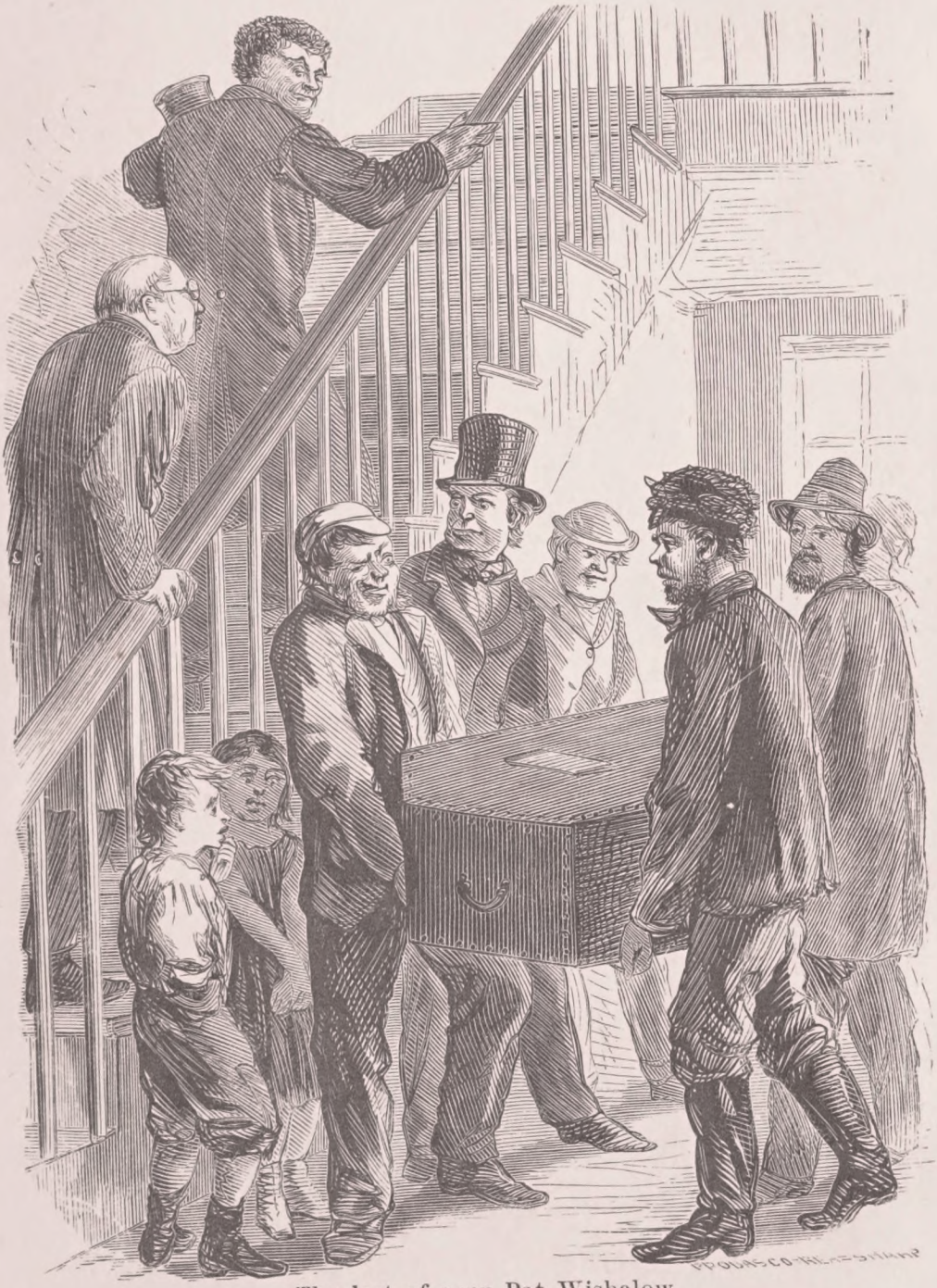

The last of poor Pat Wishalow.

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New York Bible-Woman.

THE

NEW YORK BIBLE-WOMAN.

BY

MRS. J. McNAIR WRIGHT,

AUTHOR OF

"SHOE-BINDERS OF NEW YORK," "NEW YORK NEEDLE-WOMAN,"
"ALMOST A NUN," ETC.

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom: and in her tongue is the law of kindness."

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

"THE New York Bible-woman" has been prepared as a companion volume to "The Shoe-Binders of New York" and "The New York Needle-woman." Like them, it takes us to the homes of the poor and degraded in our commercial metropolis, and, whilst painting their sorrows, their sins and their woes, suggests what may be done to soothe these sorrows, check these sins and heal these woes. The bitter streams that flow from *intemperance*—giant evil of our land—are brought vividly to light, and the power of prayer, patience, piety and the pledge to arrest the stream, shown. Happy they who are permitted to labor, with our "Bible-woman," for the sad and sinning of our race.

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THE

NEW YORK BIBLE-WOMAN.

CHAPTER I.

FOUND DROWNED.

IN a first-floor room on the corner of Broome and Sullivan streets, not so very many years ago, were two women, ever—as are half the women of New York—fighting for their lives. Their enemy was the giant Want, their weapons were needles' points; and daily, through fourteen or fifteen hours of a hand-to-hand struggle, they gave the giant several thousand pricks, and so were able to sleep on their arms and rise to the battle with another dawn.

It was not a very easy or encouraging kind of life, as we who have not tried it

may easily guess. It had worn on one of these two women, mind and body; her face and form were thin, with sharp lines instead of soft curves; her eyes were like half-smouldered coals; she shut her teeth with a click; she was more than full of hate for giant Want, and the surplus of her hate overflowed upon the world.

The battle had not wrought these same effects upon the other woman. We may as well tell at once why it had not: she had a strength born above—the strength which the angels bring daily to the exiled children of glory. The lines of care had not worn very deep into her face, for she was sure she should have strength day by day to fight with Want, and she looked confidently to something unspeakably better, when she, a true King's daughter, should be lifted out of Want's dominions and enter on her own broad inheritance. To be sure, you could see in this woman's eyes a sorrow far deeper than any strug-

gle with Want can bring, but there are some sorrows that are like the heavy spring rains, softening and blessing where they fall. This woman—she was Mary Ware—had been made by her sorrows humble, tender, generous and sympathizing. Mary's companion was Miss Prussy Wiggins. Prussy was making vests, but Mary was stitching at boys' overcoats.

There were two windows in the room—one looking on Broome street, the other on Sullivan. The window opening on Broome street was the more desirable, and so Prussy had it. It is true that Mary hired the room, and Prussy only gave her a trifle weekly for the privilege of sitting in it; but that made no difference about the windows. Prussy demanded the choice, and Mary had acquired a habit of giving up everything where giving up did not involve a moral wrong.

It was April, and mild for the season,

and both the windows were raised. Prussy had flung up hers with a bang, saying, "If it's as warm as this in April, we'll be baked to death before summer is over." Mary's window went up more softly, and through her brain floated, like a fragment of song, "For lo, the winter is past—the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come." There were neither birds nor flowers near Mary Ware, but she had lived in the country, and she knew well how the daisies and buttercups were goldening the grass, the robin and the bluebird piping their roundelays, and the blackbird shaking his scarlet epaulette and whistling to his mate.

Philanthropists may suggest that for the flowers of meadow and roadside, fair and soulless, Mary had now, in the densely habited city, human flowers—flowers with souls. The suggestion may contain truth,

yet, as I remember Mary's surroundings, I should say rather that she had about her human *weeds*, and those of ill names. Looking from her window for a peep of blue sky and a whiff of air coming up Watts street from the Hudson, and possibly twisting into Sullivan before all its freshness was departed, Mary saw one of these human weeds, a poor thing left uncultured in the waste where it had been born, and thought by no one worth the gathering. There is many a so-called weed that a little nurture will transform into a lovely flower; I have heard that even the despised mullein of the wayside, taken to a foreign conservatory and called the Velvet Plant, has been much admired.

To go soberly on with our history, Mary, looking out of her window, saw Rose Wishalow, a girl of twelve, with a baby in her arms as usual, coming along the narrow, rough sidewalk of Sullivan

street, crying. Rose was dark-skinned, with uncombed black hair, a frock for ever ragged, bare feet, and with an assemblage of fragments that had once been an apron tied about her waist. Mary had seen her many times, but never that she could remember without a baby in her arms. To-day the forlorn appearance of this wild Rose was increased by the tears that ran freely over her cheeks, making dingy, grimy tracks wherever they flowed.

"What is the matter, Rose?" said Mary, fitting a collar to a spring overcoat.

"I've been to Mrs. Wheeler's for a loaf, an' she wont let me have it without the money," said Rose, concluding her statement with a little cry.

"And hasn't your mother any money?" asked Mary.

"No, ma'am. Old Jessup is dead, ma'am. When mam took her work home Sat'night, he was dead, and they did'nt

give mam no pay, nor no more work, not till bisnis is settled; and they ain't going to have no more clothing store there. I never thought," went on Rose, sobbing, "that I'd feel bad 'cause that old skinflint was dead, but I do, 'cause no work's worse nor a little."

Here Prussy Wiggins, who scented gossip, whilst stitching on a silk vest, came to the window behind Mary and said, sharply, "Well, just serves your mother right for working for Jessup. She might have known if he couldn't cheat 'em any other way, he'd up and die."

"But she couldn't get work no other place," said Rose.

"Just as if Jessup's was the only coarse-work store in town!" said Prussy, pricking through a yellow satin sprig with much emphasis.

"He wouldn't give nobody as left him a character to work anywhere else," said Rose.

"Whatever did she go there for, in the first place?" said Prussy, biting off her thread. "*I* work for Broadway stores. Sech folly, running down on to Catherine street to a twopenny store!"

"Folks has to work where they can; everybody can't make vests like as you, Miss Wiggins. I do truly b'lieve," added Rose, rubbing her wet cheek with her unoccupied hand, "that for every paid stitch that is to be sot in this city, there's two poor women like mam ready to set it."

"Pooh!" said Miss Wiggins, contemptuously; "what does the like of you know of 'rithmetic?"

"Mebby I don't," said Rose, smartly, "of book 'rithmetic, but of sech as more mouths nor bread, and of fewer pennies than babies, I know right well."

"And where's your father?" demanded the vestmaker.

"He ain't bin heard of this three days,"

said Rose. "*I* can't tell what we're coming too. Mother sits like as she was struck all of a heap, and the baby hollers and t'other ones fight and cry. 'Pears like, Miss Ware, *your* place is jist a palace, and our'n is—I don't know what!"

"All along of your mother being so doless," said Prussy Wiggins, tartly.

"Now don't, Prussia," said Mrs. Ware. "I feel that it is my fault, forgetting my poor neighbors so. Rose, I'll step up to your room with a pail of soup, and do you tell Mrs. Wheeler to give you a loaf to my account;" and Mary, taking from her scantily-supplied closet a basin of soup, put on her sun-bonnet and turned to the door.

"It's more than I'd do; folk as'll never pay you back!" said Prussy.

"But my Book tells me to do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again," said Mary, going out.

"Book, book, book!" sputtered Prussy.

"It do beat all: stitch day in and out, take care of a lazy lummox of a son, and give to every beggar about. She'll come to the almshouse, mark my words!" cried Prussy, talking to nobody at all. "If ever she gets anything by sech a reckless course, my name ain't Prussia V. Wiggins, or I'm mistaken, which I ain't."

Here, through the Sullivan street window, Miss Wiggins saw Rose going home in triumph with a loaf under one arm, and the baby munching a piece of the crust.

Meanwhile, Mary Ware had climbed three pairs of stairs to Margaret Wishalow's room. Margaret sat on a backless chair, her arms clasped over her knees, and her head bowed upon them. Billy, a boy of ten, was marking zigzag lines on the dirty front window; Lizzie, two years younger than Billy, lay listlessly on the floor; and Derry, or Dermot, next youngest to the baby, jerked at the soiled frock

of his unheeding mother, uttering a steady, melancholy wail. Mary's coming into the room was like a mild morning after a dreary night. Her kind, intelligent face, tidy clothing, and the hint of help in the pail she carried, brought such cheer that Derry stopped his wail, Billy turned from the window and Lizzie gained courage enough to sit up.

"It is hard times with you, Margaret," said the visitor, "but I've come to see what I could do to help you, as a neighbor should."

"You needn't," said Margaret, without lifting her head; "I never can pay you."

"That's nothing," said Mary; "my Book tells me to do to others as I'd want them to do to me, and I'm sure I'd want you to come when I got into a hard place. Besides, I know you'll be able to do as much for me, and more; it is darkest just before the day. Cheer up, Margaret; you'll see good days yet."

"Not I," said Margaret, her voice smothered by lap and arms. "I'm out of work—not a penny, not a mouthful, Patrick's not been home this four days. I'm just ready to send Billy for the poor-master."

At this the three children set up a fearful howl.

"A full stomach," said Mary, in homely phrase, "brightens the heart. Have you had dinner yet?"

This question drew from Billy, "No, mem, we ain't; nor no breakfus, nor nothin'."

"That *is* too bad," said Mary, cheerfully, "and the sooner we make it right the better. Get up a bit of fire, Billy; and you, Lizzie, run for a pail of water; the time 'll seem shorter if you're busy."

And as the two children ran to obey, encouraged by the prospect of something to eat, Mrs. Ware picked up Derry and set him on a chair, saying, "Come, now,

Derry; see his auntie clear up the room all nice, and soon he'll have some soup." And Mary opened the windows to ventilate the room, and began to sweep with a poor stump of a broom which she ferreted from a corner. Mary seemed the genius of order. It was marvelous to note how a few touches altered the forlorn abode. A swept floor and hearth, the poor bedclothes shaken out and laid on the window-sill to air and sun, the rickety table drawn out and dusted; and now, as Billy had made a fire and Lizzie brought a pail of water, Mary got the one cooking utensil from the closet—a pot not over-clean—washed it, poured in the soup and hung it in the fireplace. Here Rose came in with the bread, and Mary's presence restrained the children from flying at it at once.

"Take the baby, Lizzie," said Mary. "Rose, clear out that closet, like a good child, while I wash these dishes."

Then Mary, taking the family stock of crockery—a pitcher, two or three bowls, and a yellow pie-plate or so—washed them quickly, laid a newspaper on the table, set the dishes in order, broke the loaf into large pieces, one for each place, poured the steaming soup from the pot into the pitcher, and, bidding Billy bring up what seats were to be had, called the hungry family to dinner. All this while poor Margaret had not looked up; but now the savor of the soup, the glad voices of her children, and the hearty good-will of her neighbor won her to move to the table. Her eyes were swollen from weeping; her face was haggard and worn.

"We will ask a blessing," said Mary, as the eager children were ready to fill their mouths. They stared quietly at her, while she, a woman of few, plain words, and mindful of the half-starvation before her, said: "For all thy mercy, Lord, make us thankful." That was all.

She had heard her father say the same in her New England home when she was but a little child.

"I'll make the beds while you eat," said Mary. She did not want to go home just then. She had somewhat to say to her neighbor, but was wise enough to wait until the woman was refreshed by a warm meal. Before making the beds, Mary washed the pot, filled it and put it over the fire.

She made the beds with the exactness with which she did everything, spreading them smooth and straight. When every morsel of food had disappeared, Mary said to Rose, "Now, child, wash the dishes and table, clean up yon shelf and set things by nicely. Billy, my man, may be you could gather a bundle of chips where they're building the store. Get some water in the basin, Lizzie, and have clean faces on Derry and the baby." The children were quite ready to obey

their benefactress, and as they went at their several tasks, Mary sat down by the poor mother, who had dropped into her former hopeless attitude of despair and misery.

"You've a sore burden, Margaret," she said, "but you mustn't give up to it. You must do what you can for your family, and I'll try and help you find some work."

"There's nothing to do," groaned Margaret, "and no use trying."

"There's plenty to do in this very room," said Mary, firmly. "Rouse up, scrub your floor, window and chairs, wash your children and their clothes. It's Bible doctrine, Margaret, to be faithful in little, if you look to being given much. It's Bible doctrine, too, to be tidy. The apostle says, 'Let all things be done decently and in order,' and I take it it means in small things as well as in great."

"It's no use to try; I used to, once," said Margaret.

"It is duty to try," said Mary; "it is your duty to the Lord, who made you. You'll be happier yourself for trying; and look at these five children; you must rouse up for them."

"I can't make 'em comfortable," sighed the mother.

"Make them as comfortable as you *can*," said Mary. "Now, do rouse up, neighbor; the Lord is trying you; he'll remember mercy and do the right thing by you—see if he don't. Never get the dumps and sit like that. Come, now; I'll send you my scrub-brush and a cup of soft soap by Lizzie, and do you clean up here. Cleanliness is next to godliness. I'll do my best to help you to some sewing."

"I can't say no to *you*," said Mrs. Wishalow.

"There, now, that's right. Rouse up

and do something, and you'll feel better. The Lord calls some of his people in the furnace of affliction, and maybe he's calling you so. You must do your duty by your children, and they'll be your comfort."

"I can't look to that," said Margaret; "they have a poor chance to be good."

"You must watch them and pray for them. Do your part right, neighbor. A good mother makes good children."

"Not always," said Mrs. Wishalow, quickly.

"In the main it does," said Mary. "You needn't let my case dishearten you. You don't see where I failed, as I do. But I've got faith to hope still, for my God is a hearer of prayer. I'll go home now, Margaret. I'm going to pray for you. Don't you forget to pray."

"I'm sure I don't know how," said Mrs. Wishalow, as Mary closed the door.

To give away bread and soup was to

Mary giving till she felt it; to give her time was of itself a great charity. For the hour she had spent with her distressed neighbor, Mary must sit up later that evening at her work.

Prussy Wiggins knew all this, and did not scruple to express plainly that she thought Mary very silly. "Every one for himself," said Prussy.

"Did you hold that when you had the rheumatiz last winter?" asked Mary, quietly.

"I said then, as I do now, I wouldn't have done what you did. What difference did it make to you? You might hev let me died, and you'd have this room to yourself now."

"But not a clear conscience. My Bible says, 'For as ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;' and I try to practice it."

"It's few persons as practices all they preaches, like you do. I practice *my*

preaching, and that is, Look out for number one."

"But which is happier?" asked Mary, mildly.

"As for that," said Prussia, "your heart aches enough, I guess; but I'm mad all the time, and I don't think you are."

"No," said Mary; "and if you'd rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him, you wouldn't be; that's a powerful good prescription for quieting folks down, Prussy."

"Well, as to the patience, it ain't to my mind," said Miss Wiggins, tossing her head; "and my creed is, to stand up for one's rights," though whom Prussy meant to stand up against, or for what rights, it was hard to tell. Mary made no reply. This was as much conversation as ever passed between them at once. They were so totally unlike. Mary did not love to contradict, while to Prussy

contradiction was meat and drink. The moments of the afternoon slipped one by one away. Prussy sewed as ever with much unnecessary energy, which resulted in breaking her thread frequently and exhausting her vitality. Mary's movements were calm and diligent. It seemed to-day as if a blessing came on her fingers after her charity, for she quite made up for lost time, and, moreover, did not feel very tired. If she could have peeped into Mrs. Wishalow's upper room, she would have seen quite a thorough scrubbing and dusting going on, and by sunset the children in bed, and their clothes, newly washed, dangling on a line going from their back window to an adjacent chimney.

At sunset, Mary and Prussia sewing still, a shadow fell through the Sullivan street window. Mary looked up and saw her next neighbor, Bridget Mulrooney. Mrs. Mulrooney's own phrase for herself

was that she was "a jewel of a woman." She had a round, red face, a large frame, her hand had a man's strength, her eyes twinkled with good-humor; they were blue eyes, and wore those golden spectacles that see only the bright side of everything; her mouth was ever smiling broadly, but just now eyes and mouth were toned down to suit the subject of her conversation: "Och, Mistress Ware, have yees heard the news?"

"No; I've heard no news," said Mary.

"Charity help us! And ye did not know there has been a man missing this several days?"

"What is it?" asked Mary, quickly, dropping her work.

"Well, he's dead—found drownded!"

"Who?" gasped Mary.

"Yes," pursued Mrs. Mulrooney, stupidly, "drawn out of the water yesterday at the foot of Watts street, by dock Forty, but not re*cog*nized till to-day."

"Who? who?" cried Mary, huskily, grasping at the sill of the window for support. But Bridget Mulrooney was too much of a gossip to see the misery she was causing, and kept on in her own way: "Yes, and—why, it's *queer* you ain't heard it!—they're bringing him home—"

"Speak out!" cried Prussy, who had come near to hear what was going on. "Can't you see you're killing the woman? If it's any of *her* folk, say so and be done with it!"

"*Her* folks! Why should it be *her* folks? Arrah, Miss Wiggins, didn't I tell yees in the very beginning it was Pat Wishalow was found drownded at Number Forty? Troth, if it was any of *her* folk, it's not Bridget Mulrooney would be turning herself into a raven to come wid bad news."

Mary began to breathe more freely, and the color came slowly to her white

lips. Prussy filled a tin cup with water and handed it to her, saying, sharply, "There, drink that, and don't be a dunce. Goodness knows there *might* worse things happen than—" She shook her head emphatically and went back to her seat. Prussia certainly cared more for Mary Ware than for any one else, herself excepted. Bridget Mulrooney might have killed any other person with her ill-told news before she would have interfered.

"As I was tellin' yees, Mistress Ware, Pat was drawn out of the water yesterday, and none knew him; but his brother Mike re*cog*nized him a bit ago, going in by chance like, and he's having him brought home, and he's going to wake him and give him a funeral. Indeed, to my mind its just nonsense to feast and yelp like wild Injins over a dead man, while day in and out his children are in want of bread. His riverence will come wid his prayers, and he'll squaze out

what money he can from Mike or the widdy for masses for him that is dead and gone, and the livin' may starve or steal—it's all one to him. I'm no Catholic, Mistress Ware, for reasons like this. Says I, What sinse in saying masses to get Pat Wishalow out of pur*gato*ry? Shure he couldn't live in heaven above *widout* his whisky-jug, and neither the Holy Virgin nor the angels could abide him *wid* it, he was that conthrary! Whist, now! I must get in me door; here they come!"

Mrs. Mulrooney hastened away, and Mary saw, followed by a troop of ragged children, gazed on by curious eyes, borne by six men, most of them the worse for liquor, and preceded by the priest and Mike Wishalow, a pine coffin covered with a black cloth. She well knew what ghastly spectacle lay shut within that coffin-lid, and her heart gave a wild throb as she thanked God the bearers were not

to stop at her door. On went the men with their burden of death, up the creaking stairs to the room where wife and children, just knowing the chilling news, were waiting, awed and horror-stricken, to receive them. Later, about ten o'clock, when Prussy had climbed to her attic and Mary was closing the day with a verse from her Bible, her trouble came home—a tall, strong man, staggering with drink. Mary Ware took his arm and helped him to a cot in a recess; took off his shoes, unloosed his neck-band, smoothed his hair, and sobbed, above his drunken sleep, "My son! my son!"

CHAPTER II.

BIBLE MARY.

MICHAEL WISHALOW called in his neighbors to hold a wake in true Irish style. It had been very little to him whether his sister-in-law and her children froze or starved; just as little whether his brother lived or died; but now, that he was dead, it was necessary to the family credit that he should be duly "waked." Mike was a teamster. He had wages and credit enough for the requisite bread, meat, cheese and whisky, and these he ordered. Clothes were borrowed for the little Wishalows; the coffin was laid on the bed, covered with a sheet, and at each corner was stuck a tallow candle. His Reverence the priest was sent for.

He had never before this darkened the door of these pauper Wishalows. Now, scenting a funeral fee and masses for the dead, he came, bringing a cross to stand at the coffin's head, and a vial of holy water.

To see enough of good, hearty food was such a matter of rejoicing to the fatherless family that they almost forgot they had any mourning to do. The whisky these children had learned to hate, but they ate ravenously; and not until, for once, they had had "all they wanted," did they remember that their father had been drowned, and would next morning be buried.

Margaret Wishalow sat apart. She could not eat. Her heart sickened at the miserable revelry about her. In her youth living with a refined and cultivated family, she had learned something better than the wild doings of these miserable days. When her children had

eaten all they could, they stole close to their mother's side. As one and another neighbor pressed into the room, it became greatly crowded; and from frequent potations every voice rose louder and more unmeaning. Margaret took her babe in her arms and Lizzie by the hand; Rose lifted sleepy little Derry, and unheeded they left the room.

They had nowhere to go, but went wearily down stairs and out into the street; dimly lighted and narrow, it offered them no refuge. The stars shone clearly, and the night air was chill. Margaret drew back and sat down on the lowest step of the staircase. She pulled her skirt up to cover her babe, and Rose sat down beside her, holding Derry. Lizzie and Billy crouched before their mother, close together for warmth, and soon all the little group were sleeping save the mother, who, with burning head and aching in every limb, leaned against

the wall and counted the slow minutes as they passed along. At last a robust figure filled the entrance. "Why, what's all this?" cried a mellow voice.

"It's me and the children," said Margaret.

"Saints above! And why are yees here?"

"It's over full and noisy up stairs," said Margaret.

