

elections a ballot is taken "license or no license" in that particular polling district. Such a vote as this would vastly simplify the action of the Commissioners, and relieve them of the trouble of deciding in all districts where the vote is adverse to license. At the same time it would relieve certain individuals from the trouble of getting up petitions, and it would also have the advantage of removing liquor saloons from some places where they now exist much against the will of a majority of the residents of the district.

Toronto, July 17th, 1883.

Yours truly,
W. A. D.

Tales and Sketches.

SAINT AGATHA.

"Agatha, come here!"

The tone in which these words were uttered was querulous. Agatha rose immediately, and went out into the tiny kitchen where her mother sat near a basket full of clean clothes just taken from the line. A pale, gentle, self-controlled little woman of forty-seven was Agatha. A woman too, of judgment and of faculty—that all comprehensive New-England phrase. But to her mother she was still no wiser than a child of seven, and was treated accordingly.

"These clothes ain't white at all, Agatha," complained the fretful voice; "what can be the reason?"

"You know there was very little sun to-day, mother," answered Agatha, quickly, "and the wind blew so hard that I took them in as soon as possible."

"Here is a spot, too, on one of the pillow-cases. I want you to wash it off immediately, Agatha."

"I think it is a stain, mother, I rubbed it hard but it would not come out."

"I'm very sure it's dirt," insisted her mother, "rub it again and let me see."

Agatha obeyed without a word. Her mother was a nervous invalid, and she was accustomed to her whims. She never expected to please her, for Mrs. Sands knew how to blame but not to praise. It was discouraging, but Agatha had learned in a long experience, that if there was to be peace in the family, her mother's will must be law, and that she must learn of Him "who took upon himself the form of a servant."

"You see, mother, that it does not rub out," she said, coming to her mother in a few moments with the pillow-case, which had been vigorously rubbed. "I think it must be a stain of medicine."

"Oh, Agatha, how can you torture me by alluding to Herbert's illness?" said Mrs. Sands putting her handkerchief to her eyes. "It is very evident that you do not feel his death as I do."

The blood rushed to Agatha's face, and the tears to her eyes at this unjust accusation—but she restrained herself. She did not trust herself to reply, however, but stood quietly awaiting any further demands upon her time and patience.

The side-door opened at this moment, and a gay young voice exclaimed:

"Where are you, auntie? I've come to stay with grandma while you go to prayer-meeting. The bell is ringing, so you must go right off and get ready."

Agatha kissed her dear little niece. There was one person in the world, at least, who loved her. "Do you need me any longer, mother?" she asked as she turned to go.

"Oh no, I suppose not, but I am distressed at these clothes."

The clothes were really immaculate; but Mrs. Sands—who had been an over-particular housekeeper in her day, and whose enfeebled health was doubtless the result of overwork—fancied that no one could do any part of the household labor as she used to do it.

"They will look whiter, mother, when they are all ironed and hung on the clothes-bars," said Agatha cheerily.

"Oh yes, that's a nice way to get off," retorted the mother with a slight sneer.

Agatha's heart was human and easily pierced. As she stood before the glass tying on her black bonnet, she thought, as she always did when she put it on—of Herbert, the brother who had been the life of the house, and who had made even his mother cheerful at times. Only a few weeks dead, and her heart daily wrung by the sight of his vacant chair and the desolation of the house. Could life ever be the same again? Could she ever cease to love and miss Herbert? Ah, God knew! And her sister Christine—the sharer of all her joys and sorrows—had died only a few years before. God's hand had been laid heavily upon Agatha.

As she glanced at the reflection in the glass of the pale, sad face, so rapidly losing all its freshness, she said to herself, "Oh, why am I left? What can be the use of my living? Would mother or any one else miss me in the least, if I were to die?"

"Behold, we count them happy which endure." She thought of this passage bitterly as she walked along to the chapel. "Can it be that endurance will ever bring me happiness?" she sighed.

Her next-door neighbor sat behind her in meeting. A brisk, breezy little woman, impetuous to a fault, and always making mistakes which were known, however, principally to herself. She knew much of Agatha's home-life, and as she saw her stepping about from day to day, so patiently

and faithfully performing all her little irksome duties, the more fortunate neighbor took home to herself, many a time, the lesson of that patient, self-sacrificing life. Agatha never complained, was always cheerful when her neighbor met her, and always ready to sympathize with, or help her in any strait.

It was this little woman who seized Agatha's arm with impulsive affection when the meeting was over.

"You are going to walk home with me, to-night," she said. "I have been sitting and looking at you in meeting, and you looked so tired and sad that it made my heart ache. Your clothes blew down this morning, didn't they? I saw you pick some of them up, and take them away to wash over, they didn't look a bit soiled to me."

"They weren't, but mother thought I had better put them into the tub again," replied Agatha simply.

"Do you know," said the impulsive little woman—as the two stopped a few moments after at Agatha's gate—"your life is a constant lesson to me. I am sure that I am better for your living; and I often say to myself as I see you going about, 'There's a halo around her head! I see it whether others do or not. She is my saint—Saint Agatha!' How do you like your name, dear?"

Agatha murmured some inarticulate reply. Her eyes were full of tears as she parted from her friend, and she walked up and down the garden-path for several moments before she dared trust herself to go into the house.

Those little words of cheer were "like apples of gold in pictures of silver" to the poor, tired, sad heart, and Agatha walked in the light of them many days. "Ah, dear Lord, forgive me," she inwardly prayed. "I have many kind friends, after all, and if I am, in the humblest way, of any help to any one of them, shall I not be thankful to live out my appointed time, and shall I not even 'count it happy to endure?'—*Elizabeth Wintrop in Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

THE LITTLE SHOES.

Some months ago—I need not mention where,

There was a meeting in a Temperance Hall,
A motley, eager crowd was gathered there,
Among them sat a man, well-dressed and tall,
Who listened earnestly to every word.

At length, a friend beside him said:—

"Come, William Turner, I have never heard
How 'twas you changed so much. Come now tell us
Why you gave up the public-house. But few,
I'm sure can tell so strange a tale as you."

Up rose William at the summons,
Glanced confusedly round the hall,
Cried, with voice of deep emotion,
"The little shoes—they did it all!"

"One night, on the verge of ruin,
As I hurried from the tap,
I beheld the landlord's baby
Sitting in its mother's lap.

"Look, dear father," said the mother,
Holding forth the little feet;
"Look, we've got new shoes for darling!
Don't you think them nice and neat?"

"Ye may judge the thing is simple,
Disbelieve me if you choose;
But, my friends, no fist e'er struck me
Such a blow as those small shoes:

"And they forced my brain to reason:
'What right,' said I, standing there,
'Have I to clothe another's children,
And let mine own go bare?"

"It was in the depth of winter,
Bitter was the night, and wild;
And outside the flaring gin-shop
Stood my starving wife and child.

"Out I went, and clutched my baby,
Saw its feet so cold and blue;
Fathers! if the small shoes smote me,
What did those poor bare feet do?"

"Quick I thrust them in my bosom;
Oh! they were so icy chill!
And their coldness, like a dagger,
Pierced me—I can feel it still.

"Of money I had but a trifle,
Just enough to serve my need;
It bought shoes for little baby
And a single loaf of bread.