

THE LITTLE CRIPPLE.

Though he was not sturdy, or strong as the others,
 And aged before boyhood, decrepit and small,
 Such depth hath the yearning of fathers and mothers,
 They loved him at home, as their treasure, their all.

A cripple past hope, he was doomed to wear crutches,
 And life promised nought save a burden of ills;
 Yet his eyes had the light which softens and touches—
 The look of the reindeer at bay on the hill.

He wistfully noted the sports and the gambols
 His sisters and brothers enjoyed the long day;
 Alas! not for him were the races and rambles
 In the meadows so near, yet so far away!

For the sun might shine brightly, and breezes breathe mellow,
 And earth laugh to scorn the dull thoughts of the sage;
 Like some small pining bird, this poor little fellow
 Drank in the glad life through the bars of a cage.

But days dawning sadly, and dimming so slowly,
 Were brightened at last by affection's true worth;
 For the love that all bore him was pure and was holy,
 The love that can make a sweet garden on earth.

And when at His beck'ning this child and this cripple
 Was summoned where sorrow and death hold no place,
 The close of his life seemed the close of a ripple,
 So peaceful the look on the wan little face.

How vain, then, the thought that His mercy is narrow!
 How empty the doubt of the "sceptical mind!"
 Each day brings its crumb for the snow-frozen sparrow,
 And love for the helpers, the halt, and the blind!

—Cassell's Magazine.

FOR LIFE.

A STORY OF LONDON EXPERIENCE.

PART I. THE OUTER LIFE.

"Each man's life is all men's lesson."
 OWEN MERRIDITH.

I hope I was no worse, I know I was no better than the average of medical students of my time; but as my story does not principally concern myself, I need not enter into details of my student-life further than to say, what may be well known to the experienced of my readers, that there were some among us diligent, many idlers, and many, who though really hard-working, liked the reputation of follies they seldom absolutely yielded to. In the frank horror of being thought "snobs" or "shams," they often became both; assumed a careless swagger and a reckless speech, lingered on the margin of the turbid stream of dissipation, dipping their feet in its foam, and with a wild bravado air were rather pleased to be thought to have plunged fully into its impurities. Some such phase of youthful perversity seized me twelve years ago, when I accepted an invitation to supper at a celebrated "wine shades" in the Haymarket. Two fellow students were my immediate companions, and we were to meet a set of "choice spirits," and "make a night of it."

Among our company was a young married man—a handsome fellow, with a frame my recent anatomical studies taught me to admire as a fine combination of strength and lightness. I did not like his face; there was nothing to find fault with in the features. The full blue eyes were so bright with natural spirits, they needed no artificial fires to add to

their brilliancy. The massive clusters of brown curls fell over a sufficiently high broad white forehead; but the animal predominated in that visage, and what there was of mind looked insolently and defiantly out of the eyes, and gave a scornful curve to the full lips. His name was Warner. He had, as I learned, made a bargain or transfer of some property that afternoon with the oldest and gravest, and, I may add, the worst of our company, and finished the business by a drinking-bout. Not that Warner looked anything but sober. As I dallied with my glass, qualifying my drink with soda water, while dreading the rattery of my companions, I saw with astonishment the way in which Warner drank; and some thoughts even in that reckless time, of the abuse of his glorious gift of strength, crossed my mind. He was the only married man of our party, and a host of jests, noisy if not witty, were levelled at "the Benedict." As the wine circulated, and the night reached the small hours, one of our company, a clever mimic, delivered in a well-sustained female voice a lecture to Warner on his late hours, bad company, &c.; and wound up with representing "Benedict's" contrition. I watched Warner's face narrowly while this scene was being enacted, and beneath his assumed good humor I saw annoyance. A red gleam, that gave his eyes a savage look, shot from them; his flexible upper lip curved from the white teeth, and putting, as I saw, a strong constraint upon himself, he laughingly offered a foolish wager, in words to the effect that none of the poor miserable bachelors among us, living in dread of waspish landladies or domineering spinster relatives, would go home, taking a friend with him, so certain of a pleasant reception as awaited "Benedict the married man." The wager was accepted: Warner looked round to choose a companion. "I promised a supper—by Jove I'd better call it a breakfast," he said, "and smiles, gentlemen: not only no murmurs, but smiles." As he spoke his gaze fell on me. I was the quietest, perhaps the soberest of the group, and so much of sense might be left in Warner that he recognized these qualities.

