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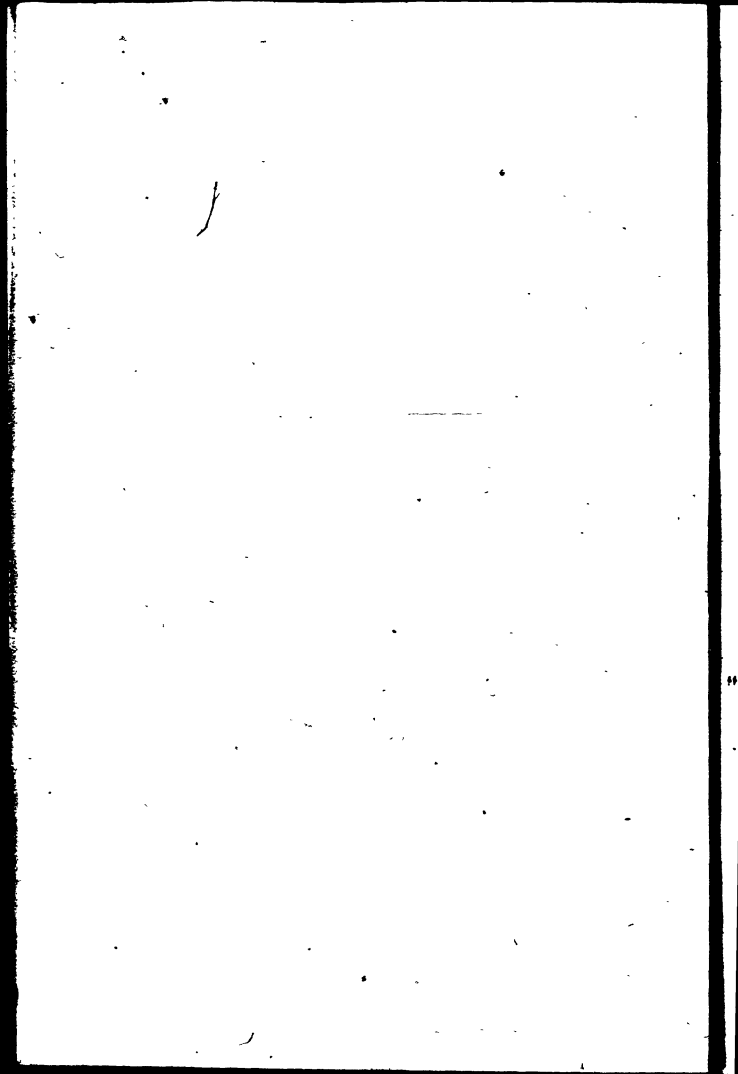
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m. F.

SOCIAL HEROISM.

[Morse]

A CANADIAN PRIZE TEMPERANCE STORY.

(see at end p. 20)

"They have made them crooked paths ;
Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." 8

BUT

"Every way *He* makes for us, leads safely to the Golden City."

TORONTO :

T. MOORE, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER, 8 LEADER LANE.

1878.

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**Entered, according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year
1878, by**

F. LOUISE MORSE,

In the Office of the Minister of Agriculture.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

Several years ago a Canadian paper offered four prizes for the four best temperance stories, to be submitted to a competent committee.

Among twenty-nine competitors the author of *Social Heroism* was awarded the first prize; the author of *Broken Bonds* one of the others.

It has been thought that, published now, when the subject of temperance is exciting such universal attention, these stories may be interesting to many readers.

Toronto, Oct. 1878.

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SOCIAL HEROISM.

CHAPTER I.

“We, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.”

“Are you going to honour Judge Harriston’s with your presence to-night, Hamilton?”

“No, there are some reasons why I would like very much to go, but it is not always best just to consult our inclinations: and I have made up my mind it is not best for me to go there any more.”

“I hope you will not think me too inquisitive if I ask you what your reasons are for wishing to go, and why you think it is not right for you to go there any more?”

“Certainly not. My reasons for wishing to go, you will easily be able to appreciate. You know, from experience, what a pleasant place it is to visit, and what congenial people we always meet. But I am afraid you will not so readily

appreciate my reasons for thinking it is not right for me to go there any more. You know Judge Harriston's ideas of hospitality—how strongly we are always urged to take wine, and that he thinks it a want of courtesy to him if we do not. I have never felt it to be a temptation yet, but stronger men than I, have yielded to such persuasions. And without God's grace I might fall as they have fallen."

"Are you not a little morbid in your ideas about this, Hamilton? I must confess I cannot see why you need to feel yourself in any danger. You know your sobriquet was given you because you seem to be braver in resisting evil than some of us weaker ones. Who would ever dream that 'old Trojan' could yield to temptation!"

"Do you think, Warren, that it never cost me a struggle not to yield sometimes? I tell you I can realize what Plato meant by comparing human nature to the chariot drawn by two horses. I have to tug pretty hard on the bit sometimes to keep my unruly horse in check."

"Now Hamilton," came from the depths of the great easy chair "don't be unearthing old Plato. Just see how the shock of his name disturbs my peaceful slumbers. His ideas would'n't do for this age of the world. I would like to know where the two horses are harnessed to the chariot, unless they are both to pull. I believe in giving them free rein, and I will cry 'good for you to the one that wins.'"

"McPherson, who ever dreamed you were listening to our sermonizing!" answered Hamilton. "I fancy a little of it will not hurt you, however, if those are your sentiments. But to return to Judge Harriston, I am not much afraid of myself now. Once I might have been, but every conquest gives me fresh courage. But I think it is sorrowful that professing Christians will throw such temptations in the way of young men. They ought to consider that God gives them a great responsibility. I think I would be almost tempted to lecture on temperance; only it is not by lectures, nor by temperance societies, although they do much good, that the revolution is to be brought about. Every such reform must begin in Christian homes. And if every Christian did his duty how long would it be before the sorrow and suffering in this world would be lessened one-half. If we think we are safe ourselves, that is not enough. We *know* others are going to ruin, and perhaps we can do something to restrain them."

"You would take all liberty away from a Christian, if you made him always consult the good of others" said McPherson. "The Bible, which seems to be your guide, tells about the 'Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.' Where is the liberty if a man cannot indulge in a harmless gratification?"

"Ah! McPherson, you know you are making a strange twist of that text. We are promised

liberty from the bondage of sin, not liberty to enter the bondage, and indulge appetites which will injure ourselves as well as others. Oh! I wish I could express all I feel on the subject. But you will think I am lecturing in earnest," he added with a smile.

"Good practice for you" answered Warren, "I am pretty strong in my principles of temperance, but I would not pretend to lay down the law for others. I do not condemn Judge Harrison for not thinking as I do. I do not know that much harm is done by taking a glass of wine at a social party, although I never do it myself. I promised my mother before she died that I would never touch it. Perhaps I might if it were not for that promise."

"I am glad to have the sanction of such a good Christian as you on my wine drinking," said McPherson. "I am a free man, I never made a promise to anyone. But I am going out for my 'constitutional' so as to be fresh for to-night. Are either of you going out with me?"

"No, I think not" answered both the other young men.

Hamilton and his two friends were, at the time of this conversation, attending the Toronto University, when the college building, of which Canadians are justly so proud was not finished. The old brick building now occupied by the Medical school was then "University College." But some grand men were trained there—men

who have proved an ornament and a source of strength to their native land.

The three friends were all in their fourth year, and each bidding fair to excel in his department. McPherson had a thorough grounding in Classics; but contrary to the expectations of his friends, he chose metaphysics. "I shall never have any moral sentiments if I do not hunt them up" he said. "Hamilton if you know what is good for yourself, you will take classics. You will never do for a lawyer in this age of the world, without getting all the wickedness you can from those old heathen." But he finally gave Hamilton up as a hopeless case. "You pick up more moral sentiments now than I do," he once said laughingly.

After McPherson had gone out, Hamilton and Warren sat very quietly reading for some time. But an observer would have noticed that the former was thinking of something besides the book before him. At last he said "Warren are you so busy that you cannot listen to me for a few minutes?"

"Certainly not. Proceed old fellow, I am all attention."

"You know the boys have sometimes made fun of what they are pleased to call my 'Byronic turn of mind.' I am sure I am not very poetical, and sadly wanting in sentiment, but I suppose they call it that for want of a better name, because I am never in such high spirits as some of

the rest of them. I have often wanted to tell you the tragedy of my early life, feeling, as I do, that you will respect the confidence I give you. We have been firm friends for many years, and I have often thought you would wonder sometimes at my serious moods. And I would like especially to have you know why I have such strong feelings about drinking wine. I know you may have thought me too strict in laying down the law for others. But when you hear my story, you will understand it all."

By this time Warren was listening intently. The look of deep seriousness on his friend's face convinced him that it was no fancied tragedy to which he was about to listen. And as Hamilton paused for a moment, he said "You may be sure of my sympathy and interest even beforehand. And also that I shall consider your confidence as sacred."

