

The doctor considered. He had seen a lumber wagon by the side of the road, not far from there, and he proposed to harness his horse to it, and do the work that night. Despite Mrs. Hosford's objections, he proceeded to execute his plan, and the corn was safely housed.

"I cannot express my thanks, but I know God will bless you," she said. "I shall never forget this kindness. I thought I was utterly forsaken."

"I would gladly assist you still more," replied the doctor. "I intend to do good as I have opportunity; but this was wholly unexpected."

"If any one could induce Mr. Gore to refuse my husband liquor, there would be some hope for him."

"I will go to him. He considers himself under some obligation to me, and it is possible that I may succeed. At any rate, I will try."

A ray of hope cheered the heart of the drunkard's wife, as she kneeled that night in prayer, and, when the morning dawned, she rose and went about her daily toil with something like cheerfulness.

Dr. Hall, mindful of his promise, made an early call upon Mr. Gore, and, finding him alone, proceeded at once to state his business.

"Mr. Gore, I have come to desire you to sell no more liquor to Mr. Hosford."

The landlord was confounded; and had the speaker been any other man in town, it is probable that he would have been shown to the door without ceremony. But Mr. Gore had a memory if not a conscience, and it was impossible for him to treat the doctor with rudeness.

"If Mr. Hosford comes to me and wants anything in my line, how shall I answer him?" he asked, after some hesitation.

"Tell him he cannot have it."

"And if I refuse him, why not others?"

"You *should* refuse others. Indeed, you ought to close your bar at once and forever."

"What if I should tell you that you ought to give up the practice of your profession?"

"I should ask you why I ought to give it up?" replied the doctor.

"So I ask you why I should give up my business?"

This was a very inconsiderate remark of Mr. Gore, and he regretted it as soon as made; still more when it was answered.

"Because you are ruining the souls and bodies of men, making homes wretched, and beggaring innocent women and children."

The landlord winced under this direct charge. "You are severe, doctor," he at last found voice to say.

"Facts are severe. You are engaged in

making drunkards, — the vilest business under heaven."

The speaker was getting excited, but he spoke only the truth. Mr. Gore felt obliged to say something, and he took refuge in his respectability.

"I make drunkards!" he exclaimed, in a tone of well-feigned horror. "I keep a respectable house, and never allow drunkards on my premises."

"I know you never have such miserable-looking wretches in your bar-room as are seen at Dan Messer's; but most of those men have once been your customers."

This was stoutly denied, but the doctor repeated such a catalogue of names as made denial absurd, and the landlord was only anxious to close the interview as quickly and as quietly as possible.

"Well, doctor," he said, with a sickly smile, "I'm afraid we never shall think alike about this matter, and, after all, each one has a right to his own opinion."

"No, Mr. Gore, I cannot accept that last

conclusion. No one has a right to entertain an erroneous opinion. But what of Mr. Hosford?"

"I can make no pledges in regard to him."

"And this is what I shall tell his wife," said the doctor, in a tone of disappointment.

Mr. Gore was getting impatient, as was manifested by his reply.

"You can tell her whatever you please," he said. "And, according to my ideas, she had better attend to her own affairs, and not interfere with her husband's business. He is a gentleman, and seems fully capable of taking care of himself."

"A gentleman!" repeated the doctor, with scorn. "He might be if he would let liquor alone. As it is, his wife is obliged to attend both to his business and her own. She is a lady, and does not need to be told what is proper. Good-morning, sir."

"What has happened?" asked Mrs. Hall, as her husband strode into the sitting-room, where she was busily engaged.

"I've been to the Eagle House, and I believe I'm somewhat vexed," was the reply. "Everybody is ready to cry out against Dan Messer. Even Esquire Randolph and Dr. Walton do that, while they consider Mr. Gore a gentleman, engaged in a legitimate business. But, in my opinion, Bill Smith was right in his estimate of the two men. I know I am excited," he continued, in reply to a mute appeal from his wife, "but I have seen and heard enough, during the last twenty-four hours, to excite any man who has a heart."

When Esquire Randolph made his morning call at the hotel, the landlord entertained him with a recital of the conversation between Dr. Hall and himself.

"The young doctor is getting quite too presuming," was the reply. "As for Hosford, I'm afraid he isn't quite so temperate as he ought to be; but I don't know as you are to blame for that."

Not one thought had the speaker that he was "to blame" for the sin of the man whose

ruin he so cruelly discussed. "Only a glass of wine! Any man is a fool who can't drink that without injury."

It may be, but there are many such men; ay, and women too.

If Mr. Gore had the least idea of complying with the doctor's request, he was sure not to do so after he had consulted with his friend, the 'squire. Mr. Hosford had no difficulty in obtaining what brandy he desired, so long as the charges against him did not exceed the value of property he was known to possess. The landlord knew there were a good cow, and a few tons of hay, at the Ruggles Farm, that could be easily transferred to his barn. What business was it of his that wife and children suffered?

The face of Hattie Hosford grew paler, and the look of sadness deepened, while she braided straw still more industriously. "And we shall lose this cow," she said to her mother. "Father always sells the cow when"—

The child could not finish the sentence,

and there was no need. The mother knew that her husband was a debtor to Mr. Gore, and that, when the day for settlement came, everything would be sacrificed. The money with which the cow had been bought was given her by some friends, who wished to "help the family start in a new place," and if this went, there seemed no way to provide food for her children.

Poor Hattie wept in anticipation of the calamity. "What shall we do, then?" she asked.

"Trust God, my darling," was the mother's reply.

"But, if he's so good, I shouldn't think he'd let father be so wicked. I ask him not to, every day, but it don't do any good."

This problem puzzles older and wiser heads. No wonder that the child's faith staggered. Grieving and working, her health at last gave way. The simple remedies failed of their usual effect, and Dr. Hall was called in. He was interested in his little patient, and tried to engage her

in cheerful conversation. But this was impossible. She could think only of their troubles, and her anxiety to get well, so that she could work.

Fortunately, the father was absent; and, in conversing with Mrs. Hosford, the doctor, with the utmost delicacy, alluded to her circumstances.

"We certainly have no luxuries," she said in reply. "But I should be thankful, if I was sure of our present comfort. Thanks to you, there is corn in the barn, if my husband will attend to having it ground; so that we can live so long as we have a cow. But that will probably go for debt, and winter is at hand."

Gladly would the doctor have assisted her, but he could think of no way in which to do it. "I'll ask Annie," he said to himself.

She was fertile in expedients, and he hoped she could suggest some way by which the cow could be kept for the use of the family. With a promise to call again the next morning, he took his leave. He had not ridden

far, when he met Mr. Hosford, and stopped to talk with him. "I have just come from your house," he said.

The man he addressed was sober, but disinclined to conversation. Nothing daunted, however, he proceeded. "I found your oldest child quite sick. There is some danger of a fever."

This arrested the father's attention. "I didn't know she was sick," he said. "I hope it will prove nothing serious."

"I hope so too," was the reply. "If she was more cheerful, there would be little to fear; but she seems unnaturally depressed. I am inclined to think she has worked too hard. Such children ought not to be confined too closely; and your Hattie, especially, needs tender care."

As the doctor said this, he touched his horse with the whip, and was soon out of sight, while Mr. Hosford stood as if rooted to the ground. He considered what he should do. He had been to the Eagle House and was returning home. For a moment

he was moved to dash from him the poison which he carried, and make one more effort to be free.

The flask was in his hand. In another moment his good intentions would have been carried out; but some demon tempted to delay.

"Well, Hosford, had the Temperance doctor down to your house, haint you?"

Mr. Hosford turned to see who thus addressed him; and, as he did so, replaced the flask in his pocket.

"He just told me he had been there," was the cool reply.

"Shouldn't think you'd patronize him. He aint one of our sort of folks."

The speaker, Bill Magoon, was one of the lowest drunkards in town. To be thus familiarly addressed by him was more than Mr. Hosford could bear; and he walked rapidly away.

"Needn't feel so grand 'cause he's college-larnt," said the ignorant man. "He aint no better'n the rest of us."

"No better!" He was immeasurably worse,

sinning as he did against greater light, and desecrating nobler powers.

Before he reached home his anxiety for his child was lost in a feeling of anger that Dr. Hall had been called without his advice. He was very glad the brandy was safe, and took a taste to satisfy himself that it was all right.

Some thoughts of payment for this and other like luxuries would intrude themselves upon him; but he put them aside with the reflection that "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

It proved more than sufficient for his family. He slammed the door, as he entered the house, ordering the children to "get away from the stove, and find something to do." Then in a loud voice he called for Harriet.

"She is sick to-day," was the reply of Susie, the second girl.

"Where is your mother?"

"Upstairs, with Hattie," was the reply.

Muttering to himself, he took the flask from his pocket, and put it to his lips.

At sight of this the children rose to leave the room, but he commanded them to "sit down."

By this time Mrs. Hosford came downstairs, and, seeing the terror of the children, said, "You can go up into Hattie's room, now, if you will be very still."

Before their father could speak they had availed themselves of the privilege, and the door was closed behind them.

"What is that for?" he asked angrily.

"They can be comfortable there," was the reply.

The husband had sense enough to know that it was no time to assert his authority, and wisely kept silence. Presently, his head began to droop, and he staggered to the bed, which, under the circumstances, was the best thing he could do.

Then, Mrs. Hosford went upstairs, and found her children as happy as they could be while "dear Hattie" was sick.

The fire on the hearth threw a cheerful glow over the little room and its scanty furniture. Even Hattie's face lighted up as she watched the dancing of the flames.

"We're going to stay here all day, aint we, mother?" said Mary.

"I don't want to go downstairs, again, never," said Johnny, the youngest of the flock.

"You'll want some supper," said the mother.

"I don't care for supper," was the unhesitating reply. But when evening came, Johnny's appetite returned, and he ate his bread and butter with a good relish.

Few words were spoken during supper, and when it was over the children crept noiselessly upstairs. A cup of weak tea and some nice cracker toast were carried to Hattie, but she could not eat.

Mr. Hosford slept, and no effort was made to rouse him. At length the children, too, slept; but the mother kept her lonely vigils, working industriously. Past midnight! But

what mattered it? She had learned by bitter experience that "all hours are alike to a drunkard's wife."

Hattie moaned and tossed restlessly upon her bed; then started up in wild affright. "I thought father was here," she said in reply to her mother's questions. "I am sure I can hear him now," she added, after a few minutes of silence.

This time it was no dream, and Mrs. Hosford went down. "Why don't you have a light here?" growled her husband. "No fire either, and I'm half-starved. About time to have supper, I should think."

"You had better look at the clock," said the wife.

"Who cares for the clock? I don't. I want some supper."

Just then, the faithful old time-keeper struck two. "Two o'clock in the morning!" he exclaimed. "I don't believe it. Anyway, I want some supper. Give me something better than slops," he said, as a bowl of bread and milk was placed upon the table.

"Pity if there isn't anything better than that in the house."

"It is a pity, John Hosford; but as you are the only one to blame, you have no reason to find fault."

At this, he ordered his wife to leave the house, and, as she did not obey, opened the door and thrust her out into the cold and darkness. Hattie, listening at the head of the stairs, heard this, and, without stopping to consider what might be the result to herself, groped her way down. "O father," she cried, "don't leave mother out there! Do let her come in. She'll freeze."

An oath was the only reply to this appeal, as the door was again opened and the child thrust out with the mother. "Now take care of yourselves," said the brutal man. A search was then made in the pantry, but nothing was found to satisfy his appetite, and he had recourse to the brandy. Without this his heart might have relented; as it was, he went once to the door, but, seeing no one, turned back and was soon quiet.

All this was known to the wife, who watched to see what would be the fate of the younger children. Hattie she had wrapped in a large woollen shawl, worn by herself during the night, and, thus protected, carried her to the barn. There she laid her down in the hay while she returned to the house.

Satisfied that there was nothing more to fear from her husband at present, she tried the door, but it was securely fastened. Not able to find entrance here, she went through the shed. All was still, and, leaving the door ajar, she retraced her steps.

"Mother," said a feeble voice, "do stay with me. It is so lonely here."

"I am going to carry you back to the house now."

"I don't want to go. I'm afraid of father."

"There is no reason to be afraid of him now; he is on the bed."

"Is he fast asleep?" asked the child.

"I think so, and we can go in without being heard."

"Then I'll go; but let me walk. It will tire you to carry me."

The mother did not feel her burden, and the child was soon in her chamber. The fire on the hearth had no charms for her then, and she almost feared to breathe lest her father should hear. The hours of the terrible night wore slowly away and the daylight was gladly welcomed.

"I dreamed of Mr. Hosford's family all night," said Annie Hall to her husband that morning. "I am sure there is something wrong, and I hope you will call there early."

"It is not strange that you dreamed of them, my dear, after all that was said. There is always something wrong where the husband and father is a drunkard. I've no doubt Hosford had some kind of liquor when I met him yesterday. Gore will sell to him as long as he dresses decently, and there is any prospect that his bill will be paid."

"Do you suppose he has drank up the cow yet?" asked the wife.

"I think not," was the reply. "The cow

is a valuable one. Have you devised any plan to keep the animal in the family?"

"None; unless you can get some claim upon it yourself. If you could carry some groceries to Mrs. Hosford and have the cow made over to you as security for the pay, that would do very well. I'm not enough of a lawyer to explain it very clearly but—"

"I understand you perfectly. I never thought of that plan. I can try, but you must remember that I have a different man from Tim Allen to deal with. Suppose you go over with me and see what you can do."

Leaving all necessary orders with Jake, the boy who attended to calls in-doors and out, Mrs. Hall prepared for her ride. It was early to make a professional call, but no apologies were required.

Hattie was decidedly worse. "She seems to have taken cold," said the doctor. "Has she been out of the room?"

"I am sorry to say that she has," was Mrs. Hosford's reply.

"And I am sorry to hear it," was the quick

rejoinder. "I thought you knew how much depended upon good care."

"Mother does take good care of me," said the child. "She couldn't help my going out."

While the doctor was making his visit in the sick-room, Mrs. Hall had gathered the children around her in the kitchen, and was relating what they considered a very interesting story, when their father appeared from an adjoining bedroom. Instantly every child sprang to the stairway, leaving the visitor alone with the cause of their terror.

He was evidently unprepared for the meeting, and, in his confusion, forgot the angry words he was about to utter. After a short conversation, in which he bore a most unwilling part, he went back to his room and endeavored to make some improvement in his personal appearance.

He brushed his hair, put on a vest and coat, but the bloodshot eyes and haggard face remained the same. These marks of dissipation could not be effaced.

"Good-morning, Mr. Hosford," said the doctor, as he came back to the kitchen. "I find your daughter much worse than I had expected, and am quite at a loss to account for it. Do you know of any way in which she could have taken cold?"

"I have not seen her this morning," was the evasive reply.

"The mischief has not been done this morning. You certainly must have seen her since I was here, yesterday."

The suspicions of the doctor had been aroused by Hattie's remark in defence of her mother, and they were increased by the angry look with which Mr. Hosford regarded his wife. "If I knew the trouble, I should be better able to guard against its effects."

This was said in a quiet tone which but illy expressed the feelings of the speaker. That there had been some outburst of cruelty on the part of the husband and father, he was sure, but he could not "right the wrong." There was nothing for him to do

but prescribe for the sick child and take his leave.

Mr. Hosford followed his wife to the door, and, while he was looking after his horse, the ladies made rapid progress in their acquaintance. Many questions were asked kindly, and answered frankly, and, without being rude or intrusive, Mrs. Hall made herself acquainted with the resources of the family.

"Next time you go there, you must have groceries to sell," she said to her husband, as they rode away. "Everything is needed, from a barrel of flour to a pound of sugar."

"What if I shouldn't find a market?" asked the doctor.

"Trust Mrs. Hosford to attend to that," was the reply.

The event proved that Mrs. Hosford did attend to it, and, "in consideration of sundries received," George Hall became the owner of another cow, "said cow to remain in possession of John Hosford, until called for by said George Hall."

IV.

There is danger in the wine-cup;
Let the morning cry be heard,
Until every pulse is quickened,
And every heart is stirred.

"GOING to study medicine?" asked Esquire Randolph of his ward.

"I had not thought of it, sir," was the reply.

"I couldn't account for your being so much with Dr. Hall, unless you wish to learn his profession."

Clarence Vane understood what was implied by this remark of his guardian. It was an indirect way of saying that the intimacy was not pleasing to him, and probably intended to elicit a direct reply.

"I have hardly thought of a profession, uncle Randolph," said the boy.

"It is time to think of it. You are fifteen years old now, and I suppose nearly ready to enter college."

"I hope to enter next year."

"I hope you will," said the 'squire, entirely forgetting the doctor, and thinking only of the handsome, enthusiastic boy before him. 'Come up to the house this afternoon, and we will talk the matter over. Be sure Genie comes with you. We shall need her to complete the family circle."

As this was said, the two separated, Clarence going directly home to inform his sister that she was expected to "complete the family circle at Uncle Randolph's."

"You know Fred is at home," he said, archly.

"I am not likely to forget it," replied Genie, manifesting no slight degree of annoyance.

"Somebody ought to be obliged to me for reminding you of it, and I consider that I have done my whole duty in that direction. I promised to ride with the doctor this afternoon."

"Is he going to Mr. Hosford's?" she asked.

"Yes, he is going there first, then round by Mr. Allen's and the prospect of a ride over the hills is much more attractive to me than going out to tea. But,"—

Here the speaker was interrupted by a knock at the door, which announced a call from Mr. Frederic Randolph. This young gentleman had just returned from the city, where he had been spending the last three months in "reading law" with an old friend of his father.

He came with a message from his mother, inviting Eugenia and Clarence to pass the afternoon with her. Whether this was the only object of his visit may be learned from the fact that it was prolonged until quite noon.

"Genie Win, why didn't you second mother's invitations, so that Fred could stop to dinner?" asked Clarence as soon as their guest had taken his leave.

"Mother's invitation ought to be sufficient," was the quiet reply.

"It ought, but it was not, so the poor fellow was obliged to go home"—

"To eat one of Auntie Randolph's best dinners," interrupted Genie; "and we may as well eat ours."

At the table, the condition of Mr. Hosford's family was the topic of conversation. Hattie had been sick for more than a week, and her mother, worn down by grief and excessive labor, was suffering for want of rest. Her husband did what he could to relieve her, but the children all shrunk from him, and Hattie refused to receive anything from his hands.

The memory of the night when she had been brutally driven from the house seemed ever present with her, and in feverish delirium, she begged that her mother and herself might be allowed to "come in and get warm."

Then again, she would cry, "O father, don't send us out into the dark and cold! Mother, dear mother, don't leave me here alone."

From such incoherent words, the doctor

divined the cause of her becoming suddenly worse, and his sympathy was still more deeply enlisted in her behalf.

Thanks to his timely supply of necessities, there was no lack of comfortable food for the family. Neighbors offered their assistance, but the mother could hardly be persuaded to leave her child even for a few hours.

Mr. Hosford, under the influence of remorse and fear, refrained from "drinking," and worked industriously. Now that he had time to think of it, he wondered how the corn was ever carried into the barn, and, as he sat there alone, through the long evenings, completing the work which his wife had begun, he despised himself for his weakness and cruelty. The doctor he avoided when possible. The keen, inquiring glance of his eye was more than he could well endure. Yet this man, who was said to "talk temperance everywhere," had never mentioned the subject to him.

Mrs. Vane and her children had listened to the doctor's account of this family with great

interest, and Clarence was particularly anxious to see Mr. Hosford. The fact that he had entered college when only fourteen years of age was sufficient to awaken his admiration.

"He must be a fine scholar," said the boy, in reply to a remark of his friend.

"Certainly, Clarence, but under the influence of liquor, he is as cruel and brutal as the vilest sot in Dan Messer's groggery."

"It doesn't seem possible," was the reply. "I wish I could see him."

The afternoon when he was invited with his sister to "Uncle Randolph's," he had expected to have this wish gratified, and his mother, desirous that he should lose no opportunity for observing the terrible effect of intemperance, decided that he should not be disappointed.

Soon after dinner, the doctor drove up, and came in to say that his wife wished Genie to come and sit with her while he was away.

"She is engaged to complete the family circle at Uncle Randolph's," said Clarence.

"Make Fred forswear the wine-cup, first," said her friend seriously.

"I am only going there to tea," replied Genie. "That is what Clarence means."

"I am glad it is no worse, but I shall not take back my advice. You may need it sometime, if not now."

"I'll never speak of that again, Genie," said her brother, in a low tone. "I didn't mean to vex you. You are a darling sister, a thousand times too good for any man who tastes of wine."

The first mile of the drive had passed before the doctor seemed inclined to talk, and Clarence was quite willing that he should remain silent. He was sorry that he had annoyed his sister, and, boy though he was, he had some anxiety in regard to her.

"A penny for your thoughts, Clarence," at length, said his companion, "You are looking serious. I must try to be more entertaining. There comes Mr. Allen. You

remember him," he added, as they were about to meet a large, good-natured looking man.

"Glad to see you, doctor; you're just the man I'm after. They've had a fight down to Messer's. One man has got a broken leg, and another has hurt his head; so you see there's business for somebody, and they both want the Temperance doctor. I was going to your house as fast as my horse would carry me."

This was Mr. Allen's message, and asking some directions as to where the men could be found, Dr. Hall drove on rapidly. "I can make but a short call here," he said, when they reached the Ruggles Farm.

Mr. Hosford was at work near the house, and, as the doctor stepped from the buggy, he introduced his young friend, and when he returned to them after having visited his patient, he found them engaged in conversation.

"Hattie is somewhat better to-day," he said, in answer to a question from the father; but your wife is miserable. She must have rest, or we shall have two sick ones."

"Well, Clarence, I suppose your curiosity is gratified," he remarked, as he drove rapidly away.

"Yes, sir, I was very glad to see Mr. Hosford; but how can such a man ever be so bad as you say he has been?"

"No wonder that you ask; yet I have not told you the worst of him. That man has laid drunk for weeks, and then kept sober for a few days, only because he was so poor he couldn't buy rum, and so mean he couldn't get trusted for it. He has more than once threatened to kill his wife, and he has abused his children until they are afraid to go near him. For all this, there is not a man in town possessing finer talents, or a more finished education."

The eyes of Clarence dilated with wonder at this recital, but he said nothing, and the doctor proceeded with the story he had commenced. "Mrs. Hosford was the only child of wealthy parents, and while she lived with them had no wish ungratified. When they died she had a handsome fortune, but her

husband squandered it, and she has suffered for the want of food."

"Was Mr. Hosford a drunkard when they were married?" asked Clarence.

"He was a wine-drinker; no worse, probably, than most of our young men, and he is no worse now than many of them will be in fifteen years, unless they reform."

"Genie shall never marry a wine-drinker," exclaimed the boy in an excited tone.

"That would be a sad fate, and you must take care that her *brother* is not a wine-drinker," was the reply.

"I will, I will," he said, earnestly. "I shall never forget what you have told me this afternoon. But it is dreadful to think what a wretch I might be. Oh, help me, always!"

"Yes, Clarence, I will help you; but you need other aid than mine."

"I know, and I pray for it every day," he replied, reverently.

As they passed the establishment of Dan Messer, the doctor stopped to speak to the proprietor, who was evidently watching for

him. "You are engaged in a bad business," he said, "and the sooner you give it up, the better."

"I'm ready to give up when Gore does. I'm no worse than he is. Preach to him, first," was the reply.

"I have preached to him, and it is your turn, now."

"Then, go ahead; I won't complain if that is the case. I sell liquor to make money, the same as Gore does; but I never take a sober man and make a drunkard of him. You got away one of my best customers, but I don't blame you for it. So just preach away."

There was need and opportunity, but the doctor concluded to postpone the sermon until he had attended to the injured men. He found them surrounded by several of their boon companions, in a miserable house, about half a mile from the groggery. Suffering had somewhat sobered them, and they were glad to see him.

"You seem to have had a rough-and-tumble fight," he said to the man with a broken leg.

"We got into a squabble, but I wan't to blame," was the reply.

"No matter who was to blame. I suppose, now, you wish me to set your leg."

"Of course, I do, else I shouldn't sent for you."

"And I will do it, upon just one condition."

"What is that?" asked the astonished listener.

"That you hold up your right hand, and solemnly promise not to drink a drop of liquor until you are able to walk."

This was refused with an oath, and the doctor turned his attention to the bruised head. The owner of this was willing to make any terms in order to be relieved, and his wounds were soon skilfully dressed.

The bystanders watched almost breathlessly to see what would next be done, but Dr. Hall seemed to consider that there was no further call for his services, and was putting on his overcoat, when the neglected man cried out, "For God's sake, doctor, don't leave me so."

"You know the condition upon which I will attend to your case."

"You've no right to make such a condition."

"Yes, I have," was the unyielding reply, "and I have, also, the right to leave you." Suiting the action to the word, he opened the door, and was followed by Clarence, who had been an interested spectator of the scene. But the door had hardly closed when he was recalled, and the required promise made without a murmur.

