

with a thousand pleasures. A party was gathered for us in which I was presented to many beautiful girls and their stylish brothers. We visited the theaters, we were invited everywhere, and we often attended as many as two or three assemblies in an evening. The days and nights were a continued round of social pleasures, and we lived in a whirl of excitement. There was no time for thought, and with me, at least, no desire for it.

But the time flew away until we waited only the excitements of New Year's Day to close our vacation, and return to the quiet life we had left under the elms of New Haven. That day was a memorable one to me and demands a chapter for its record.

CHAPTER XV.

I GO OUT TO MAKE NEW YEAR'S CALLS AND RETURN IN DISGRACE.

NEW YEAR'S morning dawned bright and cold. "A happy New Year to you!" shouted Livingston from his bed. The call woke me from a heavy slumber into delightful anticipations, and the realization of a great joy in living, such as comes only to youth—an exulting, superabounding sense of vitality that care and age never know.

We rose and dressed ourselves with scrupulous pains-taking for calls. On descending to the breakfast-room, we found the young ladies quite as excited as ourselves. They had prepared a little book in which to keep a record of the calls they expected to receive during the day, for, according to the universal custom, they were to keep open house. The carriage was to be at the disposal of my friend and myself, and we were as ambitious concerning the amount of courtesy to be shown as the young ladies were touching the amount to be received. We intended, before bedtime, to present our New Year's greetings to every lady we had met during the week.

Before we left the house, I saw what preparations had been made for the hospitable reception of visitors. Among them stood a row of wine bottles and decanters. The view saddened me. Although I had not tasted wine since "the special occasion," my conscience had not ceased to remind me, though with weakened sting, that I had sacrificed a conscientious scruple and broken a promise. I could in no way rid myself of the sense of having been wounded, stained, impoverished. I had ceased to be what I had been. I had engaged in no debauch, I had developed no appetite, I was not in love with my

sin. I could have heartily wished that wine were out of the world. Yet I had consented to have my defenses broken into, and there had been neither time nor practical disposition to repair the breach. Not one prayer had I offered, or dared to offer, during the week. My foolish act had shut out God and extinguished the sense of his loving favor, and I had rushed blindly through my pleasures from day to day, refusing to listen to the upbraidings of that faithful monitor which he had placed within me.

At last, it was declared not too early to begin our visits. Already several young gentlemen had shown themselves at the Livingstons, and my friend and I sallied forth. The coachman, waiting at the door, and thrashing his hands to keep them warm, wished us "a happy New Year" as we appeared.

"The same to you," responded Livingston, "and there'll be another one to-night, if you serve us well to-day."

"Thankee, sir," said the coachman, smiling in anticipation of the promised fee.

The footman took the list of calls to be made that Livingston had prepared, mounted to his seat, the ladies waved their hands to us from the window, and we drove rapidly away.

"Bonnicastle, my boy," said Livingston, throwing his arm around me as we rattled up the avenue, "this is new business to you. Now don't do anything to-day that you will be sorry for. Do you know, I cannot like what has happened? You have not been brought up like the rest of us, and you're all right. Have your own way. It's nobody's business."

I knew, of course, exactly what he meant, but I do not know what devil stirred within me the spirit of resentment. To be cautioned and counseled by one who had never professed or manifested any sense of religious obligation—by one above whose moral plane I had fancied that I stood—made me half angry. I had consciously fallen, and I felt miserably enough about it, when I permitted myself to feel at all, but to be reminded of it by others vexed me to the quick, and rasped my wretched pride.

"Take care of yourself," I responded, sharply, "and don't worry about me. I shall do as I please."

"It's the last time, old boy," said Livingston, biting his lip, which quivered with pain and mortification. "It's the last time. When I kiss a fellow and he spits in my face I never do it again. Make yourself perfectly easy on that score."

Impulsively I grasped his hand and exclaimed: "Oh! don't say that. I beg your pardon. Let's not quarrel: I was a fool and a great deal worse, to answer as I did."

"All right," said he; "but if you get into trouble, don't blame me; that's all."

At this, we drew up to a house to make our first call. It was a grand establishment. The ladies were beautifully dressed, and very cordial, for Livingston was a favorite, and any young man whom he introduced was sure of a welcome. I was flattered and excited by the attention I received, and charmed by the graceful manners of those who rendered it. House after house we visited in the same way, uniformly declining all the hospitalities of the table, on the ground that it was too early to think of eating or drinking.

