

"(Guess if Robinson 'd gone on that plan you'd never know what become o' your gal," said Dan bluntly.

He had been trying in this way to break the sad news gently to old John. But he saw through the window the rude wagon coming over the plain with its burden, the young mother with the babe in her arms, both dead—frozen to death on the plains in the fierce cold of the night before. He felt John must know the fact before the sad sight met his eyes. So he continued:

"If Robinson hadn't gone to hunt her up, the snow'd mighty soon have buried her, an' you'd never have found her."

John turned savagely upon the speaker.

"Dan Jones, are yer lunny? Do yer know you're talking about my gal?"

"That's jest the one I'm tellin' yer about," persisted Dan. And incensed by John's words and expression, he burst forth with the naked truth. "Your gal went over to Miller's station yesterday an' got drunk, an' comin' home, she lay down on the ground an' froze to death—her an' the young un, too." He sprang aside as he spoke, or John's fist would have felled him to the floor.

"If I hear o' you repeatin' such a lie agin, I'll send you where you'll wish you'd never said it."

"Come and see for yerself," said Dan doggedly, as he reached the door, and opening it, slipped outside.

The wagon had stopped close to the house, and two men, aided by Dan, began removing from it what looked like a rude bier. A light blanket covered it, and John could not see what was beneath; but it looked like the form of a woman. It was the woman Dan had been talking about, he supposed; but why were they bringing her—it—into the house? If they wanted to send it off by the train it would be better to go directly to the station—a few rods further down the road. Through the window he saw the men approaching the door; and he tried to go forward to speak to them; but he suddenly found himself unable to do it. A horrible fear had suddenly seized upon him! He could not tell what. The men came on up the steps and entered the open door—having some little trouble to get their burden through. They laid it upon the floor in front of John, where he stood with his back to the stove. Somebody—it was Robinson he found out afterward—came and touched his arm, and spoke some words which fell upon his ears without any meaning. Then he turned down the blanket and John saw the familiar girlish face and form, with the baby in its arms. Only a glance he gave it, and then with a low groan fell on the floor beside it, as stiff, and to all appearances, as lifeless as the corpse itself.

It was not a "stroke," though they thought at first it was; John recovered and transacted his business both in and out of the house as before—with a single exception. Of course, the bar was closed until after the funeral. And until the funeral, John would not leave his "little gal" as he called her still; but sat beside her constantly, day and night, often talking to her. He seemed to draw some mental comfort and healing in this way. He said long after, to Mr. Robinson:

"It didn't seem to me at that time as though Mary Ann was really dead. I know'd she was, but I couldn't make it seem so. An' as I talked to her, I told her all, how I come to be so careless-like, an' selfish. I tried to blame her husband first for her gittin' that bad habit. But I see plain enough, pretty soon, that I couldn't do that in reason. 'Cause he never drank a drop, an' never had a drop in the house. No, she jest larned how to use it at home—in her old daddy's house—her daddy that would a-died for her, an' never thought it nothin'. I used to give her a drop or two myself once in awhile when she was very leetle—jest to see her laugh an' say: 'More dada.' But when I put her at the bar to sell it, I told her very decided: 'You musn't never tech a drop yourself, little gal,' an' she promised not to. 'Twasn't right to serve her so; 'twas too hard on her. Jest to larn her to like the stuff, an' then put her to give it to everyone else, an' not take it herself. But I asked her pardon for it, that time 'fore we put her out o' sight. An' sure as you stan' there, I heered her say—jest with her own voice: 'Forgive you, father.' Why, of course, you didn't know what you was doin'." An' I didn't then," he concluded with emphasis. "An' what's more I wouldn't believe what was told me."

One change in John's establishment was apparent to some of his customers. After his daughter's death, his stock of liquors suddenly gave out. From the day his child was brought home dead, and his wife suddenly closed the bar, not another drop of liquor was sold. To the first man who asked if he could have some, John said simply:

"No, sir, you can't."