The fracture was then reduced and the patient cared for with all kindness.

Upon learning that the man who had first received attention lived at some distance, Clarence was despatched with the horse and buggy to take him home; and when he returned, the doctor was ready to ride.

"You have seen some unpleasant things this afternoon," he said to his companion when they were once more on their way.

"And I hope they will do me good," was the reply. "How terrible it is to be a drunk-

ard!" he exclaimed, after a short silence. "I think it is worse than anything else."

"Worse, because it brings all other evils with it," replied Dr. Hall, as he drove up to the house of Robert Halsey, where the cordial greeting showed that he was no unwelcome visitant.

"I have come to ask a favor of you," he said to Mr. Halsey.

"I shall be happy to grant it," was the reply. "Only tell me what it is."

"Some help is needed at Mr. Hosford's."

It was necessary to say nothing more.

Her sympathy was enlisted at once. She volunteered to go over and remain through the night and the next day.

"The children are shy," said the doctor, "and Hattie, the sick one, calls constantly for her mother."

"I guess I can manage them all, without any trouble," replied the generous-hearted woman, with a smile. "Mrs. Hosford has worked like a slave. I know something about how things have been going on there."

The neighbors call her proud, and I suppose she is; but she was brought up differently from the rest of us."

"Duty done in that direction. Now for home, Clarence," said his companion.

"Does Mrs. Hosford know that you are going to send her help?" asked the boy.

"She knows nothing about it," was the reply.

"Then, Mrs. Halsey may not be welcome."

"Trust her for that," said the doctor, heartily. "She can make herself welcome, anywhere, and if one poor woman doesn't get some rest during the next twenty-four hours, I shall be disappointed."

A rapid drive brought them back to the village, and Clarence hastened to his guardian's. His apology was accepted graciously, although the squire had some suggestions to offer in regard to the study of medicine.

"You are in time for tea, and mother has an extra supply of your favorite cakes," said Fred Randolph, who was in the best of humors.

"I hope the tea will cure Genie's headache," rejoined the hostess. "I have hardly heard her laugh, this afternoon."

"I am growing older, auntie, and it is time I should improve my manners. Less of laughing and more of dignity might be desirable."

"Don't talk of dignity, here, Genie Win," said her guardian; "and as for your manners, they need no improvement."

The young lady was glad to have this conversation interrupted by the summons to tea. Two cups of the cheering beverage, prescribed by her friends, seemed to have a reanimating influence upon her spirits, and the evening gave promise of passing pleasantly. Mr. and Mrs. Randolph looked with great complacency upon the young people, and Clarence was more than once reminded of the resolve he so earnestly expressed during his ride.

According to the usual custom, apples, nuts, and cider were offered to the guests; but of the latter, neither tasted. "First, it

was wine, and now it is cider," said the 'squire, noticing their untouched glasses. "You are getting unreasonable; who ever heard of cider injuring any one?"

"But I don't wish for it," said Genie, "and I certainly shall not be injured by letting it alone."

"Well, I suppose your not caring for it is no reason why Clarence shouldn't drink it."

"He can do as he pleases," replied the sister.

"And he pleases not to drink it," said the boy.

"I suppose this is some of your doctor's work," exclaimed the gentleman in a tone of vexation.

"He never said one word to me about drinking cider," replied Clarence, eager to exonerate his friend. "My own judgment tells me I ought not to drink it."

Fred Randolph took no part in this discussion, but he watched Genie's face closely, and his own clouded as he saw the delight with which she listened to her brother's decis-

ion. To the relief of all, he, at this point, adroitly turned the conversation, and engrossed his father's attention, until the offending subject was, for the time, forgotten.

"After all, Clarence, we haven't talked about your profession," was said, just as he was about to leave with his sister. "There is plenty of time, now, and I presume Fred will be delighted to walk home with Genie."

Of course he would, and by this pretty piece of management the affair was settled greatly to the satisfaction of the majority of the party. But certain it is that Clarence was a poor listener to his guardian's somewhat tedious counsel, and his lonely walk was far from being a pleasant one. He was more vexed than he cared to acknowledge even to himself; and when he found his sister standing in the moonlight with Fred Randolph, waiting for him, as she said, he replied to her almost rudely.

The moonlight had no attractions for him; he preferred the comfort of the house, and,

when his sister came in, he had quite a lecture prepared for her benefit.

"O Clarence, you have made me very happy this evening," she said, seating herself beside him.

"And I have been made very miserable," he might have replied with truth; but her beaming face banished all such thoughts. "I intend never to drink cider again," he said, well knowing the cause of her happiness.

"I hope you never will, Clarence. You and I had better count it with wine, and give it up altogether."

"We shall have plenty of ridicule for it," replied the brother, "and it does seem almost foolish to refuse it."

"Better err on the safe side, Clarence. We can't afford to run any risk in the matter."

"Who can afford it, Genie? Fred Randolph?"

"I shouldn't think he could," was the reply. "But tell me, now, about your ride."

This furnished an interesting topic of conversation until the clock warned them that it was time for sleep, and Genie clapped her hands with delight, while listening to an account of the doctor's treatment. All the events of the afternoon and evening helped to strengthen Clarence Vane in his resolutions of abstinence, but there was yet more to learn.

The following week, a party was given by Mr. Gore's oldest son, to which Eugenia and Clarence were most urgently invited, and their non-acceptance of the invitation was a source of much mortification to the family.

Jotham Gore, who was a classmate of Clarence, and about two years his senior, was not only mortified, but angry. He had counted upon their presence, and acknowledged no reason why he should be thus slighted.

"I can tell you why Eugenia and Clarence Vane stayed away from your party," said one of the boys, famous for his blunt manner of speaking.

"Why?" he asked, fiercely.

"Because your father sells liquor."

"It is no worse to sell it than to drink it," was the quick retort; "their father was once a drunkard."

Terrible words were these to fall upon the ear of a boy who cherished the memory of his father with an almost idolatrous worship.

When Jotham Gore turned from uttering them, he met the stony gaze and livid face of his classmate. "Have you told the truth about my father?" he asked.

"Of course I have. Everybody knows it," was the unfeeling reply, but a moment later, he remembered how bravely this same boy had risked his life a few months before, and regretted that he had given him pain.

Well might he regret it, for keener anguish could hardly have been inflicted. In vain, after that, were all the boy's attempts to study. The words lay before him as unmeaning characters, and the voices of his companions sounded like far-off echoes.

How glad he was when school hours were over! Yet never seemed the walk home so

long. "Mother, mother, was my father ever a drunkard?" he cried, rushing into the house with breathless haste.

It required time for Mrs. Vane to recover from the shock of such a question, before replying, and Genie anticipated her. "Father was a wine-drinker, at one time," she said, in as firm a tone as she could command.

"But was he a drunkard?" again asked the boy.

By this time, the mother had regained her composure, and decided that it was best he should know the whole truth. It was a painful revelation, but Clarence breathed more freely at its close. It was better than he had feared.

"I am glad I know it all," he said to his mother. "I am certain I shall now have strength to resist temptation."

It was a severe lesson, but he accepted it manfully. He now fully understood his position, and, instead of feeling resentment on account of the cruel speech made by Jotham Gore, he was truly grateful for it.

At this time Fred Randolph was a constant visitor at Mrs. Vane's. His vacation from study was to be short, and he seemed disposed to make the most of it. He came and went with little ceremony, but the families had always been on the closest terms of intimacy, and it excited no particular remark.

Mrs. Vane treated him cordially, Genie, with her usual frankness, but Clarence was troubled by his visits. He wished the young gentleman would find attractions elsewhere.

"Why, Genie, don't you know Fred Randolph is a wine-drinker?" he one day asked his sister.

"I am perfectly aware of it," was the reply.

"Do you suppose he'll ever give it up?"

"I have no means of judging, Clarence; but I certainly hope so, for the sake of his friends and himself."

"I hope he will," said the brother; "but I think Selwyn Barnes is a great deal better than he is. Why don't you like him, Genie?"

"I do like him," she replied, smiling at the earnestness of her young brother.

There had been a time when Clarence considered his guardian's son as quite superior to any one of his acquaintance; but that time had passed. Selwyn Barnes, who had so nobly stood his friend in the hour of disgrace, and who was distinguishing himself as a scholar, had quite usurped his place.

In justice to Fred Randolph, it should be said that he was handsome, talented, and endowed with fine social qualities, the idol of his parents, and a general favorite among his acquaintances. His brothers were men of ability in the different positions they had chosen, inheriting their father's shrewdness and tact for business. One of them had received a liberal education, with the expectation that he would become a lawyer; but he had preferred a more active life.

The 'squire now looked to Fred as a successor in his profession, and no expense was spared in the necessary training. Thus far, he had fully realized the fondest hopes of his

parents, and they counted upon his future success as certain. There had been rumors of some excess when he was in college, but it was attributed to the naturally high spirits of youth, and caused no anxiety.

He was a welcome guest throughout the village, and more than one young girl envied Eugenia Vane her elegant admirer. His preference for her had always been openly manifested, and no one thought it possible that she could be insensible to his devotion.

Until within two years she had thought little in regard to it. Nearly as much at home in her guardian's family as with her mother, she had accepted all manifestations of affection as a matter of course. Fred, being younger than his brothers, had been her more constant companion when a child; but, aside from this, she had no especial preference for him.

Now, she was sometimes flattered by his attentions, receiving them with manifest pleasure, and, again, she felt them to be almost burdensome. During his three months'

absence her interest had been so entirely engrossed with her brother, that she heard Mrs. Randolph's communications in regard to him with something like indifference.

But she could not be indifferent to his presence. They had too many tastes in common for this to be possible. He was agreeable in manners, fascinating in conversation, and — most potent reason of all — he loved her.

Most people considered the match as already certain, and pronounced it, "very suitable." The young men looked upon Eugenia Vane as "appropriated," and the 'squire made no secret of his hope to call her "daughter."

The clergyman of the village even congratulated Mrs. Vane upon the brilliant prospects of her daughter, and was surprised to learn that his congratulations were premature.

Dr. and Mrs. Hall noted the progress of events with watchful eyes. "I am sure Genie's judgment will decide against Fred Randolph," he said, "but I cannot answer for her heart."

"And if she marries him?" said the wife.

"She runs the risk of being a drunkard's wife with the odds fearfully against her. The old squire has been a moderate drinker all his life, and says he is the better for it, but Fred will never follow his example. He is quite temperate here, but when away he indulges more freely.

"Oh, can nothing be done to save our Genie?" exclaimed Mrs. Hall, as her husband sketched this dark picture. "I can't endure the thought of having her thus sacrificed. Clarence, too, I shall lose all hope of him."

"Clarence is my greatest dependence in the affair," said the doctor. "He is old for his years, and the knowledge of his own unfortunate tendency has made him a close observer of others. If he was permitted to decide the question, his sister never would be the wife of a wine-drinker."

Eugenia was conscious of her friends' anxiety, but her lips were closed. She knew their opinion as well as though it had been directly expressed, but they were ignorant of

hers. Clarence, too, was completely in the dark in regard to the matter, but he was at no trouble to conceal his own sentiments.

"I am glad, for once, not to find Fred Randolph here," he said, as he came in from school, one day; "it is pleasant to have only mother and Genie."

Mrs. Vane looked up with surprise. "I thought you liked Fred Randolph," she said.

"So I do, or I should, if he didn't come here so much," was the reply. "Everybody says he is going to marry Genie, and —"

"You had better stop and take breath, now," said the sister.

"Oh, dear! That's the way you always put me off!" he exclaimed, impatiently.

"Clarence," said his mother, in a tone of reproof that brought a blush to his face; and thus the conversation was closed.

"I wish we could go down to the doctor's and spend the evening," he afterwards said at the tea-table. "We never go there, now."

"There is nothing to prevent our going,"

replied Genie; "and I shall be very glad to go."

Clarence was in great haste; consequently, they left home early. The doctor was at leisure and welcomed them cordially. "I have just come from the Ruggles Farm," he said in reply to a question asked by Genie. "Hattie is better, and everything seems quite comfortable. Mrs. Halsey was there two days, giving the poor mother an opportunity to rest, and that was a great help."

"What of Mr. Hosford?" asked Clarence.

"He keeps sober, and is at work for Mr. Moulton. I saw him yesterday, and he told me he was engaged there for a month."

"Have you ever seen Mrs. Hosford?" asked the doctor, turning to Genie.

"Only once," was the reply, "and she looked like a broken-hearted woman."

"Well she may. She has had trouble enough to break any woman's heart. I only wonder she is alive. She little dreamed what was before her when she married John Hosford."

This remark gave Mrs. Hall an opportunity to express her astonishment that "any woman would trust her happiness in the hands of a wine-drinker, no matter who he is."

Later in the evening, Selywn Barnes came in. He had arrived at home that day, and making his first call at Mrs. Vane's, followed Eugenia and Clarence to the house of their mutual friend. He was a welcome guest, being one of the very few young men in whose "principles" the doctor had confidence.

Clarence was delighted to see him, and Eugenia found herself, involuntarily, contrasting him with Fred Randolph. Selywn Barnes was not considered handsome, but he had a good, strong face, with an expression at times so pure and tender as to make it beautiful. It was this expression that arrested the attention of Eugenia Vane, and under the power of its fascination her own face grew more radiant and sparkling.

Her brother was quite satisfied with the attention she bestowed upon his favorite, and

immediately commenced building one of those airy castles, which, lacking no grace of ornament, are so often without foundation.

Mrs. Hall, too, must have engaged in the same occupation, for no sooner was she left alone with her husband than she exclaimed, "What a nice match that would be!"

"Who are the parties to your nice match?" asked the doctor.

"You know who I mean," replied his wife, laughing; "Selywn and Genie. I do hope she will see how much better he is than Fred Randolph."

"There's no accounting for woman's vision in such matters," was the somewhat unsatisfactory reply; but the doctor had his hopes and his castle notwithstanding.

The merry trio, in their walk home, were too much engrossed with the present to think much of the future. Clarence, taking it upon himself to do the honors of the occasion, invited their companion to "come in and talk awhile; it is only nine o'clock," he said, "and I have a host of questions to ask you."

This invitation, being seconded, was accepted, and an animated conversation followed, in which the duties and pleasures of college life were thoroughly discussed.

"Just the pleasantest evening we have had for a month," said Clarence Vane to his mother, as he bade her good-night.

Very different was the decision of Fred Randolph in regard to the evening. He, too, had called at Mrs. Vane's, and from there went to the Eagle House. On his way home, he met Solomon Barnes, and the sight of him added to his previous vexation. He came to breakfast the next morning, in no amiable mood, and received but with very sorry grace the jokes of his father. "Better settle matters definitely before you go back," said the old squire.

His son only wished "matters" were settled; but, unfortunately, they were not. He had petted and caressed Genie Vane when she was a child, and he had loved her in all the years that followed. The boyish declarations of this love had been received, some-

times with sisterly frankness, sometimes with merry laughter; but he had never doubted that she would one day place her hand in his, happy to walk through life by his side.

"Never!" did I say? I should have said never until within the last few months. Various circumstances had revealed to him her increasing sympathy with the "teetotal principles" of her friend, Dr. Hall. Moreover, he was jealous of the influence of this same friend, and dissatisfied with the intimacy between Genie and Mrs. Hall, although he himself could never refrain from making his very best bow to this charming woman.

Upon no condition would he have extended his walk to their house the evening before; certainly, not after he heard from Mrs. Vane that Selwyn Barnes had gone there.

Altogether, he had passed a most uncomfortable night, and the words of his father seemed ill-timed and out of place.

As for Genie, there was quite a tumult in her heart. She knew what was expected of her as well as though her guardian had told

her, in so many words, that she was to marry his youngest son. Yet Fred had not asked her to be his wife since when, five years before, he had, in what she called "a fit of sentimentality," implored her to share his future home, and received for answer the warbling of an old love ditty.

But our heroine was no coquette. She was only an affectionate, true-hearted girl, with enough of humor and spirit to make her both attractive and positive. Bound as she was by circumstances, there seemed little opportunity for choice in regard to her life. But she had a will of her own, as had been proved on more than one occasion.

In this state of affairs, Mr. Frederic Randolph received a despatch, recalling him to the city some days sooner than he had expected. The last evening he proposed to spend with Eugenia Vane, but untoward circumstances prevented. He saw her only a few minutes, and then in the presence of others. This was tantalizing; all the more so, since he knew that she might have had it

otherwise, and he went back to his studies vexed and mortified.

Clarence openly rejoiced at his departure, and Genie, — well, she thought she was glad, but she missed him more than she cared to believe.

V.

Dealing out ruin and counting the gains;
Vending destruction, unheeding the pains;
Beggaring woman, and scorning her tears,
Reckless of danger and smiling at fears;
"Mine host," or "the landlord," whichever you call,
He is only a rumseller, after all.

"GOOD-MORNING, Mr. Hosford. Glad to see you this morning," said the smiling landlord of the Eagle House. "Allow me to wish you a Happy New Year. Take a seat by the stove. I began to fear you had forsaken us entirely."

These civil speeches were properly acknowledged, but Mr. Hosford manifested no intention of occupying the proffered seat. "I have come to settle my bill," he said, so soon as he found opportunity.

"No hurry about that," was the reply. "It

is too small to be of much consequence. But take a seat and I will look it up."

The debtor had come in with a firm determination to settle his bill, and leave immediately; but he was intentionally detained, and when the "account was squared," he was comfortably seated by the stove, enjoying the warmth, so grateful after exposure in a severe winter morning.

Mr. Gore had a shrewd suspicion of the state of affairs, and resolved that this man should not go out of his house until it was made sure that he would come again. He was aided in his purpose by the entrance of Esquire Randolph, who greeted the gentleman cordially, and sat down. "Let us drink to our success for the New Year," said the landlord, presenting to each of his guests a glass of sparkling wine.

His own was at hand, and the three glasses were drained. A glance at the clock reminded Mr. Hosford that the time had passed when he was to meet Dr. Hall, who had kindly offered him a "ride home." His first thought

was to remain where he was, but the second prompted to a wiser course.

Mr. Gore made no objection to his leaving. His object was accomplished.

Dr. Hall was waiting, impatient and anxious. It was soon manifest to his quick senses that the morning's call had resulted disastrously. His companion made an effort to conceal this, but it was only too apparent.

Had he been such a man as Tim Allen, the doctor would not have hesitated to address him directly upon the subject of temperance. Being entirely different, he was obliged to make use of strategy. "Shall you work for Mr. Moulton through the winter?" he asked, after riding a short distance.

"I have engaged to do so," was the reply.

"A man of your education ought to be engaged in some different employment," said the doctor.

"Some other might be more pleasant," replied his companion; "but when a man has been unfortunate, he cannot always choose his business."

"True, but with the best use of your talents and acquirements you could easily regain all you have lost."

An angry flush burned upon the cheek of the listener. "You must pardon my plain speaking," continued the doctor. "My interest in your family compels me to it. You have a noble woman for a wife; but she cannot live long under the pressure of poverty and grief you have brought upon her. You have not only been unfortunate, you have been fearfully guilty."

Mr. Hosford made a motion as though he would leave the sleigh, but a strong hand detained him, and a voice, full of sympathy, said, "I am your friend, and would do you good. You know as well as I that the habit of drinking has been the cause of all your trouble."

"You are right, doctor, and I despise myself for it. Over and over again have I resolved to break the chains of this dreadful habit. This morning—"

"I know," interrupted his companion.

"You know that I have been drinking wine, but you do not know the circumstances."

These were related, every word increasing the indignation of the doctor. "Gore feels sure of you now," he said.

"Yes, and *I* am sure of nothing but misery," was the hopeless answer.

"Are you going to give up now?" asked the doctor, with surprise.

"I can't tell; I only know, if I should yield to the demands of my appetite, I should go back to the Eagle House and drink myself into unconsciousness."

Sad confession, made with startling earnestness!

You may say that the man was a fool. So are all who, by their own acts, become the slaves of appetite. Say that his character was inconsistent and unnatural. It may be; but it was such a character as he had made for himself, and such as thousands of others, throughout the length and breadth of our land, are now making for themselves.

"You think me a wretch," he added, after a pause, "and so I am. You know something of my wife as she is now, but you are ignorant of what she once was, — the dearest, happiest girl in the world. I loved her, and thought myself blessed above all others when I knew that my love was returned. Yet I have made her life wretched. Would God I had never seen her!"

What could be said in reply? The doctor felt that words of his were useless, and with a prayer to Heaven in behalf of the unfortunate man, he left him at his home.

No friendly calls that morning. Even those imposed by the duties of his profession seemed irksome, and were hurried through as rapidly as possible. When he passed the Ruggles Farm on his return, a rap upon the window called his attention. Directly Mrs. Hosford came to the door, and asked if he would allow her to ride with him.

"I shall be very glad to have your company," was the reply.

A few questions were asked and answered,

during the ride, but neither seemed in social mood. When they reached the village, Mrs. Hosford desired to be left at the Eagle House. "I must see Mr. Gore," she said, replying to the look of astonishment with which her request was heard.

The reason for this was easily divined, and the doctor offered to be her escort. He took her to the public sitting-room, which, fortunately, contained no visitors, called the landlord, and left her, while he waited in the hall.

Mrs. Hosford made known her errand, asking, as a special favor, that he would sell no more liquor of any kind to her husband. Had she come alone, it is possible she might have been heard with favor; but Mr. Gore, considering the whole affair as a contrived plan on the part of the doctor, refused to bind himself by any promise.

She was bitterly disappointed. She had been sure that her request would be granted, could she humble herself to make it. But she had reckoned without her host, who, by

whatever name he might be called, was only a rumseller, after all.

When she realized the result of her mission, it seemed impossible for her to leave the room. She staggered in weakness. Then, by a great effort recovering herself, she walked to the door, turned around, and, looking sadly in the face of the man who had thus crushed her hopes, said, deliberately, "The curse of God will rest upon you for this day's work. You have three sons, — you will live to see them stagger through these streets, miserable drunkards, all!"

He stood mute with horror. Could this be true? His sons miserable drunkards! Jotham, Ellis, and little Carl!

In imagination they reeled before him. But it was only a woman who had said it, — a miserable, half-crazed woman, — and, after she had left, he returned to the bar-room, and, with his blandest smile, served liquor to his customers.

Dr. Hall, asking no questions, drove home. Mrs. Hosford, bewildered by the scene

through which she had passed, scarcely noticed the direction they were going. "I can walk now," she said, when they stopped.

"You are coming in to rest awhile," replied her friend, "and then I will carry you home."

"I can't stop. My children are alone, and I must hasten back," said the poor woman, hurriedly.

Mrs. Hall overruled this, and she was persuaded to enter the house. When the two ladies were left alone for a few minutes, the reserve of Mrs. Hosford gave way, and, with a burst of emotion, she described her call at the Eagle House. "I have no hope left now," she exclaimed. "Were it not for my children, I should wish to die."

"How gladly would I help you!" said Mrs. Hall.

"No one can help me," was the reply; "but I thank you for your sympathy."

The expression of utter hopelessness that rested upon her face, as she said this, would have moved the most callous heart. Yet her

life was not her own, that she should lay it down because the burden weighed heavily.

"I must not stay here," she said, rising from the comfortable chair in which she had been seated. "My children need me."

"But you are not rested," urged her kind hostess.

"I cannot rest," was the reply. "Oh, thank God, every day of your life, that you are not a drunkard's wife!"

Eugenia Vane came in as Mrs. Hosford was leaving. There was a striking contrast between the two; but twelve years before, the drunkard's wife was radiant and blooming as the young girl who now stood before her.

"Oh, what a life!" exclaimed Mrs. Hall, as her husband drove away with her guest.

"I thought Mr. Hosford was doing well," said Genie in reply.

For answer, the story of the morning was repeated. "And do you believe Mr. Gore will sell liquor to him now?"

"Believe!" said Annie Hall, with emphasis; "I can believe anything of a rumseller."

When the doctor returned, he found his wife and Genie still talking of Mrs. Hosford. "Let me tell you what has happened to day," he said, folding his arms behind him, while his whole manner betokened intense excitement.

"It is enough to make a man's blood boil in his veins, to think that such things are done in our midst," he exclaimed, when he had finished his account of Mr. Hosford's call. "Gore is infinitely more to blame than his victim, and Esquire Randolph is worse than either. He is doing more to extend intemperance in this village than any one else, and he will receive his just reward. I know I am talking of your guardian, Genie," he added, "but I am telling only the truth. I once feared his influence over Clarence, and that of Fred still more."

A bright flush crimsoned the cheek of the listener, but she made no reply. She, too, had feared the same influence.

"Something must be done," said Mrs. Hall.

"What?" asked her husband, quickly. "Only tell me, and I will set about it at once. There is need enough that something be done. Hardly a young man in town can be considered temperate. Selwyn Barnes is an honorable exception. He told me, yesterday, that it is more than two years since he became a teetotaller. He is a noble fellow, worthy of all good fortune."

