

unbalanced. His reason was preserved but his health failed and he had to take to his bed.

He passed through a violent attack of fever and for some weeks his life seemed to hang on a thread. When the turn came his recovery was very slow and it was rendered slower by the fact that the necessities of life could hardly be procured. His devoted wife tried to keep the family by doing some sewing, but the amount she was able to earn was very small and wholly insufficient for their needs. The poor tenement in which their child had died had to be exchanged for the still more wretched apartment in which I found them. Piece by piece, furniture, jewelry and clothing had to be sacrificed to meet the demands of hunger; and they had just reached that helpless state when there was nothing more left that could be sold or pawned when I found them as I have already described.

"My friends said I "fortune has been cruel to you, but the tide will turn. You must first get out of this wretched apartment. My advice to you is to rent a furnished room in some decent neighborhood for a moderate sum and when Mr. Miller gets able to be about again, which I hope will be soon, I will try to get him something to do. Some of my friends have put together a little money for you which will enable you to get fairly on your feet and by that time Mr. Miller will be earning something."

Having delivered myself of this little speech, I handed Mrs. Miller the fifty-seven dollars. Both husband and wife were overcome with gratitude, and leaving my address

with them so that they could communicate with me when they had changed their residence, I left them to their happiness. I felt that it was better for them to be alone, and that the presence of a third party was at such a time almost an intrusion.

### CHAPTER III.

Miller's story was told not in the practical and concise manner in which I have related it, but by the husband and wife alternately with many interruptions and with some tears. It was a pitiful tale yet one that has been enacted in actual life in New York thousands of times. When I heard it all I did not waste any time in pointing out to Mr. Miller where he had erred or in drawing a moral lesson from it, but applied myself to the actual circumstances of the case.

It was nearly a week before I again heard from the Millers. I received a short letter from the husband filled with thanks for my kindness, and giving me his new address where they hoped he said to see me at an early day.

He said in conclusion, that he had sufficiently recovered to be able to work, and if I could put him in the way of something to do, however humble, he would be ever grateful.

As soon as I had read this letter I handed it over to my desk companion, Dick Redfern, the Englishman whose prompt seconding of Mac's proposal to hand round the plate had been so beneficial to Miller's finances.

"Faith," said he, after he had read the letter carefully, "he writes a pretty hand and he expresses himself well."

"The question is," asked I, "can we do anything for him here?"