

SAVED BY A PRAYER.

"Good-by, Harry; remember that mamma will always pray for your safety."

These were the last words Harry heard as he went out of the gate toward the railroad station to take the next train for the city of New York. Harry had always been on the small farm near his home in Joyville since he was born, about seventeen years ago. His uncle, who lived in the large city of New York, had lately written that he had work for one of the boys in the new establishment on Broadway. As there were six boys in the family, Harry's father thought it would be well for one of them to go and take charge of the work Uncle George had written about, and Harry was now leaving his home to take charge of the new position which he believed God had assigned him. Little did Harry realize the dangers that would beset him in the city to which he was going. His mother, however, had lived in the city for many years, and thinking of the dangers her boy would now have to encounter, gave him the assurance that she would never forget to offer a prayer for her absent boy. "Mamma will always pray for your safety;" these words kept ringing in Harry's ears as the train passed rapidly out of the small village and new scenes came to his view. At the station in New York city his uncle was waiting for him. Harry was soon in his uncle's handsome home. Handsome, indeed, was the present home, but Harry longed for the simple furniture, the old rail fence, the cat and kittens, and old Bruno, the house dog. The artificial life of the city did not quite commend itself to his free nature.

In a few days Harry was at work in the new, grand store of his uncle. There he soon became acquainted with many young men of his own age; they all seemed very friendly, invited him to join them in their excursion parties in the evening, and visit them at their homes. Before the first week was ended Harry had visited three of the boys and taken a trip over to Jersey City, where several other boys took a trip on their bicycles. Harry had brought his wheel with him and enjoyed the trip over the new country very much. One thing, however, happened on this trip which did not make Harry feel at peace with his new companions. After they had gone a distance into the country they rested from their long ride. One of the young men suggested that they go into a store near by for refreshments.

All seemed agreed, and Harry, following his new friends, soon found himself standing at a bar in a saloon. "What will you have, Harry?" he heard one of his new friends inquiring. "I'll take a glass of lemonade, if you please," answered Harry. "Pretty good joke, Harry, but you don't get such stuff here; we are all going to have a large glass of lager beer: I'll order one for you, too." And before Harry could think of an answer, the bar-tender had poured a glassful and placed it before him. Harry felt that to refuse to drink it would be to invite the smiles and scornful remarks of his friends upon him.

He had been taught at home that the drunkard would never enter the kingdom of heaven, and that the first step towards a drunkard's life was drinking the first glass of intoxicating liquor. His mother had warned him against the drink habit the last evening he was at home, and he had promised to refuse the tempter's glass if itful and placed it before him. Harry felt that he ought to refuse, but also felt that he lacked courage. He thought: "I shall drink this time, but never after this," and was about to take hold of the glass before him when he heard, it seemed to him, his mother's voice at his side saying: "Harry, remember that mamma will always pray for your safety." Harry relaxed his hold on the glass and a determined look was in his eyes as he turned away from the bar. The other young men had half emptied their glasses and were setting them down when they noticed that Harry had not touched his.

"Drink, Harry," said one of the young men, the one who worked next to Harry at the store, "I treat next."

Harry felt a lump in his throat, but with a fixed determination answered:

"No, I do not drink."

"Pshaw," exclaimed one of the young men, "you are not temperance, are you?"

"A glass of beer cannot hurt you: it is healthful," said another.

"I promised mother," replied Harry, "that I would not drink anything that might make a drunkard of me, and if I never begin I shall never have to stop; no one has ever become a drunkard who refused the first glass, but many are drunkards who meant to 'stop after they had tasted beer or liquor 'just once'; no, I shall not drink."

It was a long speech for Harry to make, but he thought of his mother's prayer and resolved that she should not pray in vain. He expected the boys to ridicule him for his