

him to jail upon the dram-seller's execution. Till that moment I did not believe my affection could have survived under the pressure of that misery which he had brought upon us all. I put up such things of the little that remained to us as I thought might be of use, and turned my back upon a spot where I had been very happy and very wretched. Our five little children followed, weeping bitterly. The jail was situated in the next town. "O, George," said I, "if you had only signed the pledge, it would not have come to this." He sighed, and said nothing; and we walked nearly a mile in perfect silence. As we were leaving the village we encountered our clergyman, going forth upon his morning ride. When I reflected, that a few words from him would have induced my poor husband to sign the pledge, and that, if he had done so, he might have been the kind father and the affectionate husband that he once was, I own it cost me some considerable effort to suppress my emotions. "Whether art you all going?" said the holy man. My husband, who had always appeared extremely humble in presence of the minister, and replied to all his inquiries in a subdued tone of voice, answered, with unusual firmness, "To jail, reverend sir." "To jail!" said he. "Ah, I see how it is; you have wasted your substance in riotous living, and are going to pay for your improvidence and folly. You have had the advantage of my precept and example, and you have turned a deaf ear to the one, and neglected the other." "Reverend sir," my husband replied, galled by this reproof, which appeared to him, at that particular moment, an unnecessary aggravation of his misery, "reverend sir, your precept and your example have been my ruin; I have followed them both. You, who had no experience of the temptations to which your weaker brethren are liable, who are already addicted to the temperate and daily use of ardent spirits, advised me never to sign a pledge. I have followed your advice to the letter. You admitted that extraordinary occasions might justify the use of ardent spirits, and that on such occasions you might use them yourself. I followed your example; but it has been my misfortune never to drink spirituous liquors without finding that my occasions were more extraordinary than ever. Had I followed the precept and example of my neighbour, Johnson, I should not have made a good wife miserable, nor my children beggars." While he uttered these last words, my poor husband looked upon his little ones and burst into tears; and the minister rode slowly away, without uttering a word. I rejoiced, even in the midst of our misery, to see that the heart of my poor George was tenderly affected; for it is not more needful that the hardness of wax should be subdued by fire, than that the heart of man should be softened by affliction, before a deep and lasting impression can be made. "Dear husband," said I, "we are young; it is not too late; let us trust in God, and all may yet be well." He made no reply, but continued to walk on and weep in silence. Shortly after, the Deacon appeared, at some distance, coming towards us on the road; but as soon as he discovered who we were, he turned away into a private path. Even the constable seemed somewhat touched with compassion at our situation, and urged us to keep up a good heart, for he thought some one might help us when we least expected it. My husband, whose vein of humour would often display itself, even in hours of sadness, instantly replied, that the good Samaritan could not be far off, for the priest and the Levite had already passed by on the other side. But he little thought—poor man—that even the con-

clusion of this beautiful parable was so likely to be verified. A one-horse waggon, at this moment, appeared to be coming down the hill behind us, at an unusually rapid rate, and the constable advised us, as the road was narrow, to stand aside, and let it pass. It was soon up with us, and, when the dust had cleared away, it turned out, as little Robert had said, when it first appeared on the top of the hill, to be farmer Johnson's gray mare and yellow waggon. The kind-hearted farmer was out in an instant, and, without saying a word, was putting the children into it, one after another. A word from farmer Johnson was enough for any constable in the village. It was all the work of a moment. He shook my husband by the hand; and when he began, "Neighbour Johnson, you are the same kind friend"—"Get in; let's have no words about it. I must be home in a trice, for" turning to me, "your old school-mate, Susan, my wife, will sit a-crying at the window, till she sees you all safe home again." Saying this, he whipped up the gray mare, who, regardless of the additional load, went up the hill faster than she came down, as though she entered into the spirit of the whole transaction.

