

to work to support a family; how much more so when it is one so young as Mary Barton!—scarcely twenty, yet the head of the house; all depending upon her, looking to her for counsel, guidance, assistance—and yet, as is frequently the case, refusing the advice when given. What wonder that she became thoughtful!—"old" Charles used to call it, when he would come in of an evening and miss her former happy laughter, and she would force a smile or endeavor to recal her truant thoughts, instead of letting them try to solve that problem which so many have tried, of making \$10 do the work of \$20.

How precious to her were those visits! How, then, could she tell him that after his departure she had to sit up for hours preparing school work for next day, and correcting exercises. No, she could not give up those bright spots in her dreary life, even though she knew the strain was too much for her. It was only to sit up a little later, or rise a little earlier. Was she not well repaid when she heard his welcome tone in the evening? Yes, but she never remembered that what was so pleasant to her was in reality robbing her cheeks of their roses, her eyes of their brightness, undermining her health, and so unfitting her for her work. So passed on another year or two, the struggle for bread still going on, and with little or no help now from her elder brothers, who had both got into company where the "mock" wine was indulged in.

Night after night would she lie awake, wishing yet dreading to hear her brothers' footsteps; and when, as would sometimes happen, the hall door would open easily, and steady steps mount the stairs, she would cover her face with her hands, and weep for very joy. Tears came easily to those poor eyes now; the road was no new one to them, and often would they make their appearance unbidden.

I often think if men only seriously considered the wrong that intemperance does to others besides themselves, they would surely refrain; but they shut their eyes to the fact that a drunkard cannot fall alone; others must go with him, and those others are always the ones who are nearest, and ought to be dearest.

What need to linger over those unhappy days? They lasted till, in despair, she held her peace, and let them do as they would. No word of remonstrance ever crossed her lips now to the two brothers who were breaking her heart. And Charles Dakers—where was he? Tired of waiting, apparently; for he seldom came now,—his time was fully occupied was the excuse, and Mary believed him; but in reality he could not recognize his joyous Mary in the pale, silent woman who always seemed to be listening for something other than his words. And she was listening—how intently she alone knew—for those footsteps on the stair. Seldom, seldom did they sound during Charles' visit; still there was the dread, and he would leave the house disappointed with his betrothed, and hardly knowing why; then next evening, instead of going back, would call at Mrs. Wilson's, where Maude, a fine girl now of sixteen, was so like the Mary of old that he became once more happy. Perhaps had Mary told her lover all, it would have been better for both; but she could not expose her brothers, and so she bore the burden alone. It was some time before the truth forced itself upon Charles that he was getting tired of Mary, and learning to love the brilliant Maude—or rather fancy he loved her; and when at length he acknowledged it to himself he was thoroughly ashamed. But he had deteriorated during that long waiting, so that it took but little to persuade him that Mary was unsuited to him, and that it would be a benefit to *her* to set her free.

Poor Mary Barton! Those younger brothers were now growing up, it would not be very long before they could be started in the world, and then,—ah! how her heart would beat when she thought of what was awaiting her!

"When once their education is complete, and I procure situations for them, I shall be free," she thought. "I know Charles will let them live with us, and then how happy we shall be! Oh, if only James and Harry would come back to me!" for by this time they had left their home and she knew not where they were. But while these thoughts were passing through her mind, very different ones were taking up their abode with Charles. He had made up his mind that