"Troth, thin, and if this waking isn't the doleful business—turnin' out the livin' to riot round the dead! I'm afther me Terence, or he'll make a noodle of himself wid drink. It's toime he was in bed. These childer'll ketch their death, uncovered here; and whin all these riotin' rapscallions are done wid their row, they'll just run over yees. Come up to the top hall, out ov the way, and I'll lend ye me shawl, and get a quilt for ye out of yer room, and ye can sleep suitable. I'll carry Derry and lead Lizzie. Shure, I'm

sorry for ye, shure as me name is Bridget Mulrooney!"

Mrs. Mulrooney settled her friends in a corner of the upper hall, then entered the room of the rioters, and soon reappeared, dragging her husband by the arm. "Let me be, Bridget," said he, pulling away.

"It's not for yer good, jewel," said Bridget, blithely. "It's over late, and you're coming home. Och, honey, what a throuble ye are to me! Have done jerking, now! It's meself can hold sthronger nor ye can pull. Troth, it ain't Bridget Mulrooney is going to leave ye here drinking when ye ought to be in bed, sleepin' dacently. Come on, now; it's meself must make a sober man of ye, nilly nolly, as his worship the judge says. Lift yer fut and come on, now!" And to this music of Bridget's exhortations to her recreant husband, Margaret fell asleep.

Early dawn roused her, and she en-

tered her room. It was in dire disorder. Her sister-in-law, with a basket on her arm, was gathering up the fragments of the feast to carry away. "Me man paid for it, and I'll have it, Margaret. Couldn't ye show enough respict to him that's gone as to bide here and wake him?"

"No, I could not," said Margaret, shortly.

"And can ye act enough like a Christian to go to the funeral? Shure, me man has paid for three hacks, and ye an' the bye can go in one ov em wid us, for the sake of looks."

"Yes, I'll go. What time will it be?" said Margaret.

"Nine o'clock it is, so good-day to yees. Afther this, as him that related us is dead and gone, we'll be no more relatives at all."

By this remark the other Mrs. Wishalow thought to set herself free from any

responsibility for aiding her brother-in-law's destitute family. She went away. Margaret looked drearily about at her breakfastless children, her disordered room, at the bed with its fearful burden, the covers all tossed by the night's revelers, and little piles of tallow where the candles had sputtered and guttered themselves away. The children felt afraid, and cowered whining in a corner. It was just sunrise, and the stir in the street had but begun. The door opened quietly, and Bridget Mulrooney looked in; then entered, carrying a pitcher of steaming tea and a loaf of bread. "Shure, I must make up to yees what me man ate last night," she said.

"It was none of my victuals," replied Margaret.

"Don't I know ye're cold and aching from lying curled up in that hall the night? I darn't lie awake for fear I'd think of yees! Bring some water, Billy,

that ye may wash and comb all of yees, and take a bite of breakfast."

But now came in another guest, even Mary Ware. Her son was yet asleep. She had her simple preparations for breakfast made, and now came out to do good. "You've come to a poor place," said Margaret, glancing about uneasily.

"My Book tells me," said Mary, "that it is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting. Perhaps I can do you good here." And as she spoke she soothed Lizzie by patting her head, lifted Dermot into the sunshine by the window, and, turning to the bed, with a few reverent, gentle touches, made all neat and smooth; carried away the battered tin candlesticks, scraped off the grease; and Bridget Mulrooney having got the family at their breakfast, Mary swept the room.

Margaret sat looking sadly toward the bed. The tears slowly dropped over her

cheeks. "It's a mourning place enough," she said, replying to Mary's last remark.

"By sorrow of the countenance the spirit is made better," said Mary, gently. "May the Lord send it so with you."

"Dear knows!" mourned Margaret; "I didn't look for this when I left a good place at service to be married."

"Well," said Mary, "the Lord leads us by a way we know not. To be plain with you, neighbor, you've tried to set up your house without the Lord, and you've come to naught. Now, the Lord has laid on you the care of five fatherless children. Do you try a new plan; say, 'We will serve the Lord,' and tell the good Father of all that his presence must go with you day by day."

"Oh, Mrs. Ware," groaned Margaret, "I'm all in the dark."

"Well, neighbor," said Mary, simply but wisely, "you are all over done. Drink the tea and try and calm down a

bit, and we'll find a time to talk by and by."

At half-past nine the hearse and its attendant hacks had moved away from the door of the tenement-house, and Rose was left alone with the three younger children. The poor girl sat rocking the baby and helplessly crying, when the door opened and a little visitor came in—a child with a wise face and great dark eyes, with hair half gold, half auburn, carefully combed out and falling in shining ripples about her shoulders. Alas! the child was humpbacked. She was very neatly dressed in a lilac calico, and wore shoes and hose. Rare elegance of dress, that, in Sullivan street. She stole up to Rose and put an arm about her, and patted her wet cheek. "Poor thing! your father is dead. I'm so sorry for you! Here; I bought two cakes with my penny for the babies, and Lizzie shall have my little doll;" and she drew the

treasure from the folds of her dress. "I hain't nothing for you, Rose, only I'm *so* sorry for you;" and she bowed her wise face on Rose's shoulder and wept with her.

This little comforter was Bridget Mulrooney's idol, her only child. Bridget soon came after her: "Are you here, Angel, wid your wise, comfortin' ways? Good luck go wid ye! Here, cheer up the childer out in the entry wid yer talk, while Rose and me clears up this room they waked into the like of a pen a well-mannered pig would be ashamed of. Set a fire, Rose; here is me irons, and I'll smooth up yesterday's washin', and bring water to make all decent. The mother will need a place to rest in."

Sure enough, the mother needed a resting-place. About one o'clock she staggered in, faint from weariness, left to walk home from the distant graveyard, dragging Billy by the hand. She

dropped upon the bed and closed her eyes, indifferent to the baby's crying, to Derry's demands for food and to the petulant talk of Lizzie. Poor creature! she was worn out with trouble, too discouraged to hope or try for better things.

A kind eye had seen her going home. Mary Ware was not weary in well-doing. She saw that very much was wrong with the new-made widow, and, despite Prussy's strictures, she left her work and followed her to her room. By the help of Rose she removed Margaret's clothing, covered her with a quilt, put newspapers before the windows to darken the room, bathed the invalid's hot face and hands, smoothed her hair, and then bade the children go off for the afternoon and let their mother sleep.

"A pretty waste of working-hours!" snapped Prussy.

"I did it for Christ's sake," said Mary, meekly.

It has often been remarked that in the city one may know nothing of the weal or woe of his nearest neighbor. This is true of the middle and upper classes of society, but not of the lower. All along Sullivan street, from Spring to Canal, the denizens of the tenant-houses knew of Margaret Wishalow and her troubles. The last item of news, that she was sick on her bed, brought out little knots of neighbors to discuss her affairs on the doorsteps. They knew just how many clothes the Wishalow family possessed, how long the children had been shoeless; they could tell you to a penny how much Margaret was paid for her work, how much she earned in a week, and how long since she had been paid anything; they divined from their own biting experiences exactly the financial crisis that had overtaken the Wishalow commonwealth. There were many severe strictures upon Margaret's conduct.

"She might have kept her children to work," said one.

"She let her man rob her of every cent," said another.

"She's got no ambition," said a third; "gives right up."

"No wonder," replied a red-nosed woman; "she never took a drop of the craythur to kape her heart up."

Mrs. McElhaney—who sold coal in small, almost infinitesimal quantities, to suit her neighbors' pecuniary ability—asserted that Margaret was "twinty cints in her debt, the which she was a fool for allowing, and would let no more go without money down; that was her motto—yes, indeed!"

"True enough!" cried Mrs. Wheeler, the keeper of a foul den she called a grocery, but which would more truly be called a groggery. Whisky had expanded Mrs. Wheeler as much as it had shriveled Mrs. McElhaney. "True as

preaching! She owes me fifty cents—fifty cents for bread. Only she'd always paid her dues before, I'd not have trusted her; no, nor won't more!"

A more gracious conclave gathered near Mary Ware's window. Bridget Mulrooney drove a very good business in baking and cooking for several keepers of street eating-stalls. She had filled her oven, made her fire to her mind, and now, followed by her little girl, came down to talk to Mary. Bridget's whole love and care centred on her child. The little one's misfortune but made her more precious in her mother's eyes. Angeline she had named her, but in fond adoration called her Angel.

Mary was very busy, but she could use her tongue and ears while her fingers were occupied. Mrs. Mulrooney was not empty-handed, but was knitting hose for a store up town. As soon as Prussia Wiggins heard the sound of Bridget's

voice, she walked across the room and stood behind Mrs. Ware's chair. Few people stopped to talk by Prussia's window; and, loving dearly to hear news and speak sharp words, she always stood near Mary when people were talking in Sullivan street. Prussia was tall, and could sew about as well standing as sitting. She generally kept her button-holes to make when she was hearing gossip. To hear Prussia and any one else talking was like watching a one-sided game of graces. Somebody threw observation or information at her like a grace-hoop, and she, like a player who could do but one thing, caught it on a tart reply, as one catches the hoop on a stick.

"Come, now, Mistress Ware," cried Bridget, having duly reached her seam-needle, "what ever shall we do for Margaret? We can't let the poor body go to ruin with her childer."

"Send for the poormaster and have her

took to the hospital," said Prussia decisively.

"I was not axin' you," said Bridget, impolitely.

"You got a sensible answer, all the same," retorted Prussy.

"But," chimed a small voice, "what would the little children do without their mother?"

"True for ye, Angel. What would they now?" said Mrs. Mulrooney.

"If Margaret went to the hospital, now, and her children were scattered, she might never get them together again," began Mary.

"A good riddance," observed Prussia.

"No, Prussia," said Mary, in her usual mild tone. "My Book says well that a mother cannot forget her children. Now, what else has Margaret to cheer her?"

"Cheer?" interrupted Prussia; "rather to help her on to starvation!"

"That won't be, I believe," said Mary.

"The Bible says, 'He shall save the children of the needy;' and, 'Leave thy fatherless children with me; I will preserve them alive.' I can't believe in breaking these ties of the Lord's making. All Margaret needs is a little rest, a little help and a chance of work; then she'll take courage and do well by herself and her children. To see them growing up a decent, kind, industrious family together, will be better than seeing them scattered like a nest of young birds."

"You won't see them growing up decent, kind and industrious," persisted Prussia.

Mary would not argue, but replied, "Well, I can only fall back on the command to do as I'd be done by."

"Rose can take care of her mother and the baby, and I'll mind Derry," said little Angel, who was eleven years old. Her mother had made an excursion to look after her baking, and now took up the

subject: "Yes, I'll see afther Derry if me Angel says so, that I will; and Rose can tend the mother, and we'll put Billy and Lizzie to work—"

"A sight of work they'll do!" said Prussia.

"And we'll all try to do a bit for Margaret, and I'll see the poormaster and find if he'll not help her a little at home," said Mary.

"And I'll see him too, and tell him to take her to the hospital and put out the children, as ought to be done, and not have them living on what they never earned," said Prussia, tartly.

Bridget Mulrooney's eyes blazed at once. "We ask no help of you," she cried. "Do that if you dare! I'll set every man, woman, child and dog in all this neigh*bor*hood on yees."

Prussia slunk to her seat abashed.

"Mother, I'll go tell Lizzie and Billy how they must try to work and help their

mother," said Angeline; "and I'll bring Derry along to be our boy for a while. Now, Mrs. Ware, won't I be doing good, just as you told me?"

"Yes, bless you!" said Mary. "You're a gracious child, if ever there was one." The last part of her remark was made to herself. Bridget Mulrooney undertook to instruct Rose in the part assigned her, and to ask a cobbler's wife, the magnate of their vicinity, if she would give the Wishalows a little aid.

Through all the afternoon's talk there had run a single word of undertone—"Jessup."

"All comes of working for Jessup," said Mrs. Mulrooney.

"Starved on Jessup's wages," said the cobbler's wife.

"We trust none who work for Jessup," cried the firms of Wheeler and McElhaney.

"Jessup," quoth Prussia, smartly, "un-

derstood one thing mentioned in the Bible: he knew well how to grind the faces of the poor."

"Dear, dear!" said Mary. "The love of money *is* the root of all evil. Only to think how for love of money so much misery has come from Jessup!"

Meanwhile Jessup's store was closed. His executors were settling the estate he had coined from blood and tears, from hunger, cold and weary sighing. Laid away in a corner of Greenwood, no near relative to mourn him, no bosom friend left to know what little had been good in him—the restless feet, the clutching hands, the hard face, the cold, keen eyes, that had held the crafty, cruel soul, and been called Jessup, mouldered hour by hour away.

It is nearly evening. Angel has taken Derry into her charge and given him a clean skin, and then bread and molasses to comfort his inner and smear his outer

man. She has roused Billy to some desires to earn money like folks, find wood, and succor the family generally; but, alas! has instilled into Lizzie's mind no higher idea than that there are more ways to earn money for candy and penny sights than had been dreamt of in her philosophy heretofore.

And now along Broome street came one, kind of face and plain of garb, whom every ragged urchin in the street instinctively proclaimed a lady. She half paused before Prussia's window, lowered her white-lined parasol and looked in.

Prussia looked out and looked defiance. She had never seen this lady before; but every well-dressed person Prussia resolutely regarded as her foe, and this stranger's gray dress was of shining lustre, and she had French rosebuds in her bonnet. Prussia's look caused the lady slowly to raise the parasol until its white tassels swung above her head again, and

she moved on. She turned the corner as one in doubt, then looked into a window; and here the calm face of Mary Ware bent over a boy's coat, patient and trustworthy as if she were mother of half the world. Mary saw the lady stop, and looked out, inviting confidence.

"Is there a woman near here named Wishalow?"

"Yes, ma'am; two doors by, third floor, left hand."

"Is her name Margaret?"

"Yes, madam."

"She is in trouble? Her husband is drowned?"

"Yes, madam; and she has five small children, and is sick and very poor."

"Oh! Do you think she would mind seeing almost or quite a stranger?"

Prussia, as a matter of course, was glaring out from behind Mary. Mary replied: "She would be glad to see any one who is sorry for her, I'm sure."

"Thank you; I'll go and see her." The lady moved on.

"Bless her heart! she has a good, true look," said Mary, whose soul held a benediction for every one.

Prussia drew a long breath of astonishment at the subject of the conversation held by the stranger, and said: "'Sakes!" To this brilliant remark Mary made no reply. So overcome was Miss Wiggins with curiosity that, vest in hand and needle flying, she followed the lady to Mrs. Wishalow's room.

Many families in this poor neighborhood lay under the ban of Jessup. They had worked for his store in Catherine street, and he had ruthlessly ground down their wages. This lady, fair of face and true of heart, was, strange to say, a link between these victims of starvation prices and Jessup, whose gold had been scattered at his grave's mouth, and he carried captive into another world.

The lady toiled up the stairs of the tenant-house. They were darker and steeper than she had been used to.

Rose had come into the room, laid the baby in his cradle, and stood at the foot of the bed looking at her mother helplessly. Rose thought she ought to do something, she knew not what. There was a knock at the door. "Come in," said Rose, dolefully, then stared, open-mouthed. Margaret lay very quietly. Rose felt as if she were not asleep, but her eyes were closed. "Is this Mrs. Wishalow's?" asked the lady. Behind her loomed Prussia Wiggins making button-holes.

"Here's Miss Wishalow," said Rose the illiterate.

The lady paused, looked closely at the woman on the bed. "Margaret!" she said; "my *poor* Margaret, can this be you?"

Margaret Wishalow roused up a little,

returned the lady's gaze, her dull eye lighted with recognition. "Oh, Miss Agnes! Miss Agnes!" she sobbed, and was silent.

Rose was not ignorant of that name. She knew that Miss Agnes was in some sort her mother's patron saint, yet very flesh and blood. If here was Miss Agnes, here then was help, was friend, comfort, hope, a fairy land of goodly possibilities. Rose took courage; became audacious; the evil of her nature, as is our fallen wont, asserted itself before the good. Prussia Wiggins stood, buttonholing, just without the door-sill. Rose walked up, saying plumply, "Nobody axed *you* here," and shut the door in her face.

The door opened, and Prussia walked inside, replying to Rose, "S'pose you didn't, who cares?"

Meanwhile the lady held the sick woman's hand, saying, "How glad I am I

found you, Margaret! Let me help you as I did in old times."

"Miss," sobbed Margaret, "see what I've come to! Oh, if I'd never left your house!"

"You are discouraged, Margaret," said the visitor, gently; "you have these;" and her eyes wandered to the small head in the cradle and Rose near at hand.

"It's a drear world they've got into; better for them they'd never seen it," said Margaret, half aloud.

"That's sound sense for once," said Prussia, quick of ear.

"Your children shall be your best blessings, Margaret. How many have you?" said the lady, cheerfully.

"Five. There was another girl, less than Lizzie. I named her after you, miss, asking pardon; but she died a wee babe. She's better off than these."

We will admit that, glancing at the poverty-pinched faces and bare, dreary

room, the lady felt glad that her namesake's little lifeboat had glided soon into harbor, instead of struggling like these others with so turbulent a tide.

Mrs. Wishalow noticed the hasty glance about the room. "We're very poor, miss," she whispered. "There's naught left of all you gave me for outset thirteen years gone."

"Tell me all about it, Margaret; how has it come?"

"It's easy told," broke in Prussia. "Her husband drank like a fish—only he took to whisky instead of water—and she worked for Jessup: two things which is enough to ruin a crown prince."

"Jessup?"

"Jessup it is," retorted Prussia; "a beggarly skinflint on Catherine street, grinding down poor folks and selling clothes. 'Fashionable Tailor' he hangs out on his sign-board; and if it's fashionable to rob the poor—and like it is!—he

was fashionable enough. Five cents for a flannel shirt, ten cents for overalls, and found! There, now; wouldn't a rat starve on that, let alone feeding five mouths?"

"Oh, Margaret! I wish I had known this before; and now you need everything. Speak freely to me. I'm your friend."

"Yes, Miss Agnes; but belike you ain't Miss Agnes now?"

"Ever that to you, Margaret. Tell me all."

"I don't know where to begin," said Mrs. Wishalow.

"Father's dead, drownded, waked, buried," said Rose, like an auctioneer reading a catalogue.

"I know it; I saw the name in the paper; that brought me here. It is not a common name."

"*I* never heard it before," said Miss Wiggins.

"We ain't got no money," said Rose, more interested, "nor no clothes, nor no work; and mother's in debt;" saying the last words as if oppressed by a mighty burden.

"In debt? And how much?" asked the lady.

"Why," said Rose, holding up her forefinger and inspecting it, "there's fifty cents to Mrs. Wheeler;" then holding up her middle finger, "there's twenty cents to Mrs. McElhaney."

"Is that all? That is easy paid," said the visitor.

"Hum!" grunted Miss Wiggins, "'is that all?' It takes some time to earn seventy cents from Jessup; and it *is* all, 'cause poor folks knows better nor to trust poor folks."

The guest was in a quandary. She saw that judicious aid was immediately needed, but Margaret seemed utterly listless and could suggest nothing. Prussia

was evidently everybody's enemy—next person to him who is nobody's enemy but his own. Rose was voluble, but ignorant.

"I wish I knew some one who could tell me what to do to help you best; somebody who could look after you a little." The lady was unused to dealing with the city poor.

"Better send for Bible Mary," suggested Rose.

Prussia bit off her thread, shook out her vest and flounced out of the room. The lady had ignored her until even curiosity could not endure it.

"Send for Mary," said Mrs. Wishalow, and dropped into apathy. Rose darted off; the baby cried, and the lady took him up, sighing over the meagre face and pinched arms, so different from the chubby, dimpled ones that awaited her at home. She looked relieved when, coming in with Rose, she saw the kindly

woman who had spoken to her at the corner window on Sullivan street.

"Here she is," said Rose, ignorant of introductions.

"You are the Bible-woman of this district?" said the lady.

"No, madam; I do not know what that is; it ought to be something very good, from the name."

"I thought the little girl said you were a Bible-woman."

"I'm Rose. I called her 'Bible Mary,' 'cause she's allus a-reading it and preaching it."

"My name is Mrs. Warren," said the lady. "Margaret, here, lived five years in my mother's family, and left us when she was married. I lost sight of her until I saw her husband's death mentioned in the paper, and recognized the name. I want to do all I can to help her and make her comfortable, and I want you to tell me how I can do it, for you are more

acquainted with these matters than I am."

Mary Ware hesitated a moment.

"Never mind the money; speak out," said the lady.

"Then, ma'am, she is only discouraged and worn out. A full cupboard and fuel-box, a little money on hand and a promise of work will cure her up, and God bless you for your goodness!"

"Margaret," said the lady, brightly, "have you lost your old skill at the wash-tub?"

"I guess not," said Margaret, faintly.

"Get well, then, in a hurry; for I appoint you my washerwoman weekly at a dollar a day, and I can find you three other places at seventy-five cents a day. You need not be wearing out your life at slop-sewing. Cheer up, now; I want to hear you singing over my tubs as you did over my mother's. Here, Rose; run pay that seventy cents of debt you men-

tioned, and buy candles with all the change. May I ask your name?" she said to Mary, politely as to a queen.

"Mary Ware, ma'am."

"Now, Mrs. Ware, I'm going to order our patient a dose of tea and beefsteak, and I'll trouble you to see it prepared. I shall come here another day. I must see all your children next time, Margaret, and I shall bring this little fellow some new clothes. Mrs. Ware, could you go a few blocks with me to bring back some things I shall buy for Margaret? It is time I was going home."

"Yes, indeed, ma'am," said Mary, heartily.

Mrs. Warren laid the baby beside its mother. As she bent down she said, gently, "Margaret, do you read your Bible yet?"

"It is lost, Miss Agnes," said Margaret, in a whisper.

"Do you not remember there is only

one sure Refuge in time of trouble? Will you not call on the Lord?"

"You have brought back the past, miss," said Margaret, still clinging to the old-time title. "I'll try; I will."

Together Mrs. Warren and Mary went along the street. "You must do what you can for Mrs. Wishalow," said the lady, "and I will pay you."

"I'll help her all I can, willingly."

"And I believe you can minister to her soul as well as to her body," said Mrs. Warren.

"I can tell her what the Lord has taught me," said Mary.

"That is the best of teaching; go to her with that," said the lady.

CHAPTER III.

THE MISER'S MONEY.

WHILE Mrs. Warren was making her purchases, Mary Ware stood quietly by the store door looking into the street. Certainly the sight of so many things which stern poverty forced her to deny herself, but which were necessary to her comfort, nearly tempted her to covetousness; but she strove to say for herself, "The will of the Lord be done," and to be thankful that Margaret was to be supplied with all she needed. In a short time Mrs. Warren approached her, and the clerk handed Mary a large wicker basket filled with parcels. The lady and the seamstress stepped upon the pavement. "This," said Mrs. Warren, touching

the topmost and largest package, "you will accept for yourself; and here," she added, as she held out a folded bill, "is a trifle that you must keep also."

"By no means, madam," said Mary. "I do not deserve or expect such kindness from a stranger."

"You surely will not deprive me of the privilege of giving you this?" said the lady, with a winning smile. "The Lord has promised to repay me. And if I depend on you to care a little for Margaret, I cannot take your time without payment, for your time is your money."

"When I can give nothing else, madam," said Mary, "I may give my time to a needy neighbor."

"In some other case give it, then," said the lady; "but if you will still refuse my offer, I must go back and cook Margaret's supper myself, though it is growing into twilight."

"Thank you, then," said Mary, frankly, taking the money. "You have an art that is rare, madam; you know how to give so that it is a pleasure to receive."

Mrs. Warren saw a car coming that she wished to take. "I will call on you to-morrow," she said; "here, buy Mrs. Wishalow fuel with this dollar. Good-night;" and she stepped into the car, wondering much at Mary's dignity and refinement; while Mary went on to Mrs. Wishalow's, bought fuel, put the children to bed, cooked supper, and withal comforted the widow's heart by so many wise and good words that they were better to her than medicine.

At last Mary went to her own room.

"A pretty thing, this!" cried Prussy. "You'll get to the poorhouse by your goodness; mind I told you so. You've spent an hour and a half over those beggars, and you a woman having her living to earn."

"Well, I am more than paid for it this time," said Mary. "See, here is a dollar bill, and look at this parcel—rice, tea, sugar, cheese, smoked beef!—who ever saw so many good things here before? Now, Prussy, you shall have tea with me. I wish Richard were here," she added, with a sigh.

Prussia evidently did not join in this wish. She, however, cried, eagerly, "Is all that for you? a present? from the lady?" hurrying her questions as Mary nodded a reply to each. "Well, there, now! That *is* the *first* time you ever made anything by religion and charity, and," she added, consolingly, "it will be the *last*."

"I don't look to reward in this world," said Mary. "My Master has promised me treasure higher up. However, I can be thankful for good things when he sends them. Move up, Prussy; we'll have the tea when it's drawn, and we'll thank the Lord for it."

"I'll thank *you*," said Prussia the incorrigible.

"Prussia," said Mary, "do you know what a Bible-woman is?"

"No; unless it's one summat like yourself," said Miss Wiggins.

"That lady asked me if I was one this afternoon, and I said no," said Mary.

"You might easy have said yes," replied Prussia.

"She said '*the* Bible-woman,' as if it was something particular."

"'*The*' or '*a*,' it's all one," said Prussia; "and you're particular enough, mercy knows!"

The next day Mrs. Warren called on Mary before going to see Mrs. Wishalow.

"Indeed, madam, she is much better," said Mary, in reply to a question about Margaret; "your goodness has cheered her up."

