

Who shall say that the Onward March in the line of Prohibitory Enactments has not been a magnificent one? And who does not feel that the agitation is only in its beginning, and is gathering from Home, Church and Society, the elements of a strength and constancy which shall preclude all retrogression, and which is the sure and certain augury of coming victory?

But I must now hurry on to speak of the greatest and most significant gain of the past—the enlistment in this Reform of

*7. The active and organized woman power of our country.*

Where was woman in this work fifty years ago? Where she had been for centuries,—suffering, sorrowing, praying; kneeling in the shadows and stretching out imploring hands to heaven, as father, husband, brother and son swept past her and away towards the deep sea of destruction.

Where was woman? Shivering over the dead embers of her ruined home; starving, as the last crust from her cupboard went to fill the greedy maw of the traffic which had turned her Plenty into Poverty; following with quenchless love the dear ones from descent to descent of misery, until the final precipice yawned before her into which she could not follow. Kneeling in piteous beseeching through the long dreary hours of suspense and anxiety, that He who sees might follow when she saw not; or appealing in wild despair to God for Vengeance, as the pitiless arrows of destruction pierced child after child, and it died, not on her knee, but afar off, and lay in a nameless grave.

But by and by the time came when suffering was to be transmuted into force, and desire into action,

Have you never observed how often evils work out the way of salvation, and suffering provides the very mode of release?

'Tis a time of severe drought. The sun hangs like a ball of fire in the heavens, and its fierce rays beat down upon the earth, till, brown and parched, it pants for rain as the tired hart on the arid mountains. And we say, "will the rain never come, the drought never cease?"

All the while the very heat is bringing the answer. The burning rays that we think so pitiless, see! they are drawing from lake and river and sea the millions of invisible mist motes. We can almost hear the rustling of their tiny wave-wings as they rise through the parched atmosphere, and haste away to the far-off camping grounds in the distant spaces of the heavens. Hour after hour they are massing, day after day they are moulding their tiny units into great drop companies, week after week sees the vapour battalions forming until, at the order of God, they come sweeping up in great cloud regiments, and, with flash of lightning and roar of thunder, pour their moist bullets full upon the face of the pitiless drought, and drive it from its feast on nature's heart.