

the spirits did it, and not himself. He's as quiet a man as there in the city o' Cork, when he's sober; and as fine a workman; and he wouldn't hurt a hair of my head, barring he was in liquor."

The poor creature's affectionate appeal on behalf of her erring husband was interrupted, by the secretary demanding if he had taken the pledge before.

"I did, sir!—Stand back, Nelly, and don't try to screen me. I came here and took it from Father Macleod: and, God forgive me, I broke it too. I broke it last night, or rather all day yesterday, and—"

"Never heed telling any more about it, James dear," said the wife, eagerly; "never heed telling any more about it. A man may be overtaken once, and yet make a fine Christian after all. You wouldn't be sending him from the Priest's knee, sir, because he broke it *once!* when, as I said before, it was his brother who was in it, and not he, only for company."

"I had no heart to come this morning—only for her," said the husband: "she remembered his Reverence preaching about there being more joy in heaven over one like me, than over ninety-nine good men. O! if she would only let me tell the wickedness of my past life, and the sin and shame that has followed me—"

"It was the drink, James; it was the drink," reiterated the wife earnestly: "don't be distressing yourself; for it was nothing but the drink. Sure, when sober, there isn't a more loving husband or a tenderer father, on Ireland's ground. And now you'll be true to the pledge, and it's happy we'll be—and prosperous; for the master told me this blessed morning, that if he could depend on you for soberness, you'd earn your twenty-five shillings a week and have the credit to be a Monday man; and ye will, James—ye will, for my sake, and for the sake of the children at home."

"Ay," he interrupted, "and for the sake of the broken-hearted mother that bore me; and for the sake of little Mary, that I loved, in the drink. O! when the sweet look of that baby is in me,—her sweet patient look,—I think the gates of heaven never be open for such a sinner!"

While he made this confession, his arms hung powerless by his sides; and his pallid face lengthened into an expression of helpless, hopeless, irreclaimable misery. The wife turned away and burst into tears. Several evinced the quick sympathy of Irish nature for they shuddered, and murmured, "The Lord be betwixt us and harm, and look down upon them both!" The woman was the