

turned to reprove the already heart-broken dragoon.

The rest of the party came flying up. The second sheik seized Dr. Bently's horse, which had also caught the spirit of mischief, and thus the three were saved. Supper was prepared. They sat out in the starlight and watched a company of Arabs do strange, wild things with swords, while they chanted weird songs, and after they had gone to bed they could hear the wolves howling about the outer walls and some women wailing over a new-made grave.

Mr. Murray and His Men.

(League Journal.)

'Did you say you saw Jim Falconer in the neighborhood, Macrae?' asked Mr. Murray of one of his men in his workshop. 'And was he sober?'

'Ay; an' had a wee touch o' the D.T.'s too?' replied the man. 'He's very near the end o' his credit as well as his money; an' I told him what you said, sir, that you would take him back whenever he liked to come.'

'That was right,' said his master cheerfully. 'I hope he'll come soon.'

The men were silent, but they exchanged looks which Mr. Murray was quick enough to intercept, and even to interpret; the one said very plainly, 'I told you so,' and the other, 'Who would have thought it?'

'You didn't think I really meant it, Macrae?' he asked quietly.

The man hesitated. 'Well, I think yet,' he said stoutly at last, 'that when you see Jim Fa'c'ner's face, an' the eyes of him, an' the twitching hands, you'll no trust him wi' much o' a job.'

'No; not till he is better,' said Mr. Murray with a sigh. 'We must get him once out of the beast's grip, and I pray that it may be once for all this time.'

The man looked up with such wonder in his face that his employer laughed.

'Don't you read your Bible?' he asked pleasantly. 'You would find a lot more in it about affairs in general than you ever went in search of. Poor Jim shows the mark of the beast very plainly at times, and at others—if you set out to fill a pit or chasm you must touch both sides. Well, God made man a little lower than the angels, and higher than the brutes that perish, and he, man, touches both sides. His will is aye on the balance between the two. He can sink the angel in the beast, as Jim is doing now; or he can sink the beast in him, and become its master, and rise even to the likeness of the Son of God himself. Isn't that worth trying for Macrae?' he concluded seriously.

The man nodded silently, and stitched at the boot he was mending. He hated to have religion dragged into everything, as this, his new master, had a habit of doing. But Macrae knew when he was well off—none better; and he had been discharged from an excellent situation, where he had risen to the post of manager—not for tippling, indeed, for that he could not stop at, but for terrible drinking bouts, getting more and more violent, even after long intervals. The man was not one who could become a sot; but a raging maniac, endangering his own and others' lives, he did become in these bouts. He was suspended and re-instated many times over, for the firm knew his value; but at last, after a fearful scene, in which all the 'wild beast'

in him had been unchained, he was finally dismissed, under open circumstances that made it seem impossible for him to get another good situation in his native city. He had not sought work from Mr. Murray. To his great surprise, Mr. Murray had sought him, and offered him steady work, exacting no conditions. He did not hesitate, although he would once have curled his lip at such a situation; but he had a young wife and a beautiful blue-eyed baby girl, and for their sakes he took it, and was doing his duty manfully in it.

It had been on the tip of his tongue many a time to ask Mr. Murray why he did not require a pledge from him, but he had always refrained. For more than four months now, he had abstained from all intoxicants, and he was beginning to think that he had overcome his deadliest foe. Yet, strange to say, instead of a feeling of brotherly kindness and kindred sympathy towards the poor wreck, Jim Falconer, he felt nothing but supreme contempt. He wondered exceedingly that Mr. Murray did not shake off the poor cumberer, and keep only smart, respectable men in his shop.

While he mused and stitched, he found that he was left alone in the workshop, as usual at that hour; he had been so deeply absorbed in work and thought that he had never seen anyone leave the place. A trembling, uncertain hand turned the handle of the door that opened into the lane by which the workmen came and went. The door opened slowly, and a most disgraceful shadow of a man appeared, with wild eyes and livid lips, and blue-veined cheeks and temples. His clothes were like those of the monks of old, as described by Charles Kingsley—'greasy, smeary, smelly old things,' and his hands and face twitched in nervous jumps and spasms.

