

evil habits is most easily made and most hard to break,—the constant resort to opium. Once created, it found in Paul Preston's nature that which made it impossible to escape even when the awful bribe of pain was gone.

Against this foe of heart and head,—for to both it is fatal,—Elizabeth Preston fought the losing fight which a resolute and high-minded young woman wages in the interest of a weak masculine nature. It were vain to dwell on a tale so common. His property disappeared almost mysteriously. Trusts in his keeping became embarrassed and were taken from him. At last she knew with amazement what it was to want. Next she learned how surely all morals wilt in the presence of the habit he had acquired. He became at last a passive, inert being, and she the controlling force. Resolute to make one last effort at reform, she induced him, with a certain ease which amazed her, to spend a summer on a great tract of land in Northern Pennsylvania, which was almost the last unembarrassed possession left to her. Once in the woods, the autumn found them with so little means that to stay was easier than to leave, and so the years had run along and by degrees she had settled down to make the best of a bad business. She thought, and rightly, that in the wilderness he would be unable to secure easily the needed drugs; but she failed to calculate on the other foe which is apt to become the craving of the disappointed opium-eater. Whiskey was only too plenty about the logging-camps. To this he took kindly and fatally, and, enfeebled