"Yes, yes," said Prussia; "there's plenty willing to lie in bed and be waited

on that ain't willing to take hold and work, like *I* has to."

"I'm sure Margaret has always worked hard," said Mary; "and all she wants now is to be able to see daylight and have something to do."

"See daylight?" snapped Prussia. "*I* see daylight through the hole I make with the point of my needle, and *I* never found a lack of work."

"I shall furnish Margaret with work," said Mrs. Warren.

"It did me good to see Billy this morning," said Mary; "how like a man he set out to help his mother!"

"'Twon't last long," said Prussy; "they're all bad ones."

"I don't think he is a bad boy," said Mary; "he has never had clothes fit to go to school, nor has he had any regular employment. All boys get into mischief when they have no business. I mind well what my mother taught me:

"'Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.'"

"And," said Mrs. Warren, who had lived but a year in the city, and unfortunately had confined her observations to her own class in society, "is there any choice of employment for children such as Margaret's?"

"Yes, indeed," said Mary; "there are hundreds of children of five years old and upward who have regular business and support themselves. Like grown people, children require something to set them up in their trades; and what is only a trifle in itself, is to many a fortune they can't get hold of; and, for want of it, hundreds have to pick up a living helter-skelter. And then there's as many other children who are tossed about like dead leaves on the stream; and some die, and others get to Refuges, Homes, Houses of Correction and so on. Now and then the good Lord's mercy sends some

Christian to pick up one and take care of it."

"Why," said the lady, shading her eyes with her hand, "this is a horrible picture of childhood; how came you to know so much of it?"

"I have looked at it here, on Greene, Broome and Sullivan streets, for ten years," said Mary, with a sigh.

"Terrible! terrible!" said Mrs. Warren, half to herself, reflecting on what Mrs. Ware had said. "What can be done? Can it ever be relieved?"

"Ah," said Mary, "if God's people from church to church in all this city would join hands, they, by doing, each one, all they could, would make a strong net, and gather in all these swarms of children as a fisherman's seine gathers in the fish."

"And I," said Mrs. Warren, "have lived in this city a year, with some leisure and some money to spare, and I have

done nothing, known nothing, for all this!"

"Well," said Mary, lifting her grave eyes from her work, "perchance what loitering *has* been, the Lord will attribute to ignorance of his work; but I do feel that, when one knows of it, they must call to mind their orders from the Head of the house: 'Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with thy might.'"

Even the tart and fearless Prussia lifted her eyes at what she considered Mary's audacity. But Mary meant no audacity. She had but one purpose in her humble life—the service of the Lord. She spoke to Mrs. Warren, not as to a superior in wealth and station, but, sinking all inferior thoughts, she addressed her frankly, gravely, humbly, as one Christian should speak to another.

To these remarks Mrs. Warren, a woman like-minded with Mary Ware, replied: "You have shown me a side of life

of which I had not the least imagination; I thank you for it; it reveals to me a new means of doing good."

"To work for *children*," said Mary, "is to do the very hopefulest kind of work. Of course, if the children were all right, the grown-folks that are to be would be right too."

"Certainly," smiled Mrs. Warren; "it is the old story of the twig and the tree."

"Yes, madam; mother used to say that too. Mother was a great woman for that kind of sayings."

"But to go back farther yet," said Mrs. Warren; "if there were good mothers, there would be better children. Why not work for the mothers?"

"Then, if you're going to the root of matters," said Mary, "you must go farther back yet, and work at their paymasters."

"Tell me how that is," said Mrs. War-

ren; "you know more about the poor than I do."

"Why," said Mary, "these folks are very poor, and have no friends; and can't get out as day's-workers anywhere, because people won't trust them. The Bible says 'the destruction of the poor is their poverty,' and it's true enough. These poor women bind shoes, make caps and do slop-sewing. They get the very smallest pay, and for that, work day and night. They lack food, fire, rest and clothes, and the children run wild because the mothers have not comfort or care to give them."

"Yes," chimed in Prussy, "work for men like Jessup."

"Jessup again," said Mrs. Warren to herself; then aloud, "What can you tell me of Mr. Jessup?"

"He's dead, poor man!" said Mary, "and it seems wrong even to tell the truth of him. But he was one of the

hardest of all hard paymasters. Twelve or fifteen women in this quarter worked for him. These women had from three to seven children apiece, and Jessup throve by giving them wages that crushed out their very life. Oh, madam! those that give that sort of wages crush bodies and souls too!" Mary spoke strongly, but worked even while she spoke.

Mrs. Warren sighed, as if oppressed. The theme had been handled in a way Prussia could not enter upon, and there was a moment's silence. Then Mary, feeling the oppression, said, "Please let us talk about something else. Won't you tell me what a Bible-woman is, madam?"

"A Bible-woman," replied Mrs. Warren, "is a Christian woman who is employed by some able persons to go about a certain part of the city reading the Bible, teaching the poor about religious

and family duties in a friendly way, and helping and encouraging them; caring for the sick, making note of destitute cases, and reporting all to a lady who acts as manager, furnishes relief and gives advice."

"Lawk!" cried Prussia, glad to find something to say; "and what pay might one get for such work?"

Her loud tones drowned Mary's gentle murmur, "Ah, what a blessed life!"

"I suppose the salary differs with different places and individuals," said Mrs. Warren.

"I wouldn't mind being one myself," said Prussia. "It is pleasanter running about than sewing for dear life by a window ten mortal hours a day, or more—oftener twelve or fourteen. As to the work you made mention on, I could do all but the reading well enough, and that I might make shift of; poor folk have no call to be over particular."

"But a Bible-woman," said Mrs. Warren, gently, "must have good judgment; and, more than all, that religion, pure and undefiled, that exalts Jesus and his love, and longs for the salvation of souls—a knowledge born above, and that is beyond all price."

"Oh!" said Prussia, pursing up her mouth and critically examining a watch-pocket; "oh! oh! oh! Well, I don't doubt I've got as much religion as is good for folks on Broome and Sullivan; yes; but if you want one over-much inclined to Methody, there's Mary Ware. She's one of your Bible-women—just it—only the salary. *She* totes about after the sick when she ought to be quilting linings and setting sleeves. *She* carries the Bible in her pocket constant, and I may say in her head. On Sundays she gets Rose Wishalow and Angel Mulrooney, and a pair of Miss Logan's tow-heads, and talks, and reads, and preaches. You just ought

to hear her. She's turned Angel nigh wild—"

"I ain't *wild*," said a soft voice; and all turned to see Angel standing in the door with her white face, her large, earnest eyes, and her long golden hair combed out in bright waves over her shoulders, half hiding her deformity, and holding Dermot Wishalow by the hand. Dermot was scrubbed and combed to a nicety, and wore a neat pink and white pinafore.

Angel's eyes questioned Prussia so closely that that worthy woman snapped out, "Wild enough! Ain't you talking texts, and right and wrong, and dying, and heaven and all that—no end?"

"Oh!" said Angel, enlightened; then crossing over to Mary: "Don't Derry look nice? I washed him, and that's one of my pinafores."

Mrs. Warren held out her hand to draw Angel to her side, and gently stroked her soft hair.

"How nice you are!" said Angel, frankly. "Do you like me?"

Mrs. Warren's smile seemed answer enough, and Angel went on: "And you don't mind?" Her expression referred the minding to her deformity.

"No, no; not at all," Mrs. Warren said, eagerly.

"Nor mother don't" said Angel, delighted; "she loves me just as much, or more; but," her tone was lower, "Prussy does."

"Of course," said Prussia, whose quick ears caught every word; "any one likes straight folks best."

Mrs. Warren felt the unkindness of this, and, to make amends to Angel and testify her own good-will, asked, "Have you a doll?"

"Yes'm; an old one."

"And wouldn't you like a nice new one, with pretty clothes?"

"Oh, I don't care much for dolls," said

Angel; "but I'll tell you what I'm saving up money to buy, and that's a little work-basket and thread and needles; and when I get a big bundle of patches, I'm going to make a quilt for me when I'm a woman!"

Mrs. Warren rose to go to Mrs. Wishalow's. "Would you like to be a Bible-woman?" she said to Mary.

"Ah, yes; but it would be easy to find one better fit," said Mary.

A fortnight later Mrs. Warren was sitting by her window in her low chair. A small roll of bank-notes lay on her lap, and as they were stirred by the air coming through the open window, they showed the mark $100 on the corners. They had just been paid her by the executor of the estate of a deceased great-uncle.

Mrs. Warren's eyes were dreamily fixed on the slips of paper; they seemed, in her reverie, spotted with blood and wet with tears. As they rustled, their

sound seemed sighs, and stifled groans, and whispered entreaties, and prayers for retribution; and this because, for the week past, Mrs. Warren had gone daily to Sullivan street, and had seen many of the denizens of that quarter; and the great-uncle, whose small legacy this money was, was no other than Jessup. Her great-uncle, who, having taken some pique against a generation or two back, had never met his niece, and consequently had small claim on her love or regrets. Probably his sole reason for leaving a few hundreds to Mrs. Warren was that by so doing he might irritate somebody else, though who that somebody was she had no means of knowing.

Presently Mrs. Warren gathered the bank-notes in her hand and went down to the library. Her husband was writing at the table, and she went behind his chair and held the bills over his shoulder.

"Here is that money Uncle Jessup left me."

"What is the matter? is it counterfeit?" he asked, looking up from his work.

"Oh no; but were we not rich enough for all our needs before we got this? Did we wish it, or seek for it, or do we need what it will buy?"

"Certainly it is not of much importance to us, but money is always good in its way. Use it as pleases you best. What will you buy? Books, pictures, a statue or two, some bronzes? You like those things. Get what will make the poor old miser's memory seem the least unpleasant."

"I know how he got it!" cried Mrs. Warren. "He ground it out of the poor, out of wretched mothers and neglected children; he got it by pressing poor creatures down into such misery and despair that they do not care what they do, and

so rush into horrible crimes for the public to be shocked at, and for you lawyers and judges to punish."

"Yes," said Judge Warren, gravely; "thank God that there are large-hearted philanthropists to counterbalance mischief such as his, or the country would be in a fair way for ruin."

"That is just it," exclaimed Mrs. Warren, eagerly; "and I want to do my little part in this compensation system, and turn this money back in a refreshing stream upon the territory whence it was drained. I want to give it again to those upon whom he had committed legalized robberies. I want to give it to those poor who have made my heart ache for their wretchedness."

"But, my dear woman," said Judge Warren, drawing the money from his wife's hand and spreading it out before him on the table, "if you go along Broome and Sullivan streets and deal

out this money as your kind impulses prompt you, you may do incalculable mischief. The old story of a feast one day and a famine the next will be realized, your money will be wasted on unworthy objects who impose upon you, and I fear he who can lie fastest will get the most."

"Oh, your honor," said Mrs. Warren, drawing down the corners of her mouth, "just hear my plan, which is not quite so insane as yours."

"Ah, you have a plan? Let me hear it by all means."

"This money, your honor," said Mrs. Warren, merrily, "will support a Bible-woman for two years, and leave a hundred and fifty each year to use in the wisest manner that can be devised for the benefit of the needy."

"And, unless you mean to keep this money tied up in a long stocking, after the story-book style, there will be a little

interest coming from it before you get it all spent."

"So there will; I had forgotten that. We will keep the interest to set up some little boy in a legitimate business, and thus save to the city—item, one thief."

"And whom have you in your mind to engage for Bible-woman? Mary Ware, of whom I have heard so much?"

"Exactly. What an admirable guesser you are!"

"I advise you first to see her pastor, and ask his opinion as to her suitableness for the work. And you will act as lady manager?"

"Yes; but I hope to beguile some of my good friends into taking an interest in it."

"I see now but one objection to urge: in two years your capital will be exhausted, and the work will have to drop —perhaps just when well begun."

"By no means," said Mrs. Warren.

"If the work is good—if the cause is of the Lord—he will prosper it, and will not let it fall to the ground. I could believe that in two years he would open new means of supporting the enterprise, and that in the name of the Lord we might go forward."

"Well," said Judge Warren, gathering up the money and handing it back to his wife, "take it and use it as you propose, and may a blessing go with it. I don't know that a blessing could follow it if put to any other use."

Mrs. Warren divided the notes into two parcels. Giving the larger to her husband, she said: "Take care of that, and get ever so much interest on it in behalf of that boy, whoever he is, that we will set up in business. I will see Mary Ware's pastor and Mary herself, and get this little plan in operation as soon as possible."

And so, poor, miserly Jessup, this is

the way your money is going! You would have your pound of flesh; you gathered in your money, dime by dime, at the peril of your soul, and what comes of it? Hardly in your coffers is it before the Lord takes it out and sends it back to those from whom it was wrung—sends it back with goodly interest added to it in tender human sympathy and heavenly truth!

CHAPTER IV.

SETTING UP IN BUSINESS.

AS Mrs. Warren turned to leave the library, a girl of seventeen ran in, her pretty face lit up with smiles, her fair, wavy hair pushed off her forehead, her sleeves rolled up past the elbow, a bib-apron of white dimity pinned over her alpaca dress, and a delightful look of playing-at-work in her whole appearance.

"Oh, Aunt Agnes!" she cried, "I've had the greatest time getting those things down from the attic! Jim has helped me, and we've made them look splendid. I've almost a mind to hire an attic and furnish with them, and play at being poor and keeping attic. *Could* you give me some plain sewing, ma'am—some of

the jointilman's shirts, for instance? Shure, I'd do thim well for the joodge;" and the lively girl swept a curtsy which was over-graceful for the Irishwoman she was personifying.

"Indeed," said Mrs. Warren, laughing, "I cannot promise you any sewing, for I am afraid 'the joodge' might put his arms through some of the stitches, mistaking them for arm-holes; but I should be happy to go and see this furniture you have been furbishing up."

In Mrs. Warren's attic had stood a heterogeneous assemblage of household articles, part of which she had banished from her own rooms, other part had been in the attic when she entered the house, abandoned by the previous occupant, and the rest had been sent there by a relative who left town in haste. This "household stuff," Jim the hired boy, under the direction of Miss Kate Fairly, Judge Warren's niece, had set up in the back area, and

cleaned and polished and mended to the best of his ability. Jim evidently thought it work that was almost play. He stood grinning from ear to ear, his face curiously streaked and spotted with stove polish, and his latest work before him, in the shape of an antiquated little cook-stove newly cleaned.

"See what a love of a stove!" cried Kate; "and look at the jewel of a kettle! Jim is going to solder up that hole, and then it will be all right. Here's the bedstead. I sent Jim out to buy a cord for the old-fashioned object, and you can find a mattrass and bedding, I'm sure, Aunt Agnes. Ah, here's the table; we nailed a piece on that foot, and Jim put a hinge on the leaf. I think Jim ought to be a joiner. How much do you think it will take to set him up in business?"

Jim here burst into a loud laugh; but suddenly remembering that that was not respectful, checked himself by inadver-

tently thrusting the stove-brush into his mouth, which at once yawned on Miss Kate such an inky cavern that she was obliged to retire to the entry to try and finish her laughing. Meanwhile, Mrs. Warren examined the remainder of the furniture—a pot, pan, washboard, two chairs, a looking-glass, a mat, and a heterogenous collection of crockery. She then bade Jim wash his face and go for a dray to take the things to Mrs. Wishalow.

In these weeks since Mrs. Warren had come to comfort her in her trouble, Margaret Wishalow had recovered much of her early strength and energy, and was now ready to go to work to help herself and her children.

At first, Margaret, completely broken in spirit and exhausted in body, had lain on her bed, seeming to care for nothing; but the increased comfort and cheerfulness of her children, the strength slowly

coming from rest and good food, and the plain, kind reasoning of Mary Ware roused her to some interest in what was going on. Margaret had been a good housewife in her early days, and now, as she lay in her bed, the old instincts of careful management began to stir in her as she saw Rose awkwardly trying to mend a decent garment recently given to Derry, or, with the best intentions, stupidly ruining wholesome food. These things stirred Margaret to activity. She sat up in bed and mended the frock, and got out of bed to make the beef-soup to her liking. Once out of bed, she did not care to go back; but, finding brush and comb conveniently laid on a shelf, she dressed herself, smoothed her hair, and in a day or two began to help Rose keep the room in order. The greatest agent in rousing Margaret, making her hopeful, stirring the nearly dead embers of her self-respect, and winning her to make

new efforts for the welfare of her family, was a clock.

Mrs. Warren had in one of her back bed-rooms a clock long unused. One day some good angel whispered her to give it to Margaret. She had it cleaned, and soon it was ticking and striking on a shelf in Sullivan street. With the clock came a new era in Margaret's domestic life; the cheerful, busy days of her service with Mrs. Warren's mother were recalled. The bitter years of going lower and lower in poverty and sorrow were dead; the clock ticked their requiem, and hour and minute hands seemed burying them out of sight, like birds burying the babes in the wood. Margaret was herself again. She washed her babe daily, undertook to teach Rose how to work, bade Billy be a good boy, and said vaguely that Lizzie should go to school some day. She was sadly hampered, however, by lack of nearly all

household furniture and utensils; often she was ready to cry, "What is the use of trying to do anything? I can never get things together to live like decent people."

In the midst of all this came the dray with the goods that had recently stood in Mrs. Warren's attic, and more recently had been polished by Jim in the back area.

When the drayman and a lad from the street stumbled into Mrs. Wishalow's upper room with the stove, and information that there was a load of "stuff" at the door below, the whole family flew to the window to see. At once Rose, Billy and Lizzie ran frantically down to bring up the things, while the baby shrieked unheard by its amazed mother, and Dermot fell down stairs unheeded.

"Goody gracious!" cried Billy, as he ran up stairs with a pot and tea-kettle, while Lizzie followed hard after with the looking-glass; "mustn't Mrs. Warren be

rich as anything, to give away all these things?"

"Yes, sir!" said Lizzie; "I shouldn't wonder if she had two hund*ered* dollars in the bank. I 'spect she gives away things 'cause she just don't know what to do with her money."

"Some folkses like to give away," said Billy; "Bible Mary does, and Mrs. Warren's just like her; why, she give me a reg'lar preachment t'other day."

"I don't like preachments," said Lizzie; "I like candy and nuts, and I want a parasol with beads on it; and if ever I get rich, I'm going to the theatre." Here the children were crowded out of the way by the drayman carrying the bedstead, the boy with a huge bundle of bedding on his head, and Rose valiantly lugging up the crockery. Billy and Lizzie fell into the rear of this procession, and Lizzie concluded her remarks to her brother by saying, "And I don't care for Bible

Mary; she seems like as she was a-looking right into you."

The men were gone. Margaret sat on the side of her bed, crying violently. The astonished children stood about her.

"Are you sick, mother?" asked Billy.

"Are you sorry, mother?" urged Rose.

"You'd oughter be glad," said Lizzie. "I never seed sech a stock of things in my life, and all our'n!"

"Don't ky," shouted Dermot; "here's a ba'kit with bread and cookies into it!" He pulled the wicker-basket to his mother's feet. Margaret, relieved by her tears, was wiping her eyes. "It overcame me," she explained to her children, "to see all these things, and to feel as if there was a chance of being something yet, and not to be sure of getting to the poorhouse, or seeing you in jail for stealing your bread." At these miserable words Rose put her frock-skirt to her eyes, Billy begun to whimper, "Don't

you be so hard on a fellow, mother;" while Lizzie, who understood thoroughly the science of crying, lifted a piercing shriek, ably seconded by the baby, and toned down into a melancholy wail; Dermot, however, kept shouting, "Don't ky; here's a ba'kit of cookies!"

Margaret stooped over the precious basket, and saw, truly enough, bread and ginger-cakes, but, worthier than they, a Bible in plain print. As she took it from its wrapper she saw a slip of paper, whereon was plainly written, "*Margaret, read this each day to your children.*" What could she do but resolve to obey this monition of her benefactress?

Busy hands soon put the new furniture in its place. The stove was set up, and Rose was eager to "get tea like other folks."

When the meal was cleared away, Margaret bade her children sit down, and said to them: "Mrs. Warren has sent

me a Bible, and says I must read it to you every day. If folks minded what the Bible says, there wouldn't be nigh so much trouble nor badness in this world. If I'd minded it, and all Miss Agnes' mother used to say to me, I'd be a better mother, and belike you'd be better children."

"You're good mother enough," said Billy, gallantly.

"We don't want no better," said Rose, getting tearful behind the baby's head.

Margaret now opened her Bible, and Providence doubtless directed her to the twentieth chapter of Matthew, of which she read half, quite distinctly, the children being much interested. Billy, however, suggested that a penny a day was "cheap wages," and Lizzie replying that there were "lots of things to buy for a penny—she'd like one every day."

Rose put the three younger children to bed; Derry, to his triumph, being tucked

into the "new bed," which he was to occupy with Billy. Rose and Billy retired to the most remote corner of the room, where they kept up a long whispering, their mother meanwhile sewing by her new table.

The next day, Kate Fairly insisted upon going to see Mary Ware and Margaret. Mrs. Warren sent the cook, an elderly woman, to act as the young lady's escort. Early in the afternoon, while Mrs. Warren was calling upon Mary's pastor, Kate sat smiling and chatting in Mary's room, making the coatmaker think of flowers and sunshine, and even beguiling Prussia from her usual acidity. Kate met at Mary's somebody whom she wanted to see—no other person than Angel Mulrooney. Kate had in a paper a nice little work-basket made of chintz, and furnished with pockets stuffed with spools of thread, a needlebook full of assorted needles, a steel thimble, a pair of scissors, a

cushion filled with pins, and in the centre of the basket a goodly bundle of calico; a grand beginning for that famous quilt that should cover Angel when she was a woman. Angel was in a maze of delight while she examined her treasures. "All for me?" she cried. "How good you are! Oh, I know you are one of those good ones the Bible tells of, that God loved; he must love you a great deal. I know you love him, you are so kind."

The pink on Kate's cheek deepened to red; she looked about, feeling uncomfortable, and her eye fell on Rose, who she thought felt uncomfortable too. But in truth Rose felt simply awkward. "I ought to have a present for her," said Kate to herself; then putting her hand in her pocket she found her porte-monnaie. Taking out twenty-five cents, she held it out to Rose, saying, "I did not know if you would like a basket; you can buy yourself a present with this."

Rose took the money quickly, saying, "Thank you, ma'am; I like this most."

Very likely Miss Kate would have been better pleased if Rose had been less prompt about accepting the money, and had needed to be urged a little. The conventional child of the story-books has usually a "native delicacy" that shrinks from receiving money from strangers. Rose, however, had no scruples; she wanted money very much, and was delighted to get it.

"A reg'lar young beggar!" hissed Prussia.

Rose dared not reply before the stranger, but her brow frowned and her black eyes darted fierce looks at Prussia, over baby's shoulder.

Angel soon wanted to go and show her gift to her mother, and Rose went with her to find Billy; both went off so cheerfully that Kate said to Mary, "How little it takes to make them happy!"

"It was very kind of you to remember them," said Mary. "Poor dears! there has been but little to brighten their lives, more especially for Rose."

"And did Margaret like the things we sent her yesterday?" cried Kate.

"Yes, indeed, miss; you cannot think how much hope and comfort that cart-load of furniture brought them."

"That was my idea, to send those things you know," said Kate with the freedom of sixteen. "I spoke to Aunt Agnes about it, and helped Jim furbish them up."

"May the Lord reward you!" said Mary.

"That's just it," said Kate, confidentially. "I *do* think that giving is the easiest way to get good. You know all it says in the Bible about giving a cup of water being rewarded, and the prophet's reward, and all that."

"Yes," said Mary, "I believe the

generous heart is always blessed. There are some people that love to give so well that giving is its own reward, and I think the Lord often rewards the liberal by a fair portion of this world's goods. But you know, dear miss, that we cannot buy heaven by our liberality—we can't get into glory on the strength of what we've given away down here."

"Well," said Kate, "I know that is what aunt and uncle and the ministers believe. But I have read those texts about giving over and over; I like them the best of any in the Bible; and—I never said it to any one before—but I do think they mean that those who are generous in giving shall get to heaven; why some of them can't mean anything else."

"God forbid that the generous should *not* get to heaven!" cried Mary, "but they will not get there because of their gifts; it's because of the love of Jesus for

them, and theirs for him, that they'll reach that good land. Bless you, my child! it's not by *giving*, but by *receiving*, one gets to heaven!"

Kate sighed, shook out her dress, and drew some sort of sketch on the floor with the top of her parasol. "I must go to see Margaret," she said; "I will call here again some time with my aunt." The cook had preferred to spend the time of Miss Kate's visit to Mary in gossip on the sidewalk; she now followed the young lady toward Mrs. Wishalow's. They passed Angel, Rose and Billy, sitting on a step in close consultation; the baby had slipped from Rose's lap and crawled to the edge of the walk, and was inspecting the slimy gutter. As Miss Kate passed, startled by her magnificence, or forgetting his usual efforts to maintain his equilibrium, he lost his balance, and, like the unfortunate helmsman of Æneas, rolled upon his head. His

dismal situation broke up the council the children were holding.

