

## The Maiden's Error

Timothy Shay Arthur, 1851

The story of *Julia Forrester* is but a revelation of what occurs every day. I draw aside the *veil* for a moment, so that someone might gaze with trembling on the sad picture, and be saved from her direful plight!

The father of Julia had served an apprenticeship to the tanning and currying business. He had been taken when an orphan boy of twelve years old, by a man in this trade, and raised by him, without any of the benefits of education. At twenty-one he could read and write a little, but had no taste for improving his mind. His master, being well pleased with him for his industry and sobriety, offered him a small interest in his business, shortly after he was free from indenture, which soon enabled him to marry, and settle himself in life.

His new companion was the daughter of a poor tradesman; she had high notions of gentility, but possessed more *vanity* and *love of admiration* than good sense. Neither of them could comprehend the true concept of being parents. If they *fed* their children well, *clothed* them well, and sent them to the most reputable schools, they imagined that they had, in part, discharged their duty; and, wholly, when they had obtained good-looking and well-dressed husbands for their daughters. This may be a little exaggerated; but such an inference might readily have been drawn by one who attentively considered their actions.

I shall not spend further time in considering their *characters*. Their counterpart may be found in every street, and in every neighborhood. The curious *student of human nature* can study them at will.

*Julia Forrester* was the child of such parents. When she was fifteen, they were in easy circumstances. But at that critical period of their daughter's life, they were ignorant of human nature, and entirely unskilled in the means of detecting bad character, or discovering true merit.

Indeed, they were much more ready to consider the former as true — and the latter as false. The *unpretending modesty* of real worth, they generally mistook for imbecility, or of questionable points of character; while bold self-assurance was thought to be an open exhibition of manliness — the free, undisguised manner of those who had nothing to conceal.

It is rarely that a girl of Julia's age, but little over fifteen, possesses much insight into *character*. It was enough for her that her parents invited young men to the house, or permitted them to visit her. Her favor, or dislike, was founded upon mere impulse, or the caprice of first impressions. Among her earliest visitors, was a young man of twenty-two, clerk in a dry-goods store. He had an open, self-confident manner, but had indulged in wicked habits for many years, and was morally unprincipled. His name was *Warburton*.

Another visitor was a modest, sensible young man, also clerk in another dry-goods store. He was correct in all his habits, and inclined to be religious. He had no particular end in view in visiting at Forrester's, more than to mingle in society. Still, as he continued his visits, he began to grow fond of Julia, notwithstanding her extreme youth. The fact was, she had shot up suddenly into a graceful woman; and her manners were really attractive. Little could be gleaned, however, in her society, or in that of but few who visited her, from the current *chit-chat*. It was all *chaffy* stuff — mere *small-talk*.

Let me introduce the reader to their more particular acquaintance. There is assembled at Mr. Forrester's a mirthful social party, such as met there almost every week. It is in the summer time. The windows are thrown open, and the passers-by can look in upon the light-hearted group, at

will. Warburton and Julia are trifling in conversation, and the others are wasting the moments as frivolously as possible. We will join them without ceremony.

“A more beautiful ring than this on your finger, I have never seen. Do you know why a ring is used in marriage?”

“Why no, Mr. Warburton. Do tell me.”

“Why, because it is an emblem of love, which has neither beginning nor end.”

“And how will you make that out, Sir Oracle?”

“True love has no beginning; for those who are to be married love each other before they meet. And it cannot have an end. So you see that a ring is the emblem of love.”

“That’s an odd notion; where did you pick it up?”

“I picked it up nowhere. It is a cherished opinion of my own, and I believe in it firmly.”

“You are a strange fellow.”

“Yes, I have got some strange notions; so people say: but I think I am right, and those who don’t agree with me, wrong. A mere difference of opinion, however. *All things are matters of opinion*. Isn’t it so, Perkins?” addressing the young man before alluded to.

“What were you talking about?”

“Why, I was just saying to Julia that all different *ideas* entertained by different people — were differences of *opinion* merely.”

“Do you mean to say, that there is no such thing as truth — or error?”

“I do — in the abstract.”

“Then we differ, of course — and as it would be, according to your estimation, a mere difference of opinion, no argument on the subject would be in place here.”

“Of course not,” replied Warburton, rather coolly, and dropped the subject. Julia almost saw that Warburton had made himself appear foolish in the eyes of the dull Perkins — but her mental vision was closed up as firmly as ever, in a moment.

A loud burst of laughter from a group at the other end of the room, drew the attention of the company, who flocked to the *scene of mirth*, and soon all were chattering and laughing in a wild and incoherent manner, so loud as to attract the notice of people in the street.

“Ha! he! he!” laughed a young lady, hysterically, sinking into a chair, with her handkerchief to her mouth — “what a droll body!”

“Ha, ha, he-o-o-o,” more boisterously roared out a fun-loving chap, who knew more about high living, than good manners. And so the laugh passed round. The cause of all this uproar, was a merry fellow, who had made a *rabbit* out of one of the girl’s handkerchiefs, and was springing it from his hand against the wall. He seemed to have a fair appreciation of the character of his associates for the evening; and though himself perfectly competent to behave well in the best society — chose to act *the clown* at present.

In due course, order was restored, more from the appearance of a waiter with nuts and raisins, than from a natural reaction.

“Name my apple, Mr. *Perkins*,” — whispered a young lady to the young man sitting next her.

“It is named.”

“Name my apple, Mr. *Collins*,” said *Julia*, with a nod and a smile.

“It is named.”

“And mine, Mr. *Collins*”

“And mine, Mr. *Warburton*”

“And mine, Mr. *Jones*.”

The apples being eaten, the important business of counting seeds came next in order.

“How many have you got, Julia?”

“Six.”

“She loves!”

“Who is it, Mr. Collins?” asked two or three voices.

“Mr. Warburton,” was the reply.

“I thought so, I thought so — see how she blushes.”

And in fact, the red blood was mounting fast to Julia’s face.

The incident escaped neither the eye of Warburton nor of Perkins. To go through the whole insipid scene would not interest any reader, and so we will omit it.

After the apples were eaten, “hull-gull” — “nuts in my hand,” etc., were played, and then *music* was called for.

“Miss Simmons, give us an air, if you please.”

“Indeed you must excuse me, I am out of practice.”

“No excuse can be taken. We all know that you can play well, and we must hear you this evening.”

“I would willingly oblige the company, but I have not touched the piano for two months, and cannot play fit to be heard.”

“O, never mind, we’ll be the judges of that.”

“Come, Miss Simmons, do play for us now, that’s a good sport!”

“Indeed you must excuse me!”

But no excuse would be taken. And in spite of protestations, she was forced to take a seat at the piano.

“Well, since I must, I suppose I must. What will you have.”

“Give us ‘Bonny Doon’ — it is so sweet and melancholy,” said an interesting looking young man.

“‘Charlie over the Water,’ is beautiful — I dote on that pong; do *sing* it, Miss Simmons!”

“Give us Auld Lang Syne.”

“Yes, or Burns’s Farewell.”

“‘Oft in the Stilly Night,’ Miss Simmons — you can sing that.”

“Yes, ‘Oft in the Stilly Night,’ — Miss Simmons,” said half-a-dozen voices, and so that was finally chosen. After running her fingers over the keys for a few moments, Miss Simmons started off.

Before she had half finished the first verse, the hum of voices, which had commenced as soon as she began to sing, rose to such a pitch as almost to drown the sound of the instrument. She labored on through about a verse and a half of the song, when she rose from the piano, and was proceeding to her vacant seat.

“O no! — no! — no!” said half-a-dozen voices at once.

“That will never do — we must have another song.”

“Indeed I can’t sing tonight, and must be excused,” said the lady warmly, and so she was excused. But soon another was chosen to be victimized at the piano, and “will-you-will-you,” she must sing. Simultaneous with the sound of the instrument rose the hum of voices, which grew louder and louder, until the performer stopped, discouraged and chagrined.

“That’s beautiful! How well you play, Miss Emma!” and Miss Emma was forced to resume the seat she had left half in mortification. All was again still for a moment.

“Can you play the ‘Harp and Lute,’ Miss Emma?”

“No sir.”

“Yes you can, though, for I’ve heard you many a time,” said a smart young lady sitting on the opposite side of the room.

The blood mounted to the performer’s cheeks. “Indeed you’re mistaken though,” half pettishly replied Miss Emma.

“But you can play ‘Yankee Doodle,’” retorted the first speaker.

Miss Emma left the instrument in anger.

“I’ll never speak to that *pert minx* again as long as I live!” whispered Miss Emma in the ear of a friend.

Thus ended the musical exhibition for that evening. As the spirit of wine grew more active, the men became less *formal* in their attentions, and the young ladies less *reserved*. Before the company broke up, I almost blush to say, that there was scarcely a lady present who had not suffered her red-ripe lips to be touched by those of every young man in the room. And on all these proceedings, the parents of Julia looked on with keen satisfaction! They liked to see the young people enjoying themselves!

Then there were rambles by moonlight, during which soft things were whispered in the ears of the young ladies. These were the occasions on which *Warburton* loved most to steal away the fond confidence of *Julia*; and, by degrees, he succeeded in fixing her regard upon himself. Consent was asked of the parents, and given; and soon Julia Forrester was Mrs. Warburton!

It was only six months after the marriage, that a *financial crisis* arrived; one of those reactions from prosperity which occur in this country with singular regularity, every ten or fifteen years, and swept the whole of his property from Julia’s father. This sudden revulsion so preyed upon his mind, that a serious illness came on, which hurried him in a brief period to the grave. The mother of Julia soon followed him.

Warburton, before this, had neglected his wife, and wrung from her many a secret tear. He had married her for the *prospect of worldly gain* which the connection held out, and not from any *genuine regard*. And when all hope of a fortune was suddenly cut off, he as suddenly appeared in his real character, of a *heartless and unprincipled man*.