At last we began to grow hungry for our lunch, and at a bountifully loaded table accepted an invitation to eat. Several young fellows were standing around it, nibbling their sandwiches, and sipping their wine. A glass was poured and handed to me by a young lady with the toilet and manner of a princess. I took it without looking at Livingston; held it for a while, then tasted it, for I was thirsty; then tasted again and again, until my glass was empty. I was as unused to the stimulant as a child; and when I emerged into the open air my face was aflame with its exciting poison. There was a troubled look on Livingston's face, and I could not resist the feeling that he was either angry or alarmed. My first experience was that of depression. This was partly moral, I suppose; but the sharp air soon reduced the feverish sensation about my head and eyes, and then a strange thrill of exhilaration passed through

me. It was different from anything I had ever known, and I was conscious, for the first time, of the charm of alcohol.

Then came the longing to taste again. I saw that I was in no way disabled. On the contrary, I knew I had never been so buoyant in spirits, or so brilliant in conversation. My imagination was excited. Everything presented to me its comical aspects, and there were ripples and roars of laughter wherever I went. After repeated glasses, I swallowed at one house a draught of champagne. It was the first I had ever tasted, and the cold, tingling fluid was all that was necessary to make me noisy and hilarious. I rallied Livingston on his long face, assured him that I had never seen a jolly fellow alter so rapidly as he had since morning, begged him to take something that would warm him, and began to sing.

"Now, really you must be quiet in this house," said he, as we drew up to an old-fashioned mansion in the suburbs. "They are quiet people here, and are not used to noisy fellows."

"I'll wake 'em up," said I, "and make 'em jolly."

We entered the door. I was conscious of a singing in my ears, and a sense of confusion. The warm air of the room wrought in a few moments a change in my feelings, but I struggled against it, and tried with pitiful efforts to command myself, and to appear the sober man I was not. There was a little group around us near the windows, and at the other end of the drawing-room—somewhat in shadow, for it was nearly night—there was another. At length a tall man rose from this latter group, and advanced toward the light. Immediately behind him a young girl, almost a woman in stature and bearing, followed. The moment I could distinguish his form and features and those of his companion, I rushed toward them, forgetful for the instant that I had lost my self-control, and embraced them both. Then I undertook to present Mr. Bradford and my friend Millie to Livingston.

It did not seem strange to me to find them in New York. What foolish things I said to Mr. Bradford and what maudlin words to Millie I do not know. Both carried grave faces.

Millie's eyes—for even through all that cloud of stupid insanity, from this far point of distance I see them still—burned first like fire, then filled with tears.

For what passed immediately after this, I am indebted to an other memory and not to my own.

After watching me and listening to me for a minute in silence, Millie darted to the side of Livingston, and looking him fiercely in the face, exclaimed: "You are a wicked man. You ought to be ashamed to let him do it. Oh! he was so good and so sweet when he went away from Bradford, and you have spoiled him—you have spoiled him. I'll never forgive you, never!"

"Millie! my daughter!" exclaimed Mr. Bradford.

Millie threw herself upon a sofa, and burying her head in the pillow, burst into hysterical tears.

Livingston turned to Mr. Bradford and said: "I give you my word of honor, sir, that I have not drunk one drop of wine to-day. I have refrained from drinking entirely for his sake, and your daughter's accusation is most unjust."

Mr. Bradford took the young man's hand cordially and said: "I believe you, and you must pardon Millie. She is terribly disappointed, and so am I. She supposed her friend had been tempted by bad companions, and as you were with him, she at once attributed the evil influence to you."

"On the contrary," responded Livingston, "no man has tempted him at all, and no man could tempt him. None but women who prate about their sufferings from drunken husbands and brothers could have moved him from his determination. I am ashamed to tell you who attacked his scruples first. It was one who has reason enough, Heaven knows, to hate wine—but her efforts have been followed by scores of younger women to-day, who have seemed to take delight in leading him into a mad debauch."

Livingston spoke bitterly, and as he closed, Millie sprang from the sofa, and seizing his hand, kissed it, and wet it with her tears.

"Please take him home, and be kind to him," she said. "I am sure he will never do it again."

In the meantime, entirely overcome by the heat of the room, acting upon nerves which had been stimulated beyond the power of endurance, I had sunk helplessly into a chair, where I stared stupidly upon the group, unable to comprehend a word of the conversation.