I wished to decline, but I was over-ruled in the boisterous clamor; and without thinking very clearly, or it might be being able to think clearly of the intrusion I was to perpetrate, our party broke up, half, selecting each a companion to testify as to their reception, but saying, "We promise no smiles; and yours, Warner, is an empty boast."

How freshly blew the clear night air on our fevered temples, as Warner and myself walked briskly towards a western suburb. It was the end of October, and a healthy breath of coming winter mingled in the breeze. I noticed that my companion, though well wrapped, shivered occasionally, even while he sang snatches of songs, and I had a suspicion that nature, ever in that stalwart frame, was avenging the transgression of her laws. Ah! how wise we are for others! How clear often is the justice of the sentence that we read in another's case!

I began to be heartily vexed with myself for my fool's errand, when we stopped at the door of a corner house in what seemed a new built street. A light gleamed from an upper room, and I thought I saw a curtain move.

"Here she is," said Warner, as he rang the bell, with a chuckle of satisfaction that made an indignant glow spread over me.

The window was hastily lifted up, but Warner shouted impatiently, "Come down Annie, what are you afraid of?"

In a minute after the door was unlatched, and a soft voice said, "Oh, dear! red! I feared it was not you, I thought I saw ano—" She had cautiously brought the light forward screened by her hand, and now saw me as she broke off in the midst of her sentence. "Yes,

Annie, a friend of mine has come home with me to supper," said Warner, entering, I, more embarrassed than I ever felt in my life, sheepishly following him.

There was a moment's pause, in which I did not see how Mrs. Warner looked, for I had the grace to be ashamed of my part in this folly, and I cast my eyes anywhere rather than encounter her glance.

Warner, stung by the silence, went on in a loud voice, and to me, insufferable manner. "Yes, Annie, and be quick; we know that as you don't expect company, you are not prepared; my friend will take pot-luck with us: be quick: what room are you in? We can't go where there is no fire this confounded cold night."

"The only fire, I regret to say," replied Mrs. Warner, bowing to me, "is up stairs in," she half whispered to her husband "the nursery."

Here I interposed, and said to Warner, "Pray allow me to bid you good night. I could not think of intruding further on Mrs. Warner;" and I added significantly, "all is fulfilled."

But Warner was peremptory. "I must stay, and the nursery was as good a room as anywhere." The wife evidently saw that her husband was not sober, and with a dread of thwarting him and making his condition more humiliatingly apparent to me, she added her entreaties to her husband's, and I followed them upstairs into a cosy little room where there was a cheerful fire, and a table before it, with a supper-tray neatly laid. A pair of embroidered slippers were toasting on a stool on the hearth-rug, and a warm dressing-gown lay over the back of the easy chair at the fireside. The room was a picture of home comfort, not by any means lessened by the appearance in a snug recess, close to the arm-chair, of a child's cot, decorated with snowy drapery; and as we entered, Warner still talking and laughing loudly, there was a movement in the cot, and a little curly head rose up, rested a flushed cheek upon a chubby hand, and opened languidly two blue innocent eyes where sleep yet lingered.

