

poverty, and, no doubt of sorrow. The dilapidated house, the old, worn and shattered furniture, seemed to wear a forced and almost painful appearance of neatness, like a smile that hides heart-eating grief.

In the next room was Emma, the sick child; and there, too, I supposed, was her mother, watching over her; and I heard also the voice of a man. It might be her father, or it might be her physician, or perhaps some friend come in to see her.

But a moment after, all doubt was dissipated, as the voice grew louder and harsher: "She shall too, so get up now. What's the use of lying there all day, when she's well enough to be up?" The sound of the mother's voice could be heard expostulating; and I wondered if Mr. Ray was a drunkard.

"Get up this minute, growled out the savage father; I'll see if you won't mind." I stepped to the door and opened it. The mother held a bowl of drink for the sick child in one hand; with the other she attempted to restrain the father from any act of violence to his child.

"Don't John," she said, "you know Emma is sick, and isn't able to get up. Don't act so." He pushed her roughly away, spilling the drink from the bowl, and, without perceiving me, caught the child's hand to enforce his brutal authority.

Stepping forward, I laid my hand suddenly upon his shoulder. He turned, gazed at me with a half stupid stare, and muttered, "He'd see if his children couldn't be made to mind—have 'em lying abed all day"—and in a few minutes the intoxicated man left the room.

Little Emma hid her face in the pillow, and sobbed with shame and grief.

I sat down by her side, took her hand and spoke kindly to her; the mother wiped a few tears from her own cheek, seated herself, and drew her little boy to her lap. We talked of sickness and of the Saviour, of living and of dying, the weary pilgrimage of earth, and the blessed rest of heaven.

Emma was a Christian. From her mother's instructions, and the kind and faithful labours of her Sabbath-school teacher, she had learned of her Saviour, and been able to believe in him and to love him. Poor child!—happy child rather. She was soon to go home, soon to see Him, whom not having seen she had loved. With a frail constitution, she had never enjoyed the health and buoyancy that give joy to childhood.—Could she have

been tenderly cared for, nursed and favored, she might have lived blessed and a blessing. But want and exposure had nourished disease, and aggravated every premonition of her early decline. Oh, how like a canker it had eaten into her mother's heart, as day by day and month by month she had watched her tender lamb, chilled and shivering beneath the storms of life, from which she had no power to shelter or protect her, and knew that she was wasting away and sinking into the grave. And the father—what shall we say of the father? God forgive him.

No matter; it was all right. Emma said it was. She would be with the angels soon; and she knew it wouldn't be long before her poor mother would come too. And her father—Oh, if she could only think that he would come also! That was the only thorn in her dying pillow. She scarcely thought of death. Of earth she thought, and did not grieve that she was to leave the sorrows she had tasted so bitterly. Of heaven she thought, where the rivers of life gently flow, and the good Shepherd leads his flock; that was her home and she hastened to it.

Three evenings after, I called again. It was just at sunset. Emma was about to take her departure. Her mother had raised her up in the bed a little. She smiled as if some good news had been told her or as one might, who, in the glee of childhood, was going out with playmates for a run in the green fields, or to gather flowers in the wood.

How she talked of heaven and the angels, and of the Saviour, her Saviour!—wondered if they would know her when she got there, and if she should see her little brother who died last spring, and that she had mourned for so much! how sweet the music of golden harps would be, and how beautiful the green fields, and the bright flowers, and the crystal waters!

"And oh, mother, you must come soon. You will, won't you? I shall want to have you with me so much!" said the child in the transport of her joy. Her mother covered her face and answered her only with tears. "And father," she added as a cloud passed over the sunlight of her vision;—"think poor father will come too? I want him to come—and, little Willie, you must be a good boy, and you will come some day, and we'll all be there." She failed.

Presently her father, who had been absent all day, opened the outside door and stumbled into the kitchen. Er a heard