Instantly Genie's thoughts reverted to the time when he had brought her tidings of her brother, and her heart gave full assent to the praise bestowed upon him.

She went home to think of what she had heard, and read again a letter she had received that morning. "Darling Genie,"—thus the letter commenced which lay before her, and at its close was the name of "Fred Randolph."

Most earnestly did she wish that those words had never been written, that the avowal of affection had never been made.

But this availed her nothing. She must reply, and upon this reply rested the happi-

ness of her life. She would neither give confidence, nor ask advice in the matter. It rested alone with herself. No one could place the case any more clearly before her.

Her principles and those of Fred Randolph were directly at war. She knew this well, and never thought of asking him to give up the habits he had learned at home, and in which he was encouraged by his father's example. Some would have done this, but it was not like Eugenia Vane.

She recalled the wretched looks of the woman she had seen that day, and who, scarcely ten years older than herself, seemed already broken with age. She had married, loving and beloved. Was there not a warning in her history?

On the other hand were all the associations of her life. Never had she received aught but kindness from the family of her guardian. Should she now thwart their cherished plans?

She tried to reason the matter calmly. She had a sincere regard for Fred Randolph;

but she was not certain that she loved him as a woman should love the man she would call "husband." Trust in his honor! Confidence in his unswerving integrity! Had she these?

She folded the letter and laid it aside.

In the evening, Selwyn Barnes came in, looking his best. Cordial New Year's greetings were exchanged, and fast flowed laughter and song, until the young gentleman felt compelled to apologize for having remained so late.

Clarence, as usual, was loud in his praises the next morning. "I am so glad I can be with him the first two years I am in college," he said. "You needn't have any fears for me then, mother. He is all right in everything."

But we must return to our doctor. When he went out to visit his patients on the second morning of the New Year, he encountered Dan Messer. After exchanging salutations, he exclaimed, "I've been waiting for that sermon a good while. You know I told you to preach as much as you pleased."

"What good would it do?" asked the doctor, seriously. "I wish I could preach so effectually as to make the men of this town aware of their danger."

"Why don't you try it?" asked the rum-seller. "Appoint a meeting somewhere, and have the matter talked up."

The doctor looked closely at the face of the man, to see in what spirit this was spoken. "I am in earnest," he said, in reply to the scrutiny. "I'll go, for one, and I'll invite my customers. I believe everybody has a right to do as he's a mind to, and I shan't think no different; but I should like to hear what you've got to say."

"Where can we have a meeting?"

"In the school-house, I guess. Robert Halsey has the care of it; so there won't be no trouble about that. If there is, just tell Betsey, and she'll see to it."

This was a new idea, which the doctor pondered, as he rode along. There had never been a temperance meeting in town.

He decided to ask the opinion of some of his friends in regard to its probable success.

The first person he met was Tim Allen.

"It will be a grand idea," he said, in reply to the question. "There is only one trouble about it."

"What is that?"

"It may affect your practice."

"I'll risk that," said the doctor. "My trouble is in quite a different direction. I am not used to speaking in public, and am afraid I can't do justice to the subject."

"No danger of that," replied the blacksmith, laughing. "You can speak to the purpose in private, I am proof of that, and I can promise you a houseful to hear you talk."

Mr. Halsey was not at home when the doctor called, but his wife could answer for him as well as herself. She was greatly interested, and, taking the matter into her own hands, so managed that Dr. Hall was invited to speak upon the subject of temperance in the school-house of "District Number Three."

It was the general topic of conversation in the village. Some predicted that the meeting, if it was held, would result in the doctor's being obliged to leave town; others were sure he could not find six persons foolish enough to be present.

A few encouraged him, and when the evening arrived, he drove with his wife to the school-house. Eugenia Vane, Clarence, and Selwyn Barnes were there, so he was sure of an audience of four. But, much to his astonishment, he found, upon entering the house, that every seat was occupied. Men, women and children had "turned out to hear the Temperance Doctor."

True to his promise, Dan Messer was there, with half a dozen of his customers. As others came in, he made himself useful in providing seats, and really seemed as much interested as any one present.

Well acquainted with the character of the people whom he was to address, the doctor commenced talking in an easy, familiar way, and soon the look of eager ex-

pectancy yielded to one of intense interest. When he had spoken about fifteen minutes, a loud stamping was heard, and the door was opened to admit Esquire Randolph and Mr. Gore. Seats were provided, — the 'squire occupying a position directly opposite the old desk, so that he could look the speaker full in the face.

Far from being disconcerted, the presence of these men seemed to give the doctor a new inspiration, and he portrayed the evils of intemperance in glowing colors.

No one could deny what he said. Many could attest its truth by their own experience. One old man, seated in the extreme corner of the room, was observed to be greatly agitated, and, when the speaker paused for a moment, he exclaimed, in thrilling tones, "It's worse than that."

There was a general movement, then a profound silence. "Worse than that!" repeated the doctor, slowly. "What can be worse? Who would choose the life I have

described? What heart could bear the crushing shame, the fearful sorrow?"

The audience was deeply moved. Even Dan Messer was forced to wipe the tears from his eyes. A voice was again heard from the corner. "Let me tell my story."

It was "Crazy Bill, the old shingle-maker," who spoke, and, at a word from the doctor, the people made way for him to come forward. His head was bald, and his form bent, while his poor and scanty clothing hung in rags. Blear-eyed and trembling he stood before the people, eager to speak, yet half-abashed by their gaze.

Had a spectre appeared, the sensation could scarcely have been greater. Crazy Bill! He talk of temperance! Not one present but had seen him beastly drunk.

It was plain that Esquire Randolph was disgusted. He drew his chair as far as possible from the old man.

This roused him, and straightening himself to his full height, in a clear, ringing voice, he said, "I have dranked many a glass of

wine and brandy with the 'squire ; but we never drink together now. He is rich, and I am only a poor drunkard. Why should he notice me?"

The 'squire moved uneasily, but the speaker proceeded. "Yet, thirty years ago, my prospects were as bright as his. Some of you can remember me as I was then. I had a pleasant home, a loving wife, and three blooming children. Where are they now?" he asked, throwing out his arms wildly.

"Dead ! All dead ! And I killed them by my neglect and cruelty. I loved them ; but the cursed drink maddened me. It burnt in my veins like fire ; yes, and it burns there now," he cried, with startling vehemence.

It was impossible to listen with indifference. This man, whose voice was seldom heard, save as he begged for food or cider, spoke with an irresistible power and eloquence. "It is too late for me now to think of reform ; but I entreat you, young men, to take warning by my fate. I stand before you a murderer, guilty of the death of wife

and children. I have blasted my life, ruined my soul, and all to gratify a hellish appetite. I shall drink till I die, and after death comes the judgment. Crazy ! Yes, I am crazy," he shrieked, as the fire died out from his eyes, and the old maudlin look came back to his face. Shuffling to his seat, with form again bowed, he was only "the old shingle-maker ;" but he had told a story that could never be forgotten.

"I presume the audience will be glad to hear from any one present," said the doctor.

Esquire Randolph felt constrained to respond to this appeal, and, moreover, he must make some reply to the remarks of "Mr. Morgan."

He rose leisurely from his chair. "I came to this meeting, not to speak, but to hear ; not to engage in any discussion, myself, but listen to the discussions of others. Yet, under present circumstances, I cannot refrain from saying a few words. We have listened to an eloquent description of the evils of intemperance ; I could add nothing

to this, should I attempt to. I stand before you as a representative of temperance. I have both preached and practised temperance all my life. True, I did drink wine and brandy thirty years ago, and I drink them now. Mr. Morgan has told his story; perhaps I might be pardoned for telling mine. But I will not weary your patience. I will only say that I have never used any stimulant to excess. I believe that the moderate use of ardent spirits is conducive to health and social enjoyment; and I believe, also, that any man can restrain his appetite within the bounds of moderation. We are to use the good things of this life without abusing them."

This is only the commencement of the speech, but as it consisted principally of the same ideas, I will not transcribe it. Excess and moderation were prominent words, uttered with various degrees of emphasis; but they produced little effect, and the speaker sat down with the consciousness that, for once in his life, he had made a failure.

Every one seemed to expect that the doctor would make some reply to these "few words;" but he was content to leave them without comment. He waited for others, but as no one spoke, he produced a "Total Abstinence Pledge," which he read, and laid upon the desk. Pen and ink were placed beside it.

"Will any one sign this pledge?" he asked. "My own name is already upon the paper."

Betsey Halsey rose instantly, followed by her husband and children. She did wait for Robert to write his name first, but it was with evident impatience. Mr. Allen came forward with his family; some old people also signed the pledge, and, after some hesitation, the man whose head had been injured in the fight at Dan Messer's added his signature.

The gentlemen from the village looked on with ill-disguised vexation, which vexation was increased when Mrs. Hall, Eugenia and Clarence Vane, with Selwyn Barnes, walked to the desk and affixed their names to the

odious paper. The 'squire, mortified and angry, considered this an act of defiance on the part of his wards.

The names of other young people were added, and "signing the pledge" seemed quite the fashion. This was better than the doctor had expected, and in well-chosen words he expressed his satisfaction.

"I've got something to say before we go home," said Dan Messer. "I believe it's mean business to *sell* liquor as well as to *drink* it, and I'll give it up if Gore will."

He waited for an answer, but none was vouchsafed. The landlord of the Eagle House felt himself insulted, and preserved what was intended to be a dignified silence.

But Dan Messer was not satisfied. "Are you ready to give up selling liquor?" he asked, taking a step towards the man addressed.

There was some delay, even then, but at length Mr. Gore said, "I have no intention of changing my business."

"Very well, sir," replied Dan Messer,

in a loud tone, "then I'll take my share of the profits. When a man comes and asks for rum, he shall have it, but I won't wheedle him into drinking when he don't want to."

A pretty sharp hit, which Mr. Gore felt keenly. This was the last speech of the evening, and was, in its way, quite as effective as any which had been made.

The next morning, Esquire Randolph made an early call at Mrs. Vane's. Eugenia was alone in the sitting-room, thrumming the piano in a careless, undecided manner. She had no thoughts for music. The events of the previous evening, and the unanswered letter, engrossed her whole attention. "Good-morning, Uncle Randolph," she said, as her guardian opened the door.

He saw, at a glance, that she was not in her usual happy mood, but, returning the salutation, he seated himself in the favorite arm-chair, and inquired for Clarence.

"He has gone to the village," was the reply, "and mother is in the kitchen. I will call her if you wish."

"There is no necessity for calling her; I have no special business this morning."

Now, begging the 'squire's pardon, this was not true. He had special business, but it was with the daughter rather than the mother.

He chatted awhile upon different subjects, until the conversation seemed naturally to turn to the temperance meeting.

"The doctor was really quite eloquent," he said. "I never knew before that he had such a talent for public speaking. He ought to have chosen one of the talking professions."

"I didn't suppose you would like him," replied Genie.

"Neither do I like him, if liking implies agreeing with his sentiments; of course I can't do that, but I think him a forcible speaker. He certainly had great power over his audience."

"Not so much as Crazy Bill," said Genie.

The 'squire didn't care to talk about this man. "His appearance would impress any

one; but the ravings of an insane man can hardly be said to have much power."

"Why, Uncle Randolph, don't you think he knew what he was saying?"

"Possibly."

"And didn't he tell the truth?" continued Genie.

"Yes; or, at least, I know nothing to the contrary. When I first came to town, he owned the farm at the foot of Long Hill, and was considered very smart. Everybody expected he would be one of the richest men in town; but he began drinking to excess, and his property was finally sold under the hammer. After that, he went from bad to worse, until now he hasn't a shelter for his head."

"And did he abuse his wife and children?"

"People said he beat them cruelly when he was intoxicated, and there is no doubt but they suffered from cold and hunger."

"I shouldn't think any one would ever wish to drink any more liquor, after hearing his story," exclaimed the young lady.

"You jump at conclusions," replied the cool-headed lawyer. "It does not follow that one must be a drunkard because he sometimes drinks a glass of wine. It is only necessary to govern one's appetite."

"But a great many people won't do that; and why is it necessary to gratify such an appetite at all? Dr. Hall says the appetite is usually acquired. Is it necessary to have it?"

"Perhaps not; but I think the moderate use of stimulants beneficial. It certainly has been to me," said the 'squire, after a short pause, during which he wondered if this girl ever would give up the habit of asking such direct questions.

Just then a sharp twinge of pain through one of his toes suggested a doubt as to the truth of this assertion; but as toes are voiceless, Genie was no wiser for the suggestion. "I suppose you think you are on the safe side, now," he said, with a forced laugh.

"I hope I have always been safe from intemperance," was the reply.

"And now you have signed the pledge assurance is made doubly sure."

This was said in a tone of irony, which roused the spirit of Eugenia Vane. "Of course, I shan't break my pledge, Uncle Randolph; neither will Clarence."

"And Selwyn Barnes, — do you answer for him, also?"

"No, sir; I presume he can answer for himself," she replied, with flushed cheek and flashing eyes.

"Tut, tut, Genie; don't get offended with your old uncle. I know you don't care for Selwyn Barnes, but I must have my joke."

She was not quite so sure of this indifference as her guardian seemed to be.

"I suppose you hear from Fred, often," he said, desirous to introduce a more agreeable topic of conversation.

Genie's confusion at this remark convinced her guardian that, at last, the affair was settled, and, upon this presumption, he ventured a question which had been several times upon his lips. "What do you think Fred will

say, when you tell him of the meeting last evening?"

"I have no intention of telling him," was the reply.

"Better tell him at once," was the fatherly counsel. "I presume it won't trouble him seriously." Then, without giving her time to reply, he added, "But, really, Genie, I was very sorry that you and Clarence should have placed yourselves upon a level with the crowd present last evening. I am afraid you allow Doctor Hall and his wife to have too much influence over you."

"They had nothing to do with my signing the pledge. I didn't even know there was to be one presented; I should have signed it for Clarence's sake, if for nothing else. You know that his only safety is in total abstinence."

"I know that you think so, my dear. But when Clarence is older he will have more self-control. I presume you have no fears that Fred will be a drunkard."

"I certainly hope he will not."

Something in the manner this was said struck the 'squire unpleasantly. Was it possible that he had been mistaken in his conclusions? "I suppose there is an understanding between you and Fred," he said, looking at her sharply. "I mean an understanding that you will be married when he is established in practice," he added, speaking more explicitly.

"There is no such understanding," was the reply.

The gentleman, then, never dreaming that any young lady, much less the one before him, would think of refusing his Fred, supposed "the boy went back to the city without asking Genie to be his wife."

Anxious to make amends for this neglect, he assured his companion that "Fred had always hoped and expected to marry her. As for my wife and myself, we have looked upon you as a daughter. I calculated upon that when you were a baby."

Esquire Randolph's anger of the preceding evening had taken counsel of prudence, else

would the result of this call have been very different. As it was, he went to his office somewhat chagrined at his mistake, yet determined that the matter should be set right. Supposing Fred to be the one in fault, he wrote a letter for the next mail, in which he plainly told the young gentleman his opinion.

Genie had intended writing that morning, and the contents of the letter were fully determined. But the visit of her guardian, and the hopes he had expressed, threw her again into a state of indecision. Possibly Fred might be a moderate drinker all his life without injury to himself or others. Then he had loved her so long. Might she not safely trust his love?

In the midst of this debate her mother came into the room. "You have had quite a long call," she said.

"Yes, mother, but it was not particularly pleasant."

"Was Esquire Randolph offended because

you and Clarence signed the pledge last evening?"

"I think he was, although he did not say so. He asked me what I supposed Fred would say when I told him of the meeting last evening, and I replied that I had no intention of telling him."

Genie's nice sense of honor had prevented her consulting her mother in regard to the letter she had received; but, under the present excitement, she revealed all her trouble, and asked advice.

Mrs. Vane had expected this; indeed, it seemed but a natural result of the long intimacy between the families. Only one objection could be made to the young man, and this would hardly have been considered by most mothers. Once Mrs. Vane would have thought less of it than now. She had looked upon her husband's unfortunate temperament as an exception, and fancied that some people might safely conform to the usages of society.

But closer observation, aided by the in-

telligent conversation of Dr. Hall, had wrought an entire change in her sentiments. She was a thorough convert to total abstinence, and believed that no woman could safely trust her happiness in the hands of a moderate drinker. She recognized the difficulties of her daughter's position; but, having confidence both in her principles and decision, she had been content to know that whatever might be the tacit understanding in the family of her guardian, Genie was bound neither by word or honor.

"I wish that letter had never been written," said the troubled girl. "Now, it must be answered."

"Of course it must be answered."

"How, mother?"

"As your heart and judgment dictate," was the reply, with a strong emphasis upon the second authority.

"My judgment decides against marrying an habitual wine-drinker, and I am sure Fred Randolph is that. But, then, —"

"Then, what?" asked the mother, anxiously.

"His father and mother. They have always said I belonged to them almost as much as to you."

"Their kindness and affection demand a proper return, but they do not demand that you sacrifice yourself. Think well and calmly, Genie."

"Before Uncle Randolph came in, I had decided just what to write."

"Then write it now."

"The whole village is wide awake," exclaimed Clarence, as he came in, interrupting the conversation between his mother and sister.

"What has roused them?" asked Genie.

"I have heard no bells."

"The bells were rung down in Number Three, last evening, and the echoes have just been heard up here. The only reason you haven't heard them is because you have been in the house all the morning."

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Vane.

"Why, the doctor's temperance meeting has created quite an excitement. Everybody is talking about it. Jotham Gore called me a teetotaler, and I thanked him for the compliment. I think it's the best name I ever had. I saw the doctor, too," he continued, "and he is much encouraged. Dan Messer promised not to sell any more liquor to Crazy Bill."

Mrs. Vane allowed Clarence to talk as long as he pleased. She thought he might say just what Genie needed to hear. Some one had given him a history of the man who wished to tell his story, the evening before, and this he repeated, with certain comments of his own. "If any man thinks best to try moderate drinking, after hearing that, he can, but I certainly will not."

This was, to Clarence, the conclusion of the whole matter, and had Genie asked *his* advice, he would have given it without hesitation.

When he went out to school, she fully intended to write to Fred Randolph, directly,

but company and household duties furnished a pretext for delay. The next day and the next were spent in much the same manner, until nearly a fortnight had elapsed since the reception of his letter.

At length, after many unsuccessful attempts, she wrote a reply, of which her judgment approved, and to which her heart gave a reluctant assent.

VI.

Sights and scenes of horror
That fill the soul with dread;
Mingled grief and terror,
The living and the dead.

THE last week in January the cold was intense, and the roads so blocked with snow as to be almost impassable. For hours the patient oxen toiled through the drifts, while men and boys urged them forward and sometimes aided their progress. Stages came in irregularly, mails were delayed, and travellers were glad to test the comforts of a country hotel, or the hospitalities of private individuals.

It was a time for generous hearts to think of the poor, and long to supply their needs. Even Dan Messer had some compunctions of conscience in regard to his business when his

miserable customers came in to spend the money which should have gone to buy food for their families.

"Tough weather, this," said Bill Magoon, as he shut the door, and caught up an old broom to sweep the snow from his boots. "It's enough to freeze a man clear through," he added, drawing near the stove, and extending his bloated hands to catch the genial heat. "Much as I could do to get here; but my jug was empty, and it had got to be filled some way. I wish it was larger, so I shouldn't have to come so often. But then you have so much better fire than poor folks can afford, it pays to come, for the sake of gittin warmed up. Say, Dan, can't you trust a feller this mornin'? The old woman wants a little tea and sugar, and I'm short for money. She thinks she aint very well. Women are notional critters."

How Dan Messer despised the man before him! In imagination he saw the wretched wife cowering over a smouldering fire, half clad, and suffering for the want of nourishing

food. "Better spend your money for something to carry home to your wife, and let the jug go empty. You'll be the better for it, and I'm sure your wife will."

"Couldn't think of it," was the heartless reply. "I can't live without my rum, and if you won't trust me, Sukey must go without tea, this time. She wanted some flour, too, but I guess corn meal'll answer her turn a while longer."

Another customer came in, another brushing followed, and nearly the same remarks were made in regard to the weather.

"Has any one seen Crazy Bill, this week?" asked the new-comer. "I can't see any smoke from his camp, this morning, and I wan't certain about it yesterday."

"He was here day before yesterday, just at night," said Dan Messer. "He wanted some rum, but I wouldn't let him have any."

"Too bad, by George," replied one. "He's paid you money enough not to be turned off that way such weather as this."

"I gave him something better than rum."

"What was it?"

"A good supper. I tried to have him stay with me all night; but I couldn't keep him. I gave him some tea and coffee, and he said he had meat and potatoes enough, on the hill, to last him a fortnight."

"That's better'n nothing; but taint the stuff, after all. Somebody ought to look after him. I'd go up there myself if 'twan't so fur."

The speaker had walked much farther that morning than it would be to go to the camp of the old shingle-maker.

"Let us all go," said the rumseller.

"Then, treat all round," said a chorus of voices. "We can't take that tramp on empty stomachs."

This demand was complied with, and they started off, following the road for a short distance, and then turning into the woods. There had been a path before the storm of the previous day, but now every trace was obliterated, and it was with difficulty they made their way through the trackless snow.

Some would gladly have turned back, but Dan Messer would listen to no such proposal.

"Forward," was the word with him, and, after a fatiguing walk, they reached the shanty. The snow was piled high against the door, no smoke issued from the chimney, and their repeated holloas received no reply.

One of the party had brought a shovel, and, with the aid of this, an entrance was effected into the rude dwelling. In one corner of this were a shaving bench, some blocks of timber, a pile of finished shingles, and the tools used in their manufacture. Opposite the door was a rough stone chimney resting against the rock which formed two sides of the room. The other two had been constructed of logs, and made tight by chinking with coarse mortar. This shanty, or cave as it was sometimes called, had formerly been used as a camp for choppers, but during two winters Crazy Bill had found shelter there.

When the door was opened that January morning, the first object which met the gaze was the form of the old shingle-maker, lying

stiff and stark upon the floor. A cry of horror escaped the beholders, and, for a moment, they stood as though paralyzed. Dan Messer was first to recover, and decide what must be done. Turning to the man who seemed best able to endure fatigue, he said, "You must get to the village, in some way, and send the 'squire up here. I'll stay, and the rest can stay or go, just as they've a mind to."

"But aint you goin' back to the store?" asked Bill Magoon. "How am I to git my jug?"

"Go without it," was the emphatic reply. "Carry this tea and sugar to your wife," he added, taking up from an old table the same packages he had given Crazy Bill, and which contained nearly all of their original contents.

The man was not yet satisfied. "Your jug has nothing in it," was said, at length, "and what's more, it won't have to-day. Don't talk of that now."

Nothing more was said of the jug, and the owner departed with him who had been ap-

pointed to carry the news to the village. Long before they reached the main road they heard the shouts of "a breaking-out team." When they came up to it, and told their story, a man who lived near volunteered to go on horseback to summon the coroner.

Esquire Randolph was in his office, and made no unnecessary delay in preparing for his ride. Seeing Dr. Hall in the street, he called to him. This he would not have done had Dr. Walton been able to go out. But he was confined to the house by an aggravated attack of his old difficulty.

The time seemed long to those who watched in the cave, and, at last, Dan Messer was left alone. Not a sound save the crackling of the fire which had been kindled on the ample hearth relieved the oppressive stillness.

Once had the old man told his story, and prophesied of the future. "I shall drink till I die, and after death comes the judgment." The lonely watcher remembered these words, and was glad to be roused from his painful

reflections by the sound of approaching footsteps.

Esquire Randolph entered, with the gentlemen who had accompanied him. Few words were spoken. Plenty of food was found in the cupboard by the chimney, and there could be no lack of fuel; so the old man had died of neither hunger nor cold.

An examination of the body followed, and a verdict rendered of "Death caused by disease of the heart, induced by long continued habits of intemperance."

A relative of the deceased lived about two miles distant, and it was thought best to consult him in regard to the final disposal of the body.

Dan Messer again volunteered to remain until further arrangements could be made, but this watch was not a lonely one. A strange attraction drew the people of the town to the hillside camp. A well-beaten path soon marked the way, and many came to look upon the dead face of the man who had so long been known as Crazy Bill.

"There aint a handsomer man anywhere in the parts, than he used to be," said one who had known him before intemperance had set its seal upon him.

"Was he really crazy?" asked an earnest-looking boy.

"Certainly not," was the reply. "His mind hasn't been very strong for a few years, and he said a great many strange things; but he was no more crazy than some other men in town."

"No more so than any one who destroys his senses by drinking," added an old man, who was present at the temperance meeting.

The comments made, and the events recounted in that forest dwelling, were impressive and instructive, revealing much of the character of the speakers, and the history of the dead. Men talked of "William Morgan," not of "Crazy Bill," and of "the promising young farmer," rather than "the old shingle-maker."