He held the situation of clerk, at the time, in the same store where he had been for years. But immediately upon the death of his father-in-law, a flood of demands for debts due here and there came in upon him, and not having money to meet them with, he was thrown into jail, and obtained his freedom only by availing himself of the law made and provided for the benefit of *Insolvent Debtors*.

His poor wife knew nothing of the proceedings against him, until he was lodged in the jail. Hour after hour had passed since the time for his return to dinner, and yet she listened in vain for his well-known footsteps. She felt strangely oppressed in feeling, when the dim twilight came stealing sadly on, and still he came not home. But when the clock struck nine, ten, eleven — her distress of mind became heightened to agony. The question, so often asked of herself, “*Where can he be?*” could find no answer. All night long she sat listening at the window, and sunk into a heavy slumber, just as the grey light of morning stole into the window and paled the expiring lamp. From this slumber, which had continued for nearly two hours, she was aroused by the entrance of a servant, who handed her a note, addressed in the well-known hand of her husband. Tremblingly she tore open the seal. At the first words:

“Dear Julia, I am in jail . . .” the note fell from her hand, and she pressed her aching head for a moment, as if she feared that her senses would leave her. Then snatching up the paper, she read:

“Yesterday I was sent here for *debt*. I owe more than I can possibly pay, and I see no chance of getting out but by availing myself of the Insolvent Law, which I am determined to do. Don’t let it trouble you, Julia. I shall not be here long. Tomorrow I shall probably be at liberty. Good-bye, and keep a brave heart,

Your husband.”

For some time after reading this letter, a *stupor* came over her senses. Utterly unprepared for such a distressing event, she knew not how to act. The idea of a *jail* had ever been associated in her mind with *disgrace* and *crime*, and to think that her own husband was in jail, almost bereft her of rational thought. Slowly, however, she at length rallied, and found herself able to understand her situation, and to think more clearly on her course of action.

Her first determination was to go to her husband. This she immediately did. When admitted, she fell senseless in his arms, and it was a long time before she recovered her consciousness. Her presence seemed to move his feelings less than it annoyed him. There was nothing about his manner which sought affectionately her sympathy and confidence — that which gives woman, in situations no matter how distressing, something so much like happiness to bestow. He gave her but little satisfaction as to the manner in which he became bankrupt, and when, after several hours, she prepared to go home, at his suggestion, he told her that she must not come there again, as it was not a fit place for her.

“If you are here, Henry,” was her reply, the tears starting freshly to her eyes — “it is a fit place for me.”

“That’s all nonsense and sentimentality, Julia! This is no place for you, and you must not come again. I shall be out in a day or two.”

“A day or two is a long — long time” — and the poor wife’s voice trembled as she spoke.

“It will soon pass away.”

“It will seem ages to me, and you in this dreadful place. I must come tomorrow, Henry. Tell me who has imprisoned you, and I will go to him, and come tomorrow with his answer. He cannot stand the pleadings of a wife for her husband.”

“It’s no use at all, Julia. He is a hard-faced villain, and will insult you if you see him.”

“He cannot — he dare not!”

“He dare do anything.”

“Dear Henry, tell me his name.”

“No! — no! — no! — It’s no use to ask me.”

She had many times before suffered from his petulance and coldness; but under present circumstances, when she sought to bring him sympathy and relief — to be *repulsed*, seemed as though it would break her heart. Slowly and in tears did she leave the dreadful place which confined her husband, and sought her home. There she endeavored to rally her scattered thoughts, and devise some *means of relief*. Her first movement was to go to the employers of her husband. They received her coldly, and after she had stated the condition of her husband, told her that they could offer no relief, and hinted that his conduct had been such as to forfeit their confidence. This was a double blow; and she returned home with but strength enough to seek her chamber and throw herself, almost fainting, upon her bed.

For hours she lay in a kind of nervous stupor, the most troubled images floating through her brain. Sometimes she would start up, at the imagined sound of her husband’s voice, and spring to the chamber-door to meet him. But the *chilling reality* would drive her back in tears. Where now were the crowds of friends who but a short time ago, had hovered round her? They were but fashionable, soulless insects — the cold winds of adversity had swept them away! Since the

failure and death of her father, not one of the many who had called her *friend* had come near her lonely dwelling. But she could not complain. More than one friend had *she* deserted, when misfortune came suddenly upon them.

She took no food through the whole of that dreadful day, and could find no sound sleep during the night of agony that followed. On the next day, just as she had determined to go again to the prison, her quick ear recognized the foot-fall of her husband. She sprang to meet him, with a gladder heart than she had known for many weeks — but *his cold manner* and brief words threw back upon her feelings a sickening chill.

“We must move from here, Julia,” said he, after a few silent moments, and looked at her as though he expected objection as a matter of course.

“I am willing, if it is necessary, Henry. I will go *anywhere* with you.”

Her manner softened his feelings, and he said more tenderly, “Things are changed with me, Julia. In expectation of a handsome monetary gift from your father, I have been imprudent, and am now largely in debt. The Messrs. R. & L. will not, I am sure, take me back into their store, and it will be hard, I am afraid, for me to get a situation in town. Our furniture, which I have secured to you, is all we have, except about money enough to pay our quarter’s rent now due. I see no wiser plan for us than to sell this furniture, except enough for one chamber, and then open a boarding house. It will bring a sum sufficient to pay our board and other expenses for at least one year, if we manage prudently; and, surely, I can get something to do in the mean time.”

“I am willing for anything, dear Henry!” said his wife, twining her arms about his neck, and laying her pale cheek to his. The furniture was accordingly sold, and the reduced and humbled couple removed to a boarding house.

As he had expected, Warburton found it hard to get employment. Finally, after doing nothing for two months, he accepted the situation of *bar-keeper* at one of the city hotels. Julia pleaded hard with him not to go there, for she feared the influence of such a place upon him, but he would listen to no argument.

His wife soon began to observe indications of a change for the worse in his character. He grew more pettish and dissatisfied, and frequently acted towards her with great unkindness. He was rarely, if ever, at home before midnight, and then repulsed every affectionate act or word. Several times he came in intoxicated, and once, while in that state, he struck a severe blow on the head of his wife, which caused an illness of several weeks.

At the end of a year, Warburton had not only become dissipated in his habits, but had connected himself with a set of gamblers, who, as he proved to be a skillful hand, and not at all squeamish, resolved to send him on a trip down the Ohio and Mississippi, to New Orleans, for mutual benefit. To this he had not the slightest objection. He told his wife that he was going to New Orleans on business for the Stage Office, and would probably be gone all winter. Even as unkind as he had grown, it was hard parting. Gladly would she have taken all the risk of fatigue, to have accompanied him with her babe but four months old, but he would listen to no such proposal. When he did go, she felt sick at heart, and, as the thought flashed across her mind that he might probably *desert* her, helpless and friendless as she was — it seemed as if the fever of her mind would end in madness.

Regularly, however, for several months, she heard from him, and each time he enclosed money; but little more than was sufficient to meet expenses. In the last letter she received, he hinted that he might return home in a few weeks. At the usual time of receiving a letter, she waited day after day, hoping and almost fearing to receive one — anxious to hear from him, and yet fearing that he might have changed his mind as to his contemplated return.

Week after week passed, and there were no tidings from him. Day after day she went to the post-office with an anxious heart, which throbbed quicker and quicker as the clerk mechanically and carelessly turned over letter after letter, and at last pronounced the word "none," with professional indifference. Then it would seem to stop, and lie like a motionless weight in her bosom, and she would steal away paler and sicker than when she came. At last, her distress of mind became so great, that she went, reluctantly, to the stage-office, to inquire if they had heard from him recently. To her hesitating, anxious inquiry, she received the brief reply that they knew nothing of him.

"But is he not in the employment of this office?"

"I hope not," was the short, sneering reply of one of the clerks.

"What do you mean, sir?" she asked, in an excited tone — "he is my husband."

The manner of the man instantly changed. "Nothing, ma'am — It was only a thoughtless reply. He is not, however, in our employment, and never has been."

Mrs. Warburton turned pale as ashes. A chair was instantly handed to her, and a glass of water, and every kind attention offered.

At this moment a man entered, who eyed Mrs. Warburton with a vulgar stare. The person who had first spoken to Mrs. Warburton took him aside, and after conversing in whispers for a few moments, turned to her and said that he had just learned that her husband had joined a band of traders, and was now on his way to Mexico.

"How do you know?" was the quick reply.

"This gentleman has just told me."

"And how do you know, sir?"

"I received a letter from him three weeks ago, in which he stated the fact to me. He has been in my employment ever since he has been away, but has left it and gone to Mexico."

"When did he say he would return?" she asked, in a calm voice.

"That is uncertain, madam."

She tottered out of the office, and stole home with an enfeebled step. "Forsaken! — forsaken!" — was all the form her thoughts would take, until she met the sweet face of her babe, and then her heart felt warmer, and not all forsaken.

"Poor thing! how I pity her!" said the clerk in the stage-office, when Mrs. Warburton had retired. "Her husband is a scoundrel, that's all I know about it," responded the gentleman-gambler, who had sent Warburton out on a swindling expedition.

"The more the pity for his poor wife."

"I wonder if she has any property of his in her hands?" queried the gambler.

"Why?"

"Why? — Why because I'll have my own out of it if she has. I have his note, payable in a week, for money lent; and if he has got a dollar here, I'll have it."

"You'll not turn his wife out of doors, will you?"

"Will I?" — and his face grew dark with evil thoughts. "Will I? — yes! — what do I care for the whining wench! I'll see her tomorrow, and know what we have both to expect."

"Coulson!" said the clerk, in an excited but firm voice — "You shall not trouble that helpless, unfortunate woman!"

"Shall not? ha! Please, *Mr. Sympathy*, and how can you hinder me?"

"Look you to that, sir. I *act*, you know, not *threaten*."