So Hamilton began. "You remember my mother I know. You always seemed attracted by her sweetness and dignity when you were a school boy; in spite of the sadness which would have repelled some boys. It is just five years since she died leaving me without a near relative in the world. It was a sad day to me when I entered the University. She had looked forward with so much pride to that time. But when it came, there was no one to care whether I entered with honour or not. We had lived in Quebec until we came here fourteen years ago. My father

was a banker, with very bright prospects of advancement when he and mother were married. They loved each other devotedly and the first five years of their married life were almost too happy, mother has often told me since. There were only two children, myself and a little girl five years younger. When I was four years old the clouds began to gather. The President of the bank, of which father was manager was a professing Christian,—standing high in the estimation of every one. But he had the same ideas of hospitality which I was condemning in Judge Harriston. And it was at his house that father first learned to drink. He went down rapidly after that, losing after three years his position in the bank. He was very much such a disposition as Harry McPherson, and you cannot think how I tremble when he talks as he did to-day. It is often men of the finest, most generous disposition who yield first to temptation. I will not dwell upon all the sad scenes through which we passed, although I remember many of them; but I will hasten to close. One night father came home about midnight, very much beside himself, and found mother sitting up for him as usual. He seemed very angry with her, and when she remonstrated with him *he struck her*. The thought that he, who had promised to love and protect her, raised his hand against her in anger was the most bitter trial yet, and she fell fainting to the floor. As she fell, her head

struck the sharp edge of the fender to the grate cutting a deep gash. The fall awakened me, but I was so paralyzed with terror that I could not move. The sight of the blood in a measure sobered him. He raised her in his arms, and kissing her again and again he said 'Oh my darling, I have killed you, I have killed you!' He placed her gently on the bed, and then a sort of frenzy seemed to seize him. He caught up my little sister who was then three years old—wrapped a blanket around her, and rushed out of the house. I must have fainted, for I remembered nothing more until morning. When I awoke, I crept out of the bed, and found mother—not dead, as in my childish terror I expected; but sitting in a chair with such a stony heart-broken look on her face. It burnt itself into my memory forever. She knew nothing of the night's occurrence, except the blow. She had not even noticed that my little sister was gone. I need not tell you of her search for them all over the City. We never heard of them, nor from them, and every one believed father had plunged into the river and the swift current had carried their bodies out to sea. Does all this seem too tragical for real life, Robert? Do you not think if we could see beyond appearances, often we would find that there are tragedies being acted all around us with wine as the great stage manager?

“Perhaps the quick sharp agony which mother endured was easier to bear than the dull, heart-

reaking sorrow, which so many wives and daughters are enduring. How many noble and cultivated women are being dragged lower and lower, until hope and faith sometimes die in their hearts. If the history of our inmates of insane Asylums were known, do you not think we would stand amazed to find how much of the misery we see there is caused by wine? Oh how can Christians be so blind to their duty in this matter! Why cannot they see that intemperance is the greatest hindrance to the triumph of the gospel? And why do they not stand shoulder to shoulder and fight against it with "all the energy and strength, God gives them?"

Warren had listened with pained and almost breathless interest to his friend's history, and now as Hamilton paused he said, as tears, of which he was not at all ashamed stood in his eyes: "I wish I had known your sad story before, Hamilton, I feel that sometimes my good must have been so out of harmony with yours. I feel deeply grateful for the confidence you have shown in me, you will have reason to thank God for your words, even if it has been extremely painful for you to lift the veil which hides the past. Heretofore I have been in a self-indifferent state of mind on the subject of intemperance. Now I am heart and soul with you in doing everything by word and deed to put it down."

"I shall be more than repaid for the pain it has

given me to speak of these things, if this is the result," replied Hamilton. "It was partly for that reason that I have told you. You have the wonderful gift of strong personal influence. I have often wondered to see your power over the minds of others. And I want you to exert it over Harry, and all others who need it. If you believe heartily in the danger of wine drinking you will soon influence others."

"Did you finish all you were going to tell me about your life?" asked Warren.

"I will not weary you with a history of the struggles through which mother and I passed after the disappearance of my father and sister. We knew what it was to be cold and hungry. The President of the bank offered to take me as a messenger boy; but mother declined his offer. He knew it was at his house that father had learned to drink; and I suppose that was done as a bribe to his conscience. I wonder if a vision of our desolated home never haunts him now. We moved after two years to Toronto, where, after a time mother opened a school. After that our prospects brightened. You and I have both had to work our way along through College, as well as to care for our mothers. But I believe we are both stronger men for the discipline. Do you know I think a man's education is only half finished and his character not quite symmetrical, unless he has a mother, sister or wife, for whom he can work. It smooths

own his rough edges, and makes him more gentle—a true *gentleman*—to know that he makes no more than a small sacrifice to mar the happiness of some dear one.”

“I remember your mother” said Warren, “I believe I loved her next to my own mother. I often wondered why she looked so sad. I hope the future has much brightness in store for you, Hamilton, to make up for the sadness of the past. But I suppose McPherson will soon be home. You still intend not to go to Judge Harriston’s party to-night. I honour your feelings; but I am sorry you are not going. I should be almost tempted to stay with you, only I have asked my cousin Louise Howard if I may have the pleasure of escorting her to the party. I think she will be disappointed at not seeing you there.”

The serious expression changed to one of pleasure as Hamilton answered. “I should like better to see her than any one else, but I am afraid my absence will hardly be noticed by her. I suppose I am a little morbid in my fears about this temptation; but when I go to such places and see the wine, I seem to live over in imagination the scenes through which mother passed: and I can realize how she must have felt when watching father in his downward path. But as I said before I am afraid neither my presence, nor absence would make much difference to Miss Howard.”

“Comfort yourself with that thought if you like, my dear fellow. But she is a girl of such

quick intuition, she seems to get below the surface almost at a glance, and finds out the true ring of gold in a man's character. If there were anything in my life of which I were ashamed, I would keep clear of her."

Hamilton seemed to have no objection to listening to the praises Warren was bestowing on his cousin. But looking out the window he saw Harry coming and so he said "I feel strongly inclined to go, but I think it is best not. So I will spend the time 'cramming.'"



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CHAPTER II.

But judge this rather that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

Judge Harriston was a man of great influence and wealth. A widower with an only daughter. He took much pleasure in entertaining his friends in the most graceful, hospitable manner. As he was a man of much culture, he naturally drew around him a class of people—his equals in wealth and intelligence. But he also delighted in taking notice of those who needed help to rise in the social scale, and no one was much more unconscious of the benefit of his patronage than was the Judge himself. But his egotism was easily forgotten in the light of his kind and generous heart. Hamilton has already pointed out the one great mistake in his hospitality. He would have thought that something was wanting in the entertainment if wine had not been furnished as freely as in the "good old times." He had been accustomed to its use all his life—never had been tempted to drink to excess. And all possible arguments were used to convince him that others were differently constituted: and that he was placing grievous temptation in the way of many young men.

Judge Harriston's home was ever a pleasant place, but on the night of the party it seemed to have received an extra touch of pleasantness. And as Warren and his cousin entered the drawing room, an unspoken feeling of regret was in the mind of each that Hamilton was not there to enjoy it with them. Pictures, flowers and books were there to satisfy all the wants of a refined nature. Little groups of people were gathered here and there, enjoying themselves in various ways, and there was such an air of *homeneity* about the whole scene, one felt at ease at once.

They found their young hostess quite monopolized by Harry McPherson, but still keeping her eyes on the door to be ready to receive her guests. As they came up to her she said joyfully "Louise what a naughty girl to come so late! I did not feel that we were having a party until I saw you."

Harry put on a comical look of distress as he said, "and here I have been making a martyr of myself, trying to entertain you, and wondering all the time why you were so interested in that door."

Miss Harriston did not answer his sally, except by a bright, laughing glance, as saucy as her own, as she turned away to welcome another guest.

Later in the evening Louise was standing with her cousin and Isabel Harriston looking at and admiring a beautiful inlaid table of mosaic.

which looked like a beautiful painting of an old cathedral. "Do you know," she said, "that table always preaches me a sermon? How beautifully the dark stones bring out the colours of the bright ones. The picture would not be perfect without them."

"Yes, but how about the sermon?" asked Isabel.

"I was thinking that the dark stones represent the care and sorrow we have through life. And the happiness and joy are all the brighter by contrast. *Now*, so many of our experiences seem too dark and sombre to harmonize with the best. But, I think when we stand in the clear light of Heaven, and look back upon our lives, we shall see how every trial, every disappointment, every failure was needed to make our characters what God would have them. He can see the whole plan, and He knows just where the brightness is needed, and just where the sombre tint should tone down the brightness—just we should be satisfied with this world's happiness" Louise spoke with such earnestness that she had not noticed that several others were listening to her. As she caught her cousin's eye she blushed deeply, and stopped.

"You would do to preach a sermon yourself, say nothing of that little table preaching," said Isabel, admiringly. "I wish I had just such earnest thoughts about everything. I never see 'sermons in stones.' There have been

very few dark stones placed in the mosaic my life so far. So I suppose I must have rather a queer looking, unsymmetrical character. O dear! I hope the sombre tints are not coming at once in the future." And a shadow crossed her sunny face.

"Forgive me for being so serious," said Louise, "God grant that you may not need much toning down as some of us, dear Isabel."

How merciful it is that God hides the future from us. Sometimes the coming joy would unnerve us for present sorrow—we would be impatient to grasp it. And how often all the joy of the present would be robbed of its brightness could we see the dark clouds of sorrow which lie just below our horizon.

Just before supper Judge Harriston brought the Bible, and giving it to a minister, who was present, asked him to lead in worship. This was a custom which he always observed. And it is easy to see how likely it would be that the young men would urge his example as safe in such things, when it was so good in many.

When supper was announced, Harry McPherson took charge of Louise, while Warren had the honour of escorting his fair hostess.

"Shall I have the pleasure of bringing you a glass of sherry or port?" Harry asked Louise.

"I do not wish either," she answered quietly.