'Oh, man, for God's sake don't refuse me this time!' he pleaded imploringly. 'Just threepence for one glass to pull me together, or I'll die! Only that, Macrae, if you have a heart the size of a peppermint!'

Macrae looked the shaking creature over from top to toe with supercilious coolness. 'Indeed, and I'll give you no threepence,' he said severely. 'And there's no fear of your dying—no such luck! The public-house man'll be the biggest loser if you do.'

The stricken wretch began to weep profusely.

'Not so, Macrae,' said a serious voice from the doorway that led into the front shop; 'God and Jim Falconer would be the biggest losers.'

Macrae did not answer, except by an impatient grunt, as he bent to pick up the boot that he had laid down, and stitch furiously at it.

Mr. Murray advanced and took Jim by the arm firmly. He would have struggled, but the raging thirst that consumed him sapped all his strength and will-power.

'I knew you would come, Jim,' said his master kindly. 'And our Master is waiting and wearying to help you. Come—you know what a doctoring you're going to get with black tea, and black coffee, and dry toast, and so forth; but you're worth all the trouble, dear lad, and you'll soon be back in the right track again!'

About an hour after, Mr. Murray returned to the workshop, having left one of his own boys to watch Jim's sleep, which was broken and uneasy. He walked straight to a swing shelf that contained a number of books, selected one, and sat down.

'Macrae,' he said abruptly, 'did you ever read any of the grand old stories of Greece and Rome? They're full of pith and marrow.'

'No, sir; I never did,' said the man shortly.

'Well, there's one here.' He put on his spectacles, and turned over the pages. 'Ah, it's too long just to read it from beginning to end, but I'll give you a wee idea of it. A when brave young princes and heroes set out with a fine fleet on a great expedition. They had a dangerous strait to pass, where three foul monsters with angel faces and angel voices sang, and beckoned and lured poor mariners to death and destruction. Their chart told them all about it, and so, when they neared the rocks of the strait, one of the leaders made all his sailors fill their ears with wax. He ordered them to bind him—the captain—to the mast, and said they must not loose him, no matter how he prayed them to do so. Well, they did get through; but he struggled, and wriggled, and twisted at the ropes, and signed and shouted to them to let him go; but the men obeyed orders. Another of the commanders, instead of doing that, took his own harp, and played such sweet, loud, heavenly music that it altogether drowned the angel voices of doom and destroyed the temptation. Which of these two had the best of it?'

'The man wi' the harp,' said Macrae, unhesitatingly. He had ceased working, in the interest of the old story, and was regarding his employer attentively, a little uneasily.

'Think it well over, Macrae. Are you sure?'

'I'm sure that that's the way it looks to me, anyway,' he replied somewhat testily; he was not sure of what he was committing himself to.

'And that's the way it looks to me,' said his master heartily. 'And I'll show you now the fact that lies under the figure, as I see it. You and I, dear lad, and poor Jim Falconer, all have a deadly enemy disguising itself as a friend.' Macrae started up as if he would have left the shop, but his employer looked steadfastly into his eyes, with such loving kindness in his own, that the man abruptly sat down again and bent low over his work. 'We have been cruelly wounded in the struggle with this enemy that we thought was a friend,' resumed Mr. Murray, after his involuntary pause, 'and we have bound ourselves by solemn pledges, and tried to stop our ears to the clamor of our desires. Jim Falconer told me he wrote a vow in the Bible, on his bended knees, that he would never touch drink again, yet—'

'Jim Fa'c'ner's a poor stick,' broke in Macrae with asperity. 'Are ye evenin' him wi' me?'

'Jim Falconer is so near the very heart of God that he sent his Son in search of him,' said Mr. Murray with a sigh. 'And it's that love of the Father-Heart that is going to make the heavenly music in poor Jim's heart and life that will lift him beyond the power of the enemy—as it has lifted me, as I pray it may raise you, dear lad, and numberless other victims, this "Love that will not let us go." Ah, Macrae, the music in our hearts is a thousand times better than the vows and promises that bind us with ropes of our own making. See now, lad, you seem to be twice the man Jim Falconer is; and yet, if he gets that developing principle of