The subject the children had had under discussion was no less than how Billy should earn his living. Many times, during his ten years of life, he had earned a little money, but, by what had seemed to him some miserable magic, as soon as the money was gained his father found it out and took it from him to buy rum. It may have been that Billy's countenance in its unusual complacency betokened the presence of money in his pocket, or he may have jingled the pennies in said pocket until the sweet music intended for his own ears met his father's also; however it was, poor Billy had been so often robbed that he had grown hopeless of benefiting any one by his exertions. When his father was dead and his mother sick, Billy mustered up all his energy to try and earn a little money for food and fuel. Everything

seemed against him; he could barely raise a penny a day, and nightly returned disheartened to Rose, to tell her how little he got by his best efforts, and that unless he had money to "set up" with, he "couldn't do one thing."

Where money to set up with would be obtained, how little could be made to do and what would be the best way to use it, were matters Rose and Billy had argued many times in corners.

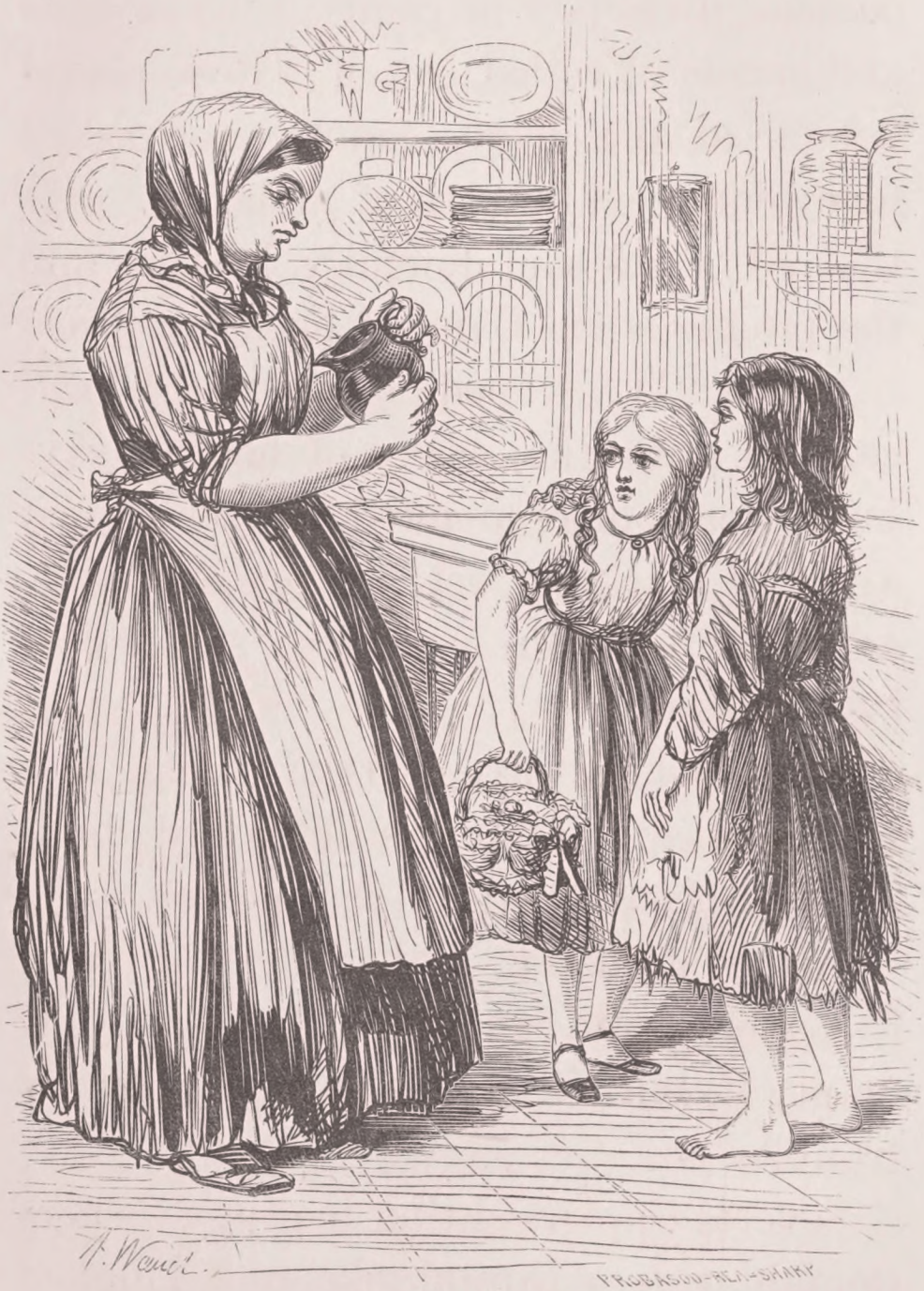
Rose proposed that Billy should set up as a candy-merchant; if they could buy some molasses, Rose thought she could make some candy under Mrs. Mulrooney's tuition; Rose and Angel would pull it into sticks; Billy should beg a bit of board for a tray at the ship-yard, and enter fairly upon business. But where was the money to come from? The children had found their mother apt to be discouraging and to look despondently upon their plans; and moreover they had

never known her to have twenty-five cents to spare, and twenty-five cents was the least that would safely inaugurate the new project. They had concluded that Billy should keep every penny he earned until the requisite amount was gathered together, but in a whole week he had earned but five cents' and one of those dear cents impish Lizzie had run off with to buy peanuts. Now that Rose had the longed-for money, she could hardly believe her own senses. How much better was this precious quarter dollar than Angel's fine basket! She found Billy as soon as possible, and with Angel had just settled upon the way of laying out their small capital when the baby rolled into the gutter. Matters about the baby were soon set right. Angel said she would mind the little creature while Billy ran to look for his smooth white board, and Rose, with a high sense of her own importance, set out to buy the molasses.

Rose knew no better than to go to Mrs. Wheeler's, where all her life she had been sent to buy necessary articles in amounts from one to five cents' worth. She did not know that her money would buy more and better molasses at the nice grocery where Mrs. Warren had filled the basket for Mary Ware. Rose had a sort of idea that poor people must trade at poor places. Had she mentioned her business to Mary or Mrs. Mulrooney, she would have been told where she could buy to the best advantage, but she was too eager to stop to ask advice from any one. With her large brown pitcher she hasted away to the wretched little den, indicated by a board considered a triumph of art, and bearing this inscription—

Mrs. Weeler gRoceRyss,

and having its dim little window-panes filled up with small salt sacks, herrings transfixed on big pins, horrible-looking



"Molasses has riz!"

New York Bible-Woman. Page 113.

cookies, dirty jars of candy, rows of pins and spools of soiled cotton. Rose placed herself at the grimy counter and asked for twenty cents' worth of molasses. "Is that all?" she said dolefully, looking into the pitcher when Dame Wheeler returned it. Mrs. W. leaned against the wall covered with the scores of her whisky-buying customers, planted her feet against a kit of mackerel, set her arms akimbo, and looking severely at Rose, said, "Molasses has riz."

Rose took the five cents of change, but in her disappointment still looked dubiously at the contents of the pitcher.

"If you don't like it," said Mrs. Wheeler, "you can give it back and I'll empty it, but I'll keep the money for my trouble."

Several tipplers sitting in dingy corners thought this a capital joke, and laughed feebly at the woman's wit. Rose went out disconsolate.

She went up to Mrs. Mulrooney's room, where Angel had shown the new work-basket and detailed the plan for Billy. Mrs. Mulrooney was in high good-humor, and ready to do all she could for Rose.

"If you'll show me how to make it just once, Mrs. Mulrooney," said Rose, "I'll do it alone next time. Here is a five-pence for a bit of butter and flour to put in it. I want it ever so nice, if this molasses will make it; only see how little and black it is, for twenty cents."

"Little and black, sure enough! Take advisement by me, honey, and lay out your money at a decent place, an' you haven't but a dime to spend. I larn't that long enough ago. How would I thrive widout? Never waste a penny by Mrs. Wheeler, as sells poison to folk. But never mind, jewel; what's done's done, and can't be helped; what can't be cured must be endured; and by that same token it's no use crying for spilt milk.

We'll make fair candy to-day, and we'll keep clear of Ann Wheeler and do better by ourselves next time."

Mrs. Mulrooney now carefully instructed Rose how to make the candy, and then showed her and Angel how to pull it. Billy came running in with his tray, and Angel took some blue and pink paper which had come about bundles of cotton, and cut a fringe to go about the candy-board. Mrs. Mulrooney declined taking the five cents for the "bit of flour and butter," bidding Rose keep it for the next hard time. Billy put his four cents with it, and knowing unfortunately that Lizzie was not to be trusted, they took the money to Mary Ware to keep for them. As they were leaving Mrs. Mulrooney's, Billy said, "Oh, I saw *him* as I came by Mrs. Wheeler's;" "him" meaning Mrs. Mulrooney's husband.

"I must go fetch him," said Bridget, with a sigh, as she left Angel to get sup-

per, and went to bring home the truant husband and father.

"Come, Terence, me man," said Mrs. Mulrooney, entering the door of the dingy groggery; "you've missed your way, an' will be late to supper. What have ye in yer hand? Hone! it is a moog of whisky! Give it to me, darlin'; it's over bad for ye!"

"It's paid for, and I won't take it back!" cried Mrs. Wheeler, angrily. Bridget took the cup from her husband, and coolly opened the door and emptied it into the sewer.

"What business have you here, disturbing folkses' lawful bargains?" demanded Mrs. Wheeler.

"More shame to them as makes it lawful, and to you as sells the stuff that makes raving manacs and ijits of people! Look at me Terence, a decent workman when he's sober, and such a poor, grinning fool when he's drunk. Shame on

you, Ann Wheeler, for a woman to make her living on sending them home wild, swearin' brutes, that ought to be good fathers to their poor chillen!"

"Shame on him, to be tied to his wife's apron-string!" said Mrs. Wheeler, pointing to Terence, who gaped and swayed to and fro as his wife held his arm.

"It's not him as is tied to me apron-sthring at all, at all," said Bridget; "mine wouldn't be long enough to reach *here*. Why will ye no drive a dacent trade in soap and flour and fish, 'stead of sending Margaret Wishalow's man to dhrown hisself, and breakin' Mary Ware's heart afther a dhrinkin' son. Hold up, Terence! Is ye trying to slip off from me? Come home and go to sleep, that ye may get to work to-morrow. I doubt, me jewel, ye haven't done a hand's turn the day."

"Yes, he did," said Mrs. Wheeler, in a braggart tone; "and I've got the money

for't in my pocket;" and she rattled some loose coins; "he's paid up his old score, and is fair for a new one."

"Then, for that and yer other ill deeds," cried Bridget, growing furious, "may ye niver have forgiveness! May your sins hunt ye like hounds, and I be there to see you rewarded for your badness!"

So excited was Bridget that she muttered wishes for "bad 'cess and ill luck" to Mrs. Wheeler all the way home, but once in her own room, her rage abated. The little humpback was truly a ministering angel to her parents; she brought water and helped her father wash, gave him a cup of tea, and persuaded him to go to bed. As Mrs. Mulrooney said, drink made an idiot of Terence. After a few swallows of whisky, he fell into a state of driveling imbecility, gaping and grinning, and utterly incapable of saying "No" to any one. In this state he lost his tools, parted with his money, was per-

suaded to give away or pawn his clothes, and was the jest of every ragamuffin in the neighborhood.

"Don't grieve, mother," said Angel, standing by the table where her mother was making sandwiches and turnovers for an early customer. "I keep praying to God to make father stop drinking, and I know he'll answer me if I do wait pretty long. I think it is a good while sometimes," she added, with a patient little sigh; "but you know, mother, 'long' to me may be 'short' to God. He will answer me, I know."

"Ach, honey," said her mother, "while it's praying yees air, ye might betther ask destructhion to them as sells the vile pisen. What is there of ill I wouldn't more than rej'ice to see catch Ann Wheeler!"

"We must forgive her—" began Angel, as in duty bound.

"I won't!" said Bridget, decidedly.

"It would be a black shame to forgive sich goin's on."

"But, mother," urged Angel, "maybe nobody ever did teach her what is good."

"I'll teach her, then, wid two strong hands. Shure, let nobody tell me it isn't fit for a lone woman to do her own fighting. Shure, ain't it as good for a lone woman as a lone man, so she has the strong arms and can strike out fairly! I'll do it! Let no one tell me women oughtn't to fight! Them as has husbands that keeps 'emselves simple as week-old calves with whisky must fight their own battles. See if Ann brags to me and rattles me man's money in her apron any more!"

"Oh, mother," said Angel, beginning to cry, "you'll break my heart if you fight like those bad folks. All the boys will hoot at you. Oh! don't make your Angel ashamed of you, and fretted over bad doings."

Angel knew well that to urge her own feelings upon her mother would be the most potent argument she could use.

"Well then, honey," said Bridget, "kape easy. I'll not fret you, but what will I do at all? There's your father, as was such a gem of a man whin we was marrit, and look how he lies yon like a pig, and snores like a grampus, and grins in his slape as silly as an ape. Bad luck to all of them!"

An uninitiated hearer might have supposed Bridget wished bad luck to the animals she had mentioned her husband as resembling, but her mild malediction was intended for whisky-makers, sellers and drinkers. Alas for the woes they bring upon the world!

"I'm done me work now, Angel. Get to bed wid ye, dear; I'm going over to see Mistress Ware a bit," said Mrs. Mulrooney. Angel was glad enough to hear this, for she knew her mother would pour

out her troubles into Mary's ears, and get good counsel.

Much to Bridget's delight, Prussia had already betaken herself to her attic, and the visitor sat down for a free talk. Mary was sewing briskly.

"Och, woman, but you'll ruinate your eyes working evenings, and by such poor light!" said Bridget.

"Ah," sighed Mary, "I find my eyes failing me, and I so often think I shall lose my sight so I can no longer sew, perhaps go blind altogether. I often think of it, Mrs. Mulrooney, and pray over it, too."

"And why don't ye sthop and take a bit of rest?"

"Sometimes I think I will, but it is all I can do by constant work to pay rent and get us a little of fire in winter and enough food, so we are not hungry, and clothes to cover us. But my Book says, 'Having food and raiment, let us be there-

with content.' I do try to trust it all with the Lord. I know he will do what is best, and even if he takes my sight, he can be eyes to the blind, and will yet provide for me, but sometimes, when I sit sewing alone, I get quite desponding."

"And well you may, and there is that big son of yours, that might support you dacently, leaves the load of his own keepin' on your shoulders. I'd like to know, take it all in all the world over, if it ain't the women does the most work and supports the men?"

A look of pain passed over Mary's face. "If I could only get Rick away from the city!" she said.

"You and I are sailing in the same boat," said Bridget, bluffly. "There's no need for our trying to hide our tough times from t'other. I know what you have to put up with, knowing what I have to go through myself. Only you don't get sass from the whisky-sellers,

like I do, for you don't go to bring your trouble home."

"I used to, but that is the one thing that makes Rick angry, and he goes off and stays several days."

"Well, I came to relave me mind by telling yees me throubles all along of Ann Wheeler. I had it in my mind to give her a good pounding, but me Angel says no;" and Mrs. Mulrooney gave an account of her expedition to the grog-shop. After exhausting her vocabulary of all the expletives and ill wishes that she dared to utter to Mary, Mrs. Mulrooney went on: "Don't tell me no Uniwersaler preachin'; I'm down on that. I know pretty well 'bout all sorts of preachers, Mistress Ware, for I lived two years in a parson's family when I was out to service. Now, them Uniwersalers says everybody'll get to glory. Don't tell me no such. Why if Ann Wheeler and a grist of them distillers and license-men *was took*

into heaven, there's plenty of decent bodies, like you and me, Mistress Ware, that *wouldn't* go in. Why, Ann Wheeler herself is enough to turn glory into a grogshop."

Here Mary got a chance to speak:

"I'm no Universalist, Mrs. Mulrooney, for my Book tells me that he who don't believe in Jesus shall not be saved. Our dying is not going to cleanse away our sins; it is the dying of Jesus once for all those who trust him, that is going to make us holy. Very truly: as you say, there's no oneness between sinners and heaven, and I doubt if they'd be happy even there. Yet I do believe that the blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse all sin—to make Ann Wheeler herself pure."

"I *don't*," broke in Bridget, not meaning irreverence.

"I *know* it is, for it has cleansed my soul," said Mary, solemnly.

"Oh, woman! and ye don't go to put

yourself on a level wid that rapscallion of an Ann Wheeler! What would save you wouldn't be enough to save her. Some linen's fouler nor other, and Ann is like the foulest of all."

"But soap and water will cleanse the foul linen," began Mary.

"Och, but it takes more of it!" retorted Bridget; and Mary, who was wading into discussion beyond her depth, prudently returned toward plain sayings and left similes: "My Book tells me the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." But Bridget had struck a fine lead, and would not be called off: "More of it, and boiling too, Mary, does foul linen need, and boiling or baking, it's something of that kind does Ann need."

"Here is a solemn question, Bridget," said Mary, earnestly: "have we neglected or rejected Christ? That is the heaviest sin that can be; all other sins are to it like little brooks running out of a big

lake. Now, if we do not repent and take Christ as *our* Saviour, we deserve punishment just as much as Ann Wheeler. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, is the word, and Jesus came to save sinners."

"You're drawing too hard lines for yourself, Mary," said Bridget, coolly leaving her own case out of the question. "Don't tell me you're like Ann Wheeler, or need as much to save you, or will be lost barrin' all believin'. No, Mary. I know good, decent folks like you and me can slip into heaven quiet-like, and the ministers and Mistress Warren and me Angel can get in and welcome; but such as Ann ain't to set foot there."

"You are a good mother and a kind neighbor, and an example to the neighborhood for thrift, Mrs. Mulrooney, and yet you are far from the right way. I hope the Lord will show you his truth—"

"Come, come, Mistress Ware, it's time

we were both in bed. Good-night to you. I wish your boy was home. But don't fret; maybe something will turn up to make a sober lad of him yet; don't lose heart."

Mary would not lose heart. She put by her work, read a verse or two of Scripture and knelt in prayer. Prayer was much to Mary. When all the streams of human comfort failed her, there was yet a full supply flowing to her fainting spirit from the Throne of Grace. She waited on the Lord, and he increased her strength.

CHAPTER V.

THE BIBLE-WOMAN.

WITH joyful hearts, while Angel talked with her mother at the baking-table, did Rose and Billy in their own home put the tray of candy, with its blue fringe, on a shelf in the closet, well out of harm's way, they thought. They looked on it as the foundation of Billy's fortune—the first rung of the ladder whose topmost step was some palace for fruit and confectionery, such as dazzled their eyes and tantalized their hungry mouths when they ventured into Broadway. Early the next morning they were awake; their mother was going to work that day for Mrs. Warren, and was lighting the fire. Billy, as soon as dressed, went for a look at his tray. He did

not mean to produce it until his mother had left, for the whole affair was to be kept a profound secret from her until they had money to show her.

No sooner had Billy glanced at his board than he gave a cry of dismay. Rose ran into the closet to see what was the matter, and lo! nearly half the tray was empty. Their grief was too great for silence. They came from the closet. "It was Lizzie, I know it was!" cried Rose; and going to where Lizzie slept, at the foot of their mother's bed, sure enough, the child's face was daubed with molasses, her hair sticky, and a half-melted fragment of candy was yet in her hand.

"What's the matter?" cried Margaret, looking up from the stove, where she was trying to blow her kindlings into a blaze.

"A lady gave us a quarter," explained Rose, "and Mrs. Mulrooney made us

candy to sell, and here's Lizzie, the hateful thing! eaten half of it up."

True enough, Lizzie the sharp had discovered the candy secret, and felt that now was the time to take her fill of sweets. She had feigned slumber, and with wonderful decision had kept herself awake until the rest of the family were asleep, when she had risen and eaten as much as she could. The loud voices near her roused her, and she sat up, apparently entirely interested in opening the hand so covered with candy.

"Dear me! what a child she is!" said Margaret, in her listless way. "But what ever did you think of selling candy for? Children can't make anything; better have kept your money to buy yourself something. But," she added, as she saw her two elder children standing close together, miserable little companions in affliction, and sobbing in a broken-hearted way, "never mind; sell that, and maybe

you'll get your money back. I'd whip Lizzie, if I thought it would do her any good."

But Billy's tears had spent themselves; he flashed into a rage: "Children *can* help themselves; they can make money; lots of them do it, and I will. I'll be a man, and I'll take care of Rose; and if I can't do well staying here at home, I'll run away. If Lizzie steals my candy or my money again, I'll whip her: see if I don't!"

Margaret began to cry, and Rose interposed: "No, Billy, you won't run away. Don't make mother feel bad. You ain't talking as Mary would say was good. Let's get breakfast, and you go sell what you've got."

"Well, you needn't cry, mother," said Billy, relenting. "I ain't angry at you; only at Lizzie."

"I don't never have no candy nor good things, and I think it was real mean of

you, selling to other folks and not giving me any," cried Lizzie.

"Don't you try it again," said Billy, angrily, while Rose put the tray away. Altogether, it was a very uncomfortable breakfast. The day was bright and sunny, and Billy's spirits rose as he went out to sell his candy. Margaret, leaving her children at their meal, went to Mrs. Warren's. In her pleasure at working for her benefactress and earning something, she lost from her face the shadow of her morning's troubles. Lizzie ran off into the street, and Rose was left to set the room in order and take care of the little children.

Mrs. Wishalow and Mary Ware had lately been trying to teach Rose how to do her work well, but this morning the sunshine looked tempting, even in Sullivan street, and Rose wanted to get out to talk over her troubles with Mary. Hence she was inclined to slight her work, apolo-

gizing to herself by saying she must get out to look after Lizzie. Very happily for Rose, little Angel Mulrooney came climbing up the stairs and entered the room. After a few minutes she said, quietly, "I don't think you're sweeping your room very nice, Rose."

"Oh well, it don't matter; nobody'll see it to-day," said Rose.

"Yes, God will," replied Angel, positively.

"He won't care," suggested the sweeper.

"He does care, Rose, for every little thing; Mary Ware said so, and she said verses from the Bible to me about it. One is, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,' or like that; and another, 'Not with eye-service as men pleasers, but with singleness of heart as unto God.' Mother often says, 'What's worth doing is worth doing well,' and that's what makes our house so nice, you know. Now, Rose, if you get a habit of

doing things carelessly, you'll be careless all your life."

A small teacher, indeed, was Angel, perched on a chair with her feet resting on the front rung.

"Well," said Rose, going vigorously into cracks and corners with her broom, "I will sweep better, but I was in a hurry to get out to talk to Mrs. Ware. Lizzie served us such a mean trick last night."

"Now, Rose," said Angel the wise, "if I was you" (for our Angel was not versed in English grammar), "I'd scrub that table with ashes, and I'd wash that window Derry is streaking, and dust everything nice. And don't you see, Rose, those quilts are on crooked? they'd look better straight."

"What a fuss you are!" said Rose, but not unkindly, and she straightened the quilts.

"Mother says I'm her little house-

keeper, and it's her praise if I'm neat," said Angel. "Say, Rose, would you like to be like Judy Flinn?"

"When I get big? No," said Rose, indignantly.

"Judy ain't at all nice; she's ragged and dirty, and runs about barefoot, with a dirty baby or so, talking at all the windows; and her room looks—oh my! you can't think how!" said Angel, graphically.

"I wouldn't be her for the world," cried Rose.

"Well, now, Rose," said Angel, solemnly, "Mrs. Ware says she's so now 'cause she was so when she was young, and wouldn't stay home and do things nice, but run about all the time. Now, Rose, don't you think when you hurry here to run off with baby and Dermot, you're a little like Judy?"

Here was a home-thrust, and Rose was silent.

"Now, if I was you, Rose," proceeded Angel, "I'd stay home, and clean and sew, and take good care of the children; and I'd go out sometimes, as clean as I could, and see folks like folks: that's how I'd do. I don't say this all out of my own head, Rose, 'cause I don't know so much, only Mrs. Ware told me. She says you might make real blessings of baby and Derry."

"I couldn't of Lizzie, that's sure," said Rose, scouring her table, and at once poured forth the tale of her sister's misdoings. When she had finished, Angel said, "We must tell Mary about it, for she knows how to make bad ones good. Now I've got my new basket here, and we'll sit and sew and mind the children, as we will when we're grown-up women."

Meanwhile, Billy went from street to street crying his candy. His face and hands were clean and his hair smooth; he had a frank, intelligent face and a pleas-

ant voice, and opened his candy business with much success. Toward noon, as he came home with his money jingling in his pocket, he saw a stout young man leaning against a lamp-post and evidently intoxicated. "There," said Billy to himself, "is Rick Ware drunk again! My! won't his mother feel bad!" Here Rick spied Billy. "Hillo, Billy!" he cried, come here—don't be afraid. Are you selling candy? 'Lasses candy—oh, good 'lasses candy, is it? Got just three sticks; hold on, Billy. I'll give you a lift; I'll buy them sticks; I'm rich. Here, Billy, give us the candy, and here's a quarter; don't want no change, Billy; I'm rich." He took the three sticks of candy, crowded one into his mouth, gave one to an urchin near, and in maudlin folly put the third in his hat, amid the hoots and cheers of a gang of small boys.

"My eye! won't your hair be sticky!" cried one.

"No room for it there—got a brick there already," said No. 2.

"Gone to keep the brick company," said a third.

"Come home, Rick," said Billy.

"Can't; I'm 'shamed to walk with a candy-boy. Go 'long; got business with the mayor—goin' to write a letter to Queen Victory, I am."

Billy went on to Mary's room. "Your son got three sticks of me, Miss Ware," said Billy, "and he gave me this, and I thought you'd better have the change."

