THE SURE REFUGE.

Under his wings shalt thou trust. Alone within the depth of forest wild, Or descrt bare,

Beyond the sight of thy loved face and form, Beyond thy care.

Thou dost not bid me go and trust thee there, But folded close within thy loving arms

Against thy breast, While o'er me bends thy tender, smiling face I sweetly rest,

And trusting thee can say, "Thy will is best." Like birdling 'neath the mother's downy wing,

Content I lie. And nestling close I find protection there

When harm is nigh, Secure I rest though arrows swiftly fly.

Why need I fear although sometimes about me Fall shadows deep?

Tis but the closer folding of thy wings Safe-guard to keen.

Teach me, dear Lord, yet nearer thee to creep. Strange that we ever dare to doubt thy love,

Which holds us dear ;-And howsoever far from thee we stray, Still follows near

The perfect love that has no place for fear. -Standard.

A STEP IN THE DARK.

BY W. J. LACY.

Arthur Townley's conscience pricked him. He stood with his hands in his pockets at the window of a private hotel looking out upon the busy tides of human life as they flowed through a great city thoroughfare. More and more anxiously he poered into the gathering dusk. He was waiting for a friend who did not come. And the young merchant's thoughts went back to a remote western village, and to happy, careless school-days. How strange it was that here in Manchester he should meet another Stanford man, and that the other should be Alec Sutton, once his closest ally. There was a wide gap of years and a wider of circumstance between past The wheel of fortune had and present. lifted Arthur Townley to levels beyond his highest hopes. He had secured a capital situation in a London counting-house, had managed to render a notable service to his grim old principal, winning favor and pro-motion thereby, and at the end of fifteen years of steady application found himself a unior partner in the concern. Alec had become an artisan, like his father before him, and there were about him signs of dissipation which his ancient comrade dis-

It was here that compunction entered. The montor within said that Arthur Townley had taken a step in the dark.

"Why, it's Townley! I can't be wrong! No, I should know you anywhere, I'm sure. You've gene from boy to man, old fellow, but you haven't altered out of knowledge on the journey, as I suppose I have."

The words had pulled Arthur Townley

sharply up outside of a gin palace. He was incapable of despising an old acquaintance because of the difference in condition. Much to the wonder of a reckless-looking companion who fidgetted in Sutton's rear, he shook hands warmly, and inquired after the mechanic's welfare. It was a pitiful, disappointing story, with, as was easily discornable, many slurs and suppressed passages, to which Townley listened.

I've tramped right away here from Stanford, and I've got a job that'll maybe last me a month. But I only got at it day before yesterday, and I'm clean out o' coin," Sutton concluded with a feverish gleam in "I don't like to sponge on any man, but for old times' sake

Stopping him with a gesture, Arthur Townley had slipped gold into his palm. "I'm staying at Latimer's, 10 York street. Come there at six this evening, and ask for me. Will you?"

"Thank you, sir; yes, most certainly I will," Sutton answered.

But the hour fixed was long past, and

the young merchant was still alone.
"Is it that through the pride of his too evident poverty Alec does not care for my company?" he soliloquized; " or did I do him an ill turn instead of a good one by the gift of that half-sovereign?"

Townley was not a temperance man. Though extremely abstemious in personal habit, he had not hitherto seen it his duty to join the ranks of those who are daily doing battle with the colossal curse of in- of his own awakening.

temperance. Yet he suddenly trembled. It was borne in upon his spirit that drink had wrecked his friend's fortunes, that Sutton had pleaded necessity on the very doorstep of a drinking saloon, and that when opportunity had thus offered for kindly persussion and warning he—Townley-had been silent, and had supplied money for the obvious purpose of further indulgence.

A servant came in to light the gas, and with a sigh Townley abandoned his vain

watching.
"Terrible affair just now, sir, in Mersey

street," the man said.
The visitor's interest was languid, but

he said, "Oh, indeed!"
"A man killed in a drunken quarrel.

Done in a twinkling they say. "Did you hear the name?"

"Sutton was one. But whether that was the man murdered or the one as did it, I don't know, sir."

The quick, horrible dread which had followed the first indifference was justified then! Over what precipice had not mistaken generosity sent Townley's old comrade? He rose to his feet again, wan and agitated. Seizing his hat, he was in the street before the attendant had time to observe the alteration in his demeanor.

"Queer chap. Mindful of his own affairs, no doubt," muttered the wondering waiter.

Already newsboys were crying evening sheets with the sensational advertisement, Awful Tragedy in Mersey street," and Arthur Townley shuddered as he heard them. He soon ascertained that it was Alec Sutton who, in mad, drink-inflamed passion, had taken a life. A dispute had arisen with the companion Townley had seen by his side, and the tempter had become a victim. The offender was in prison, sobered by his deed. Townley obtained admission to his cell.

"Lad, lad, I'm done for! And-andnever give a man money to drink with again. You can't tell what may come of again. You can't tell what may come of it. I had been a teetotaller a week. I meant to stick to it, till Burton-poor fellow—persuaded mo to take a dram with him. If you'd have said, 'Don't go in there, Alec,' I believe you'd have stopped me. But I don't reproach you-not at all. You meant it kindly."
To wnley groaned. He had no words for

many seconds. But he knew right well that a keen self-reproach would be his abiding portion.

There were several touching interviews between the two before Alec Sutton stood in the dock and received sentence of a long term of imprisonment for his crime of manslaughter, and Arthur Townley took upon himself the care of an aged, grief-crushed kinsman of his erring but repentant and remorseful friend.

