

few male friends at dinner, or on a party of pleasure; his very good nature, which made him so desirable a companion, were the means of leading in the steps of ruin.

"Come Boynton, another glass."

"Excuse me, my dear fellow, I have really taken too much already."

"Nonsense! It is the parting glass, you must take it."

And Boynton, wanting in firmness of character, yielded to the voice of the tempter. Need we say, that, with indulgence, the love for the poison was strengthened?

For a while the unfortunate man strove to keep up appearances. He was never seen during the day in a state of intoxication; and from a doze on the sofa in the evening, or a heavy lethargic sleep at night, he could awake to converse with his friends, or attend at his counting room without his secret habit being at all suspected.

But who that willingly dallies with temptation can foretell the end? Who can "lay the flattering unction to his soul," that in a downward path he can stop when he pleases, and unharmed retrace his steps? Like the moth, circling nearer and still nearer to the flame, until the insect falls with scorched wing a victim to its own temerity, so will the pinions of the soul be left scathed and dropping.

Soon Boynton began to neglect his business, and he was secretly pointed out as a man of intemperate habits. At last he was shunned, shaken off by the very men who had led him astray. Who were most guilty? Let Heaven judge.

Here let us pause, ask why it is, that so many look upon a fellow being verging to the brink of ruin, without speaking one persuasive word, or doing one kindly act, to win him back to virtue? Why is it that, when fallen, they are thrust still farther down by the taunting and contempt? Oh, such was not the spirit of Him who came "to seek and to save that which was lost."—Such was not the spirit of Him who said, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."—How often, instead of throwing the mantle of charity over a brother's sin, instead of telling him his fault "between thee and him alone," it is bared to the light of day, trumpeted to a cold and censure-loving world, until the victim either sinks into gloomy despondency, and believes it hopeless for him to attempt amendment, or else stands forth in bold defiance, and rushes head-long to his ruin. Not one human being stands so perfect in his isolation, as to be wholly unmoved by contact with his fellows; what need, then, for the daily exercise of that god-like charity which "suffereth long and is kind," which "rejoiceth not in iniquity," which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Seven years have gone with their records to eternity—where is James Boynton now?

In one room of a miserable, dilapidated tenement, inhabited by many unfortunate victims of poverty and vice, lives he who on his wedding-day had entered a home which taste and luxury rendered enviable. Squalor and discomfort are on every side. His four children are pale and sickly, from want of proper food, and close confinement in that deleterious atmosphere.—They have learned to hide away when they hear their father's footsteps. Alas! to his own he is no longer the good-natured man. Fallen in his own esteem, frequently the subject of ribald mirth, his passions have become inflamed, and he vents his ill humor on his defenceless family. He no longer makes even a show of doing something for their support; and to keep them from starving, his wife works wherever and at whatever she can find employment.

A few more years, and where is Mrs. Boynton? Tremble ye who set an example to your families of which ye cannot foretell the consequences! Tremble, ye whom God has made to be the protectors, the guides, the counsellors, of the women ye have vowed to love and cherish! Mrs. Boynton, like her husband, has fallen! In an evil hour, harrassed by

want, ill used by her husband, she tasted the fatal cup. It produced temporary forgetfulness, from which she awoke to a sense of shame and anguish. Ah, she had no mother, no sister, no woman-friend who truly cared for her, to warn, to plead, to admonish! Again was she tempted, again she tasted, and that squalid home was rendered tenfold more wretched by the absence of all content and order. However great may be the sorrow and distress occasioned by a man's love for strong drink, it is not to be compared to the deep wretchedness produced by the same cause in woman; and it is matter for thankfulness, that so few men drag down their wives with them in their fall.

Providence raised up a friend who took the barefooted children of the Boyntons from being daily witnesses of the evil habits of their parents; and so dulled were all the finer feelings of his nature, that James Boynton had parted from them without a struggle.

Like the Ezedemonians of old, who exposed the vice to render it hateful in the eyes of the beholders, we might give other and more harrowing scenes from real life; but let this one suffice. Thank God for the efforts which have been made to stay the moral pestilence! Oh, it is fearful to think how many homes have been made desolate—how many hearts have been broken—how many fine minds have been ruined—how many lofty intellects have been humbled! It is fearful to think of the madness, the crime, the awful death, which follow in the Steps of Ruin.

HOW I WOULD HAVE IT.

The following thoughts were awakened in our mind, a few days since, upon passing by a grocery situated near a grave-yard; and if you think they will be of any advantage to your readers, they are at your disposal.

I thought that, if legislative power were delegated to me I would enact a law, placing a grave-yard immediately in front of a liquor-shop; and then I would so arrange it that all who were brought to their death by ardent spirits should be buried in them, and upon every tombstone should be written "*Murdered by the grog shop-keeper.*"

Whilst my mind was thus engaged, in imagination I beheld a funeral procession entering the solemn place. A man, hardly past the meridian of life, followed the coffin—his garments torn, his countenance reddened by excess. With eyes cast down to the earth, he was evidently engaged in deep, gloomy meditation. By his side there was the form of one who, in earlier, happier days, he had vowed to "comfort, honor, and keep, so long as they both should live." But how changed! That vow had been broken; the countenance of him who was wont to smile upon her, wore the sullen gloom of the inebriate's brow; the firm, elastic step of manhood was changed to the swaggering gait of him who treads the path of the vicious and unprincipled; and as they approached the solemn resting-place for the dead, he spoke no words of comfort to her, who, weighed down with grief, stood trembling with emotion by his side, whilst, with an aching heart, she beheld her last lovely babe deposited in the tomb. As the clouds were falling upon the coffin lid, we ventured to whisper in her ear the words of Christ, "suffer little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." A momentary glow of joy lit up her countenance, but it was soon followed by sadness and sorrow. But what were the feelings and thoughts of her husband, as he stood like a statue, while gloomy melancholy sat hovering over him? Did he remember his violated vows? Did he think how often he had neglected his babe, now cold in death? Did he think of the deep sorrow of her who loved him in spite of all her wrongs? We left the grave-yard, and, as we retired, I permitted myself to entertain a hope that he would change his course of life, and "prepare to meet his God."