Mr. Bradford took Livingston aside, and after some words of private conversation, both approached me, and taking me by my arms, led me from the house, and placed me in the carriage. The dusk had already descended, and I do not think that I was observed, save by one or two strangers passing upon the sidewalk. The seal of secrecy was placed upon the lips of the household by the kind offices of Mr. Bradford, and the story, so far as I know, was never told, save as it was afterward told to me, and as I have told it in these pages.

The carriage was driven rapidly homeward. The house of the Livingstons was upon a corner, so that a side entrance was available for getting me to my room without public observation. The strong arms of Livingston and the footman bore me to my chamber, removed my clothing, and placed me in bed, where I sank at once into that heavy drunken slumber from which there is no waking except that of torture.

The morning after New Year's was as bright as that which preceded it, but it had no brightness for me. The heart which had leaped up into gladness as it greeted the New Year's dawn, was a lump of lead. The head that was as clear as the sky itself on the previous morning, was dull and heavy with a strange, throbbing pain. My mouth was dry and hot, and a languor held me in possession from which it seemed impossible to rouse myself. Then all the mad doings of the day which had witnessed my fall came back to me, and it seemed as if the shame of it all would kill me. Livingston brought me some cooling and corrective draught, on the strength of which I rose. The dizzy feeling was not entirely gone, and I reeled in a pitiful

way while dressing; but cold water, a cool room, and motion, soon placed me in possession of myself.

"I can't go down to breakfast, Livingston," I said. "I have disgraced you and all the family."

"Oh! women forgive, my boy," said he, with a contemptuous shrug. "Never you mind. If they don't like their own work, let them do it better."

"But I can't face them," I said.

"Face them! Bah! it's they who are to face you. But don't trouble yourself. You'll find them as placid as a summer morning, ignoring everything. They're used to it."

He insisted, and I descended to the breakfast room. Not an allusion was made to the previous day's experiences, except as a round of unalloyed pleasure. The young ladies had received an enormous number of calls, and on the sideboard stood a row of empty decanters. There was no thought of the headaches and heart-burnings with which the city abounded, no thought of suicidal habits begun or confirmed through their agency, no thought of the drunkards they were nursing into husbands. There sat the mother in her matronly dignity, dispensing her fragrant coffee, there were the young ladies chattering over their list, and talking of this one and that one of their callers, and there was I, a confused ruin of hopes and purposes which clustered around a single central point of consciousness and that point hot with shame and remorse.

We were to return on the afternoon boat that day, and I was not sorry. I was quite ready to turn my back on all the splendors that had so charmed me on my arrival, on all the new acquaintances I had made, and on my temptations.

Special efforts were made by Mrs. Livingston and her daughters to reinstate me in my self-respect. They were cordial in their expressions of friendship, begged that I would not forget them, invited me to visit them again and often, and loaded me with all courteous and friendly attentions. Livingston was quiet and cold through it all. He had intended to return me as good as he brought me, and had failed. He was

my senior, and had entertained a genuine respect for my conscientious scruples, over which, from the first moment I had known him, he had assumed a sort of guardianship. He was high-spirited, and as I had once repelled his cautioning care, I knew I should hear no more from him.

When we arrived at the boat, I went at once into the cabin, sank into a chair, buried my face in my hands, and gave myself up to my sorrow and shame. I was glad that I should not find Henry in my room on my return. He had been gone a month when I left, for, through the necessities of self-support, he had resumed his school duties in Bradford for the winter. I thought of him in his daily work, and his nightly visits at my father's house; of the long conversations that would pass between him and those whom I loved best about one who had proved himself unworthy of their regard; of the shameful manner in which I had betrayed the confidence of my benefactress, and the disgrace which I had brought upon myself in the eyes of Mr. Bradford and Millie. It then occurred to me for the first time that Mr. Bradford was on a New Year's visit to his daughter, whom he had previously placed in a New York school. How should I ever meet them again? How could they ever forgive me? How could I ever win their respect and confidence again? "O God! O God!" I said, in a whisper of anguish, "how can I ever come to Thee again, when I knew in my inmost heart that I was disobeying and grieving Thee?"

I was conscious at this moment that steps approached me. Then followed a light touch upon my shoulder. I looked up, and saw Mr. Bradford. I had never before seen his countenance so sad, and at the same time so severe.

"Don't reproach me," I said, lifting my hands in deprecation, "don't reproach me: if you do, I shall die."

"Reproach you, my boy?" he said, drawing a chair to my side while his lips quivered with sympathy, "there would be no need of it if I were disposed to do so. Reproach for error between erring mortals is not becoming."

"Do you suppose you can ever forgive me and trust me again?" I asked.

