



The Streets of the City.

The streets of the city are full
Of poor little perishing souls,
Who wander away from the light,
In places that Satan controls.
They see not the snare at their feet;
They know not the danger they're in:
Dear Saviour, can these be Thy lambs,
So changed and disfigured by sin?
Famishing, perishing, every day;
Lambs of the flock, how they go astray.

Then out of the mire of sin,
And out of the darkness of night,
Go, bring the dear lambs to the flock,
And lead them up into the light.
Their nature with tenderness train,
Their wilfulness try to subdue,
Be patient and tender with them,
As Christ has been patient with you.
—Selected.

The Angel and the Demon.

(Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler, author of 'The Double Thread,' etc., in the 'Friendly Visitor'.)

(Concluded.)

The first year of their married life in their pretty, woodbine-covered cottage was a period of unclouded happiness, and then the old temptations again began to knock at the door of Frank's soul. For a time he held the fort against the invading foe, but only for a time; and then there came an outbreak which made the neighbors shake their heads and poor Alice wish that she were dead. But miserable as Alice was, her love for her husband never failed. Tenderly she bore with him in his maddest bouts of intoxication; and patiently she endured the poverty which now threatened to destroy their once happy little household.

Again the good Angel and the Demon of Drink strove together for the soul of Frank Marsden.

'I will save him by the hand of a little child,' said the Angel; 'the hand of a little child is strong.'

'But I am stronger,' said the Demon; and he laughed.

When the days of Frank's humiliation seemed at their darkest, a baby came to the woodbine-covered cottage, to comfort Alice and to make Frank's heart once more as the heart of a little child. And when Frank realized that to this new son of his he must be as a god knowing good and evil, he swore that the ideal of fatherhood should never be lowered by him, and that the lad should never have occasion to be ashamed of his father. So he put away from him the accursed thing and became again a sane man. For the sake of his wife and child people were ready to help the reformed drunkard by giving him work, and the cottage once more became bright and cheery. Little Tommy was the very apple of his father's eye, and Frank was never happy now apart from the boy. Long and interesting were the talks the two held together as Tommy grew older, and began to take notice of the world around him. Then there came to the bright little home a baby-girl, whom Frank called Jane, after his still tenderly-loved mother, and altogether the latter days of the Marsdens promised to be better than their earlier ones. Again Frank and Alice read and discussed books in the long winter evenings, and again wandered through grassy lanes and sweet-scented hay-fields on the long summer days. Alice began to look back upon that terrible past as a bad dream from which she had awakened, and to forget those 'old, unhappy, far-off things' which had thrown so dark a shadow over her early married life.

But this halcyon time was doomed not to last. Once more the evil spirit entered into Frank, and once more sorrow and want took up their abode in the woodbine-covered cot-

tage. Poor Alice's once pretty face grew wan and wistful, and the two children soon felt the pinch of poverty and began to droop. Many a night did Tommy cry himself to sleep, calling in vain for his dear daddie to come and comfort him, and many a night did Alice sit up until the small hours to let in the besotted slave who had once been the light of her eyes and the joy of her heart.

For the last time did the good Angel strive with the Demon of Drink for the soul of Frank Marsden.

'I will save him by means of worldly ambition,' said the Angel; 'worldly ambition is strong among the sons of men.'

'Not as strong as I am,' sneered the Demon, and he chuckled to himself.

One day, when the Marsdens were in sore pecuniary straits, a lawyer called to see Frank and to tell him that his mother's brother had just died in Australia and had left him a large fortune. Marsden was staggered at the unexpectedness of this sudden accession to wealth, and could not at first realize that he was a rich man; but as he more fully grasped the idea he once more made up his mind that he would finally break himself of the pernicious habit which was ruining him in body, soul and estate. While poverty stared him in the face it was a relief to drown his cares in drink; but now that the reality of life had surpassed his wildest dreams, he had no longer any cares to drown. Glorious indeed were the castles that Frank reared in the air with his newly acquired wealth. What beautiful clothes he would buy for Alice, and what wonderful toys for the children; and how happy they would once more be all together! Surely the hateful past was indeed past now—past, never to return; for in a new life, spent in a fresh place, under altered conditions, the old temptation would lose its former power and be for ever robbed of its victory. But the thought which brought the greatest joy to Frank Marsden's heart in connection with the fortune he had inherited from his uncle, was the thought that now he could make Tommy 'a real gentleman,' for Tommy should go to school where the real gentry sent their sons, and should hold his head up with the best.

'Hullo, Marsden! come and stand us a drink,' cried George Grierson, one evening as it was growing dusk.

'No, no, not I,' replied Frank. 'I'll never taste another drop of that accursed stuff while I live. This money has made a new man of me, and a new man I mean to remain.'

'Well, you are a stingy cove, and no mistake!' sneered Grierson. 'I couldn't have believed that you would turn out so mean as soon as you had a little ready cash in your hand.'

