

"You know friend," he continued, "I was taken sick in the barracks and there was nothing for it but to be taken down to Dawson to the hospital; I was mighty bad, or so the boys told me after I got out of that place. But I want to tell you something that happened there which has given me a heap of trouble since then. You see they brought a lot of nurses in from the east to take care of the people who got into the dumps at Dawson. Yes, I say dumps, for a great many of the fellows in those places are no more sick than you sir, and you don't look like a consumptive." I assured him I felt all right especially after the supper the steward had served. "Well I was one of the first to get into the 'coop' and I was bad with the typhoid, or so the doctor said, and there I was for weeks, and after I was better they nearly starved me. You see, mister, grub was one dollar a pound and they didn't like to waste it on a chap as was half dead. But there was a friend in there who was up to it all and she gave me a few meals that helped me wonderful." Here there was another pause and I thought he felt for a revolver, or, perhaps, a flask, but after he had thought a moment and smiled at the sky as if he had seen right through it, he continued with the story.

"Yes the doctors took all the credit for curing me, but it was that little girl who did it and 'tween you and me it wasn't all in the medicine either."

"Why," he continued after a low laugh which almost ended in a groan "when I was out of my head with the fever I used to think she was my mother, but younger you know, and then she appeared like an angel, and she was one to me in that trouble sir, and no mistake. Well, I was getting better all the time and I began to think of leaving that little girl there, and, at last, I gave right in and told her the whole truth. I had led a pretty hard life for years, and you see I am no saint, but I thought I could give up all the shady ways of the world for the heart and hand of that little nurse. You wouldn't think it, but you do find out in these wild places the best women in the whole world." I must have smiled at this for he looked at me with a little scorn in his eye, as much as to say, "you have lived all your life in the city and we will pardon your ignorance." I feared that this had dampened his ardour so I assured him that I had plucked fowls afar among the mountains that were not inferior to the hot house variety. He saw the point at once and the story was resumed. "I knew I was not worthy to touch her little finger" he said "although at home her station would have not been all right with our people, but we have no such notions out here." Yes, sir, I told her that if she would give up the nursing of these toughs and duffers, as come in there, I would never taste another drop of the drink, which had been the cause of all my trouble." Here he again halted and a shudder passed through his strong frame which was painful to witness. In the course of a few minutes he turned upon me and said, "Did you come on the boat at Vancouver?" When I answered him in the affirmative he drew nearer to me and whispered in my ear the name of this one being who, of all others, was now the guiding star of his life. "She is now in some of the hospitals of the coast cities" said he "and it may be you have seen her?" Strange as it may appear I had known her as one of the most faithful and beloved nurses of a hospital I had frequently visited. I did not hesitate to tell him that I had met the one to whom his thoughts ever turned but I felt compelled to assure him that he need never think of securing the hand of such a lady as Miss Clara Sinclair while he was a slave to habits which such as she could not endure.

"But you could have some influence with her when you return," said he as he bent a piercing look upon my face. Yes, I might do something for you but not as I now know you, I said. Indeed I should do my best to persuade her to have nothing to do with you. He started as if he had been stung to a frenzy and it was, perhaps, as well for me that we were not in a lonely place. "You would put between us?" he hissed through his half-open lips leaning toward where I reclined in the deck-chair. I was not fearful of him if he did not take advantage of me by the use of concealed weapons, and, as he made no attempt to reach for such tools, I did not try to get out of his way, nor to defend myself. Looking him in the face, which was dark and full of wrath, I repeated what I had said, asking him in the same breath to be calm or his chances of claiming this "guiding star," were worthless.

When he had thought for a moment he looked up and said in a half whisper, "do you think there is any hope for me, or

am I doomed forever?" If you mean is there any hope for you to get this young lady for your wife I can tell you frankly that that will depend upon your future conduct. If you have told me the truth about your hospital experience you are the only one who has a claim to her affections, but, if I can have a correct judgment of her principles, she will never marry a man who has no faith in God, nor a good moral character, and, from what you have told me, you are just that man. Don't you think she is too good for the like of you, Mr. R.—I said! "Too good for me" he said, "yes and the best man in the universe, and I would wear my heart out now if I thought I could undo the life that is behind me. O, Mister, you don't know what it is to become a slave to drink when you are a boy at school. You think it is an easy matter to stop when you like but it is like death, and worse than death a thousand times." I let him talk on till the waves of his anguish ebbed far out and he became willing to listen to reason. I have known people like you who got back what manhood they had lost, I remarked, but not without a Bible and a God. "Now look here, stranger, you took me up "loud" on that statement, and it is more'n I bargained for." You have cornered me sure, for I know the Old Book is all right, and maybe I know more of it than you think. But you see when I left the Old Land I got reading the "Higher Critics," and they do slash everything right and left, so when I got into this way I just took the stand to all the parsons that I took to you. But don't I know it is all right when I know my own mother, and that gal in the hospital?" Then, I said, you must be made a new man by the truth of the Book and by the power of Jesus; otherwise you must abandon the thought of ever being happy again, for that young girl will walk the wards of the hospital till the "crack o' doom," before she will be the wife of such as you. We parted that night, after he had given me most solemn promises that he would profit by the conversation, and that he had taken his last drink, and in the future he would live for the redemption of the past.

I saw him but once again, which was as I crossed the "great divide," known as the "White Pass," amid the horrors of which so many poor fellows lost their lives on the way to the Yukon. Our train had reached one of the most lofty elevations and as we were creeping along thousands of feet above the old Klondike trail, in the valley far below, I saw my friend of the voyage "tramping it," to the far off regions of gold. I learned he had spent all in Skaguay and now he was making his way from post to post on the strength of his uniform which was a passport to hospitality throughout that region.

I think of the mighty cataract which raged near to where we left him, and to me it wove out the dark parable of the young man's life, riven and defiled as it was. What a loss this naturally noble young fellow had sustained, and all for the good times of the drinking saloon.

Here he was an exile from home and native land; deposed from the place he might have occupied with distinction; lost to the church, for he had, no doubt, the best of talents; and lost to the one woman to whom his heart had turned. Could he keep the vows so faithfully given to a traveller under the stars on the deck of the ocean liner? I could scarcely hope for anything so desirable when I well knew that he would be thrown into company, on every hand, whose influence would tend to lead him back to the old way.

Toronto, Ont.

## Look Out For No. 1.

SO says the world. But who and what is "No. 1"? Why, I am. So the world's advice to me is "look out for yourself." Study your own interests, defend your own rights, get all you can and keep all you get.

Is this what I am for? There is something in my very soul which feels insulted at the suggestion.

I am not six feet high nor two feet wide, and to ask me to confine my thoughts, my activities and my aspirations to an area which can be described by such contracted limits is to impeach my manhood.

When a man comes to be content with the interests which are confined in a casket two by six, I don't see that it makes much difference whether he stands erect in a fashionable drawing room, or in its mart of trade, or lies prostrated in a country graveyard. The man who lives only for himself is dead while he lives.