

TO PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH.

Most honored Sir, (and let me say this is no formal phrase; Your noble character deserves our reverence and praise; Not less than your most brilliant pen and charitable heart, We all admire your bravery—you've played a manly part).

I've read your earnest letter, printed in the *Weekly Sun*, Upon the coming plebiscite. Of course its ably done; But after due digestion of all you have to say, I'm going to the polls, dear sir, to vote the other way.

I'm no fanatic temperance man; the honor has been mine, To sit at your own table and drink my glass of wine; (No choicer board could generous Hospitably arrange, Than 'tis her genial custom to spread at the old Grange.)

I love my glass of sherry just as you do, on the plan Of the temperate and self-respecting English gentleman. But, like many English gentlemen, I'm troubled with a heart That for the woes of others cannot help but throb and smart.

I've lately seen some humble homes— if that sweet hallowed word, May be misused in manner so cruel and absurd. Some "dens," to speak more strictly, where tears and terror reigned, But which, with liquor banished, would be Paradise regained.

For drink has brought those families from their former high estate Down to the very gates of hell. This grim and horrid fate Is visited on many a wife, who, a happy, hopeful bride, With a pure noble husband, sailed out upon life's tide.

And she still is gentle, hopeful, though in her anxious air You see the constant shadow of a hovering despair, And in the tears that fill her eyes, as with an eager clasp She holds her children, lest they fall into the Demon's grasp.

Were there but one such case as this in all our favored land, My heart would still be master of the ballot in my hand; The voice of Christ within me, the still, small, whispered voice, Would yet compel my voting, and leave me no free choice.

A vote for Prohibition means a vote to throw away Seven millions of a revenue, which we will have to pay, And fifty millions capital invested in the "trade"; Perhaps 'tis true! But listen! those children cry for bread!

The vote means that some thousands must be thrown out of work; And heavy loss to farmers—these points I will not shirk. Allow them true; they're serious, and speak in thunder tones— But over them my heart can hear that suffering woman's groans!

The vote means Compensation— another heavy loss, And more police, that smugglers shall not our borders cross, Coercion and ascetic rule, and wide-spread, lawless strife. It may be so, but you poor babe must have a chance for life!

The vote means that my harmless wine I must henceforth forego And give up liberties I prize and value—even so: My plate cries against it, but my heart becomes a flame, And rises in my bosom, and says, "O Christian, shame!

"Thy vote may mean material loss, and suffering and rage— Such conflict has often scarred and darkened history's page; It may mean sacrifice to you! But hear that woman's sigh! Behold that ruined man, and weigh that infants wailing cry!"

—A Friend.

ONE SCENE OUT OF MANY.

It was a dreary, miserable morning, a heavy fog hung over the wretched street; the rain had fallen continually through the night and still drizzled in a forlorn way. Pedestrians jostled along, occasionally hitting one another with their wet umbrellas and sloshing the mud right and left over the dirty pavement.

Crossing the filthy street, where the thick, black mud entered the soles of her shoes, and clung with tenacity about her thin ankles, was a young girl of thirteen or thereabouts. She breast the driving wind and swerved not from the straight course ahead, although her protection against the elements was only a ragged dress and a thin faded shawl of many colors. Tied about her untidy mass of hair was an old hood, and upon her feet were an old one-sided shoe, unlaced and torn at the top, and a coarse discarded boot, hard and unweedy. She seemed utterly indifferent to the rain. Why should she be otherwise? For one who is thoroughly wet and worn a few drops more or less either of water or trouble makes little difference.

She hurried around the corner and a shiver passed through her frame with a cutting blast of wind. She shuffled on as fast as possible, considering her soaked feet, held her poor wet garment close to her as if for protection, turned up a dark court, opened a creaking door in a rickety tenement house and entered. How cold and dark and damp, although just what she expected. A deep sigh escaped her. The "bundle of rags" (called father) on the straw in the corner did not move, and she softly opened the door into another smaller room and looked in. All was hushed and still. On a low couch of straw, covered with a thin, patched army quilt, lay a little girl of seven, pale and faded; but, though the clammy sweat stood upon her brow, one could not but say, "How lovely." Yes, though a drunkard's forsaken child, Lena Croft's pinched features were beautiful. Amy knelt down by her side, took the little thin hand in her own, and poor child, although she did not intend to wake her sick sister, the hot tears that fell from her eyes had that effect, and the little one's eyes opened and looked upon her imploringly. She had begged her father, with all the strength and pathos of her anguish, to call a physician for Lena, even getting down upon her knees before the degraded man with her earnest pleading; but no, this heartless father turned away from his eldest born's prayer and took the money, that with God's blessing would have brought relief to his sick child, and gave it to the rum seller, who was licensed to flood his home with poverty, hunger and perhaps something worse.

"I am so glad you've come, Amy, I'm so hungry. Can I have something now?"