The gambler's face grew darker, but the clerk turned away with a look of contempt, and resumed his employment.

That night he sought the dwelling of Mrs. Warburton. He found her boarding at a respectable house on Second Street. He named his business at once, and warned her not to allow herself to get in the power of Coulson, who was a gambler, and a heartless villain.

When he understood her real situation — that she was in debt for board, and without a dollar, forsaken of her husband, and among strangers — his heart ached for her. Himself but on the salary of a clerk, he could give little or no assistance. But advice and sympathy he offered, and requested her to call on him at any time, if she thought that he could aid her. A kind word, a sympathizing tone, is, to one in such a sad condition, like gentle dews to the parched ground.

“Above all,” was his parting admonition, “beware of Coulson! He will injure your character if he can. Do not see him. He will, if he fixes his heart upon seeing you, leave no stone unturned to accomplish it. But waver not in your determination. And be sure to let me know if he persecutes you too closely. Be resolute, and fear not. I know the man, and have crossed his path before this. And he knows me.”

Early on the next day, Coulson called, and with the most insinuating address, asked to see Mrs. Warburton.

“Ask him to send up his name,” was Mrs. Warburton’s reply to the information of the servant, that a gentleman wished to speak to her.

“Coulson,” was returned.

“Tell him that I cannot see him.”

To this answer he sent back word that his business was important and urgent.

“Tell him that I cannot see him,” was the firm reply.

Coulson left the house, baffled for once. The next day he called, and sent up another name.

“He is the same person who called himself ‘Coulson’ yesterday,” said the servant to Mrs. Warburton

“Tell him that I cannot be seen.”

“I’ll match the hussy yet!” he muttered to himself as he left the house.

It now became necessary for Mrs. Warburton to rally all the energies of her nature, feeble though they were, and yet untried. The rate of boarding which she was required to pay, was much beyond what she could now afford. At first she nearly gave up to despair. Thus far in life, she had never earned a single dollar, and, from her earliest recollection, the thought of working for money seemed to imply *degradation*. But *stern necessity soon destroys false pride*. Her greatest concern now was, what she should do for a living. She had learned to play on the piano, to draw and paint, and had practiced embroidery. But in all these she had sought only *amusement*. In not a single one of them was she proficient enough to teach. Fine sewing she could not do. Her dresses had all been made by the dress-maker, and her fine sewing by the family seamstress. She had been raised in idle pleasure — had spent her time in thrumming on the piano, making social calls, tripping about the streets, and entertaining company.

But *wherever there is the will, there is a way*. Through the kind intervention of a stranger, she was enabled to act decisively. Two rooms were procured, and after selling various articles of costly chamber furniture which still remained, she was enabled to furnish them plainly and comfortably, and have about fifty dollars left. Through the kind advice of this same stranger, (where were all her former friends?) employment was had, by which she was soon able to earn from four to five dollars a week.

Her employment was making cigars. At first, the tobacco made her so sick that she was unable to hold her head up, or work more than half her time. But after awhile she became used to it, and could work steadily all day; though she often suffered with a distressing headache. Mrs.



Warburton was perhaps the first woman who made cigars in the city. Through the intervention of a third person, to a manufacturer, the work was obtained, and given, from motives of charity.

She had been thus employed for about three months, and was beginning to work skillfully enough to earn four dollars a week, and give all necessary attention to herself and child, when Mr. Allen, the manufacturer, received a note signed by all the journeymen in his shop, demanding of him the withdrawal of all work from Mrs. Warburton, on pain of their refusal to work a day longer. It was an infringement, they said, upon their rights. Women could afford to work cheaper than men, and would ruin the business!

Mr. Allen was well off, and a man who could brook no dictation in his business. His journeymen were paid their regular wages, and had, he knew, no right to say *whom* he should employ; and for any such interference he promptly resolved to teach them a lesson. He was, moreover, indignant that a parcel of men, many of whom spent more money at the taverns and in foolish expenses, in the week, than the poor forsaken mother of a young babe could earn in that time, should heartlessly endeavor to rob the more than widow of her hard-earned mite.

“I will sacrifice half that I am worth, before I will yield to such dictation!” was his only answer to the demand. The foolish men went on strike, and turned out to lounge idly in taverns and other places, until their employer would come to terms. They were, however, soon convinced of their folly; for but a few weeks elapsed before Mr. had employed females to make his cigars, who could afford to work for one-third less than the journeymen had been receiving, and make good wages at that. The consequence was, that the men who had, from motives of selfishness, endeavored to deprive Mrs. Warburton of her only chance of support, were unable to obtain work at any price. Several of them fell into idle and dissolute habits, and became vagabonds. Other manufacturers of cigars followed the example of Mr. Allen, and lessened the demand for journeymen; and the result in this instance was but a similar one to that which always follows combinations against employers — namely, to injure the interests of journeymen.

It was not long before Coulson found out the retreat of Mrs. Warburton, and commenced his persecutions. The note of her husband had fallen due, and his first movement was to demand the payment. Perceiving, however, at once, that to make the money out of any property in her possession was impossible, he changed his manner, and offered to befriend her in any way that lay in his power. For a moment she was thrown off her guard; but remembering the caution she had received, she assumed a manner of the most rigid coldness towards him, and told him that she already had friends who would care for her. The next day she managed to apprize the clerk in the Stage Office of the visit of Coulson, who promptly took measures to alarm his fears, for Coulson was a coward at heart, and effectually prevent his again troubling her.

Little of an interesting nature occurred for about a year, when she received a letter from her husband at Cincinnati. He stated that having despaired of getting along in the business he had entered into on leaving — which had involved him in debt, he had left with a company of traders for Mexico, and had just returned with a little money, with which he wished to go into business. But that if he returned to her, that he would be troubled for payments of debts, and all he had taken from him. He enclosed her a hundred dollar note, and wished her to come to him immediately, and to leave without letting anyone know her destination. He professed much sorrow for having left her in so destitute a condition, but pleaded *stern necessity* for the act.

Mrs. Warburton did not hesitate a moment. In four days from the time she received the letter, she was on the way to Cincinnati. Arriving there, she was met by her husband with some show of affection. He was greatly changed since she had seen him, and showed many indications of irregular habits. He appeared to have plenty of money, and took rooms for his wife in a

respectable boarding-house. The improvement in his child pleased him much. When he went away he was only about five months old — now he was a bright little boy, and could run about and chatter like a bird.

After some hesitation in regard to the kind of business he would select, he at last determined to go into the river-trade. To this Mrs. Warburton gently objected; because it would keep him away from home for months together. But his capital was small, and he at length made his first purchase of produce, and started in a flat-boat for New Orleans. Poor Mrs. Warburton felt as if deserted again when he left her. But at the end of three months he returned, having cleared four hundred dollars by the trip. He remained at home this time for two months, drinking and gambling; and at the expiration of that period had barely enough left to make a small purchase and start again.

Her troubles, she plainly saw, were just beginning again, and Mrs. Warburton almost wished herself back again in the city, for which, though there she had no friends, her heart yearned.

Her husband did not return, this time, from his river-voyage, for three months; nor did he send his wife any money during that time. The amount left her was entirely exhausted before the end of the second month, and having heard nothing of him since he went away, she feared to get in debt, and, therefore, two weeks before her money was out, applied for work at a cigar-factory. Here she was fortunate enough to obtain employment, and thus keep herself above absolute poverty.

Long before her husband returned, her heart had fearful forebodings of a second blighting of all its dearest hopes. Not the less painful, were those anticipations, because she had once suffered.

One evening in June, just three months from the time her husband left, she had paused from her almost unremitted employment, during the violence of a tremendous storm, that was raging without. The thunder rattled around in startling peals, and the lightning blazed from cloud to cloud, without a moment's intermission. She could not work while she felt that *the bolt of death* hung over her. For half an hour had the storm raged, when in one of the pauses which indicated its passing away, she startled at the sound of a voice that seemed like that of her husband. In the next moment another voice mingled with it, and both were loud and angry.

Fearfully she flung open the door, and just on the pavement, drenched with the rain, and unregardful of the storm, for one more terrible raged within — stood two men, contending with each other in mortal strife, while horrible oaths and imprecations rolled from their lips. One of these, from his distorted face, rendered momentarily visible in the vivid flashes of the lightning, and from his voice, though loud and disguised by passion, she at once knew to be her husband. His antagonist was not so strong a man, but he was more active, and seemed much cooler. Each had in his hand an open Spanish knife, and both were striking, plunging, and parrying thrusts with the most malignant fury. It was an awful sight to look upon. Two human beings striving for each other's lives amid the fury of a terrible storm, the lightnings of which glanced sharply upon their glittering knives, revealing their fiend-like countenances for an instant, and then leaving them in black darkness.

For a few moments, Mrs. Warburton stood fixed to the spot, but, recalling her scattered senses, she rushed towards the combatants, calling upon them to pause, and repeating the name of her husband in a voice of agony. The result of the strife was delayed but an instant longer, for with a loud cry her husband fell bleeding at her feet. His antagonist passed out of sight in a moment.

Lifting the apparently lifeless form of her husband in her arms, Mrs. Warburton dragged him into the house, and placed him upon the bed, where lay their sleeping boy. She then hurried off for the nearest physician, who was soon in attendance.

The first sound that met the ear of Mrs. Warburton, on her return, was the voice of her dear child, eagerly calling, "Father! father! wake up, father!" And there was the little fellow pulling at the insensible body of his father, in an ecstasy of infantile joy at his return.

"Father come home! — Pa come home, mamma!" And the little fellow clapped his hands, and shook the body of his father in the effort to wake him.

The mother gently lifted her child from the bed. His little face instantly changed its expression into one of fear, when he looked into his mother's countenance. "Pa's very sick, and little Charles must keep still," she whispered to the child, and sat him down in the next room.

