

By the end of the second year, Mary was the mother of a lovely boy, who big fair to be as much the idol of his parents as she herself had been. But as time progresses, changes take place, and one had taken place between the young couple, not perceptible indeed to strangers, but to Mr. Rutledge it was painfully so—he could not even to his own mind account for it; he blamed himself as being too exacting. Mary could not be expected to devote so much of her time to his comfort, she was engaged by the cares of a mother; her baby was very restless, often keeping her awake all night. Was it to be wondered at, if she was often dull and heavy?—Was it to be wondered at that some things were neglected, which had been formerly attended to by her? No! and he looks upon himself as little less than a monster, to expect that things could be otherwise than they were. He stepped into a shop, and bought her a handsome present, in some degree atone to her for the injury he fancied he had done her in his thoughts. When he presented his offering, she received it coolly and silently. He felt chilled and disappointed, still he never dreamed of the worm which was gnawing at the very root of his happiness. He could not complain, for he knew not what to complain of, but he could perceive that his honey-moon had terminated much sooner than he anticipated; and when another immortal soul was added to his family in the person of a little daughter, he felt more regret than thankfulness; considering it only as an additional bar to his social enjoyment. The reader, if he or she is of a lively imagination, may picture to their own mind, the horror, the agony, the young husband experienced, when on his return one evening from his place of business, he found his young, his idolized Mary—drunk,—yes, drunk! Not a suspicion of the truth had ever crossed his brain, and now to find her thus. Many circumstances crowded themselves on his memory, and he was astonished at his own blindness,—he felt ashamed and humiliated,—he could not look his own servants in the face.

When his poor degraded wife came to herself, she expressed sorrow and repentance, and promised amendment; but alas! the resolution was taken in her own strength, and she again fell. But why follow her through all the scenes of crime and dissipation through which she passed. In her sober moments she was often heard to curse the first teat spoonful, the drops of the evening glass, ay, even the parents who first held the tempting ingredient to her lips. But did it lead to true repentance? Oh, no; her broken-hearted husband removed her some miles from the city, and took her children from under her control, as he considered it a sacred duty, his afflictions having had a salutary effect on his own soul, and he felt the need of divine assistance in all he did. He tried every means to lead her from the love of the intoxicating cup; he never ceased to pray to God for her salvation. And such was the power of Divine grace on his own soul, that he could leave the event with perfect resignation in the hands of his heavenly Father.

Their eldest child was about ten years of age, and had never seen his mother from the time he was four. His sister did not remember her,—both Mary's own parents were dead. During all this time her devoted husband had watched her with the most tender care.—He was rewarded when he least expected it. On his return one evening, expecting to find her in what was her usual state, that was—(I was trying to find a more gentle name, but I cannot)—drunk, what was his astonishment to find her, in the words of scripture, "clothed and in her right mind." There was a look of earnest supplication, mingled with remorse and shame about her countenance, which had long been strangers

there. It caused the husband's heart to bound with joy and gratitude; he conversed with her that evening in a way he had not done for years; he believed it to be the dawning of better days. Night after night he found her the same, his hope became confirmed into certainty, but still he hunted not at the years of misery they had passed. At length one evening, when nearly two months had glided by of even more happiness than they had known in the early days of their married life, Mary rose suddenly flinging her arms about her husband's neck, sobbing out "William, can you forgive me, and our children?" she could say no more. He clasped her closely to his bosom, "forgive you Mary," said he, "yes, freely and fully. It would not become a sinful mortal, who has been so much indebted to the pardoning mercy of a sin-forgiving God, to say I would not forgive you, who is but a fellow sinner. And our children, Mary, are both well, and you shall see them soon."

I have seen them William," she answered, "when you knew not of it: it was the sight of them which led me to see my utter degradation, and to loathe myself for my wickedness in preferring my own sensual gratification to the honor of leading and guiding their minds in the paths of virtue and religion. But, William, I cannot see them again. Degraded as I have been by accursed liquor, I could not bear the idea of being scorned by my own children. No, no, she continued, I am not deserving to be called mother by such innocent little beings."

"Mary," said her husband in a melancholy tone of voice, "do you think I have watched and guarded you for so many years from the too prying curiosity of the world, to make the nature of your disease, (for such I consider it,) a topic of conversation before your children. No, Mary, my dear wife, they know you have been laboring under a disease of the mind, but that is all they do know, and they know now that you are getting better, and that they are to see you soon; but I have a proposal to make, and I hope it will meet your approbation; but first, dearest, tell me where you saw the children; they have never been here. No, William, but I saw announced in a newspaper, a Temperance Meeting, and that you were to speak. Curiosity seized me; I wanted to know whether you would make your own sorrows an argument in favor of Temperance. I learned from the servants you would not return till late. I made my escape, and was almost the first at the meeting. For long I dared not look up, and when I did, your form was almost the first which met my eye, sitting back on the platform almost screened from view. I saw a child by your side, but took little notice of him then. Oh! can I tell you? although I was the erring one, I hated you. I believed you was there for the purpose of exposing my faults, and I sat with the feelings of a demon,—my hands clenched, and my teeth firmly compressed; and yet, can you forgive it? At the moment I was sober, yes, sober, as far as regarded drinking that day. At length you rose. There was a breathless silence. Every one appeared as eager to catch what you said as I was myself; but not one could feel as I did. You portrayed the misery of the drunkard's home—the blasted hopes of the drunkard's wife—the humiliating condition of the drunkard's children—the horrid crimes of a drunkard's life—the darkness of a drunkard's hereafter. But not one word of the home desolation caused by a drunken wife, the wretchedness of the children of a drunken mother,—nothing of the crimes committed by a drunken woman. No, no! she was the angel pointed out, as the beacon star to guide erring man from the paths of destruction. You sat down amid thunders of applause; but one voice was silent; it was mine; but it was not hatred now; my feelings had been entirely