"Miss Harriston, my friend Warren seems to entirely ignore the fact that he has not offered you any. May I supply his short-comings?"

"Thank you, I will take a glass of sherry."

As he handed the glass to her, he said to Warren, "Robert, do not think I am usurping, I am only supplementing your good offices. Did you forget?"

"No, I did not forget. I hope Miss Harriston will acquit me of all discourtesy to herself or Judge Harriston, when I say that I hope never to offer anyone wine again."

Harry opened his eyes wide in astonishment. "Are you the young man who was saying this afternoon that he would take wine himself if he had not promised his mother he would not? Has a change come o'er the spirit of your dream? I thought your opinions were as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians."

"No, my opinions have undergone a complete change since afternoon. I have been shaken into earnestness."

Louise did not make any comment on her cousin's words, but her eyes expressed the pleasure she felt.

"That is the only subject on which Louise and I never agree," said Isabel, "I do not think there is the least harm in taking wine. See how many splendid men use it all their lives, and never come to any harm."

"Yes, and see how many splendid men find that the cause of their ruin, both in this world and in eternity. I have no friends for whom I feel any anxiety; but it makes my heart ache

to see some of our finest and most brilliant men filling drunkard's graves. But I do not wish to preach you another sermon to-night, Isabel."

"Miss Howard, you say you have no friends for whom you feel anxious. You surely do not fear for yourself. Then what are your arguments against taking wine yourself? I have heard one temperance lecture to-day, and would like to hear another," said Harry.

"No, I do not fear for myself, although I do not dislike wine, and you know women too become drunkards. Is it not awful to think of women falling so low? When I see so much misery and wretchedness, so many desolate homes and breaking hearts, and know the cause of it, I feel I want my life free from the guilt of setting a wrong example. The Bible says 'no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.' What will God say to us if we help to make a man a drunkard? It is best to be on the safe side."

Judge Harriston was passing at this moment and said laughingly, "Are you riding your old hobby, Miss Louise?" Although rather impatient if a man differed with him on this subject he was very chivalrous if his opponent were a woman.

"Somebody is always very politely mounting me on my hobby, and then what can I do but ride off in my best style?"

"Oh, dear, I am afraid I should be convinced

myself if it were not for you and Judge Harriston," said McPherson to Isabel. "It is more than a man can stand to have so many against him. Miss Howard, you should meet my friend Hamilton, your opinions agree exactly. I believe you must have been acquainted sometime as far back as the glacial period." Harry paused in his nonsense, for a very deep blush passed over Miss Howard's face, and she turned her eyes in another direction. "I declare," he said to himself, "it looks as if they might have met once or twice since the glacial period, by the warm color on her face!"

The conversation was here interrupted by the departure of the ladies from the supper-room, and it was not again resumed. There was no excessive drinking on the part of the gentlemen when left to themselves. But Harry McPherson received a new impulse in that direction. Hamilton's earnest arguments had made him think earnestly about the subject, and then Miss Howard's question, "What will God say to us if we help to make a drunkard?" But the example of Isabel and Judge Harriston more than counteracted the influence of the serious words.

On their way home, Louise said to her cousin, "I did not know until to-night that your friend Hamilton is such a strong temperance man." And then in almost Hamilton's own words she added, "I am so glad that your personal influence is, henceforward to be on the right side."

CHAPTER III.

"And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."

Hamilton, Warren, and McPherson were so entirely occupied, after this, with their closing examinations that there was no more time for recreation of any kind. They all came through with honour to themselves; as might be expected where good natural abilities were combined with very studious habits. Somebody did care very much whether Hamilton graduated with honour or not. If he had known how much satisfaction his success gave Louise Howard, his honours would have been almost priceless in his eyes.

Hamilton and Warren were to enter immediately upon their law studies, in the office of a prominent firm in Toronto; McPherson was appointed to a position in one of the banks in the same city.

One evening the friends were talking of the past and discussing plans for the future. They felt that in those past years they had been preparing for the battle, tempering and grinding their weapons for the conflict. *Now*, they were to test that preparation, to find whether the

metal had improved under the trial. The hearts of all were filled with hopes of success,—moral as well as temporal success,—and each felt that success comes from God.

“What do you say to a little trip of some kind before we fairly go to work?” asked Warren. “I think it would be a good preparation for law. My head is ‘crammed’ yet. I would like to dissipate a little of the superfluous knowledge before I put any more in.”

Harry showed a disposition to stand on his head at the mere suggestion, but compromised matters by throwing up his hat. Hamilton expressed his approval in as hearty, if not as demonstrative manner, so they planned a trip down the St. Lawrence, and along Lake Champlain to Lake George; and then put the plan into execution the following week.

The St. Lawrence is so familiar to Canadian eyes, that its beauties need no description. As they passed the historical places on Lake Champlain they brushed up their history of the French and Indian war.

Leaving the steamer at the lower end of the Lake, they took the stage for Ticonderoga. The best seats are on the top of the stage, and our three boys were fortunate enough to secure them. The driver had his history well digested, and amused them not a little by his rendering of it. When they passed the ruins of old Fort Ticonderoga, his tongue waxed warm in describ-

ing the way Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain boys took it "In the name of the Continental Congress," (before the Britishers knew there was any Continental Congress.) Our travellers did not think it necessary, in order to prove their loyalty to their own country, to speak slightly of the one whose beauties they were enjoying so heartily. Their minds were broad enough to appreciate the grand features of both. Ticonderoga lies at one end of Lake George: at the other end Caldwell. Now there is a little steamer which runs daily between these two places. And at the upper end, on the site of old Fort William Henry, stands an hotel of that name. A lovelier scene than one gets from the veranda of this hotel can hardly be imagined. The lake nestles in its emerald setting of hills—even *now* scarcely disturbed by the usual signs of village life; but *then*, one could hardly find a more restful, peaceful spot. In the early morning the deep purple shadows of the hills lie heavy on the lake; but as the sun rises higher and higher, they are gradually lifted until the clear blue of the water shows itself.

The three friends found pleasant quarters in the house of a farmer, and spent a week or two sleeping, reading and boating. (It is more than probable they *ate* something too.) As would be expected Hamilton and Warren expressed their enjoyment in a more quiet way than McPherson, who was extravagant in his expressions of pleasure.

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"I believe there isn't a lovelier place this side of Scotland," he exclaimed one day as they were rowing on the lake—winding around the little islands, and sometimes landing and exploring for themselves.

"I have heard tourists say it is very like Loch Katrine in its general characteristics," answered Hamilton.

They were not anxious to hurry away from such enchantment. But finally they concluded their brains were in good working order again, and they must begin work in earnest. So they started home by a different route, feeling they had been off duty long enough.



CHAPTER IV.

"God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold.
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart ;
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold."

While they had been studying at the University, Hamilton and his friends had conscientiously kept themselves from being drawn much into society. They had allowed themselves but a few recreations—"just enough to keep from getting rusty." They knew from experience that the flash of bright eyes has a very disastrous effect on Euclid and Mill. Now, however, they thought they could throw down the barriers in a measure.

Harry McPherson seemed to be more and more conscious of the attractions of Judge Harriston's home—the chief attraction being, of course, the bright daughter of the house. Harry had some property of his own, and his position in the bank, in the eyes of those who estimate equality by such a standard, brought him on a level socially with the daughter of Judge Harriston.

Arthur Hamilton, as we have already imagined, felt more than an ordinary interest in Louise Howard. He had visited at her home

with Warren, who saw that they were mutually attracted, and was glad in his cousinly way, to bring them together. Warren himself was as yet troubled with no such heart-aches. He enjoyed most heartily the progress his two friends were making. He watched the assault of each strong outpost, and knew before those who were most interested, and that there would soon be "unconditional surrender."

Louise and Isabel had been intimate friends for a number of years. To a careless observer they would have seemed very unlike—almost too unlike to be thoroughly congenial. But the dissimilarity in character was mostly on the surface. Have you stood on the sea-shore when the tide rushes in and then recedes leaving bare some rugged edges of rock? This is the way it had been with Louise Howard. She had seen much trouble—enough to show her that life is not all quietness and peace. And she had rightly learned the lesson, which sorrow is intended to teach. It had brought to the surface the strong points in her character—given her a quiet seriousness; but underlying the seriousness was a deep stream of mirth and cheerfulness, which waited only for a chance to break its barriers.

Isabel's life had been very different. Her mother died before she could remember, and Judge Harriston had tried to be to her both father and mother. She had hardly ever known a wish which could not be gratified. So with

her the mirth and cheerfulness were nearly always on the surface, while the real earnestness was lying dormant, only to be awakened by deeper experiences. It may be that great sorrows would be needed to quicken her best powers. So the two girls harmonized well with each other. Louise grew merrier when with her friend. Isabel seemed inspired with higher purposes when in the company of Louise.

Harry's business position was such that he did not necessarily hesitate on that account before asking the final question. His income was more than sufficient for the wants of two people; even if their wants were not easily satisfied. But still he waited. Judge Harriston treated him with great cordiality, although he must have known that Harry was aspiring for the possession of his one treasure. But with the modesty of all true-hearted lovers, he underrated his own good qualities, and magnified Isabel's, until he persuaded himself that Judge Harriston might look higher for his daughter.