With a laugh and a shout the father took his cherub boy from the cot, and the child uttered a frightened cry. Then, for the first time, I ventured to look at the mother, a delicate, fairy-like little creature, with a face made to express love and grief. I took no note of her features except that they were small; but the anxious, fond, tremulous look in her startled eyes, and the flexible eyebrows gave a varied expression to the young face, and to the pliant grace of the form, as she ran to her child and releasing him from Warner's arms hushed him on her bosom, cooing out pretty indistinct words of maternal endearment. I am glad to remember that as I looked at mother and child, I felt myself a very sorry fellow, with a soul that would have gladly crept into a nutshell to have escaped the ordeal of their presence. Warner seemed wholly unimpressed, and merely said, "Annie, what's the boy afraid of that he squalls that way?" tossed the dressing-gown from the back of the chair across the room, saying with a wink at me as he kicked the slippers off the stool, "You women are such precious coddles." He then pointed to a chair opposite and bade me be seated, and began helping the supper. I complied mechanically, though shame, indignation, or a something that blended both, which I never felt before, utterly prevented my eating.

Mrs. Warner, having stilled her boy, came to the table, and with a smile—a struggling smile, that smote me like a stab—apologized for the servant having retired, and for the slight refreshment set before me.

I stammered out something I know not what, and the child, now thoroughly awake, turned his face half shyly to me, gave a furtive glance like a bird, and then

quickly nestled again to his mother's bosom.

"Give me the boy; give him me, I say; and go you down, Annie, to the cellar. My friend must have better stuff than this 'poor Will,'" touching a mug as he spoke. There was a struggle, I saw, as I kept interposing apologies, in Mrs. Warner's mind between the wifely and the motherly feelings. She would go down; but as the child, with the instinct of infancy, screamed at the thought of being transferred to the father's arms—a flush that was neither confusion or anxiety came to her face. It looked like anger; and streams of light seemed to pour from her eyes; but she put a strong constraint on herself, and resolutely keeping the boy in her arms, down stairs she went, returning in a few minutes with a liquor stand. I employed the interval of her absence in entreaties to be allowed at once to retire. "The wager was fairly won, I could testify. There had been surely," I choked at the word, "a very kind reception." I felt a strong impulse to dash the glass of water that stood beside me in the face of my host, who, lolling back in his chair, and lazily laughing a cool satisfied laugh, said, "Benedict, indeed! the fools: don't they know there's no slave like a fond woman? I should like to see the day or the hour she wouldn't give me, and any one I choose to bring to my home, a kind reception; I should like to see that," and his clenched fist came down on the little table with an impetus that made the tray and glasses clatter. I rose, not daring to trust myself another moment, and as Mrs. Warner entered the room, I bowed, passed her hastily as I called "Good night" to Warner, and was down the stairs, and out of the house, while he was shouting after me, and as I heard by his lumbering tread, preparing to follow me. I knew, however, that in his present state, that was not likely.

Once again out amid the quiet of the night, the few stars that gemmed the darkness looking brightly down, reminded me of the eyes I had just seen: the innocent child and mother in the power of a brute whose reason was over-mastered by his appetites. Yet who was I that I should condemn him? I had helped to make him what he was. I had been the instrument of an insulting intrusion, most painful as I well knew to that young loving wife, whose very virtues were to add to the sum of her miseries. I knew how to honor a good woman. However unworthy I had proved, I had been the son of one; and the incident of that evening tortured me. I saw—I still see—the looks of mingled love, pity, dread—the constrained courtesy, the motherly anguish rising into holy anger, that had flitted over her face, and made it readable as an open volume.

It was the turning-point in my history. I wrote as briefly as possible my testimony to decide the wager, among the wild companions I knew Warner would meet again; and from that time I took seriously to my studies, and was glad to be "cut" by my "fast" friends. I could avoid and escape them; the very ease with which I did so, frequently brought to mind the condition of those for whom no escape from evil association is possible. The living body, tied to the putrifying corpse, seemed to my newly-awakened perceptions a less dreadful doom. The Warners, what was to be their future? I had had a glimpse of their outward life. It was so unpromising, and yet, as I knew, so common, that I often caught myself uttering the platitude, mentally, "Poor thing! she must make the best of it—it is for life."

(To be continued.)

—Twenty-six persons united with the Congregational church at Salt Lake City March 6th. Ninety-two have been received into this church the past year.