

open page. My eye fell upon the words—'They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses.'

"I cannot tell you, lads, how it came upon me, and smote my heart. Now I saw what it meant to her, these nights when I was away, never thinking but what she was fast asleep in her bed. And here she stayed up like this, praying for me, and with tears, too! It broke my heart. I knew now what had made her all so pale and sad, and I thinking all the time that it was all along of the baby and her fretting because he was so weak and ill. It was my doing; all of it mine; and yet I loved the lass better than my life.

"I kneeled down by her side. I didn't know how to pray, exactly; but I knew it would do me good to get down beside her, and there at the open Book. I could not say anything, only bowed my head and let my tears of grief and shame flow down before God, and longed with all my heart that He would make me a better man.

"I had not kneeled long when the lass woke up with a shriek. She sprang on her feet, and threw up her clasped hands. Her eyes were wild and frightened. Then suddenly she turned round, and caught sight of me kneeling there. She snatched at the candle, and looking at me as frightened as ever! put out her hand and felt me. 'Thank God!' she sobbed. 'It was a dream.'

"'What was it, lass?' I said, getting up and letting her lean against me.

"She put up her hand again as if to make sure that it was me. 'I have dreamed it night after night;' she said. 'I saw a man lying under the trees, and among the ferns and grass, stretched cold and dead, with a mark in his forehead like a picture of murdered Abel that they have got in a Bible in my father's house; but I could never see the rest of the face. Every night I have got nearer and nearer. I seemed to know who it was all the time;' and she put her hand about me more tightly; 'but to-night I came right in, and stood over it, and the moon came out from a cloud and fell right on it, and it was you, Nath,' she said with a shiver, and pressing against me; 'and the fright woke me up. Thank God you are here.'

"We stood quite still for some minutes. I could only think what her praying for me might have done. At any rate, it had brought me home to begin the year aright. My voice was choked as I spoke at last, and I could scarcely get the words out. 'Lass,' I whispered, 'will you pray for me? God will hear you. He has already.' She looked up at me again, as if it was still a dream; and then we knelt together. And there we began that New Year kneeling there at the opened Bible.

"Ah, lads, before that New Year was two hours old I promised the lass, by God's help, to have done with the drink altogether. It should not be a pint nor a drop. And I put it down in writing, and the lass signed her name to it as a witness. And I kissed her that time without her asking for it. And though the roses hadn't