When the physician arrived, he found that the knife had entered the left chest just above the heart, but had not penetrated far enough to destroy life. There were also several bad cuts, in different parts of his body, all of which required attention. After dressing them, he left the still insensible man in the care of his wife and one of his assistants, with directions to have him called should any alarming symptom occur. It was not until the next morning that there was any apparent return of consciousness on the part of the wounded man. Then he asked in a feeble voice for his wife. She had left the bed but a moment before, and hearing him speak, was by his side in an instant.

"Julia, how did I get here? What is the matter?" said he, rousing up, and looking anxiously around. But overcome with weakness from the loss of blood, he sank back upon the bed, and remained apparently insensible for some time. But he soon showed evidence of painful recollection having returned. For his breathing became more labored, under agitated feelings, and he glanced his eyes about the room with an eager expression. After a few minutes he buried his face in the bed-clothes and sighed heavily. Distinct, painful consciousness had returned.

In a few days he began to grow stronger, and was able to sit up; and with the return of bodily vigor, came back the deadly passions that had agitated him on the night of his return home. The man, he said, had literally *robbed* him of his money, (in fact, *won* it); had cheated him out of every dollar of his hard-earned gains, and he would have his life.

When hardly well enough to walk about, Warburton felt the evil influence of his desire for *revenge* so strong, as to cause him to seek out the individual who, he conceived, had wronged him by *winning* from him, or *cheating* him out of his money. They met in one of the vile places in Cincinnati, where vice loves to do her dark work in secret. Truly are they called *hells*, for there the *love of evil* and *hatred of the neighbor* prompt to action.

Every malignant passion in the heart of Warburton was roused into full vigor, when his eyes fell upon the face of his former associate. Instantly he grasped his knife, and with a yell of fiendish exultation sprang towards him, like some savage beast eager for his prey. The other gambler was a cool man, and hard to throw off of his guard. His first movement was to knock Warburton down, then drawing his Spanish knife, he waited calmly and firmly for his enemy to rise. Blind with passion, Warburton sprang to his feet and rushed upon the other, who received him upon the point of his knife, which entered deep into the abdomen. At the same instant, Warburton's knife was plunged into the heart of his adversary, who staggered off from its point, reeled for a few seconds about the room, and then fell heavily upon the floor. He was dead before the cool spectators of the horrid scene could raise him up.

From loss of blood Warburton soon fainted, and when he came to himself, he found that he had been conveyed to his home, and that his weeping wife stood over him. There were also

others in the room, and he soon learned that he was to be conveyed, even in the condition he was then in, to prison, to await his trial for *murder*.

In vain did his poor heart-stricken wife plead that he might be left there until he recovered, or even until his wound was dressed; but she pleaded in vain. On a litter, faint from loss of blood, and groaning with pain, he was carried off to prison. By his side walked her whom no ill treatment or neglect could estrange.

Three months he was kept in jail, attended daily by his uncomplaining wife, who supported herself and little boy, with her own hands, sparing much for her husband's comfort. The wound had not proved very dangerous, and long before his trial came on, he was as well as ever.

The day of trial at length came, and Mrs. Warburton found that it required her strongest efforts to keep sufficiently composed to comprehend the true nature and bearing of all the legal proceedings. Never in her life before had she been in a court of justice, and the bare idea of being in that awful place, stunned at first, all her perceptions; especially as she was there under circumstances of such deep and peculiar interest.

Next to her husband, in the bar, did this suffering woman take her place: and that husband arraigned before his country's tribunal for the highest crime — murder! How little did she dream of such an awful situation, years before, when a mirthful, thoughtless, innocent girl, she gave up in maiden confidence, and with deep joy, her affections to that husband. Passing on step by step, in *misery's paths*, she had at last reached a point, the bare idea of which, had it been entertained as possible for a moment, would have almost extinguished life. Now, her deep interest in that husband who had abused her confidence, and almost extinguished hope in her bosom, kept her up, and enabled her to watch with unwavering attention every minute proceeding.

After the indictment was read, and the State's Attorney, in a comprehensive manner, had stated the distinct features of the case, which he pledged himself to prove by competent witnesses — poor Mrs. Warburton became sick and faint. A clearer case of deliberate murder could not, it seemed to her, be made out. Still, she was sure there must be *palliating circumstances*, and longed to be permitted to rise and state her impressions of the case. Once she did start to her feet, but a right consciousness returned before she had uttered a word. Shrinking into her seat again, she watched with a pale face and eager look, the course of the proceedings.

Witness after witness was called on the part of the state, each testifying distinctly the fact of Warburton's attack upon the murdered man, and his threat to take his life. Hope seemed utterly to fail from the heart of the poor wife, when the testimony on the part of the prosecution closed. But now came the time for the examination of witnesses in favor of the prisoner. Soon Mrs. Warburton was seen upon her feet, bending over towards the witness stand, and eagerly devouring each word. Rapid changes would pass over her countenance, as she comprehended, with a woman's quickness of perception, rendered acute by strong interest, the bearing which the evidence would have upon the case. Now her eye would flash with interest and her face become flushed — and now her cheek would pale, and her form seem to shrink into half its dimensions. Oh! who can imagine one thousandth part of all her sufferings on that awful occasion?

When, finally, the case was given to the jury, and after waiting hour after hour at the court-house, to hear the decision, she had to go home long after dark, in despair of knowing the result before morning—it seemed hardly possible that she could pass through that night and retain her senses. She did not sleep through the night's long watches — how could she sleep? Hours before the court assembled, she was at the court-house, waiting to know the fate of one, who now, in his fearful extremity, seemed dearer to her than ever. Slowly passed the lingering minutes, and at

length ten o'clock came. The court-room was filled to suffocation, but through the dense crowd she made her way, and took her place beside her anxious husband.

The court opened, and the foreman of the jury came forward to read the verdict. Many an eye sought with eager curiosity, or strong interest, the face of the wife. Its calmness was strange and solemn. All anxiety, all deep interest had left it, and as she turned her eye upon the foreman, none could read the slightest exhibition of emotion. "GUILTY OF MURDER IN THE SECOND DEGREE!" As quick as thought, a hundred eyes again sought the face of Mrs. Warburton. It was as pale as ashes, and her insensible form was gently reclining upon the arm of her husband, which had been extended to save her from falling.

When recollection returned, she was lying upon her own bed, in her own chamber, with her little boy crying by her side. Those who had, from humane feelings, conveyed her home, suffered the dictates of humanity to die in their bosoms before her consciousness returned; and thus she was left, insensible, with no companion but her child.

In due course, Warburton was sentenced to eight years imprisonment, the first three years to be passed in solitary confinement. During the first term, no person was to be allowed to visit him. The knowledge of such a sentence was a dreadful blow to Mrs. Warburton. She parted from him in the court-room, on the day of his sentence, and for three long, weary years, her eyes saw him not again.

But a short time after the imprisonment of Warburton, another babe came into the world to share the misery of her whose happiness he had, in all his actions, so little regarded. When able again to go about, and count up her store, Mrs. Warburton found that she had little left her beyond a willing heart to labor for her children. It would have been some comfort to her if she had been permitted to visit her husband, but this the law forbade.

"Despair is never quite despair," and once more in her life did Mrs. Warburton prove this. The certainty that there could be no further dependence upon her husband, led her to repose more confidently in her own resources for a living, and they did not fail her. She had long since found out that our *necessities cost much less than our superfluities*, and therefore she did not sit down in idle despondency. Early in the morning and late at night, was she found diligently employed, and though her compensation was not great, it was enough to supply her real needs.

For two years had she supported thus with her own hands herself and children. The oldest was now a smart little fellow of five years, and the youngest a fair-haired girl of some two summers. Thus far had she kept them around her; but sickness at last came. Nature could not always sustain the heavy demands made upon her, and at last sunk under them.

There are many more cases of extreme suffering in this country, than people are generally willing to believe. These extreme cases are among those whose peculiar feelings will not allow of their making known their real condition. They are such as were once members of some social circle, far removed indeed from the apparent chances of poverty. Their shrinking pride, their yearning desire for independence, clings closer and closer to them, and operates more and more powerfully, as they sink lower and lower, from uncontrollable causes, into the valley of need and destitution.

Beggars with no feelings, and no claims beyond those of idleness and intemperance, thrust themselves forward, and consume the *bread of charity* — which should go to nourish the widow and the orphan, who suffer daily and nightly, rather than ask for aid.

One to whom the idea of eating the *bread of charity* had ever been a painful and revolting one, was Mrs. Warburton. So long as she was able, she had earned with untiring industry, the food which nourished her children. But close confinement, insufficient nourishment, labor

beyond her strength, and above all, a wounded spirit — at last completed the undermining work, which threw down the tottering and feeble health that had long kept her at her duties.

It was mid-winter when she was severely attacked by *pleurisy*. For some weeks she had drooped about, hardly able to perform half her usual labor — most of that time suffering from a hard cough and distressing pain in the side, which was augmented almost to agony while bending steadily, and for hours over her work. Taking, as it did, all that she could earn to keep herself and children in comfort during the winter, she had nothing laid up for a time of more pressing need; and, as for the last few weeks, she had earned so little as to have barely enough for necessities, when helplessness came, she was in utter destitution. Her wood was just out, except a few hard, knotted logs; her flour was out, and her money gone. When she could no longer sit up, she sent her little boy for a physician, who bled her, and left her some powerful medicines. The first gave temporary relief, and the latter reduced her to a state of great bodily and mental weakness. He did not call in again until the second day, when he found the children both in bed with their mother, who was suffering greatly from a return of the pain in her side.

The room was chilly, for there was no fire, and it was intensely cold without, and the ground covered with a deep snow. He again bled her, which produced immediate relief, and learning that she had no wood, called in at the next door, where lived a wealthy family, and stated the condition of their poor neighbor.