To Robinson only and to Hannah, did he vouchsafe any explanation of his intentions.

"(Guess I'll try to look after somebody else's chilren a leetle, now I can't see after my own any more," the words ended in a husky voice, and John suddenly bent his head and sobbed, as only a man can sob, and then only when his heart is broken.—*New York Observer.*

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—"Judge not, and ye shall not be judged."—Luke vi. 37-49.

Second Day—The Judgment Seat of Christ—Matt. xxv. 31-46.

Third Day—"None of us Liveth to Himself."—Rom. xiv. 1-9.

Fourth Day—Personal Responsibility.—Rom. xiv. 10-23.

Fifth Day—The Strong should Help the Weak.—Rom. xv. 1-13.

Sixth Day—We should regard others' Consciences.—1 Cor. viii. 1-13.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, June 20—OUR BROTHERS' KEEPERS.—(Gen. iv. 3-16. (A temperance topic.)

OUR BROTHERS' KEEPERS.

Rescue the perishing, Care for the dying,
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;
Weep o'er the erring one, Lift up the fallen,
Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save.
Rescue the perishing, Care for the dying;
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save."

How can we expect God to keep us, unless we are willing, so far as we can, to help Him keep our brothers?

Our brother's keeper—in a bargain! Be as anxious that he shall come out with profit as that you shall.

Our brother's keeper—in "the race of life"! Instead of snatching him from the goal, push him towards it, though you are thereby delayed.

Our brother's keeper—above all, in the times when he does not love you but loves sin, spurns you and hugs the wineglass, or other lusts of the body. God help us all who stand in Christ's stead to the world, and try in His name to carry on His work, to throw our arms about the outcasts, as He threw His, and draw them into the kingdom of heaven!

The weak and the fallen are calling for help, and they are calling to us. Let us hear and respond. There are conditions so low and besotted that they have lost all consciousness of their degradation, their faculties being so blinded that they are incapable of measuring, or even apprehending the depths to which they have descended. Such do not call for help, of their own volition—but their very helplessness is vocal with appeal, and we should not turn a deaf ear to this plea that is dumb. They are perishing without knowing it, and sinking lower and lower into perdition because of the sheer neglect of men and women more fortunately situated, who are called the followers of the Nazarene, but are not yet fully erudued with His spirit: "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in." This is the Gospel commandment to seek the outcast and the neglected, whose rightful home is within the Father's house.

Vice and drunkenness are universal, and they are growing more and more appalling every day. The saloon influence, especially, is reaching farther and farther, and it has long been felt in halls of legislation. This is an institution which curses humanity and drags it down, and no where is the saloon so powerful as in America; and nowhere is there a people on whom the drink habit has such a destructive influence as it has on the American people. Here is a large field, which offers matchless opportunity for Christians to lend a helping hand. The weak brother, the drunkard and his family, appeal unto us for help, and they sadly need it. We are our brother's keeper—this is the voice of God, and our conscience responds to it—let us hearken and let us help.

The Psalmist has said to those who put their trust in God's protection

"THE LORD IS THY KEEPER."

Thou art willing to be kept by Him. Thou knowest thine own helplessness and ignorance; the power and malignity of the adversary; the sufficiency, love, and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ; the reality of the Spirit, thou distinguishest His still, small voice; the Word of God is a lamp to thy feet; thou meditatest therein day and night; thou hast the shield of faith. Thou knowest the voice of Thy Keeper, and knowest not the voice of strangers. In prosperity, in adversity, and in the intervening hills, thou dost equally seek the guidance and help of the good Shepherd. He is now Thy Keeper; and therefore it is certain that in all times of trouble, in temptation, and in the valley of the shadow of death the Lord will be Thy Keeper, He will Keep thee in all serenity and security. If Christ has done so much for us in keeping us safe from harm should we not follow His example, by helping the weak and erring and in action as well as word become our Brother's Keeper.