

"SOMETHING THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A MAN."

"There goes something that should have been a man!" exclaimed a friend.

The poor creature was just leaving a low grog-shop. A tall form, with a massive great chest, a noble brow, with a shock of frizzled grey hair—eyes deep, dark, and lustrous once; now, still deep, but sepulchral, and burning like smouldering fires upon red altars—these made the sum bodily of that something that should have been a man.

But once to trace his career:

A beautiful babe pressed fondly to the breast of a joyous mother. Clinging to her neck, playing with her ringlets, filling the house with the music of his laugh

A lovely boy, towards whom all eyes are turned; his face bright with enthusiasm, wending his way to the little school, and there winning prizes. So in the play-ground the king among his fellows; vivacious, full of fun and repartee, eager at play. Hear the ring of his glad shout!

A youth, already singling his gentle partner. A youth, sipping at small parties the bright-hued wine, and poetising upon the frothy pearls that deck its surface.

*A young man!* How the words leap to paper. How much of strength, what beaming eyes, what high resolves, and what proud startings for fame! What yearnings to be rich! What hopes of happiness! What dreamings of the future! What excesses of joy, those three little words conjure before the mind!

A young man! Does he mean to be drunken? To be poor? To be dishonoured? To have the children laugh and point the finger at him? To strike down the helpless woman? To deform innocent children? To turn home into worse than a howling desert?

O! assuredly not.

Nor does he think so, while he leans back in the gorgeous saloon, and amid flashing lights, aided by every artifice, takes to his heart, to his soul, hugging it as a miser hugs his treasure, the fiend that desolates.

Well, time has passed swiftly; the brand is burnt out, it is charred and blackened, the star has fallen from the heavens of home.

He bickers, he quarrels, he laughs with silly learing, and kicks at the armless chairs and tables. He roars, that you may roar him back; and thinks it wit. If his wife smiles he curses her; and if she cannot get him a supper or a fire, still he curses her. It is cursing, cursing, and going to grog shops, and coming home to curse again, from morning till night.

Alas! poor drunkard. Wherever you behold him, you see "something that should have been a man." Ah! and something that cannot be freed from human responsibilities. The Judgment! The Judgment!

---

MANNA.

Augustine repeats from the Rabbinical writers, that the Israelites found the manna with which they were fed in the wilderness to have the taste of their favourite food, that they experienced from it the relish of fish, flesh, fowl or vegetable, according to each man's prevailing taste. The Rabbins add, however, that in no case had it ever the taste of melons, cucumbers, leeks, onions and garlic, which were those roots of Egyptian produce the Israelites regretted to have lost. This alleged property of the manna is matter of mere conjecture or fable; yet, by a little license of interpretation, it may familiarly illustrate an assured property of the food of God's Spiritual Israel. 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' Now, the heavenly food of the believing soul, the practical and saving knowledge of the glorious gospel, possesses the relish of every holy pleasure, satisfies the craving of every pure desire, gratifies the intellectual palate of every unvitiated taste, affords to the soul all the enjoyments of which it is capable, except such as would excite or cherish its longings for a return to 'the house of bondage.' "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, when I remember thee upon my bed and meditate on thee in the night watches." "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether, more to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." "For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."