But at last matters came to a crisis. Harry and Isabel were out rowing one night in early summer, (I suppose it was moonlight, for it always is on such occasions.) about a year after the trip to Lake George. They had been drifting for some time, but it was growing late, so Harry again took the oars,—Isabel the helm. He had been praising her skill in guiding the boat. And then suddenly, as if the words could

no longer be restrained he said, "I wish you would promise to be my guide through life. A wife is truly her husband's guide. Will you promise to be my wife?" Poor Isabel had no chance to hide her blushes, unless the moon kindly hid her face just then, as she answered sweetly and solemnly, "I think you need a safer guide than I could be; but I will promise to be your wife."

I am not going to tell you what Harry did then. He did not row: and so the boat drifted again with the waves. After awhile he asked, "Do you think your father will give us his consent and blessing, Isabel? I have feared he would not think me worthy of such a gift."

"I know he has always liked you: and I think if he had felt any objection he would have shown it before now," she answered with a smile.

As Isabel said, if Judge Harriston had not looked with favor upon Harry, he would not have waited so long before discouraging his visits. He gave his free and hearty consent to their marriage which Harry urged might take place in the fall. Isabel thought that was hurrying matters a little too much; but at last she gave her consent.



CHAPTER V.

“The bells of time are ringing changes fast :
Grant, Lord ! that each fresh peal may usher in
An era of advancement, that each change
Prove an effectual, lasting, happy gain !”

The summer passed quickly away, and October came with its beautiful clear days, when Isabel was to fulfil her promise of becoming Harry's wife. Louise and another friend of Isabel's were to be bridesmaids. Hamilton and Warren groomsmen of course.

Everything which love could suggest was called into use to beautify Isabel's home on her wedding night. Although it was late in the season for flowers, the house was bright and beautiful with their abundance—arranged in graceful carelessness by loving hands.

This night, if never before Harry and Isabel were very serious, for they realized the solemn vows they were about to take upon themselves. You have never had a description of the personal appearance of either Isabel or Louise. You have had glimpses of their minds and hearts whose beauty is of far more importance. This night perhaps they were fairer and more womanly than ever before. Louise looked as serious

as and earnest as Isabel herself: *perhaps* she was thinking of marriage in the abstract: perhaps "coming events cast their shadows before."

Judge Harriston was as courteous as ever before to his guests. But one could easily see that Isabel's marriage was, for many reasons a sad event to him. For her sake he rejoiced; but who was to fill her place in his home? To be sure she was coming back to live near him, in a home which he had fitted up for her in the most perfect manner. But her place in his home would be vacant. Is it any wonder that tears dimmed his eyes as he gave her to Harry to love, cherish and protect." He had great confidence that Harry was worthy of the trust, and that belief lightened the pain to a great extent. And Harry's heart was full of the most earnest intentions to faithfully fulfil the trust.

At supper there were the usual toasts to the bride, to which Harry responded in a very graceful and heartfelt manner.—Then the other toasts which are deemed necessary on such an occasion. After they were over, Harry brought a glass of wine to Louise and said, "Surely Miss Howard you can forget your scruples for once, and take a glass of wine with me in honor of my wife." It would be difficult to give an idea of all the satisfaction and happiness Harry's voice expressed as he spoke those last two words.

Louise hesitated for one moment. She did not like to appear singular, and it was most painful to have special attention called to herself. And she knew it would do her no harm but she answered firmly, "I would gladly grant your request if I thought it would give one moment more happiness to Isabel. If you will give me a glass of water, I will drink her health twice over."

"I see there is no hope for you now," Harry said. Do not think he was trying to break down her principles. He thought it was only a 'womanly whim,' and it would be great fun to show the masterful power of man and break her of it. He was not annoyed at her refusal. It would have taken more than that to cloud his sunshine that night. But he thought, "I am glad after all that Isabel is not quite so much after the heroic type as Louise. I do not like to see a woman too positive in her beliefs." Then aloud to Louise, "You are such a regular little Puritan, I henceforth wash my hands of all responsibility with regard to your conformity to the customs of good society."

"Do not look so sober Louise" said Isabel "I know I have the best wishes of your heart without this proof."

Louise looked up and found Hamilton's serious dark eyes looking earnestly and approvingly at her. She could not understand all the meaning his look expressed. She knew he never took

vine himself; but, as yet she did not know his history, and the reasons why he should feel so deeply on the subject. She had the approval of her own conscience: and she also felt that he was not displeased with her and so she was content.

Hamilton and Louise were not yet engaged. But they thoroughly trusted each other: and perhaps there was as much happiness in their intercourse as though the definite words had been spoken. Louise had confidence that he was a true-hearted man. And his attentions had been so exclusively given to her,—she had reason to cherish the hope which was beautifying her whole life—the hope which she hardly put into definite form even in her own mind. And Arthur, inspired by the same trust in her, knew he would never have allowed him to become so marked in his attentions, had she not returned his love. What a change it would make in society, if men and women would be true to themselves and to each other. How much more cause there would be for faith in humanity.

Hamilton intended to tell Louise his history before he asked her to take his name, and link her happiness with his. It was a painful subject to him: it had cost him a great struggle to tell it to Warren. And still more difficult did it seem to tell Louise that his father had been a drunkard and a suicide. But he knew that the love of such a woman would stand the test of a

revelation even like that. If parents have no pity for themselves, a thought of the sorrow and shame they are bringing on their children ought to restrain them.

As they were driving home that night from the wedding Hamilton told her there was something connected with his past life, which he wished to tell her some evening when she would be at leisure to listen to him. She named an evening, and it was settled he should come there. She wondered a little what he could be going to tell her. She felt there could be nothing in his past life which would not bear close inspection. But it was natural that she should have a little curiosity about it. Perhaps he had loved some one else before he loved her, and thought he ought to tell her. She did not torment herself with improbable surmisings, she knew it must be something which interested him, and of course it would her also.

The appointed evening came and found Arthur and Louise seated in her parlour free from intrusion. Without much preface he told her the same sad story which he had told Warren nearly two years before:—going a little more into details, for he felt it was her right to know all. She did not interrupt him by words, but her face was beautiful in its expression of sympathy. When he had finished, before giving her an opportunity to reply he said “I think you will not wonder why I have told you this

For more than a year, every thought of home-happiness has been associated with you. The love which might have been lavished on father, mother, brothers and sisters has long been pent up in my heart: and now has been added to it a deeper and tenderer love which is all centered in you. Is it too much for me to hope that you return this love? You are the only woman I have ever wanted for my wife." For answer, she laid her hands quietly in his own. They had found the home they so much needed.



CHAPTER VI.

“Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

Harry and Isabel returned from their wedding trip, and took immediate possession of their new home. Of course there were many visits to receive and return: besides a number of parties given in their honor. There seemed to be danger that they would be drawn into a sort of a whirlpool of fashion. They both had higher aims. But the claims of society are imperative upon those who acknowledge her laws as binding upon themselves.

They always had wine on their side-board to offer their guests: and sometimes Harry's face seemed a little flushed, as though, in fulfilling his ideas of hospitality, he had taken one or two glasses too much. But a thought of danger never seemed to enter Isabel's mind. Alas! if she could have realized that every great sin has a small beginning. Then the habit had a very slight hold upon him, and an expressed wish from her would have made him give it up. He had been on the point of doing so several times before his marriage, for he could but feel the

effect of Hamilton and Warren's example. Had Isabel formed the habit of looking deeper into life: and thinking more of the sorrows of others, she might have seen the danger.

Harry showed good business abilities, and was receiving great commendation from the Directors of the bank. And there was every prospect of rapid promotion. So life seemed one bright day to them both—not even a cloud to dim the sunshine.

The intimacy between the three friends, and between Isabel and Louise remained unbroken. Harry and Isabel could find no better wish for Arthur and Louise than the often expressed one that they might be as happy as they were. The four joined in their commiseration of Robert's lonely condition: and there seemed some danger that they would all turn match-makers on his account; although they all believed in the right to choose for ones self. Warren seemed the least troubled of any of them. "Never mind me" he replied to their repeated sallies, "you see if I don't do better than any of you. Remember the proverb 'Patient waiting no loss.'"

Arthur and Robert were both reading law with great diligence. They were connected with an old and well-established law firm: the senior members of which had expressed their determination to retire and leave the whole practice to them as soon as they had passed their

final examinations. A prospect which was very encouraging to Hamilton and Warren.

Hamilton had a double inducement to do his best—his own love of study and ambition to make his name in the world: and a wish to earn a home for her who was all in all to him. They did not expect to be married for two years; but that did not seem long when they could see each other nearly every day. Their hopes and aims were one already, and their companionship was proving mutually beneficial.

The trouble which Arthur had seen in the past made the present very bright. And Louise thought he deserved all the devotion she could give him to make up for that past. The stain which rested on his father's memory made no difference in her love. She felt that "to live nobly is better than to be nobly born." And she was more interested in Arthur's present and future than in his past. The present was all that she could wish, and gave promise of a harvest of happiness in the future.

We have seen how earnestly both Hamilton and Louise felt on the subject of temperance. They believed that intemperance was one of the greatest evils of the present day. But they did not believe that it is the only evil. It is written that hatred, evil-speaking, envying, wrath and strife will keep men from inheriting the Kingdom of God, as well as drunkenness. And with the help of Christ—the Great Helper,

they wanted their lives to speak against all these things. What a difference there is even in men's faults. It takes much more of God's grace to make some men earnest and useful than it does others. Christianity does not change a man's disposition all at once. The mean, small soul will have a hard battle before all the meanness is purged out. There are some men who are noble and lovable, even before the Divine Touch has transformed their nature. This is no heresy. Are we not told that Christ beheld the young man and loved him, although He still had need to say to him "One thing thou lackest." And when a noble, truthful nature like Hamilton's is influenced by the principle of love to God, we can realize something of the truth that man was made in His image.