'It isn't meanness, Grierson.'

'Isn't it, well, it looks uncommonly like it, doesn't it, lads?' cried Grierson, appealing to a group of men who were hanging round the doors of the 'Blue Boar.' 'I noticed that you were ready enough to drink when you were poor, and other chaps had to stand treat; but now that the boot is on the other leg, you've become mighty teetotal all of a sudden. Such temperance is beautiful to see, isn't it, boys?'

The men roared with laughter at this sally, and Marsden—who never could bear to be laughed at—after a little more similar chaff, went into the 'Blue Boar,' followed by his former evil associates—'just for the last time,' as he said to himself in excuse.

And it was for the last time.

Long and late did Frank Marsden sit drinking in the public-house with his boon companions—sat until he was besotted and inflamed with the devil's poison, and was no better than a brute beast. Poor Alice, guessing what had happened, came and waited for him outside; she brought the two children with her, hoping that the sight of his darlings would bring Frank to a better state of mind, and induce him to come home with her and them. But her heart sank as she waited for him in vain, and looked at the reeling figures reflected against the window-blind of the 'Blue Boar,' which made a ghastly magic-lantern to the further discomfiture of the unhappy woman. Marsden knew that his wife was outside waiting for him, but he was too far gone by this time to have any ear for her tender pleadings. At last one of the men made some rough joke about Frank's being tied to his wife's apron-strings, which filled the tipsy fellow with unseasoning rage against the patient figure waiting so pitifully in the village street. Completely carried away by his drunken fury,

he rushed out of the inn and down the steps to where his wife was standing, and struck the poor woman to the ground with an iron tool he had seized in his intoxicated frenzy.

A piercing shriek rent the still night air, followed by the pitiful wailing of little children; and then Frank Marsden came to himself, to find that he was a murderer and his babes were motherless.

So Frank was hanged at the next Assizes, and his handsome fortune was forfeited to the Crown. The baby-girl did not long survive her poor mother; and Tommy, who was to have become a 'real gentleman,' was condemned to the hard lot of a pauper-child, and the sins of his father were visited upon his innocent head.

The Demon of Drink was filled with unholy triumph, for the struggle was ended and he had prevailed.

'Strong is a man's promise to his mother,' he said; 'and strong are also worldly ambitions, and the love of woman, and the hand of a little child. These truly are mighty; but I am mightier than them all.' And he laughed aloud in his evil glee.

The good Angel answered him never a word, but returned vanquished to his own place; and as he went he bowed his head in sorrow, crying, 'Lord, how long?'

At the Table of the Lord.

The Communion Service was drawing to a close in a little country chapel one summer Sunday evening. The bread had been distributed and the deacons were carrying round the cups of wine. As they did so, a faint, unmistakable odor filled the building; it reached a central pew occupied by the minister's wife and two visitors. One was a lady staying at the Manse; the other, a stranger shown in after the service had commenced. The smell of wine brought no sensation to the minister's wife; she was used to it. When her friend, Hilda Macdonald perceived it, she said to herself; 'It's fermented.' Her prayer of consecration changed to one of supplication that drunkards might cease to be tempted within the walls of the sanctuary. It was well to offer the prayer for the girl beside her needed it. She was a young servant girl with marks of struggle on her pale thin face; she had listened to the simple sermon very eagerly, and joined in the singing with a smile that came from happy memories. But now she watched the cup passing from hand to hand with fear and horror. In her heart she prayed, 'Oh, keep it away from me. I shall taste it if it comes too near. Make someone else refuse it, too.'

The deacon brought it to the pew; the minister's wife, with a temperance badge upon her mantle, sipped the wine and passed it on. Miss Macdonald took the cup in her daintily-gloved hand; gave one glance at the girl cowering in the corner of the pew, who made no effort to receive it, and passed it back again to the deacon untouched.

When the last hymn had been sung and the benediction pronounced, Hilda Macdonald felt a hand upon her arm.

'Tell me,' said the girl, in a whisper, 'did you do it on purpose? Did you know I dare not take it?'

Hilda smiled and said, 'No, but I did not want you to.'

'I'm glad you kept it back,' the girl went on. 'I've lost three situations through giving way to drink. I've promised never to touch it again, and I've been getting on so well these last three months. I haven't been to a service like this for three years, but I didn't know they ever used such stuff in chapels. They never did in London. I am glad I happened to sit next to you.'

'I expect it was not quite by chance,' said Miss Macdonald, brightly. 'I am very glad you did. I always pass fermented wine at a communion service. I see no reason to break my pledge even at the table of the Lord.'

'Hilda,' said the minister's wife that night at supper. 'What was that poor girl saying to you after service?'

Hilda repeated the conversation word for word. It was received in a silence that remained unbroken until Hilda started another topic. She had done her part. On her next visit, she found that the minister and his wife had not failed in doing theirs.—'Temperance Record.'