

inquiries from those likely to know, touching the object of his search. But no one could impart any information.

At length Latimer found himself in the Queen City of the West. But he had no eye to admire anything he saw; he stopped to look at nothing with wondering interest. In half an hour after the boat touched the wharf, he was abroad in the city, on his errand of mercy.

As young Arlington had learned the trade of a coach-maker, James went, first, to every establishment of this character in the place to make inquiries for him. But the search was fruitless. He then spent two days among the grog-shop keepers and boatmen, but with no better success. He was about relinquishing his efforts to find the one he sought in Cincinnati, when a man in one of the liquor stores at which he had called, hearing him mention the name of Arlington, said—

"Who? Jack Arlington do you mean?"

"Yes," replied Latimer. "Do you know where he is?"

"He's in rather a hot place by this time, I should think."

"Why do you say that?" anxiously inquired Latimer.

"I saw him in Natchez under the Hill, three weeks ago. But as Yellow Jack had hold of him, I rather think it's all day with him now."

"Yellow Jack!" said Latimer inquiringly. He did not understand the term.

"Yellow fever," replied the man; "and the way it was taking hold of him was a caution to sinners. When I left him, I wouldn't have given the snap of my finger for his life."

But notwithstanding the slender hope this information gave to Latimer, he made particular inquiries of the man where he had seen John Arlington, and took passage in the next boat that started for Louisville. At this place he found only one boat up for Natchez, and that was advertised to go in the afternoon. At five o'clock the time mentioned in the advertisement, Latimer went on board, and waited impatiently for the boat to start, but waited in vain. Towards sundown he received information that she would not leave the landing until the next morning. Vexed and disappointed, he left the boat and walked up into the town. As he was strolling along Main-street, he passed a man in whose appearance there was something that particularly arrested his attention, but why, he could not tell. Involuntarily, he turned and looked after him. The man was miserably clad, and walked, either from weakness or intoxication, with an unsteady gait. After standing and gazing at him for a short time, Latimer moved along in the direction the man was going, and followed him until he saw him enter one of the many drinking dens that lined a cross street, near the river. Passing on, he walked as far down as Water-street, still thinking of the man. There he stood and looked back toward the house into which he had disappeared.

After thinking awhile, Latimer made up his mind, he hardly knew why, to see more of this miserable creature, and, accordingly, walked back and entered the drinking house. He found about half a dozen persons, in a small room, with a low ceiling, the atmosphere of which was scarcely respirable, so loaded down was it with tobacco smoke and the fumes of liquors. The person who had attracted his attention, he found seated at a table, playing cards with a man whose appearance was little better than his own. The amount of the stake was a quarter of a dollar. Latimer took up a newspaper, and sat down under the pretence of reading, but, really, that he might observe the man without drawing attention to himself. The game progressed in silence, yet with evident eagerness on the part of both to win. The hands of the one in whom Latimer felt interested, trembled as he played his cards, and he leaned heavily, for most of the time, as he sat at the table, evidently for the support it gave him.

It was the countenance of this person that most interested Latimer. The more earnestly he looked at him, the more certain was he that he had seen him before, but he searched his memory in vain for the time and the place.

Suddenly the truth flashed upon him. It was the brother of Mary. It was the object of his search! He saw the likeness between him and his sister as clear as a sunbeam. Just as he had made this discovery, the game terminated, and the man with whom he had been playing, exclaimed angrily—

"Jack Arlington! you cheated me!"

A bitter oath fell from the thin, quivering lips of Arlington, as he drew back his fist and made a pass at his opponent. But the

latter stepped nimbly aside, and let him stagger forward and fall heavily on the floor. Before Arlington could recover himself, the man drew back his foot and was about kicking him brutally in the face; but Latimer sprang forward in time to prevent this cruelty, by grasping him tightly and drawing him back with a sudden jerk. The man endeavored to free himself by violent struggles, swearing dreadfully as he did so; but he was in powerful hands, that held him as securely as if he had been bound with cords.

As soon as the prostrate man had regained his feet, Latimer released his adversary, saying to him in a kind voice as he did so—

"Forgive me, sir; but I could not see you injure one in whom I have a deep interest."

This was interrupted by a volley of oaths and threats. But the man had felt the strength that lay in the young stranger's arm, and did not care to come into personal collision with him.

"And who are you, pray?" said Arlington, a little surprised at the interference, and still more so at an expression of interest in him. There were four or five boxes, as they were called, in the room, to which persons retired to eat or drink. Latimer glanced to one of these in which a candle was burning, and said, as he nodded towards it—

"Come aside with me, and I will tell you."

Arlington followed him, and they sat down together, on opposite sides of a small table, each looking intently into the other's face. There was that in the appearance and manner of Latimer that filled the company with something like respect, and though they still kept their eyes upon him, anxiously, as he retired with Arlington, no one came near or attempted to interfere with him in any way.

"You ask who I am?" said James, as soon as they were thus alone.

"I do. But, before you answer me, let me thank you for having saved a sick man, who is almost as weak as a child, from brutal violence. And now, let me inquire who you are, and why you feel any interest in a poor wretch like me, who does no good for himself nor any one else?"

"Your name is John Arlington, is it not?" asked Latimer.

"It is."

"You are from the East?"

"Yes."

"You have friends living there?"

"I presume so. But I left home some years ago, and have heard nothing from there since."

"Why have you not written home?"

"Because I could write no good of myself. My poor mother had trouble enough close at hand, without having any sent to her from a distance. But she may be dead now."

"No, she is not dead. I saw her only a short time ago."

"My mother!" exclaimed the young man suddenly, much agitated, and leaning over towards Latimer.

"Yes."

"My mother! And was she well?"

"Yes, and happy, but for the thought of her wandering son."

"Happy! How can she be happy? Is not my father——"

The young man paused and set his teeth firmly together.

"Two years ago your father signed the pledge, and, since then, has been industrious, provident and kind. But for your absence and errors, your mother's heart would be happy."

"Signed the pledge? Oh no! That is too good news." And the young man shook his head doubtfully.

"It is true," replied Latimer, firmly. "I saw him sign it, and have since worked in the same shop with him, for two years."

"Where?"

"In Newark."

"Is my mother in Newark?" asked Arlington, in a low voice.

"Yes. And your sister Mary is with her."

"And my younger brother and sister?"

"They are at home also."

"And I only am a wanderer and an outcast. Oh! if I only were at home again, and in such a pleasant place as home must now be, I am sure I would be a better man. But that is impossible. I have not the means of going back; and if I had, I would not sadden my poor mother's heart with so miserable a spectacle as I present. She thinks me dead, no doubt. Let her remain in ignorance."