"I forgive you and trust you now. I give you credit for common-sense. You have proved, in your own experience, the truth of all I have told you, and I do not believe that you need to learn anything further, except that one mistake and misstep like yours need not ruin a life."

"Do you really think," said I, eagerly grasping his arm, "that I can ever be again what I have been?"

"Never again," he replied, sadly shaking his head. "The bloom is gone from the fruit, but if you hate your folly with a hatred which will forever banish it from your life, the fruit is uninjured."

"And are they to know all this in Bradford?" I asked.

"Never from me," he replied.

"You are too kind to me," I said. "You have always been kind."

"I don't know. I have intended to be kind, but if you are ruined through the influence of Mrs. Sanderson's money I shall curse the day on which I suggested the thought that brought you under her patronage."

"Will you accept a pledge from me," I said eagerly, "in regard to the future?"

"No indeed, Arthur. No pledge coming from you to-day, while you are half beside yourself with shame and sorrow, would have the value of a straw. A promise can never redeem a man who loses himself through lack of strength and principle. A man who cannot be controlled by God's Word certainly cannot be controlled by his own. It will take weeks for you to arrive at a point where you can form a resolution that will be of the slightest value, and, when you reach that point, no resolution will be needed. Some influence has changed your views of life and your objects. You have in some way been shaken at your foundations. When these become sound again, you will be restored to yourself, and not until then. You fancied that the religious influences and experiences which we

both remember had done much to strengthen you, but in truth they did nothing. They interrupted, and, for the time, ruined the processes of a religious education. You fancied that in a day you had built what it takes a lifetime to build, and you were, owing to the reactions of that great excitement, and to the confusion into which your thoughts and feelings were thrown, weaker to resist temptation than when you returned from *The Bird's Nest*. I saw it all then, just as plainly as I see it now. I have discounted all this experience of yours—not precisely this, but something like it. I knew you would be tempted, and that into the joints of a harness too loosely knit and fastened some arrow would find its way."

"What am I to do? What can I do?" I said piteously.

"Become a child again," he responded. "Go back to the simple faith and the simple obedience which you learned of your father. Put away your pride and your love of that which enervates and emasculates you, and try with God's help to grow into a true man. I have had so many weaknesses and faults of my own to look after, that I have never had the heart to undertake the instruction of others; but I feel a degree of responsibility for you, and I know it is in you to become a man who will bring joy to your father and pride to me."

"Oh! do believe me, Mr. Bradford, do," I said, "when I tell you that I will try to become the man you desire me to be."

"I believe you," he responded. "I have no doubt that you will try, in a weaker or stronger way and more or less persistently, to restore yourself to your old footing. And now, as you have forced a promise upon me, which I did not wish you to make, you must accept one from me. I have taken you into my heart. I took you into its warmest place when, years ago, on our first acquaintance, you told me that you loved me. And now I promise you that if I see that you cannot be what you ought to be while retaining your present prospects of wealth, I will put you to such a test as will prove whether you have the manhood in you that I have given you the credit for,

and whether you are worth saving to yourself and your friends."

His last words wounded me. Nay, they did more—they kindled my anger. Though grievously humiliated, my pride was not dead. I questioned in my heart his right to speak so strongly to me, and to declare his purpose to thrust himself into my life in any contingency, but I covered my feelings, and even thanked him in a feeble way for his frankness. Then I inquired about Henry, and learned in what high respect he was held in Bradford, how much my father and all his acquaintances were delighted in him, and how prosperously his affairs were going on. Even in his self-respectful poverty, I envied him—a poverty through which he had manifested such sterling manhood as to win the hearts of all who came in contact with him.

"I shall miss him more than I can tell you," I said, "when I get back to my lonely room. No one can take his place, and I need him now more than I ever did before."

"It is as well for you to be alone," said Mr. Bradford, "if you are in earnest. There are some things in life that can only be wrought out between a man and his God, and you have just that thing in hand."

Our conversation was long, and touched many topics. Mr. Bradford shook my hand heartily as we parted at the wharf, and Livingston and I were soon in a carriage, whirling towards the town. I entered my silent room with a sick and discouraged feeling, with a sad presentiment of the struggle which its walls would witness during the long winter months before me, and with a terrible sense of the change through which I had passed during the brief week of my absence.

