

FALLEN WOMEN.

BY L. J. HARVIE.

The subject of the present paper, as placed in our hands by the Executive Committee of the Provincial Union, was "Drunkenness and its Relation to Fallen Women;" but we have preferred to consider this question in some of its other aspects and relations. And not in any spirit of idle curiosity would we draw aside the veil and disclose this horrible, this ghastly, this festering sore which is eating at the very vitals of social life. Not with a desire to make the sin of licentiousness any the less repulsive, not to remove any of the shame which clings and should cling to the garments of a "fallen woman," but, as in the sight of God, to search for the causes and the cure of this awful "social evil," and with His help, endeavor to remove some of the difficulties out of the way of those who are laboring for this class in society—and especially to encourage every saved woman present, to go home with a heart yearning for these "lost souls," determined to reach forth and grasp one shattered wreck and pilot it safely up to God.

Public opinion is ever changing. What we denounced yesterday we laud to-day, and *vice versa*. A quarter of a century ago it would scarcely have been deemed wise for Christian women, pure, and spiritual, to recognize, much less to attempt to unveil causes, or remove the effects of sensuality and licentiousness among women. But to-day the evils lurking behind the sin of "Prostitution" are assuming hideous forms—are revealing themselves in naked deformity. Vice among women is greatly increasing; girls scarce out of the school room are flaunting their shame in the face of the onlooker. The consideration of these facts, common sense, and a feeling of the "fitness of things" has taught us, and the public as well, that Christian men can neither understand nor engage successfully in this department of work for Christ. No, the salvation of women already lost, fallen, and the rescue of those tottering on the brink of the dreadful abyss, is woman's work—God appointed.

In seeking to uplift fallen women, we are beset with difficulties. The standard by which the world measures the worth of woman is so high, since Eve, our first mother—a perfect woman—stood in all her marvellous loveliness, fresh from the hands of Divinity, before our great father—the perfect man—his sons, in gospel lands, have held her daughters, in universal admiration, placing them upon the lofty pedestal of purity, stainless, modesty unapproachable, and truth absolute.

The verdict of general opinion, where woman is concerned, is invariably severe. The sin of licentiousness in man is excused, forgiven, permitted. We speak apologetically of our young men, as only "sowing their wild oats," when more than usually daring and reck-