

which I was reared; the unwearied pains taken by my indulgent father to give me an education answerable to my birth and prospects. And well do I remember my numerous suitors—my happy bridal eve—my splendid dress—and my brilliant wedding—when I gave my hand and my heart to him who is now my husband.

I was then a delighted, happy wife. My husband was one of the most promising and intelligent young men in the village. He was to me so kind and so attentive—so full of affection and tenderness. I loved him then; I love him still; and I trust I shall love him until I die. Our prospects then were the most encouraging. Well do I remember the beautiful mansion which my father gave me, and the splendid furniture with which it was stored. The costly sideboard, with the glittering vases and glasses which covered it; and the elegant decanters, sparkling so brilliantly with the choice wines contained in them. Oh that wine! that wine! how like the serpent it stole into the Eden of our bliss, and stamped a curse on me and mine, unutterable and indescribable. But I was then young and thoughtless. I poured out the wine for my young companions as they called upon me. I laughingly urged those who were temperate to drink *only one glass*. Like a fool, I was sporting with the very temptation, the most fatal to the peace and happiness of families. Experience—bitter, sad experience—has taught me this; and the agony of heart and the tears of anguish I have shed for this, my youthful folly, can only be seen at the judgment.

One year after my marriage, I gave birth to my first-born, a fair and beautiful boy. Oh, how many hours of happiness—pure and unalloyed—have I spent in sporting with and nursing that young immortal. How fondly was my heart attached to that child; and yet how little did I then feel for his true interest; how little gratitude did I feel to my Maker, for his goodness towards me; and how little obligation to teach my son, in his early and tender years, his duty to God. I was then blinded with my sins; I had experienced and enjoyed too many mercies to feel grateful for them; and it was only when misfortune came, and laid its iron hand upon me, that I was led by the infinite grace and mercy of God to think of my obligations and duties.

Well, time rolled on. Another, and another, and another were added to my family; and nine years after my marriage, I was the mother of five children, all of them boys. My husband had, by his attention to business, secured a handsome fortune; and our worldly prospects were most encouraging. He was to me still kindly affectionate—all that a husband should be. I was still a happy wife, and a gratified, delighted mother; no cloud seemed resting over me. But why need I dwell upon this fair side of the picture longer? My tale is a tale of woe—of blighted hope; and my appeal is the last painful effort of a wife's and mother's heart! Read it and hear me through, ye rum-selling gentry. Ye are they who make sport of the happiness and peace of many a domestic circle; ye are they who, for the sake of gain, are ready to destroy both body and soul; ye are they who are scattering flowers over hell, and smoothing the pathway of many a wretched wanderer towards it, with your stimulating drinks. Do I talk too hard? Oh, read a little further, and see the havoc one of your number has produced in my family; and then say, if you can, that I have no reason for my severity.

I well remember one bitter cold night in December, that I sat up long after my usual hour, waiting for my husband to return from his business. This was the first time he had ever staid out so late as to alarm me. There I sat in my chair, all alone, anxiously waiting the sound of every foot-step upon the pavement. One, two, three o'clock was sounded by the faithful monitor before me. Still he came

not; tired and cold, I laid myself down upon my pillow, not to sleep, but to wet it with my tears. My heart was oppressed with a certain feeling that all was not right with my husband. About four o'clock, I heard several hurrying steps upon the pavement, and strange loud voices, as if engaged in angry debate. The crowd stopped at my door; I heard my husband's voice demanding admission. I descended to the door and opened it. He looked at me sternly for a moment, but observing my pale countenance, still wet with tears, he changed colour, stammered out an apology for keeping me up so late, and ascended to our chamber. Before retiring to bed, however, he went to the sideboard to drink a glass of wine. The decanters were empty: he opened the sideboard, and looked for the jug containing brandy. This was empty also. This surprised me; I knew that both had been filled a few days before. My eyes were now opened, and the astounding fact that my husband had become a drunkard, and had just returned from a drunken revel, burst upon me. I covered my face with my hands, and burying them deep in the pillow, I tried to shut out the frightful idea. Oh, God! what an hour of agony—was that. The husband of my bosom—the beloved of my heart—the father of my children—prostituting his intellect and debasing his character by intemperance! Could it be? He arose the next morning long after his usual hour. Breakfast had been delayed for him; and the eldest children whispered together as he entered the room, as though they were shocked at his altered appearance. Before he sat down to the table, one of the boys was sent to a certain rum-selling professor in our neighbourhood, after some brandy. I knew he had always drunk a glass before breakfast; but it had never attracted my attention particularly before. I now determined to remonstrate with him—gently, but firmly—and induce him, by a kind moral influence, to abandon so pernicious a habit. As soon as the breakfast table was cleared, I entered the parlour, and desired him to follow me. He entered with a cheerfulness which gladdened me; and, closing the door, seated himself beside me upon the sofa. I took his hand gently between mine, and, looking him up in the face, with as much tenderness as I could assume, I began to speak of our first acquaintance—of our early love—of our marriage—and the bright prospects which were then opened before us. I spoke of our present standing and influence in society—of the high respect with which we were treated by all; and then I brought the question home to his heart, whether he was not fearful that all these fine prospects might be ruined, if he continued to indulge his appetite for ardent spirits. He listened to me attentively, and smilingly answered, when I had finished, "that a glass of wine or brandy, now and then, could do him no hurt. He was not fearful of becoming a slave to habit; he could break off when it hurt him; I might make myself easy about him, for he understood his own interest too well ever to become a toper."

This was eighteen years ago. No Temperance Societies had then been formed; and public opinion was not so much enlightened as it is now. I knew it was fashionable to keep all kinds of ardent spirits in the house, to treat every caller; and our station in society was such, that our house was often thronged with visitors. I knew that we should be derided if we banished liquors from the house; and yet, so thoroughly was I convinced that my husband was a ruined man, unless it was done, that I determined to make the attempt. I proposed it to him; he looked at me with surprise. "No, no," he exclaimed, "that shall never be; our less wealthy neighbours afford it, and so must we; I cannot, and will not, consent to that. One glass of wine cannot do any one any possible hurt, I shall drink one whenever I want it." "I agree with you, my dear husband, that one glass of wine can do no hurt. It is not of *one glass* I complain. I have