

"With me? Live with me, whom you have dishonored with your pity, your contempt, your preference of another? Rather again stand arraigned before a criminal tribunal, than accept such a woman as my wife!"

"As a *servant*, then; let me attend as a servant on this little creature, so dear to me, so precious to me, so feeble, so——"

"Is it Cavendish's brat, that you plead for him so warmly?" cried I, infuriated that even my child should be preferred to me. And I now attempted to remove him by force from her arms.

"Help! help! help!" faltered the feeble, half-fainting mother. But no one came, and I persisted. Did you ever attempt to hold a struggling child—a child that others were struggling to retain—a young child—a soft, frail, feeble child? And why did she resist? Should not she, woman as she was, have known that mischief would arise from such contact? She who had tended those delicate limbs, that fragile frame? The boy awakened from his sleep—was screaming violently. He struggled, and struggled, and moaned, and gasped. But, on a sudden, his shrieks ceased. He was still, silent, breathless."

"Dead!" cried I.

"So she imagined at the moment, when, at the summons of her fearful shrieks, the servants rushed into the room. But no, I had not again become a murderer; a new curse was in store for me. When medical aid was procured, it was found that a limb was dislocated; the spine injured; the boy a cripple for life!"

"What must have been his father's remorse!"

"His father was spared the intelligence. It was not for fourteen months that I was removed from the private madhouse, to which, that fatal night, I was conveyed, a raving maniac. The influence of wine, passion, horror, had induced epilepsy; from which I was only roused to a state of frenzy. Careful treatment and solitude gradually restored me. Legal steps had been taken by the Brabazon family during my confinement; and my mutilated boy is placed, by the Court of Chancery, under the guardianship of his mother.

For some time after my recovery, I became a wanderer on the continent, with the intention of wasting the remnant of my blighted existence in restless obscurity. But I soon felt that the best propitiation, the best sacrifice to offer my injured wife and child, was the attempt to conquer, for their sakes, an honorable position in society. I got placed on full pay in a regiment appointed to a foreign station. I made over to my boy the whole of my property. I pique myself upon living on my pay,—on drinking no wine,—on absenting myself from all the seductions of society. I lead a life of penance, of penitence, of pain. But, some day or other, my little victim will learn the death of his father, and feel that he devoted his wretched days to the duties of an honorable profession, in order to spare him further dishonor as *the son of a suicide*."

"Thank God!" was my murmured ejaculation, when at this moment I perceived the boat of the *Astrea*, whose approach enabled me to cover my emotion with the bustle of parting. There was not a word of consolation—of palliation, to be offered to such a man. He had indeed afforded me a fearful commentary on my text. Never

before had I duly appreciated the perils and dangers of WINE!

"And is it to such a stimulus," murmured I, as I slowly joined my companions, "that judge and juror recur for strength to inspire their decrees; to such an influence, that captain and helmsman turn for courage in the storm; to such a counsellor, the warrior refers his manoeuvres on the day of battle; nay, that the minister, the chancellor, the sovereign himself, dedicate the frailty of their nature! That human life, that human happiness, should be subjected to so devilish an instrument! Against all other enemies, we fortify ourselves with defence; to this masterfiend we open the doors of the citadel."

My meditations were soon cut short by the joyous chorus of a drinking-song, with which Lord Thomas's decoctions inspired the shattered reason of the commandants, superior and inferior, of His Majesty's ship the *Astrea*.—*Eliza Cook's Journal*.

FRAGMENT.

How beautiful this night! the balmy sigh
Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
Were discord to the speaking quietude
That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's ebony
vault,
Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur
rolls,
Seems like a canopy which Love has spread
To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills
Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend,
So stainless, that their white and glittering spires
Tinge not the moon's pure beam; yon castled
steep,
Whose banner hangeth o'er the timeworn tower
So idly that rapt fancy deemeth it
A metaphor of peace: all form a scene
Where musing solitude might love to lift
Her soul above this sphere of earthliness;
Where silence undisturbed might watch alone,
So cold, so bright, so still.

The orb of day,

In southern climes, o'er ocean's waveless field
Sinks sweetly smiling; not the faintest breath
Steals o'er the unruffled deep; the clouds of eve
Reflect unmoved the lingering beam of day;
And Vesper's image on the western main
Is beautiful still. To-morrow comes:
Cloud upon cloud, in dark and deep'ning mass,
Roll o'er the blackened waters; the deep roar
Of distant thunder mutters awfully;
Tempest unfolds its pinion o'er the gloom
That shrouds the boiling surge; the pitiless fiend,
With all his winds and lightnings, tracks his prey;
The torn deep yawns—the vessel finds a grave
Beneath its jagged gulf.—*Shelley*.