

"Now," said Maggie, "I shall be strong for a little while. It's like the old life and strength I had before I loved it, while it lasts I'll tell you what I want to say while I can. You know how many times I have come to you. Each time I meant to give up drinking, but I never did. The truth was, my father was an officer in the church, and he dealt in strong drink; from my earliest childhood it was all around me. I used to smell it always, then I came to taste it, then to like, then to love it. Before I was sixteen I would drink as much as I dared whenever I could get it. My mother was dead, my father was always engrossed in the business, and for a long time he did not see; but I think he suspected at last, for he sent me from home to a boarding school. There I had plenty of money, but no drink at all, until I had time to watch which of the servants liked to drink, then it was easy. I gave her the money, she procured the drink, and we had it secretly when we could. After I left school I was put to learn dress-making. I think I really loved learning, and I knew I was clever at my work; and, now that I had my liberty when work was done, I could do as I pleased and have all the drink I could pay for."

"But, just then, the drink lost its hold upon me entirely. I had become acquainted with a young man, and we came to love each other dearly. Like myself he was well educated and exceedingly fond of poetry. Not like me, as I had been, he could not even bear the name of strong drink. It was something about his mother, but I never asked particulars and he never told me. He never spoke of it but once. Time went; we were happy, he at his work, I at mine, until the old love of the drink returned and seemed to haunt me. The thought of it never left me, asleep or awake. I bore it as long as I could, then I thought I would quiet myself by having just a little; and I went into a tavern to get it. There the very smell of it seemed to madden me with lust for it. The more I drank the more I wanted. I became quarrelsome when they would serve me no more, and they thrust me out. I was staggering from the thrust on the pavement, and should have fallen into the gutter, but a man caught my arm and held me. I turned upon him in unreasoning anger and looked in his face. There I saw eyes that I knew dilated with horror, lips that I loved quivering with disgust and shame. He helped me to the wall and left me. I have never seen him since. But the pure love died out of my heart and the love of the drink took its place and kept it. It was not like his love, for it never left me through good or evil."

Her voice had grown very tender while she was speaking. The power of memory, excited by the drink, had carried her back into the past, and she evidently lived again in the days she described.—"I have had many a bitter fight for it," she continued. "Sometimes I could go without for weeks together, then my skill procured me clothing and a decent home. Again I must have drunk, and home and clothing and money all went for it. I never made companions; no other man ever spoke of love to me; the drink destroyed my first dream, and I never dreamed again. I have seen many reverses, sometimes dressed well, quiet, respectable, outwardly happy, but never for long; at other times I would have to sleep in common, fever-stricken lodging-houses, going thence to make the dresses of fashionable ladies, sometimes sleeping in the market, sometimes in doorways, and even in the den of horrors, the casual ward. My father sent me money, and I drank it away, until he heard how I was living. Then he cast me off and died, they said, broken-hearted about me. I did not care—I could not—I only wanted to drink and forget all unpleasant things. Ah, it was good to drink, for then all I had lost came back to me. Then I was away back at school, innocent and happy; then I was learning my business and enjoying it; then, best of all, the time came back when he loved me and we spoke of the happy life we hoped to lead when we were wedded and had a home of our own. To wake from such dreams to what I had sunk to was torture, and the dreams only came with the drink. It is no wonder I loved it, gave up all for it, never could leave it—that I still love and crave it."

While she was speaking the excitement of the drink gradually left her; a gray, awful shade was stealing over her face, and she was silent for a brief space of time. A spasm of pain aroused her, and she said, "Call Bet! call quickly!"—I went to the door and shouted for her friend; as if waiting for the summons, Bet was speedily in the room and looking down upon her—"More drink, Bet," she said, "more drink; I'm dying for it."

But even Bet saw the time for more drink was gone forever, as she sank shudderingly upon her knees by the ragged bed—"More drink!" again cried Maggie, "only once more! Bet, don't be hard-hearted now! Minister, give me the last thing I shall ask for!" "Let me read—let me pray with you," I entreated; "pray for yourself, or it will be too late."

"I don't want reading. I don't want prayer—it is too late for these. I want whiskey, and I must have it. It has been home, love, Bible, mother, father, religion, to me. Let me have some once more, only once; I tell you I'm dying for it. Ah!" she screamed, "I never thought of it till now, but I'm going where they are always 'dying for a drop,' and begging for it in vain."