The afternoon was fast waning, when, under the direction of the relative to whom al-

lusion has been made, the body was removed. Borne upon a rude litter for nearly a quarter of a mile, it was then placed on a sled, to be carried to the house where the funeral was to be attended.

When all had left, and the echo of their voices had died away in the distance, Dan Messer wended his way slowly homeward, regardless of cold or snow. His groggery was not opened that evening. Those who came for their accustomed drink were invited to the room adjoining the store, which served as parlor, bedroom, and kitchen to the proprietor. Here they were at liberty to remain until thoroughly warmed, and, if anything was wanted in his line of groceries, it was brought; but "no liquor to-night" was his reply to all.

The next day a motley group assembled at the funeral of William Morgan. There were rich and poor, sober men and drunkards.

Dr. Hall was present, although his time was much occupied. An unusual amount of

professional business devolved upon him during Dr. Walton's illness. From the funeral, he went to visit the old doctor himself, who was suffering so severely that even his favorite remedy failed to give relief.

It was of no use to preach total abstinence; but Dr. Hall expressed his opinion decidedly in regard to the nature of the disease, which, having been caused by the use of brandy, could never be cured by it. This opinion was received with little favor, yet the remedies suggested were faithfully applied.

The week passed, and February was ushered in by a blinding snow-storm. No one but the doctor thought of riding. His business was imperative. There was much sickness, and, rather than send out of town for a physician, many employed the "Temperance Doctor" for the first time. Some complained of the strict regimen to which they were subjected, but most yielded without a word of remonstrance.

After a most fatiguing day, Dr. Hall seated himself for an evening at home. Dress-

ing-gown and slippers, new books and the society of his wife, were so seldom enjoyed as to be counted among the luxuries of his life.

"Dear me," exclaimed his wife, as the old knocker sounded, "I do hope you'll not be obliged to go out again to-night."

"I hope not, Annie; but I am servant to the public, and must do my duty," was the reply, as he went into the hall. "Fred Randolph is at home, sick," he said, as he re-entered the room. "I must go there, immediately."

Soon ready, he left the cheerful sitting-room, where his wife watched and waited for his return until the clock struck the hour of midnight.

He found the young man in a high fever, and somewhat delirious. A slight indisposition had detained him from his studies for a few days before leaving the city, and he was in no condition to endure the exposure, consequent upon a journey home.

He reached there, chilled and suffering,

yet determined, not only to keep up, but go out. He soon found this impossible. One moment shivering with ague, the next burning with fever, half crazed with pain, there was no alternative but to be treated as an invalid.

The parents were relieved when Dr. Hall reached there, and, with his usual promptness, prescribed the necessary treatment. But disease had fast hold of its victim, and ordinary remedies failed. It was soon apparent to the observing physician that mental excitement had something to do with the present condition of his patient, and he was not long in discovering that Eugenia Vane was, in some way, responsible for this excitement. As I have before said, it was midnight when he returned home, feeling the need of rest, yet too anxious and troubled to obtain it.

The next morning Fred Randolph was worse. A brain fever seemed inevitable. He talked incessantly; yet, if mad, there was method in his madness, for his words showed

that his thoughts scarcely wandered from one object of interest.

After the doctor's visit, Esquire Randolph, without even informing his wife of his intention, drove to Mrs. Vane's. "I have come to carry you home with me," he said to Genie.

"Such a day as this, Uncle Randolph! I had not dreamed of going out to-day."

"But we need you; Fred has come home sick."

This was news; but, instead of being a reason why she should be invited there, it seemed to her quite the reverse, and she instantly decided not to go.

Before she had given utterance to this decision, her guardian commenced an account of his son's illness. "Haven't you received a letter from him?" he asked, in conclusion.

"Yes, sir," she replied, thinking of the one which had cost her so much anxiety.

"I thought so," said the 'squire, in a tone of satisfaction. "The sight of you will do Fred more good than medicine; so tell your

mother she must spare you to us for the present."

"But, Uncle Randolph," —

"Well, what is it, my dear? You have no scruples on the score of propriety, I hope. If Fred can't come to see you, it's your place to go to him."

"Did he wish you to come for me?" she asked.

"He said nothing about it, and I didn't tell him I was coming. But he repeats your name constantly, and talks of an unanswered letter. Do you owe him a letter?"

"No, sir."

"When did you hear from him last?"

"New Year's Day."

"Not since then!" exclaimed the 'squire, with a perplexed look. "And hasn't Fred asked you to be his wife?"

"Yes, sir; and I think, under the circumstances, he would not care to see me."

"What have you done?" asked the old man, sternly, a new idea flashing across his mind. "Have you refused my boy?"

"I told him that I could never be his wife," said Genie, in a tremulous tone.

Esquire Randolph had through his whole life consulted policy, and it served him still. Reproaches would avail nothing, and, smothering his indignation, he still insisted that his ward should accompany him. "If you prefer not to stay, I will bring you back. The ride will, certainly, do you no harm."

But she was decided, and he was forced to return without her. Again by the bedside of his son, he listened to his incoherent mutterings, until he was convinced that the last letter written by Genie had never been received. As the day advanced, the fever increased, and the sick man called constantly for his old playmate.

"I wish Genie was here," said the mother. "I do believe he would be more quiet if he could see her. Had not you better go down and bring her up?"

"She might have some scruples about coming," replied the 'squire, evasively.

"She need not have. I am sure I could

reason her out of them ; and I never can bear to hear Fred call for her like that," she said, as he again begged that Genie would come to him. "I know he intended to go down to see her last evening."

Dr. Hall made his second visit, looking serious, as he noted the progress of the fever. The habits of the young man were against him. Fast living and late revels were poor preparations for withstanding the attacks of disease.

Mrs. Randolph urged her husband to go for Genie Vane, and, after waiting until evening, he complied. His plans were well matured when he reached the house. Probabilities and possibilities had been considered, and, humiliating as it was, he condescended to plead with his ward.

She was moved by his representations. It seemed cruel to deny his request. After a short consultation with her mother, she consented to accompany her guardian, upon condition that she should return in an hour. This may seem like weakness ; but it was a

weakness of which most women would be guilty.

Not a word escaped her during the short drive, yet more than once she was upon the point of demanding to be carried home. Even after entering the house, her impulse was to fly, and thus escape the toils that seemed closing around her.

Mrs. Randolph entered the room, saying, as she threw her arms around the young girl, "Thank you for coming, dear. I was sure you couldn't refuse."

"But I ought not to have come, auntie, and I am sorry that I did so," was the reply.

"You shall never regret it," said the mother, in a tone of loving assurance. "You will be dearer to us now than ever before," she added, as she led the way to the chamber of her son.

The father opened the door, and beckoned them in. Genie heard her name pronounced in tones of sorrowful tenderness, and involuntarily moved towards the bed. A smile of joy told how welcome was her presence. One

hand clasped hers; with the other, her head was drawn to the pillow. Burning kisses were pressed upon lip and brow, and all sweet terms of endearment lavished upon her.

Happy in bestowing these caresses, Fred Randolph noticed not that they were received passively, and that the cheek he held against his own was blanched as by a sudden fear. "O Genie, darling, why was my letter not answered? It was so long to wait."

"I did answer it," she replied, struggling to free herself from his embrace.

"And I never received it. It must have been lost. But no matter. You are mine, now," he said, folding her more closely to his heart.

"Fred! Fred!" she cried, in a voice of terror, as in an instant all that was implied by those last words flashed upon her.

"Pardon me, darling. I didn't meant to trouble you," he said, allowing her to be seated in a chair that stood by the bed, while

he retained one of her hands in his feverish grasp.

Esquire Randolph was not disappointed in the result of this visit, so unwillingly made. He knew that the lips of his ward were sealed in regard to the contents of her last letter to Fred, and that she would never undeceive him while he lay sick. Beyond that, he was willing to trust time and circumstances.

Mrs. Randolph looked on, well pleased, but Eugenia Vane was impatient to go home. Every moment she remained increased her perplexity. "She had refused" the man before her, and, under ordinary circumstances, no words of his could have changed her decision.

But the scene in which she had been an unwilling participant, the thronging of old memories, and the mute appeal of eyes gazing fondly into her own, half constrained her to accept the implied position, and bide her fate.

Then came thoughts of home, and of the

brother for whom she hoped and feared so much. She *would* be free. It was wrong to sit there and act a lie, dishonorable to flatter hopes which could never be realized. "Uncle Randolph, will you take me home?" she asked, by a sudden effort releasing her hand, and turning from the bed.

"Don't leave me," said Fred, imploringly. "I shall forget as soon as you are gone."

His father, fearing to trust her longer, came to the rescue. "You must let her go, soon, Fred. I promised not to keep her long. Perhaps she will come again to-morrow."

"Will you come?" he asked, pleadingly. "It is such a little while you have been here, Genie dear. Don't leave me now."

The mother joined her entreaties, and again was she persuaded against her own better judgment. For the hour Fred Randolph seemed almost oblivious of pain, and, though his mind sometimes wandered, he was less restless than he had been at any time during the day.

"Uncle Randolph, I can't go to your house to-morrow. I am sorry I went this evening. What am I to do? Fred must know the truth. It is wrong to deceive him."

This was said by Genie during the drive home from the house of her guardian.

"I thank you more than I can tell for having gone with me," was the reply of her companion, ignoring the trouble manifest in every tone of her voice. "You have done a world of good, and I know you'll not endanger Fred's life by telling him that his letter was answered differently from what he expects. Promise me not to do that until he is stronger and better able to bear it," he added, without one thought of pity for her who sat beside him.

The promise was given, and Eugenia Vane breathed more freely as she found herself once more at home. To her mother she gave a detailed account of what had passed during her visit, closing with, "I am so sorry I went."

"You could hardly do otherwise, Genie,"

replied Mrs. Vane. "I am sorry to have your conduct misunderstood, but I must agree with the squire, that it is no time for undeceiving Fred."

Clarence, coming in, looked at his sister sharply. He was thoroughly displeased with the aspect of affairs, and expressed his displeasure strongly.

Poor Genie passed a sleepless night, and rose the next morning with a headache so severe as to unfit her for any employment. She was glad to lie quietly upon the lounge, close her eyes, and try to forget. Starting at every unusual noise, turning restlessly, while the pain in her head increased, the morning wore away. Somewhat past noon she was roused from a light slumber by the sound of bells. "Not here, mother," she said. Mrs. Vane met Esquire Randolph in the hall, and ushered him into the dining-room. As was expected, he called for Genie; but her mother was unwilling to have her disturbed.

"I had hoped to take her home with me,"

he said. "Fred is worse to-day, and wonders that she does not come to him."

He had fancied that he could move the heart of the daughter; but he could not see her, and the mother was inexorable. When the hall-door closed after him, Genie gave a sigh of relief. She could not but be anxious in regard to what had transpired, but she asked no questions.

Clarence came in from school, repeating what he had heard. "Fred Randolph is worse to-day, and Dr. Walton has been up to see him. Everybody says he'll have a hard time with the fever. I guess there has been too much wine, and too little cold water. Cold water for me!" he exclaimed. Then, remembering the aching head of his sister, he knelt by her side, and smoothing back her heavy black hair, left a kiss upon her lips.

Meanwhile, Dr. Hall was perplexed. That the presence of Eugenia Vane would be beneficial to his patient, he well knew; that she had once visited him, he felt assured. Why was not the visit repeated?

He resolved to see the young lady; but after a half hour's call his perplexity was as great as before. It was increased when, the following afternoon, he found Mrs. Vane and her daughter at Esquire Randolph's. It was only an act of neighborly kindness, to relieve the parents from their constant watch, but Genie would never have thought of offering her services as nurse. A long interview between Mrs. Randolph and herself had resulted in her being where she was.

"I will go down myself," she had said, when her husband refused to make any further effort to bring the young girl there. "She will certainly listen to me."

The listening was not all upon one side. The lady herself heard a strange revelation, and no longer wondered at Genie's unwillingness to accompany her. But she was utterly at a loss to understand the reason why Fred's proposal of marriage had been rejected.

That he was fully the equal of her whom he loved, the fond mother never doubted. He certainly was, in social position and future

prospects, and she was sure the time had been when Genie was not indifferent to his love.

An expression of surprise challenged the explanation, which was frankly made. "And you couldn't trust him," said the mother, in a reproachful tone. "I wonder that you thought of it."

Her companion made good her position by citing the example of her father, and of many others who, with the most flattering prospects, had made utter shipwreck of their lives. "Think of Crazy Bill," she said, in conclusion. "I can never forget him."

"Suppose you think of your guardian. He is not a drunkard," said the good woman, whose faith in her husband had never for one moment been shaken.

But she was content to waive discussion, and turned to the object which was uppermost in her mind. She used all her arts of persuasion to induce Genie to accompany her home, pleading as for the life of her son. "Only humor his fancies now," she said. "If

he lives, tell him what you please, when he is stronger."

"If he lives!" This simple phrase had more influence than all which had preceded it. Should he die, the guilt might lie at her door. Her heart gave a quick bound at the thought, and, her mother accompanying her, she decided to go.

She crossed the threshold of the sick-room noiselessly, but the subtle influence of her presence gave notice of her approach. So tenderly, thankfully, was she welcomed, that she wondered at her hesitation in coming. Unmindful of the future, she devoted herself to the task of soothing the sufferer; and, in the success which crowned her efforts, felt amply repaid.

"Better than medicine" was the sight of her face, pale though it was. There was hope of rest. Dr. Hall rejoiced at this, but feared it was purchased too dearly.

Mrs. Vane received his instructions for the night, and herself watched by the bedside of Fred Randolph. Home duties demanded her

attention in the morning, and she prepared to take her leave.

"Genie cannot go, must not go. It will kill Fred if she leaves him." These were the exclamations from father, mother, and brother. It seemed useless to argue the question, and she allowed her daughter to decide.

It cost her a struggle to remain; it might have cost her a more severe struggle to go. She was not sure. Even then she thought of Clarence, and begged her mother to tell him all the circumstances which influenced her decision.

Dr. Walton came again that day, and, seeing her, smiled approvingly. Yet there was little cause to smile in that room, for the fever raged violently, and fears were entertained that it might prove fatal. Dr. Hall expressed his fears frankly, and it was at his request that Dr. Walton had made the necessary effort to visit the young man.

"You can only watch and wait," said the family physician; but the young doctor pro-

posed to do more than that. He was assiduous in his attentions, unwearied in his efforts, devoting what time he could command from other duties. Thus interested in his patient, he yet found time and opportunity to think and care for her who watched beside him. He insisted that she should be allowed to rest, and, when he afterwards found her weeping by herself, he ventured to ask the cause of her tears.

She longed to tell him all her trouble, and ask his counsel; but honor forbade.

"I hope Fred will recover," he said, after finding that his question elicited no reply. "There is a chance for him yet."

He expected this would draw forth some expression of feeling. He was disappointed. "I must get your mother to put you under my care," he added, after a short silence. "I'm not sure but I ought to prescribe for you professionally."

"I am not sick," she replied, for the first time raising her eyes.

In a moment a suspicion of the truth

flashed upon her friend. "You ought not to remain here to-day," he said, taking her hand in his, and counting the quick pulse. "Let me carry you home."

She shook her head.

"Genie, did you wish to come here?"

Again the same mute negative.

"Do you wish to stay?"

"I don't know."

A burst of tears followed this avowal, and the doctor wished Annie was there, with her warm heart and quick wit.

Not long could he linger. Others demanded his care, and, with an anxious look to the young girl, whose sad face haunted him for hours after, he rode away. By the ice-bound river, over hills and through valleys, he sped. Stopping occasionally at comfortable farm-houses, or low, time-worn cottages, he came at length to a lonely dwelling, half hidden by the snow. A narrow path led to the door, which swung heavily on its hinges.

"Mary's dead. You can't do no more for her," was the greeting he received. "Died

half an hour ago," added the mother, without rising from her chair. "She's the last one. I'm glad there aint no more to die."

Upon the bed, which occupied one corner of the room, lay the lifeless form of Mary Stratton. There, too, was the drunken father, one hand resting carelessly upon the head of his child.

It was a sight to sadden any heart. No wonder that the mother had turned away, refusing to look upon the revolting picture. She sat, weaving her body to and fro, with eyes dry as stones, and no traces of tears upon her cheeks.

Three children had died, after long and painful sicknesses, and now the last had found rest in death. There was little reason to mourn for them, yet this mother had mourned and wept until the fountain of her tears seemed exhausted.

"Have you been alone to-day?" asked Dr. Hall.

"Mostly, since morning, till *he* come back," was the reply. "The neighbors are good;

but they can't do always for me, when there's so many sick."

"Have you anything in the house to eat?"

"Got some potatoes. The women brought some bread and meat last night, but *he* ate it all up. I don't care nothin' about that. I aint hungry."

"Can I carry Mary's body into the bedroom?" asked the doctor, not satisfied to have it remain where it was.

"Yes, if you want to," said the mother. "But it won't make no difference. She don't know. He won't strike her now, and if he does, it won't hurt her. I'm glad of that."

These words were spoken in a voice so utterly passionless as to be terrible. It betokened the apathy of that despair which settles upon the heart when life has done its worst, and there is nothing more to fear. This woman had never been beautiful or gifted, but she had been young and happy, looking forward with hope and anticipation.

Dr. Hall had carried the body of the child into the bedroom, straightened the limbs,

closed the eyes, and smoothed back the hair, when the door opened, and Mrs. Halsey entered. She carried a bundle, and her husband followed with a basket.

Proceeding to take off her hood and cloak, she said, "I should have come before if I could, but I've watched three nights within a week, and I had such a headache, Robert said I must rest. I knew the women around here were all tired out. But where's Mary?" she asked, glancing at the bed.

The mother pointed to the adjoining room. Mrs. Halsey was prepared for this, and had brought what she thought might be needed.

"I can't do anything with that man here," she said. "Isn't there a place for him upstairs?"

"A poor place, I guess," replied her husband.

"Good enough for him, any way," was the decision. "I'll go up and see."

Poor place indeed! A low unfinished garret. But it contained an apology for a

bed, which was made to serve as a resting-place for the drunkard.

Then Mrs. Halsey appealed to the wife, who had seemed scarcely to notice what was going on around her. She said she was neither tired nor hungry, and wanted nothing. She could hardly be persuaded to taste the food which had been so kindly provided; yet when the fire was replenished and the room made clean, she expressed her thanks. "I couldn't do it," she replied. "We used to be clean but 'twas a long while ago."

"We'll stay for the present," said Mr. Halsey, in reply to a question from the doctor. "Betsey ought to be abed; but we won't leave Mrs. Stratton alone."

Later, Dan Messer heard his name called loudly by some one in the street. "Who is it?" he asked of a customer looking from the window.

"The Temperance Doctor," replied the man, with a scowl. "He's round, everywhere. No business coming here, though."

Dan Messer heard only the first part of this speech. Before it closed, he was standing by Dr. Hall's sleigh.

"I've just come from Dick Stratton's. Have you seen him to-day?"

"He was here this morning," replied Dan.

"I thought so, for I found him drunk."

"Drunk!" repeated the rumseller. "He told me he wanted some rum to use about his girl; said you ordered it."

"That was a falsehood. I shall never send any man here for liquor," said the doctor, emphatically.

"I'm sorry I let him have it. I refused at first, for I know they've had a hard time. But he told such a fair story, and promised not to drink any of it, that I changed my mind. It's the last liquor he'll ever get, here. How is his girl?"

"Beyond his reach."

The interview closed abruptly. As the doctor drove away, he passed the "Ruggles Farm," observing, as he did so, that a pile of uncut wood lay at the door. He saw, too, the

pale, thin face of Hattie Hosford pressed against the window.

"I wish father was like him," she said to herself, as she caught a glimpse of her friend. Her father was a drunkard.

Strange that one, to whom belongs so holy a name, should ever so disgrace it!

VII.

Oh! fearful and dark is the curse,
That only its victim may know;
Insatiate the terrible thirst,
Undying its torture and woe.

"MOTHER, how much longer is Genie to stay away?"

"I don't know, Clarence. I hope she will be at home soon."

"I hope so too," rejoined the boy; "and if I were in your place, I should send for her to come directly. She ought never to have gone."

Mrs. Vane had been thinking of her daughter, more than half inclined to the opinion of Clarence, that "she ought never to have gone," and quite as impatient for her return as he could be.

"Can I go for her this evening, mother? It is good walking; and she has been there long enough."

Permission was given, with some cautions in regard to his conduct, and Clarence, cap in hand, waited to hear all his mother had to say.

"I know just how they will try and keep Genie," he said, in reply; "but you will see her within an hour. There's Selwyn Barnes, this minute," he added, as the well-known voice of his friend was heard.

The door opened and closed; there was a short consultation, and then Selwyn Barnes entered the house alone, while his horse was driven in the direction of Esquire Randolph's.

"I came to see if I have lost my sister," said Clarence Vane, as Genie met him. "Are you lost to me?" he asked, looking at her earnestly.

"I think not," she replied, with a wan smile.

"Then go home with me now. We can't spare you any longer," he said.

As was expected, the 'squire and his wife made strong objections to this, insisting that Clarence should go home alone. But Genie's wishes accorded with those of her brother. Fred was sleeping; so there were no remonstrances on his part, and, without binding herself by any promises, she sprang into the sleigh.

"Young Barnes' team. I suppose he's waiting at Mrs. Vane's," said Esquire Randolph to himself, as he closed the door.

This thought was not a pleasant one, but it only served to strengthen his resolve that Eugenia Vane should be the wife of his son, despite all "temperance whims." Fred believed her betrothed to him, and she was pledged not to deceive him until he was well. He knew she would not forfeit her word, come what might. As for Clarence, he had never counted on his influence, either for or against the proposed alliance. But had he listened to the conversation between the brother and sister after they left his

house, that evening, he might not have been so sanguine.

Genie was glad to be at home, and, like a child freed from irksome restraint, gave expression to her gladness. Selywn Barnes thought her more charming than ever, and wondered if she really was "engaged to Fred Randolph," as everybody said.

"Now, mother, tell me what I shall do," she said, when their visitor had departed.

"Sleep for to-night, and let the morrow care for itself."

Much-needed advice, received gladly, and obeyed implicitly. Late to breakfast, but no one found fault. It was such a pleasure to have Genie at home, that Clarence was disposed to think kindly of every one, even Fred Randolph. "No wonder he loves her," thought the boy.

For a time she almost forgot the shadow which clouded her life. With its memory came the question, "What shall I do?" Over and over again, had this been asked.

"To-morrow" had come. What would it bring?

Taking up a book, she attempted to read, but her thoughts wandered. In imagination, she heard a familiar voice calling her. Did her heart respond? Was the voice one to which she could listen all her life long, and never tire of its accents? If it grew hoarse with wine, would it still be dear?

"Never! Never! A drunkard's wife! Never!" she exclaimed, rising from her seat, and giving vent to her excited feelings in a wild storm of music.

But the trial was not over. Fred Randolph missed his fair attendant, and insisted that some one should go for her. He grew feverish and restless. Dr. Hall found him worse than he had expected; his parents were troubled, and there seemed no help but from Genie.

The father presented himself before her. "I cannot go," she said. "You must not ask me."

She knew all that would be urged, all that

would appeal to her sympathy, should she yield; and, knowing, feared to trust herself under its influence.

"I cannot go back without you," replied her guardian. "Fred will be worse than ever, before night, if I do, and his life depends upon his being kept quiet. Better never have gone than refuse now."

"It would have been better had I never gone," she said, calmly.

"Have you no heart, Genie? Something has changed you strangely within the last two years. You once had some confidence in my judgment."

Reproaches were usually very poor arguments to use with this young lady; but a consciousness of her inconsistency gave them power. She *had* changed within two years, — grown stronger in her purposes, wiser in her decisions; but she was sadly weak, after all. For the next month her time was divided between her own home and that of Fred Randolph. She was sometimes cheerful, yet often gloomy, always fitful.

Fred regarded this state as the result of over anxiety, and fancied that impaired health affected her spirits. As for himself, Dr. Hall's visits were thought no longer necessary. The old doctor occasionally made a call, half friendly, half professional, at which time some wine was drank, many stories told, and a small amount of advice given.

Notwithstanding this, the mother insisted that her son was not yet able "to bear the crushing of his hopes." "Wait until he is able to go out," she said.

The young man was impatient for the time when he could "go out," although never was invalid upon whom more attention was bestowed. He longed to breathe the bracing air, mount his favorite horse, and mingle with his old companions.

Mr. Gore came up to tell him how much he was missed, and leave a bottle of his choicest wine as proof of his regard. "This is the best medicine in the world, for a man in your condition," he said. "There is nothing

like it for giving tone and vigor to the system."

"I'll take you for my medical adviser so long as I'm not very sick," was the laughing reply. "But in a fever, commend me to the young doctor. He never gives up his patients so long as there is any life left."

The landlord smiled faintly. Praises of Dr. Hall were getting to be most unwelcome; the more so, since this gentleman had again remonstrated with him in regard to the business he was pursuing.