In the second year of their married life a little daughter came to Harry and Isabel. They had thought their cup of happiness was full before, but they found there was room for one drop more. Isabel seemed to realize, even more than Harry, the responsibility of having an immortal soul to train for Eternity: and the new experience added more dignity to her character—or rather proved the touch-stone to call out what was there before.

Judge Harriston evidently thought the little Louise was his especial property. He would take her home and keep her for hours; and she soon came to know him, and would show her

pleasure in her own baby-fashion, whenever he made his appearance. Harry made great show of being jealous, but the little woman lavished her smiles freely on him also, so he could not fail to be content.

Sometimes it seemed to Isabel that a cloud, very small as yet, was rising on her horizon. When they were first married Harry had not seemed to care for wine, and only took it with their friends. But now he had it regularly for dinner, and of en took it at other times as well. She still had no fear he would ever be a drunkard, but she did not like to feel that he was at all dependant upon it.

One day she stood waiting, with baby in her arms, to receive his good-bye, as he was about to start for the bank after dinner. He had taken more wine than usual at dinner, and now he walked to the side-board and poured out another glass.

"Harry," she began, and then hesitated.

"Well Isabel?"

"I have been wondering if it would not be as well for us to give up having wine for dinner. It is an unnecessary expense, and do you not think we would be better without it?"

"We scarcely need to hesitate about such a little expense as that, do we? And then I think it does me good. I have a great amount of work to do this afternoon and evening, and it strengthens my nerves."

Isabel looked at the robust, manly form of her husband, and she could not keep back a little smile of amusement that he should require anything foreign to strengthen his nerves. But the smile faded in a moment for there was an earnest purpose in her mind. "I suppose it would not be too much to say that our wine costs us at least a dollar a day the year around. I think it would be grand to give that to the Home Missions. That would be a real self-denial. And you know we do not have to deny ourselves very much. And I do not like to have you go to the bank every day, among all the clerks, with your breath so strong of wine." It was a hard thing for this wife to tell her husband that she feared he was getting too fond of wine.

He laughed good naturedly, and putting his hand under her chin, he lifted her face so as to make the down-cast eyes look into his own. "Why my darling, what new freak is this? Has Louise Howard been lecturing you again?"

"No, Louise has not mentioned the subject since we were married."

"What is it then? I was just on the point of giving it up about the time that we were married. I could not help feeling the influence of Hamilton's and Warren's example. They were so solemn about it it made me feel I must be doing something dreadful. But I thought it was better to please you and your father than to

please them, as long as I had no very strong convictions either way. I was afraid Judge Harriston would think me mean if I refused to have wine for our friends. And now here is my wife forsaking me and going over to the enemy." He kissed her good bye and hurried away.

How his words had sunk into her heart! He would have given it up once, but for her. And now she knew it would be much harder for him to do so. How could she speak to him again about it, when he had said it was to please her and her father that he began to use it in his own home? She was just beginning to see her mistake. She remembered now saying to him so many times that she could not see any harm in drinking wine in moderation. Ah! who could decide the bounds of moderation? A council of all the wise men of the nations would have difficulty in deciding. An undefined feeling of dread seemed to have taken possession of her, and she had more of a feeling of sadness than she had ever in her whole life known. And now she could realize the truth of many things which Louise Howard had said in past years. Ah! it were more Christlike to feel for the misery of others, as Louise had done, and sacrifice her own opinion before the iron entered her own soul.

CHAPTER VII.

"Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me : he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me."

The two years had now passed and Hamilton began to think of a home and of a wife. He and Warren were now well established in their profession, and it was quite excusable in Arthur to indulge in dreams of this kind.

The marriage of Arthur and Louise was a quiet one and need not be described. Perhaps it was more a true marriage of hearts than many, for it is not often that two such noble natures find each other in this world.

Hamilton had fitted up a simple, cheerful home for his wife—very different from Isabel's, but the happiness of home does not depend upon outward surroundings. He had woven a thought of her into all its arrangements, and that thought was visible to her eyes if to no other. Theirs would be a home from which the peace and love would never depart. Even if death should claim one of them, there would be so many blessed memories; and hopes of a glorious immortality to comfort the one who should be left.

In society and before others, there were none of these demonstrations of affection, which should be kept private—else the sacredness were gone. But Hamilton believed he might show his wife at least as much courtesy as he would a stranger. Wherever she was she felt encompassed and surrounded by his thoughtful love. And how did she repay such devotion? Just as only such a woman could repay it—with a love and reverence equal to his own. This is no ideal picture. Such a marriage has been and can be realized. Does Christ elevate marriage too much when He makes it a type of His love and care for His Church, and the Church's love and dependence upon Him?

There was no danger that Arthur and Louise would grow selfish and think only of themselves. Hearts so full of such happiness must overflow with good to others. Their lives were spent in trying to elevate those who were sunk in sin and unhappiness—trying to do all *they* could to send their little gleam of light through the darkness of this sin-sick world. No one could be long with them without wishing to have his own life more Christlike.

Arthur and Robert watched Harry very closely as they found their fears were being realized. Even before Isabel had opened her eyes to the danger, they had tried to show him whither his present habits were tending. But Harry was just at that point when it is

hardest to convince a man that he is in danger. He felt that as yet the habit had not taken strong hold of him, and he could break from it at any time. And even then he could have done so without much of a struggle. But he could not believe that it would become more and more fastened upon him. It is easier to reach a man who knows his own misery and degradation.

Harry was still the same generous-hearted, high-spirited man, and it made their hearts ache to think of his laughing eye becoming unsteady, and all his fine powers corrupted and made a curse to himself, and to his family.

It was some time longer before Isabel could bring her mind to speak to her father of her fears. Like a true wife, as she was, her husband's honor and good name were precious to her. And she could not endure that any one else should notice and speak of the fear that was saddening her life. At length Judge Harrison noticed the change in her, and before speaking, tried to find out for himself the reason. But his eyes were not keen enough to detect anything amiss. So finally he asked her why she was not the same merry-hearted girl she used to be. She hesitated a little and finally told him the heavy burden of anxiety which was troubling her and making her so different.

"Why Isabel, I have never seen Harry when he seemed mastered by the wine. I think he keeps control of himself."

"But he is getting more and more fond of it. He depends upon it for 'inspiration' as he calls it." Her voice quivered with feeling as she went on. "I know he seems to be all right now, except his growing fondness for it; but I seem to be impressed lately with the feeling that he will be a drunkard. I have not touched wine for a long time. Oh! if I had only felt the importance of my influence before: for he says it was from your example and from mine that he first began to drink wine."

Judge Harriston looked very serious. This was the first time that he thought he might have made a mistake in his hospitality. "I think you are alarming yourself unnecessarily my dear child: I will keep a lookout on Harry and warn him. I am afraid you are not as well as usual, it is not like you to believe in presentiments. You always looked on the bright side of everything."

Some little ray of comfort seemed to shine upon Isabel now that her fear was confided to her father. She had great confidence in his ability to influence Harry. It is a sad thing for a wife when she has a sorrow which she cannot confide to her husband. One of the most sacred and beautiful things about married life is the mutual confidence. How sorrow and care are lightened when they are mutually shared.

If possible, Isabel became more loving and devoted to her husband than before. The

attractions of his home were strong. Baby Louise was daily developing many winning child-like ways. Seldom has a man more inducements to be noble and upright. But alas, we can look about, and see many instances, where such attractions seem to have little power over a man who has begun to listen to the voice of temptation.



CHAPTER VIII.

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ; but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

Five years have gone by since the close of the last chapter—years which have brought many changes to all: sad—very sad experiences for some of them, and joyful ones to others.

Arthur Hamilton and Louise were in their pleasant drawing room one evening just after tea. Arthur was down on the floor on hands and knees playing horse with his four-year old boy. Louise sat sewing with her little girl on her knee, enjoying most heartily the antics of the horse and his driver. The horse must have had an unusual supply of oats, for he seemed very fractious. At last Arthur said “Now Fred the horse is tired, we must let him go into his stable.”

There was just a little hesitation before Fred unharnessed his horse, but he had learned already that his father meant what he said. So he climbed up on Arthur's knee and laid his head lovingly against his shoulder, and asked for the story of the bears who ate up all the naughty

children. The story was told with his corrections, and Louise said "That was pretty bad for the naughty children, wasn't it?"

Fred had ever shown a disposition to see the best side of everything. If there were one little patch of blue in the sky, and all the rest dark and cloudy, he always saw the blue. So how his mother waited to see what his answer would be.

"Yes mamma, but it was *good for the bears.*"

When the smile which this answer called up had passed away, Arthur said "When the little people are in bed, I have something to tell you Louise."

She looked inquiringly into her husband's face to see whether it was anything painful which he had to tell.

He understood the look and answered "Yes it is about Harry. Every time I think of him and compare their unhappiness with our happiness, I feel so saddened. And yet in the beginning one would have thought that they had more to make them happy than we. The only difference, they had not such a sense of the need of God's help. Then, too, I do not know what might have been my course, if you had not had such principles about temperance. You were like mountain scenery always inspiring me to better deeds."

A happy look came into her face. What wife does not like to hear such words? But still

she thought that without her, he was strong in God's strength.

"I do not despair of him yet" she said "I feel that God will answer our prayers. Poor Isabel!"

"Poor Isabel" echoed Fred "did the bears eat her up too?" And Louise thought he was not dangerously wise with regard to their conversation.

