

and divine laws have alike been trampled upon; and to-day, while preaching moral suasion, they are banding to sustain the system of cruelty and wrong at every hazard.

Moral suasion! Let the stricken mother go pray upon the slippery deck of the pirate when blood leaps smoking from the scuppers, and beg the life of her boy! Send childhood with a tear on its cheek, into the den of the furnished tigress, and with a silvery voice beseech the life of a parent, writhing in her remorseless fangs!

For the universe of God, its wealth and its honors, we would not, in the light of this day, have the guilt of rumselling rest heavy on our soul.

One more visit to the miserable tenement of Watt. All that the law spared has been carried off by Watt and pawned at the tavern. The Bible of the dead wife, her only legacy to her children, has been stolen from the place where young Bertha Watt hid it, as a priceless treasure, and sacred with the heart-drops which had fallen upon the worn pages, and sold for rum.

Little Bernard Watt lay sick unto death. With many a bitter curse, the father had turned from the doctor, as Bertha plead that her sick brother might have a doctor called, and left for the tavern.

And all within was hushed and still—every foot-fall as light as the falling leaf, for fear of disturbing the sick one. With hot tears upon her cheek, Bertha leaned upon the scanty couch, the tiny and feverish hand clasped convulsively within her own, as if to hold the boy-brother to earth. Though pale and fading, the features were classically beautiful; but a clammy sweat had gathered upon the white brow, rich with the last kisses of a dying mother. The chubby cheek had grown thin and touchingly pale; the eye had lost its laughter, and looked languidly upon the group around him. The white teeth appeared through the half closed lips, and the rich golden hair lay back upon the coarse blanket pillow. On the fourth day, as the sun was going down in the west, the child was passing away.

Through the broken window, a broad beam of sunshine, like a ray from bliss entered and trembled for a moment upon the hair, and then burst like a flood upon the pale features of the child—He turned his face to the sun, and a smile, sweeter than the sunlight, came over the wasted and bloodless lips. Upon that golden pathway the little one was smiling back upon kindred angels in Heaven!

"Bertha, do they always have sunshine in Heaven? and will my little flower grow there,—and the birds sing?—and will the angels you told me about last night be good and love me?"

"Mother is there,—she will love you," replied the choking Bertha.

"How I want to die! You say I won't hunger there, Bertha, and I'll have clothes so bright, and always feel happy. I won't cry there, Bertha, will I?"

Bertha could not answer from her swelling heart, but the tears wound their way down her cheeks, and fell like rain drops upon the glistening locks of Bernard.

"Bertha!"—and the boy looked wildly out into the room, and shut his sharp, thin fingers tightly upon her arm, and in a whisper continued—"Father won't be there to whip us 'cause we can't help crying, will he? Oh, I hope Mr. Hermon won't go there, to sell any rum. The good God don't sell rum, does he? Why can't you die, too, Bertha, and go when the angels come after

me?"—Sobs only answered the faint prattle of the innocent.

"Bertha, give me some more of that toast.—When I get to Heaven I'll tell ma how good Minnie Hermon was to us." Bertha looked, and the toast was gone, and with it the loaf of bread and the wine which Minnie Hermon had brought that morning, as she learned of their sickness and destitution. The father had robbed the dying, and sold the loaf for two drams. There was not a morsel of food for the boy, and Bertha's heart almost broke as she thought how cruel that Bernard should die hungry.

"Bertha—I'm going to sleep—kiss me. Good night! Bright!—ma, Bernard coming!"

The setting sunbeams lingered upon the pallid face of the sinless sleeper, as the whispers fell with crushing weight into the hearts of the little band. The pauper children loved each other.

The night of death had gathered around the little brother. The pilgrim of four summers had turned aside from a cloudy pathway, and passed directly to Heaven. He who loved such, led the gentle spirit through the shadows of the dark valley.

Even in that curtainless, carpetless room, there were gentle footsteps in the depths of the night, where lay the unwatched and unshrouded dead. Convulsive sobbing, and many a flood of tears, and close and warm were the kisses which clustered upon the chill and unanswering lips of all that remained of Bernard Watt.

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Early one morning Hermon met Minnie upon the hall steps, with her work basket in hand and hood on. He had, by dissipation, become utterly insensible to shame, and at times ill-tempered towards all. As he became degraded by his own habits and avocation, and blackened with guilt, he was bitter and revengeful. The consuming wreck of his nobler nature kindled into intenser flame all that was mean and base. He had just received one of the stinging shots of Doctor Howard, in relation to his treatment of the Watt family, and was much exasperated.

"Who now have you taken to support?" he angrily demanded of Minnie.

"No one, father."

"But where are you going?"

"To Watt's."

"D—n the Watts! I've heard enough about the paupers," he retorted, snatching the basket from her hand, the contents falling upon the steps.

"What now!—clothing, too, eh? A fine pass, if I've got to clothe and feed all the paupers in the country."

"Clothing for the dead, father; this is a shroud for little Bernard Watt. *He's dead!*"

"Pity they wan't all dead!" muttered the thoroughly brutal dealer, as he turned away.

Unseen by Minnie, Bertha Watt had entered the "Home" from the other street, and met Hermon as he left his daughter in the hall. Watt had taken a ham which Doctor Howard had sent to the children, and upon the pawn money was deadly drunk in the bar-room. Boiled turnips and salt, without bread—without anything else—had constituted their breakfast. From the table Bertha, with but a thin handkerchief upon her head, her heart running over with injuries inflicted, started for the "Home."