A child of six years old stood by his mother while the physician was speaking. Mrs. Buck seemed much affected when told of the sufferings of the poor woman, politely thanked the physician for making her acquainted with the fact, and promised immediate attention.

That evening there was to be at this house a large party. Extra servants had been employed that day, and all was bustle and preparation.

“Sarah,” called the lady, a few minutes after, to her housekeeper — “Sarah, Dr. Hamilton was here just now, and said that the poor woman who lives next door is sick and out of fuel. Tell John to take her in an armful of wood, and you just step in and see what more she is in need of.”

“Yes, ma’am,” responded Sarah, and muttering to herself some dissatisfaction at the order. She went to the kitchen, and addressed a black man-servant, and kind of doer-of-all-work-in-general, indoors and out,

“John, Mrs. says you must take an armful of wood in to Mrs. Warrington; I believe that is the woman’s name who lives next door.”

“Who? The woman whose husband in the prison?”

“Yes, that’s the one, John.”

“Don’t want to meddle with those sort of folks, Miss Sarah,” with a broad grin at his own humor.

“Well, I don’t care whether you do or not,” responded Sarah, and she glided swiftly away, satisfied to do one part of her order — and *forget* the other, which related to her going in to see the poor woman herself. Mrs. Buck shifted off the duty on her housekeeper, and she contented herself by *forgetting* it.

Little William, who was present with his mother when the doctor called, had often played with the child of the sick woman. He had seen his little playmate but a few times since the cold weather set in; but had all his sympathies aroused at the doctor’s recital. Being rather more suspicious of the housekeeper than his mother, and no doubt for good reasons best known to himself, he followed on to the kitchen, and was an ear-witness to what passed between John and the housekeeper of the mansion.

“Come, John, now that’s a good fellow,” said he to the negro, after the housekeeper had retired, “take in some wood to poor Mrs. Warburton.”

“I’m afraid, Massa Billy, indeed. I’m afraid of prison — ha! ha!! ha!!!”

“She can’t help that, though, John. So come along, and take the wood in.”

“I’m afraid, indeed, Massa Billy.”

“Well, if you don’t, I’ll take it in myself, and dirty all my clothes, and then somebody will find it out, without my turning tattle-tale.”

John grinned a broad smile, and forthwith, finding himself outwitted, carried in the wood, and left it in the middle of the floor, without saying a word.

Towards evening, just before the company assembled, little William, not at all disposed to forget, as everyone else had done, the poor sufferers next door, went to the housekeeper’s room, where she was busy as a bee with preparations for the party, and stationed himself in the door, accosted her with —

“Miss Sarah, have you been in to see Mrs. Warburton, as mother told you, today?”

“That’s no concern of yours, Mr. Inquisitive.”

“But I’d just like to know, Miss Sarah; because I’m going in myself, if you haven’t been.”

“Do you suppose that I have not paid attention to what your mother said? I know my own business, without instruction from you!”

“Well, I don’t believe you’ve been in, that’s all; and if you don’t say yes or no at once, why, you see, I’ll go right in myself.”

“Well (coaxingly) never mind, Billy, I haven’t been in, I’ve been so busy; but just wait a little bit, and I’ll go. There’s no use of your going; you can’t do anything.”

“I know that, Miss Sarah, and that’s why I want *you* to go in. But if you don’t go in, I will, so there, now!”

“Well, just wait a little bit, and I’ll go.”

The child, but half satisfied, slowly went away, but lingered about the passages to watch the housekeeper. Night, however, came on, and he had not seen her going. All were now busy making the more immediate and active preparations for the reception of company, when he met her in the hall, and to his, “Look here, I say, Miss Sarah,” she hurried past him unheeding.

The company at last assembled, and the hours had passed away until it was nine o’clock. Outside, all was cold, bleak, and cheerless. Within, there was the perfection of comfort.

Little William had been absent for some time, but no one missed him. Just as a large company were engaged in the various ways of passing time, dancing, chatting, and partaking of refreshments, the room door opened, and in came Master Billy, dragging in by the hand, a little barefoot fellow about his own age, with nothing on but a clean, well-patched shirt, and a pair of linen trousers. Without heeding the company, he pulled him up to the glowing grate, and in the fullness of his young benevolent heart, cried out,

“Here’s fire, Charley! Warm yourself, fellow! Hurrah! I guess I’ve fixed Miss Sarah now.” And the little fellow clapped his hands as innocently and as gracefully, as if there had been no one in the room but himself and Charley.

All was agreeable and curious confusion in a few minutes, and scores crowded around the poor child with a lively interest, who, an hour before would have passed him in the street unnoticed.

“Why, Willy! what does all this mean?” exclaimed the father, after something like order had been restored.

“Why, father, you see, this is Charley Warburton,” began the little fellow, holding the astonished Charley by the hand, and presenting him quite ceremoniously to his father. “Doctor Hamilton came here today, and told mother that his mother was sick next door, and that they had no wood. So mother told Sarah to send John in with some wood, and to go in herself and see if they needed anything. So Sarah went and told John to go and take some wood in. But John he wasn’t going to go, until I told him that if he didn’t go I would, and if I went to carrying in wood, I’d dirty all my clothes, and then somebody would want to know the reason. So John carried in some wood. Then I watched Sarah, but she didn’t go in. So I told her about it. And then she promised, but didn’t go. I told her again, and she promised, but didn’t go. I waited and waited until night, and still Sarah didn’t go in. Then you see, a while ago I slipped out the front door, and tried to go in to Mrs. Warburton’s. But it was all so dark there, that I couldn’t see anybody; and when I called ‘*Charley*,’ here, his mother said, softly, ‘*who’s there*,’ and I said ‘it’s only little Willy. Mother wants to know if you need anything.’ ‘Oh, it’s little Willy — it’s little Willy!’ said Charley, and then we both came in here. O! it’s so dark and cold in there — do father go in, and make John build them a fire.”

During the child’s innocent but feeling recital, more than one eye filled with tears. Mrs. Buck hung down her head for a moment, in silent upbraidings of heart, for having consigned a work of charity to neglectful and unfeeling servants. Then taking her child in her arms, she hugged him to her bosom, and said,

“Bless you, bless you, my boy! That innocent heart has taught your mother a lesson she will not soon forget.” The father felt prouder of his son than he had ever felt, and there were few present who did not almost wish him their own. Little Charley was asked by Mr. Buck if he was hungry, on observing him wistfully eyeing a piece of cake.

“We haven’t had anything to eat all day, sir, none of us.”

“And why not, my little man?” asked Mr. Buck in a voice of assumed calmness.

“Because, sir, we haven’t got anything to eat in the house. Mother always had good things for us till she got sick, and now we are all so hungry, and haven’t got anything to eat.”

Mr. Buck then said to his wife, “Emma, give this hungry child some nourishing food with your own hands. He has a claim on you, for the sake of our little Willy.”

Mrs. Buck was not slow in relieving Charley’s needs and then, after excusing herself to the company — she visited, with John and Sarah Mrs. Warburton who had been suffering so painfully, in the next house to her comfortable dwelling.

The light carried by John revealed, in the middle of the floor, the armful of wood, in large logs, almost impossible to kindle, which the servant had thrown down there without a word, or an offer to make a fire. Mrs. Buck’s heart smote her when she saw this evidence of her neglect of true charity. Enveloped in the bed-clothes, she found Mrs. Warburton and her little child, the former suffering from pain and fever, and the latter asleep, with tears glistening on her eyelashes. The room was so cold that it sent chills all over her, as she had come in without throwing a shawl around her shoulders.

“I am sorry to find you so sick, and everything around you so cold and comfortless,” she said, addressing Mrs. Warburton.

“I don’t feel so very sick, ma’am, only when I try to sit up, I grow so faint, and have to lie down again. If my little children had anything to eat, I wouldn’t mind it much.”

Just then, aroused by the voice of her mother, the little girl awoke, and began moaning and crying. She could not speak plain, and her “Bread and milk, mamma! O, mamma, bread and milk!” thrilled every heart-strings of Mrs. Buck, who had never before in her life witnessed the



keen distress of a mother while her child asked in vain for bread. She drew the child out of bed, and kissing it, handed it to Sarah, whose feelings were also touched, and told her to take the little thing into her house, and give it to the nurse, with directions to feed it, and then come back.

By this time, John, rather more active than usual, had kindled a fire, the genial warmth of which began already to soften the keen cold air of the room. Some warm drinks were prepared for Mrs. Warburton; and Mrs. Buck had the satisfaction to see her, in the course of half an hour, sink away into a sweet and refreshing slumber. On glancing around the room, she was gratified, and somewhat surprised, to see everything, though plain and scanty, exhibiting the utmost order and cleanliness. The uncarpeted floor was spotless, and the single pine table was as clean as hands could make it. "How much am I to blame," was her inward thought, "for having so neglected this poor woman in her distress and in her poverty!"

On returning to her company, and giving a history of the scene she had just witnessed, the general feeling of sympathy prompted immediate measures for relief, and a very handsome sum was placed in the hands of Mrs. Buck, by the gentlemen and ladies present, for the use of Mrs. Warburton. Rarely does a social company retire with each individual of it so satisfied in heart, as did the company assembled at Mrs. Buck's, on that evening. Truly could they say, "*It is more blessed to give, than to receive!*"

The incident just related, possessing a kind of romantic interest, soon became noised about from family to family, and for awhile it was fashionable to minister to the needs of Mrs. Warburton — whose health continued very delicate — and to her young family. But a few months passed away, and then one after another ceased to remember or care for her. Even Mrs. Buck, the mother of little Billy, began to grow weary of *charity long continued*, and to feel that it was a burdensome task to be every day or two obliged to call in or inquire after the poor invalid. Finally, she dismissed the subject from her mind, and left Mrs. Warburton to the tender mercies of Sarah, the housekeeper.