The doctor had no desire to do this; but the entreaties of a widowed mother prevailed. In his interview with Mr. Gore, he had no new arguments to offer; he only repeated the words of lamentation to which he had himself listened.

George Blake was the best singer in the village, leader of the choir, and director at all musical parties. He was also a skilful mechanic, commanding high wages, and providing well for his mother, who was wholly dependent upon him. Following the exam-

ple of those about him, and joining in their conviviality, he became a lover of intoxicating drinks. He was *not* a drunkard; that would be too harsh a term to apply to him; but he sometimes neglected his business for days together, spending his time in riding, fishing, or rollicking with a set of jolly fellows.

A few times in his life he had been intoxicated, but he usually drank only enough to produce a pleasurable glow of feeling, and never even so much as this, unless in company. Upon one occasion, having taken a glass too much, he had publicly disgraced himself, and so mortified was he at this, that he vowed to drink no more for a year.

His mother, long anxious, rejoiced, while his companions jeered. But ridicule was powerless. His pledge was unbroken. At the close of the year, while passing the Eagle House with two of his companions, one said, "Let us go in, come, your time is up. Celebrate your freedom."

"Not this evening," was the reply. "I'm not sure but I shall swear off altogether."

"What's the use?" asked the first speaker. "You may as well enjoy life as you go along."

"I believe I am enjoying life pretty well, as it is."

"Well, no matter about that now. Come in and have a glass of wine."

"I have something else to do," replied the young man, as he walked on, leaving his friends to enter the hotel.

Mr. Gore had watched the trio from a window. "Why didn't Blake come with you?" he asked. "I should think he'd be tired of drinking cold water by this time."

"He doesn't seem to be," was the reply. "He says he's not sure but he shall swear off altogether."

This troubled the landlord. George Blake had been one of his most welcome guests, and, moreover, he was getting sensitive in regard to public opinion. It was worth an effort to lure him back. "Because he drank too much once, it is no sign he should never drink

again," he said, "I suppose we all believe in temperance; I certainly do, for one; but I am sorry to see people unreasonable."

The following week the village choir was invited to meet at the Eagle House, and, of course, the leader was expected to be present. He hesitated a little, but finally decided to accept the invitation, confident of his own strength. Even should he see fit to drink a glass of wine, he was at liberty to do so, since he had bound himself by no new pledge.

The evening arrived. There was quite a large party in addition to the choir, and everything moved on pleasantly. Refreshments were served, and with them wine, of which nearly all partook. George Blake, exhilarated with singing, urged by his companions, and still more by the demands of appetite, put the glass to his lips.

Some exulted, but their exultation was soon turned to sorrow. One glass would not satisfy. Another and another was drained, until reason lost its sway. No one was

willing that Mrs. Blake should see her son in such a condition, and a room was provided where he might sleep off the effects of the liquor.

Morning came, and with it consciousness. Slowly the events of the preceding evening were recalled, and, before the village gave signs of waking from its sleep, George Blake returned home. He could not conceal the truth from his mother. She saw it all at a glance.

"It is of no use to talk to me," he said. "I know how miserable I have made myself. Fool that I was to go there! My head must have grown weak, or I should have stopped when I had drunk one glass. I acted like an insane man."

Then he upbraided himself, while his mother listened hopelessly.

And Mr. Gore,—what cared he? His plans had been well laid, and their success was all he could desire. But, for once, he had some regrets. He never intended that any man should become intoxicated in his

house. It would injure its respectability, and this affair might be particularly discreditable. He wished he had allowed George Blake to go on as he pleased. As for the mother, he never troubled himself about the family affairs of others.

The "choir meeting" was generally talked of, and, before night, Dr. Hall had heard the particulars of the wine-drinking. He had watched the young man closely during the preceding year, and was both grieved and indignant that he had thus fallen.

"I've not the slightest doubt that the choir was invited there for the express purpose of getting George back to his old habits," said the doctor to his wife. "Indeed, Charles Dunn told me that was the case, and he ought to know."

"Poor Mrs. Blake will be utterly prostrated by this," he added.

"I wish we could help her," rejoined the wife. "I'd go to Mr. Gore myself, and ask him not to sell liquor to her son, if I thought it would do any good."

"No use in that," was the reply. "Every word that is said about temperance only makes him more determined in his opposition, and he will sell liquor as long as he can find a customer. He cares little who suffers, if he only makes money."

"He deserves to be punished. I wish there was some law to reach his case."

"There is just the trouble, Annie. He is *protected* by law, instead of being *punished*. He has paid for a license, and has a legal right to pursue his business."

"I wonder why some wretch doesn't buy a license to commit robbery. I should rather lose my money than my friends."

Mr. Gore would have thought this speech very foolish; all the more so from having been uttered by a woman; but the good man who heard it smiled approvingly upon his enthusiastic little wife. "Rumsellers would be likely to receive their deserts, were you judge of the land; but, as you are not, you had better call upon Mrs. Blake and give her the benefit of your sympathy."

"But you must do something yourself. Don't let George Blake go on drinking. Why don't you go over and talk with Mr. Manning? It is time for him to speak."

"Perhaps he wouldn't speak on our side. What then, Annie?"

"Convince him of his error, and convert him to the true faith. A Christian minister ought to talk on the side of temperance."

"I'm not sure but you can have the more influence. Perhaps you had better call at the parsonage on your way to Mrs. Blake's."

"No, husband, I am not ambitious to try my skill in learned argument; but I really think you had better see Mr. Manning."

Upon consideration, the doctor accepted the suggestion of his wife, and started for the parsonage.

Mr. Manning had been settled in this village for several years, and was universally beloved and respected. Both nature and circumstances had made him conservative, but he was a good man, and, once convinced of his duty, labored faithfully to perform it.

He had been a silent, but by no means indifferent, observer of the influences which had been at work, in his parish, upon the subject of temperance. But, condemning the excessive use of intoxicating liquors, and deploring the misery resulting therefrom, he was not yet convinced of the necessity of total abstinence.

Dr. Hall stated frankly the object of his visit, and received a cordial welcome. "Perhaps I shall not agree with you; but I shall be glad to discuss the question," said Mr. Manning.

So the two seated themselves in the pleasant study, and talked calmly but earnestly of this great question. The doctor, considering facts the strongest arguments, mentioned the names of several persons with whom moderate drinking was an impossibility. "They must abstain wholly, or drink to drunkenness," he said.

"There can be no question in regard to their duty," replied Mr. Manning. "Such men should never taste a drop of anything

which can intoxicate. But I cannot understand such a temperament."

"Probably not; but we are obliged to believe many things we never fully understand. Then you are willing to admit that total abstinence is necessary to some people?"

"It must be, if you are right in your estimate of their powers of self-control."

"There is no mistake about that. They acknowledge it themselves."

"Then, why will they persist in drinking?"

"For the same reason that men continue the practice of any other sin. It affords a momentary gratification, and the evil —"

"Allow me to interrupt you, doctor. Do you believe the use of intoxicating liquors to be a sin?"

"Most certainly I do," was the emphatic reply. "It is the great sin of the age."

Mr. Manning was silent, and his companion waited for him to resume the conversation. "I had never thought of it in this light," he said, at length. "It is not a sin to

eat and drink what is necessary for the support of our bodies."

"Certainly not; and whenever intoxicating liquor is necessary for such a purpose, the drinking of it will be no sin. But how many moderate drinkers have any such excuse to offer? They drink because their appetite craves it, and not because they are made stronger or better by so doing. No man in health requires such stimulus, except upon extraordinary occasions, such as would occur but seldom in one's lifetime."

"I believe I must appeal to facts, doctor. We have men in town who have drunk moderately, for thirty, forty, and a few for fifty years, but they are among our best citizens. They claim that they have lived longer and worked better for the use of stimulants."

"As they are ignorant of what they would have done under other circumstances, they are hardly qualified to make such an assertion. I undertake to say they would have been better men, better husbands and fa-

thers, and better citizens, had they never seen a drop of intoxicating liquor."

"You are ignorant of what they would have done under different circumstances," said Mr. Manning, quoting the doctor's own words.

"True; but I know some things they would *not* have done," was the reply.

"Please enumerate them."

"They would not, by their example, have encouraged intemperance; and they would not have transmitted to their children vitiated appetites and tendencies."

"I am sure those men have no thought of encouraging intemperance; they despise a drunkard quite as much as you can."

"Then, why do they help to make drunkards? They say drinking is respectable and beneficial."

"Not drinking to excess, doctor."

"Excess is a very indefinite term," was the reply. "It means one thing with one person, and quite a different thing with another. There are drunkards in town who use less

intoxicating liquor than some of our most respected citizens."

Mr. Manning could hardly accept that assertion; but his companion knew whereof he affirmed. As the discussion proceeded, it became more animated, and the doctor waxed eloquent. He denounced wine-drinking as the fruitful source of drunkenness. "Do you suppose there is a man who frequents Dan Messer's groggery, but would prefer wine and brandy to the cheaper liquor with which he is compelled to satisfy his appetite?" he asked. "There is not one."

After a time, the clergyman made no attempt to reply to either argument or assertion. He was only a listener.

"Something must be done to save our young men," said Dr. Hall, as he rose to take his leave. "I hope you will help me in the work."

"I will try to do my duty, doctor. If I have been wrong in this matter, I pray God to set me right."

Mrs. Hall had been at home more than an

hour when her husband returned. "How did you find Mrs. Blake?" he asked.

"As I expected, prostrated with grief," was the reply.

"Did you see George?"

"No. His mother said he saw me coming, and left the room. But she thinks he would see you, and be influenced by you. She wishes you to go over and talk with him. And now tell me of Mr. Manning. Did he talk on our side?"

"Not exactly; but I have strong hopes that he will. He said he would give attention to the subject."

The next morning, Dr. Hall called at Mrs. Blake's. The poor woman was, indeed, prostrated with grief. George had not left the house since he entered it on his return from the hotel. He felt himself degraded and was unwilling to be seen. When persuaded to meet the doctor, he replied to his salutation without raising his eyes.

"If I had stopped after taking one glass, there would have been no trouble," he said,

when somewhat reassured by the kind words of his friend.

"Ah, George, you should have stopped before taking one glass. You should have abstained altogether."

"That is the truth, doctor. I wanted the second glass more than the first; and now, if it was not for mother, I should be drunk before night."

"Your mother is not the only one who cares for you."

"She will be if I go on, and I am afraid I shall."

"Go on drinking liquor! You cannot do that, George. Your life is worth too much for that."

"I tell you, doctor, you don't know anything about this burning thirst for liquor. I never dreamed I had it until that evening at Gore's. I found it out then, and there is no safety for me now," exclaimed the young man, pacing the floor nervously.

"Sign our total abstinence pledge and you will be safe," was the reply.

"Sign it and break it! Then I should be doubly guilty."

"But you would not break your pledge. You have too much honor for that."

"I don't know. I shouldn't intend to break it; but temptation will be sure to meet me, and I am very weak. I believe in total abstinence. You are right in preaching that; but you must get men to stop selling liquor before you'll make any great headway."

"If they had no customers they would be obliged to stop selling."

"Yes; but no man ever sold liquor who did not make an effort to *get* customers. If anybody tries to be temperate, there'll be some way contrived to make him drink."

George Blake realized his position, but could not be induced to sign the pledge. His mother followed their visitor to the door, and asked him to see Mr. Gore. "Tell him George is my only earthly stay, and entreat him not to let him have liquor. He has boys of his own; implore him, by the love he has for them, to have mercy upon me." Much

more than this she said, each word expressive of fear or sorrow.

"I will go to Mr. Gore; but I fear it will do no good," was the reply to her appeals. "He cares little for the hearts he is breaking."

It would be useless to recount the particulars of this interview. The result was what the doctor expected. The landlord was only more determined "to sell as much liquor as possible."

It was but a few days after this that he called upon Fred Randolph. Upon taking his leave he expressed a hope that his might be the second house at which he would call. "I know I can't expect to be first," he said, with a laugh.

The young man was glad to be left at liberty to resume the train of thought which had been interrupted by his visitor. "I wish I had that lost letter," he said to himself. "I should know by that. If Genie loves me —" He paused here, and mentally erased that little conditional word. He would not

allow himself to doubt. She might be capricious, cold, and even unreasonable, but it must be that she loved him.

Thus he reasoned, but a review of the past few weeks afforded small comfort to an exacting lover. "Did Genie wish to come here when I was first taken sick?" he asked his mother when she came into the room.

"Why, Fred, what made you think of that? Your father went after her, and I never heard him say anything about it."

This gave him no satisfaction. "I wish I had that letter," he said again to himself; and, with a slight hope that it might be found, he addressed a note to his companion in study, asking that any letters belonging to him might be forwarded immediately.

In a few days a package was received, and with it a note containing the following sentences, —

"One of these letters came to hand the day after you left; but I judged from the post-mark that to remail it would be but 'sending coals to Newcastle.' Perhaps its contents are

of that description which never grow old. If so, I congratulate you."

Here was the letter he had been so anxious to see; but now that it lay before him, he hesitated to open it.

He had made his first visit at Mrs. Vane's, and been treated with the utmost kindness. Yet, during that visit, despite all that was pleasant, he found himself wondering if Genie really loved him.

This letter would give him some definite assistance. It was read. Yet still he wondered.

"I can never be your wife, Fred." This was sufficiently explicit, but no reason was given for the decision. Only the concluding lines furnished a clue to what this might be. The reader resolved to know if his suspicions were correct; but it was necessary for him to wait until the following day.

Had the letter arrived an hour sooner, there might have been an awkward meeting in the parlor of Mrs. Vane. Esquire Randolph had a long interview with his ward, upon

strictly private business, which business concerned his son more than himself, and the young lady more than either.

"I should not be here, Genie," he said, "if I did not believe that you really love Fred, and that your own happiness is at stake as well as his. Let us talk the matter over calmly, and remember, my dear girl, that I have your own best interest at heart."

Following this, to which Eugenia Vane made but short reply, was quite a lengthy argument to prove that wine-drinking was not only harmless, but beneficial. Then he asserted that wine-drinkers were in no danger of becoming drunkards.

"Isn't that the way all drunkards commence?" asked the young girl.

"No, indeed. Plenty of them commence and end with new rum."

"I suppose that is because they can't afford to buy wine and brandy. But I am sure that a great many commence with drinking wine."

"I grant that some do; but it does not follow that every wine-drinker will be a drunk-

ard. There is our good minister, for instance, and myself, with a great many others I could name. We have always been temperate men."

Genie bowed assent, and the 'squire hoped that point was settled. He had too much at stake to lose the least advantage.

The agitation of the temperance question had made him more observant of the habits of those about him, his own family as well as others; and he had sometimes thought that Fred, during his convalescence, indulged more freely in wine than was necessary. He feared, too, that the gratification of appetite had something to do with this; and, although he would not for a moment harbor a fear in regard to the habits of his son, he considered it essential that his wife should be a woman of decided principles.

In the course of the conversation Genie spoke of Mrs. Hosford, and of the poverty to which she had been reduced.

"And do you fear such a future for your-

self should you marry my son?" asked her guardian.

"I certainly should fear it," was the reply.

"Mr. Hosford was only a wine-drinker."

"You shall be secure against any such fate. I will guarantee that, Genie."

"You cannot tell that, Uncle Randolph."

"I can make sure that you shall never want for anything which money can buy."

"Money will not buy happiness. I cannot be a drunkard's wife."

"Why will you insist upon using that expression in this connection? There is no possibility of such a fate being in store for you."

"I must make sure that there is not."

"What would you have?" at length asked the squire, somewhat impatiently. "Do you wish Fred to promise never to drink another glass of wine?"

"No, Uncle Randolph. He would probably break the promise the first opportunity. I would have him know the contents of the letter he has never received."

"You must not tell him that. It will ruin him. Is there no voice in your heart which pleads for him?"

"There is such a voice," said the young girl, sadly.

"Then listen to its pleadings."

"I dare not."

"But your influence, Genie. Think of that. Fred loves you too well to do anything which would make you unhappy."

Many a woman, trusting to such influence, has wrecked her happiness for time and eternity; but Eugenia Vane was firm. Only one concession did she make. She promised to keep silence in regard to the contents of the lost letter for one week longer.

But the letter had already spoken for itself, and the next morning Fred Randolph visited the writer. Soon flattering himself that no want of affection had prompted the denial of his hopes, he fancied all scruples would be easily overcome. "Is it possible, Genie, that you have become such a fanatic upon this point?" he asked. "Why, three-quarters of

the men in the country are no more temperate than I. When we are married I shall have no will but yours. If you say teetotal, then teetotal it shall be."

This was said lightly, and evidently intended to settle the whole difficulty. But he soon found that, with his companion, this was a serious matter, something more than a girl's whim, to be set aside with a word. He said many things which his father had said the previous evening, but Genie was fortified against all. He then reproached her with having deceived him during the weeks of his sickness.

"Why did you allow me to cherish a delusive hope?" he asked. "Why make yourself dearer, that the blow might be more severe?"

"I could not help it, Fred; indeed I could not," he replied, weeping. "I know it was wrong, but —"

Here he made haste to comfort her; condemning himself for his harshness. He could easily believe that she had acted against her own judgment, and many things which had

seemed strange to him were now easily understood.

"Genie, darling, did I think as you do upon this matter of temperance, would you be my wife?"

To this question Fred Randolph received such a reply as tempted him to forswear his cups on the instant. "Give me time to consider this," he said; "so slight a cause ought not to separate us."

Never until that morning had Eugenia Vane known how fondly she had loved this man. His dependence upon her during the weeks of his illness, the constant expression of his affection, and the tenderness he manifested for her even in his disappointment,—all increased her regard for him.

Quick to see this, he allowed himself to hope against all assurance and left her with a smile upon his lips.

Genie betook herself to solitude. She knew she had acted wisely; but this thought could not still the clamorings of her heart. Some tears would flow, some regrets intrude them-

selves, and the struggle to regain composure was long and severe.

Abstinence or intemperance, wine or water, seemed at this time to be the watchwords through the town. Previous to this, many good citizens had deplored the evils of drunkenness, but few had taken the trouble to trace out its causes. "Weak-headed" was the term generally applied to those who "drank more than was good for them."

George Blake's unfortunate fall gave a new impetus to the discussion, and there were many who said boldly that "the Eagle House was worse than Dan Messer's any time." The proprietor was troubled, and took counsel of his friend, Esquire Randolph.

"This excitement will soon blow over," was the comforting assurance; but time proved that this was a mistaken prophecy. The persistent talking of Dr. Hall did much to keep the subject before the people, and startling events seemed every day occurring, which added force to his arguments.

The 'squire had never been so much excited

in regard to any public question, and not a drunkard in town but claimed him as "on our side." An amusing incident, illustrative of this point is well worth relating.

A group of men were gathered in the village store when Esquire Randolph improved the opportunity to express his sentiments. In the crowd was a miserable drunkard, even then partially intoxicated, who listened eagerly and in various ways testified his admiration for the speaker.

At length, when the gentleman closed his remarks, the poor drunkard, who fully endorsed what he had said, exclaimed, with the utmost coolness, "We know when we've drank enough, don't we, 'squire?"

The effect of this can be better imagined than described. Peal after peal of laughter filled the room, the discomfited "'squire" vainly trying to preserve an appearance of dignified indifference.

It was a severe mortification, but none the less did he, at home and abroad, ridicule the idea of pledges and total abstinence. His son

felt this influence, and resolved to win a bride by no unmanly concessions.

Yet people remarked that his visits at the Eagle House were less frequent than formerly, and, upon a few occasions, he had been heard to talk temperance nearly as well as his father.

Mr. Gore missed him; but family matters were beginning to absorb his attention. "Husband, you had better look after Carl, a little," said his wife.

"Why what is the matter with the little Dutchman?" he asked, laughing.

"The matter is that he drinks every drop of liquor that comes in his way," was the reply. "It is impossible for me to keep wine on the sideboard or in the cupboard."

"He drank so much last night, that I had to help him to bed; and it wasn't the first time," added Ellis, the second son.

The father remembered the words of Mrs. Hosford. Had retribution commenced? He tried to persuade himself that the affair had been overstated.

Carl, coming in, was questioned of his

habits, and, like a spoiled child as he was, commenced crying. Proof was too strong to admit of denial, and he was forced to acknowledge that he sometimes drank out of the bottle and it made his head swim.

"There isn't a drunkard in town likes hard cider better than he does," said Ellis, who, now that his brother was up for trial, determined to tell the whole truth.

Mr. Gore was startled, and commenced a severe reprimand, when he was interrupted. "I don't drink all the wine," said Carl; "Jotham and Ellis drink too."

"I have tasted of the wine, sometimes," rejoined Ellis; "but I never drink much; not half what Carl does."

The landlord was called for in the bar-room. "I'll attend to this when I have more time," he said. "For the present remember that you are not to taste any kind of liquor. It never was made for boys to drink."

"I wonder if it's any better for men than for boys," said Carl, when the door was

closed. "But 't'was real mean for you to tell of me, Ellis."

"I shouldn't said anything if mother hadn't told first, and known you were pretty tipsy last night. You'll be as bad as Bill Magoon if you don't look out. I heard somebody say he was dead drunk before he was ten years old."

"Well, if liquor is such bad stuff, I don't see what makes father sell it."

"You can't be very bright if you don't know the reason for that. He sells it to make money."

VIII.

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging:"

Thus runneth the proverb as spoken of old;

Spoken in wisdom, dimly revealing

A sorrow and anguish no words can unfold.

It was a pleasant Sabbath in the early spring, when a large congregation had assembled in the village church, waiting to be taught the truths of God's Holy Word.

After the usual opening exercises, Mr. Manning announced the text for the morning service: "Proverbs, twelfth chapter and last verse."

Esquire Randolph always liked texts from Proverbs, — they were so practical. As may be inferred from the preceding pages, he was not a religious man, and had a fancy for sermons containing something of worldly wisdom. He had just time to congratulate

himself upon the prospect of hearing something unusually interesting, when these words fell upon his ear: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

Some of the congregation wondered that "the minister" should dare make such an assertion, even though it was first uttered by the wise man. Many thought it one of those passages which should be passed over in silence, while a few heard for the first time that there were such words in the Bible.

Mr. Manning never apologized for preaching the truth, and no one would have supposed, from his manner, that he was presenting a subject calculated to rouse opposition. Calmly and deliberately, yet earnestly, was each word spoken. Heads were bowed, but there were no sleepers; eyes wandered, but the attention of all was firmly held. Well had the preacher redeemed his promise to give this matter prayerful attention.

During the intermission, the merits of the sermon were freely discussed. "I don't know

nothing what to say about it," replied good Deacon Field, whose opinion had been asked. "It was the Bible from beginning to end, and it won't do to find fault with that. I rather guess, friends, that it's time for us to find out our duty, and then do it."

Esquire Randolph had lost his faith in Proverbs, and was overheard saying to his wife that "clergymen should confine their preaching to the gospel. Everything else tends to produce dissatisfaction."

Mr. Gore, who prided himself upon being a constant attendant at church, thought of his boys through the whole sermon, and, at the close of the services, hastened home, without stopping to speak with any one.

Dr. Hall, unfortunately, was obliged to visit patients that morning, so that he would have lost the sermon, had not his wife taken upon herself the duty of a reporter. "It is just what is needed," she said. "Every man, woman, and child in town ought to have heard it. I couldn't help wishing that Fred Randolph had remained at home a few weeks

longer. Mr. Manning's words might have more influence than yours."

"There is need enough of it, if all stories are true," was the reply; "but his father's influence will counterbalance all other."

That word influence served to recall a remark in the sermon which had before been forgotten, and which furnished a new starting-point for conversation.

The next day, Mr. Manning took occasion to call upon the doctor and thank him for having brought this subject to his immediate notice. "I shall not be surprised if the preaching of yesterday results in my dismissal; but I shall never regret it, come what may. It is time, as you said, that something be done to save our young men; you have worked almost alone; now I will help you."

"I shall work better with your help, and I think you can count upon the support of a majority of your church," said the doctor, who was himself a most exemplary member.

He did not speak without knowledge. A majority of the church sustained their pastor;

but there was a minority who felt that a great mistake had been made in bringing this matter into the pulpit.

Never since Mr. Manning's settlement had there been so much said in regard to the preaching of the gospel. No subject would bear comparison with that, and nothing else must be allowed to usurp its place. Even Dr. Walton, who seldom attended a religious meeting of any kind, shook his head gravely while listening to a report of that sermon.

But to one hearer it was a word fitly spoken. George Blake was still hesitating, sometimes yielding to temptation, and sometimes resisting. It needed just that sermon to save him. Monday evening a new name was enrolled upon the total abstinence pledge, and Mr. Gore's plans, in one direction, were thwarted.

George Blake made no secret of what he had done; and two days after, as Dr. Hall was passing the home of Mrs. Halsey, she called after him to know if the good news

was true. "Robert heard of it this morning, but I was afraid of some mistake."