Amy looked at the thin cheek so touchingly white, at the blue eyes that once beamed with laughter, and her heart sunk within her. She felt such a weight of oppression that she could not speak. She had promised to get something for the sick child and had failed. She had rung at many basement doors, but the servants had bade her begone. She had come back empty-handed and broken-hearted. She could not resist this appeal.

"You may, dearie. You shall, my little lamb. Just wait a minute," she cried, and again she bounded out (that freezing, wet, starving child), resolved that she would ring the front door bells and see the ladies themselves, as a last resort.

Thinking only of Lena, her poor, tired feet seemed shod with wings. She hurried through the streets and rung the front door bell of the first respectable house. A tidy housemaid opened the door, and in answer to Amy's pleading "Please may I see the lady?" she received, "You dirty girl, to come up these clean steps with your muddy feet. Begone this instant," and the door was slammed in her face. She turned despairingly but resolutely (the sad eyes at home haunting her) and pulled the next bell. As the servant opened the door Amy said quickly, "My little sister is starving, please give me something for her."

"Beggars should go to back doors," angrily answered the girl, and was about to shut the door when a gentle voice said, "Let her step in on the oil-cloth so that I can see her."

"But, sure, she's drippin' wet, ma'am, and covered with mud."

"Do as I say. Let her in."

The door was opened and Amy stepped in.

"Oh, how lovely," thought the poor out-cast, "how bright and how lovely everything is," and her eyes wandered to the sweet-voiced invalid lying upon the crimson hall-couch.

"My poor girl, what can I do for you?"

"O ma'am, something for my sister. My poor little sister is sick and dyin' and starvin'."

"Poor child, poor little girl. Katy, tell the cook to give her part of my beef tea in a bottle, a cup of jelly and some bread and meat, and be quick about it."

The poor girl received the package with a thankful heart, and the world looked brighter to her eyes as she ran fast to the hovel she called her home, although the rain still fell pitilessly.

Just as she entered the door the tattered heap in the corner moved, and the miserable father raised himself with difficulty to a sitting posture and looked at her with an ill-tempered scowl. He had grown so bitter and revengeful in his dissipation that Amy shuddered with dread.

"What you carryin' so sneakin'?" he fiercely demanded.

"Something for Lena; she's starvin', father."

"Bring me what you've got; I'm starvin' and thirsty too."

"O, father, I can't, Lena's dyin'," moaned Amy, trying to pass the miserable wreck on the floor, but he raised himself slowly and uttered a threat so terrible that the frightened child tremblingly handed him the precious basket. Snatching it from her, he swallowed the beef-tea as if famished, then greedily followed with the meat and as much of the bread as he could eat. Then he rose staggering, and wrapping the cup of jelly in a paper, he started towards the door. Amy stood looking with horrified eyes, but with great effort asked, "Where are you going with the jelly, father?"

"To Washburn's for a drink."

"O, father leave me the jelly or Lena will die," and poor Amy wrung her hands in agony.

"Pick up the crusts that I left; they're good enough for such brats as you are," was the answer and the brutal father turned away.

Amy opened the bedroom door trembling. How could she face her little sister without food again, and tell her there was none? But there was no need; Lena had heard all. Thro' the little broken window came a feeble ray of light, revealing a patient loving smile on the thin white lips. She held out her wasted hand to Amy, and the heart-broken girl caught it between her own and covered it with scalding tears as she broke forth into convulsive sobbing.

"Don't cry, Amy, my good Amy I'm sleepy; but I love you sister Amy. Kiss me Amy for I'm going to Mamma. I won't be hungry any more, nor cry any more. Will I Amy?" Amy's tears were falling faster than the rain-drops outside, but her heart was too full to speak.

"I'll ask God to come for you sister, soon—soon. No tears there. Mamma." The sinless sleeper was at rest.

One little tired heart has found peace; up the golden stairs her tiny feet have gone. But, O Father, the other.—*Ernest Gilmore.*

A WHISKEY ORATOR SILENCED.

A friend told me of a prominent liquor dealer who went to a certain town in Kentucky to make a speech against Prohibition. He was met by a respectable well-to-do, but indignant man, who showed determination in every gesture and a fearful earnestness in his voice. He said, "Mr. —, a merchant in this town bought a barrel of whiskey that had your brand on it. A young man drank of it. A young lady drank of it. That young lady was accomplished and respected in the community; she was an adored daughter. That young man ruined her when both were under the influence of your whiskey. You furnished that whiskey. I furnished that daughter. I killed the man that ruined my child, and will kill any man that makes a whiskey speech here to-day."

Mr. — made no speech, but retreated in good order, and the town was carried for local option.—*Southern Journal.*

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The VANGUARD was published during the stirring years of 1893-4-5 in the form of a magazine. It was devoted to expert discussion of the liquor question and the many matters thereto related, special attention being given to details of most interest and value to Canadians.

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