

INDIAN SUMMER.

She waveth a royal sceptre
O'er fallow and glade and wood,
Her tread is the tread of a monarch
Her raiment is purple and gold—
The glint of the summer sunset
Is mirrored in her floating hair,
A faint gleam of mist-wreathed silver
Their bosoms her bosom fair.

A venture of scarlet splendour
She drops on the maples high,
And clothes the dogwood and sumac
In robes of eastern dye,
She comes to the woodland waters
Till they burst into purple bloom,
And waves like a royal banner
The golden-rod's yellow plume.

She relents the clinging ivy,
And deepens the corn-field's gold;
Bursts open the podded mild-weed,
Bids the blossoms unfold,
She mellows the autumn vintage,
And purples the watered vine,
And with lips like damask roses
She tastes of the ruddy wine.

But the languorous span of her beauty
Grows fainter and fainter still,
And the print of her vanished footsteps
Is passing from vale and hill:
And the mist-wreath that floated around her,
Enshrouding her bosom fair,
Has faded away with the sunlight
That glistened her golden hair.

The maples have lost their scarlet,
And the dogwood their crimson dye,
And the golden-rod's yellow banners
All pallid and faded lie,
The glow of the royal purple
Has fled from the mist-wreathed lawn,
And the tropical queen of the forest,
The Indian Summer, is gone.

"WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON!"

BY MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

THE golden rays of a summer afternoon were streaming through the windows of a quiet apartment, where everything was a picture of order and repose. Gently and noiselessly they glide, gilding the glossy old chairs, polished by years of care; fluttering with flickering gleam on the bookcases, by the fire, and the antique China vases on the mantel, and even coquetting with sparkles of fanciful gypsy over the face of the perpendicular, sombre old clock, which though at times apparently coaxed almost to the verge of a smile, still continued its inevitable tick, as for a century before.

On the hearth rug lay outstretched a great, lazy-looking Maltese cat, evidently enjoying the golden beam that fell upon his sober sides, and sleepily opening and shutting his great green eyes, as if lost in luxurious contemplation.

But the most characteristic figure in the whole picture was that of an aged woman, who sat quietly rocking to and fro in a great chair by the side of a large round table covered with books. There was a quiet beauty in that placid face, that silvery hair brushed neatly under the snowy border of the cap. Every line in that furrowed face told some tale of sorrow long assuaged, and passions hushed to rest, as on the calm ocean shore the golden furrowed sand shows traces of storms and fluctuations long past.

On the round, green-covered table beside her lay the quiet companion of her age, the large Bible, whose pages like the gates of the celestial city, were not shut at all by day—a few old standard books, and the pious rippling knitting, whose dreamy, irresponsible monotony is the best music of the age.

A fair, girlish form was seated by the table: the dress bonnet had fallen back on her shoulders, the soft cheeks

were suffused and earnest, the long lashes and the veiled eyes were eloquent of subdued feeling, as she read aloud from a letter in her hand. It was from "our Harry," a name to both of them comprising all that was dear and valued on earth, for he was "the only son of his mother, and she a widow;" yet had he not been always an only one; flower after flower on the tree of her life had bloomed and died, and gradually, as waters cut off from many channels, the streams of love had centred deeper in this last and only one.

And, in truth, Harry Sargeant was all that a mother might desire or be proud of. Generous, high-minded, witty, and talented, and with a strong and noble physical development, he seemed born to command the love of a woman. The only trouble with him was, in common parlance, that he was too clever a fellow; he was too social, too impressible, too versatile, too attractive, and too much in demand for his own good. He always drew company about him, as honey draws flies, and was indispensable everywhere and to everybody, and it needs a steady head and firm nerves for such a one to escape ruin.

Harry's course in college, though brilliant in scholarship, had been critical and perilous. He was a decided favorite with the faculty and students; yet it required a great deal of hard winning and adroit management on the part of his instructors to bring him through without infringement of college laws and proprieties, not that he ever meant the least harm in his life, but that some extra generous impulse, some quixotic generosity, was always tumbling him, neck and heels, into somebody's scrapes, and making him part and parcel in every piece of mischief that was going on.

With all this promised, there is no need to say that Harry was a special favorite with the ladies; in truth, it was a confessed fact among his acquaintances, that, whereas dozens of creditable, respectable, well-to-do young men might besiege female hearts with every proper formality, waiting at the gates and watching at the posts of the doors in vain, yet before him all gates and passages seemed to fly open of their own accord. Nevertheless, there was in his native village one quiet maiden who held alone in her hand the key that could unlock his heart in return, and carried silently in her own the spell that could fetter that brilliant, restless spirit; and she it was, of the thoughtful brow and downcast eyes, whom we saw in our picture, bending over the letter with his mother.

That mother Harry loved to idolatry. She was to his mind an impersonation of all that was lovely in womanhood, hallowed and sainted by age, by wisdom, by sorrow, and his love for her was a beautiful union of protective tenderness, with veneration, and to his Ellen it seemed the best and most sacred evidence of the nobleness of his nature, and of the worth of the heart which he had pledged to her.

Nevertheless, there was a danger overhanging the heads of the three—a little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, rising in the horizon to their hopes, yet destined to burst upon them, dark and dreadful, in a future day.