"No mistake this time," was the reply. "Our cause is gaining ground. We are a great ways in advance of where we were when we spent that night at Tim Allen's."

"I know that; but I've seen misery enough this last winter to make me feel almost discouraged. There's John Hosford; he grows worse and worse. I went over to see his wife yesterday, and, from my heart, I pity them all. That woman can't live long as she is now. She works beyond her strength; but that isn't the worst of it. A heavy heart is worse than hard work."

"Did you see Mr. Hosford?" asked the doctor.

"He was at work on some wood near the door when I drove up; but that was all I saw of him. Robert says he is drunk more than half of the time. Gore must have a pretty large bill against him by this time; but I suppose he thinks he can take the cow and what hay there is."

Dr. Hall had not lost his interest in the tenants of the Ruggles Farm, and he knew their situation, perhaps, better than any one else. Mr. Hosford avoided him; but to the other members of the family his visits were always welcome. He had thought of calling there on his way home, and Mrs. Halsey's words decided him.

He found Mrs. Hosford looking more worn and wretched than he had before seen her. A large pile of work was upon the table, and her children were seated around her, industriously braiding straw. "I am very glad to see you," she said, as he entered; but no smile of welcome lighted up her face. The children seemed more cheerful, and the younger ones chatted pleasantly with their friend, until, at a sign from her mother, Hattie called them to another room.

"You will be tired of hearing my troubles, doctor," said the unhappy woman; "but I have no one else to tell, and I shall die if I cannot speak."

"Never fear my being tired," was the reply. "Only tell me how I can help you."

"I don't know as any one can help me; but I must have some advice. I can never live through another three months like the past, and last night was more dreadful than all." Here she paused, as though wanting strength for the recital. "Perhaps I ought not to tell you," she said, hesitatingly. "I may tax your patience too severely."

"Tell me all, as you would tell a brother, and be assured of my sympathy," said the listener.

She resumed her story. "My husband was about home all day yesterday, and I knew he was entirely out of money. He asked me for some just before Mrs. Halsey came in, and I refused to give it to him. After she was gone, he commanded me to give him what money I had; but I told him that he should never have the money I earn to spend for liquor."

"You were right in that," said the doctor, emphatically.

"I know I was right; but right is not always the conqueror, as I have learned, to my sorrow. He was so cross that I sent the children upstairs out of the way, and he was so busy looking for the money that he didn't mind it at first. But just after dark he called them all down, and told them not to stir from the room without his permission. They looked at me, but their father was so crazy with passion and thirst that I dared not interfere. When it got to be so late that no one was passing, he put them all out of doors, and told them if they made a noise he would certainly kill their mother. Then he ordered me to give up my money, and said the children should never come in until I did. I refused, although I knew they would suffer with the cold; but, after an hour had passed, I could bear it no longer. I gave him every cent of money in my possession, and thus bought the privilege of caring for my children."

Dr. Hall had listened to many a sad story;

but this, told with great effort and half-stifled sobs, seemed to him saddest of all.

"Where is Mr. Hosford?" he asked.

"Gone to a neighbor's to work this afternoon."

"Has he spent the money you gave him?"

"I presume it was paid to Mr. Gore this morning. He went to the village early; but I think he is somewhat ashamed of his conduct, for he drank less than usual after his return, and he was sober when he left home. He had no liquor yesterday," she added, in reply to a question asked by the doctor.

"Would it be of any use for me to offer him the pledge?"

"I am afraid not," replied the wife. "He seems perfectly desperate. Nothing but the hand of God can arrest him. My remonstrances are worse than useless, and I must now do what is best for my children. I voluntarily took upon myself the vows which bind me to my husband, and I recognize all their sacred obligations; but I cannot see my children ruined."

"Do you propose to leave your husband?" asked her friend.

"I must leave him," was the reply. "Death will soon separate us, unless there is some change in my life. I have tried to keep up strength and courage, but they are fast failing me. I can work; but I cannot endure this constant fear and apprehension. How shall I tell my husband?"

Here was where she wished advice. She would do everything reasonable for his comfort, but she must have a home for herself and children, uncursed by the presence of a drunkard. After some consultation in regard to what was best to be done, the children were recalled, and Dr. Hall took his leave.

As he rode along, it was not strange that his thoughts should revert to this family, and that various plans for aiding them should be presented to his mind. But upon reaching home the whole matter was referred to his wife, who was sure the best thing would be to find a house for Mrs. Hosford near the village.

"We must save Mr. Hosford," she exclaimed, after a pause. "It will never do to turn him out upon the world without making another effort to reclaim him. I've a great mind to go down there myself, and talk to him. Would it do any good?"

"I think not, and it might do harm. Wait until his wife and children are no longer in his power, and then you may talk to him as much as you please."

Mrs. Hosford was right in supposing that her hard-earned money was paid to the landlord of the Eagle House. It was endorsed upon her husband's liquor bill; but there was a large balance still due.

Mr. Gore had delayed urging the payment of this, or taking any measures to secure it. The liquor had been sold against such strong remonstrance that he was unwilling to have anything more said in regard to it. But Mr. Hosford could see that his presence was less welcome than it had been the first of the year, and he began to fear that he should be refused further credit. His excessive drinking had

wholly unfitted him for labor, and there was no way for him to obtain money except from his wife. Hence the cruel measures to which he had resorted.

Returning that evening from the house of his neighbor, he had some compunctions of conscience for his wickedness, and some feelings of shame for his unmanly conduct. But the moment he reached home he drowned these feelings in a potation of brandy, and was then prepared to re-enact the scenes of the previous night, had circumstances tempted him.

Mr. Manning's sermon and George Blake's pledge had been the topics of conversation during the afternoon; and the memory of this, instead of having any good effect, only tended to irritate him. As usual with a drunkard in such a frame of mind, he vented his spleen upon his unoffending wife and children.

"O mother, let's go away somewhere, and leave father," said Hattie when he was, at last, asleep. "I'm afraid he'll kill us all."

"We will go, darling," was the reply.

They did go. The long-suffering love of

woman could endure no more; and kindly, yet firmly, Mrs. Hosford told her husband of her decision. This was done at a time when he was partially sober, and he uttered no reproaches. "I don't blame you," he said, after a short pause. "I have dragged you down low enough. Take the children and do with them as you please. I have no right to the name of husband or father."

"O John, if you would only give up drinking we might yet be happy!" said the wife, her heart moved to tenderness.

"I know we might, but it is useless to expect it. I came here resolved to retrieve my life; but I have failed. It is too late now to think of reform."

This man realized his degradation, and acknowledged its cause; but these words had scarcely died upon his lips when he turned again to the maddening drink.

If Mrs. Hosford had any misgivings in regard to her proposed course, this banished them, and preparations for a change of homes were made as speedily as possible. A house

near the village was rented, and the scanty furniture packed.

Whatever were the husband's plans, he said nothing in regard to them; but his wife was still mindful of his comfort. She worked through the whole night to put his clothes in the best possible order. Then food was prepared, sufficient to last him for several days, and a bed left upon which he could rest.

The moving was over, thanks to Robert Halsey, and Mrs. Hosford was comfortably settled. Mr. Gore had been an interested observer of this change, and even drove down to the Ruggles Farm to make some inquiries. The cow was just being led from the barn, and to his astonishment he was told that it belonged to Dr. Hall.

"And the hay?"

"That goes with the cow," was the reply.

The shrewd landlord had been outwitted, and no one enjoyed the discomfiture more than his brother rumseller, Dan Messer. "Served him right," was Dan's verdict. "Glad of it. I know how he manœuvres to get custom."

Guess he didn't make much out of that job."

"Pretty good liquor he lost, too," said an old toper. "Hosford don't drink any of your mean stuff. He's a gentleman; drinks with the 'squire and talks Latin."

"Just as good as the 'squire, too," responded Dan. "The Lord made him up so he can't drink liquor so coolly; that's all the difference."

"Whew!" said one of the bystanders. "'Twon't do to talk that in this town. The 'squire's a respectable man, but he got a little too much sermon last Sunday. They say Parson Manning has gone into partnership with the Temperance Doctor. We shall have hot work now. Lucky you've got your license, Dan."

"Perhaps so. Any way, I think more of Mr. Manning than I did last week. I never did believe in drinking Christians. The doctor's one of the right sort. Preaching and practice go together with him."

"His preaching don't seem to have much effect upon you."

"That's more than you know," was the reply, as the speaker turned away.

Dr. Hall's preaching had produced an effect upon Dan Messer. True, he had not given up his business, but his opinion had been greatly modified since the temperance meeting when he announced his determination to sell liquor to all who wanted it. There were some men to whom he utterly refused to sell. Dick Stratton had begged and implored in vain for only one drink. "I'll not help you kill your wife, now your children are all gone," said Dan.

Mrs. Hosford had been in her new home for a week when she was told that her husband had left town. One of their neighbors had carried him about two miles to take the stage. It was a great comfort to know thus much,—to be sure that she would not be troubled by his presence.

She never expected to be happy in her worse than widowed condition, but the cheerfulness of her children did much to soften her grief. Friends proffered sympathy

and assistance, while the avails of her labor were sufficient to meet the wants of her family. She gained the respect and esteem of the whole community, even of those who were at first disposed to censure her.

Only one person in the village was troubled by her presence. This was Mr. Gore. He never saw her without wishing he could roll back the wheels of time, and live over again that New Year's morning when he had tempted her husband to his ruin.

Evil had come to him since then. The prophecy of the drunkard's wife tended to its fulfilment. Little Carl, the brightest and dearest of those who called him father, had more than once been seen thoroughly intoxicated. In vain had he expostulated, reprimanded, and punished. Carl would and did drink any kind of liquor that came in his way.

"The boy must have a natural taste for it," said Mr. Gore to his wife; and he spoke the truth, yet without comprehending its full force. This taste had come to his son by

direct inheritance; but circumstances had developed it and given notice of its presence.

He had always been allowed to "sip a little," and the father had often laughed to see the evident relish with which he drained the nearly empty glasses that were offered him. During the days of weakness succeeding that in which he had nearly lost his life by drowning, wine was given him almost constantly, Dr. Walton assuring the parents that it was just what he needed.

At first the knowledge of this infirmity was confined to his family, but after a time it was whispered among his school-mates. Clarence Vane, who had a peculiar interest in this boy whose life he had saved, learned it from his own conversation. He attempted to reason with him and warn him of his danger; but he was too young to comprehend it. "Don't you like wine, Clarence?" he asked.

"Yes, just as well as you do," was the reply.

"Then why don't you drink it?"

"Because it will make me a drunkard."

"That's just what father says," responded the boy; "but he sells it all the time, and I guess it won't hurt me much. When I get big enough to pay money for it he won't care."

Thus Carl reasoned. The father's precepts had little influence so long as his example destroyed their force. Commands were disobeyed and entreaties slighted.

This was a case in which Mr. Gore sought no counsel. Neither physician nor lawyer were summoned to the rescue. Mr. Manning's sermon, every word of which he accepted as truth, went straight home to his conscience, suggesting a way of escape from the ruin which threatened him. But his love of money was strong, and pride rebelled at the thought of yielding to the "temperance mania."

After the sermon, came the lesson at the Ruggles Farm; and then the pale face of Mrs. Hosford must sometimes meet him, eloquent with a dumb reproach. Esquire Randolph was a less frequent visitor in his bar-room,

and, when there, often seemed preoccupied and moody.

As Dr. Hall had said, the cause of temperance was gaining ground, although opposition still flaunted its banners and made brave show of resistance. The women of the town, as a body, gave their influence in favor of total abstinence.

Yet here and there one might be found, whose broken health had been so long sustained by stimulants, that their use seemed a necessity; while others hesitated to acknowledge that danger could lurk in the social glass.

A few, a very few, were drunkards; disgracing the holy names of wife and mother, and giving birth to children, who, without the intervention of an almost miraculous providence, must prove a curse to themselves and to the world.

Dr. Hall sometimes met these women in the course of his practice; but they turned a deaf ear to his representations and appeals. "I've just as good a right to drink as my

husband has," said one. "It's all the comfort I have."

"But your children."

"They must learn to take care of themselves. I've had trouble enough with 'em as it is."

Mrs. Halsey was a self-appointed committee to visit two of these drunkards with whom she had a slight acquaintance; but her efforts seemed entirely lost upon them. "I suppose they think they've seen the last of me on this business, but they'll find themselves mistaken," she said while reporting her want of success to Mrs. Hall. "I shall go again before summer is out. There is nothing like persevering in a good cause."

Through all, no one officially remonstrated with Mr. Manning in regard to his sermon. There was some dissatisfaction; but, on the whole, the preacher received more praise than blame. It was expected that Esquire Randolph would be loud in his condemnation, and, perhaps, withdraw his support from the society; but he pursued an entirely different

course. After a plain, but not unfriendly talk with his pastor, he was content to let the subject drop. Truth to tell, the 'squire had interest nearer home to engross his thought. He was disappointed and anxious. Eugenia Vane had proved unyielding, and Fred Randolph was a rejected lover; rejected, too, for "a mere difference of opinion." It is possible, that at this juncture of affairs, the right influence from his father might have won him to a life worthy of her whose hand he sought. Wanting this, he returned to the city, his heart beating tumultuously with wounded pride and unconquered affection.

Many in his position would have professed a change of sentiments they did not feel, and an abstinence they did not practise. He was too honorable for this, and had he attempted the deception, he would probably have failed; for she with whom he had to deal was quick to detect a counterfeit. He had thought that the strength and ardor of his love would overcome all scruples on the part of its object, and, when convinced of his error, was glad to

escape from everything which reminded him of the delusive dream. He was very unhappy; life seemed to have lost its zest; but he still grasped the wine-cup.

Not alone did he suffer. Mrs. Vane found that the excitement of the winter had told severely upon the health and spirits of her daughter. Their home no longer echoed with her merry laughter, and the voice of song was hushed. She complained of weariness, and this was sometimes accompanied with a nervous irritability quite unnatural to the happy-tempered girl.

As the spring advanced, this had increased until Dr. Hall was summoned. As a friend, he had noted her varying moods, and judged rightly that the body but sympathized with the mind.

"Well, Genie, I suppose I must discover whether your disease is located in heart, lungs, or liver; so, if you have any definite knowledge upon the subject, you will save both time and trouble by enlightening me."

This was said lightly, and Genie made an

effort to reply in the same tone; but her voice failed her, and her eyes filled with tears.

"This will never do. We must have smiles, not tears," said the doctor, more gravely; and then followed a half-hour's conversation, through all of which he watched his companion narrowly.

At its close, he prescribed a simple tonic, with plenty of out-door exercise. "To make sure of the exercise, I shall take you out myself every pleasant day, and I shall expect to find you a very entertaining companion."

The doctor was a little in the dark in regard to this case. He was sure his young friend had made a decision that would affect her whole life; but, so well had she guarded her secret, he was ignorant of what this decision had been.

He ventured to ask Mrs. Vane if Genie was engaged to Fred Randolph? "I should not presume to ask the question under other circumstances," he said, by way of apology.

The answer being given, he could easily account for her present state, and was able

to speak decidedly. "There has been too great a draft upon her sympathies, and an over-tension of the nerves; but this will be soon remedied by proper treatment. She needs to have her time fully occupied with some pleasant employment. I'll send Annie over to see her this afternoon."

Annie went, and carried with her an atmosphere of such cheerfulness that Genie assumed something of her old manner, and laughed merrily at the witty sallies of her visitor.

The doctor's prescriptions were faithfully carried out. There was no lack of walking, riding, or cheerful occupation; and his patient welcomed the incoming of summer with improved health.

Clarence was spending his last term in the village academy, studying early and late to make sure of passing a creditable examination. Mrs. Vane had always intended that Genie should spend at least one year in some seminary, where she could have advantages not afforded by their home school. Regard

for the welfare of her brother had delayed her leaving home, and, now that he was going, it was judged best that she should resume her studies in the autumn.

Her guardian was consulted; but he preferred to express no opinion in regard to the matter. Without positive unkindness, he made her to feel that she had lost her old place in his regard; and she sometimes hesitated to address him by the endearing title he had himself taught her.

The events of the last few months had changed the relation of the families, and, although so well concealed as to be apparent only to themselves, it was a source of grief to Mrs. Vane and her children. Mrs. Randolph had loved them all too well to cast them out of her heart because Genie refused to take a dearer name; but the disappointment had a marked influence upon her conduct. Without intending it she gave them a less cordial welcome to her home; and there was a constraint in her manner to which they were wholly unaccustomed.

Plans for the future of Clarence were no longer discussed with freedom and animation, while Genie's preparations for leaving home elicited few remarks. Esquire Randolph scrupulously performed all duties devolving upon him as guardian; but the fatherly interest was wanting.

Genie felt this keenly, and ventured, upon one occasion, to express her sorrow.

"Are you really sorry? Do you regret what you have done?" he asked, looking at her closely.

"I am sorry that I have incurred your displeasure," was the reply. "It almost breaks my heart to have you and auntie so estranged from me."

"Then come back to us, and take your old place. Recall your cruel words, and make us all happy. No one will love you as we have loved you."

Again the trial. For a moment she wavered; but only for a moment. "I have never wished to leave you, but I could not

do differently from what I have done," she answered, sadly.

"And you persist in your determination?"

"I must," was the reply.

"Then, if Fred is ever what you profess to fear he will be, you must answer for it. There are but few young men who would not become reckless under such circumstances. But you shall never have reason to complain of my indifference to the trust your father placed in my hands."

This conversation but increased her unhappiness. Was she responsible for the future of Fred Randolph? If he made a wreck of his life, would the guilt lie at her door?

Some particulars of Fred Randolph's college life, detailed by Clarence, answered these questions to her entire satisfaction. Rumor had not exaggerated his excesses, and his life as a law student was still more open to censure. Surely, she had no responsibility in this. No "cruel words" of hers had driven him to this recklessness.

The past gave warning of the future; and

the father might talk as he pleased of moderation; while he asserted again and again that wine-drinking was beneficial, yet there was an unspoken fear in his heart.

The wheels of time stayed not. Midsummer was upon them. The examination was over, and Clarence returned with Selwyn Barnes. He had "passed gloriously," and was in jubilant spirits. Genie caught something of his gladness, and allowed her thoughts to drift from the painful subject which had so long engrossed them.

About three weeks before she was to leave home, Fred Randolph came from the city, having neither the looks nor appearance of a despairing lover. A friend accompanied him, and he seemed bent upon displaying the brightest side of country life. Never had the young people been so gay, and never were amusements better planned or more heartily carried out.

The first evening after his arrival, he, with his friend, called at Mrs. Vane's, where they received a cordial welcome. A slight em-

barrassment in Genie's manner, which, at the most, was visible to but one, soon passed away, and she chatted with her old playmate as gayly as ever.

Clarence appeared his best; Mrs. Vane was entertaining, as usual. "Mrs. Vane, I wonder if my old invitation still holds good," said Fred Randolph, as he rose to take his leave. "When I was a boy, you told me I might come here at any time. Is that permission, or invitation, as I chose to consider it, outlawed?"

"Not outlawed," was the reply, "but I will now renew it, and extend it to your friend."

This nice little piece of strategy had been successful, and the success was acknowledged gracefully. It was worthy the old 'squire himself. There was no turning back for a last word with Genie, nothing to indicate that she held his heart in her keeping.

So guarded was he that the young girl herself wondered if he had ceased to love her.

Had Fred Randolph known this, his tri-

umph would have been complete. Without the knowledge, he was satisfied in having established himself as a visitor on the old footing, and felt that an important point had been gained.

"Moon-struck, Randolph? Here I have been talking to you for the last five minutes, and never a word in reply."

This was said by Hal Somers, as the two were walking home from that evening call.

"Talking to me!" was the laughing reply. "I thought you were rhapsodizing for your own entertainment. I never dreamed that you expected any reply."

"Pshaw! I don't believe you know one word I have been saying. Why didn't you tell me what an angel there was hidden up here? You would never have been obliged to urge my coming, unless — Say, Randolph, have you any intentions in that quarter? Because if you have, speak now, or ever after hold your peace."

"There, Somers, you must be quite exhausted. Don't do anything rashly. There

are several pretty girls in town, and in due time you shall see them."

In the two weeks Fred Randolph spent at home, not a day passed in which he did not see Eugenia Vane, yet no allusion was made to any conversation which had transpired between them the previous winter and spring.

Excursions were made to nearly every place of interest in the vicinity, and, to crown all, a grand picnic at Oak Bend was proposed. Everybody was invited, and everybody was glad to accept the invitation.

In the rides that had been so much enjoyed, there had been none of the usual "pairing off." Sometimes the ladies had occupied open carriages, escorted by the gentlemen on horseback, and sometimes all had found seats in large wagons, — a merry crowd, with no opportunity for sentiment or love-making.

Fred Randolph had inaugurated this new order of things because it suited his own purpose; but, as the picnic at Oak Bend was to take place the day before his return to the city, he chose to be somewhat more exclusive.

Hal Somers found himself left alone for a while in the morning; and when his friend returned, it was to say that he should drive down with Genie Vane.

"I have provided a team for you, and you may provide yourself with company."

"Magnanimous, truly! Why didn't you tell me that two hours ago?"

"My plans were not then matured," replied Fred Randolph, with a laugh. "There's Lou Shafton —"

"Yes," interrupted his companion, "and there was Genie Vane. I've suspected you all the time. But you have a cool way of manifesting your preference. It wouldn't be quite to my taste if I were a young lady. However, I'll not quarrel with you. So here goes;" and Hal Somers started for the village, where he found Lou Shafton ready to accept his invitation.

Fred Randolph smiled bitterly when left alone. This cool manner, which he had compelled himself to assume, was most irksome; but thus far it had served him well. It was

a part of his plan that Genie should appear with him at Oak Bend.

The whole village was in commotion. There was shouting in the streets and gossiping in the kitchens. Everywhere preparations were being made for the picnic. Clergyman, doctor, and landlord, all were going.

It was a matter of some interest how all these men, women, and children were to find conveyance. Every horse that could go must go, and every carriage must be filled to its utmost capacity.

Eugenia Vane had accepted Fred Randolph's invitation without a thought of the unpleasant position in which she might be placed, or the misunderstanding to which it might give rise. Indeed, she did not think at all in regard to it. Fred had entered the sitting-room in his old, familiar way, and, after chatting a few minutes, asked her, as though it was a matter of course, that she would go down with him. She assented without hesitation and without thought.

Clarence was indignant; the more so, since

Selwyn Barnes called to offer himself as her escort. Several times was she obliged to say that a way had been provided for her, and every time this was repeated, she regretted the necessity.

Soon after noon the cavalcade commenced moving, the older people making an early start, that they might be ready to return "in good season," and the younger ones following their example, that they might have a longer time to remain.

It was a drive of five miles from the village to the Bend, over a smooth, level road following the windings of the river. Half the pleasure of the afternoon was crowded into that short drive; and, once on the way, no one seemed in haste.

Only a few were late, and, last of all, were Fred Randolph and Eugenia Vane, who came up after every one else was upon the ground. Hal Somers and Lou Shafton, who had been there a full hour, assailed the new-comers with a torrent of questions in regard to their tardiness. From these Genie made her es-

cape, leaving Fred to answer as he pleased; and if any one was the wiser for his replies, it certainly was not his fault.

No spot could be better adapted for a picnic than the one which had been chosen. As the name indicated, it was at the bend of the river. Here the waters made a sudden turn, rushing swiftly past an almost perpendicular cliff. Crowning this cliff, were some old, widely branching oaks; and under their shade, where the grass grew greenest and freshest, the party was assembled.

Beauties of earth and sky conspired to render the scene delightful. Under its inspiring influence the gravest waxed merry, and the saddest grew cheerful. Groups of old and young, drawn together by that secret sympathy, so universally acknowledged, but never explained, were scattered here and there; some in the deep shadows of the neighboring wood, and others seated upon the green sward.

Eugenia Vane alone seemed not to find her place. She flitted from young to old, from

sunshine to shadow, coming to all as a vision of beauty.

"Genie Vane is outshining herself this afternoon," said an old man to Dr. Hall. "Fred Randolph wins the brightest and the best. May the light of her eyes never be quenched in tears!"

The doctor turned to look at her. The light in her eyes gleamed and flashed like a brilliant flame, magnetizing all upon whom it fell; but this friend, who allowed no mood of hers to escape his notice, saw in it the unrest of a troubled heart. Some one called his attention, and when he looked for her again, she was not to be seen. Singing was proposed, and then her name was called; but, Fred Randolph being also missing, no search was made for her.

"More pleasantly employed than in singing," said one, as George Blake gave the signal for commencing the "out-door concert."

Eugenia Vane was at that moment half-way down the cliff, resting upon the trunk of

an old birch-tree, whose roots, fast bound to the face of the rock, and reaching into every fissure, managed to draw sustenance from the scanty soil. In its struggles to reach upward, it had formed a natural seat, wholly screened from observation, and this was occupied by our heroine.