The young merchant began now to examine seriously his position with regard to strong drink. There was much to enlighten him in the facts which came to his knowledge concerning the career of Sutton. It appeared that once and again the infatuated artisan had promised amendment, while scoffing at the idea of total abstinence. And always his enemy had been too strong for him, and he had failed. At last he had been persuaded to take the pledge. It was on the morrow of his arrival in Manchester, and the good Samaritan who had thus pre-vailed by earnest argument and gentle sussion over prejudice and appetite had found an opening for his convert in the crowded ranks of northern industry. Alas! Sutton's reformation was brief, and his fall was at this time a catastrophe. His own phrase came back to Arthur Townley's lips as he heard at first hand from the grieved and disappointed patron the painful story of the broken vow.

"I did more than lose an opportunity to speak the saving word-I misused the

chance. I took a careless step in the dark."
But it was the last time that drinkmoney passed from Arthur Townley's lands to either friend, business acquaintance, or subordinate. Like other city houses, they had had a custom of treating, of supplying likely customers with wine or spirits, and tipping workmen for drams. With unhesitating decision the junior partner put a stop to the practice. It was a sharp battle that he waged with his colleagues; but he was in dead sincerity, and he gave with impressive brevity the account

"Yes, I know that it is a breaking with understandeth and knoweth me trade traditions," he said. "We may even yet you have never preached that toose by it, though in the long run I do not cried the dying man, and he clutch believe we shall. But there are higher interests at stake than financial ones. No one who gives another strong drink, or who pays for indulgence, can tell exactly what he is doing. He may be—as indeed I was —dealing a deadly blow. The whole thing is evil—a cruel curse. I have made up my mind henceforth to leave intoxicating liquors alone. You are safe then; you can never-pardon me-be absolutely sure of safety so long as the perilous stuff is tampered with at all."

"That means that you have signed the teetotal pledge, I presume?" put in one of the listeners.

"I have; and I will be no party to working or continuing that mischief in

other lives which I flee in my own case." Mr. Gregson, the senior partner, grasped Townley's hand.

"You are perfectly right," he said. have had the same thoughts myself. Let it be a rule that there is no treating in our counting-house."

And in many directions since then the influence of Arthur Townley has been exercised with good effect against the pernicious customs of commerce and society in the matter of strong drink. He speaks from within the sombre shadow of grievous re-

"It is easy to do a great wrong inadvertently," he says. "That was my case; and the indelible stamp of remorse will be upon my memory to the end of the chapter. Nothing can away with it. If we cannot accomplish much active good in the world, let us at least avoid the reckless handing on of a cup of ruin. Take no steps in the dark lest your leading precipitates a brother over the precipice."—Scottish Temperance League Tract.

A GOOD MISSIONARY STORY.

The missionary story you ask about is this: Our father and mother, with two children, came to Ohio from the North of Ireland in 1825. After a year or two they went to Philadelphia, but my father's business undertaking there did not succeed, and they returned to Ohio so much the poorer for the attempt. Soon after, they bought a farm for which they could not pay full payment and were obliged to give a mortgage and those who know the Scotch-Irish horror of debt can understand what a burden it was until the last dollar was paid off. Finally it was accomplished. It was when the harvest had been sold, and when the final payment was made, my father came home with two gold eagles above the amount of the debt. The announcement was made to the family, for every child had been made to feel that he shared the responsibility, and so was allowed to share the pleasure. Then father took out the two pieces of money and said, "We will give ten dollars to the Missionary Society for a thank-offering, and this," he added, giving mother the other ten, "is for your giving mother the other ten, "is for your new clonk." She held it thoughtfully a moment, and then giving it back, said, "Put this with the other piece for the thank-offering, and I will turn my old cloak. No personal desire or need was ever allowed to come in the way of the money due to church or to God's work, and, above the dues, freewill offerings were delight.-Isabelle Thoburn in Friends' Missionary Advocate.

THE RICH MAN AND HIS DOLLAR.

They brought him a dollar. He took it in his skinny fingers, and clutched it as though in it alone was his only hope in death, for he was dying. He counted his wealth by millions, and now, on his deathbed, he looked back upon his misspentiffe which had not a good or generous deed to brighten it. His feet were nearing the dark river, its roar was sounding in his ears.

His church pastor entered and sat by his side. The dying man asked him, "Does the Bible say no rich man can enter the kingdom of God?" "Yes," the preacher replied. "Read it to me." The man of God read, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." "And you never preached that to me!" the dying man axied. The preacher read on ""Te The preacher read on : "Let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this that he yet you have never preached that to me! cried the dying man, and he clutched the dollar as though it was the only saviour that could guide him across the dark sea of eternity.

The day was drawing to its close. The watchers moved noiselessly about the room, conversing in whispers. The son sat down conversing in whispers. The son sat down by his father's bedside with dry eyes, thinking of the hundreds of thousands that would soon be all his own. No sound but the ticking of the clock disturbed the stillness of the room. Tick ! tick ! The face of the dying man grows whiter and his breath shorter. Tick! tick! tick! Nine o'clock passes slowly by. Night is without, and darkness within, for the soul of the dying man is engaged in a deadly combat with an enemy whom man has never yet conquered.

At last, just as the clock struck the hour of twelve, the angel in the belfry of heaven tolled the last hour of the rich man's life, and the struggling form on the bed lay still. As they were robing him for the grave, his widow stepped to his side and attempted to take the dollar from the dead man's grasp, but in vain; the rigid cords and muscles would not relax. In death his hand still clutched the coin with a grip like steel. 'Mid the waving of plumes and black crape, and the sound of funeral dirges, he was carried to the comotery, and there, while the rain poured and the winds howled, and funeral requiems wailed upon the air. they lowered him into the grave. to ashes, dust to dust !"

And so he died and they buried him with

his dollar !-Messiah's Herald.

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