In those scenes of college hilarity where Harry had been so indispensable, the bright, poetic wine cup had freely circulated, and often amid the flush of conversation, and the genial excitement

of the hour, he had drunk freer and deeper than was best.

He said, it is true, that he cared nothing for it, that it was nothing to him, that it never affected him, and all those things that young men always say when the cup of Circe is beginning its work with them. Friends were annoyed, became anxious, remonstrated; but he laughed at their fears, and insisted on knowing himself best. At last, with a sudden start and shiver of his moral nature, he was awakened to a dreadful perception of his danger, and resolved on decided and determinate resistance. During this period he came to Cincinnati to establish himself in business, and as at this time the temperance reformation was in full tide of success there, he found everything to strengthen his resolution; temperance meetings and speeches were all the mode; young men of the first standing were its patrons and supporters; wine was quite in the vocative, and seemed really in danger of being voted out of society. In such a turn of affairs, to sign a temperance pledge and keep it became an easy thing, temptation was scarce presented or felt; he was offered the glass in no social circle, met its attraction nowhere, and flattered himself that he had escaped so great a danger easily and completely.

His usual fortune of social popularity followed him, and his visiting circle became fully as large and important as a young man with anything else to do need desire. He was diligent in his application to business, began to be mentioned with approbation by the magnates as a rising young man, and had prospects daily nearing of competence and home, and all that man desires—*visi na, alas!* never to be realized.

For after a while the tide that had arisen so high began imperceptibly to decline. Men that had made eloquent speeches on temperance had now other things to look to. Fastidious persons thought that matters had, perhaps, been carried too far, and ladies declared that it was old and threadbare, and getting to be cant and stuff; and the ever-ready wine cup was gliding back into many a circle, as if, on a second thought, the community was convinced that it was a friend unjustly belied.

There is no point in the history of reform, either in communities or individuals, so dangerous as that where danger seems entirely past. As long as a man thinks his health failing, he watches, he diets, and will undergo the most heroic self-denial; but let him once set himself down as cured, and how readily does he fall back to one soft indulgent habit after another, all tending to ruin everything that he has before done!

So in communities, let intemperance rage, and young men go to ruin by dozens, and the very evil inspires the remedy—but when the trumpet has been sounded, and the battle set in array, and the victory only said and sung in speeches, and newspaper paragraphs, and temperance odes, and professions, then comes the return wave; people cry, Enough, the community, vastly satisfied, lies down to sleep on its laurels, and then comes the hour of danger.

But let not the man who has been once swept down by the stream of intemperate excitement, almost to the verge of ruin, dream of any point of security for him. He is like one who has awakened in the rapids of Niagara, and with straining ear and wild prayers

to Heaven, forced his boat upward into smoother water, where the draught of the current seems to cease, and the banks smile, and all looks beautiful, and weary from rowing, lays by his oar to rest and dream; he knows not that under that smooth water still glides a current that, while he dreams, is imperceptibly but surely hurrying him back whence there is no return.

Harry was just in this perilous point; he viewed danger as long past, his self-confidence was fully restored, and in his security he began to neglect those lighter outworks of caution which he must still guard who does not mean, at last, to surrender the citadel.

"Now, girls and boys," said Mrs. G. to her sons and daughters, who were sitting round a centre-table covered with notes of invitation, and all the preliminary *et cetera* of a party, "what shall we have on Friday night?—tea, coffee, lemonade, wine?—of course not."

"And why not wine, mamma?" said the young ladies; "the people are beginning to have it; they had wine at Mrs. A.'s and Mrs. B.'s."

"Well, your papa thinks it won't do—the boys are members of the temperance society—and I don't think, girls, it will do myself."

There are many good sort of people, by the by, who always view moral questions in this moral style of phraseology—not what is right, but what will "do."

The girls made an appropriate reply to this view of the subject, by showing that Mrs. A. and Mrs. B. had done the thing, and nobody seemed to make any talk.

The boys, who thus far in the conversation had been thoughtfully tapping their boots with their canes, now interposed, and said that they would rather not have wine if it wouldn't look shabby.

"But it will look shabby," said Miss Fanny. "Lemons, you know, are scarcely to be got for any price, and as for lemonade made of syrup, it's positively vulgar and detestable; it tastes just like cream of tartar and spirits of turpentine."

"For my part," said Emma, "I never did see the harm of wine, even when people were making the most fuss about it; to be sure rum and brandy and all that are bad, but wine—"

"And so convenient to get," said Fanny, "and no decent young man ever gets drunk at parties, so it can't do any harm; besides, one must have something, and, as I said, it will look shabby not to have it."

Now, there is no imputation that young men are so much afraid of, especially from the lips of ladies, as that of shabbiness; and as it happened in this case as most others that the young ladies were the most efficient talkers, the question was finally carried on their side.

Mrs. G. was a mild and motherly woman, just the one fitted to inspire young men with confidence and that home feeling which all men desire to find somewhere. Her house was a free and easy ground, social for most of the young people of her acquaintance, and Harry was a favourite and domesticated visitor.

During the height of the temperance reform, fathers and brothers had given it their open and decided support, and Mrs. G.—always easily enlisted for any good movement—sympathized warmly,