

to know that they have been drugged and ruined, and that their parents are in despair. In some seminaries of learning in this city letters are constantly exchanged, signals swing out of the blinds by means of ribbons of different hues, and appointments made and kept. If a daughter is missing from New York, or from a radius of twenty miles around, the police know usually where to look for the erring child, if she has not eloped.

THRILLING CASES.

In one of the most attractive of these houses of bad resort there is, at this moment, a young woman of surpassing beauty. Her form is queenly. She would make a sensation in any fashionable soirée or watering-place in the land. She dresses in elegant style and with exquisite taste. Her complexion is alabaster; her hair raven black, flowing in natural ringlets. Her voice is superb, and as a singer she could command a large salary. On the boards of a theatre she would move without a rival. Her accomplishments are varied. She can sing with ease and skill the most difficult music of the best masters. She can paint and embroider, and the specimens of her skill are exhibited to her admirers at the house where she resides. She has a finished education, and could fill and adorn any station in life. She has a parentage the most respected, who reside among the noble of New England. Their repute and family honor, till now, have been without a stain. Apparently happy in her home, and virtuous and modest, she left the Seminary, where she had nearly reached the honor of graduation, and where she was at the head of the school, and one night was not to be

found. Her absence was the cause of great distress. Months passed, and no knowledge of her residence was obtained. At length the sad fact was revealed that she was a lady boarder in a house of ill repute in New York. When she entered that abode, she resolutely shut the door in the face of all who knew and loved her. Father, mother, sister, friends, besieged the door in vain. Deaf to all entreaties, and hardened to sobs and tears, she refused to look on the face of the mother who bore her, and those to whom she is still dear. To all she had but one answer,—“Think of me only as one that is dead.” Yet she will talk of home, and dear ones of olden days; will sigh, and wipe the tear away, if any one seems to have a heart of sympathy. But the mystery of her course; what led her to fling away the great gifts God gave her; how she came to know of that way of life; what her first wrong step was; who aided her in her bad descent; why she does not fly from the life she evidently loathes, and find refuge in the home of her childhood, to her mother’s arms, that are still wide open to receive her,—all this is a secret locked in her own bosom. Soon her sunny day-dream will close. The bleak winds of winter will blow on that form trained to tenderness and reared in delicacy, and her feet will stumble on the dark mountains, with no one to help or heed her bitter cry.

STARTLING FACTS.

There is another case sadder and more mysterious than the one just related. In one of the Broadway houses can be seen a young lady about seventeen, but so fragile and so girlish that she seems scarcely twelve.

Small and genteel in figure, she appears only a child. She has a remarkable forehead of great breadth, an eye searching and keen, and her smartness and talent are marked. She is the belle of the house, and, looking on her, one can easily see — what was the fact — that she was the sunshine of her home. She belongs to New York. Her father and mother are persons of rare intelligence, of unquestioned piety, and high social position. They are rich, and live in good style. On this child they lavished the tenderest care. No money was spared to give her a complete and polished education. Her voice is superb, and her execution marvellous. Her home was not sad and hard, but sunny. She was the morning light and evening star of the fireside which she adorned. She was the pride of her parents, the ornament of the social circle that was proud to call her companion. From her youth she was trained in the Scriptures. At the family altar daily she was accustomed to kneel, and till she left the roof of her mother she had attended Sunday school from her childhood. She seemed to have no sorrow nor cause of grief. Her company was unexceptionable. No open act of hers, and no word uttered, betrayed anything but a virtuous heart and a pious life. One afternoon she did not come home from Sunday school as usual. The evening came, night rolled its heavy moments along, and the darling came not. Agony laid the mother on her bed, helpless. The father searched New York over, but the lost one could not be found. To the suggestion of shrewd detectives, that perhaps she would be found in a house of low resort, the family could only utter their horror. Like Jacob, they knew

their darling must be dead. Leading a life of infamy? Never! With a likeness of the missing daughter, and an accurate description, the matter-of-fact officers started on their search. The first house they entered they saw a young girl who resembled the lost one. On inquiry, they found she came to the house on Sunday afternoon; told her name; said she came from a Sunday school; hung up her bonnet and cloak, as if they were to be trophies to the goddess of infamy; demanded and received garments suited to her new life; and, coming fresh from the Sunday school, entered on her career of infamy. Satisfied that the lost child had been found, the officer said to the father, "Come and see if this be thy child or no." With a heavy heart and unsteady step the forlorn and bereaved father followed the detective. He shrank from the entrance, as if the portals really led to hell. The daughter met him at the door, flung her arms about him, and gave him a passionate kiss. Then she seated herself, with hands folded, head declined, and eyes fastened on the floor. She heard all that was said; she spake no word; made no explanation; confessed no act; revealed no temptation, and refused to explain why she had adopted her new course of life. To all entreaties, tears, and prayers she was indifferent. Nothing could move her. Her mother came to see her, and the girl threw herself on the bosom where her head had so often lain in joy and sorrow, and in a passionate burst of anguish shed scalding and bitter tears. To all inquiries how she came to that place, and who led her astray, she would answer not a word. To all entreaties to come home, and all should be forgotten and for-

given, she made but one reply, — “O, mother, it is too late! too late!” But from the house where she was she refused to move. Once in a while she goes home, hangs up her hat and shawl on the old nail, throws herself on the bosom of her mother, and weeps and sobs. But when the time comes for her to go, she wipes away her tears, puts on her hat, kisses her mother a good bye, and departs. Prayers, tears, promises, offers of reward, all have been used in vain. In her home of infamy she often talks of her girlish days; of her superintendent and teacher. She speaks of the church that she attended as “our church;” names the pastor with terms of endearment, and makes special mention of the missionary of the church, who is still in the field, to whom she seemed to be specially attached. And these are but specimens of what can be found in New York.