"Thank you," said Mary; "it will buy his supper."

Billy had twenty-five cents now, and was ready for more candy and a second day in the street pursuing his business.

That afternoon Mrs. Warren called on Mary and engaged her to act as Bible-woman.

"You must send back that sewing and get at better work," said the lady. "Your

salary is now secure. I can pay you for one quarter in advance, if you wish."

"I'd rather have it each month as I earn it, madam," said Mary.

"She's afraid to keep much money where her son can lay hands on it," said Prussia, bluntly.

"But you might lay in stores of fuel and provisions, and buy to better advantage by getting considerable at a time."

"Poor folks ha'n't any place to keep much on hand," said Prussia, without giving Mary time to speak; "and it would be all one, money or provisions, if Rick got hold of it. There's plenty of folks that'll give whisky as fast for stuff as for money."

Mary's eyes filled with tears. "Indeed, madam," she said, "you will think me a very poor person to go about teaching in the neighborhood, when my own son is so far from right. My husband's father, ma'am, had a nice little farm, and he

promised, if Rick went to live with him, it should be Rick's. I thought it wrong to give up my only child, ma'am, and to those who would spoil him by letting him have his own way, and who wouldn't give him any Bible-teaching. Besides, it didn't look right to me that Rick should have all the farm, and the other grandchildren get none. But my husband liked the plan, and let the boy go. I think Rick loved his mother always; but he was spoiled, sure enough; and my husband and his parents died, and Rick got the farm. He had gone wild, ma'am, and he sold the farm, and off here to the city for three years. I kept at home and sewed for a living, and could hear nothing of Rick, until at last news came of Rick sick and his money all gone. I came here and took care of him. I managed to get work, and hire this room and fit it out with what few things I brought from home; and so it has been twelve

years, ma'am. My Rick is thirty-five, ma'am. One while he repents and promises to do better, and works a bit, and then he's off again, and so it goes. Many is the prayer I've prayed for Rick, and oh the tears I've shed over him, ma'am!" and Mary bowed her head and sobbed aloud.

That good, gray head bent with sorrow and shame for a straying child was a touching sight. Mrs. Warren wept, and even Prussia wondered where was the eye of her needle, and furtively wiped her face with her apron.

As said the good man to the mother of Augustine, so said Mrs. Warren to Mary: "Take courage; it cannot be that the child of such prayers and tears should perish."

"When I look at my boy," said Mary, forcing back her tears, "and see how he's all gone wrong for want of right training when he was little, you can't think how

it makes me want to teach and help the children. I want to save other mothers' hearts, if mine is broken. And the children are such easy ground to work! Why, there are Rose and Angel; how readily they learn, especially Angel! She's a gracious child, is Angel."

"Well, Mrs. Ware, work all you can among the children; and if you see anything that needs money to set right, just tell me at once, and I will see about it. I shall expect to hear close reports about the families you visit, and how they receive you, and what you are doing for them."

After Mrs. Warren had gone, Mary finished the last overcoat she had in hand and took her work back to the store. When she came home she was ready for her new work at once. She had been thinking of it during her walk. But an unpleasant duty lay before her. Mrs. Warren had said, "I shall pay you

enough, Mrs. Ware, so that you will not need to rent Miss Wiggins the privilege of sitting in your room. You need now to have the room to yourself, so that if people wish to come here to you for comfort and advice, they can do so and find you alone. They would not wish to speak of some things before Miss Wiggins, which they might need to mention to you. Miss Wiggins is quite unpleasant in her ways. Besides, I wish you to have a sewing-school here two afternoons in a week, and a little class for poor women on Sunday afternoon; and I do not want Miss Wiggins to think she has any right to interfere with it. Let her come to see you if she chooses, and do her all the good you can."

After this, of course, Mary must request Prussia to find some other place to work. She did it as politely and kindly as possible, explained Mrs. Warren's plans, and the need there was of having

the room to herself; but Prussia was furious. She abused Mary, called Mrs. Warren names, mocked at religion, Bible-women and all the good Mary hoped to do. She accused Mary of treachery and ingratitude, and succeeded in making the poor woman very unhappy; and finally gathered up her possessions and departed, vowing never to speak to Mary Ware again.

Mary sighed over Prussia, asked a little boy to go and tell Lizzie Wishalow that she had an apple for her, and then set about clearing up her room. While she was doing this, Lizzie put her head into the door, but at once withdrew it. Lizzie was not fond of Mary, and now her love of apples was hardly sufficient to bring her into Mary's room.

"Come in," said Mary, pleasantly, "and get your nice apple. I'm very glad to see you; have you had a nice time playing to-day?"

"No," said Lizzie, sulkily, "I hain't."

"That is a pity; what was the matter?" asked Mary.

"Everything," said Lizzie, crossly; "everybody's got more things than me, and nobody likes me. Some girls is rich as Jews, and I'm so awful poor."

"Is that so?" said Mary. "I once knew a little girl as poor as you who was very rich at the same time."

"Land a goody!" said Lizzie; "did she find a bag of money?" Lizzie had perched herself in Prussia's deserted chair, and had her apple in her hand.

"Why, the way about the little girl was," said Mary, "that she found a Father who was richer than anybody that ever lived."

"Was he her very own father?" asked Lizzie.

"He adopted her," replied Mary. "I'd like to tell you that story, but it is so long I must wait till Sunday. You may

come to hear it Sunday afternoon, and bring whoever you like with you."

"What, Norah Wheeler?"

"Yes, poor little Norah; I wish she would come."

"Norah has horrid times, her mother's so hateful; she knocks her right down. She makes her beg too."

"Poor little thing! she looks so miserable and frightened always, I pity her," said Mary. "You see, Lizzie, how much worse off she is than you are. What do you want most of anything, Lizzie?"

"Money," said Lizzie, promptly.

"And how do you mean to get it," said Mary, who, having finished her room, sat down to some mending for Rick.

"I dunno," said Lizzie, sullenly.

"Don't you intend to go to school, Lizzie?"

"Mam says she's going to earn me clothes this summer, and start me in the winter, and make me go right ahead."

"And until then you mean to run about the streets?"

"I guess so," said Lizzie, munching the apple.

"Do you like it?" asked Mary.

"No, I don't like nuffin'," said Lizzie, who had a great deal of her mother's indifference.

"Lizzie," said Mary, "I think you'd better go into business and earn some money."

"How?" said Lizzie, waking up to interest.

"Well, you must have a little bag to keep money in; then you must have a box hung to your neck by a tape, and the box will be full of roasted peanuts. When Billy goes out with candy, you must go beside him with peanuts."

"He won't let me," said Lizzie.

"I'll see to that."

"But I hain't no money to set out with."

"I'll see to that," said Mary.

"Oh, do you truly mean I can do it? Go out selling and earn money all by myself?"

"Yes, 'if' two or three things."

"What 'if?'" asked Lizzie.

"Well, if you will always let Rose make you clean and tidy before you go out?"

"Yes, I will," said Lizzie.

"And if you'll always stay by Billy, and not leave him or quarrel with him?"

"I'll do that!" said Lizzie, more doubtfully.

"And if you will always trade fair, and never cheat, but be a real honest little woman—"

"We-ll—I—will," said Lizzie, slowly.

"My plan for you is, that to-morrow you come here to my sewing-school and make a little money-bag. I will talk to Billy and your mother, and get your box and nuts; and Saturday night you shall

roast your nuts here, and on Monday morning you can start out with Billy to sell."

"And the money will be all my very own to keep, and use just the way I like?"

"Yes," said Mary, "after you have paid your debts; of course you want to pay them first?"

"What debts?" asked Lizzie.

"Well, there's the penny you took from Billy; of course you feel badly about that, and want to pay him?"

Lizzie hung her head.

"Then you want to pay him for his candy that you ate. And you'll want to pay me for the peanuts—"

"Dear!" cried Lizzie, angrily; "'tain't no use talking. It'll be pay, pay, all the time, and I'll never get nothing for myself."

"Oh yes; we will manage this way: each night you come to me, and we will divide your money into four parts; one

part to pay your debts, two parts to buy fresh nuts, and one part for yourself, to buy what you like."

Lizzie looked brighter: "I'll do it."

"And you remember all you promised?"

"All what?" asked Lizzie.

"To be neat and clean.

"To keep by Billy.

"Not to quarrel.

"To be honest.

"To pay your debts."

"Yes," said Lizzie, "I will."

"To-morrow, then, come here to my sewing-school; and bring Norah Wheeler, if she can come."

Mary regarded Lizzie's departures from honesty in the matter of the candy and the penny as very serious errors; she took the way of bringing the child into the right path that she deemed best suited to the circumstances. Lizzie had already taken steps in that rapidly-descending road that fills houses of correction,

penitentiary and prison. Mary was holding out a hand to turn her into the right way, the path of virtue and happiness.

Lizzie might very fairly be regarded as an unpleasant child. She was selfish, sullen, untruthful, dishonest—a fair specimen of street-training. It was generally supposed that Lizzie cared for nobody. She disobeyed and mocked her mother, and quarreled with her brothers and sisters. Yet there was a soft spot in Lizzie's heart; she was capable of pity, and her pity had grown to love. Of this love and its object, of its many queer and often pitiful outworkings, no one but the object of her tenderness knew. But now the keen, wise eyes of Mary Ware were to be on her, and this her best trait, and the best point to touch her and rouse her to goodness, would soon be seen.

Early the next day Mary began her visits in her neighborhood. Her first effort was to get some girls into her sew-

ing-school. Mrs. Warren had told Mary that she would provide calico and factory for the girls to make garments, which, when neatly finished, were to be their own. Those parents who could furnish material for the clothing of their children were to have the privilege of having their children instructed in the school. Mrs. Mulrooney and Margaret Wishalow were glad to buy material and send it with Rose and Angel to Mary's school. Lizzie came with a bit of red flannel for her money-bag, and Norah Wheeler and the red-headed Nolan twins came without anything but their dirty fingers with which to do the work.

Mary had ready a basin of water, soap and a towel. Mrs. Warren had sent her two long benches, and also a box of needles, thread, tape and buttons, with the promised cloth.

Mrs. Ware had not dared venture to Ann Wheeler's to ask Norah's presence

at the sewing-school. The invitation had been given by Lizzie, who was Norah's only friend. Poor Norah was Mrs. Wheeler's only child, and seemed the especial object of her mother's dislike. Abusive words and blows were Norah's portion. Half the time thrust out of the miserable den she called home to sleep in the streets, and always compelled to beg her daily food from door to door, Norah was as wretched an object as was to be found in the city.

Whatever of love and sympathy there was in Lizzie's heart had been drawn out to Norah. On this day Lizzie had arranged with Norah to go to Mary's, and for nearly an hour after noon loitered about the grogshop door, waiting for Norah to join her. Norah was unfortunately waiting on her mother's customers, and, when Lizzie's patience was nearly exhausted, had helped a palsied old toper spill a glass of gin. This accident roused

all the drunken mother's fury. She seized the child, beat her violently, dragged her to the door, and threw her from it with such force that the child fell into the gutter.

Lizzie, watching for her friend, came to the rescue. She helped the sobbing Norah to rise, and led her quickly away from the vicinity of the grogshop.

"Oh dear! you're all wet and mud; and did she hurt you, Norah?"

"Oh yes," groaned Norah; "and now I hain't no more clothes, and I can't go 'long with you, and I feel so bad—"

"Never mind," said Lizzie; "come to the pump, and I'll pump water on you and get you clean; it'll be 'most fun; and then we'll take off your frock and wash that at the pump, and wring it good; and you can come along, and it'll dry on you."

"But all the girls will laugh at me," said Norah, who, despite her hard life, was sensitive.

"If they do, I'll scratch their eyes out!" said Lizzie. Accordingly, Lizzie pumped water on Norah until her hair was drenching wet, her face and arms in a streaked, half-clean condition, and the dress which had been washed and wrung by the united efforts of the children was wet enough, and not much cleaner than before. In this forlorn state Norah slipped into Mary's room close behind Lizzie, and sat down on a corner of a bench by the wall, with Lizzie beside her, kindly spreading her scanty skirt as far as possible over Norah's lap, to hide all defects. The other girls came in one by one and took their seats, while Mary at her table was finishing, cutting and basting the articles to be sewn.

Presently Martha Nolan spied Norah, and began pointing her fingers, making signs of wringing her hair and clothes, and otherwise taking notice of her condition. Up spoke Lizzie, briskly: "If

you make fun of Norah, Mat Nolan, I'll scratch your face."

"Then we'll whip you," said Martha's twin sister, Bess.

"Then you may," said Lizzie, promptly; "I'll scratch you anyhow."

"Hush! hush, children! speak kindly; don't quarrel; what is the matter?" said Mary, turning quickly.

"They're funning 'bout Norah, and they sha'n't," said Lizzie.

Mary looked closely at Norah. "Why, what is the matter here?" she asked: "this child is drenching wet." She sat down and drew Norah toward her.

"The old woman whipped her and flung her in the gutter, and I washed her at the pump," explained Lizzie.

Bess Nolan tittered. Lizzie showed signs of executing the threat of "scratching."

"Don't, my child," said Mary, grasping her arm. "You are a kind friend to

Norah, and I love you for it. Bess, if you were Norah, you wouldn't like to be laughed at."

"I *ain't* Norah," said Bess.

"But you *might* be."

"No, I mightn't; my mother don't sell whisky."

Norah's face was bowed down, and she cried bitterly.

"Norah," said Mary, "I must take off this wet dress, and wash and dry it for you. I will wrap you up in my shawl while I do it."

Norah did not reply, but bent her head lower still and held her wretched garment close about her.

"She don't want to take 'em off," volunteered Lizzie, "'cause she's all rags, and her old woman's been a-pounding of her."

"Do not mind it," said Mary, gently; "you will be sick if you sit here so wet. Think how nicely your dress will look all

washed and ironed, and I will mend it too; and see, here is plenty of factory; I will cut you out some clothes and help you make them." Angel and Rose were already busy on the work they had brought. The two Nolans were eyeing Norah curiously, and Lizzie valiantly stood close to her forlorn friend.

Mary reached a comb from a high shelf and carefully combed the water from Norah's hair. She then took off the child's dripping dress. Norah had on under her dress but one garment, which might rather be called an assemblage of tatters. A wornout and cast-off piece of clothing of her mother, it hung in rags over her thin form, the red and bruised flesh showing pitifully between the soiled shreds of muslin. Mary's heart ached over the poor child, and she wrapped her own coarse shawl about her and lifted her upon the bench in her former place. Then Angel, who

had been apparently unobservant of what was passing, rose, walked quietly over to Norah, and, clasping her arms about her neck, kissed her. Norah had stopped crying, but now began again.

"Why, don't cry for *that!*" exclaimed Lizzie; "she means good to you. Angel, you're just as good as you can be! She's been 'bused so she don't know how to act," added Norah's little patroness, apologetically.

"Mrs. Ware, please may I put by my sewing and help you on Norah's, so's she can have something to put on?" said Angel.

"And I will too," added Rose.

"I can't sew good enough, but we won't fun about her no more," said Bess Nolan; and Martha, fishing in her pocket for a while, produced a suspicious-looking lozenge, which she presented to Norah as a peace-offering. By all these good words and ways Norah was comforted. Mary

from long necessity had learned to do several things at once; so now she superintended the sewing, chatted pleasantly to the children, and at the same time washed Norah's frock and hung it out to dry. She talked to Rose and Angel about attending mission school. As there was some hope of their going regularly, the Nolans spoke quite contemptuously of mission school, but kindly accepted an invitation from Mary to come and visit her and look at pictures.

"Will you tell us the story of the gal what got 'dopted by the rich 'un?" asked Lizzie.

"Yes, I'll be sure and tell that," said Mary.

Mary begged the privilege of heating two irons by Mrs. Mulrooney's baking fire to iron Norah's dress. She, with Rose and Angel, worked vigorously at Norah's sewing until nearly six o'clock; then the girls all went home, except

Norah, leaving Mary still sewing with nimble fingers. Mary soon finished her work and ironed the dress; she then prepared a tub of warm water and gave Norah a thorough bath.

"Dear me!" said Norah, with a sigh, "how good I feel in clean things! I allus did want to be clean, but what's the use of tryin' to hum? I wisht I was your girl."

Mrs. Warren, when sending down supplies for the sewing school, had sent a little basket of smoked beef, biscuit and honey for Mary. Mary now thought of this, and invited Norah to stay to tea with her. The good woman always set her table neatly, covering it with a little cloth. Norah looked on with delighted eyes. All being ready, the two sat down, but just then the door opened and Angel entered, leading Richard Ware.

"I saw him in the street," she explained, "and I asked him to come home;

he was getting all mud and dust; it made me think of father." The tears came into her large dark eyes as she led Richard to a chair and asked him to take off his coat.

"I always wash father's face and wet his head, and that brings him to," suggested Angel. Mrs. Ware was not used to these offices; some remorse seemed ever busy in Richard's heart that made him dislike his mother near him when he was drunk. He pushed her away now as she approached him, but passed his hand over Angel's hair, as if admiring its color and smoothness. Angel was a queer, quiet, helpful little creature, and she coolly took the basin of water and waited on Richard as she did on her father. The poor fellow seemed pleased, and indeed the cold water so far roused him that he followed her suggestion about having some supper, and sat down to the table. The neatness and cheerfulness of

everything evidently impressed him pleasantly; he ate and drank, spoke kindly to his mother, sat by the window for a while, and then went to bed nearly sober. Norah, after getting her tea, stayed long enough to help Mary wash the dishes, and then prepared to go away. Mary supposed of course she was going home. She took her hand; "Norah, do you know who will be your friend in every trouble?"

"Yes, Lizzie will," said Norah.

"Somebody better than Lizzie."

"Mebby you'd be," said Norah.

"Yes, surely. But I meant some one better. I mean God."

"I dunno him," said Norah.

"The great God who made all things will love you and take care of you, if you pray to him, Norah."

"*I* can't pray," said Norah.

"Say this little prayer night and morning, Norah, and I hope soon you will

learn more of God. Say, 'Please, God, take care of Norah.'"

"Yes, I will," said Norah, whispering it over to herself. She went out into the street, where the lamps were just being lit, wandered up and down for a while, and then crept into a box standing by the walk, spread her clean clothes as smoothly as possible, wrapped her hands in the folds of her dress to keep them warm, and fell asleep, as forlorn a specimen of a nine-year-old girl as any one could find. She said her prayer as Mary had told her before she slept; and meanwhile, at home, Mary was praying for her, and as she glanced into the recess where was Richard's bed, Mary prayed for Angel too. While the sad mother prayed in heart for her sinning son, she also worked, cleaning his clothes, rubbing the mud from his shoes, and placing near his bed clean shirt and socks and his hat well mended.

It was a new thing for Richard Ware to awake sober. He looked a little ashamed as he sat down to breakfast; his mother, however, was very cheerful. "I must tell you I'm in a new business, Richard," she said—"a deal easier business than coat-making, and a very good and blessed business. I'm Bible-woman for this part of the city, and am to spend my time reading and teaching, and helping the poor. I'd like to begin the day well with you, my son, and read a chapter and pray, as I used to do when you came to see me when you were an innocent little boy."

Richard made no reply, but did not start to go away. Mrs. Ware took the Bible and found the place. Just then Angel came in, for the ceremony of knocking was unknown in that neighborhood. "I want to see Mr. Ware," she said, "but if you're going to read, I'd like to listen;" so she went and stood by

Richard's side, with her hand laid on his arm, Richard looking well pleased.

"I wonder if you could get a day's work, son Richard?" said Mary, when devotions were over.

"I'm out of work," said Richard, gruffly. "Folks can't pick up a day's work whenever they like." This was true, and Mary felt hopeless; but Billy had come in to tell how well his candy was selling, and he exclaimed, "You can get work now, Rick. Come on, and I'll show you. They want all the men and boys they can get to clean off the rubbish where the big fire was t'other night. Come on, and I'll show you!"

So Richard went and worked two days, getting ready for a Sunday spree; but when Billy came homeward Saturday night, he stopped into Mary's, and, handing her a little parcel, said, "There's some of your money."

"Where did it come from?" said

Mary, unrolling the little soiled packet of money.

"I suppose it was paid Rick this afternoon. I saw him going into a whisky-den as I came home, and I picked his pocket for him."

Mary sighed, and knew not what to say. She knew Billy was a tolerably honest boy, yet she thought he was unfortunately skillful in pocket-picking. And then her Richard—when and how would he get home? That problem was soon solved. Billy related his exploit to Angel, who asked where he had seen Richard. The place was not far off; there was some daylight remaining yet, and Angel walked in the direction Billy indicated. As she expected, she found Rick on the sidewalk hunting for his money.

"Won't you please to take a walk with me, Mr. Ware?" she asked. "I hardly ever take a walk. Sometimes the boys

hoot me—because of my back, you know. But I've got my best blue dress on, and won't you take me a walk?" She slipped her small hand in Richard's, and went away with him, very childish in height and words, very old in her face and heart. I think some of God's ministering spirits must have taught this little Angel her wisdom. So, while Mary Ware was praying in her room, God was answering her in Thompson street; and before long, after a ramble through Green street, listening to Angel prattling of flowers and fields, which she some day hoped to see, and of heaven, where it would be "shining summer all the time," Richard Ware came home—a little child leading him.

One Sunday morning, Mary visited several sick people, then went to church with Angel and the two elder Wishalow children, and in the afternoon had her little class in her room. Norah was there, her

dress quite dirty again, and tear-marks on her thin cheeks, for she had been cuffed about in her mother's whisky-shop all the morning. She held fast to Lizzie, but managed to get close to Mary and put her hand on the good woman's lap. She was an eager listener while Mary talked to them of the Good Shepherd who carries the lambs in his bosom; and if the lamb is crippled or lost or wounded, or all covered with briers and clay, he only carries it more surely and tenderly still. Norah listened eagerly, but Lizzie did not care for "preachment," and before long asked for the story. She seemed disappointed to find that God was the Father whose love adopted the poor child; that the treasures were love, content, faith. "Pshaw!" she said; "is that all? I wanted it a story of rich folks taking the girl and making a lady out of her."

"That don't be, only in stories," said

Norah. "I like this best, 'cause she says it can come to poor ones like us."

"Well," said Lizzie, crossly, "you just took me in, Mary Ware; your story ain't no 'count 't all."

However, the next day Lizzie was over her cross mood, and Mary had all ready for peanut-selling. Lizzie repeated her promises to Mary, and had begun the fulfillment of one by looking very tidy. It was a busy week—Mary going her rounds, Rose working at home, little Angel seeming to be everywhere where she could do good, having a special faculty for hunting up Rick Ware and bringing him home, and much befriending Norah during Lizzie's absence. Every night Lizzie went to Mary and divided her money: two parts for buying new stock, one part for paying debts, one part for herself. This last part Lizzie carefully divided again. Finally, Mary asked her what was to be done with that

money. "One part's for Norah," said Lizzie.

"Ah! To buy her clothes?" asked Mary.

"No; it's summer; she don't need much clothes."

"Then are you going to set her up in business?"

"Pooh! no. I'll tell you what 'tis; I'm saving 'nuff to take Norah and me to the Bowery Theatre. We can get standin' places for a shillin' a-piece, and we'll want another shillin' for goodies. When I get half a dollar saved up, we're goin'. My! We'll see the play, and the silk dresses, and the julery, and the spying-glasses; and the folks as plays, they flings 'bout money, and swears, and shoots each other's heads; and the beautiful gal, she faints dead; and her father, he stamps like mad. I've heard the boys what has been tell 'bout it; and there's no end of lights, too."

"Why, Lizzie! are you earning money just for that?"

"Yes, I be; and don't you go to preachin' 'bout it, or you may take back your old nuts, and I'll never speak to you agin. Guess me and Norah's had hard times 'nuff, without your setting up 'bout our going to the theatre. We ain't going to mind all you say. We'll have one good time, anyhow."

Mary dared not reply, but in her honest, simple heart she felt much distressed. Mary had lived too much alone to have much philosophy, and she looked on Lizzie's yearnings after the pit at the "Bowery" as indications of terrible depravity. She was very glad when Mrs. Warren came in and she had some one to whom to confide her troubles. She began to feel that a great mistake had been made in helping Lizzie earn money to spend in the dreadful dissipation of theatre-going. She carefully detailed Lizzie's shocking

plans, when, to her surprise, Mrs. Warren seemed overwhelmed by merriment, and peal after peal of laughter echoed through Mary's dull room. Mary was amazed; she could not suspect Mrs. Warren of wrong, and yet was she not making a mock at sin? Yet somehow that laughter did Mary good; it stirred her heart; it made the old room look brighter; it seemed to shake the stagnant air into buoyancy. Mary breathed freer amid her wonderment. The good Bible-woman could not see how ludicrous was to Mrs. Warren poor Lizzie's idea of a good time of theatre-going: the lady could picture to herself those two small revelers in enormous shakers and bedraggled gowns going, greedy-eyed, with gingercakes in hand, into the splendors of the Bowery theatre, and staring wonderstruck at all the clap-trap, the tinsel show, the extravagances, the bluster of the stage. To them the paste would be

diamonds; the brag, bravery; the paint, beauty. Poor little tots! for this they would go ragged and hungry, small, miserable types of all of us who work to win a sight of this world's gauds and silly pageantry, and turn our backs on heaven.