And here, lest my reader be afflicted with useless anticipations of pain, I record the fact that wine never tempted me again. One bite of the viper had sufficed. I had trampled upon my conscience, and even that had changed to a viper beneath my feet, and struck its fangs deep into the recoiling flesh. From that day forward I forswore the indulgence of the cup. While in college it was comparatively easy to do this, for

my habit was known, and as no one but Livingston knew of my fall, it was respected. I was rallied by some of the fellows on my sleepy eyes and haggard looks, but none of them imagined the cause, and the storm that had threatened to engulf me blew over, and the waves around me grew calm again,—the waves around me, but not the waves within.

For a whole week after I returned, I was in constant and almost unendurable torture. The fear of discovery took possession of me. What if the men who were passing at the time Mr. Bradford and Livingston lifted me into the carriage had known me? Was Peter Mullens in New York that night, and was he one of them? This question no sooner took possession of my mind, than I fancied, from the looks and whisperings of him and his companions, that the secret was in their possession. I had no peace from these suspicions until I had satisfied myself that he had not left the college during the holidays. Would Mr. Bradford, by some accident, or through forgetfulness of his promise to me, speak of the matter to my father, or Henry, or Mrs. Sanderson? Would Millie write about it to her mother? Would it be carelessly talked about by the ladies who had witnessed my disgrace? Would it be possible for me ever to show myself in Bradford again? Would the church learn of my lapse and bring me under its discipline? Would the religious congregations I had addressed hear of my fall from sobriety, and come to regard me as a hypocrite? So sore was my self-love, so sensitive was my pride, that I am sure I should have lied to cover my shame, had the terrible emergency arisen. It did not rise, and for that I cannot cease to be grateful.

It will readily be seen that, while the fear of discovery was upon me, and while I lived a false life of carelessness and even gayety among my companions, to cover the tumults of dread and suspicion that were going on within me, I did not make much progress in spiritual life. In truth I made none at all. My prayers were only wild beseechings that I might be spared from exposure, and pledges of future obedience should my prayers be answered. So thoroughly did my fears of men pos-

sess me, that there was no room for repentance toward God or such a repentance as would give me the basis of a new departure and a better life. I had already tried to live two lives that should not be discordant with each other; now I tried to live two lives that I knew to be antagonistic. It now became an object to appear to be what I was not. I resumed at intervals my attendance upon the prayer-meetings to make it appear that I still clung to my religious life. Then, while in the society of my companions, I manifested a careless gayety which I did not feel. All the manifestations of my real life took place in the solitude of my room. There, wrestling with my fears, and shut out from my old sources of comfort and strength, I passed my nights. With a thousand luxurious appliances around me, no sense of luxury ever came to me. My heart was a central living coal, and all around it was ashes. I even feared that the coal might die, and that Henry, when he should return, would find his room bereft of all that would give him welcome and cheer.

As the weeks passed away, the fear slowly expired, and alas! nothing that was better came in its place. No sooner did I begin to experience the sense of safety from exposure, and from the temptation which had brought me such grievous harm, than the old love of luxurious life, and the old plans for securing it, came back to me. I felt sure that wine would never tempt me again, and with this confidence I built me a foundation of pride and self-righteousness on which I could stand, and regard myself with a certain degree of complacency.

As for efficient study, that was out of the question. I was in no mood or condition for work. I scrambled through my lessons in a disgraceful way. The better class of students were all surpassing me, and I found myself getting hopelessly into the rear. I had fitful rebellions against this, and showed them and myself what I could do when I earnestly tried: but the power of persistence, which is born of a worthy purpose, held strongly in the soul, was absent, and there could be no true advancement without it.

I blush with shame, even now, to think how I tried to cover my delinquencies from my father and Mrs. Sanderson, by becoming more attentive to them than I had ever been in the matter of writing letters. I knew that there was nothing that carried so much joy to my father as a letter from me. I knew that he read every letter I wrote him, again and again—that he carried it in his pocket at his work—that he took it out at meals, and talked about it. I knew also that Mrs. Sanderson's life was always gladdened by attentions of this sort from me, and that they tended to keep her heart open toward me. In just the degree in which I was conscious that I was unworthy of their affection, did I strive to present to them my most amiable side, and to convince them that I was unchanged.

I lived this hypocritical, unfruitful life during all that winter, and when Henry came to me in the spring, crowned with the fruits of his labor, and fresh from the loves and friendships of his Bradford home, with his studies all in hand, and with such evident growth of manhood that I felt almost afraid of him, he found me an unhappy and almost reckless laggard, with nothing to show for the winter's privileges but a weakened will, dissipated powers, frivolous habits, deadened moral and religious sensibilities, and a life that had degenerated into subterfuge and sham.

