

As soon, however, as his eyes were fairly opened, and he found that *Ady and Jane* had each grasped tightly one of his hands, he rose up, and yielded passively to their direction—suffering them to lead him away.

"Oh dear!" exclaimed a man who had looked on with wonder and deep interest. "That's a temperance lecture that I cannot stand. God bless the little ones," he added with deep emotion, "and give them a sober father."

"I guess you never saw them before?" said one of the bar-keepers lightly.

"No, and I never wish to again, at least in this place.—Who is their father?"

"Freeman, the lawyer."

"Not the one, who, a few years ago, conducted with so much ability, the case against the Marine Insurance Company?"

"The same."

"Is it possible?"

A little group now formed around the man, and a good deal was said about Freeman and his fall from society. One who had several times seen *Ady and Jane* come in to lead him home as they had just done, said it was a touching case.

"To see, said one, how passively he yields himself to the little things when they come after him. I feel sometimes, when I see them, almost weak enough to shed tears."

"They are his good angels," remarked another. "But I am afraid they are not strong enough to lead him back to the path he has forsaken."

"You can think what you please about it, gentlemen," spoke up the landlord, "but I can tell you my opinion on the subject. I would not give much for a mother who would let two little things like them go wandering about the street, alone, at this time of night."

One of them who had expressed interest in the children, felt angry at this remark, and he retorted with some bitterness:

"And I would give less for a man who would make their father a drunkard!"

"Ditto to that," responded one of the company.

"And here's my hand for that," said another.

The landlord finding that the majority of his company were likely to be against him, smothered his angry feelings and kept silence. A few minutes afterward, two or three inmates of the bar-room went away.

About ten o'clock the next morning, while Mr. Freeman, who was generally sober in the fore part of the day, was in his office, a stranger entered, and after sitting down said:

"I must crave your pardon beforehand, for what I am going to say. Will you promise not to be offended?"

"If you offer me an insult I will resent it," said the lawyer.

"So far from that, I come with the desire to do you a great service."

"Very well. Say on."

"I was at Lawson's refectory last night."

"Well?"

"And I saw something there that touched my heart. If I slept at all last night it was only to dream of it. I am a father sir! I have two little girls, and I love them tenderly. Oh, sir, the thought of their coming out, in the cold winter night, in search of me, in such a polluted place, makes the blood feel cold in my veins."

Words so unexpected coming upon Mr. Freeman when he was comparatively sober, disturbed him deeply. In spite of all his endeavors to remain calm, he trembled all over.—He made an effort to say something in reply, but could not utter a word.

"My dear sir," pursued the stranger, "you have indeed fallen at the hand of the monster intemperance, and I feel that you are in great peril. You have not, however, fallen hopelessly. You may yet rise if you will. Let me then,

and in the name of the sweet babes, who have shown us in so wonderful a manner their love for you, conjure you to rise superior to this deadly foe. Reward these dear children with the highest blessing their hearts can desire. Come with me and sign the pledge of freedom. Let us, though strangers to each other, unite in this one act. Come."

Half bewildered, with a new hope in his heart, Freeman arose and suffered the man, who drew his arm within his, to lead him away. Before they separated, both had signed the pledge.

That evening, unexpectedly, Mr. Freeman was perfectly sober when he came home. After tea, *Ady and Jane* were standing on either side of him, as he sat near their mother, an arm round each of them, he said in a low whisper, as he bent his head down and drew them closer,

"You will never have to come for me again."

The children lifted their eyes quickly to his face, but half understanding what he meant.

"I will never go there again," he added, "I will always stay at home with you."

*Ady and Jane*, now comprehending what their father meant, overcame with joy, hid their faces in his lap, and wept for very gladness.

Low as all this had been said, every word reached the mother's ear; and while her heart yet stood trembling between hope and fear, Mr. Freeman drew a paper from his pocket and threw it on the table by which she was sitting. She opened it hastily. It was a pledge, with his well-known signature subscribed at the bottom.

With a cry of joy she sprang to his side and his arms encircled his wife as well as his little ones, in a fonder embrace than they had known for years.

The children's love had saved their father. They were indeed his good angels.

#### THOUGHTS ON THE NECESSITY OF LAW.

In the United States there are about 400,000 drunkards, and of this number, New-York contains probably 50,000. Every one of these becomes such contrary to his intention. He complied with a perverse custom which all classes shared, and found that he had formed for himself a chain of habit stronger than fetters of iron. He never dreamed of danger until it was too late.

But nature at last vindicated her broken laws. Behold him now plunged in a state of utter misery and weakness, of which no mind, save that of an inebriate, can ever conceive?—A bottomless ocean of despair, above which are heard the mingled hiss of men and demons, and the thunders of God's wrath!

Here has he struggled through long years of agony unutterable, beholding in the fate of each companion that has sunk at his side, a foreshadowing of his own. Does he wish to escape? Fools are they that ask the question. Ask the slave that cowers and groans beneath the bloody lash, if he longs for freedom!—Ask him that writhes in the remorseless fangs of the pestilence, if he would wish to be restored! Yes, the wish is there. The one burning desire of his soul is for restoration. From his first fall it hath ever been so. His whole life has been one vain struggle to that end.

Again and again has he toiled up the dismal forbidding shores, mangled and weary and bleeding, and looked for a while upon the promised land of Sobriety beyond. Like the man from whence the evil spirit had gone out, he hath for a while walked "through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none," watching against danger narrowly, mayhap prayerfully;—when suddenly at some unguarded moment, the flood-gates of a fiery stream are opened, whose current with resistless sweep bears him back to the ocean from which he had with such toil emerged, and "the last state of that man is worse than the first." Then arises the hiss