Yet there was a pathos in the thought that stirred to tears as well as laughter, and tears stood in Mrs. Warren's eyes and a tremor shook her voice as she said, "Poor little souls! and that is their idea of a good time—eight years old and never had any child pleasures, and now must treat themselves to a night at the Bowery!" She laughed again more softly, as one who *must* either laugh or weep. "When do you think Mary, that they will have money enough?"

"Not for a week or two," said Mary.

Mrs. Warren pondered a few moments: "Well, Mary, next Tuesday afternoon you send those girls up to see me about

two o'clock. Let Lizzie leave her nut-peddling for once. Tell her I will show them something fine."

"Thank you, madam," said Mary, quite relieved; "you can't tell how it worried me."

"You must not worry," said Mrs. Warren. "Do your duty and leave results to God. He offers to bear your burdens for you, and you need not do one thought of worrying."

So through the rest of the week Mary took heart of grace and worked, and did not worry. Passing from house to house, as one passes about on dark nights carrying a light, she went bearing from room to room the light of God's word, of heaven's promise and of human sympathy. Over pallid, care-worn faces came a gleam of hope, and children followed her for her kind words, and the lonely toilers blessed her coming.

Through the streets went Billy and

Lizzie—Billy thinking better of his small sister, now that she had gone into business and was paying her debts. Billy shouted, "Candy he-ur!" and Lizzie, in her piping treble, chorused "Peanuts he-ur!" and so from street to street went the children of poverty earning their daily bread.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOOD TIME.

LIZZIE was inclined to regard Mrs. Warren's invitation in the light of a conspiracy. She said she did not like "too good folks," and Mrs. Warren had "too much preachment." She was rather jealous on account of the twenty-five cents Kate Fairly had given Rose. Indeed, our poor Lizzie was a genuine New York Arab, a little Ishmaelite of the streets. With the exception of Norah, Lizzie's hand was against every one, and she thought every one's hand was against her. The fact that Norah was included in the invitation weighed down the scale in Lizzie's mind in favor of acceptance. As to the Sunday class in Mary's room, Lizzie was not going

there, but here Norah put in a good word: "Oh, Lizzie, do come. I want to go, Lizzie. I like to hear of that Good Shepherd and his lambs. I remember that verse, 'He shall carry his lambs in his bosom.' Say, Lizzie, do you know I've followed Mrs. Ware 'round nigh all this week. When she goes I tag her softly, and I stands listening at doors and windows to hear her talk; it 'pears like I'm hungry for it, as I am for suffin' to eat."

"If you're hungry now, mother'll give you a piece of bread; we get's all we want now, since dad's dead. Say, Norah, don't you wish your old woman would go and get drownded and waked and buriet, and mebby *you'd* have good times too?" Norah took the offered bread thankfully, and then succeeded in getting Lizzie to go to Mary's room with her. To her intense mortification, Lizzie told Mary of Norah's "tagging" operations. Lizzie's object was a bad one, but it de-

feated itself; she hoped Mary would reprove Norah, and so make her dislike her and keep away from her. Instead of this, Mary clasped Norah in her arms, called her a dear child, and said she would get her a book and teach her, so that she could read about the Good Shepherd.

"No I sha'n't—I sha'n't learn to read," said Norah, quickly.

"Don't, it's no use," said Lizzie. Mary felt grieved.

Notwithstanding this little hindrance, they had a very pleasant afternoon, and as the children went home, each one carried gentle and holy thoughts as charms against the evil of their daily lives.

They had all gone and Mary sat alone; she thought perhaps Angel would bring Richard home toward evening. Richard could get angry at his mother, but never at Angel; perhaps it was because she paid such pleasant tribute to

his self-respect, calling him "Mr. Ware," when to all else he was "Drunken Rick;" perhaps some latent spark of chivalry was stirred by Angel's fairness, her gentleness and her misfortune. The door creaked and swung open; there was a pat of bare feet on the floor, and Norah crept up behind Mary: "Be you mad at me, Miss Ware?"

"No, child, surely not; but—"

"I couldn't, I darsen't," burst out Norah. "If I'd a-said I'd learn to read, from some of them gals it 'ud got to mom, and she'd a-killed me. Look here, Miss Ware—" Norah came forward, lifted her hair and showed a long scar on the side of her forehead. "I askded her to let me go to school, an' there's where she flung me on the stove for it. Oh, I do want to learn; and won't you please to teach me secret, and never let nobody know so she'll hear it?"

Mary was a plain, simple-minded wo-

man; she had no stilted sentimentality that demanded that this poor child should risk being half murdered for asking the drunken wretch whom she called mother to allow her to learn to read. The child must be rescued, and perhaps she could do something for that mother; at all events, the child must be saved, and to attain to any useful womanhood she must learn to read. Mary did not hesitate to promise Norah that she would teach her very secretly indeed.

When Norah had gone away, Mary began to think of Prussia Wiggins, who was still in hostile mood. She determined to climb up to Prussia's attic, and try to be reconciled to her; so with a prayer in her heart, she went up the long stairs. Prussia stared at her guest without speaking.

"I want to be friends with you Prussy," said Mary; "it is unchristian to live without speaking to a neighbor. I wish you

well, Prussy; let us be on good terms again."

"Not I," said Prussia; "you're a hypocrite, a lazy, ungrateful woman as ever was. You turned against me after I'd been your friend this six year. I ain't to be pulled on and off like as I was old gloves. Don't bring any of your religion about here; I hate it and you too. See here!" and Prussia caught up a vest and began sewing vigorously.

"Oh, Prussia, don't break the Lord's day, whatever you do," remonstrated Mary.

"It's my day just as much as anybody's," said Miss Wiggins, "and I'll sew to spite you."

"I'm afraid, Prussy, you're bringing down heavy judgments on yourself. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth, but not with its maker; fight me, Prussy, if you will, but don't fight with God."

Very meek looked old Mary standing by Prussy's door, in her black gown and snowy cap, her Sunday garb; but her meekness did not touch Prussy.

"You go down stairs, and don't you come back; I hate the sight of you," said Miss Wiggins.

"May the Lord send you a better mind," said Mary, going slowly away. She stopped to ask a widow, who lived by binding shoes, to go to church with her that evening, promised a bowl of gruel to a sick girl, and advised the mother of a feverish babe to bathe it in tepid water and soothe it to sleep. "Mothers will do anything for their children," said Mary.

"Yes, indeed," said the baby's mother.

"And God puts himself very near to us when he says, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.'"

"Does he say *that?*" said the woman.

"Yes, and many things like it: if you

would read them in the Bible, they'd be a great comfort to you."

"I haven't any Bible, but I 'spose I could get one easy," said the woman, whose husband made good wages as a bricklayer. Mary resolved to see that the Bible was got. So to the sick girl, Mary, with her promise of gruel, had whispered good words of the Great Physician.

She sat down by her window and watched for Rick. Her heart was heavy, for she feared he was going to eternal ruin. As she watched there came to her a golden promise; it was as if some ministering spirit had breathed it on the air; it came to her clear and distinct as speech: "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, I will do it." She had an advocate above; not only that, but the everlasting, all-powerful Giver was pledged to pour out his mercy upon her asking. Like the Syrophœnician woman, Mary could

go to Jesus, pleading for her child. A strong faith entered into her heart. Richard could be saved—must be saved. To this end she would labor and pray, nothing doubting.

Even now there is a heavy, irregular step on the sidewalk and a softer tread, and there is the music of a child's voice, and Angel has found Richard and has brought him home. Rick has been too poor to get drunk; he has only had a glass or two of liquor all day, and that is almost nothing to him. Mary poured water for her son to wash, brushed his clothes for him and set about getting supper. Angel brought a chair for Richard and a stool for herself. "I'm going to say you my Sunday-school lesson and my text, and sing for you, Mr. Ware," she said; "and here is something very queer: can you think how it happened? I got this beautiful card for saying such a long lesson perfect, and when I got to

church, why there the minister had this very text on my card, for his preaching text." Angel took from her pocket a handsome gilt-bordered card, wrapped in tissue paper. "Hear me say it," she said, fixing her earnest eyes on Richard: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself—but in me is thy help found." Richard started. "I think I'll give you this card to remember me by, Mr. Ware," said Angel; "it means me, and I've got it in my mind, and it means you, and you can have it on the card." Richard took the card and looked at it some time; then he folded it up awkwardly and put it in his pocket. "Now I'll sing for you," said Angel, and she sang her favorite hymn:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power.
He is able,
He is ready,
Want no more."

"Are you tired of me?" asked Angel, when she had finished singing.

"No," said Richard, coming out of a muse; "who could get tired of you?"

"Then I'll say my lesson, and after that I must go home and see mother." So Angel, in tones that told she felt the lesson, repeated the parable of the Prodigal Son.

When she went into the hall to go home, Mary followed her: "Angel, I want you to help me save Richard. The Lord has promised to hear prayer, and I want you to help me pray for him."

"Yes," said Angel, earnestly, "put my father in, Mrs. Ware, and we'll pray for them both every day just as hard as ever we can."

After supper, Richard sat looking moodily from the window; he was sober enough to realize the ruin he had come to—to see how he had wasted his little

property, degraded himself, fallen out of self-respect, forgotten his early acquirements, shattered his health. In such moments Richard was thoroughly unhappy and stung by the bitterest remorse. His mother could not know what he was thinking of: we fear she thought him only craving the poisonous cup; but her heart yearned over her son, and she stole to his side and stroked his hair as she had done when he was a child. Richard was in bed and asleep before church-time, and Mary went up for comfort to the house of God.

On the appointed afternoon, Lizzie and Norah went to Mrs. Warren's. They were taken into the dining-room, and Mrs. Warren received them very kindly.

"Mary says you are saving your money to go to the theatre and have a good time," she said.

"Yes, we be," said Lizzie, defiantly.

"I thought it a pity you must wait so

long for a little pleasure, and so this afternoon we will have the pleasantest kind of a time. What is there so nice at the Bowery? I've never been there."

The two children sat crowded together on a green-covered lounge; Mrs. Warren had taken a low rocking-chair close in front of them. Kate Fairly was looking out of one window, and a sweet old Quaker lady was sewing by the other.

"Ain't you never seen nobody as had been to Bowery?" asked Lizzie the bold.

"Not to hear them tell about it; suppose you tell me what there is there."

"Why, there's—there's lights, and flowers, and red curtings, and playin'-folks all fixed off to kill; and there's a lady what wants to run off with the splendidest robber, and she just climbs out of a winder on a ladder; and a dagger, and dear knows what all; and the father of the girl, you know; he does no end of swearin'."

"As for that," said Mrs. Warren, "I should think you could hear more than enough swearing every day of your lives."

"Oh, but this is different. It makes a difference who does it, 'cause this man as swears, he's got a welwet coat and red silk stockings, and no end of stars and ribbins all over him!"

"Oh, I didn't think of that," said Mrs. Warren, smiling.

"And then," said Lizzie, warming to the interest of her story, "he gets so tearin', raging mad, 'cause the girl runs off with the robber! Goody! how mad he gets! why, it's just fun to see!"

"But," said Mrs. Warren, curiously regarding this poor little pleasure-hunter in bare feet and ragged apron, "I should think you would be tired of seeing folks angry. Don't the people about you get very furious every day?"

"Oh yes," said Lizzie, condescendingly;

"now here's her old woman, Ann Wheeler, she gets rampagious mad; but don't you see the difference? Now Ann gets mad and she pounds Norah and pulls her hair, but the man in the play, when he gets mad he goes and pulls his own!"

"Surely there is a difference," said Mrs. Warren, while Kate, by the window, shook with the laughter she tried to conceal.

"How do you know so much about the theatre if you've never been there?" asked Mrs. Warren.

"Why them boys an' girls as can scrape up the money to go, they goes, and then evenings after it they gets on a box or a bar'l, and we as ain't been comes 'round, and they tells us all 'bout it, and they keeps on telling till somebody goes again; that's what me and Norah mean to do."

"You shall have a splendid time today to tell about," said Mrs. Warren;

"and first come into the kitchen and have a good dinner."

Mrs. Warren had taken a world of pains to provide the pleasure she desired for these two little forlornities. She had begun by procuring from her friends two full suits of good second-hand clothing to fit these girls. Accordingly, when the children had had their dinner, Fanny, the chambermaid, gave them each a bath, combed each little head and tied their hair up with bright ribbons, fitted them out with under-garments, hosiery, shoes and gloves; and now behold each child with a gingham dress and round hat, and Lizzie with a little black silk sacque and Norah with a white apron. All was complete, even to a neat ruffle about each neck. The two girls were fairly in awe of each other's splendor. When they were again ushered into the dining-room, Kate danced about them in delight at their fine appearance; the

Quaker lady wiped her spectacles, looked and looked again; and as Mrs. Warren came in, attired for walking, the old lady handed her some money, saying, "Thee is doing a good work, niece; here is a little help for thy poor children."

Oh glorious afternoon! If the fairy tales were true, and delightful genii had whisked off these two children to elfin land, nothing could have exceeded the wonders Mrs. Warren revealed to their unaccustomed eyes. Cinderella's chariot and outfit were nothing to it. They looked like other people, they walked with a lady, they went to a panorama. What scenes passed before them like enchantment! what puppets amazed them by their evolutions! what pictures caused them to hold their breath! what music they heard, far finer than the full band playing for well-dressed people in the Park, about whose confines these two had sometimes hung, like fabled Peris about

some fabled Paradise! Nor was this all. The exhibition ended, Mrs. Warren took the children to a restaurant, whose magnificence of marble, cut glass, flowers, mirrors, luxurious seats and heaped-up delights of every imaginable fruit and confection, struck Norah and Lizzie with an awe and reverence far surpassing what any church could have inspired. Then they absolutely sat down to one of those tables and ate ice cream and frosted cake, and each one had an orange and a paper of candy to carry home. The next place where they stopped after the restaurant was a store full of books and pictures. They lingered by the window, and Norah cried out, "Oh, there is the Good Shepherd with a lamb in his bosom! That is like Mrs. Ware tells us. Ma'am, you can't think what good talk she says to us; and if you'll never, never tell, ma'am, she's going to teach me to read about the Good Shepherd, who loves all the poor

children, even me. Yes, ma'am, I just love Mary's school."

"And do you like Mary's school?" Mrs. Warren asked Lizzie.

"No, ma'am, I don't. I think it's dumb; there ain't nothing but talk about being good, and I have to be good all the week, else Mary won't let me sell no peanuts, and I say it's too mean to have to go'n act good all Sunday too."

"But suppose with the good talk you had some singing?" Lizzie admitted that would be an improvement.

"And if Mary had a nice picture or two hanging in her room, and some verses all printed like that one in blue and gold, and if there were some cards?" At these suggestions Lizzie did not know but Mary's school might do; and Mrs. Warren, thinking that part of her aunt's present could not be better spent than here, went into the store with the girls and bought the Good Shepherd picture

and a picture of Christ blessing children, and also a package of pretty cards. "Go to Mary's school next Sunday, and I'll ask Miss Kate to go there and help you sing."

"Rose says she's got a bonnet with a long-tailed bird right on it," said Lizzie.

"I believe Kate has," said Mrs. Warren.

"I wisht you'd ask her to wear it, 'cause we don't see nothing pretty down our way," said Lizzie, eagerly. The child's mind was truly bent on earthly vanities.

Lizzie sailed home magnificent in all her new attire. So did not Norah dare to do, but carried the precious raiment wherein, during the afternoon, she had rejoiced, to Mary, and asked her to keep it for her for some dimly seen time of future prosperity, when she might wear it with none to make her afraid; the ribbon that had tied her hair she folded in a bit of paper and hid in her bosom,

that in hungry days and lonely nights she might touch it and know her afternoon of happiness was not all a dream. The Good Shepherd picture was hung in Mary's room, where Norah could see it every day.

Day by day was Mary busy. Her Sunday-school, after Kate began to teach them to sing, numbered as many as the room could hold. The sewing-class also was full. Among the myriad human shuttles that, cast to and fro, wove the sad web of daily life in these dreary haunts where our story lingers, went Bible Mary carrying the one bright golden thread of all the pattern—the light of the gospel. Good news indeed it was that Mary bore up into attics, down into cellars, going everywhere, sitting down in the squalor of some discouraged woman's room; and while the poor creature, who never had time to clear up her home or refresh herself, stitched hurriedly, Mary, hushing a

babe on her knee, would tell of her own hard struggles, of the one hope that had upheld her through all; spoke gently of this weary life as but the dim threshold of a better world, to which we may enter if we have the passport of the King; and read in tender tones, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Now and again Mary rescued some little child for whom nobody cared, and Mrs. Warren got it into an asylum, where it could be properly brought up. Through Mary flowed from Mrs. Warren's hand blessed charities to the needy; bodies as well as spirits were refreshed.

While doing all these things in her new life, Mary felt very sad about her son. She took care of him as well as she could, but seemed so helpless about making him any better. Bridget Mulrooney could follow her drunken husband from place to place, and by sheer muscu-

lar ability bring him home. Angel, with her small, soft hand, pleading voice and earnest eyes, would beguile Richard from some drunken haunt, or lead him from the street; and then, when he was at home, refreshed and quieted, she would take her stool near him and repeat a hymn or portion of Scripture in her serious way. Mary thanked the Lord for Angel.

Mrs. Mulrooney was very proud of her child. "She's better nor the lave of them, an' she is crooked," she would say. "Look at her sewing! To see the wise ways of her! It's me Angel will bring back the father to sober ways if ere a one can."

But Angel unfortunately was Bridget's strong point against the doctrine of regeneration. Never tell her, she said. Angel was aye good enough. Bridget herself would slip into heaven, as any other honest, tidy, hard-working woman

should, but Angel was bound to go in and welcome, and what more did any one want than that?

Rose Wishalow was a great comfort to Mary. The girl's improvement was so rapid and manifest that she was a rich reward to the Bible-woman's labor. When tempted to be despairing, she thought of Rose growing so womanly, working at home so faithfully—such a kind little mother to the baby and Dermot; and Mary thanked God and took courage.

Margaret Wishalow had never much energy, but she grew cheerful as her circumstances improved, and was apt at following suggestions given her by Mrs. Warren. Billy's candy scheme had prospered, so that his mother was quite satisfied with it; and it was a great relief to the woman to know that Lizzie was with her brother, trading in peanuts, instead of quarreling about Sulli-

van street all day. The Bible was read in Margaret's room every night. Lizzie was sometimes restive and sometimes fell asleep during the reading; the others were truly interested; Billy thought it "respectable," and Rose had some glimpses of deeper meanings than met the others, hearing it as the voice of the Great Teacher to her heart.

Not very far from Sullivan street was a mission church, and now on Sabbaths the different members of the Wishalow family attended public worship there. Lizzie went because of the new suit Mrs. Warren had given her. Billy was saving his earnings that he might go to school. There was talk of Lizzie's going, but she declared she never would go; while Rose wanted much to go, but saw no prospect of it through the long vistas of baby-tending required by Dermot and the little one.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PLEDGE.

THE summer seemed short to Mary; she was busy and happy in doing good, and we doubt if amid her labors she would have noticed the passing day, had not each one found Richard still on the downward path. Perchance in his evil way the man was halting a little; God is the answerer of prayer, and while Mary and Angel daily importuned him for Richard's sake, judgments may have hung suspended in the balance; the destroying axe may have lain quiet by the tree, and heavenly ministers may have followed after him amid the dangers of his reckless life, and whispered to his spirit of penitence and restoration.

On a bright October morning, while Mary was busy in her room, Kate Fairly came to see her, followed by Jim carrying a large basket. Jim was dismissed, and Kate sat down to talk with Mary. The young girl's face was brilliant as the skies above her. Life went very smoothly to Kate, and she had a buoyant temperament that seized the pleasure of everything as bees carry off the honey of the flowers.

"I was afraid I shouldn't find you at home," said Kate, "but I meant to get your key from Mrs. Master and put the basket in. You've no idea what a lot of nice things I have for your poor folks! What are you doing, Mary?"

"I'm making some beef-tea for that sick baby I was telling your aunt of on Monday"—Kate began to rummage her basket—"and old Lottie is so fond of the gruel I make that I'm getting ready a bowl of that. You'd hardly think that

one *could* have the rheumatism this fine weather, but she has it dreadfully. I did mention the hospital to her, but she clings to that poor hardworking daughter of hers, and I believe they'd rather die together than be separated." Kate had now one heap of articles on her lap, another on the floor. "Now, Mary, how do you like that?" she cried, shaking out a little night-gown; "three of those for your sick baby, and little warm socks too; and here's the softest delaine quilt to wrap it all up in!"

"Bless your heart," cried Mary, kindly regarding the animated young face; "that will be just the thing!"

"And see here, too," continued Kate—"here are some red flannel shirts and a pair of carpet slippers for old Lottie; and— Oh, auntie wants to know if she can read, now that she has the spectacles and the large-print Bible?"

"Yes, her reading is coming back to

her nicely; she takes a world of comfort reading while her daughter sews. She was telling me yesterday how that verse, 'Even to hoar hairs will I carry thee,' kept in her mind, and how she'd proved it true."

"She's quite a diamond in a muck-heap," said Kate lightly. "Well, here are the dry goods for the sewing-class, and here are tea, rice, lemons and other groceries for the invalid. I declare, Mary, I've spent nearly all my monthly allowance on your poor people."

"Not *my* poor people," said Mary, steadily—"the *Lord's* poor."

Kate had emptied the basket and begun to put on her gloves; in her own way she had as much dread of "preachment" as Lizzie.

Mary, however, had a word in her heart for this merry girl. She took her hand and looked earnestly at her: "You are indeed 'liberal in giving,' Miss Kate.

I wish you would give yet one thing more—give your heart to Jesus. Don't hold that back!"

Kate did not reply. Her cheek flushed and her eyes grew misty, but she took her hand gently from Mary's clasp and went away.

Nearly everywhere that Mary went she found the myriad brood of miseries to which drunkenness is father. Dirty and barren homes, hunger, cold, sickness, idleness, quarreling, and so on, the long list; of children uncared for, parents forsaken, wives forgotten, manhood, womanhood and even childhood made frightful wrecks, and day by day bodies and souls swept out into irreparable ruin. How Mary longed to do something that should stay the progress of this monster, Destruction!

"Talk of cholera and yellow fever," said Mrs. Mulrooney one day, when peculiarly excited by Terence's shortcomings. "Well, folks makes a heap of fuss over

them diseases; the whisky's worse, Mistress Ware, take my word for it. They say them others is contagis! Shure the dhrinkin' is more so. Set up one shop like Ann Wheeler's, and see what'll come of it. Troth, Mary, it's to my mind contagis, like as if one caught small-pox from cholera, for let a man catch the dhrinkin' disorder and see what divers ill ways his family catches from it. 'Deed, Mary, there's few women that a dhrinkin' husband won't ruinate; it hasn't me," said Mrs. Mulrooney, with some pride, "but there's few but what it does."

True enough! Mary knew so many families sunk in all kinds of ills arising from the father's drunkenness that she only sighed by way of answer to her garrulous neighbor.

"Of coorse," went on Mrs. Mulrooney, "I wasn't going to rack because Terence fell to drinkin', nor would I let me child be desthroyed by it. I can't say, Mary,

what *might* have been an' I'd had poor health and half a dozen childher; but havin' only me Angel, and *such* an Angel! troth now I'll hold me own way in the world, and jerk me Terence along wid me somehow!"

Bridget went home. Mary had had a long day of labor, and she sat alone with her Bible on her knee. She thought, more than ever before, of the giant Evil that was making desolate so many hearts and homes about her. She felt powerless to lay so much as a straw's strength against the current of wrong. Even as she lifted up the cry, "Help me, Lord!" came, in a swift thought, the prayer's answer. Mary saw what she could do; she felt sure of success; she had a plan—a plan that would not fail. She prayed over it—she promised the Lord she would make this effort. She exhorted herself to be courageous. Even then, as if to cheer her, a new thing came about.

Richard walked in sober, spoke civilly to his mother and put away his hat and boots. Mary knew that Richard had been working for several days and had money in his pocket, and so could drink if he chose. She looked at him wistfully, feeling that she would like in some way to show her care for him, when came the second happy thought of the evening; she bid the young man sit up a little while, and made him a cup of good coffee.

"That's nice!" said Richard, heartily, finishing a second cup; and he went into the recess where he slept and pulled off coat and vest, then he put out his head from the faded curtain, and said, roughly but rather kindly, "Here, old lady, catch this and keep it; it'll buy more of the stuff;" and he flung his old pocket-book into her lap.

"Thank you, son," said his mother, striving to overcome her surprise enough

to speak calmly. "I will buy the coffee and have it every night, if you will come home for it."

Richard drew back his head like a turtle into its shell, and made no reply to his mother.

Mary did not know what to make of this. Years before, Richard had had his seasons of repentance and feeble attempts at reformation, but these struggles had, alas! been too often followed by lower lapses than before, and his good days and struggles to do right had been so long intermitted that Mary had ceased to look for them.

Before the dawn Mary was awake, revolving her plan; it looked, in the cool review of the morning, less likely to succeed than it had seemed in the enthusiasm of the evening's dreaming; but Mary had promised herself to perform this work, as far as her efforts could avail for it, and she would not go back. She felt as if

Angel, who had so long prayed with her, must now work with her, and resolved to see her as soon as the morning work was done. When breakfast was over, Mary said to Richard, "I'll have a good dinner for you if you will come home to it, my son." Richard seemed to hear her, but went out without answering. It was now but little after six, and hardly had Richard gone when Angel entered. "Father's been bad all night," she said; "mother could not find him until late, and he'd drank so much. Oh, Mrs. Ware, can't we keep him from it any way?"

