

THE ROCKWOOD REVIEW

victim to a primal curse. Half frozen, half dazed, holding on as best he could, and in sheer desperation to the drifting boat, how he knew not, and how long he could not conjecture, the poor wretch was forced, by the wind and rushing billows, nearer and nearer to the northern shore of Garden Island, and at last, without volition, almost without consciousness, he felt the ground and scrambled to land. How he reached a cabin, guided by a glimmering light, placed in the window as a guide to the breadwinner of the household who had started for Kingston before the storm and had not yet ventured to return, he could never tell. Knocking at the door of the little house, he fell as it was opened prone upon the floor, a strong man of yesterday now weak as any child, and when he recovered knowledge of his surroundings found himself once more in the hands of a good Samaritan. The wife of the fisherman, who sat far into the weary night awaiting her husband's return, was affrighted when Bill fell upon the floor, but with keen solicitude did her best to restore him to warmth and comfort. She gave him hot tea, supplied him with a suit of her husband's clothes while she dried his own, fed him, and cheered him with her talk. At daylight he departed, grateful and rich in his remembrance of one who, despite her humble homespun wincey dress, was to him as an angel, and ever afterwards she spoke of her reverently and with rough emotion. But his days on Garden Island were ended. He tramped to Hamilton, found work in a brickyard, made good wages, and married. The love of drink did not desert him, and his home was speedily such as those of wage-earning drunkards generally are. He was forced to move on once more, and pursued his occupation

in country brickyards. He could readily do the work of two ordinary men, and earned more money than any seven of his comrades. Children were born to him—some almost idiotic, others bright and intelligent,—but his life had become little better than that of a laboring animal. Education shed but little light in the humble dwelling which he built in an inland village. Brickmaking was abandoned, and ordinary day's work, wood cutting, the clearing of odd bits of land, potato planting, and similar employment took its place. His poorly clad children children were fed upon bread and potatoes, and saw meat, now and then, as a luxury. But the daily consumption of whiskey or beer, by husband alone at first, and husband and wife together at last, never lessened. Yet, strange to tell, amidst the drunkenness and its accompanying penury, Bill Mansford remained honest, paid every debt, and never failed to meet an obligation. Thus, for years, he struggled through life. Numerous were his escapes from accident, from frost-bitten limbs, and a death bed canopy of winter sky. After every debauch came exposure and risk. How he was spared none could tell. The pitcher, nevertheless, went once too often to the well. An extraordinary orgie, a night of intense darkness, a muddy soil, and he started for his home, and failed to reach it. A turn to the left, instead of to the right, and his defective vision brought about the end. His home was near a river bank, high and enclosing a large sheet of dammed up water. He stood on its upper brink, fell, and slid feet foremost into the deep pool. Next morning, when he was missed, men set out to find him. The track made by his slipping feet from the top of the bank to the water's edge showed how he had