After a little Arthur carried the two children up stairs, and when Louise had put them in bed and listened to Fred's prayer for them all; especially for "dear Uncle Harry," she went down to listen to Arthur's story.

"I have known for some time that Harry has been going down in spite of all our remonstrances and prayers. But I never realized how low he had fallen until to-day. I went to the bank to see him on business. The teller had a queer look on his face when I told him I wanted to see him. He pointed to the private room and said I would find him there. 'I know you are an old friend of his' he said 'perhaps you can do something for him.' I did not understand what he meant, although I had a dread that something was wrong. I found him lying on the bed in a drunken sleep. Just think of it Louise! Our Harry, with all his noble gifts fallen so low as that! I cannot tell you of all the thoughts which passed through my mind as I sat there beside him. I wondered how a man with such a

wife, and two such dear little children could so far forget his duty to them and himself—if he had no higher thought of his duty to God. I bathed his head and face: and at last he awoke. I need not describe to you his mortification when he found I had seen his degradation. ‘Oh Arthur,’ he said ‘if I had only listened to your advice; but now I am afraid it is too late. I do not believe I can break off now.’ ‘No Harry it is not too late. Think of the men who have fallen so much lower than you have, and yet by the help of God, have thrown off the power of this habit, and become free men again. For the sake of your wife and children, turn over a new leaf.’ He sobbed like a child when I spoke of them. ‘I am not worthy to have such treasures’ he said. ‘But you were once and with Divine help you can be again.’

“I told him he was not in a condition to go home to tea, and if he would promise that he would stay there, I would go and tell Isabel that that he would not be home until evening. He promised faithfully that he would not leave until I came back. So I went to his home. Isabel seemed very much alarmed, and asked if anything had happened to him. I think she knew from my manner that something was wrong. I could not help showing how sober I felt, when my heart was so heavy with pity for them both. She turned so pale, I was afraid she would fall.

"'To think that I am the cause of it all' she said over and over."

"I think she blames herself more than she ought" said Louise.

"I think so to; but still Harry would have given it up once if it had not been for their false idea of hospitality. I do not think she erred wilfully. It was from thoughtlessness, and because others had done so, and were doing so, she did not see the harm of it. If influential men and women would only take a different stand how soon the evil would grow less. Men are so much afraid of being called mean and fanatical. Perhaps it would help them to bear the title with equanimity, if they would remember that the greatest men of the world have been called fanatics. Really it is the aristocracy of independence and devotion to the good of others.'

"But to return to Isabel. She grew calmer after a little, and asked me if I thought there was no hope that he would reform. 'I seem to have no faith in my own prayers,' she said. 'I feel God thinks I ought to be punished for placing temptation in the way of others.'

"You are taking a morbid view of God's dealings with you," I said. And then I took the Bible and read the hundred and third Psalm, dwelling particularly on the verses 'He has not rewarded us according to our iniquities. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord

pitieth them that fear Him. For he knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust.' She seemed greatly comforted; and I told her that you and Robert and I are praying for Harry unceasingly, and I feel sure God will answer our prayers, although it looks very dark now. I promised I would bring Harry home safely to her in the evening. And now I think I must go."

Louise had listened with tearful eyes to Arthur's painful story. In the realization of their own great happiness, these two could still sympathize with the sorrows of others, and weep with those whose hearts were heavy.

"Isabel's life has been so full of sunshine: it makes it doubly hard to live in this dark shadow now. It envelops her so closely, I fear she cannot realize that the sunshine of God is still behind the cloud. And what a change there is in Judge Harriston. He would have done anything rather than have her troubled, even to giving up a time-honored custom."

"I believe he does not have wine on his table now. How differently we look at a truth, when the force of it comes home to us."

"I left Robert with Harry, and he was going out to an hotel, or somewhere to get him a cup of strong coffee. So I hope for Isabel's sake, he is sober now."

Arthur folded his wife closely to his heart as he said "Thank God for us, my precious wife that His grace has been sufficient to keep us from these things."

There was the secret of their strength and their humility. They knew that from God comes the strength, and the honour for their uprightness belonged to Him.



CHAPTER IX.

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise."

Harry's fall had come about in this way. He had met some old College friends, whom he had not seen for years; and they had been drinking to the memory of "Auld Lang Syne," until both past and present were obliterated from their minds by a drunken stupor. This was the first time Harry had been so intoxicated as to lose entire control of himself. His mortification and contrition were so intense, that for some time his wife and his friends hoped he had really reformed.

Had it not been for the faithful watchfulness of Arthur and Robert, it is not easy to say what might have been the result when Harry awoke to a sense of his disgrace. But their earnest words of advice and hope inspired him with some comfort. He was more like himself than he had been for some time, when Arthur took him home that night. And Arthur was very thankful that Isabel had been spared the agony of seeing him in the condition in which he had found him.

She did not meet him with tears and reproaches. She felt it was not in that way she could undo the wrong she had done. For sometime after that night their home seemed something as it had been at first: and the happiness began to come again into Isabel's face. Their little girl was now six years old; their boy three. And it often seemed to Isabel that but for them, her heart would have broken. There is some healing touch in baby fingers which softens the most bitter sorrow a mother or wife can know. Harry had never been unkind. She was spared the bitter memory of cruel words. But he had always laughed off her pleadings by telling her it was all her doings. Had he known the agony of heart such words caused her, he might not have said them: although a man, under such circumstances is ever seeking a cause for his conduct. And one who could so far forget his manhood in one thing, would scarcely hesitate about speaking words, which he knew would wound.

And how had Warren been spending all these years? He had been true to his best impulses and feelings; true to his Christian principle. And all these years had been useful ones. His name through the whole city was spoken with admiration, not so much on account of his talents, other lawyers were as clever, but because of his uprightness in all things. No man would have thought of coming to him or to Arthur to plead in an unjust or unlawful cause.

Robert was still unmarried—a fact which Louise mourned over more than a little.

“He has all the qualities necessary to make a good husband; and his wife would be the happiest woman in the world—except one,” she said to Arthur one day.

“You show the wisdom of a statesman, putting in that last clause, in order to keep disaffection out of your kingdom. I suppose your most loyal subject may take that dainty morsel to himself.”

Hamilton and Warren had been, for sometime engaged as counsel in an extensive lawsuit; and it became necessary, in behalf of their client, for one of them to go to England to hunt up some witnesses of a contested will. Hamilton preferred not to go unless it was best, for the business might detain him a number of months. And his home claimed him first. As Warren had no such ties, he thought it would be a fine opportunity to see England. So it was decided, to the satisfaction of all that he should go.

He came one night to say good-bye to Arthur and Louise. He was to start the next morning for New York, where he would spend a few days, and then sail for Liverpool.

Louise could not resist the temptation of giving him a parting remonstrance.

“Remember Robert, I expect you will bring back an ‘English Rose’ as your wife. I am getting thoroughly disheartened at your short

comings. Do you know you are thirty one years old and are getting grey?"

"Yes, I am conscious of both these dreadful facts? and I will do my best to satisfy you. But what can I do until the right one comes across my path?"

"I expect you will meet her in the most romantic manner."

Louise had assumed this playful manner to hide the real sorrow she felt at parting with him, even for a few months. He had been like a brother to them all these years, and they felt they would miss him very much.

Robert's parting with Harry was painful to both. There were a few earnest words of encouragement and admonition from him and Harry promised to do all he could to break the chains which threatened to drag him to eternal ruin.

But Harry had not yet felt his own weakness and his need of God's help. It was not very long after Robert's departure before he had again fallen into temptation. Every new failure deadened his sensitiveness regarding his disgrace, and brought also a loss of self-respect and courage. His falls came so often now that Arthur, with all his chivalrous devotion, could not always save Isabel from the heart-breaking misery of seeing him when there was little intelligent manhood visible in him. Oh! the mystery of the power of that temptation which makes a man forget everything which was once dearer than life to him!

One day the President of the Bank called upon Judge Harriston and requested a private interview.

"I have come in the name of the Directors, on a painful errand—one which I can hardly find courage to communicate to you. You will know it is something regarding your son-in-law, Mr. McPherson. I wish from my heart that it were the same message that I had for you seven or eight years ago. *Then* I told you he had gained the confidence of all. But I need not tell you that since the change in his habits, it is all quite different. We have confidence still that Mr. McPherson is strictly honest. But when he is in a condition to be hardly conscious of his actions, we feel it is endangering the stability and credit of the Bank to allow him to hold his present responsible position. He cannot inspect the accounts properly: and should any irregularity occur, it might cause a serious loss to the bank."

Judge Harriston had been sitting with his head bowed upon his hands while Mr. Montgomery had been speaking. Now he raised his head and said "I am deeply grateful to you for the kindness and courtesy you have shown me in this matter. I appreciate the truth of all you have been saying; but if he is dismissed from the Bank I am afraid it will break my daughter's heart, and send Harry to immediate ruin.—Would you consent to keep him, for a time at

least, in his present position if I place fifty thousand dollars in your hands, as a surety against any such irregularity? Would you think that amount sufficient?"

"It will be more than sufficient to satisfy me. I will speak to the other Directors about it, and I am quite sure they will be of the same opinion."

"Mr. Montgomery, I feel in a measure responsible for Mr. McPherson's fall. It was in my house he first learned to take wine—just in a social manner. And he was often urged by me to do so when he refused. I had always been accustomed to it, and could not understand how it could prove a temptation to others. My eyes are opened now. God teaches men through heart-breaking experiences sometimes, if they refuse to learn by gentle ways. If you have never seen the danger of some of our social customs, take warning from my experience."

