

The brandy and seltzer appeared and vanished. A broiled steak, and oysters and crackers followed, and then came rum to wash it all down. By sunset poor Dick's weak head was in a whirl. When darkness fell, his errand was still neglected, and he sat in the little bar-parlour, looking on while his boon-companions played cards, a hot bloom on his cheeks, an insane glitter in his handsome eyes.

'Come up, Dick, and try your luck?'

'Don't care if I do,' said Dick, and at it he went.

His own purse was soon emptied, and then, he never could clearly recall how it all happened, but, insane from drink and determined to retrieve his losses, he ventured to open the sealed envelope and to borrow a stake from the funds entrusted to him by his employer.

'I'll soon double it,' he thought, 'and then I'll replace the amount.'

But he lost instead of doubling, and then swallowed more brandy in his excitement, at the invitation of his good friends. The end was, that he made a night of it, and when the morning dawned, poor Dick found himself alone, forsaken by his friends, and the sealed envelope and its contents both gone. The shock sobered him. He got up, and with his head beating like a trip-hammer, walked back to his native village, and seeking his employer, confessed all that had happened. Mr. Robinson was greatly provoked, and at once put the matter into the hands of the law, and Dick Arnold was arrested and sent to prison.

When the news came to his father's ears he refused to give his son either aid or countenance.

'I'm done with him. Let them send him to the State prison; he deserves it.'

But the mother, her faithful heart going out in yearning pity for her erring boy, stood and pondered how she might save him.

In a little while she turned, and entering the pleasant cottage, went slowly upstairs, and into the chamber where her daughter Rose sat sewing on her bridal-rob.

Sitting down beside her, she told her the story of her brother's trouble. Rose understood her mother's meaning even before she could put it into words. There was a little box on the table, which contained her marriage dowry. Little by little the father and mother

had hoarded it in their only daughter's name, that she might not be dowerless on her wedding-day.

Pretty Rose took the box and put it in her mother's hands.

'Take it, mother,' she said, 'and do with it as you think best.'

'Heaven bless you, my daughter; but it is hard to deprive you of your marriage dowry, and your wedding day so near.'

Rose's cheeks bloomed like her namesakes in the little garden below, and her blue eyes lit.

'Never mind that, mother,' she said. 'Charlie will be willing to take me without the dowry; I'm sure of it.'

So Mrs. Arnold took the box and went away. Before the day ended she had refunded the money to Mr. Robinson, the charge was withdrawn, and her boy was out of prison.

'I can't go home, mother. Father doesn't want me; he told me so,' said Dick, as they stood under the green locust trees beyond the cottage lawn. 'Let me go out into the world and work my way up, and then I'll come back.'

She put her arms around his neck, and looked up at him with streaming eyes.

'Oh, Dick, my boy, my darling, you will do better—you will, Dick, for mother's sake.'

'Yes, mother, God being my helper, I will. I've caused you so much trouble, and you've always been good and gentle to me, mother. Forgive me now; I'll come back and be a comfort to you yet.'

'My boy, I forgive you, and I believe in you. Here, Dick,' and she drew a purse and a worn little Bible from her bosom, 'take these. You may need the money; the Bible is mine, Dick—mother's Bible, don't forget that. Mother has read it every day and night for the last thirty years. You'll think of that, Dick, and you'll read it for mother's sake.'

'Yes, mother.'

'Every night, no matter where you may be, you'll read a chapter, and get down on your knees and pray the little prayer mother taught you, if nothing else? Promise me, Dick. Every night at ten o'clock, at that hour I shall be on my knees praying for you, my boy. I shall never miss a night, Dick, while I live; promise me you'll do it, for mother's sake.'

Dick tried to promise, but he let his