

as gentlemen, that we will not, hereafter, drink any spirit, wine, malt liquor, or cider, unless in sickness, and under the prescription of a physician."

Jarvis took the pen in his hand, that trembled so he could scarcely make a straight mark on paper, and enrolled his name among the hundreds of those who, like him, had resolved to be men once more. This done, he laid down the quarter of a dollar which he had obtained from his wife, the admission fee required of all who joined the Society. As he turned from the tradesman's store, his step was firmer, and his head more erect than, in a sober state, he had carried it for many a day.

From thence he proceeded to a hatter's shop.

"Well, Jarvis," was uttered in rather a cool repulsive tone, as he entered.

"Are you in want of a journeyman, Mr. Warren?"

"I don't want you, Jarvis."

"If you will give me work, I will never get drunk again, Mr. Warren."

"You're said that too many times, Jarvis. The last time you went off when I was hurried with work, and caused me to disappoint a customer; I determined never to have anything more to do with you!"

"But I'll never disappoint you again," urged the poor man earnestly.

"It's no use for you to talk to me, Jarvis. You and I are done with each other. I have made up my mind never again to have a man in my shop who drinks rum."

"But I've joined the Temperance Society, Mr. Warren."

"I don't care if you have; in two weeks you'll be lying in the gutter."

"I'll never drink liquor again, if I die!" Jarvis said solemnly.

"Look here, you drunken vagabond," the master hatter said, in angry tones, coming from behind the counter, and standing in front of the individual he was addressing—"if you are not out of this shop in two minutes by the watch, I'll kick you into the street! So there now—take your choice to go out or be kicked out."

Jarvis turned sadly away without a reply, and passed out of the door through which he had entered with a heart full of hope, now pained and almost ready to recede from his earnest resolution and pledge to become a sober man, and a better husband and father. He felt utterly discouraged. As he walked slowly along the street, the fumes of a coffee house which he was passing, unconsciously struck upon his sense, and immediately came an almost overpowering desire for his accustomed potation. He paused.

"Now that I try to reform, they turn against me," he said bitterly. "It is no use, I am gone past hope."

One step was taken towards the tavern door, when it seemed as if a strong hand held him back. "No—no," he murmured, "I have taken the pledge, and I will stand by it, if I die."

Then moving resolutely onward, he soon found himself near the door of another hatter's shop. Hope again kindled up in his bosom, and he entered.

"Don't you want a hand, Mr. Mason?" he asked in a hesitating tone.

"Not a drunken one, Jarvis," was the repulsive answer.

"But I've reformed, Mr. Mason."

"So I should think from your looks."

"But, indeed, Mr. Mason, I have quit drinking, and taken the pledge—"

"To break it in three days; perhaps three hours."

"Won't you give me work, Mr. Mason, if I promise to be sober?"

"No. For I would not give a copper for your promises."

Poor Jarvis turned away. When he had placed his hand to the pledge, he dreamed not of these repulses and difficulties. He was a good workman, and he thought that any one of his old employers would be glad to get him back again, so soon as they learned of his having signed the total abstinence pledge. But he had so often promised amendment, and so often broken his promise and disappointed them, that they had lost all confidence in him; at least the two to whom he had, thus far, made application.

After leaving the shop of Mr. Mason, Jarvis seemed altogether irresolute. He would walk on a few steps, and then pause to commune with troubled and bewildered thoughts.

"I will try Lankford," he said, at length, half aloud; "he will give me work, surely." A brisk walk of some ten minutes brought him to the door of a small hatter's shop, in a retired street. Behind the counter of this shop stood an old man, busily engaged in ironing a hat. There was something benevolent in his countenance and manner. As Jarvis entered, he looked up, and a shade passed quickly over his face.

"Good morning, Mr. Lankford," Jarvis said, bowing, with something like timidity and shame in his manner.

"Are you not afraid to come here, John?" replied the old man sternly.

"I am ashamed to come, but not afraid. You will not harm me, I know."

"Don't trust to that, John. Did you not steal—aye, that is the word—did you not steal from me the last time I employed you?" The old man in manner was stern and energetic.

"I was so wicked as to take a couple of skins, Mr. Lankford, but I did very wrong, and am willing to repay you for them, if you will give me work. I was in liquor when I did it, and when in liquor I have no distinct consciousness of the evil of any action."

"Give you work, indeed! O no, John, I cannot give you another chance to rob me."

"But I will not get drunk any more; and you know, Mr. Lankford, that while I was a sober man, and worked for you, I never wronged you out of a sixpence worth."

"Won't get drunk any more! Ah, John, I have lived too long in the world, and have seen too much, to heed such promises."

"But I am in earnest, Mr. Lankford. I signed the pledge this morning."

"You?" in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, I signed it."

"Ah, John," after a pause, and shaking his head incredulously, "I cannot credit your word, and I am sorry for it."

"If I have signed the pledge, and I am really determined to be a reformed man, will you give me work, Mr. Lankford?"

The old man thought for a few moments, and then said, half sorrowfully, "I am afraid of you, John. You are such an old offender on the score of drunkenness, that I have no confidence in your power to keep the pledge."

"Then what shall I do?" the poor wretch exclaimed, in tones that made the heart of the old man thrill—for nature and pathos were in them. "Now that I am trying in earnest to do better, no one will give me a word of encouragement, or a helping hand. Heaven help me! for I am forsaken of man."

"Have you been to see Warren?" asked the old man.

"Yes, and he threatened to kick me out of his shop."

"Mason wants a hand, I know. He will no doubt be glad to employ you."

"I've tried him, but he will not give me work."

Mr. Lankford stood thoughtful and irresolute for some moments. He pitied, from his heart, the poor creature who thus importuned so earnestly for work, and whose trembling hand indicated that he had forborne, at least for a time, his accustomed stimulus. But he did not wish to have him in his shop, for he had no confidence in him. At length he said

* We believe the custom of requiring an admission fee is confined to America, the scene of this narrative. No such fee is demanded in England.—(E. R. T.) Neither is such a fee required by the Montreal Temperance Society.—(Ed. T. A.)