

human probability, would prove his ruin, both in mind and body. The officer listened very patiently to this outburst, and, having asked his visitor to take a seat, said,—

"Now, young man, let us talk this matter over, and I think you will see it is all for the best; your brother, as I understand, has been only a common laborer—"

"I beg your pardon, sir, you are misinformed, he has only worked on his near relative's farms, and never received a day's hire," interrupted Robert.

"Oh, well," said Capt. S., "it is much the same; a life of dull and constant toil lies before him if he should remain in this unfortunate and uncivilized country (mem., the Captain was the son of a wealthy cotton-spinner in Manchester); while, on the contrary, as 'one of ours,'—such a fine looking fellow,—by the bye, what a very extraordinary likeness there is between you,—but, as I was going to say, he is sure of rapid promotion in our regiment; and, instead of living in a hum-drum, hundred-of-years-ago way, in such a village as F——, he will travel about from place to place at the country's cost, learn how the world goes,—in short, 'see life.'"

"Ah!" cried Robert, "that is the very thing I fear,—there is the terrible truth that shakes me with terror and apprehension,—you say he will 'see life;' but can you say what will become of him, while he is seeing life? Is not this what you mean by the misapplied phrase, which should be 'see death'? He will be intimately associated with his comrades, many of whom are old in vice, if young in years,—he will have free access, either alone or with companions, to 'the canteen,' where he can obtain intoxicating liquors, without going out of the barracks—to the deep disgrace of the British government! He must move about from city to city, or colony to colony, without remaining anywhere long enough to form a lasting friendship, which might be advantageous in after life; and eagerly welcomed everywhere by the tavern-keepers, and the—pardon me—

the very vilest of both sexes, who, like beasts of prey, prowl about your soldiers, 'seeking whom they may devour;' and, oh! sir, he must be away from me, who, until the last miserable one, never was separated from him for a single night since we were born. Oh! what shall I do! what shall I do!"

And the young man went to a window to hide the scalding tears, and repress the sobs, which shook his frame in his agony.

Deeply moved by his distress, Capt. Selbright, after a pause, said,—

"You take this matter too much to heart, and most certainly paint the soldier's life in the blackest possible colors; but, I assure you, after ten years of experience, the well-conducted, steady soldier, if he has received even a tolerable education, so that he can read, write, and keep accounts correctly, is sure of promotion; and the condition of a sergeant, to look no higher, is far better than that of a laborer, or even of a farmer, in a small way, who struggles on from year to year, scarcely able 'to make both ends meet.'"

"I feel, sir, you speak in kindness," replied Robert, "and I must tell you the truth,—my brother is as noble-minded, good-hearted a fellow as you could find, but he has one fault,—the most dangerous for him as a soldier,—he is easily led; he cannot resist the temptation of going into company, where song and dance and drink drive him beside himself. Alas! alas! is not his present position sufficient proof of this? And if he has acted so when among friends and relatives who cared for him, what will he do when removed from the restraints of home?"

"I'll tell you what you should do, Mather," said the officer: "come with him. I feel deeply interested in your case. You are evidently talented, and educated far above your class in life; from the way in which you speak of a soldier's dangers you will know how to avoid them, and be the means of keeping your brother from them also: enlist now, and I promise you the stripes shall soon be on your arm,—the