From a state of deep despondence to one of hope, had Mrs. Warburton been raised, by the timely aid afforded through the persevering interference of the little playmate of her son. But she soon began to perceive, after a time, that the charity was only *spasmodic*, and entered into without a real consideration of her peculiar case. The money given her was the best assistance that could have been rendered, for with this she obtained a supply of wood, flour, meal, potatoes, and some warm clothing for her little ones. But this would not last always, and the multitude of little nice things sent from this one and that, were of but little service.

The month of March, so trying to a weak and shattered constitution, found her just well enough to venture out to seek for employment at her old business of cigar-making. She readily obtained work, and again sat down to earn for herself and children, the bread that would nourish them. But she was soon made to feel keenly that her health was not as it had been. A severe pain in the side was her daily companion, and she had to toil on, often sick and faint, from daylight until long after others had sought the grateful repose of their pillows. Painfully alive to a sense of dependence, she was ready at any time to work beyond her strength, rather than to eat the *bread of charity*. This kept her steadily bending over her work until nature again became exhausted, and she was forced, from direct debility, to suspend her labors for at least the half of every day.

As April came in, with an occasional warm day, her appetite gradually left her, and she began to experience a loathing of food. Weakness, headaches, and other painful warnings of nature, were the consequences. Her earnings were now so small, that she with difficulty procured enough of food for her children. She knew that if she would let Mrs. Buck know her pressing destitution, food and other necessities would be supplied; but she shrank from telling her needs.

Finding, however, that her strength continued to fail, until she was unable to sit up but for a few hours at a time, and that, in consequence of her extreme weakness, the nausea produced by the tobacco was so great, as to render it almost impossible for her to work in it, she made up her mind to let her boy go in to Mrs. Buck, with a request to send her some little thing that she could eat, in hopes that something from her table might provoke an appetite.

Mrs. Buck was sitting at her dinner-table, which was covered with the luxuries of the season, when little Charley came into the room and handed in his poor mother's request.

"Please, ma'am, mother says will you be so good as to send her some little thing that she could eat. She has no appetite, and not eating makes her so weak."

"Here's some pie, Charley," struck in little Billy. "It's good, I tell you! Eat it now; and mother, do send in Charley's mother a piece, too. I know she'll like it."

But Billy and his mother did not agree in this. The latter thought a little sago would be much better. So she gave Charley a paper in which were a few spoonfuls of sago.

"Here is some sago, mother," said Charley, on his return,

"Mrs. Buck says it will do you good."

Now it so happened that, from a child, she had never liked sago. There was something in it so insipid to her, that she had never felt an inclination to more than taste it. Particularly now did her stomach loathe it. But, even if she had felt an inclination to taste the sago, she had not, at the time, any way to prepare it so as to make it palatable. She did not, however, at the time, send for anything else. She still had some flour and potatoes, and a little change to buy milk, and on these her children fared very well. Healthy food does not cost a great deal, and Mrs. Warburton had long before learned to economize well her resources.

On the next morning she tried to get up, but fainted away on the floor. Her children were still asleep, and were not even awakened by her fall. It was some time before she recovered sufficiently to crawl upon the bed; and there she lay; almost incapable of thought or motion, for hours. As feeble nature reacted again, and she was able to think over her situation, she made up her mind to send in her little boy again to Mrs. Buck, with an apology for not using the sago, and request her to give her some little thing from her table — anything at all that would be likely, as she said, "to put a taste in her mouth," and induce an appetite for food.

The child delivered the message in the best way he knew how, but somehow or other it offended Mrs. Buck, who had begun to be tired of what she was pleased to call the importunities of Mrs. Warburton; though, in fact, she had never before even hinted that she was in need of anything. The truth was, Sarah, the housekeeper, had heard something from somebody, about Mrs. Warburton, and had been relating the *scandal* to Mrs. Buck, who, instead of opposing the tattling propensity in her servant, encouraged it, by lending an attentive ear to her silly stories. But the story was false, from beginning to end, as are nearly all the idle rumors which are constantly circulating from one family to another, through the medium of servants.

"How did she manage to live," she had just been saying to Sarah, "before I befriended her? It is a downright imposition upon my good-nature, and I have no notion of *encouraging idleness!*"

"The fact is, ma'am," chimed in the maid, "these here poor people, when you once help 'em, think you must be always at it; they find it so much easier to *beg*, than *work*."

Just at this stage of conversation, the child timidly offered the humble and moderate request of his sick mother; a request that should have thrilled the heart of anyone possessing a single human sympathy. But it came at the wrong moment. The evil of *self-love* was active in the heart of Mrs. Buck, and all *love of neighbor* was for the time extinguished. She cast upon the child a look so forbidding, that the little fellow turned involuntarily to go.

“Here, Sarah,” said she, in a half-angry tone, “send Mrs. Warburton a *dried herring*. Perhaps that will ‘put a taste in her mouth.’”

And a herring was sent!

“It’s a pretty pass, indeed,” said Miss Sarah, as the child closed the door, “when *beggars* become *choosers!*”

Only half satisfied with herself, Mrs. Buck turned away and made no reply. How differently did she feel on the night when, with her own hands, she ministered to the needs of this same suffering child of humanity! Then her heart, though melted even to tears, felt a bounding gladness, from the consciousness of having relieved the suffering. Now it was heavy and sad in her bosom, and she could not hush *the whispers of an accusing conscience*.

Little Charley carried home the herring, and laid it on the bed before his sick mother. His own little heart was full, for he could not mistake the manner of Mrs. Buck for kindness. Mrs. Warburton looked at the uninviting food, and turned her head away. After awhile, it did seem to her as if the fish would taste good to her, and she raised herself up with an effort, and breaking off a small piece, put it languidly to her lips. The morsel thrilled upon the nerve of taste, and she ate the greater part of it with a relish she had not known for many weeks.

In the meantime the heart of Mrs. Buck smote her so severely, when all at once she remembered having lost *her appetite* after a spell of sickness, and the difficulty with which she regained it — how during the day, nothing could tempt her to eat, while all night long she would dream of rich banquets, of which she eagerly desired to partake, but which changed to tasteless morsels, when she lifted the inviting food to her lips. For a time she strove against her feelings, but at last gave up, and ringing for the cook, directed her to broil a couple of thin slices of ham very nicely, make a good cup of tea, and a slice or two of toast. When this was ready, it was sent in to Mrs. Warburton. It came just in time, and met the excited appetite of the faint-hearted invalid. It was like manna in the wilderness, and revived and refreshed her drooping frame.

From this time she gradually regained her appetite and strength; and had the gratification of being able to earn enough for the support of her children with her own hands.

This she continued to do until the expiration of the solitary confinement term of her husband. How wearily passed the long, long days and nights, as the time approached for her again to look upon the face that had been hidden from her sight for three sorrowful years! The long absence had only excited her affection for him. Not as the *dead* had she thought of him, but as of the *living*, and of the *suffering*. Her own deep poverty, sickness, and anxious concern for her children — she counted as nothing compared to his lonely endurance of life.

Some weeks before the expiration of the first term of imprisonment, she gathered together all her little store, and having sold many heavy articles, packed the rest, and had them started for Columbus, the capital of the state. She then took a deck-passage for herself and children in a steamboat for Portsmouth, from which place she determined to walk, carrying her youngest child, a little girl of nearly three years, in her arms. I will not linger with her, nor trace her toilsome and lonely journey through strange places, continued without a day’s intermission, until she at last came in sight of the long-looked-for place.

After the time-worn state-house, the next building that met her eye, was the old, dark-looking *prison*, in which was confined her husband. How gladly did her eyes greet its somber walls! It was the dwelling-place of one, for whom, in all his wanderings, her heart retained its warm emotions of love. Suddenly, like a parching wind of the desert, came upon her the thought that he might be *dead*. For three long years, she had not been permitted to receive tidings from him, and who could tell, if in that time, the *wing of death* had not overshadowed him? Trembling, weary,

and sick at heart, she made her way first to the prison-gate, and there, to her unspeakable joy, she learned that her husband still lived.

For many nights previous to the day on which permission would be granted her to see him, sleep had parted from her eyelids; and when the time did come, she was in a high state of mental excitement. Morning slowly dawned upon her anxious eyes, but seemed as if it would never give place to the broad daylight. At last the sun came slowly up from his bright chambers in the east. It was the day on which she would again see her husband; the long-looked-for, the long-hoped-for husband. Tremblingly she stole out, before the day was an hour old, and ran, not walked, to the gloomy dwelling-place of her husband.

For several days previous, she had not been able to keep away from the prison, and the keeper, who knew her errand, had become much interested in her case. He received her kindly, and made instant preparation for the desired interview.

For three years Warburton had not heard the music of a human voice. Far away from the sight or sound of his fellow-prisoners, he had dwelt alone, visited only by the mute keeper who had brought his daily food. To his earnest and oft-repeated inquiries if nothing was known of his wife and children, for whose welfare a yearning anxiety had sprung up in his bosom — he was answered only by a gloomy silence. He did not know, even on the morning of his release from solitary confinement, that the all-enduring companion of his better days had come to cheer his anxious eyes with her presence.

Soon after daylight of this morning, the door of his cell turned heavily on its hinges, and he was brought out among his fellows, and heard again the sweetest music that had ever fallen upon his ear — the music of the human voice. A stronger thrill of pleasure had never passed through his frame. He felt as though he could remain thus shut out from the rest of the world forever, so that he could see and talk with his fellow-men. He did not then think of the keen delight that awaited him, for in the first impulse of selfish gratification, he had forgotten the being who loved him better than life.

An hour had not passed when he was again called for. The door of a private room in the keeper's house was thrown open, and he entered alone. There was but one being present: a pale, haggard woman, poorly clad, who tottered towards him with extended arms. At that moment both hearts were too full, and their lips were sealed in silence. But oh! how eagerly did each bind the other in a long, long embrace! It seemed as if their arms would never be unlocked. For one hour were they left, thus alone. But how were *years* crowded into that hour; years of endurance — terrible endurance!