With one terrible convulsive spasm the gray shade settled down upon the face, never to be lifted any more.—Out, most gladly into the wild night to buffet with wind and rain, thinking, as I strove on homeward, that I would not be concerned with the making or sale of strong drink for all the

money that ever was coined. "At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."—"Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and flee away."—*British Messenger*.

Public Opinion.

DENOUNCING THE PROPOSED SCOTT ACT EMASCULATION.

SOME SPECIMEN EXTRACTS.

The Scott Act has been given to temperance reformers who have regarded it not as a perfect measure but as one calculated to diminish the evils of intemperance. If it was considered by the Senate an unadvised or an objectionable measure it should never have been passed by that body. But since it has become law and its promoters have gone diligently to work to put it into effect, it is most unjust now to emasculate it. Neither is it very wise. The Senate, as it now exists, has not too many friends, and it was a stupid proceeding, to say the least of it, to array itself against public sentiment upon such a question. Let us hope the Commons has not so lost common sense.—*Oshawa Vindicator*.

Will the country quietly submit to this fresh outrage? giving an optional law to the people and asking them to say by its adoption or otherwise what their desires are in that direction; and when great amounts of time and money have been expended in registering a verdict, and that verdict plainly in the direction of abolition, then for men calling themselves honorable legislators to step in and thwart the public will, is a step backwards which calls for pronounced condemnation. Another nail has been driven in the Senate coffin, and the sooner the useless but expensive bauble is blotted from our Dominion the better.—*Bowmanville Sun*.

The Senate has been trying to find employment in tinkering the Scott Act. Their action in amending the Act to allow the sale of light wines and beer in counties where it is in force is a gross insult to the people, and shows what an anomaly this chamber of superannuated fogies is. Not being responsible to the people they cut and carve at their own sweet will regardless of public sentiment. By their votes the people in these counties have said we do not want liquor sold in our borders; and by their actions this irresponsible voting machine called by courtesy the Senate has sought to make the whole thing null and void and cast contempt upon the measure. If this amendment becomes law, the Scott Act becomes a farce. It is time that we had an elected Senate. It would be a healthful surprise to these old gentlemen to be cleaned out of the polls to let them know that the people run this country.—*Tilsonburg Liberal*.

From all parts of the country most emphatic protests have been made against the recent mutilation of the Scott Act by the Senate. This body appears as an eyesore in our system of government; an irresponsible portion of a so-called responsible government. The facts are becoming clearer every year, that its days are numbered, and the sooner it becomes a thing of the past the better it will be for the country. Many of its members are worn out politicians who have been rejected by the electors as unfit to represent them in the Commons, where they would be responsible to their constituents. By being assigned a refuge in the Senate, they are now placed above the reach of those, whose servants they should be, and who have to foot the bill for their maintenance, and a heavy bill it is.—*Dundalk Herald*.

The Senate has been regarded by many well disposed persons as a useless and expensive appendage to our system of government, and their recent action to defeat the will of the people will add largely to the number. The Scott Act some years ago originated in that body and it is worthy of note that all the recently appointed Senators are now trying to destroy it. The country would not be a loser if the moral influence exerted by the various religious bodies was directed in erecting a higher standard of political morality for our legislators at Ottawa than we have at present, and insisting upon those who seek to be representatives in reaching it.—*Aylmer Express*.

The Scott Act was passed with the consent of both parties, it has been carried in the Counties by a nonparty vote, and the friends of the Act will not allow it to be destroyed by a body of men who have no right to interfere with the expressed desire of the people. The members of the Senate do not represent the people; they are appointed by the Premier, and most of them have been rejected by the electors when they offered themselves as Candidates for Parliament. It is a strange feature in our government that men who do not enjoy the confidence of the people, are placed in a position to thwart their wishes. All the members lately appointed to the Senate voted to destroy the Scott Act, though the electors have adopted the Act by large majorities, and are opposed to any changes that would make it less effective. Such an anomaly in our government must be done away with. The people will not submit to have the laws which they make, rendered useless by a lot of old women. The Senate must go.—*Dufferin Advertiser*.

The great question now is, will these amendments be adopted by the Commons? If the Commons pursue the proper course, the work of the Senate can and will, to a very great extent, be repaired. It would be well for the people to closely watch the action of their representatives in this matter. A most important crisis is about being reached. The importance of the situation can not be over-estimated. If the Commons stand firm and do their duty, prohibition is an assured fact within a very brief period. The result will be awaited with considerable anxiety. It would certainly be very unwise for a representative of a constituency, where the Scott Act has been adopted, to vote for the amendment. Not only would it be doing an injustice to the riding, but it would be sure political death.—*Embro Courier*.