"Yes, dear," said Mary, "I hope the Lord's showed me a way. Just help me do my work up while I talk. There's a grand temperance man now in the city, and he talks so none can resist him. He's getting hundreds to sign the pledge every night in the big halls up town. He is stopping at the Astor House, and

I've heard Mrs. Warren and Miss Fairly tell about him, and I've read of his speeches in the papers. Now, child, we'll ask the Lord to prosper us, and you and I will go to this gentleman, and we'll tell him how we've prayed and suffered here, and we'll ask him to come down and speak right before Ann's shop, Sunday afternoon next. And your mother'll take your father out, and you must win out my Rick."

Thus all was arranged. Angel and Mary got ready at once, and by half-past eight they were standing in the hotel hall asking for the lecturer on whom their hopes were set. The dandy waiters of the hotel seemed inclined to ignore the inquiries of these humble visitors, but they proved the old rule true that, "Perseverance conquers all things." It conquered the inattentive servants and obtained them an audience with Mr. ——.

"Well, friends, what am I to do for you

to-day?" inquired the lecturer, pleasantly.

"Sir," replied Mary, "we come from a very poor neighborhood, which intemperance is making worse every year. We have heard a great deal about the good you are doing, and as we know our folks won't come out to these grand places where you speak, we ask you to have the goodness to come and speak to them on Sunday afternoon, if you can, sir, right out of doors by the whisky-shop. It is a poor place, sir, but just the place to do good in."

"H–m–m–m!" said the lecturer, taking a set of tablets out of his pocket and turning them over. Mary trembled lest her case should fail: "Don't refuse me, sir. My son, my dear son—oh, sir, he's ruined by liquor, but you may win even him."

"And my father too, sir," interposed Angel with tearful eyes, giving the

gentleman's coat a little pull in her eagerness.

"And who are you?" asked the gentleman, kindly.

"Angel, sir;" and seeing the stranger looked puzzled, she said: "It sounds queer, I know, sir, but I'm used to it. My name is Angeline, and my mother calls me Angel; being my mother, sir, she don't mind, you know;" and Angel's expressive look indicated that she thought of her deformity.

"Ah! And your father drinks, does he? Have you any brothers or sisters?"

"No, sir. It's a good thing I haven't, isn't it? for mother couldn't take care of many, and you don't know how hard it is for children to have fathers that drink, sir. Mine would be a very good father only for that; indeed, and he don't mind it either, sir, only when he's been drinking a good deal."

The gentleman looked down very

kindly on the child; then turning to Mary, he said: "And may I ask who you are, madam?"

"I'm Mary Ware, Bible-woman of that district, sir."

"Ah! Bible-woman! Then you have a manager? Who may that be."

"Mrs. Judge Warren, sir."

"Oh! oh! Now I see daylight plainly in this matter. I'm acquainted with Mrs. Warren—indeed, I'm going there to tea—and I think you may rely upon me for a speech by that whisky-shop you mention, on Sunday at three o'clock. But madam, whisky is a stubborn fiend to exorcise, and too frequently will not down for my best efforts."

"Ah," said Angel, with another little involuntary pull at the coat, "but we're asking God to help you. "We've been praying a long while, Mary and me."

"And don't you get discouraged?" asked he, gently.

"No, sir," replied Angel, with a patient little sigh. "There is something in the Bible about the long waiting, and the answer is sure to come."

Then Angel and Mary went off, very well satisfied.

When Mary in her rounds that day went to old Lottie's attic, she found there Kate Fairly, escorted by her aunt's staid old cook. Kate had come to bring Lottie a bowl of jelly and a bottle of liniment. Old Lottie sat propped up in her bed as close to the one dormer window as she could be without interfering with her daughter's work. She was placed so that whatever light there was fell well on the coarse-print Bible set up before her; and though her hands were too much crippled with rheumatism to hold the book, she had a thumb and finger well enough to turn the leaves. So she spent much of her time reading slowly to her toiling daughter, and now she was telling Kate

how she had put up David's prayer, "When I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not," and the Lord had heard her.

Kate and Mary went down stairs together. "How dull that room is!" cried Kate, "and how that poor woman sits bent over that half-paid sewing to keep herself and mother from starvation! I wonder if something pretty wouldn't brighten her face a little? I believe, Mary, I'll send Jim down with a red monthly rose to stand in her window. Do you think she'd like it?"

"Indeed she would," said Mary, warmly; "poor people like beauty as well as rich ones, but then they get so very little of it."

"I'll send the rose," said Kate. "I'll buy it as I go home."

"Dear child," said Mary, with a trembling voice, turning to her young companion on the stairway, "with all this

giving, give one thing more—your heart, Miss Kate—your heart for Jesus."

They had reached the door. "Good-bye, Mary," said Kate, and went away, the cook following her.

Saturday came, and an hour before tea-time Angel was searching about for Rick Ware. To her delight she saw him lounging homeward, quite sober. She put her small hand in his and walked along, chatting pleasantly: "Your mother isn't in yet but I know where her key is, Mr. Ware; and we will get supper ready, won't we? Besides, I want to ask you to do something for me, Mr. Ware. Do you suppose you'll do it?"

"Like enough," said Richard.

Angel never went anywhere with her father. It was not that she did not love him, or that she was willing to neglect him, but that he was the worst companion she could have in the street.

There are hundreds of boys on the city

streets to whom no gentleness or misfortune or depth of misery is sacred. There were enough to hoot at our little Angeline because of her deformity. With all the juvenile mob her father was "Shaking Terry," the lawful butt of practical jokes. When alone, Angeline was not always sure of passing unnoticed or unmolested; with her father, she was sure to be persecuted.

With Richard Ware it was different. The man had a giant frame, and a lion-like temper that no one cared to rouse. Drunk or sober, Richard Ware was to be decently treated; and whatever of goodness or chivalry was slumbering in his nature, Angel had awakened, and with him she was sure of protection and kindness. All those better impulses that might have made Richard a good husband and father, had he not been enslaved by strong drink, stirred to the sound of Angel's voice and to the touch

of Angel's hand. "If—if," he thought, bitterly—"if his youth had been restrained and his manhood steadfast to the right, he might have had a home of his own making; wife and children to welcome his coming, to look up to him, to trust *him*, to depend on *him*. Ah, he would not then have left them to degradation while he was sinking lower than the brutes; but now—too late, too late." Richard respected his mother, he loved her in a measure, but, owing to that bitter wrong of separating the mother from the child, he did not know her love for him; his tenderest thoughts were not bound up in memories of her, and how she had cared for him and comforted him in childhood's April day. Besides, we do not paint our Mary as perfect. In many things she was a weak woman. Indeed, whatever strength she had was Bible strength; by nature she had little of resolution, of strong impulses, of ardent loving and

hoping. Perhaps if she had had a more *resolute* heart she would have been able to keep her child in those early years. Now she was rather in awe of Richard; she did not know how to carry herself toward him; she was afraid of going wrong; and yet, despite of all these disadvantages hampering her actions, tying her hands and keeping a gulf between herself and the son of her tender love, we can show you how her Bible strength triumphed, and her son was saved by faith and prayer; we think that Angel was given Mary as one of her helps with Richard, in answer to prayer.

But now Angel and Richard have gone into Mary's room and are busy at housekeeping. Rick made the fire, and Angel put the tea to steep and set the table, and, meanwhile, crafty little soul that she was, told all the items that had drifted to her concerning the lecturer Mr. ——, and how she wanted to hear him—she was

careful not to say she had seen him—and she knew he was going to speak on Sullivan street right before Ann Wheeler's, and she could not go alone, she was so short and there would be so many boys there; "And you know, Mr. Ware, the boys *do* mind, though *you* don't, Mr. Ware, and mother don't, either." How Angel loved to dwell on that mother-love that did not mind her deformity! "Won't you take me to hear the speaking, Mr. Ware? I won't be the least mite afraid with you."

"Why don't you ask your father?" said Richard, a little gruffly. But he was sorry as soon as he spoke, for Angel said, tremulously, "Father can't take care of me," and looked up with tears in her eyes; so Richard said quickly, to make amends, "Of course I'll take you. I was joking you, Angel; don't mind. I'm a rough fellow; you'll hate me."

"Oh no," Angel said, very cheerful

again; "I could never hate you Mr. Ware."

"Don't I do things you don't like?" asked Richard.

"Yes, you do," said Angel, boldly; "but you'll stop that, Mr. Ware."

"Why will I?" asked Richard, wondering at her confidence,

"You will, and you'll be happy, and so will your mother and so will I; and—and—I wouldn't wonder, Mr. Ware, if you got to be a policeman with a star on your coat!" cried Angel, taking a lively flight of imagination.

"Hoh," said Richard; and his mother came in, glad enough to see him sitting there, and tried to interest him during supper-time; and he sat by the stove a while, and gave his mother what money he had and went to bed. He was silent enough, yet I believe that visions of a blue coat, with a star and a glazed cap and a policeman's bludgeon, hung before

Richard's eyes that night, waking and sleeping.

Mary sat up late, cleaned and mended her son's clothes, blacked his shoes, and laid on a chair beside his bed a collar and neck-tie of her own providing. She hoped, but there was the haunting fear that in the morning Richard would go back to his boon companions again, and so be unfit to go with Angel. Angel had some fears of this kind herself, and was early on hand to prevent mishaps. Mrs. Mulrooney was fully cognizant of the lecture plan, and was sure of escorting her husband to hear all that was to be heard. She said to Mary, "Arrah, jewel, I'l take him there, though it'll do not one mite of good; but I'm not the woman as will leave any stone unturned to make a man of me Terence."

Mary was the only one to whom Mrs. Mulrooney would speak her mind about her husband. Did any one else venture

a word as to Terence's misdoings, Bridget was resolved into an indignation meeting at once: "Shure Terence was no worse than other men. What one wouldn't take a taste of the poison, when never a corner could he turn without it bein' poked into his face? Bad luck to them as sells it, and makes it, and lets the bad laws thrive!"

Early on Sunday morning, fresh and happy, comes Angel into Mary's room; her golden hair is brushed over her shoulders in long silken waves; she has on her blue Sunday dress, a white apron, and about her neck is a bit of lace. She sees Richard's tidy trim at once: "How nice you look, Mr. Ware! just nice enough to go to church. Won't you go with me this morning? Do!"

"No," Richard replied, moodily; "church is not for me. It is well enough to stay at home."

Angel loved church. It was much of

a cross for her to stay at home, but she said: "Mayn't I stay here with you, Mr. Ware? I'll read to you and sing to you, and you can hear me say my lesson, if you'll let poor Norah stay with us too; for she daren't go to school or church, and she's got nowhere else to wear her good clothes."

Richard agreed to this proposition. He asked Angel to take a walk with him, "for a breath of air," and Angel, knowing he felt restive, went with him to keep him out of mischief. When they came back, Norah, in the clothes she had gotten from Mrs. Warren, was waiting to receive them. Mary was off on her rounds; the room looked clean and cheery; the sun shone in at the bright windows, and there was a nice cold dinner, covered with a white cloth, on a table in the corner. Norah sat down near Angel, her eyes fixed on the picture of the Good Shepherd. Angel read and talked and

sang. Many of her innocent words smote Richard's heart. He listened, interested for a time; at last dozed a little, with his head against the wall. Angel thought he slept, so she stopped singing and began to talk to Norah, and their talk ran in soft tones on their home-troubles, and "if" everybody was only good, and "if, if"—many "ifs," between which and themselves King Whisky interposed.

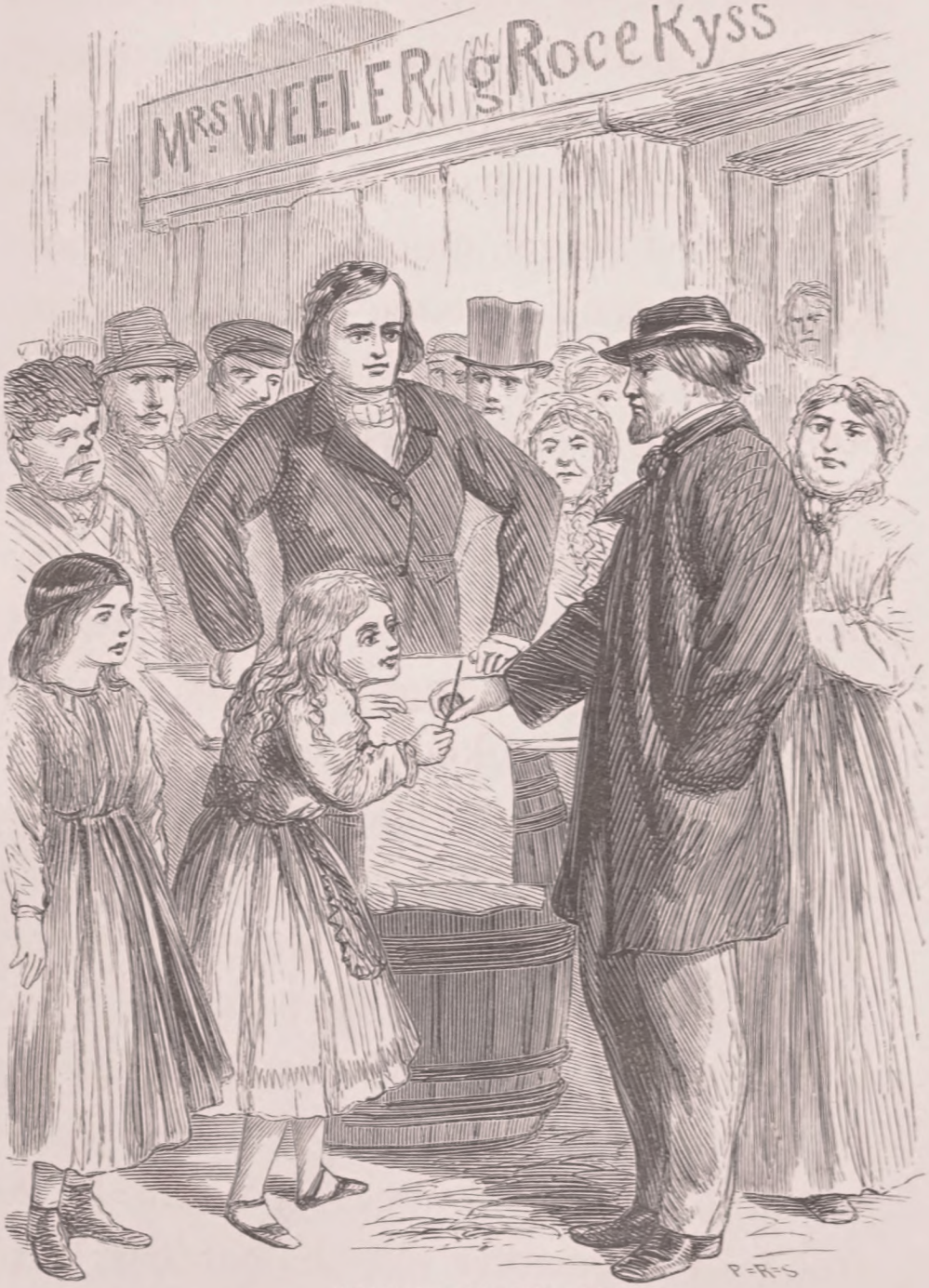
"Let's you and me always be temperance," said Norah.

"Yes, indeed," said Angel; and then thought she saw one of Richard's eyes a little way open, so wisely turned the current of conversation into another channel.

We are a long while getting to this temperance lecture, but it came at last; somehow the news had spread abroad, and many were ready to go. Black-eyed Rose had dressed the baby in its best to carry with her to the "speaking."

Margaret Wishalow was nothing loth to take Dermot in his new check suit, now that she found Mrs. Mulrooney was going, for Mrs. Mulrooney was quite a magnate in that neighborhood; and Mrs. Mulrooney had Terence in tow, griping his arm tightly, to be sure that he stayed outside of Mrs. Wheeler's shop and attended to the speaking, instead of inside, attending to the drinking. Billy was there in a Sunday suit of his own buying; and besides these of our acquaintance, nearly all the denizens of those houses adjacent strolled up one by one as the clear, ringing, touching, electric tones of the speaker fell upon the air. Mary Ware was in her room teaching those of her children who, like Norah, did not dare, or, like Lizzie, did not care, to go; but as she taught, her heart was truly more with that advocate for temperance who was speaking to her son than with the lesson she was teaching.

Richard Ware was at the street temperance speech. He had lifted Angel up upon a board placed across a hogshead, and stood beside her leaning against the house, his arms folded across his stalwart chest, his brows knit, his eyes fixed upon the speaker. Angel, with uplifted face, parted lips, clasped hands and golden hair sweeping back over her shoulders, was the personification of the eager listener; she sat close to her self-chosen protector, her arm resting against his broad shoulder. In a crowd Angel always felt frightened and alone, but today, so near strong Richard and hearing such quick, searching, wonderful words, she forgot her fears. And now the fervid flow of eloquence is stayed a moment; the speaker has a pen and parchment in his hand; there is a pledge written, and who will sign their names to that happy vow? There are two, too eager to wait for others. Rose and Billy are pressing



"You too, Mr. Ware!"

forward to set down their names, and Mrs. Wishalow's heart gives a sudden bound; she will not see her boy's head go down into a drunkard's grave. "Me too!" cried Angel, quickly. "Mr. Ware! help me down! take me up there! let me sign that good pledge!" and her voice was too earnest to be denied, and Richard lifted the child down and helped her through the crowd, where she might sign her name. There were several names down now, and Angel, slowly writing hers in queer, crooked letters, put the pen in Richard's hand, whispering, "You, too, Mr. Ware! you, too! You will keep it, I know you will. Sign quick, and get my father here to sign his name." Richard's fingers closed awkwardly about the pen. He hesitated—he might be free—was the bondage sweet? Would he be free? The speaker saw the conflict. He saw what noble manhood had been wrecked in Richard Ware. He bent his

head and spoke a few strong, true words that woke the slumbering energies of Richard's soul. Richard turned the paper about and deliberately wrote his name. He drew a long breath. He was Drunken Rick no more, but a free man, to labor and to win—to take among men his own honorable place. Life, with its happiest possibilities, was within his reach once more. The pledge signified much to Richard, and he meant to keep it.

But here was another candidate for the honors of signing the pledge. Mrs. Mulrooney escorted her husband to the speaker's side, saying, in her clear, cheery tones, "Here's me Terence to put down his name, yer honor." Terence Mulrooney was very easily moved. He was fickle as the wind. Terence was unfortunately like a gutta-percha face—easily pinched one way, and quite as easily another. He had stood before the speaker,

entering into the whole interest of the occasion, smiling when others smiled and weeping when they wept. When the pledge was produced, Terence waited to see which way the vane of his emotion should turn; when Billy and Rose went up to set their names to the pledge, Terence put one foot forward; when others followed the two children, he took a whole step onward; when Angel pressed by him to write her name on the good list, Terence cried, "Come, old woman!" and when Richard wrote himself free, the enthusiasm of Terence rose rapidly. He shouted, "Come *on*, old woman!" and Bridget, hoping a little and fearing a great deal, brought him to the barrel that served as a desk. To be sure, Terence had never signed the pledge before, and Bridget did not know but the pledge might have some binding force; but she knew that nothing was very sacred in her husband's eyes. She had heard him

utter solemn promises of reformation, which he broke in an hour; indeed, he promised most when he had drunk most, and yet, poor fellow! his worst fault was his weakness.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOST.

ALAS that almost the same page must chronicle victory and defeat! While Richard Ware on that Sabbath evening was telling his mother of the signing of the pledge, Terence went to the pump for a pail of water for his wife. Here his evil genius, Ann Wheeler, met him. Ann was furious at the business of the afternoon, and was determined to retrieve whatever ground she had lost, if it were in her power to do so. She met Terence as he went for water.

"Good luck to ye!" she shouted; "come an' drink me health in a glass of whisky!"

"I've no money," said Terence, with an uneasy thought of the afternoon.

"Who talks ov money?" cried Mrs. Wheeler. "Ain't I juist treating all ov me friends as has strength to stand by a poor widdy, airning her daily perwisions. Come on, Terry; I sthand threat, man; and it's yerself is the apple ov me eye in the way ov custom. Come on; ain't they all a-waiting? 'Troth', says they all, 'we'll not taste a drap till Terry comes.'"

Who will credit it? Terence left his pail to the Fates, and, bent on evil, trotted off to the grogshop, and there uproariously drank "Long life to the temperance man!" "Good luck to the pledge!" made a speech in favor of cold water, and during it drank himself into a state of stupidity, after which Ann thrust him into the street.

While Terry was thus making a dolt of himself, Ann resolved to look up Richard, and, as she did not have that

fear of Mary that she had of Bridget, went boldly to Mary's room and thrust her head in at the door. "Come on, Rick!" she cried. "I'm treating all me friends to a supper and a drink, and it's you we are waiting for to give us a song. Come on; leave the old woman to her prayers, and show us what you can do with the dhrink and the fun." Richard slowly rose and walked to the door.

"Mrs. Wheeler," he said, plainly, "I've been to your shop for the last time. I wrote myself free of whisky this afternoon, and I mean to stand to what I've done. It is a pity for a man to encourage a woman like you to live by a trade that robs other women of all the comfort of their lives; and it's a pity for a woman to stand tempting men to the destruction of strong drink. You may come for me no more; I'll drink no more poison at your bar. Here I am to look out for my mother, and who makes light of her

makes light of me, as sure as my name's Rick Ware!"

To him who has thrown away the opportunities of a life-time, who has rushed headlong on the downward track, bitter are the steps of retrogression. How hard it is to battle with long-pampered appetites, to win respect from those who have noted the long degradation, to begin one's career of honorable industry after long-wasted years, and slowly climb to competence, only those who have shared or closely watched the endeavor know.

How many times did Richard Ware gnash his teeth in very fury at himself when he thought of the position, the means, the time, the strength he had flung away in service of that monster whose wages had wellnigh been death. Here, almost at middle age, was he at the very starting-point; by this time he might have had something to show for

his labors had he not early sold himself into slavery. Richard was angry at himself, but he was not disheartened; he was not the man, because he was not where he ought to be, to cast himself out of all hope of better things. It took all his dogged resolution, all his iron strength of endurance, to stifle the temptations of his appetite, the sharp cravings for drink, the voice of remorse that shrieked, "Too late! too late!" Richard had a rough path to tread just then, but he trod it bravely. Day after day he sought work, willing to take mere boy's employment, so that he but had something to do; he was ready for anything that would lift him upward from the slough whereinto he had fallen. Man as he was, and looking older than his years, he went every evening to night-school with Billy and Rose. His fingers, too used to cards and liquor-glasses, now held the pen or slate-pencil; he returned to the first principles

of spelling-book and reader, and indeed soon found the benefit resulting to himself from this course, for his mind became clearer, he grew hopeful and cheerful, and "Drunken Rick" was buried with no fear of resurrection.

All these trials and struggles and conquests of her son, Mary, sure of sympathy, rehearsed to Mrs. Warren; Mrs. Warren, interested in the story, repeated it to her husband; and thus, at the different extremities of this chain of circumstances, Judge Warren and Richard Ware were drawn together. The judge waited a while to see how Richard should hold on his way. He wanted to test the strength of the man's new principles, and then, for his mother's sake, and through her acquaintance with the Warrens, Richard got help; the judge offered him employment with liberal renumeration, which yet left his evenings free for school.

While Richard's course was thus cheering, poor Terence was meeting with many ups and downs.

Dire was Bridget's indignation over Terence's quick lapse from the temperance principles to which he had pledged himself. The next morning, while her husband lay in his drunken stupor, Mrs. Mulrooney met Mary on the street; she took her aside and in an earnest undertone began to relate the recent fall of Terence. "Och! what'll a body do?" she said; "he means to do well, and he can't; how easy it is for him to slip, to be sure! I'd give him up, only to spite Ann; and he's me Angel's father, and he was a likely lad onct!"

"Don't give him up," said Mary, strong in her own new hopes. "Talk to him, reason with him. He will let you watch him. Get him work, and take him to it and from it; and, Bridget, best of all if you would pray for him."

"Troth! it's not meself as is in prayin' humor," said Bridget, hastily. "I feel more like going and fighting Ann Wheeler, only me Angel don't approve it. Howsumiver, Mary, I'll take your advisement as to talking and watching, and I'll not give over thrying; and—you may do the praying an' you like, Mary."

Artisans of all kinds were then in demand, and Terence was known to be a good workman when sober, and it was easy for him to obtain employment. Bridget resolved to take him to and from his work, and appointed herself his guardian to such an extent that she searched his pockets and did not allow him a penny to spend by himself. She complained bitterly that this censorship she was exercising was ruining her own proper business, and making her lose custom; but here helpful Angel came to the rescue. The child was sure she could cut out and bake the little cakes her mother mixed,

and prepare sandwiches, as well as any one. Indeed, Angel was as good as her word, for, mounted on an upturned soap-box by the table, she cut wonderful things in dough, and proved as wise at the oven as her mother; so Bridget's business prospered.