My natural love of approbation—the same greed for the good opinion and the praise of others which in my childhood made me a liar—had lost none of its force, and did much to shape my intercourse with all around me. The sense of worthlessness which induced my special efforts to retain the good-will of Mrs. Sanderson, and the admiration and confidence of my father, moved me to a new endeavor to gain the friendship of all my fellow-students. I felt that I could not afford to have enemies. I had lost none of my popularity with the exclusive clique to which I had attached myself, for even Livingston had seen with delight that I was not disposed to repeat the mistake of which he had been so distressed a wit-

ness. I grew more courteous and complaisant toward those I had regarded as socially my inferiors, until I knew that I was looked upon by them as a good fellow. I was easy-tempered, ready at repartee, generous and careless, and although I had lost all reputation for industry and scholarship, I possessed just the character and manners which made me welcome to every group. I blush while I write of it, to remember how I curried favor with Mr. Peter Mullens and his set; but to such mean shifts did a mean life force me. To keep the bark of my popularity from foundering, on which I was obliged to trust everything, I tossed overboard from time to time, to meet every rising necessity, my self-respect, until I had but little left.

CHAPTER XVI.

PETER MULLENS ACQUIRES A VERY LARGE STOCK OF OLD CLOTHES.

THOUGH Mr. Peter Mullens had but slender relations to my outer life—hardly enough to warrant the notice I have already taken of him—there was a relation which I recognized in my experience and circumstances that makes it necessary for me to say more of him. He had recognized this relation himself, and it was this that engendered my intense personal dislike of him. I knew that his willing dependence on others had robbed him of any flavor of manhood he might at one time have possessed, and that I, very differently organized, was suffering from the same cause. I watched the effect upon him of this demoralizing influence, with almost a painful curiosity.

Having, as he supposed, given up himself, he felt that he had a right to support. There seemed to him to be no sweetness in bread that could be earned. Everything came amiss to him that came with personal cost. He was always looking for gifts. I will not say that he prayed for them, but I have no doubt that he prayed, and that his temporal wants mingled in his petitions. No gift humiliated him: he lived by gifts. His greed for these was pitiful, and often ludicrous. Indeed, he was the strangest mixture of piety, avarice, and beggarly meanness that I had ever seen.

My second spring in college was verging upon summer. The weather was intensely hot, and all the fellows had put themselves into summer clothing—all but poor Peter Mullens. He had come out of the winter very seedy, and his heavy clothing still clung to him, in the absence of supplies of a lighter character. Although he had a great many pairs of

woolen socks and striped mittens, and a dozen or two neckties, which had been sent to him by a number of persons to whom he gave the indefinite designation of "the sisters," there seemed to be no way by which he could transform them into summer clothing. He was really in a distressed condition, and "the sisters" failed to meet the emergency.

At a gathering of the fellows of our clique one night, his affairs were brought up for discussion, and it was determined that we should go through our respective wardrobes and weed out all the garments which we did not intend to wear again, and, on the first dark night, take them to his room. I was to make the first visit, and to be followed in turn by the others.

Accordingly, having made up a huge bundle of garments that would be of use to him, provided he could wear them—and he could wear anything, apparently—I started out one evening, and taking it in my arms, went to his room. This was located in a remote corner of the dormitory, at the bottom of a narrow hall, and as the hall was nearly dark, I deposited my bundle at the door and knocked for admission.

"Come in!" responded Mullens.

I entered, and by good fortune found him alone. He was sitting in the dark, by the single open window of his room, and I could see by the dim light that he was stripped of coat and waistcoat. He did not know me at first, but, rising and striking a light, he exclaimed: "Well, this is kind of you, Bonnicastle. I was just thinking of you."

He then remembered that his glasses had been laid aside. Putting them on, he seemed to regard himself as quite presentable, and made no further attempt to increase his clothing. I looked around the bare room, with its single table, its wretched pair of chairs, its dirty bed, and its lonely occupant, and contrasting it with the cosy apartment I had just left, my heart grew full of pity for him.

"So you were thinking of me, eh?" I said. "That was very kind of you. Pray, what were you thinking? Nothing bad, I hope."

"No, I was thinking about your privileges. I was thinking how you had been favored."

It was strange that it had never occurred to Mullens to think about or to envy those who held money by right, or by the power of earning it. It was only the money that came as a gift that stirred him. There were dozens or hundreds of fellows whose parents were educating them, but these were never the subject of his envious thoughts.