So Harry remained in the Bank, although not one but Judge Harriston and the Directors knew the conditions.



CHAPTER X

"Commit thy way unto the Lord. Trust also in Him. and He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgments as the noonday."

Warren went first to London to find some trace of the persons for whom he was seeking. He intended to combiné business and pleasure, and concluded he might as well stay in London for a week or two just to get a glimpse of its wonders. At last much to his satisfaction, he found that the men he wanted lived among the Westmoreland lakes. So about a month after his arrival, he started for the north of England.

When the train was fairly beyond the London fog and smoke, he found that the other occupants of the railway carriage were a lady and a man—probably a gentleman in that individual's own estimation, but not in Roberts. The two were evidently perfect strangers to each other, but the man seemed inclined to make the acquaintance of both the lady and Robert. She seemed to be very much annoyed at his advances, and Robert thought she looked rather appealingly at him, as if she were asking to be relieved. So, rather against his own inclinations, for he saw

the man was intoxicated, he asked him to come and take a seat beside him, and he would show him some views of Canada. The lady gave him a look of grateful relief and turned again to her book. While Robert was explaining the pictures, he could not help now and then glancing at her face, and he found a strange fascination in it. He could not help smiling to himself when he thought how Louise would weave a little romance making him a true knight, defending a poor besieged damsel. Truly one would search far and wide to find a man with more heroic virtues. In days of chivalry he would have been a knight "without fear, and without reproach."

Robert was to change cars at Lichfield: and he found the lady gathering up her shawl and book as if she were going to do so, too. The other occupant seemed inclined to begin his annoying attentions again; so Robert, having an opportunity, ventured to say to her "If I can be of any assistance to you do not hesitate to command me." She thanked him cordially and said she would not.

At Lichfield when the train stopped and the guard opened the door; the man started to take her bag, but Robert was too quick for him. "This lady is under my care," he said with decision. The man looked quarrelsome but finally went his way, and they saw nothing more of him; but they learned he was an unworthy son of a noble house

“I saw enough of drunkenness in Canada but it is far worse here,” Robert said, as they were going from one train to another.

“Yes, it is England’s greatest curse,” she answered.

Under ordinary circumstances, probably these two people would never have spoken to each other. But now the ice was broken, and they talked of many things. She told him she had never travelled such a distance alone before; but the illness of a friend in London had made it necessary for her to go to her, and now she was returning home. She told him it must be much pleasanter in America than in England for a lady to travel alone, partly on account of being locked in the railway carriage in England.

Robert found that her home was at Ravensdale, Westmoreland, and that she was going to stay with a friend over night at Manchester; so he concluded, if he could find out that it would not be disagreeable to her, he would stay over too, as their road would be the same next day. He showed her some of his “credentials” so that she would feel safe under his protection. But with a pure-hearted woman’s quick intuition, and sensitiveness, his face and manner were the best credentials to her.

At Manchester, she found no one waiting for her at the station as she expected; so that decided Robert about staying over night. He saw her safely to her friend’s house, and then

went to an hotel. The next morning saw them again on their journey, feeling by this time almost like old friends. The further details of the journey need not be told. They took stage a short distance over the mountains to Ravensdale, and how it reminded him of that other ride, years ago, when Harry was his own true-hearted manly self.

At last he left her at her own door with the promise, if he could find it convenient, at some future time, he would call upon her. She gave him her card, and after he left her, he read "Helen Douglas," and he found himself repeating Scott's description of the "Lady of the Lake."

Someway in his letters to Arthur and Louise, he did not mention this little episode; although he had given very detailed accounts of all his experiences before. But strangely enough, he thought; for the first time since Louise had given him the order; of the "English Rose" he was to take back to Canada.

Robert found after a time the men he had been in search of, and obtained the information which was needed to prove his client's claim. But only three months had passed, and he had six or eight months' leave of absence. So now he planned how he could spend the time remaining to the best advantage; and concluded that he would spend a little time most pleasantly among the hills and lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland. So we find him at Ravensdale,

cosily settled in a quiet English inn. From there he made excursions in all directions—going as far as Scotland, and spending some time in Ireland. But always coming back to headquarters, as if a magnet drew him irresistibly.

He had called upon Helen Douglas soon after his first arrival—had been introduced to her father and brother, and had received a cordial welcome. For his thoughtful courtesy to Helen had been a password for him, even through the reserve of an English home. He was soon established on the most friendly footing with them all.

The six months passed rapidly away, and Robert wrote home to ask if the time could be extended. Arthur answered that he could be spared three or four months longer as well as not, and urged him to stay.

So Robert felt at ease. He found that among all of England's attractions, to him, the strongest one was to be found among the Westmoreland hills. He had surrendered at last. And now he felt he could not go to Canada without asking Helen Douglas to go with him as his wife. She possessed all the qualities of the ideal woman he had been thinking of so long. So one night he told her of his love and hopes, and asked her if she would go home with him. "I know I must seem almost a stranger to you" he said. "You know from the letters I have shown you what my position is. But your heart alone can

W tell you whether I am worthy of your love, whether you can trust your happiness in my hands."

L Her heart seemed to tell her something which satisfied them both.

"I do not know why it is," Robert said to Helen, "that your face has always seemed like that of some one I have known before. From the first hour I saw you I have never been able to think of you as a stranger."

They went together to her father, and in a few, straightforward, manly words, Robert made known his wishes, and his request.

"I cannot say that I will keep sorrow from her life, for God alone can do that; but I will try to make her life as joyful as it is possible for human love and care to do, if you think me worthy of such a gift."

"I cannot give my consent to your marriage until you know my history," her father answered. "Helen herself only knows it in part. I would spare you both the humiliation of hearing it, but it would not be right. Ah! how it bows my head in grief to think of my past. My prospects were very bright, but I ruined them by dissipation. And in my drunken frenzy, one night, I killed my wife: forsook my son, and then jumped into the river with you, Helen, in my arms; thinking to end all the misery at once. But we were picked up by a small boat, from an outward-bound sailing vessel. God, in His mercy,

had not allowed me to rush unprepared into Eternity.

"I told them on the vessel that my wife was dead, and they thought that grief had driven me mad. We were very kindly cared for by all on board. We went to Australia, where for a time, I worked with the convicts—a self-inflicted punishment; but I knew it was what I deserved. But at last God's peace flowed into my heart, and I knew that, in Christ, I was forgiven. We stayed in Australia, until you were ten years old, and I made enough money to allow us to live in comfort. I adopted your little playmate: his father and mother had died; and I hoped, in return, some one would take pity on my own boy, whose father had so cruelly deserted him. At the end of the ten years, we came here, and have lived here ever since. I made what inquiries I dared about my boy; but could hear nothing of him. And so I thought he might be dead.

"Mr. Warren, if your love for Helen is strong enough to overlook all this: I give her happiness freely into your keeping. She has been my guardian angel, and life will be very desolate without her; but I cannot be selfish enough to keep her from such happiness."

Helen had been so intently watching her father's face that she had not noticed Robert. The echoes of almost forgotten words were lingering in his mind, and how strangely like

they were to this story. As Mr. Douglas paused he said, with great earnestness: "I implore you, Mr. Douglas, tell me where you lived, and what was your name? I assure you I do not ask from idle curiosity."

Mr. Douglas looked at Robert in astonishment, as he answered, "In Quebec, and my name is Arthur Hamilton." They thought then that Robert had gone crazy. He caught Helen to his heart as he exclaimed "Oh, thank God! Thank God! Mr. Douglas, you did not kill your wife, she lived ten years after that. And your son has been for long years my dearest, my most honoured friend. I heard his story from his own lips years ago. How little did I imagine it was for this I came to England. Surely God works in strange ways."

Mr. Douglas turned so deadly pale while Robert was speaking that they hastened to get him a glass of water. As he recovered he said, "Mr. Warren are you beside yourself? You surely would not say this without some foundation for it."

"No, Mr. Douglas, I know perfectly well what I am saying." And then he told them all that Arthur had told him—and told of the friendship which had been such a safe-guard and blessing to them both. "I have always thought Arthur Hamilton the noblest man I ever knew. To think that we shall be brothers!"

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"Mr. Douglas you will surely go home with us?"

"Do you think he will ever be able to forgive me the cruel wrong I did him?" this father asked.

"He never spoke of you with any bitterness. There will be nothing but the most intense joy in his heart."

Mr. Douglas bowed his head in fervent thanksgiving to God for his loving kindness in lifting this terrible weight from his heart.

Robert showed them pictures of Arthur, Louise and their two little children. And with what strange feelings Mr. Hamilton looked upon the features of his son. Helen had hardly spoken through all this scene. She seemed almost bewildered by her father's words. But now with what loving eyes she looked at the brother, of whose existence she had never known.

Robert and Helen sat with hands clasped and he told them gently all he knew of Arthur's mother, of her sweetness and dignity, and of her peaceful death.

"I know now what made your face such a study to me from the first," he said to Helen. "It is your resemblance to your mother."

"Yes, she is very like her mother, as she was in her days of happiness. If I could only ask her forgiveness for all the sorrow I caused her."

"Perhaps she has known it all, dear father. Think now of the glorious hope of meeting her in Heaven."

There was much to tell on both sides, and these three, all unconscious of the flight of time, talked until dawn began to brighten the east. Mr. Hamilton felt that for him the day had dawned, after his long night of self-condemnation and sorrow.