Mary and Richard were not slow to do all they could for Terence. Mrs. Wishalow and the other respectable neighbors wished him well, and, knowing his weakness, tried to uphold him in the sober ways his wife had chosen for him. Opposed to these, and in league with Terence's feebleness and depravity, were Ann Wheeler and her hangers-on, and sometimes one party and sometimes the other was in the ascendant.

At one time, Terence would work industriously, smoke his pipe at home in the evening by the fire, and listen well pleased to whatever small gossip of the neighborhood his wife was ready to re-

peat to him. Again, he would grow restive and use all his cunning and resort to every subterfuge to escape from surveillance and get whisky. One day, with voluble tongue, he told the pleasures of temperance; the next, he forged a dozen falsehoods to obtain a glass of strong drink. He even went so far as to rise at night, when Bridget was sound asleep, and steal off to the whisky-shop. However, being once detected in this kind of escape, Bridget forgot not to lock the door and hang the key to her own neck when they retired thereafter. So far did Bridget carry her supervision of her worser half that one day, when Terence heard Angel reading her Sunday-school lesson in the twelfth chapter of Acts, he very stupidly likened himself to the Apostle Peter "sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison;" and besought his child to be the Angel to

release him, whereat she was greatly discomfited.

We must not suppose that with Richard's reformation Angel dropped all those little arts which she had used to win him from evil. She read to her father and sang to him, but he seemed rather bored by these entertainments; so she tried playing jack-straws and fox-and-geese, which she learned from Richard expressly for her father's benefit. Terence was fond of whittling, and Angel was apt to want a great many little knickknacks, the manufacture of which should occupy her father's evenings; and yet, for the most part, it seemed as if Terence was going to ruin in spite of everybody.

Each day poor little Norah's lot grew harder. She had learned to read a little; her willing mind had imbibed a great deal of Mary's scriptural teachings. Each Sabbath found Norah a learner

in Mary's class; and through the week, as the Bible-woman went from room to room, reading, instructing, comforting, aiding, Norah followed close at hand to hear the voice of her friend repeating the truths both loved so well.

Lizzie had given up peanut-selling, and went to school and sewing-class. Margaret roused herself to sufficient energy to insist upon this, and Lizzie was not as much opposed to instruction as heretofore. Under Mary's direction the child was growing more respectable. To Norah, Lizzie was still true; indeed, it seemed as if Norah would have starved outright had it not been for Mary and Lizzie, who secretly gave her food. Again and again, when chased by her mother out into darkness, cold and storm, Norah fled to Margaret Wishalow's room, and found Lizzie ready to sleep with her on the floor covered with a quilt, as there was not room in bed for them both. At

other times Norah would find Mary ready to receive her. Hard indeed was the child's lot when her wretched mother heard she had been to see Mary, or had gone with her on her rounds. Ann was experiencing a decrease of business, and rightly attributed it mainly to the influence of the Bible-woman and her Book.

There were other things to be laid at Mary's door. There were families comfortable who a year before had been miserable; children were in school who until now had roamed the streets; and shabby figures and faded faces crept on each blessed day of rest to His house who "seeth not as men seeth," who "looketh not on the outward appearance," who has sent a gospel to the poor, and welcomes the most wretched of his children to his outstretched arms.

One cold, clear January evening, Mary Ware was busy in her room basting work

for her sewing-class. Mary was a very diligent Bible-woman, and faithfully occupied every moment that was not needed for the few simple wants of her domestic life in the work for which she was paid by Mrs. Warren. There was no idle time for Mary. Early in the morning her room was tidy and herself in readiness to go out on her rounds. At noon her brisk hands prepared the dinner, and cleared it away in but little time, and generally part of the noon-time was spent in making some wholesome dish for infants or invalids. In the evening she did her ironing and her sewing, and arranged the work for her sewing-class. One morning in the week Mary kept for her washing, baking and scrubbing, and frequently then had a baby or so to keep for a mother who must get out for an hour, or an old creature sitting close to her fire, rejoicing in some one to whom to pour out her trials,

and mayhap getting a little comfort from Mary's words of that land "where they hunger no more, neither thirst any more, and where none shall say, I am sick." A busy life it was for Mary; and all this winter, through storm and cold, Mary's brown calico dress, coarse black cloak, and hood of black silk, quilted and bound with fur, might have been seen going in and out of all sorts of dismal dwellings. As she carried her leather-covered Bible, a little bag of tracts and her tin spectacle case, the little children called her "Bible Mary" more than ever.

Well, we must not tarry thus, for on this cold January evening—late in the month it was—Mary worked busily at the table, and nearer the stove sat Mrs. Mulrooney knitting a black stocking. Rose and Billy had gone with Richard to night-school; Angel was in bed; and as Terence was fast asleep after his day's work, Bridget had locked her door and

come, as she said, "to talk a bit wid Mary and aise her mind."

As the two worked and talked, it grew nearly nine o'clock, and then they heard a feeble, uncertain fumbling at the door-latch. Mary at once opened the door and pulled the intruder into the room. It was Norah, almost barefooted, with neither hood nor shawl, her hair tangled, her dress-waist torn nearly in two, a long red scratch down her cheek, and her teeth chattering and her whole form shaking with cold.

"Presarve us all!" cried Bridget; "what is this? Come here, you poor, frozed little toad, and warm yerself. Has that ill mother of yours been 'busing of you and turning you out this fearsome night, whin Bridget Mulrooney wouldn't put a cat intil the street?" (Here Bridget exaggerated a little, for she had carefully set her own Tabby out of her room, for the greater safety of her cakes and pies.)

Mary led Norah to the stove, wrapped a shawl about her and began to rub her chilled hands, while the child strove to speak, but from terror and cold could not utter a word.

"Poor thing! you are nearly overcome," said Mary, lifting the little creature into a chair, that her feet might get warm. "I'll give you part of the tea I have here hot for Richard."

"Do that," said Bridget; "and, if I hate the mother, I've no grudge again the child; and by that token here's me stockings, warm from me own feet, as I'll put on her. It's not Bridget Mulrooney 'll ketch cowld slipping home, and a warm fire waiting for me!" Good as her word, Bridget pulled off her own hose and drew them on Norah's blue, shrunken limbs. Norah drank the tea, and thus refreshed and comforted she grasped Mary's apron in eagerness, and said, in rapid tones, "Oh, Mrs. Ware! Mother!

It's awful! She's got the trembles, ma'am; she sees snakes; it's the horrors—the whisky-horrors, ma'am! She set at me to choke me; she'd killed me, only the men took me away; and she sees things, and she shrieks and knocks her head on the wall; and she goes on awful. Them that's there don't care; they're just putting into the whisky and drinking all they can, and taking off bottles, and mother don't know nothing only to screech and to hunt the things she sees."

"Horrible!" said Mary. "Some one must go and see to her."

"Yes 'm," said Norah; "she tried to kill me, and a man he put me out the door, and I was afeard, and I looked in at the window ever so long; and now most of 'em's gone off, and mother she lies along the floor and just screeches awful!"

"Dear! dear! somebody must go," said Mary, nervously. "I must go right off."

"Don't you go one step. She hates you, and will kill you just as like as not," said Bridget; "it will be right wicked of you to do it."

"Don't go alone," said Norah; "oh don't! But Mr. Richard is so strong; when he comes you go, do please; you don't know how bad she is this time, and everybody hates her and won't go nigh her."

Mary felt as if she must fly at once to the wretched sufferer, and tried to persuade Bridget to go with her. Bridget soundly refused, saying she was glad of it—it served Ann right. Mary urged every plea she could think of—neighborly duty, humanity, her own wishes, what Angel would say. At length Bridget cried, "An ye'll wait intil Rick comes home, I'll go wid ye, Mary Ware! Ye're enough to worrit the life out of me."

The two women now gave Norah some bread and meat, washed her, wrapped her

in one of Mary's night-dresses and laid her in Mary's bed, where she at once fell asleep. Cares for Norah were hardly ended when the trio from night-school came in. Richard at once said he would accompany his mother and Bridget to Mrs. Wheeler's, and he asked Billy to run in there after taking Rose home, that they might send for a doctor if it should be needful.

A wretched scene was that grogshop. Two unsnuffed tallow candles lighted it; the fire in the dirty stove was nearly out; Ann's last customers had evidently plundered the shop, and on the floor lay Ann shrieking and writhing, her lips wildly telling of horrible sights that passed before her frenzied vision.

The fire was soon made up, and the three who had come on their errand of mercy got Ann into her wretched bed, which they made as comfortable as they could. Bridget and Richard exerted

nearly all their strength in keeping the rum-maniac from mischief, while Mary stepped about, getting things into some sort of order and applying what remedies were at hand. Sad experience had made these three people wise as to what to do in this fearful disorder, but Richard soon saw that other aid than their own was needed. He bade Billy go for a doctor.

"He'll not come here this time of night," said Mrs. Mulrooney; "no man in 's senses would. Juist tell him what's wrong, and it's an over-bad case, and we'll be beholden to him if he sends us some mighty powerful medicine, and steps this way in the morning."

Billy did his errand quickly, and, as Bridget had opined, the doctor sent the medicine instead of coming himself. All night Richard, his mother and good-natured Bridget watched by the bedside of the inebriate, Bridget forgetting all her animosity and as attentive as if Ann had

been her sister. In the morning, Mrs. Wishalow and another neighbor came to watch, as the sufferer was now more quiet from opiates and exhaustion. At home, Mary dressed Norah in the comfortable clothes that had come from Mrs. Warren's, had her help get breakfast and then sent her to stay all day with Rose. Richard went for a physician, and then reported Ann's case to the poormaster.

"Troth now, Mary, ye needn't say one word; she'll die; there's nothing surer," said Bridget Mulrooney, as about noon she met Mrs. Ware at Ann Wheeler's bedside.

"I'm afraid she will," said Mary.

"And why is it afraid? She's no good to anybody, more's the pity. 'Deed, and if she died, the neighborhood, to say nothing for the child, would be better off."

"That is true," said Mary, "but think how unprepared she is to die. After

such a dreadful life, to die unrepentant and unforgiven is fearful."

"Yes, that's true for ye," said Bridget. "It's well for them that has acted dacent like; when it's time to die, they ain't afeard."

"But who of us is by good conduct ready for death?"

"I've done the best I can, and the Lord will ask no more of me."

"*Have* you done the best you can, Bridget? The Lord says we must love him with all our heart, mind and strength, and live for his glory. Have you done that?"

"No more I haven't," said Bridget, softly.

"I hope, Bridget, that whenever you think of this death-bed scene you will call to mind these words of my Book: 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.'"

Thus these two women talked. They

were in the poor cellar-room. The dirty floor, grimy windows, greasy counter, the shelves stripped by the last revelers, the cracked stove with its sluggish fire, the low, ill-covered bed on the floor,—all were miserable surroundings of the dying drunkard.

After a few moments of exhaustion and stupor, Ann would wake to fierce struggles and fearful visions; and toward evening, when the poormaster sent to convey her to the hospital, Ann Wheeler was dead. The women who had watched over the wretched creature's last hours laid out the body decently, and the next morning, with pine coffin, rattling cart and narrow bed in the potter's field, the last scene of Ann Wheeler's life was finished.

"There's a child," said the poormaster carelessly to Mary; "we'll bind her out or send her to a 'Home.' "

"I'm the Bible-woman of this district,"

said Mary, "and if you please I'd like time to speak to Mrs. Judge Warren about the child; perhaps we can make some comfortable arrangement for her.

The result of the consultations of Norah's friends was happy. Norah was to be Mary's little girl, her adopted child. This Richard strongly urged, and Mrs. Warren undertook to aid in supporting the girl, promising that after a few years of schooling she should be taught a good trade.

To have Norah with his mother, to find the child caring for him, waiting on him, looking up to him, coming to him to help her with her school-tasks, made Richard feel yet more a man. And as for happy Norah, she seemed until now to have been wandering in some horrible dream-land, and to have just awaked to home and friends, to sports and pleasant lessons, such as the Lord sends to little children.

CHAPTER IX.

SAVED.

THE world is full of contrasts. From the flower of spring lying on last year's withered leaves; the babe in its coffin; the old man, ruddy and strong to his threescore years and ten; the rich man, sad amid his wealth; the poor man, complaining of the troops of children and the robust health whose lack sets his neighbor to repining, and so on, there is scarcely anything we see that is not touched by its contrariety. Here in our story the wreck and hopeless loss of the mother in middle life ushers in the rescue and satisfaction of her child; and in Kate Fairly we now meet a yet happier contrast to the scene of wretchedness and death we have just depicted. To some

the Lord speaks by the strong wind rending and breaking, to some in the earthquake, to others in the fire, and yet to others, as to Elijah on Horeb, in the still small voice. To Kate Fairly, in the midst of her happy youth, with all to lure her to worldliness or to lull her to the false security of a life without the Saviour, came the gentle wooing of the Spirit, and Kate gave herself joyfully to Jesus. Thenceforth it was with a double zeal she labored among earth's highways and hedges to bring in strangers to the banquet of the King, and sanctified by love for Christ were all the offerings she brought to the suffering and needy. Need we tell of the pure joy of Mary Ware, when Kate told her what great things the Lord had done for her, whereof she was glad?

For some time Prussia Wiggins has slipped out of the current of our story. Indignant at Mary for refusing her a

share in her room, and knowing herself unpopular in all the neighborhood, Prussia stayed for the most part sewing in her attic, though she earned quite enough to enable her to hire a comfortable room. Prussia was miserly, and now devoted herself to saving money, and to doing whatever she thought would be distressing to Mary or against her principles. It afforded Prussia intense satisfaction to do her marketing and shopping on Sunday, about the time Mary was going to church, to go to somebody's room to gossip when they were about to accompany Mary to a religious meeting, or to endeavor to interrupt a Bible-reading.

It was fearfully cold weather in February, when one evening, Prussia fell on the landing near Mary's room and broke her leg. It seemed a very singular thing, this accident; for the landing was found to be a sheet of sheer ice, and no one

could tell how any water had come there, and Prussia was the last one likely to be walking there at that time of the evening. Richard Ware was getting ready for night-school, and the first thing he did was to help carry Prussia to her room, and the next to strew the ice plentifully with ashes. Of course, Mary was nearly the first one to wait upon the sufferer. She sent for Margaret Wishalow, and together they put Prussia to bed and made ready for the doctor. Prussia seemed quite insensible, and good Mary thus spoke her sympathy for the sufferer, her gratitude for herself, and her amazement at the manner of the mishap:

"Dear, dear, Margaret! how sorry I am for poor Prussy; she's so stirring, and nobody to look after her; and it comes so hard for her to be sick: she will have a dreadful time of it. I wish the doctor would come, and may the Lord grant that he can mend that leg! I'll

stay with her to-night, be sure. I can only wonder that I am not lying in Prussia's place. We're all so careful in this house about spilling water to make ice-spots, and I look for slippery places every day and cover them with ashes. There was no ice there when I went out, and I'm sure no water was spilled after I came in. It was dusk when I got in. I wonder if her head lies comfortable? If you'll hand me that camphor, I'll bathe it. I must have walked right over that ice myself, and I'm such a hand to slip—yes, let us have a little more fire—only I'd been to see Mrs. Warren, and Miss Kate *would* have me put on a pair of woolen overshoes. If it had not been for them, I would surely have got the fall instead of Prussy. I think she suffers; I saw her wince. Yes, I thank the Lord for my own safety, and I'll do my best for Prussy, be sure I will."

Prussy began groaning uneasily, and

presently Mrs. Mulrooney and the doctor came; and after a little time the broken limb was set and splinted, and Prussia was left to Mary's care. Relieved by Angel and Rose, Mary got some rest the next day, and Bridget watched the second night. The succeeding day Mary was again busy for Prussia.

"What can I do for you now, Prussy?" she asked.

"Nothing," cried Prussia, spitefully, "but go away. I know well you've got enough reading and visiting and preaching to do without waiting on me, wasting time."

"This is as much my business as anything else," said Mary, "and it is not time wasted if it makes you more comfortable."

"There now!" cried Prussia, wrathfully, lifting up her head as far as she was able. "I'll tell you the whole story, and see if you stay after that. You'll

trot off and tell the whole neighborhood in two minutes."

"I shall not do so, whatever you tell me," said Mary quietly. "Lie down, Prussy, and don't excite yourself."

"I'll excite you, then!" cried Miss Wiggins, frantically. "I threw that water on the landing, just to freeze, and tumble you down when you came over it; and it would, too, only for those woolen shoes!"

"Why, Prussia, what in the world did you want to have me fall down for?" asked Mary, mildly.

"Just to make you quit your Bible-reading and preaching, and to see if your great folks would care for you, and to—well to pay you for putting me out of the room."

"The room was my own, and I needed it," said Mary, mildly; "but how did you come to walk where you knew there must be ice?"

"I went to the store, and the foreman said one of my vests was not done right, and cut down my price, and gave me poorer sorts to make this time, and we had a fuss, and I came near not getting any work at all, and—I'd thank you to send back what I did get—and it all made me so hopping mad that I forgot about the ice, and rushed right on to it. There, now! I s'pose your Book has something about that."

"Yes, it has," said Mary, calmly; "it says, 'Transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness,' and 'The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands;' 'In the net which they hid is their own foot taken.'"

"I declare," said Prussia, throwing her arm over her eyes, "I never saw such a Book!"

"No," said Mary, in her straightforward manner, "for there never was such another book as the Bible. But I

wish you wouldn't excite yourself, Prussia, for I'm dreadful afraid of a fever for you. You needn't fret on my account: you see the Lord took care of me, as he has promised to. I'm sorry enough for you, Prussia, but if you'll spend these days that you are laid up in seeking the Lord, they'll be the best days that ever you've lived."

"'Sakes!" cried Prussia, tossing up her other arm in a restless way, "I never did see the like of you, Mary Ware! You make me mad at myself!"

The doctor who attended Prussia insisted on her being removed to a hospital. She was not able to hire a nurse, and her neighbors could not take care of her; besides, the tenant-house was noisy, and Prussia needed quiet. Miss Wiggins rebelled violently against the hospital plan, but everybody told her it was for the best. The physician was resolute, and at last Mary packed up everything that was

Prussia's, and stored the goods wherever she could, and Prussia was carried on a litter to the hospital which stands between Church and Duane streets. Mary accompanied her to the door.

"I'll come and see you!" said Mary.

"I wish you wouldn't!" cried Prussia; "it don't stand to reason that I'd want to see you very much. If it hadn't been for you—"

"I hope I'm not to blame, any way," said Mary the mild.

"Well, no, but if it hadn't been for you, I'd never have thought of throwing that water."

"I'm sure I couldn't help that, Prussy; if I'd known you meant to—"

"Oh yes, you'd have come and talked to me till I got madder than ever. You're a good soul, Mary—too good almost. Good-bye; don't come to see me, remember."

It was through Mary being the custo-

dian of Prussia's property that the rest of Prussia's story came to light. She remained nearly three months in the hospital, and Mary did visit her, despite her prohibitions. So did Angel, "for all she had minded so much, you know," as Angel said with a backward glance. The child took her flowers and little dainties in the kindest way. Perhaps these attentions mollified Prussia, for she grew a little more endurable; and as she was crippled for life, Mrs. Warren procured her admission to a "Home," where she sewed as she was able, and for the rest was supported. Her last recorded remark was to Mary: "You sell those things, Mary, and bring me the money. I'm going to keep every penny of it for my burying; I'm going to be buried in good style. I won't be buried a pauper, if I live one." And here, out of the range of our story, slips Prussia Wiggins, as drifts are gliding down the river.

Through the spring and summer did Terence Mulrooney vibrate between sobriety and drunkenness. While Richard Ware, with steady stride, had gone upward and onward, Terence, by doing no better, was in matter of fact doing worse. About a year from the time of signing the pledge, Bridget and Angel were in Mrs. Ware's room, where Richard was sitting with his mother and Norah. The burden of Mrs. Mulrooney's remarks was: "What will I do wid me Terence?"

"The fact is, Mrs. Mulrooney," said Richard, "Terence means well, but he can't stick to it. In this city there's a trap for birds that like the bait at nearly every corner. There's just one hope for Terence: if you could find a village where you could have a home and a bit of garden for him to work at in the evenings, and find him business in his trade for daytime, I don't doubt he'd come out bright as a dollar!"

"Really, Mr. Ware, if we could, would he get sober?" cried Angel, eagerly.

"But how can I do it?" asked Bridget.

"Richard and I have talked it over often," said Mary. "You have a little money laid up, and if you'd look up a place, and spend part of your money in moving, you might save Terence yet."

"But that money is for me Angel, that she may never want," said Bridget, uneasily.

"Oh but, mother, I'd rather have it go for curing father. Only think if he got sober like Mr. Ware! You must do it, mother," added Angel, patting her mother's ruddy cheek, "for some time I'll die, and then if father ain't sober, how lonesome you'll be, mother dear!"

"Vein of me heart!" cried Mrs. Mulrooney, catching Angel in her arms. "Why will ye talk of dying, jewel? Shure its nat'ral for children to bury

their parents, and not for parents to be layin' away their children."

"But you wouldn't want it that way for me, mother," said Angel, gently; "for when everybody that loves me and don't mind, dies, what would I do? You know it will be all right up in heaven."

After this, Mrs. Mulrooney could do nothing but lavish endearments on Angel, and would hear no more just then of Terence's reformation.

Angel, however, was more helpful as each week went by, and she took counsel with Richard as to the plan he had suggested. Miss Kate Fairly was visiting an aunt in a village some twenty miles from the city, and thither went Angel and Richard prospecting, and resolved to apply to Kate for advice.

Miss Fairly received Angel enthusiastically, and, taking hold of her plans with her usual warm-heartedness, soon arrived at definite results. A house was found,

and Angel was to have a little baker-shop and sell her mother's cakes and pies. Several ladies promised to employ Bridget as their laundress; Richard engaged work for Terence from a master builder, and with joyful hearts the reformed drunkard and the child returned to the city to press their suit to Bridget. Angel carried the day, as she always did, and her anxious hopes and labors met their reward in the reformation of her father.

The two years in which Mrs. Warren could carry on unaided her Bible-woman enterprise rolled swiftly away, but with their ending her faith and effort won their recompense. The undertaking did not perish; the Master of the vineyard owned and prospered the work, and funds were ready to maintain Mary Ware yet longer in her blessed labors. Side by side with Mary a stronger and younger spirit was laboring. Richard Ware had

been given, a returned prodigal, to his mother's prayers.

Five years have gone. The Washalow family have moved into comfortable quarters on Broome street. Rose is living with Mrs. Warren; Billy is in a printing-office; and the three younger children are going to school. Margaret doubtless would ruin the children by the inefficiency of her domestic government, but Mrs. Warren and Mary Ware strive to keep the irresolute mother to her duty; and to one good thing Margaret holds faithfully—the daily reading in her family of the word of God.

Angel's dream for Richard is fulfilled: he wears the policeman's star, and an earnest servant of law and order is he. There is a "poor men's reading-room" established somewhere in that neighborhood, and out of Richard's earnest work it grew. It would keep many men sober

and peaceable, he said, and so it has. There is a Sunday-school in a poor sort of place, not too fine for wharf-rats, and gutter-snipes and dust-boys to go to; and there, on Sunday mornings, may Richard and his mother and Billy be seen, working for Jesus.

During the long, hot weeks of the summer, as the sun is setting, and while the purple twilight lingers over the river and the sea, the denizens of the crowded quarters that lie outside the boundaries of gentility press to the docks to catch a cooler and freer air than has met their heated faces through the day. They throng the lines of docks—old men and little children, the youths and weary toilers of middle life; haggard, bloated, sorrowful, fierce, stern, and—too sparsely scattered through the motley group—the bluffly honest and content. Threading these crowds each day comes Richard Ware when off his beat, recognized as

the friend of all, with the tract, the kindly word, the invitation to Sunday-school or reading-room, the proffered pledge and the tale of what it has done for him. Thus labors Richard for immortal harvests.

Bridget Mulrooney has visited Mary not long ago. Angel, once in her home a loving presence, is now a beloved memory. Under the daisies has lain down the face that was so fair and earnest, framed in silken waves, and the form that, dwarfed and unshapely here below, shall rise all perfect on the resurrection morning; and with that beloved dust that was buried from her sight, Bridget's pride and self-righteousness were buried for no arising, and Bridget sat down at the feet of Jesus.

It is thus briefly we have indicated the mission of those noble hearts who stand in the dark places of the earth, holding

the light of truth. When once the Word of God enters a household, when from its open page the gospel irradiates, the shadows flee away. Going to the poor as one of themselves, speaking from sweet experience what Jesus can do for souls, meeting with depth of sympathy the woes themselves have tasted, stand the Bible-women of our land. God bless them all!

O Bible-women! Pioneers of Zion! pressing on and on where Satan reigns, to rescue some, I see you not as homely toilers, worn with the burden of your cares, and grave and bowed with poverty and labor, but ye come to me transformed with the refulgence of your gracious deeds —all bright, as one day ye shall stand fully clothed upon with the righteousness of Him you serve, and hear the words, "Well done!"

Ariadne of Naxos, standing on the verge of her sea-girt home, the treasures of the ocean clasped to her bosom and

wreathing in her hair, was celebrated with games and dances in her native isle. But let the Church, with humble gratitude to Him who giveth grace and strength, celebrate the praises of those earnest workers who stand to rescue from the seething ocean of lost humanity, jewels for the crown of Jesus.

THE END.