"Let's not talk about my privileges," I said. "How are you getting along yourself?"

"I am really very hard up," he replied. "If the sisters would only send me trousers, and such things, I should be all right, but they don't seem to consider that I want trousers any more than they do, confound them."

The quiet indignation with which this was uttered amused me, and I laughed outright. But Mullens was in sober earnest, and going to his closet he brought forth at least a dozen pairs of thick woolen socks, and as many pairs of striped mittens, and laid them on the table.

"Look at that pile," said Mullens, "and weep."

The comical aspect of the matter had really reached the poor fellow's apprehension, and he laughed heartily with me.

"What are you going to do with them?" I asked.

"I don't know," he replied; "I've thought of an auction. What do you say?"

"Why don't you try to sell them at the shops?" I inquired.

"Let me alone for that. I've been all over the city with 'em," said he. "One fellow said they didn't run even, and I don't think they do, very, that's a fact. Another one said they looked like the fag-end of an old stock; and the last one I went to asked me if I stole them."

"Well, Mullens, the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb," I said, consolingly. "It's June."

"But it don't apply," said Mullens. "I'm not shorn. The trouble is that I've got too much wool."

This was bright for Mullens, and we both laughed again

After the laugh had passed, I said: "I think I know of eight or ten fellows who will relieve you of your surplus stock, and, as I am one of them, I propose to take a pair of socks and a pair of mittens now."

The manner of the man changed immediately. His face grew animated, and his eyes fairly gleamed through his spectacles. He jumped to his feet as I spoke of purchasing, and exclaimed: "Will you? What will you give? Make us an offer."

"Oh, you must set your own price," I said.

"Well, you see they are very good socks, don't you?" said Mullens. "Now, every stitch in those socks and mittens was knit upon honor. There isn't a mercenary inch of yarn in 'em. Take your pick of the mittens. By the way, I haven't shown you my neck-ties," and, rushing to his closet, he brought forth quite an armful of them.

The humble sufferer had become a lively peddler, bent upon driving the sharpest bargain and selling the most goods possible to a rare customer. Selecting a pair of socks, a pair of mittens, and a neck-tie of a somewhat soberer hue than I had been accustomed to wear, he laid them by themselves, and then, wiping his forehead and his glasses with a little mop of a handkerchief, he put on a mildly judicial face, and said:

"Bonnicastle, my dear friend, I've always taken a great deal of interest in you; and now you have it in your power to do me a world of good. Think, just think, Bonnicastle, of the weary hours that have been spent on these articles of apparel by those of whom the world is not worthy! Think of the benevolence that inspired every stitch. Think of the—of the—thoughts that have run through those devoted minds. Think of those sisters respectively saying to themselves: 'I know not whom I am laboring for—it may be for Mullens or it may be for one more worthy,—but for whomsoever it is, it is for one who will stand up in defense of the truth when I am gone. His feet, bent upon errands of mercy, will be kept comfortable by these stockings. His hands, carrying succor to the fallen and con-

solution to the afflicted, will be warmed by these mittens. These neck-ties will surround the neck—the-throat—of one who will breathe words of peace and good-will.' My dear Bonnicastle, there is more in these humble articles of apparel than appears to the carnal eye—much more—incalculably more. Try to take it in when we come to the matter of price. Try to take it all in, and then discharge your duty as becomes a man who has been favored."

"Look here, Mullens," said I, "you are working on my feelings, and the articles are getting so expensive that I can't buy them."

"Oh, don't feel that way;" said he, "I only want to have you get some idea what there is in these things. Why, there's love, good-will, self-sacrifice, devotion, and woman's tender heart."

"Pity there couldn't have been some trowsers," said I.

Mullens' lip quivered. He was not sure whether I was joking or not, but he laid his hand appealingly upon my knee, and then settled back in his chair and wiped his forehead and spectacles again. Having made up my mind that Mullens had determined to raise an enormous revenue from his goods, I was somewhat surprised when he said briskly, "Bonnicastle, what do you say to a dollar and a half? That's only fifty cents an article, and the whole stock will bring me only fifteen or twenty dollars at that price."

"I'll take them," said I.

"Good!" exclaimed Mullens, slapping his knee. "Who'll have the next bowl? Walk up, gentlemen!"

Mullens had evidently officiated in an oyster booth at militia musters. In his elated state of feeling, the impulse to run into his old peddler's lingo was irrepressible. I think he felt complimented by the hearty laugh with which I greeted his cry.