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CHAPTER XI.

"So live that when the mighty caravan
Which halts one night-time in the vale of death,
Shall strike its white tents for the morning march,
Thou shalt mount upward to the eternal hills,
Thy foot unwearied, and thy strength renewed,
Like the strong eagle's for the upward flight."

It was decided that Robert and Helen should be married in about two months; and then they, with Mr. Hamilton, start for Canada soon after.

"We have waited for each other so many years, and I came so far to find you: we can afford to hurry a little now," Robert said.

And as both Helen and her father were impatient to see Arthur, he met with little opposition. Mr. Hamilton's adopted son was well established in business, and decided for the time to remain in England.

Robert only wrote to Arthur and Louise that he would bring his wife home with him. He did not tell of the strange discovery he had made. "You have always been like brother and sister to me," he wrote "and I ask that you will welcome my wife as a *sister*. You will find she well deserves such a welcome. Talk of

English roses, Louise! wait until you see mine. You will be glad I waited."

So two months later Robert and Helen stood together in the ivy-covered village Church, and spoke the solemn promises, which made them husband and wife. They went for a few days to Grasmere, to the spot, which had been Wordsworth's home for so many years. And they thought, with a mind so sensitive to the finest influences of nature, he could not have wanted inspiration.

His own happiness, and a thought of the joy in store for his friend, had made a wonderful change in Robert. He had been a quiet, dignified man—cheerful and affable always; but now his overflowing joyfulness was suggestive of Harry McPherson in his best days.

At last they said good-bye to England, and it was with mingled feelings of pain and happiness that Helen and Mr. Hamilton saw the shores of America. They came home by way of New York, for Mr. Hamilton felt it would recall the past too painfully to land at Quebec.

Arthur and Louise were in a state of the greatest excitement, as the time drew near that they might expect Robert and his wife. Louise wandered about the house, putting a few finishing touches to what seemed perfect before. It was one of those beautiful cool days in October, when Canadian foliage blushes because of its own

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beauty. Louise and Arthur were glad to have Helen see her new country at its best.

They had a bright, cheerful fire burning in the grate to give the crowning touch of home.

They felt as if they really were going to welcome a sister, for Robert had long been like a brother to them both.

Robert had decided that it would be best to have Mr. Hamilton go to an Hotel first; and then Helen and he would drive to Arthur's. He feared otherwise the excitement would be too great for them all.

So at last they reached the house, and Helen received a welcome as heartfelt and sincere, as even her husband could wish. Louise wondered why her English cousin trembled so when Arthur kissed her, but thought it must be her timidity at meeting strangers. She might have wondered, to, at the suppressed excitement, which showed itself in Robert's face and manner.

After they had removed their wrappings, Robert said "Arthur, perhaps you and Louise have wondered a little that I have said so little about my wife. I reserved it all until now. Arthur, look at her, does she not remind you of some one you have known and loved?"

Arthur had been looking at her almost all the time since she had entered the room. He was impressed with a strange familiarity about her, the same that had so fascinated Robert at first.

— Robert hastened on, for the paling cheek of his wife warned him that the excitement was too intense. "I found my wife in England, but, Arthur, she was born in Canada—in Quebec: she had a brother five years older than herself; he has long believed her dead. Her name was Helen—Helen Hamilton! Arthur, Louise, did I not ask a sister's welcome for my wife?"

Arthur had listened to Robert's rapid, joyous words as one in a dream. Now the strong resemblance to his mother flashed like lightning across his mind, and in an instant his long-lost sister was clasped in his arms—only for an instant did he hold her there, before his arms opened to take into their embrace his wife also. She had been his comfort—his blessing in his loneliness; now they were one in their joy.

When Arthur could find words he said, falteringly, as though he feared to ask, "And our Father, did he live long enough to seek and find God's forgiveness? What a comfort it would be to know that?"

And Helen answered "yes Arthur he did," and then she looked appealingly to Robert, as though she wished him to tell the rest.

"Arthur can you bear more joy? for there is yet more in store for you. Your father still lives—he is here in Toronto. He long ago found God's forgiveness, and is waiting now to find yours."

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The meeting between Arthur and his father was too sacred for description. Robert went with him to the hotel, but he felt that the meeting would be too touching and solemn for any one to witness; so he left them to themselves.

It would be hard to tell which one, of all the group gathered in Arthur's home that night, was the happiest. Mr. Hamilton had not believed he could ever know so much joy again on earth. Surely God does not reward us according to our iniquities.

There was a strong resemblance between Arthur and his sister—the same clear, dark eye, the same quiet dignity of manner. Helen noticed with great delight the love which existed between her brother and her husband. During the evening Helen and Robert found themselves alone for a few moments, and she said playfully “I am glad you asked me to be your wife before you knew I was Arthur's sister, or I should always believe you wanted me to marry you just because of that relationship.”

“If such a thing were possible, my own beloved, I believe I would think more of you because you are like him.”

And was their nothing to cloud their joy? Yes; not for themselves, but for those very dear to them. Robert had asked about Harry, and learned there was no change for the better, but rather for the worse.

"We must all work still harder for his reformation, and never grow weary in our prayers until his home is as bright with God's smile as ours are," Robert said.

The "world" knew that Arthur had found his father and sister; but the world never knew how he had lost them.

Isabel's trouble had developed all the strength of her character. The faith of Arthur and Louise and all of them, that Harry would sometime be brought back from his fearful wanderings, kept faith from dying out of her own heart.

Mr. Hamilton heard of Harry from them all; and from the first, these two seemed strangely attracted towards each other. At length Mr. Hamilton said to Arthur "I am going to tell Harry all of my sad story. Perhaps a picture of my life—its miserable failures—the trouble and want I brought upon my wife and children;—and then the forgiveness and peace which God has given me may have some effect."

One night Harry was perfectly sober, a rare occurrence lately. Mr. Hamilton was with him in his library, and he had been reading something from Ruskin. As Mr. Hamilton came to the passage: "He who has once stood beside the grave to look back upon the companionship which has been forever closed, feeling how impotent *there* are the wild love, or the keen sorrow, to give one instant's pleasure to the pulseless heart, or atone in the lowest measure

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to the departed spirit for the hour of unkindness; will scarcely for the future incur that debt to the heart, which can only be discharged to the dust—” His voice faltered and broke. He was thinking of his wife, and her bitter years of sorrow and want.

“May I tell you my story, Mr. McPherson?” he asked, after a little. “There seems a sort of parallel between our lives, as far as yours has gone. Perhaps my failures may prove a beacon light to warn you from the rocks that made shipwreck of my happiness.”

And then he told the story, going into the very depths of its blackness and despair—its wretchedness and sin. Harry listened with paling cheek. Mr. Hamilton did not spare himself. He wanted Harry to feel all the dreadful possibilities for wickedness there are in a heart which has drifted away from God on the stormy sea of temptation and sin. Then he told him why he had opened these old wounds.

“They tell me your wife is so different, that the joyousness has gone out of her life, when she used to be as joyous as a bird; and yet she is so patient and uncomplaining. Harry, you do not know what you might do to her and your children, when you are crazy with alcohol. For all these long years, I have believed I was a murderer; I did murder my wife’s happiness, her joy and hope, and of what value is life when they are gone?” Long and earnestly did Mr.

Hamilton plead with him. And at last, for the first time in all these dark years, Harry realized the terrible gulf, over which he was standing; and believed that God alone could hold him back from certain destruction.

He stood up, and with something of the old hope and enthusiasm kindling his eye, he said, "Mr. Hamilton, I believe all of your prayers have been answered. I know now my need of God and His willingness to help me. I solemnly promise that this shall be a turning point in my life. I shudder now to think where I might have been, but for their prayers, their faithful admonitions. And what would have become of my wife and children had we been poor, and had not Judge Harriston cared for them. I learned to-day that but for his intercession, I should have been discharged from the Bank more than a year ago. That is why I came home sober to-night, and why I am in a condition to listen to you. Oh! that I may have strength to keep my resolutions." And he added solemnly, "The Lord is my strength, in Him will I trust."

Isabel had been in her own room all the evening, watching by the children, who were recovering from a severe illness. As Harry entered her room that night he saw with clearer eyes than ever before, the great change in her. And how all the heart and manhood in him were shamed that so often her love had been so treated.

"Isabel, my darling wife, can you forgive the past and believe that to-night I have broken the chains which have so long bound me? And with God's help, I will try to be worthy of your love again." He spoke with such earnestness, and there was such a resolute look in his eyes, it seemed as if the Harry she had first loved had been on a long journey and had come back to her—that at last the heavy clouds were breaking.

And were there no struggles—no failures? Sometimes in spite of all their watchfulness—all their loving help and encouragement—it seemed as if the struggle were too much for him, and he must go back to the old habits. But with every victory came new strength, until at last the temptation had lost its hold on him. The joy and peace came back to his home; but there was never the same unclouded joyousness. Alas, sin leaves its scars. There was the memory of those wasted years, which God had forgiven; but Harry could never forget. His vigilance never relaxed: he had learned his own weakness.

And now from these Christian homes went forth an influence, which was felt by all who came within its reach. God recognized and honoured their faithfulness to Him.

Oh ye Christians! think of the thousands who are going *downward* by many paths, with no loving hand to point them to the Divine helper: no voice to plead with Him for their salvation!

Ah! if each one could believe that, "Let the world go how it will, and be victorious, or not victorious, he has a Life of his own to live. *One Life, a little gleam of Time between two Eternities: no second chance to us forevermore.*"



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