

must have it," thought Fanny. And she strove hard to think there was a good reason why she should unlock the little cupboard, and offer, that cup to her husband's lips, which she feared and dreaded he might take himself. Ah! Fanny wanted a firm heart. It was not long before a gleam of joy broke upon Fanny's spirit. The contents of the decanter were soon emptied, and James took it away to be re-filled. The next day it was not in its accustomed place upon the shelf—the tumblers were alone, and through the livelong week exhibited no marks of sugar or brandy. "James sees his danger and he has put the decanter away," thought Fanny, with a thankful heart. The cares of her family seemed relieved seven-fold; her voice was again caroling about the house.

James had a small poultry-yard, and there he kept his hens and eggs enough not only to supply his own family, but occasionally to sell to his neighbours. Fanny used to take her little boy out in the barn, and then sit him down beside the hens to the great delight of the little fellow, while she went hunting after the eggs. It so happened that, about this time, she determined to make for James his favourite pudding. To the barn she hied for eggs. Among the hay, she espied a hole, and hoped it might prove a new nest. Down she thrust her hand. She indeed grasped something, which made her start—but not a hen, not a chicken, not an egg; no it was something which took her strength away, and she felt like laying down to die. Poor Fanny! it was the glass decanter which she drew forth from this hiding-place in the barn—half filled with what!—the deadliest fire-water, New England rum. Fanny forgot her eggs, her pudding, her boy even, and she sat there and wept.

And now must we pass over many years of Fanny's life. Every prophetic eye may have seen what mournful destiny awaited her,—Many children were born to them. The two eldest she laid in an early grave. The mother wept bitter tears. But greater sorrow than these had Fanny Farmer. The yearly estrangement of her husband's affections was far more difficult to bear. For a long time Fanny strove not to believe it—and for a long time it was unfeared and unperceived by any one besides herself—that another was dearer to her husband than the Fanny of his early manhood. Another he pressed to his bosom; another, he fancied, could gladden his spirits, and lessen his cares, and lighten his burdens, and restore his health; for another would he leave his family, rise up early, and sit up late; for another would he hazard his money, reputation, his time; for another would he sacrifice his wife and neglect his children. Yes, Fanny must acknowledge a rival of superior power, and of increasing influence. For a long time neighbours and acquaintances thought Fanny was his darling; and it was not until the Farmers seemed to be getting down in the world, that people began to grow suspicious. It was not until James Farmer lost his smart manly bearings, neglected his gardens and fences, was no longer seen at church, suffered his children to go threadbare, and destitute, that the whole truth came out—James Farmer loved his decanter better than he did his wife. How much was Fanny to be pitied? but she made no complaint. A sad and care worn expression sat upon her pale cheek and sunken eye, as everything around bespoke her's the drunkard's home,—and who does not know the sad peculiarities of a drunkard's home?

So things went on until James, the second son, named in memory of the eldest born that died, grew to twelve years old—and a fine manly boy was he. Two years before, James went away to live with a gentleman in the country. That gentleman's family being now broken up, he came home awhile to wait for other employment. It was not long before Hobbs wanted a boy to tend store for him;—Hobbs, the dramseller, whose little shop at the corner had been for years a noted stand for hosts of toppers, both old and young; which had manufactured more hard

drinkers than any other shop in the country, and had made its owner rich upon other men's follies. Hobbs cast his eye upon young James Farmer. "A shrewd little fellow," thought Hobbs, "and I can get him for nothing;" and he gave an inward chuckle as he thought of the long account run up against the Farmer estate. He concluded to go over and talk about the affair with the boy's mother.

"A fine looking lad is that James of yours," said old Hobbs, seating himself in a chair, which his liquor had made rickety.

"A good boy," answered the mother, sadly.

"Well" proceeded Hobbs, a very little embarrassed, "well—perhaps you know there is an account owing me. Now I don't want to be hard, but it's bad not to get one's honest debts. Perhaps you will let James come over to the shop and help to rub off old scores."

"I did not know there were any honest debts owed there," said Fanny, a faint color mounting her cheeks, as she thought of the enticements he had used towards his drinking customers. "I can hardly remember when I have bought anything there."

"Your husband can remember, I guess," exclaimed Hobbs, angrily; "he is my customer, and if I am not paid up soon, you must suffer the consequences."

With a house still over her head, Fanny had contrived to get along. She feared, at no distant day it might be drank away; and she dreaded so inexorable a creditor as Mr. Hobbs had always proved to be towards his miserable victims.

"I will talk with Jemmy about it," replied Fanny, humbly. "What would you allow him?"

"Oh, I shant be hard with him; send the boy to me;" and Hobbs gladly vanished from the house. He could meet the oaths or the rage of the wretched crew which frequented his establishment, with an unflinching and unrepenting spirit, but the presence of a stricken woman palsied his heart.

When Jemmy came home, his mother told him of the visit.

"Never mother," exclaimed James, with energy, "will I go and deal out rum for my father, or any-body's father. No liquor shall pass through my hands. Why, mother I am a soldier in the cold-water army!"

"But if father gave you the decanter to go and buy some, you'd have to go," said a little brother.

"No, indeed, I would not," answered James.

"Then father would beat you," said little Fanny, shrinking.

"I would be beaten to death, rather than break my pledge," cried the heroic boy.

"Obey your parents," said the elder Fanny. Ah! the mother's spirit was crushed, and she was ready to make almost any compromise rather than arouse the beastly rage of the husband and father. Jemmy said nothing. It so happened that about evening, James Farmer came home, and desired his son to run down to Hobbs and bring up his decanter. The mother trembled for his refusal, and the little ones began to crowd together in fear. The boy took his cap walked off. He entered the shop, just as the old man had filled the decanter. "You are James Farmer, I suppose,—well, I want your services in the shop," said Hobbs, in a tone which was meant to be pleasant.

"I came to get the decanter," said the boy.

"And I want you in the shop," declared Hobbs, testily placing it on the counter.

"I cannot come, sir," replied James, firmly. "I am soldier in the cold-water army, and I cannot serve the shop where my father was made a drunkard."

The old man turned blue with rage, while conscience told him how true the accusation was. James seized the decanter and went off—not homeward—Oh no—for he was a cold-water soldier. He ran to a neighbouring well. C