It seemed scarcely one-tenth of that short time, when Mrs. Warburton was summoned away, but with the kind permission to visit her husband at the same hour every day. Slowly she passed beneath the ponderous gate, and still more slowly moved away, thinking how long it would be before another day had passed, bringing another blessed interview.

The case of Warburton and his faithful wife soon came to the ears of the governor, and he having expressed considerable sympathy for them, the fact was soon made known to Mrs. Warburton, who was recommended to petition him in person for a remission of the sentence. The hint was no sooner given, than acted upon, and after a delay of several months of hope and fear, to the joy of her heart, she found her husband at liberty.

In some of his former business of gambling transactions, he had become possessed of a clear title to three hundred acres of land, upon which was a log-cabin, situated about thirty miles eastward from the capital of the state, and nearly upon the national road. Searching among his

papers, still preserved by his wife, he found the *deed*, and as nothing better offered, he started with his family and but ten dollars, to begin the world anew as a backwoods *farmer*.

The few articles of furniture which his wife had preserved, served to render the dilapidated cabin, in which was not a single pane of glass, sash, or shutter, barely comfortable. It was early in the spring when they moved, and though the right time for planting corn and the ordinary table vegetables, yet it would be months before they would be fit to use. In the meantime, a subsistence must be had. The quickest way to obtain food Warburton found in the use of his *rifle*, for wild turkeys and deer abounded in the forest. He also managed to take a few dozen turkeys now and then to a neighboring town, and trade them for corn-meal, flour, and groceries. In about a month, he was enabled to sell one hundred acres of his land for three hundred dollars, one hundred in money, and the balance in necessary things for stocking a farm. He was now fairly started again, with a cow, a horse, and all requisite agricultural implements.

Mrs. Warburton did not feel satisfied in her own mind that this sudden relief from daily pressing need would be a real benefit to them. She had learned to suspect the *reformation* which was effected by the force of external circumstances, while no beneficial change in the *will* was going on. For some time, however, she had every reason to be encouraged. Her husband was industrious, and careful to make the best he possibly could out of his farm, and was kind and attentive to her and his children. Their garden, as the summer wore away, presented a rich supply of vegetables, and their corn and potatoes in the fall yielded enough for their use during the winter, besides several bushels for sale.

The winter, however, did not pass away without several indications on the part of Warburton of a disposition to indulge in *the pleasures of the bottle*. There had been, in the course of the summer, a tavern erected, about a mile from his dwelling, on the national road; and here, during the dull winter months, he too frequently resorted, to pass away the hours, with such people as are usually to be found at these *haunts of idleness and vice*.

The income of this house, as a place of accommodation for travelers, was very small, for within four miles of it stood a tavern and stage-house, kept in a style that had made it known to the traveling public. It was simply a receptacle for the odd change of the neighbors, at times when they had an hour or two to spare from business. Gradually, its business increased, and as gradually the farms of one or two individuals in the neighborhood, who were, more frequently than others, to be found at the tavern — evinced a corresponding decrease in their flourishing condition. Fences which never lacked a panel — were now broken in many places; and barns which never admitted a drop of rain — now leaked at a hundred pores. Once, there was an air of cheerfulness and plenty around their dwellings; now, wives and children looked — the former troubled and broken in spirits, the latter dirty and neglected. Where once reigned peace and quietness — now existed wrangling and strife.

During the following farming season, Warburton gave considerable attention to his farm — cultivating his ground, which in the fall yielded him an abundant return. Still, during the summer, he visited the “White Hall Tavern” too frequently, and was too often under the bewildering and exciting influence of liquor. The next winter tended greatly to complete the work of *dissipation*, which had been commenced a year before. Frequently he would come home so much intoxicated as to be lost to all reason. At such times, he was not the stupid, good-natured, drunken fool that is often met with — rather, he was then a cruel, unreasonable and exacting tyrant! His poor wife and children did not only suffer from his angry temper, but had to endure in silence his blows, and often tremble even for their lives! When sober, an indistinct

remembrance of his cruelties and other bad conduct, instead of softening his feelings towards his family, made him moodily silent, or cross and snappish if a word was said to him.

The constant and almost daily drain of small change for liquor, had nearly exhausted all the money in the house long before the winter was over. The accommodating tavern keeper seemed to discover, as by instinct, this condition of things, and encouraged Warburton to run up a large bill. He well knew that at any time it was easy to get the payment out of a man who had a good farm, well stocked.

Not so much for the money to be made at the business, as for the purpose of attracting more people to his tavern, the landlord of the "White Hall tavern" kept a small store. At this store, Warburton, long before the winter was over, had also made a pretty large bill. As if to *atone* for his *unkindness* to, and *neglect* of his family, he would rarely return from his voluntary visits at the tavern, without bringing home something. A few pounds of sugar today, some cheese or fish tomorrow, or some dried fruit on the day after. The excuse, that such and such a thing was needed, was often made to go to the tavern, and thus scarcely a day passed without a dollar or two being entered against him on the books of the smiling tavern-keeper.

When the spring opened, and his bill was made out, much to his surprise, he found his account to be one hundred and fifty dollars! After some two or three weeks pondering on the matter, during which time he was cross and sulky at home, two fine cows and one of his best horses were quietly transferred from his pasture to the more capacious one of the landlord of the "White Hall;" and thus his account was squared with *Mr. Boniface*.

The discouragement consequent upon such a reduction of his stock, tended to make him less industrious and less pleasant. He was constantly grumbling about his expensive family, and could not afford to send his two oldest children to a school just opened in the neighborhood, although the master offered to take them both for five dollars a quarter. His wife, he said, could teach them at home. And in this she was not neglectful, as far as her time allowed.

How rarely does the *drunkard*, when once fairly started, stop in his *downward course*! How similar is the history of each one! Neglect of *business* — neglect of *family* — confirmed *idleness* — *abuse* of family — *waste* of property — and finally, *abject poverty*.

In less than three years from the day on which he breathed the air again as a free man — free, through the untiring assiduity of his neglected but faithful wife — he struck her to the ground, and unregardful of all the ties of nature, left her alone with her children, in the wilds of the west, after having made over house and farm to the landlord of the "White Hall," for fifty dollars and his bill at the bar.

Day after day did his poor wife wait and look for him to return, until even hope failed, and she at last, with a heavy heart, commenced the task of recalling her own energies in aid of the little ones around her.

But she soon found her condition to be far worse than she had imagined. But a few days passed after her husband had left her, before the hard-hearted tavern-keeper came, and removed everything but the house in which she lived from off the place, and then gave her notice that she must also leave within three weeks, as he had rented the farm to a man who wished to take immediate possession.

*Hope*, the *kind and ever attendant angel* of the distressed, for more than a week seemed ready to depart; but at the end of that time, a faint desire to return to her native city began to grow into a resolution, and by the time a second week had passed away, she had fully resolved to set out upon the journey.

But she had only twenty dollars, after disposing of the few things their rapacious creditor had left them, and with this she had to go a journey of nearly five hundred miles, with three children, the oldest about twelve years of age. But when once her mind is made up — there are few things a *resolute mother* will not undertake for her children.

By persevering in her applications, day after day, to the wagoners on the national road, she at length so far prevailed on one of them as to let her and her children ride as far as Zanesville, for the trifle of a dollar or two, in his wagon.

In the true spirit of success, she looked only at the present difficulty, reserving thought and attention for all following difficulties, whenever they might come. In this spirit she cut herself loose from her place in the west, and started for — utterly unable to say how she should ever reach the desired spot.

For the first day or two, the wagoner held no conversation with her; he had been unable to resist the promptings of his kind feelings in favor of one who had asked him for aid, although he had much rather not have given her a place in his wagon. By degrees, however, his temper changed, and he occasionally asked a question, or made a passing remark; and by the time he had reached Zanesville, he had become so interested in her case, that he refused to take the stipulated price, and kindly offered to carry her home.

The way thus providentially opened for her, few obstacles remained, and in the course of a few weeks she found herself again in the home of her childhood, the dear spot that had lived in her memory, green and inviting, for years.

But how *changed* was the poor sufferer! But a very few dollars of her money was left. The fatigue of travelling so long and in so uncomfortable a manner, had gradually shaken the props of a feeble body; and by the time she looked again upon the old, familiar places, her form was drooping with sickness.

Slowly she descended from the wagon, received her children, one by one, from the hands of the wagoner, thanked him with a tearful look, and tottered away. But where could she go? She had neither home, nor money, nor friends — and was sick and faint. Years before, she had tripped lightly along the very street through which she now dragged her weary limbs. She even passed by the same house, and heard the light laughter of thoughtless voices, from the same window from which she had once looked forth in earlier years — a joyful and light-hearted creature. How *familiar* did that dear spot seem — but how agonizing the *contrast* which forced itself upon her! Little did the merry maiden who looked out upon the pale mother, with drooping form and soiled garments, who gazed up so earnestly towards her, imagine, that but a few years before, that poor creature looked forth from that same window, a glad-hearted girl.

Scarcely able to act or decide rationally, for her head ached intensely, and she was burning with fever, Mrs. Warburton wandered about the streets with her three children, one a boy about twelve years old, the other a little girl about nine, and the third, a little one tottering by her side, scarcely two years old. All at once, as she turned her steps into Walnut Street, her eye caught sight of the tall poplars which indicated the home of the homeless. “I have no home but this,” she murmured to herself, and turned her steps instinctively towards the dark mass of buildings that stood near the present intersection.

“Where is your permit?” said the keeper, as she falteringly asked for admission.

“I have none,” was the faint reply.

“We cannot take you, unless you bring a permit from one of the commissioners.”

“I don’t know any commissioner.”

“Where are you from?”

“I have just come to town from the west, and am too sick to do anything. I feel faint, and unable to go farther. Can you not admit me, and let application be made to the commissioners for me?”