"If I'm going into this business," said Mullens, "I really must have some brown paper. Do you suppose, Bonnicastle, that if you should go to one of the shops, and tell them the object,—a shop kept by one of our friends, you know,—one

who has the cause at heart—he would give you a package of brown paper? I'd go myself, but I've been around a good deal."

"Wouldn't you rather have me buy some?" I asked.

"Why, no; it doesn't seem to be exactly the thing to pay out money for brown paper," responded Mullens.

"I'm not used to begging," I said.

"Why, it isn't begging, Bonnicastle; it's asking for the cause."

"You really must excuse me, Mullens."

"All right," said he; "here's an old newspaper that will do for your package. Now don't forget to tell all your friends that I am ready for 'em. Tell 'em the cause is a good one—that it really involves the—the welfare of society. And tell 'em the things are dirt cheap. Don't forget that."

Mullens had become as cheerful and lively as a cricket; and while he was doing up my package, I opened the door and brought in my bundle. As I broke the string and unfolded the bountiful contents, he paused in a pleased amazement, and then, leaping forward and embracing me, exclaimed: "Bonnicastle, you're an angel! What do you suppose that pile is worth, now, in hard cash?"

"Oh, I don't know; it's worth a good deal to you," I replied.

"And you really don't feel it at all, do you now? Own up."

"No," I answered, "not at all. You are welcome to the whole pile."

"Yes, Bonnicastle," said he, sliding smoothly back from the peddler into the pious beneficiary, "you've given out of your abundance, and you have the blessed satisfaction of feeling that you have done your duty. I don't receive it for myself, but for the cause. I am a poor, unworthy instrument. Say, Bonnicastle, if you should see some of these things on others, would you mind?"

"Not in the least," I said. "Do you propose to share your good fortune with your friends?"

"Yes," said Mullens, "I shall sell these things to them,

very reasonably indeed. They shall have no cause to complain."

At this moment there was a knock, and Livingston, with a grave face, walked in with his bundle, and opening it, laid it upon the table. Mullens sank into his chair, quite overwhelmed. "Fellows," said he, "this is too much. I can bear one bundle, but under two you must excuse me if I seem to totter."

Another and another followed Livingston into the room, and deposited their burdens, until the table was literally piled. Mullens actually began to snivel.

"It's a lark, fellows," said Mullens, from behind his handkerchief. "It's a lark: I know it. I see it; but oh, fellows! it's a blessed lark—a blessed, blessed lark! Larks may be employed to bring tribute into the storehouse. Larks may be overruled, and used as means. I know you are making fun of me, but the cause goes on. If there isn't room on the table, put them on the floor. They shall all be employed. If I have ever done you injustice in my thoughts, fellows, you must forgive me. This wipes out everything; and as I don't see any boots in your parcels, perhaps you'll be kind enough to remember that I wear tens, with a low instep. Has the last man come? Is the cup full? What do you suppose the whole pile is worth?"

Mullens ran on in this way, muddled by his unexpected good fortune and his greed, with various pious ejaculations which, for very reverence of the words he used, my pen refuses to record.

Then it suddenly occurred to him that he was not making the most of his opportunities. Springing to his feet, and turning peddler in an instant, he said: "Fellows, Bonnicastle has bought a pair of socks, a pair of striped mittens and a necktie from my surplus stock. I've got enough of them to go all around. What do you say to them at fifty cents apiece?"

"We've been rather expecting," said Livingston, with a quiet twinkle in his eye, "that you would make us a present of these."

This was a new thought to Mullens, and it sobered him at once. "Fellows," said he, "you know my heart; but these things are a sacred trust. They have been devoted to a cause, and from that cause I cannot divert them."

"Oh! of course not," said Livingston; "I only wanted to test your faithfulness. You're as sound as a nut."

The conversation ended in a purchase of the "surplus stock," and then, seeing that the boys had not finished their fun, and fearing that it might run into some unpleasant excesses, Livingston and I retired.

The next morning our ears were regaled with an account of the remaining experiences of the evening, but it does not need to be recorded here. It is sufficient to say that before the company left his room, Mullens was arrayed from head to foot with a dress made up from various parcels, and that in that dress he was obliged to mount his table and make a speech. He appeared, however, the next morning, clothed in comfortable garments, which of course were recognized by their former owners, and formed a subject of merriment among them. We never saw them, however, upon any others of his set, and he either chose to cover his good fortune from them by selling his frippery to the Hebrew dealers in such merchandise, or they refused to be his companions in wearing garments that were known in the college.