

arm, and her eyes lifted beseechingly to his.

"Franc, you almost give me courage to try."

"You must try, John. With God on your side, there is no such thing as failure."

He walked the floor in gloomy silence. Stopping suddenly, he asked, "Why did you not answer my letter?"

Then followed explanations, and an agreement was entered into that he should write to her weekly, giving a faithful account of his success. Although no word was spoken of renewing the old engagement, both felt when they parted that they were better, truer friends than ever before.

The next day Franc was unable to leave her room, and so could not see Mr. Earle when he called; but she got a little note that gave her inexpressible comfort. It ran thus: "Franc, I am going home to try. Pray for me."

Many a fervent petition was breathed to heaven for him in the busy weeks that followed.

In a few days Mr. Graham, an old family friend, and one of her uncle's executors, came down, saying that he and his wife were going to Europe, and very much wanted her to accompany them. It was business connected with her estate that was calling him there, and he wished her to be with him. So after a little hesitation, she decided to go.

In Edinburgh, they were joined by Fred Landon—a nephew of old Mr. Graham. He proved a valuable acquisition, as Mr. Graham had no inclination to do much sight-seeing, and he was Miss Lester's ready escort at all times.

One day, in speaking of some college scrape, he mentioned Earle.

"Is it John Earle? Do you know him?" asked Franc.

"Yes; dear old John Earle, the very best fellow in all the world. Now, let me ask, do you know him?"

"I boarded with them for six months," Franc said, very quietly.

"Then you know his sister—Kate. Is she married? and just what is she like now, Miss Lester? I went home with John and spent one vacation, and I thought her — almost perfect!"

"She is just the dearest, warm-hearted, lovable girl I know," Franc said, warmly.

"She promised to make all that, I thought," and the subject was dropped; but only to be resumed again and again ostensibly to hear about "dear old John;" but Franc noticed that Kate was always very soon introduced, and she was only too glad to turn from John to her.

One day he asked Franc if Kate was engaged; "or, in plain words, Miss Lester," said he, "do you think there would be any chance for me, if I went home?"

"I cannot, of course, tell what she might think of you," she said; "but I am nearly sure she does not care for any one else."

"Then I'll go right home at once. Dear Miss Lester, you don't know what a favor you have conferred on me. I should have sought her long ago; but I heard, on what I thought was good authority, that she was engaged to Dr. McAlpine."

"It is not true, Mr. Landon. They did not agree on temperance principles. Kate will marry no one who is not a total abstainer. Are you one, may I ask?"

"Yes; I never drank a glass of anything intoxicating in my life."

"Then you have my free consent to win dear Kate," she said, as they parted.

To return to America. Were John Earle's efforts at self-control successful? Yes; in the main they were. Franc prayed for him, and he knew it, and the knowledge gave him courage.

Once or twice he had stumbled, and come near falling, and often he was depressed and gloomy; but all the dark side had been faithfully recorded in his weekly letters to Franc, and in return she wrote words of counsel and encouragement.

One evening he was driving home when Dr. McAlpine called to him. He had avoided his old friend of late, knowing that a visit at his office was sure to be attended with more or less of temptation.

"John," said he, "Hugh is down here on a spree—he has been drinking dreadfully lately, and I can't bear to have them see him in that state at my boarding-place. Could you oblige an old friend by taking him in for a day or two, until I get him sobered down and take him home?"