VICTIMS FROM NEW ENGLAND.

A very large number of the girls on the town come from New England. Maine furnishes the largest share, as the statistics of prostitution show. Many can find no employment at home, and seek this great city for something to do. They have no idea how all ranks of labor are crowded, nor how hard it is to find respectable employment; how few can be trusted; what hotbeds of temptation factories are, and places where a large number of young girls find work. Many are tempted, and fall in their homes. They know that there is no mercy for them there. Their mother and sisters will abandon them, and so they flee to a place in which they can hide in the solitude of the multitude.

A NIGHT ENCOUNTER.

Two gentlemen, of the highest respectability, were walking on Broadway quite late one night, and they were accosted by a young girl who seemed less than thirteen. She was thinly clad, and was in feeble health. The two gentlemen commenced a conversation with the girl, and learned from her lips this story. She was from the State of Vermont, and of good parentage. Her father was a farmer, and her mother and family stood high in the town in which they lived. A young man from the city came to pass the winter near her home. Singing schools and meetings brought him into her society. He declared his intentions to be honorable, and made proposals for marriage. Her parents knew little of the young man, and were not friendly to his attentions. The young lovers met in secret, and finally fled from the town. Her day-dream of love soon ended, and, deserted, she went on the town. She loathed the life she led. But want and starvation were on the one hand, and infamy on the other. She had led her life but a few weeks, and had sought for work and a chance to make an honest living, but in vain. Her parents knew not of her whereabouts, nor did the widow with whom she boarded know that she was leading a life of infamy. She led the gentlemen to the door of a very quiet, respectable house, and told them that was her home. They promised to call and see her the next evening, and aid her to escape from the life she abhorred. They called at the time proposed, and were conducted to the room designated. It was in complete order. By the side of the girl was a

small table, and on a white cloth lay a small Bible, the gift, she said, of her mother; and she stated that she never lay down to rest at night till, as in her childhood's happy home days, she had read a portion of God's word. She talked calmly about her position and life, but it was the calmness of despair, with the tone of one whose destiny was settled, and whose lot was inevitably fixed. To all entreaty, she replied, "It is now too late. I could not endure the cold pity of my mother, or the scorn of my sisters, or the taunts of my former associates. To my bitter tears and burning confessions they would give an incredulous ear, and among them I must ever walk a lost woman. I know that my life will be a short one. My health is very poor, and growing worse from day to day. I am not fitted for the life I lead. Let me alone. To all who once loved me I am as one dead. I shall die alone, and have a pauper's burial."

A MAYOR'S EXPERIENCE.

One of the former mayors of New York, a gentleman of warm heart and great benevolence, had a case brought before him while in office. It was that of quite a young girl, intelligent and well educated, and not sixteen years of age. She would not tell her name, or reveal the name of the town in which her parents resided. The mayor resolved to save her if he could. He tried to persuade her to abandon her life, get some honest employment, and make a new stand in a virtuous course. He used all the arguments, reasons, and motives that he could command. With great coolness she replied to them all, "I know all

you say — the deep degradation into which I have fallen. But I have no relief, no home, no hand to help me rise. I am a good musician; I am a neat and competent seamstress. Twice I have gained a situation, have resolved to amend my life, and have behaved myself with circumspection. But in each case some one that knew my former life has told the story of my past degradation, and so hurled me back to infamy. You have daughters, have you not?" she said to the mayor. "I have," was the answer. "Will you trust me as a seamstress in your family with what you now know of me? Would you feel safe to allow me to be the companion of those daughters after the life I have led?" The mayor hesitated. With great bitterness and much feeling, she replied, "Don't speak. I know what you would say. I don't blame you; but if, with your kind, generous heart, with your desire to do me good and save me, you can't trust me, who will?" She went out to continue in that way that so soon ends in a black and hopeless night.

HOPELESS CLASSES.

Hopeless indeed seems the condition of fallen woman. Men can reform; society welcomes them back to the path of virtue; a veil is cast over their conduct, and their vows of amendment are accepted, and their promises to reform hailed with great delight. But alas for man's victims! For them there are no calls to come home, no sheltering arm, no acceptance of confessions and promises to amend. We may call them the hopeless classes. For all offence beside we have hope. The drunkard can dash down his cup, and the murderer

repent on the gallows. But for fallen woman there seems to be no space for repentance; for her there is no hope and no prayer. How seldom we attempt to reach and rescue! and for her where is the refuge?

Every form of temptation is put in her path — hard and cruel homes, a serpent for a lover, no work, love of display, promises of marriage, mock marriage, and strong drink. I know a woman in this city, who, when a young girl, was led from her home in Massachusetts by a man whose name is well known in political circles. He solemnly promised to marry her, and I have seen his written promise of marriage. The parties came to New York, and a mock marriage was celebrated; and a mock minister was called in, and the Book of Common Prayer was used. The parties passed as man and wife for years, and received company as such. The woman bore the name of the man with whom she lived. Ten years passed away. Her husband was a leading politician in the land, and began to be much absent from home. One day a lawyer of eminence called on her, in company with a leading citizen, and told the astounded woman that the man with whom she was living was not her husband, that the marriage was a mock one, that her husband was about to marry a woman of fortune and position, and would never see her again, and that they had come to make terms with her and settle the whole case. Frightened and alone, with no one to rely on or give advice, with starvation staring her in the face, she made the best settlement she could. In later times she sought redress in the courts. But the cunning deceiver had

made it impossible to prove any marriage, and her case failed. He was worth a handsome fortune, lived in grand style, and left the poor child, whom he took from her father's home, and so foully wronged, to eke out a scanty and insufficient livelihood by selling books in the streets of New York.