

to help Adam aboard with his nets, and a small basket of provisions. Adam was assisted by two younger brothers, who lived with their widowed mother. Jean did not scruple to wade into the water, as she saw others doing, and gave her husband a helping hand in shoving off his boat.

All went well; and Adam returned with a good take of herring; and carried the first of them to Mr. Mollison, at Braehead. As he was taking his leave, Mrs. Mollison told him to remind Jean that she had promised to make her some red herrings; and to be sure not to forget.

Jean prepared the herrings, and Adam carried the first of them up to the farm house. It happened to be the afternoon on which Mr. Mollison's servants had reaped the last sheaf, for that year; and they overpersuaded Adam to remain for his bread and ale. For hours, Jean watched for her husband's return; thinking what could have detained him. His brothers had gone to sea alone; and she, after her patience was completely exhausted, was about to issue forth to seek him, when the dog bounded from the door, with a joyful bark; and she heard her husband at the little gate. She wondered what kept him there so long—and went out to see—she found Adam lying by the gate, and the dog licking his face, she tore open the gate and flew to him. She thought some dreadful accident had occurred to him. The delusion was soon ended; the smell of his breath was waited to her; and she knew he was drunk. Her idol was gone, she was prostrate,—poor creature; all her dreams of future happiness and comfort had become a blank in a moment. She assisted her husband to bed; and then sat rocking herself by the fire in a perfect state of misery. "Oh!" she exclaimed in her agony, "is this to be the end of my much prized happiness. Cursed drink, ye made me an orphan; are ye to mak me a widow, or waur, the wife o' a sot!"

It was late next morning before Adam awoke from his drunken slumber, and Jean had been long gone to help in cleaning and packing the herring which her husband's brothers had caught the previous night. It was not with the same light-hearted cheerfulness, which she usually carried along with her, that she joined her fellow workers this morning. And so great was the alteration, that one night of sorrow had worked on her countenance, that her mother-in-law exclaimed, as Jean entered her cottage to leave her boy, "Na be here! but what ails ye Jean?" Jean scarcely knew what to say, but merely told her, that she "didna sleep very weel last night, and I daursay that maks me look nae weel."

When she returned from her work, she found Adam out of bed, and looking the very picture of remorse and repentance. Jean had intended to caution and advise him; but when she saw him in so pitiable a condition, she could say nothing, she put her arms about his neck, kissed him and fell a crying and sobbing. Poor Adam begged forgiveness and promised never to transgress again. But dear reader, the promise was made in his own strength—no blessing was sincerely asked, or divine aid sought, to enable him to keep his resolution. And did you ever know such promises kept? No, let a man's firmness or ability, to overcome his evil passions, be what it may, he is not able to do so without Almighty assistance. He may promise and promise again; but still sooner or later he will fall before the demon which assails him, through the medium of his own passions.

The fishermen of Mackerel Bay had disposed of all the herring they might catch during the season, to an exporter from the neighboring town. It was Adam Donald, who, on account of his superior intelligence, had been deputed by his comrades, to make

the bargain. The season was at an end, the fish had all been delivered, and now nothing remained to be done but for the men to receive their hard earned gains.

Adam Donald set out, dressed in his best suit, to meet the merchant at a public house. He was accompanied by one from every boat's crew belonging to the hamlet. After receiving his money from Mr. Nichol, that gentleman ordered some of the best gin to be brought. He took a glass himself, and then handed one to Adam, who wanted the firmness to say no, to a gentleman; what would folks say, to a poor man like him, refusing to take a glass when offered to him: by one so much his superior—besides one glass could not harm him. But did he stop after taking one glass? We shall see.

Mr. Nichol took his leave; and then came the division of the money. To each man was to be paid the sum his boat's crew had earned, which was effected after a great deal to do. Now Adam must drink with all—there was no refusing. He had partaken of a glass with Mr. Nichol, and if he did not take one with them, he would offend. One or two glasses more swallowed, and Adam no longer resisted. Some few of them returned home before dark: but the greater number remained at the public house all night; carousing, swearing, quarreling and singing.

It was nearly day light, when Adam found his way home. Poor, poor Jean, this had been a sad night to her. She knew now what was detaining him; and bitter were the tears she shed, as she listened for his returning footsteps. Often had she thrown herself on her knees during the weary hours of that night; and poured out her soul in an agony of prayer to God, for forgiveness to her misguided husband.

Many were the promises which Adam again made to his wife; but, alas! they were again broken; until at last they ceased to be made, and poor Jean ceased to remonstrate; but not to pray. By and by, Adam lost all shame, and drank whenever and wherever he could get it.

Four years passed swiftly, yet what changes during their flight. Silently the moments glide along, yet we mark them not, until our attention is arrested by some terrible event; then we are led to compare the present with the past.

Let us compare Adam Donald's cottage now, with the same cottage four years ago. We will find all changed; the hinges of the little garden gate are broken, and in their place is some old rope: nothing remains of the gay flowers which then decorated the little spot, except the honey-suckle; and it has a neglected appearance. The outside walls of the house have become dirty and streaked. The thatch in many places has become rotten for want of a little care. Inside the cottage things still look clean and neat: although every thing wears an air of poverty. Jean herself, is not the Jean of four years ago, she is now pale and wasted. Sorrow has visited her, but it has not passed lightly over her: it has left deep traces behind it. Three children are cowering over the fire,—half clad; and it will take no deep discernment to see,—half fed also. Adam himself is not there, and the children seem to start at every sound. No wonder, poor things; for many a time have they felt the heavy hand of their drunken father laid on them without mercy; and for no fault, and their poor mother too. How often had they been witnesses of her suffering, without daring even to cry: for Adam had now become a perfect demon; and even in his sober moments treated his wife and children with harshness and severity. Jean was not now allowed to spend the money as she pleased, she must bring home grog—yes, grog; Adam would not want it. He had long ago buried her bible, (he never had one of his own), he said,