There had been a general order, given early in the afternoon, that no one should attempt to descend the cliff. It was a somewhat dangerous feat, as, by a single misstep, one might be precipitated into the river below; but Genie had often made the descent with her brother, and had no fears. Some impulse of restlessness moved her to the attempt; and, moreover, she longed for solitude.

The singing above her had ceased, and she heard preparations making for supper, when she left her seat to join her companions. Sure of foot, and strong of limb, the ascent had never seemed difficult; but now, at almost the first step, she faltered and turned back. Again she started, but grew faint and dizzy. Claspings her arms about the old tree,

and closing her eyes to shut out the sight of the depths below, she tried to combat this feeling and reason herself into firmness. Vain effort! Her hold upon the tree was gradually relaxing, when a manly form stood beside her, and a strong arm sustained her.

"I am so glad it is you," she whispered, with white lips, looking up into the face of Selwyn Barnes, and the next moment she lay helpless in his arms.

Another might claim her, but there she belonged only to him, and he watched with half-suspended breath for signs of returning consciousness. Even then he thanked God that it was his arm that had saved her, and that she owed her life to him.

"How foolish I have been!" she said, when she found voice to speak. "I never thought of danger in coming here; but, to save my life, I could not go up this afternoon. Everything goes wrong to-day. I have made both you and myself a great deal of trouble."

"Do I look troubled?" he asked, with a

smile so bright as to provoke a laugh in reply, and thus save a flood of tears.

"Looks are not always a true index to one's feelings. But you are certainly burdened if not troubled."

"There again you are mistaken," he replied. "However, we will waive discussion till the good time coming."

"When our feet are planted on a firmer foundation," added Genie. "And now let me try my strength. I am anxious to relieve you."

He was not anxious, but he allowed her to make the trial. She found herself not so strong as she had thought, and was still obliged to keep near the old tree.

"Let us try going down instead of up," said the young man at length. "It will require less effort and with the water so low, we can easily pass the bend upon the sand."

Ten minutes after, Eugenia Vane was busily engaged in unpacking the baskets sent by her mother and Mrs. Randolph, and no one

but Selwyn Barnes knew that her feet had just touched the borders of the grave.

For the first time in the history of the town there was a cold-water picnic. Not a drop of liquor had been carried to the Bend that day. Mr. Manning had refused to taste of wine; the doctor would as soon touch poison; and the young ladies were beginning to talk strongly of total abstinence. With all this opposing influence, not even Mr. Gore presumed to carry his usual contribution.

Supper was no sooner over than some began to prepare for returning home, and the sun was not quite hidden behind the western hills when the last carriage had left Oak Bend.

Hal Somers was smoking on the piazza when his friend drove up. "Whew!" he exclaimed. "I didn't expect you at present. Lou Shafton has told me the whole story of your affairs, and I congratulate you, if you have been so confounded private about it."

Fred Randolph was out of hearing long before the close of this speech, and, when he came leisurely back, was whistling. "Hap-

py, I should judge. Well, you've a right to be," said the occupant of the piazza.

"Suppose we go in and take a glass of wine," said Fred. "I must confess that cold-water picnics are not quite to my taste. Our young doctor has turned the heads of this community; but I am not quite converted to his theory."

Hal Somers, having no particular desire for the liquor, and not caring to injure himself for the sake of pleasing another, drank sparingly, but Fred Randolph made ample amends for the abstinence of the afternoon. They separated, to meet at an early breakfast the next morning, when the whole house was astir to speed the parting guests.

At last the visit was over, the stage rolled away with its burden, and those who were left behind had time for serious thought.

The picnic had been a success, giving entire satisfaction. Dr. Hall was particularly pleased, on account of its cold-water character. There had been wit without wine, and

jollity without drunkenness. Temperance was in the ascendant.

His wife was so elated that she prophesied a general reform. "It wouldn't be strange if the 'squire himself should become teetotal. Then Mr. Gore would feel obliged to give up selling liquor, and Dan Messer would close his groggery. The millennium would come speedily if all intoxicating drinks were banished from the world."

"I believe you, Annie. Drinking, both moderate and immoderate, does much to retard the progress of religion. It blunts the sensibilities, and drowns the voice of conscience."

"I fully agree with you, doctor," said a pleasant voice. "Your door stood invitingly open, and I have taken the liberty to enter without ceremony."

"Good-morning, Mr. Manning; glad to see you," was the hearty response. "I am quite at leisure this morning; so Annie and I have been discussing the prospects of the community."

"Mrs. Hall must be sanguine. I am quite sure I heard something about the millennium."

"I am always sanguine," she replied. "I look on the bright side;" and away tripped the happy wife, leaving the gentlemen to themselves.

"I believe the dissipation of yesterday has unfitted me for study," said Mr. Manning. "My thoughts would wander, despite my best efforts."

"Pleasure is not necessarily dissipation," replied the doctor. "I flatter myself we had none of the latter at Oak Bend."

"You are right. I stand corrected. Our young people are improving. You must feel well repaid for your labors."

"I am certainly encouraged. Drinking is not so popular as it was a year ago; people are thinking seriously upon the subject, but much remains to be done. Some of the strongest men in the community are opposed to us, — Esquire Randolph, for instance."

"Yes, I had a talk with him last week. He still believes in liberty and moderation,

and regrets that I have left the old paths. I only wonder I walked in them so long. But here is business for you, and I will walk on."

"Well, doctor, I don't suppose you expected to see me this morning, and I didn't expect you would; but I've met with an accident, and come to you for repairs."

This was said by Dan Messer, as he was getting out of a wagon at Dr. Hall's door. His left hand and arm were clumsily bandaged, and his face was ghastly pale.

"What is the trouble?" asked the doctor.

"I was helping unload a barrel of liquor, when it slipped and came down on my arm. I managed to hold it back a little, but I guess I shall have to do with one hand the rest of my life. I suppose 'twould have been just the same if the barrel had been full of cold water."

By this time the injured hand and arm were exposed, and a painful examination commenced.

"Not so bad as you expected," said the doctor. "I think I can save your hand; but

you will be obliged to suffer a good deal of pain."

Bones were broken, and flesh badly lacerated, so that the dressing was a tedious process. "Guess you've done that job pretty well," said Dan when the last bandage was secured. "The old doctor went by just after I was hurt; but I wouldn't have him touch me. He might be half drunk for anything I know."

"Rather too early in the morning for that," said Tim Allen, who had driven over with the rumseller. "He is pretty sober till afternoon; but people are getting afraid to trust him much then."

"Well, I don't want him any time. I suppose you are through with me now, doctor, and I may as well go."

"Not exactly. I must give you some directions. In the first place, not a drop of liquor must pass your lips."

"That's rather hard when a man needs it as much as I do to keep up my health and spirits."

"You don't need it, and you'll be likely to lose your hand if you use it."

"I should like to understand the philosophy of that."

"It is easily explained. The great danger is from inflammation. All intoxicating drinks tend to produce an unnatural and feverish state of the system, thus increasing the chances of inflammation. Your wounds will, at the best, be longer in healing than if you were a strictly temperate man."

"You must think my blood in a pretty bad condition, doctor."

"Not so bad but it might be worse."

"Some comfort in that. Now, let us hear the rest. I'm bound to obey orders this time."

Pretty strict orders these proved to be. The doctor was "thorough going," as Dan said, on his way home.

Mr. Manning made his second call that morning at Mrs. Vane's, and, after a cheerful conversation with the young people, returned to his study.

These young people had been busy with their books, making their last reviews.

"I thought I was all ready three weeks ago," said Genie. "Now I am sure of it, so far as books are concerned. Take them all away, Clarence, and let us have a good talk with mother."

There had been many such talks; but all was not said, even when the hour for parting came. Mrs. Vane feared little for Genie, but there were last words for her son, full of tenderness and anxiety.

"You may trust me, dear mother," was the reply. "I never go out in the morning without praying God to keep me safely through the day, and I never lie down at night without thanking him for his preserving care."

So they went, and the village seemed more quiet than ever. Mrs. Hall rejoiced that the general good health of the people allowed her husband to spend much of his time at home.

"There hasn't been the shadow of an inci-

dent since you left," she wrote to Eugenia Vane, when the latter had been away four weeks. "The only item of news I have heard concerns Dan Messer. His groggery is closed for the present, and there is a general lamentation among his old customers.

"Dan says he won't sell to others what he can't drink himself. His hand and arm are doing well; but if I were Dr. instead of Mrs., he would be kept under cold-water treatment for some time longer."

Once in a while, when the evenings were pretty dark, a few of Dan's customers came up to the hotel to get their bottles filled, and some went to the next town; but, on the whole, there was considerable enforced abstinence.

Betsey Halsey was so delighted at this that she went herself to visit "Mr. Messer," and carried him some specimens of her best cooking. Of course she would not lose so good an opportunity for urging upon him a continuance in well-doing.

"We shall see," was his reply.

"We are going to have some more temperance meetings this winter, and I shall expect you to be one of the speakers," she said, as she was about leaving.

"One of the speakers!" he repeated, with a loud laugh. "A rumseller make a temperance speech! Wait till I've signed the pledge."

IX.

Talk no more of temperance,
Or boast of self-control;
Pledge thyself to abstinence,
And thus redeem thy soul.

LATE one evening, when Mrs. Hosford had laid aside her work and opened the Bible, there was a rap at the door. Hattie, who was sitting beside her, sprang to open it; and there, with pale, haggard face, with clothing travel-stained and tattered, stood her father. A cry of terror, and she buried her face in her mother's lap.

Mrs. Hosford was paralyzed with the sight which met her gaze.

"I suppose you can't be glad to see me, Susan; but I had nowhere else to go. I am tired and hungry," said the man, who had entered the room.

"Sit down," she said, at length. "You can go to bed, Hattie," was added, in a low tone.

The child hesitated; but seeing, by her mother's looks, that it was best, went up the stairs.

"Would you like some supper?" asked the wife; and, being answered in the affirmative, she brought food and placed it before her husband.

He ate ravenously, as one half-starved, then moved back from the table, and once stooped as though to take his hat from the floor.

"Have you come far to-day?" was asked, more to break the silence than from any real wish to know.

"Many miles," was the reply.

It was a strange meeting between husband and wife, after months of separation. Few words were spoken. Mrs. Hosford could hardly credit the evidence of her own senses. It seemed impossible that the man she had loved, and whom she had once thought the

embodiment of all manly excellence, could have fallen so low. His very presence was a curse; yet he must have shelter for the night.

Hattie waited anxiously. "Is father downstairs now?" she asked, in a whisper, when her mother came into the room where she lay.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Why, aint you afraid he'll kill us all before morning?"

"Not at all, my dear. There is no danger of that. He is almost sick."

"I thought he was drunk," said the child, in the same cautious tone. "You won't let him stay here all the time, will you, mother? Oh, dear! I almost wish he was dead, so he couldn't ever come back."

"That is very wicked, Hattie. You should ask God to make him better."

"I do, always; and I didn't mean to say anything wicked. But we shall be just as poor as ever if he stays here."

Mrs. Hosford passed a wretched, sleepless

night, revolving all these things in her mind, and praying for strength and wisdom to do her whole duty.

Morning made that duty plain. Her husband was unable to rise from his bed, and, whatever he had been, or whatever he might be, not for a moment did she question in regard to her present obligations. Every friend outraged, every door closed against him, she must nurse him back to health and strength.

The children moved noiselessly when they knew their father was in the house, keeping as far as possible from the room which he occupied. It was the saddest day that had been spent in the new home. Instead of the usual remunerative labor, there were old garments to be cleansed and repaired; while the careless laugh of childhood gave place to tears and lamentations.

It seemed at first that only rest and nourishing food would be necessary to restore the miserable husband and father; but the day passed, with no signs of improvement. Still

prostrated when the third morning dawned, Hattie was despatched for Dr. Hall. Few questions were asked the child. The old, sad look had come back to her face, and, shrinking from observation, she turned quickly homeward.

When Mr. Hosford was told that the doctor had arrived, he protested that he had no need of medical advice. Perhaps there was no person in the world whose presence would have been more unwelcome than this same Temperance Doctor.

A slight examination showed that the sick man was suffering from a slow fever, the result of extreme dissipation.

"He will probably be confined to the house for two or three weeks," was the discouraging report made to his wife.

"This seems more than I can bear," she replied. "He will be taking the bread from the mouths of my children, and turning their home into a prison."

There were many who sympathized with her, many who would gladly have offered her

assistance; but hers was a grief with which a stranger could not intermeddle. Her husband would once have been overwhelmed with shame at the thought of his condition; but he had taken a long stride downward since he left the Ruggles Farm. His finer feelings were so blunted that he received all care and attention as his right, seeming hardly to realize that he was an intruder. The only feeling manifested was in regard to Dr. Hall. He was not yet sufficiently hardened to meet his steady gaze without betraying some annoyance, and, as his health improved, this annoyance increased.

Four weeks after his return he was able, for the first time, to go out of doors; and Johnnie hoped he would go away so far that he could "never get back."

During these four weeks Mrs. Hosford had managed, by great exertion, to meet the expenses of her family; but she had neither health nor courage to endure such a tax upon her powers for any great length of time. Her husband had spoken vaguely of going

away, but he evidently had no plans in regard to it; and, indeed, after the first few days, no allusion was made to the future. The children still avoided him, and begged their mother to "send him off."

It was a difficult place to see clearly and act wisely. The mother sympathized with her children, yet memories of other days sometimes awoke feelings of tenderness for the man who, in weakness and destitution, had come to her for shelter and care. While confined to the house, she knew he could not add to her troubles by becoming intoxicated; but with returning health came this possibility.

Dr. Hall had spoken plainly, although without expectation that his words of warning would be heeded. The only hope lay in the fact of his being utterly penniless; but a drunkard is rarely reduced to such straits that he cannot, in some way, find means to gratify his appetite. By working or stealing, funds will be raised.

Mrs. Hosford, having occasion to go to a

neighbor's about a quarter of a mile distant, took her children with her, rather than leave them at home with their father. No sooner had she left the house, than he commenced a thorough search for money. Every probable and improbable place was ransacked, and the little hoard, so carefully hidden, was at last found. He held it in his hand for a moment, moved a little from his purpose by a thought of wife and children; but the hellish thirst conquered. Pocketing the money, he went to the village store, bought some small articles for use in the family, and had his flask filled with brandy.

Well might Bill Magoon say that he was no better than the rest. The veriest wretch that walks the earth could hardly have done worse than this.

After so long abstinence, it was not strange that John Hosford drank until he was intoxicated, and thus his wife found him.

What could she do? Whichever way she turned, there was only darkness. Something

impelled her to look for her money. Gone! Not a penny remained!

Do you wonder that she wrung her hands in agony? that, for a time, she questioned the goodness of her Almighty Father, and prayed only that she might die?

The weeping of her children roused her, and she dried her own tears to comfort them. She mourned not for the loss of the money, although that was, in itself, a calamity; her great grief was caused by the knowledge that her husband had lost every feeling of honor. This was the severest blow of all, the last drop in the cup of bitterness.

Work, that night, was a blessing; and when her children had been cared for, she tried to think calmly of her situation. She knew that it was not her duty to provide a home for her husband at the expense of her own and her children's comfort; certainly not, under present circumstances. But how could she rid herself of his presence? Once she could have appealed to him, but now such an appeal would be hopeless.

Often was the needle laid down, but again resumed at the thought of the helpless ones dependent upon her. She must work, for winter was at the door, with no provisions made for its coming.

The next day she consulted Dr. Hall.

"My husband knows I cannot support him," she said; "but he is too far gone to care for that. He will not leave me, and I cannot move again."

The doctor considered. He had done all in his power to reclaim this man, and was convinced that, so long as liquor could be obtained, he would continue to drink, unless some new influence could be brought to bear upon him.

"You would not wish to complain of him for stealing, and let the law take its course?" he said, questioningly.

"I could not," was the reply. "I can endure no added disgrace, and it would only make him more desperate."

No plan could be suggested which promised success, and the poor woman returned

home, to try once more the effect of her own words. She found her husband sober, and asked him what he proposed to do for the winter.

"You know that it is impossible for me to provide for you," she said. "While you were sick, I was willing to take care of you, but, now that you are well, I cannot do it."

"Want to get rid of me, do you?" he asked.

"Yes, I do," was the reply, made more emphatic by the insolent tone and manner in which the question was propounded. "I wish to be left in peace with my children."

"Well, if you want peace, you'd better keep quiet. I've got into comfortable quarters, and I shan't be in any hurry to leave. You may as well get supper now."

Truly, "no person can so torture, degrade, and humiliate a woman as her own husband," and no woman bears keener torture, deeper degradation, or more abject humiliation, than the drunkard's wife.

Never had Mrs. Hosford realized this as

during the conversation above narrated, and only regard for her children kept her silent. The frugal meal was prepared; but the husband sat at the table, alone. The children ate some gingerbread in their room above stairs, and the mother had no desire for food. This night was spent in work until tired nature was completely exhausted, and claimed rest in sleep.

The following day Betsey Halsey called. She had heard something of the state of affairs, and thought, perhaps, she might be of service. Mr. Hosford sprang from his chair the moment he saw her; but she caught a glimpse of his retreating figure, and called upon him to return.

"I have some special business with you."

Without suspecting what this business might be, he turned back.

"I have brought a total abstinence pledge, and I want you to sign it," she said, unrolling the paper she held in her hand.

To say that he was indignant at the sight of this would but poorly express his feelings.

He was thoroughly enraged, and he gave his wife such a look as showed that he considered her to blame for the intrusion.

"You needn't look at your wife in that way," said the visitor. "She knew nothing of my coming. You are not the first man I have asked to sign the pledge, and you won't be the last."

John Hosford was "fairly cornered." He would not presume to argue with this woman, for he knew her to be more than his match, and he certainly had not the least idea of signing the pledge. "I think you must excuse me," he said, at length, with something of his old, gentlemanly manner.

"Excuse you?" she replied. "I don't think I can. I left my work and came over on purpose to bring you the pledge, and I can't afford to spend my time for nothing. Just sign the pledge. You must know by this time that drinking liquor will never do you any good."

"I should like to know what others you have asked to sign the pledge," said Mr.

Hosford, anxious that the conversation should become less personal.

"Several men in our neighborhood. Among them, John Wilson and Dan Messer."

"And did they sign?"

"John did, and I am sure that Dan will as soon as he can bring his mind to give up his business. We intend to have some temperance meetings this winter, and I calculate on him for one of the speakers."

"Then I guess you'll get disappointed. Rumsellers are not in the habit of making temperance speeches."

"Dan isn't exactly a rumseller now. He hasn't sold any liquor since he hurt his hand last summer. But that has nothing to do with my business here. I want you to sign the pledge, whether any one else does or not."

"I guess I'll wait till Dan makes his speech."

"Will you sign then?" asked the persevering woman.

"I'll think of it," was the first reply; but

this did not satisfy ; and, at last, he promised fairly that he would sign the total abstinence pledge when Dan Messer made a public speech in favor of temperance.

This done, he was glad to make his escape, and Mrs. Halsey was perfectly willing he should do so, as she then had an opportunity to talk with the other members of the family. She first distributed some cakes among the children, and then addressed herself to the mother, who received gratefully the sympathy so kindly offered.

"Try and have patience for a few days, and see what can be done. If everything fails, then he may as well be given up."

This was the parting advice of Betsey Halsey as she drove away to complete the work she had so well begun. She went first to Dr. Hall's, then to Dan Messer's, and from there home, well pleased with her success.

The next week, notice was given of a series of temperance meetings, to be holden in the different districts of the town, and a great effort was made to rouse the interest of the

people. Mr. Manning promised to be present. George Blake engaged to furnish attractive singing, and there seemed no possibility of failure.

Those who had been most violent in their opposition the year previous were comparatively silent. The 'squire said he had no disposition to interfere. His sentiments had always been well known. Mr. Gore affected to treat the whole matter with indifference, dispensing smiles and drams as blandly as ever.

For one, John Hosford was annoyed by the announcement of these meetings, and sometimes a fear crossed his mind lest he might be called upon to redeem his promise.

It was time that the patience of his wife should be relieved. When the money taken from her was gone he worked enough to supply himself with liquor, so that he was at no time free from its influence. For three days before the first temperance meeting he was thoroughly intoxicated, and, when Robert Halsey called with his wife to say that

Dan Messer was expected to be present, they found him extended upon the bed. At first, he refused to listen, but they remained until near the hour appointed, when Dr. Hall came to their assistance; and the half-drunken man was persuaded, much against his will, to accompany them to the meeting.

There was a large attendance, and among those present were several who had long been considered irreclaimable drunkards. Mr. Manning opened the meeting with prayer, and made a few remarks. Dr. Hall followed in an earnest appeal, presenting the pledge.

Nearly every young lady in the hall came forward and signed it. A few young men imitated their example, and then the meeting was open to any who might choose to speak.

No one seemed inclined to improve the opportunity, and George Blake came to the rescue with his band of singers. When their inspiring song had closed, Dan Messer rose and stood before the audience. The anti-temperance men said he made "no great of a speech;" but it had the merit of directness,

and produced a positive effect upon those who heard it. He announced the fact that his groggery was closed, never to be reopened. "I've done with liquor forever," he said, turning to sign the pledge.

John Hosford, who had listened with almost breathless interest, mindful of his promise, with great effort rose from his seat, and attempted to walk towards the desk. After a few steps he staggered, and would have fallen had not Robert Halsey offered his assistance. Even this was insufficient, and Tim Allen placed himself upon one side of the half-intoxicated man.

Thus supported, he reached the desk, and, with trembling hand, grasped the pen.

There was only an illegible scrawl upon the paper, but it had been made by John Hosford, and stood in place of his signature.

"He's too drunk to know what he's been doing," said some one in an audible whisper.

"I'm not quite so badly off as that," was the reply. "I know that I've signed the

pledge, and I shall keep it. You may count on that, sure."

This occurrence loosened all tongues, and there was no lack of speakers. When the meeting closed, Dr. Hall took Mr. Hosford in charge, and saw him safely home. His wife, too restless to work, was waiting impatiently for his return; but small comfort had she when he appeared. He sat down, leaning his head upon his hand, for a short time, then rose, without speaking a word, and entered his sleeping-room.

All hope seemed lost; there remained hardly a possibility of reformation; and she endeavored to prepare herself for the trial before her. What the morrow might bring she knew not. Prayer was her only resource, and in this she sought strength.

The next morning, long before the sun had risen, Mrs. Hosford heard her husband moving about the kitchen. So unusual an occurrence made her tremble with fear; but, when she found courage to enter the room, she soon saw there was no cause for alarm.

A cheerful fire was burning in the stove, and the first preparations were made for breakfast.

"You are up early this morning, John," she said, wishing to break the silence.

"Yes," was the reply. "I could not sleep, and thought I would have a warm room for you and the children when you came down."

Another silence. "Susan, I signed the pledge last night. Ask God to help me keep it," said the husband, in a husky voice.

"Signed the pledge!" she exclaimed. "O John, is this true? Don't deceive me," she added, going up to him, and looking him full in the face.

"No wonder that you doubt it, my poor, injured wife," he replied, folding his arms about her, and weeping manly tears of penitence.

She had not expected this, and, for a time, had no words to express her joy. After the first burst of emotion, when they could talk calmly, he gave her an account of the meeting. "There is hope for me now," he said,

in conclusion. "I never expected to be called upon to fulfil my promise to Mrs. Halsey, but she and Dan Messer have saved me."

The candle burned to the socket, and the sun flooded the earth with its golden light, but this husband and wife took no note of time. "I will leave you until I have proved the sincerity of my purpose, and redeemed my character. Then you may, perhaps, forgive me, and again share my home," he had said.

"Everything is forgiven, my husband," was the reply. "Stay with me, and let me help you in your struggle. Let us work together."

The compact was sealed with renewed pledges of amendment, and, if a doubt still lingered in the heart of the wife, she gave it no utterance.

The children were as much surprised at the new order of things as their mother had been, but they were not so ready to overlook the past. They looked with suspicion upon

their father, even after he told them that he had "signed the doctor's pledge" and was going to work to get them a nice home. Their confidence was not so easily regained.

Mrs. Hosford was careful to have as good a breakfast as she was able to provide; yet her husband ate but little, and the avidity with which he drank several cups of strong coffee showed his craving for the usual stimulant. Rising from the table, he prepared to go to his work. "I shall be back as soon as I am through this evening," he said, as he held the door ajar, looking back to his wife. "Pray for me, Susan. It will be a hard day."

It was a hard day, through every hour of which he was obliged to combat the demands of appetite; but he resisted, even to the end, and went home one day nearer heaven.

How glad was the welcome he received! His children sprang to meet him, while his wife looked up with a smile and a cheerful "good-evening." His taste had been considered in the preparation of the supper, to which he did ample justice.

Dr. Hall and his wife came in to spend part of the evening, when conversation flowed fast and freely. At first it was general, but the ladies gradually withdrew from their husbands, and talked more confidentially. Mrs. Hosford learned more of the temperance meeting from her visitor, and heard, also, a detailed account of the measures proposed to stay the tide of intemperance. "We had some people present, last evening, from the four adjoining towns, and they think it is time for them to wake up," said this enthusiastic temperance woman.