The appearance of Mrs. Warburton too plainly indicated her sick condition, and the keeper thought it best to admit her for the present. A meeting of the commissioners was held on the same afternoon, and a formal admission given.

The first indication that Mrs. Warburton had, that she was no longer at liberty to choose or think for herself, was the entire separation of her children from her. True, she was soon too ill to attend to them, but that would have made no difference. After a dangerous illness of many weeks, during most of which time she was insensible to everything around her — she was again able to droop about a little. Her first questions, after the healthy reaction of body and mind, were about her children; her first request, to see them. But this was denied. “They are doing well enough,” was all the answer she could get.

“But cannot I see Emma, my little one? Do let me see her!”

“It is contrary to the rules of the institution. You cannot see her now.”

“When can I see her?”

“I don’t know,” — and the nurse left her and went to attend somewhere else, utterly insensible to *the keen agony of the mother’s heart*. Was she not a pauper? What right had she to human feelings? But *a mother’s love* is not to be chained down to rules, or circumscribed by the narrow policy of chartered expediency. As Mrs. Warburton slowly gained strength, a quicker perception of her situation grew upon her, and she soon determined to know all about her children. In vain had she asked to see them; but each denial only increased the desire, and confirmed her resolutions to see them and know all about them.

One day, when she could walk about a little, a day on which she knew the board of commissioners were in session, she watched her opportunity, and when the nurse was attending in another part of the room, stole quietly out, and soon made her way to the commissioners’ room.

“Gentlemen, a mother asks your indulgence,” was her appeal, as the keeper checked her entrance.

“Let her enter,” said one of them.

“What is your wish, good woman?” continued the first speaker.

“I want to see my children.”

Her voice was so low and mournful, and her pale face, which still retained many traces of former beauty, expressed so strongly her *maternal concern*, that the hearts of all were touched.

They looked at each other for a few moments, and after some whispered words, directed that she should be allowed to see her children for half an hour each day.

The keeper now called their attention to certain of their proceedings, some weeks past, and they found that places had been obtained for two of them, the oldest boy, and the little girl, scarce ten years old.

“We have obtained good places for *two* of your children, madam; the other, aged two years, you can have under your own care, while here.”

“And all without allowing me one word, as to *who* should take them, or *where* they should go! My poor little Mary — what can you do as a servant?”

“They are well provided for, madam. You can now retire.”

Mrs. Warburton did retire, and with a *bleeding heart*. Her little Emma was restored to her, and was constantly by her side. She had been two months in the alms-house, when she was



strong enough to work, and by a rule of the place, she had to work two months, to pay for her keeping while sick, before she would be allowed to go out, and maintain herself.

Slowly and heavily passed the hours for two weary months, when she presented herself for a release from the alms-house.

“Where can I find my children?” she asked of the keeper, as she was about to leave.

“It is against the rule to give any such information in regard to pauper children. And in this particular instance, it was the request of both people taking your children, that you should not be told where they were, as they wished to raise them without being troubled by other influence.”

The mother attempted no remonstrance, but turned away, and homeless, and almost penniless, leading her little one by the hand, again entered the city where her happiest years had been spent.

As she passed down a street, she saw on the door of an old brick house, the words “A room to let.” She made application, and engaged it, at two dollars a month. A pine table, and an old chair, she bought at a second-hand furniture store for a dollar; and with the other dollar she had left, the pittance saved from the twenty dollars she had when she left Ohio, she bought some bread, dried meat, milk, etc. She had no bed, and was for some time compelled to sleep with her child on the hard floor.

The art of making cigars, which she had learned years before, and which had more than once stood between her and poverty, was again brought into use. She applied at a tobacconist’s, and obtained work. Giving all diligence, day and night, she was able to make five or six dollars every week, with which, in a short time, she gathered a few comfortable things about her, among which was a bed.

Two months had passed since she left the alms-house, and still she could gain no tidings of her children. Daily, for an hour or two, had she made search for them, but in the only way she could devise, that of wandering about the streets, in hopes of finding them out on some errand. As the winter drew on, she became more and more anxious and concerned. If her little girl, who was always a delicate child, should be in unkind hands — she sickened at heart to think how much she would suffer. Night after night would she *dream* of the dear child; and always saw her in some condition of extreme hardship.

One night she thought she saw little Mary sitting on the curb-stone. She went up to her, and dreaming that it was very cold, found her bare-foot, thinly clad, and almost perishing. The child threw her little arms, naked and icy cold about her neck, and as her well-known voice sounded in her ears, she awoke.

She slept no more through that night, and soon after breakfast, started out, being unable, through the uneasiness of her mind, to work. Without questioning the reason why, she naturally wandered in the direction indicated in her dream. When near the place, she was startled by the piercing screams of a child that seemed in great agony, and there was entreaty and supplication mingled in the tones. The voice was like the voice of her own child. She knew it *was* her own child — a mother’s ear is never deceived. Darting towards the spot, she found a bucket of hot water spilled upon the pavement, from which the vapor was rising in a cloud, and glancing her eye down the alley, she saw her little one half-dragged, half-carried, by the arm, by a tall, masculine woman, who seemed in a violent rage. Following like the wind, she reached the dwelling of the virago as she entered and dashed the child upon the floor.

Just as Mrs. Warburton came up — the woman was lifting a stout cow-hide, and was turning to lacerate the back of the little one, as she had often done before, her face red and expressing the most wicked passions.

At once Mrs. Warburton felt that only in retreat was their safety, and catching up the child in her arms, she darted out as quickly as she had entered. Not more swiftly, however, did she go, than followed the enraged woman to whom this child of nine years old had been bound to do the work of a full grown servant. Finding herself gained upon by the person in pursuit, she looked about for a place of retreat, and seeing "Magistrate's Office" on a sign, she darted into that lower court of justice. Here she was safe from molestation, until some decision was made in the case, by those deputed to act.

A crowd soon gathered about, attracted by the strange sight of a woman flying with a child in her arms, and another in hot pursuit. The magistrate, who was a humane man, and held his office in a part of his dwelling, instinctively perceived that the mother and her child needed kindness and consideration, and had them, after examination, removed back into his dwelling, and placed under the care of his wife, while he entered more fully into the merits of the case.

When Mrs. Warburton was sufficiently at ease to examine her child, she found her a pitiable object indeed. Her face, neck, and body were dreadfully scalded, and her back was in scars and welts all over, and in some places with the skin broken and festering. It appeared, from the statement of the child, that the woman she lived with had placed on her head a bucket of scalding water for her to carry to a store, which she was going to scrub out. The heavy weight on her head caused her to lose her balance and fall, when the whole contents of the bucket were spilled over her face and neck, and penetrated through her clothes to the skin, in all directions.

Of course, she was suffering the most excruciating pain. Medical aid was called in by the magistrate, and every attention extended to the *little sufferer*, who seemed to forget her pain in the consciousness of her mother's presence. The inhuman wretch who had thus brutally maltreated a mere child, enraged to a state of insanity in finding herself thwarted in obtaining the child, made an appeal to the city court, then in session, and had all the parties present. It needed but this to give Mrs. Warburton uncontrolled possession of little Mary. The condition in which the court found the child, added to the touching story of her mother, caused an instant cancelling of the indenture by which the unfeeling woman claimed possession of her.

In a few days after, Mrs. Warburton found her boy, who, much to her satisfaction, had a good place, with which he was pleased, and was learning a good trade. She was now fairly started again, and as her spirits revived, her health became much improved. Month after month passed away, and brought with it new sources of comfort, new causes for satisfaction. Of her husband, she now thought of with no affection. It is true, earlier feelings would sometimes return, but with no force, and after moving the waters of her quiet spirit for a moment, would tremble into rest.

When a man once extinguishes his own self-respect, he is a *burden to society*. But when a husband and father descends so low, he becomes a *curse to his family*. After abusing them, and making their condition so wretched that even he cannot share it — he will forsake the wife of his bosom and the children of his early love, and leave them to the tender mercies of strangers. But let the mother gather her little ones around her, and by toiling early and late, make their condition comfortable — and the *brutalized wretch* will return and consume the food of his children, and abuse them if they complain.

A year had passed away, when early one evening in the fall of the year, a man pushed open the door of the room she occupied, and with a "well Julia," took a chair, and made himself at home without further ceremony. Though dirty and ragged, with a beard of a week's growth, and half drunk, Mrs. Warburton could not mistake the form of her wretched husband.

"O, husband! can this be you?"

“Yes, Julia, this is me. I’ve come back at last. I’ve tried hard to make something for you and the children, but it is no use — fate is against me. So here I am again, as poor as ever. But give me something to eat, for I’m as hungry as a badger.”

Six years had passed away since Warburton had returned, and the *wretchedness* which had been with him in his absence, he brought as an abiding guest to the dwelling of his wife. During that time, she had endured sickness, hunger, abuse, and been near unto death; but through it all she had come with a heart still unconquered, though almost broken. For her children’s sakes, two more of whom had been added in that time, she had stood up and braved the storm.

At last, her miserable husband, sunk in the lowest depths of drunkenness and degradation — died, as he had lived. It was the dawn of a brighter day for Mrs. Warburton, when the spirit of her husband took its flight to the world of spirits. Her son was nearly free from his trade, and her oldest girl could assist her greatly in the house, as well as by earning something for their support.

Contentment and health having taken up their abode with her — we will leave her to fill up her allotted space in life unobtrusively and peacefully.

The story of Mrs. Warburton has been introduced as another illustration of the ill effects which so often arise from the *lack of watchfulness on the part of parents*, in regard to the *characters* of the young men who are allowed to visit and play upon the affections of their daughters.

It also shows *how unconquerable is a mother’s love*. Here a weak, foolish girl, by strong trial — becomes a woman with a strength of mind which nothing can subdue, and, as a mother, overcomes difficulties from which most men would shrink in despair.