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PLEDGE.—We, the undersigned, do agree, that we will not use Intoxicating Liquors as a Beverage, nor employ them; that we will not provide them as an article of Entertainment, nor for persons in our Employment; and that in all suitable ways we will discountenance their use throughout the community.

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The Only Son.

BY MRS. JANE WEAVER.

Mr. Harcourt sat alone in his study.—The walls were crowded with book cases filled with the massy tomes of the law; his table was covered with papers of importance; and a pile of notes, which had just been paid him by a client, lay close by his elbow. The costly lamp that hung above his head threw its light full on the upper part of his face, bringing the massy brow out into bold relief, and giving additional sternness to his cold and inflexible features. All at once he rang the bell.

"Is the master James arrived?" he said sharply, when the servant entered.

"Yes, sir."

"Show him in, then."

In a few minutes the door of the study opened again, and the lawyer's only son stood in the presence of his father. He was a youth of seventeen, fair and manly to gaze upon, but with that look of dissipation in his countenance which mars even the noblest beauty.

An expression of feminine softness and irresolution in his face, contradicted the proud self-willed glance of his dark, glowing eye. He seemed, indeed to judge from his looks, to be wholly a creature of impulses.

"So you have been in another scrape, sir," said the old man harshly.

The youth bowed his head and bit his lips.

"It cost me four hundred dollars to pay for the carriage that was broken, and the horses foundered in your drunken frolic. What have you to say to that, sir?"

The young man's eye wandered irresolutely around the room, without daring to meet his father's face. Nor did he make any reply.

"How long is this to last?" said his parent, in a more angry tone.

"Have I not told you, again and again, that I will disown you, if these things went on? You are a disgrace, sir, to me—a blot on my name.—Thank God your mother did not live to see you grow up!"

The youth had been evidently nerving himself to bear his father's rebuke, with as much indifference and coolness as possible; but at the mention of his mother's name his lip quivered and he turned away his head to hide the tears that gathered in his eyes.

And that stern, irritating old man known how to follow up the chord he had struck, his son might have yet been saved; but he was a hard, correct man, unaccustomed to make allowances for difference of character, and he resolved to drive his son into obedience by the strong arm of parental authority.

"You turn away to laugh, you rascal, do you?" said he enraged.

"You believe, because you are my only child, I will not punish you. But I would cast you off if you were ten times my son; and I made up my mind to-day to tell you at once, to go. There is a pile of notes—five hundred dollars—I believe; take it; and to-morrow I will make it a thousand, before you do."

But remember, this is the last night you shall spend under my roof—the last cent of my money you shall ever touch."

When his mother was alluded to, the youth had almost made up his mind to step forward, ask pardon for all his evil courses, and promise solemnly hereafter to live a life of strict propriety; but the sharp and angry tone in which Mr. Harcourt pursued the conversation, and the words of banishment with which it closed, seemed to make him irresolute. He colored, turned pale, and

parted his lips as if about to speak; then he clasped his hands half in supplication; but the cold, contemptuous look of his father checked him and he remained silent.—The angry flush, however, rose again to his cheek, and became fixed there.

"Not a word, sir," said the father. "It is too late for pleading now. Don't be both a blackguard and a coward. I told you if you ever got into such a discreditable difficulty I would disown you.—But the warning did no good. You must reap as you have sown? Will you go?"

The youth seemed again about to speak; but his words choked him. The spirit of the son, as well as that of the father, was roused. He felt that the punishment was disproportioned to the offence, even great as it had been. He took the notes which his parent held out to him, crumpled them hastily together, and flinging them scornfully back, turned and left the room. The next instant the street door closed with a heavy clang.

"He has not gone, surely?" said the father, startled for a moment. But his brow darkened as his eye fell on the notes. "Yet let him go, the graceless villain—he is hereafter no son of mine.—Better die childless than have an heir who is a curse and a disgrace to your name. Did I not do my duty to him?"

"Ay! old man, that is the question—*Did you do your duty to him?* Were you not harsh when you should have been lenient—did not you neglect your son for years after his mother's death, careless of what kind of associates he consorted with—and when he had been led astray, did you not, we say, attempt to correct him by threats when you should have drawn him by the gentle cords of love? Look into your own heart and see if you are not just as unreasonable as your son. Can a character be reformed in a day? Your profession should have taught you better, old man. But the boy has gone from your roof forever, for well he knows how inflexible is your stern, self-righteous heart; and, indeed, with a portion of your own pride, he would sooner out off his right arm than solicit or accept your aid. Yes! take up that mass of complicated papers and endeavor to forget the past scene in its absorbing details; but yours must be a heart of adamant if, in despite of your oft repeated reasonings, you can justify your harshness to it. Remember the words you have uttered. They may apply to more than one—*As you have sown so shall you reap!*"

James Harcourt went forth from his father's house in utter despair. Pride had supported him during the last few moments of the interview, and he had met his stern parent's malediction with bitter defiance; but when the door had closed upon him; and he turned to take a last look up at the window which was once his mother's, the tears gushed again into his eyes, and covering his face with his hands he sat down on a neighboring step and sobbed convulsively. "Oh, if she had been living," he said, "it would never have come to this. She would not have left me to form associations with those who wished to make a prey of me—she would not have galled me by stern and often undeserved reproaches—she would not have turned me from my home, with no place whither to go, and temptations around me on every side. Oh! my mother," he said, casting his eyes to heaven, "look down on and pity your poor boy."

At that instant the door of his father's house opened, as if some one was about to come forth. A momentary hope shot through him that his parent had relented. But no! it was only a servant who had been called to close the shutters.—Ashamed to be recognized, the youth hastily arose, turned a corner and disappeared.