

There they sat in the lawyer's office—the lawyer and the rumseller—for brother Ben was a lawyer then, and Ned Melbourn, my deceased husband's brother, was a rumseller. There was a bottle of wine and glasses on the table.

"Didn't that fellow lecture last night?" said Ned Melbourn.

"Yes, he came down rather hard on some in this town," answered brother Ben.

"Didn't he, though; it has been the custom of our house," continued Melbourn, "to take Bill Dimer to every temperance meeting in town, and then we would have a good time next night. You see Bill would deliver the lecture over better than new. We have had some of our best nights after one of Bill's lectures, but last night there was not anything we wanted to hear again."

"No, I should think not,—it was a string of curses upon the rumseller from beginning to end," said Ben.

Ned Melbourn drained his glass. "Why don't you drink? I brought a bottle of my best."

"I am not going to drink another drop of that stuff."

"Well I thought so too last night; thought I'd quit the business."

"You stop selling liquor! No, Satan won't let you. If your father had left you a good honest business you would have left it as I did mine, and I would have been a richer and a better man to-day if I had never left the old place."

"Yes, but do you know that fellow has an object over and above his business; he is heir to half my property,—that is, Bessie's son. You know father disinherited her when she married Dunkin. But when Dunkin died, father willed Bessie's son half the estate; so he has turned up now just twenty-one, do you see? And I want you to help me."

The half drunken man leaned over the table, and whispered, "if you'll help me put him out of the way I'll give you one thousand dollars. We've always been good friends; I've always helped you when you wanted money."

Had he been less under the influence of liquor, he would have seen enough in his companion's face to silence him. But he saw nothing, thought of nothing, but how to save his money.

"It's no more than the old man did. Didn't I see the glass after she had taken the last she ever drank,—Kate, I mean,—you remember she died suddenly. It was Bess who gave it; of course she didn't know it was poison. Father did it to save the family from disgrace. Now if you can get him here, help him, you know, be his lawyer; the fellow can be got rid of, and—"