

A Visit to the Spring on the Hillside;

OR,

The Temperance Question.

CHAPTER I.

THE WIFE'S APPEAL TO LEGISLATURE.

"Oh for a gleam of light
On the home—on the friendly hand,
That pours in kindness the burning draught
That maketh a desolate land."

I step from the back door alone, for I cannot explain to my sisters what prompts this visit to the spring on the hillside. I once looked as carelessly as they do now upon these scenes, but absence has endeared them to me, and their memory is almost sacred now. So I look longingly at the old evergreens, and wish their outstretched branches would hide me from enquiring eyes; and while I wish I have gained the hiding place, and have only to ascend the hill and stand beside the spring.

What wonder that my mind goes back to the days of my childhood, as I look upon these scenes. There stands the old tree where I have gathered nuts, and there is the old oak where I played years ago—not so many years ago either, for I am not old. This is my first visit home since marriage.

I love my husband. I wish he did not drink wine, and was a Christian like my father; but he is a good man, and I dare say he will not be a drunkard, if father does say he is on the road to it.

And now I stand where the water is falling off a jut of rock, and I stoop and kiss the clear water, though I am not the least thirsty.

A clear laugh rings out through the woods, and here comes my sisters, my brother, and my husband. "We watched you, we followed you," came in a breath. "And oh, we have such a plan; we are going around the road to have our fortunes told.