It was not long before we reached the door of our cottage. Farmer Johnson took out the children; and, while I was trying to find words to thank him for all his kindness, he was up in his waggon, before I could utter a syllable. Robert screamed after him, to tell little Tim Johnson to come over, and that he should have all his pinks and marigolds. When we entered the cottage, there were bread, and meat, and milk, upon the table, which Susan, the farmer's wife, had brought over for the children. I could not help sobbing aloud, for my heart was full. "Dear George," said I, turning to my husband, "you used to pray; let us thank God for this great deliverance from evil." "Dear Jenny," said he, "I fear God will scarcely listen to my poor prayers, after all my offences; but I will try. We closed the cottage door, and he prayed with so much humility of heart, and so much earnestness of feeling, that I felt almost sure that God's grace would be lighted up in the bosom of this unhappy man, if sighs and tears, and prayers, could win their way to heaven. He was very grave, and said little or nothing that night. The next morning, when I woke up, I was surprised, as the sun had not risen, to find that he had already gone down. At first I felt alarmed, as such a thing had become unusual with him, of late years; but my anxious feelings were agreeably relieved, when the children told me their father had been hoeing for an hour, in the potato field, and was mending the garden fence. With our scanty materials, I got ready the best breakfast I could, and he sat down to it with a good appetite, but said little; and, now and then, I saw the tears starting into his eyes. I had many fears that he would fall back into his former habits, whenever he should meet his old companions, or step in again at the Deacon's store. I was about urging him to move into another village. After breakfast, he took me aside, and asked me if I had not a gold ring." "George," said I, "that ring was my mother's: she took it from her finger, and gave it to me, the day that she died. I would not part with that ring, unless it were to save life. Besides, if we are industrious and honest, we shall not be forsaken." "Dear Jenny," said he, "I know how you prize that gold ring. I never loved you more than when you wept over it, while you first told me the story of your mother's death. It was just a month before we were married, the last Sabbath evening in May, Jenny, and

we were walking by the river. I wish you would bring me that ring." Memory hurried me back, in an instant, to the scene, the bank upon the river's side, where we sat together, and agreed upon our wedding day.—I brought down the ring, and he asked me, with such an earnestness of manner, to put it on his little finger, that I did so; not, however, without a trembling hand and a misgiving heart. "And, now Jenny," said he, as he rose to go out, "pray that God will support me." My mind was not in a happy state, for I felt some doubt of his intentions. From a little hill, at the back of our cottage, we had a fair view of the Deacon's store. I went up to the top of it; and while I watched my husband's steps, no one can tell how fervently I prayed God to guide them aright. I saw two of his old companions, standing at the store door, with glasses in their hands; and as my husband came in front of the shop, I saw them beckon him in. It was a sad moment for me. "Oh, George," said I, though I know he could not hear me, "go on; remember your poor wife and your starving children!" My heart sunk within me, when I saw him stop and turn towards the door. He shook hands with his old associates; they appeared to offer him their glasses; I saw him shake his head and pass on. "Thank God!" said I, and ran down the hill, with a light step, and seizing my baby at the cottage door, I literally covered it with kisses, and bathed it in tears of joy. About ten o'clock Richard Lane, the Squire's office boy, brought in a piece of meat and some meal, saying my husband sent word, that he could not be home till night; as he was at work on the Squire's barn. Richard added, that the Squire had engaged him for two months. He came home early, and the children ran down the hill to meet him. He was grave, but cheerful. "I have prayed for you, dear husband," said I. "And a merciful God has supported me, Jenny," said he. It is not easy to measure the degree of happiness; but, taken altogether, this, I think, was the happiest evening of my life. If there is great joy in heaven over a sinner that repenteth, there is no less joy in the heart of a faithful wife, over a husband that was lost, and is found. In this manner the two months went away. In addition to his common labour, he found time to cultivate the garden, and make and mend a variety of useful articles about the house. It was soon understood that my husband had reformed, and it was more generally believed because he was a subject for the gibes and sneers of a large number of the Deacon's customers. My husband used to say, Let those laugh that are wise and win. He was an excellent workman, and business came in from all quarters. He was soon able to repay neighbour Johnson, and our families lived in the closest friendship with each other. One evening, farmer Johnson said to my husband, that he thought it would be well for him to sign the temperance pledge; that he did not advise it, when he first began to leave off spirit, for he feared his strength, might fail him. "But now," said he, "you have continued five months without touching a drop, and it would be well for the cause, that you should sign the pledge." "Friend Johnson," said my husband, "when a year has gone easily by, I will sign the pledge. For five months, instead of the pledge, I have, in every trial and temptation—and a drinking man knows well the force and meaning of those words—I have relied upon this gold ring, to renew my strength, and remind me of my duty to God, to my wife, to my children, and to society. Whenever the struggle of appetite has commenced, I have