This same subject was being discussed, in a somewhat different way, by the gentlemen.

The doctor was anxious to enlist his companion as a speaker at the next temperance meeting, thinking that, with this in prospect, he would be more sure to keep his pledge inviolate.

But Mr. Hosford was unwilling to bring himself thus before the public, urging, as a reason, that he could have no influence. Many would say that he had better take care

of himself. At last, he promised to think of it during the next fortnight; and with this the doctor was forced to be content.

Mr. Manning received a call that evening from five of his parishioners, gray-headed old men, who had all their lives used liquor moderately, and cider excessively. They felt it to be their duty to remonstrate with their pastor on the course he was pursuing.

"Of what do you complain, gentlemen?" he asked.

There was some hesitation. Each one seemed waiting for his neighbor to reply.

"We think you ought not to take sides on the temperance question. Ministers should preach the gospel."

"You are right there, my friend. They should preach the gospel, and declare the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear."

"Certainly, certainly," said one. "We all believe that. No one will find fault with that."

"I have done no more."

"But you were at the temperance meeting last evening."

"I was, and I wish you had all been there. You would have heard some fine singing and good speeches."

This was most ungraciously received, and much more was said, which I have not space to record.

"We have no wish to run after any new doctrine, and shall feel obliged to withdraw our support from those who do."

This dignified speech, made by a man with bloated face and watery eyes, closed the interview, and the "gentlemen" left the house, surprised and offended. They were not quite ready to go home, so went into the bar-room of the Eagle House to talk over the matter.

Mr. Gore received them graciously. He, too, had been troubled in regard to their pastor; but he hoped nothing would be said or done to injure the good man's feelings.

"He has been unduly influenced, and we must give him time for consideration. I've no doubt that he will soon see his error."

"I know," said one, in reply. "It all comes of that Temperance Doctor. We got along well enough before he came here, and nobody thought of making such a fuss about liquor. The old doctor says a little stimulus is good for anybody, and I believe him. Landlord, I'll take a glass of wine."

This second call, made by the delegation, proved much more agreeable than the first, and Mr. Gore felt himself greatly encouraged by their sympathy. Some allusion was made to Mr. Hosford and Dan Messer.

"All talk," said one. "Dan will be selling again within a week, and I shouldn't wonder if Hosford was his first customer."

This remark, or one of like import, had been frequently made during the day. The meeting had been reported in such a variety of ways, that many, not sympathizing with its object, wished they had been present. Among these, Esquire Randolph regretted exceedingly that he was obliged to receive the news at second-hand, and yet was anxious to hear all the details. The subject, not of

temperance, but abstinence, forced itself more and more upon his attention.

After the death of Mr. Vane, he had associated with himself a man remarkable for nothing but plodding application. The work of the office was faithfully performed, but the old 'squire wished for more than that. He was ready to give up something of the care of his general business, and had long looked forward to the time when Fred should complete his studies, and assume this responsibility. With this time, too, he had associated another event, the realization of a fondly cherished hope to welcome a daughter to his home. But the past year had mocked his best-laid plans.

He feared that the habits of his son were far from what they should be, and the thought that he might wreck his life by dissipation, filled him with anxious forebodings. He missed the bright young faces that had so long beamed upon him; and, although under the influence of a great disappointment, he

had treated his wards with coldness, he longed for their return.

Mrs. Vane's house was closed, and this added to his feeling of loneliness. Soon after her children left home she had been called away by the death of a brother's wife, and had been persuaded by the bereaved family to remain with them for the winter. Eugenia and Clarence would spend their vacations with her, and some months might elapse before they would visit their native village.

Selwyn Barnes had been present at the temperance meeting, of which he wrote a glowing description to Clarence Vane; and his mother and sister, as well as himself, were impatient for the next news in regard to Mr. Hosford. This came, a week later, in a letter from Mrs. Hall.

"His pledge is yet unbroken. He has worked every day since signing it, and we have faith that he will persevere. The doctor hopes that he will speak at the meeting next week."

This was read with delight, and Clarence indulged in various speculations in regard to the speech Mr. Hosford might be expected to make.

He was not alone in his speculations. When it was known that Mr. Hosford was expected to make an address upon the subject of temperance, every one was anxious to hear him.

"The school-house won't begin to hold the people," said Dan Messer to Dr. Hall. "I know enough that are going to fill it twice over. We must go to the Town Hall."

"Are you going yourself?" asked the doctor.

"Indeed, I am. I wouldn't miss hearing Hosford for a good deal. Besides, you know, he came out to hear me, and I must return the compliment," he said, with a laugh. "I don't think my business will suffer much."

In the fortnight since Dan Messer had signed the pledge, there had been a great change in his business. The two filthy rooms that constituted the groggery were thoroughly

cleansed, and the casks of liquor replaced by substantial groceries. This change involved some sacrifice, but it was promptly made.

"I 'spose it looks better'n it did afore, but it don't seem so much like home," said one of the old customers, who came in with a bag to be filled with flour. "Guess you won't make so much money this way, Dan."

"Nor so much misery, either," was the reply.

The second temperance meeting of the season was held in the Town Hall, and this was hardly sufficient to accommodate the audience. As before, Mr. Manning implored the divine blessing. Dr. Hall hastily reviewed the progress of events. A stirring song was sung, and then Mr. Hosford appeared upon the stand. Painfully conscious of the interest he had excited, it was no easy task to control his emotions. For a moment after rising he hesitated; but directly his voice was heard, clear and distinct.

There were men present, who, like himself, had waded in the slough of drunken-

ness, and who had not yet come up from its depths. But not to these were his words addressed. He appealed to moderate drinkers, who believed they were injuring neither themselves nor others.

"The drunkard knows he is ruining himself, soul and body, and this consciousness often goads him well-nigh to madness. He is miserable and wretched, and, if he be poor, as sooner or later a drunkard will be, he is an outcast from society. No man in his senses would choose such a fate. No man does choose it. It is forced upon him by circumstances."

At this assertion the speaker paused, while more than one whisper of dissent was heard.

"I do not mean to say that the use of intoxicating drinks is forced upon any man; but I do mean to say that there are many men who cannot make use of such drinks without becoming drunkards."

This remark was received with no more general favor than the one which preceded it; but Mr. Hosford dwelt at some length upon

the point, and continued his appeal to moderate drinkers, using the following strong language, —

"You, who can drink one glass of wine and feel no craving for the second, may, by your example, tempt another to his ruin. Some, alas! do more than this. They place a cup to their neighbor's lips, and then turn away, unmindful of the misery they have wrought, speaking contemptuously of him who cannot control his appetite."

Conjecture and speculation had been entirely at fault in regard to this speech. It was altogether different from what was expected. Some, perhaps most, had thought they should be entertained with a personal narrative; but such were greatly disappointed, as the speaker made no allusion to his own history.

No sooner was he seated than Mr. George Thompson rose. A wealthy farmer, and a professed Christian, he was one of the solid men of the town, whom all respected, and to whose opinion all gave deference.

"I believe our brother is right," he said. "I heartily endorse every word he has spoken. Since our pastor preached his temperance sermon, I have been thinking of this matter, and praying over it, asking that the path of duty might be made plain before me. I wish, my friends, you would all do this, and see what answer you receive. I was convinced that I had been in the wrong, and resolved to give up the use of all intoxicating liquors, never thinking it would cost me an effort to do this. I had often said, as I have heard many others say, 'I can drink, or let it alone, just as I please.' I could drink, that was certain, for I had tried it; but to let it alone was not so easy, as I found to my shame and sorrow. When I have a hard day's work to do, I miss the accustomed stimulant; and when the social glass is offered me, it is a self-denial to refuse. Some of you, my friends, may think this a strange confession; but try total abstinence yourselves, and see what will be your experience. I see before me many fathers, whose

sons and daughters are growing up around them, strong and beautiful. You would not have them drunkards, but you may be helping to make them so. I have laid five children in their graves, and I would infinitely rather lay the last remaining one beside them, than have him live to be a drunkard. I for one am ready to sign the pledge, and I pray God my son may follow my example."

There were many tearful eyes in the assembly as this was said; and when the speaker, whose sincerity no one doubted, took up a pen to affix his signature to the pledge, sobs were heard from different parts of the hall.

A noble-looking boy came forward to the table, and laid his hand upon the shoulder of the man as he wrote, and two new names appeared upon the paper.

"Thank God for this, Willie! We are safe now," said the father, as together they returned to their seats.

This gave a religious tone to the meeting, and for the remainder of the evening prayers were intermingled with remarks.

"A regular prayer-meeting," said one old toper to another. "It's a good many years since I've been in one before, but I shall be on hand for the next one."

"Just what it should be," said Dr. Hall. "We can never make progress in a good cause without God's blessing."

Esquire Randolph was present, but he stayed for no comments. Mr. Hosford's words would have seemed of little consequence had they not been endorsed by another. The departure of his friend Thompson from the old ranks troubled him; and, listening to his remarks, he could not but think of his own sons. Was he helping to make them drunkards?

The idea was preposterous. He would not allow it to influence him for a moment. But it did influence him, notwithstanding this resolution, and the next day he wrote a long letter to Fred, urging upon him the necessity of temperance.

"You know I am not a fanatic," he said, in conclusion; "but I cannot be blind to the fact

that many of our young men ruin their prospects for life by a too free use of stimulants. I do not ask you to abstain altogether; but I do ask and expect that you will never allow reason to be dethroned by appetite."

Fred Randolph read this letter, gave its contents a few moments of serious consideration, then laid it aside and joined a company of young men who had no scruples as to the way in which their time was spent. "A short life and a merry one" was their motto.

A few weeks later he was "admitted to the bar," and entered his father's office. Upon returning home, he found that great changes had taken place in the community. Mr. Gore's business had materially fallen off, and Dan Messer's groggery was a thing of the past. Some of the worst drunkards had abandoned their cups, and many moderate drinkers had signed the pledge of total abstinence.

The series of temperance meetings, which, from first to last, were fully attended, had accomplished a great and good work. Signs

of thrift appeared where before had been squalid wretchedness.

Yet some, wilfully blind to all these improvements, declared that the old days were better than the new. The men who had called to remonstrate with Mr. Manning absented themselves from church, and refused to pay anything towards his support. But they had never been very liberal; so this caused no inconvenience; and, their places being made good by others, they were hardly missed.

When the spring opened, the usually quiet village was astir with business. A company of gentlemen from abroad had purchased a water privilege about half a mile above the village, where they proposed to erect a large mill. New avenues of employment were thus opened, and there was no excuse for idleness.

The influence of this movement was felt throughout the town. Farmers and mechanics alike rejoiced. Mr. Gore flattered himself that his bar would be better patron-

ized, and counted largely upon increased profits.

His first disappointment was experienced when he learned that the agent of the company was a particular friend of Dr. Hall. The second was still more severe. No person, who made use of intoxicating drinks, would be employed in any capacity by this agent.

"Downright tyranny," said some. "Wonder if he thinks we shall stand such treatment as that. This is a free country, and we shall eat and drink what we please, work or no work."

Mr. Gore fully sympathized with these sentiments; but their expression would put no money in his pocket, and money was what he wanted.

Esquire Randolph was astonished at so unusual a restriction; but the law could give no redress to the aggrieved party.

Good wages and sure pay were strong inducements, and Mr. Bolton, the agent, found no difficulty in securing all the help he

desired. Mr. Hosford was one of the first men who applied, willing to do anything of which he was capable. The agent had heard of him through their mutual friend, and gave him the best situation in his power.

Here he soon gained the respect and esteem of all with whom he associated, and even Esquire Randolph, who, for a time, had passed by on the other side, was willing to acknowledge his acquaintance. Mr. Gore bowed politely when they met. The liquor bill had been paid with some of the first money earned by the reformed man. Mrs. Hosford had given up all extra work and devoted herself entirely to her family, while the children grew rosy and happy. The cow had come again into their possession, and plenty crowned the board.

About the first of July, Mrs. Vane returned and opened her house, that it might be in readiness to receive her children. Esquire Randolph and his wife called upon her directly, to express their pleasure at her re-

turn; and Fred exceeded his parents in cordiality.

Mrs. Hall welcomed her friend affectionately. So much had transpired during her absence, that in a long call there was time to give only a general outline of the changes. "You must see Mr. Hosford," she said. "He is one of the finest-looking men in town, and his wife is growing handsome. Betsey Halsey may well be proud of her work. She is now expending her energies upon two poor besotted women, and I have no doubt she will succeed in reforming them. Her faith is of the kind that removes mountains."

"Have you converted the 'squire?" asked Mrs. Vane.

Her companion shook her head in reply. "I wish he might be converted," she said, after a short silence; "but the doctor has little expectation that he will ever give up his old habits and opinions."

"And Fred?"

"Like his father in sentiment, but less

temperate in practice. He must reform or be ruined."

This was no more than Mrs. Vane had expected; yet it seemed hard to realize that one so gifted with all manly graces should be in danger of ruin. She thought of her own son, and prayed that he might return to her untainted with vice.

It was a joyful day when the family were again united, and the dear familiar rooms echoed to their happy voices. Eugenia came one day before her brother, and would gladly have devoted the time to quiet conversation with her mother, but her friends, eager to bid her welcome, left small space for this.

Never had the old 'squire manifested more affection for her. Fred protested he had been very lonely without her, and hoped she would never think of going back to school. "We cannot spare you for another year," he said, laughing. "If persuasion fails, father must exercise his authority. Mother, too, will have something to say about it, and she

will expect to see you early to-morrow morning."

Eugenia gladly promised to make the call, congratulating herself that friendly relations were once more established between the families, and during the vacation, she with her brother was often at the house of her guardian.

In return, Fred made frequent calls at Mrs. Vane's, always in the best of spirits, and wearing his most agreeable manners. Perfectly at home with whomever he might meet there, he was counted as a member of the family.

Eugenia and Clarence were not troubled by this. They were quite willing that people should think what they pleased. The rumor of an attachment between her old playmate and a golden-haired, blue-eyed beauty had reached Eugenia Vane while in school, and she was disposed to give it credence; the more so, since Fred made not the most distant allusion to his old passion for herself.

The evening before she returned to school, she learned her mistake. Fred Randolph again asked her to be his wife.

Surprised and deeply moved, she could not instantly reply. "I must answer you as I have done before," she said, at last.

Her companion was not one to seek rejection, or claim an unwilling bride. He believed that she loved him; she had more than once acknowledged this, or he would never have given her another opportunity to refuse his hand. He did not need to be told the reason which still separated them. He knew it well; but appetite and pride of will forbade any concession on his part.

His course of conduct during the past year had been adopted for the purpose of crushing the scruples he could not combat with argument. For this he had weighed each word and act, considered circumstances, and calculated results. To find that all had been in vain filled him with grief and mortification. Yet he drew some consolation from

the thought that he was not the only one who suffered. "Genie loves me," he whispered, as he pressed his lips to her forehead; and he spoke truly. The feeling she thought dead had only slumbered. But when fully roused it could not change her decision.

Fred Randolph had reason to remember that evening through all his after life. For the first time, a woman's voice pleaded with him to forego the fascinations of the wine-cup. "There is danger in it," said the young girl at his side. "A brilliant future lies before you. Do not sacrifice it. For your own sake, if not for the sake of those who love you, be persuaded to change your habits."

Well would it have been for the listener had he heeded these words. He felt their power. Reason urged, the sweet voice pleaded, and a bright future beckoned; but ever against these were the force of habit and the example of a father. The struggle between these conflicting influences went on long after his sad parting from Eugenia

Vane; and the recording angel wrote the result with tears.

The next morning, in the hurry and bustle of departure, Eugenia succeeded in concealing all traces of agitation from her mother, and, during the first part of her ride, conversed gayly with her brother and Selwyn Barnes; but, when their routes separated, she experienced a feeling of relief at being no longer obliged to affect a cheerfulness she did not feel. In school, she devoted herself to study with renewed ardor, knowing that in constant occupation was her only hope of happiness.

Spending her next vacation with a friend, she was not again at home until spring; but she lost no item of home news. Her many friends kept her well advised of all that transpired.

Dr. Walton's death occurred during the winter, and this, with the progress of events at "Mill Village," formed the principal topics of conversation in all places where men assembled to talk over matters of general interest. Particularly was this the case in the

bar-room of the Eagle House. There the old doctor's loss was deeply felt. Mr. Gore counted him among his firmest friends, and he could not well afford to lose any one of these.

During his long sickness, the landlord visited him almost daily, and to him confided the secret of his family troubles. His three boys were a source of great anxiety. Jotham had been dismissed from his situation with a merchant in a neighboring town, and sent home in disgrace. "Too fond of liquor to suit me," was the reason given by his employer for the dismissal. Ellis was not to be trusted in the bar-room alone, while Carl, as everybody knew, was often intoxicated.

Trouble enough for one father, truly; but Dr. Walton always comforted him with the assurance that the boys would do well enough when they were older. He had tried to believe these words of encouragement, and, as this old citizen left neither wife nor children, perhaps no person in town mourned his death more sincerely than Mr. Gore.

When Clarence Vane returned from his

second year in college, he made another effort to reclaim Carl Gore; but the boy was deaf to all entreaty.

"And I might have been just as bad, but for you and mother, dear Genie," said Clarence, after relating his want of success with Carl. "I can never repay you for your care. I am only beginning to realize what it must have been. And Selwyn, too, — he has helped me every day. Now, with God's help, I believe I can stand secure."

Was not this sister repaid for all the years she had devoted to her brother? There were no more fears for him, even when he left home alone. Mrs. Vane allowed herself to look with confidence to the future.

Esquire Randolph was proud of him, his principles as well as his talents. "Going on the teetotal plan through life, Clarence?" he asked, one day.

"Yes, sir," was the reply. "I would rather lose my life than break my pledge."

"A strong will there," said the 'squire to

himself, when his ward had left him. "Perhaps he is in the right, after all."

Eugenia, at home with her mother, settled down to the old routine of duties and pleasures. The discipline of school and study had greatly improved her. She went from home a lovely, enthusiastic girl. She returned, an accomplished woman, with manners somewhat subdued, yet wanting none of the peculiar grace which had always characterized her.

Fred Randolph expressed quite as much pleasure at her return as he had the year previous, and promised Clarence that she should lack for no brotherly attention during his absence. He made good his word, often stopping, as he went to and from the office, to know if he could be of service; and so persistent was he in his offers of kindness that they could not be refused.

Eugenia's number of friends increased, every new-comer to the village being anxious to make her acquaintance. There was a pleasant circle of young people, in which she

was always welcome. Selwyn Barnes, having completed his college course, was studying medicine with Dr. Hall, while last and least, at this same Dr. Hall's there was a brown-eyed baby, upon whom she was expected to bestow a large amount of attention.

"Mill Village" had grown to be quite a thrifty little place. Good dwelling-houses had been erected for the workmen, and a temperance store established. Of this Mr. Hosford had charge, his family occupying a cottage not far distant. George Blake, who had from the first been employed as master mechanic, was building a house for himself. Real estate throughout the town had increased in value, and people moved a little faster than in the years gone by.

Mr. Manning rejoiced in accessions to both church and society, — temperance, as ever, having proved the handmaid of religion.

When the autumn days were brightest, Mrs. Randolph told Genie she was expecting

company the next week, and should depend upon her to assist in entertaining the guest.

"Who may the guest be, auntie?" she asked.

"Lilly Barton" was the reply. "I saw her when I went my journey last spring, and invited her to visit us this fall. Her mother was an old friend of mine; but she has been dead several years, and Lilly has a step-mother. I don't think the child is very happy at home, and I want her to enjoy herself while she is here."

"Is she a child, auntie?"

"Why, no; but she certainly looks like one. She is nearly seventeen years old; but she appears younger than that."

When Lilly Barton came, no one could wonder that Mrs. Randolph had called her a child. Petite in figure, with curls of golden hair clustering around a sweet, innocent face that was lighted with eyes of deepest blue, she seemed ever appealing for protection.

The old squire petted her as he would have petted a child of half her years, his wife

lavished upon her a world of tenderness, while Fred was in danger of forgetting law-books and office together. For the first few days, Lilly went down the walk to meet him when she saw him coming, then she waited on the piazza, and, at last, he was obliged to seek her when he returned home; but the bright blush that suffused her cheek at his approach told that he was still welcome.

It was a new sensation to watch her, as she flitted through the old rooms, and it was a new happiness to feel that some one counted the hours when he was away. But why linger over this visit? Love's ways have been the same since first the world began. When Lilly Barton returned home, Fred Randolph accompanied her.

"We must have you back soon," said the old 'squire to Lilly, at her departure. "Remember that I cannot spare my little daughter long," added Mrs. Randolph.

There was no reason why the marriage should be delayed. Mr. Barton was proud to receive as a son-in-law the most promising

young lawyer in the county, and his wife was glad to be rid of a step-daughter. Preparations were hurried, and before mid-winter the bridal took place.

Then the house of Esquire Randolph was thrown open for a grand reception. Young and old were present, and among them all Eugenia Vane moved peerless. Curious eyes watched her, but they saw no traces of grief or disappointment. She met Fred Randolph's gaze without emotion. Not a pulse quickened as she offered her congratulations. Her love for him, lacking the enduring elements of trust and confidence, had given place to friendship, and she saw him the husband of another with no regrets save for the bright being at his side.

What need had she of sympathy? Her heart had given forth its love without doubt or question. Surely, one who held another's happiness so entirely in his keeping could not but be mindful of his obligation.

It was this entire, childish confidence which had charmed Fred Randolph, and

made him almost forget that his first devotion had been bestowed upon another. That evening he noticed the contrast between Eugenia and Lilly, as they stood side by side; but if for a moment his thoughts lingered with the old love, they were quickly recalled by the glance of those eyes, which, though they might grow dim with tears, could never look upon him coldly.

Wine was furnished to the guests on this festive occasion, and there were a few who drank to the happiness of the newly-wedded pair.

Settled in life. This was what the old squire had desired for his son, and he looked for a great change in his habits. His wife was expected to exert a strong influence over him; while she, in her happiness, dreamed only of basking in the sunshine of her husband's love.

All too soon was she awakened from this dream. But few months had passed before harsh words were spoken, and, wondering at their cause, she redoubled her efforts to win

the speaker back to smiles. As time went on, she learned the source of all her trouble; for trouble came to her, and the fair, young face grew pale with suffering. The parents, who had so gladly welcomed her to their homes, saw all this; but no amount of kindness on their part could make amends for her husband's want of tenderness. The lily drooped.

Business at the office was faithfully transacted, and in public Fred Randolph drank but moderately; yet in the privacy of his own room, where his wife dared not remonstrate, he indulged his appetite for intoxicating drinks. Marriage had not saved him. The demon of the cup mocks at love and domestic happiness, knowing well that his influence is the stronger.

The father trembled as he looked forward; and when Clarence Vane graduated from college, strong in the principles of truth and temperance, he acknowledged that this boy had been trained in a more excellent way. Eugenia, too, had acted wisely. He

saw this at last, and rejoiced when he knew that she was to become the wife of one upon whose uprightness rested no shadow of suspicion.

Selwyn Barnes had been content to bide his time until, by that subtle instinct with which noble natures are gifted, he knew another heart beat in unison with his own. Then he opened his arms to receive her whom he had once rescued from death, while he told her of the love he had so long and sometimes so hopelessly cherished.

Theirs was a joyous bridal, and most sincere were the congratulations they received. Each was worthy of the other. Clarence could ask no brighter destiny for his sister, and the mother was confident of her daughter's happiness.

Fred Randolph was not present. "Important business" called him to town; but his wife wreathed her pale face with smiles to do honor to her much-loved friend.

Clarence Vane chose the profession of law, and, when his studies were completed, re-

turned to his native village to fill a place which had been made vacant by death.

Lilly Randolph had died of a broken heart in the fourth year of her marriage. Her idol was of clay, and, when it lay in fragments at her feet, earth had no more to offer.

A few weeks more, and they, who had mourned a daughter, wept with almost inconsolable grief at the grave of a son.

Warning, remonstrance, and entreaty had all been unheeded. Dissipation had done its work quickly, cutting down one in the very strength of his days.

In this his hour of trial Esquire Randolph turned to Clarence Vane, who entered his office, and, so far as possible, fulfilled the duties of a son.

As the village increased in size and population, our Temperance Doctor was still conspicuous for his efforts in the cause he had so early espoused, in all of which he was earnestly seconded by his associate, Selwyn Barnes. The old squire, too, added his influence. He had learned that there is safety

only in total abstinence, and was, during the last years of his life, a strong advocate of its principles.

The Eagle House has passed into other hands. Mr. Hosford, who was there tempted to his ruin, is now a wealthy and respected citizen, while the former landlord, poor and wretched, has lived to see his sons stagger through the streets, miserable drunkards all.

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."