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Romance of the

Keely Institute

BY

Harry Meredith



KING ALCOHOL

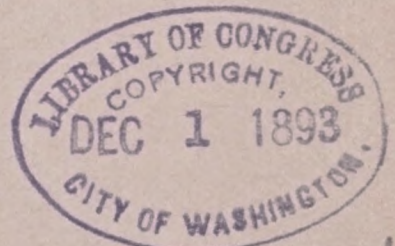
A

ROMANCE OF THE KEELEY INSTITUTE

BY

HARRY MEREDITH

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NEW YORK

1893

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KING ALCOHOL

A ROMANCE OF THE KEELEY INSTITUTE

KING ALCOHOL:

A ROMANCE OF THE KEELEY INSTITUTE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARK.

God said, "Let there be snow," and there was snow; deep in the "mountain valley," and warmly bonneting the giant boulders!

The everlasting forest, sleeping for a season, caught the falling flakes, and the sinewy pines held aloft their mighty arms, in mute expostulation against the frozen shower that covered them with a spotless fleece.

A whitened harvest everywhere, and silence over all! Except at four P.M., when the belated train on the "American Central" worried into the station at Blue Wing, and cast out several men and women.

This was the event of the short winter day: a corporal's guard of passengers, and a leather mail bag!

No long line of Pullman coaches now, radiant in uniforms of dark green and glittering gold! These splendid conveyances were humbly lodged in their sheds; their old-time passengers fishing in Florida.

Two travellers entered a sleigh at the station, and after a careful "tucking in" by the attentive driver, sat in silence and waited for the end.

One of these was a young woman, erect and serious; she looked straight ahead, and seemed to be investigating the drift-covered road, up which the excited horses were plunging.

At every turn she peered eagerly forward, as if looking for something she was anxious to see, yet dreaded to find.

Her companion was buried to the chin in robes. One hand lay exposed, the fingers of which plucked nervously at the wool covering; the other was hidden and tightly clinched.

This man did not breathe; his respiration was a succession of gasps and sighs, now and then a moan.

Small wonder!

Every nerve in his body was twisting, quivering, vibrating, like the strings of a rudely struck harp.

He shivered; his eyes were full of tears; his lips and chin fluttered like disturbed water, and ever and anon he plucked tufts of hair from the warm covering.

The cedars and pines to the right and left were white and motionless, untenanted; yet this man saw on the top of a tree—

A huge black crow.

The sleigh flew past, and on the wall of the bridge sat a white rabbit as large as a setter dog.

The sufferer ground his teeth together and babbled a series of words, trite and vapid, yet comforting balm to him; words he had heard from the lips of the loving girl by his side very often of late, and now he mumbled them over and over.

“Nothing there, dear! nothing there!” Another turn and over the fence stood a *giraffe* eating snow from the tree-tops. The animal bowed and stretched his long neck across the road.

The horses bowled through the monster's head and then ran over a *bear*.

"Anna," moaned the wretch, clutching her dress, "tell me there is nothing! nothing! nothing!"

"Nothing, dear! Do not be afraid," said this comforting girl.

"I thought they might really have come out of those dark woods."

"No, John, nothing."

In spite of the human pathos contained in this dialogue, the driver smiled grimly, as he faced the driving storm and the falling night.

Anna's brow contracted with a nervous pang, the closely pressed lips signified anxiety.

"Are we nearly there?" she inquired of the driver.

Roberts turned to her with a bracing smile and shouted back: "Yes, miss; right ahead of the next turn."

Another dash of the spirited animals, and the lights of a handsome hotel fell on the snow before them.

The ornamented iron dog on the lawn covered with frozen crust appeared to the sick man as a polar bear, and incapable of further endurance he uttered a sharp cry, and would have leaped from the sleigh had not Anna's arm been thrown around him.

"Nothing there, dear!"

"No, indeed, sir," repeated Roberts cheerily; "nothing there, and if anything comes we will give it a fine chase."

They drove into the electric beams and were handed from the sleigh.

The front doors of the building were thrown open and two lively boys in gray and gold hustled the satchels and bundles.

Anna accepted the proffered arm of a genial-faced

gentleman, and wandered with him in the direction of a stained-glass door over which was a sign, "Manager's Office."

The suffering man was left to himself, trembling at what he saw; or, rather, at what he did not see.

To him all was confusion worse confounded; he was surrounded by foes, armed for his destruction.

At first he thought of fighting, of desperate defence and determined attack.

Then came a change to idiotic mood; and he wanted to laugh, and did laugh, and a dozen men beside him laughed with him. And when he pointed out the old lady playing billiards with her crutch, they all acquiesced in his mood, and professed to see her likewise, and one young fellow smoking a cob pipe assured him that the old woman was "a regular visitor," and "a very worthy individual."

Fortunate man this; just in time, his admission into the "Ark of Safety."

Next he pointed out oranges on the mantel, and eggs on the floor. The cob-pipe man pretended to pocket the oranges, and walked with care so as to avoid crushing the eggs.

The massive doors shut with a clang that seemed to the weakened mortal like a peal of artillery, and with a wailing sob he cried out and darted into a corner.

Blessed sufferer! doubly blessed in spite of your present woe, for you are safe under the glorious beams of the light that never fails.

The large apartment was comfortably filled with gentlemen of all ages and conditions. Each face wore a reassuring smile, yet he thought them a legion of devils. A tall, handsome man with a lion eye and tawny beard

now came through the crowd, and held out to him a glass half filled with pure whiskey.

Spring water to the gasping creature in the wilderness of burning sand.

The shaking hand could not clutch the glass, so the good Samaritan held the tumbler to his quivering lips and let him drink.

Then for a few moments he gained, and looked around him without absolute terror, and greedily warmed himself at the fire of blazing logs.

The faces lost their fearful cast, their demoniac lustre, and gradually became human.

One by one the sympathizing men came forward, made themselves known, and offered friendly services.

Then he picked up a portion of his lost reason, found rational speech, and announced his own name.

John Candor, of New York!

The generous draught of alcoholic tonic went to the necessary spot, touched the right organs, and in a measure soothed him.

But for this relief he must have gone mad. For the time the crisis was averted, the agony postponed.

The billiard table and the old lady with the crutch were no longer visible.

How kind all were to him! just like old friends, brothers. And the gentleman who had saved his reason with the two ounces of whiskey, and who now gently held his hand and counted his galloping pulse, who was he?

Suddenly poor John began to wonder, and try to recall. The weak brain did not respond. He could not place himself, he could not realize his present circumstances or condition. All behind him was a blank,

This condition of mind was provocative of delirium, he began to tremble new. Alcohol and nerves will not mix creditably. Then with a tremulous gulp he asked:

“Where am I?”

“Oh, you are in a comfortable hotel, where all are your friends,” answered a fine-looking lawyer from Washington, taking possession of John’s shoulders with both hands, and giving him a friendly caress.

This was all very well, and the sick man gained momentary comfort, but immediately afterward his eyes fell on the wide, gaping, half-darkened stairway that led to the upper floors.

Coming down the steps he saw a man clad in dressing-gown and slippers. The new-comer was gaunt, unshaven, dishevelled—a weird make-up.

This poor fellow’s wife and mother and little ones had often wept to see him as John Candor saw him.

And at the sight of him now there came to John the awful want of Anna’s gentle touch and soothing voice:

“Where is she, where is Anna?” cried he, shrinking from the man above him.

“*Where is Anna?*”

The spectacle on the stairs answered with a grin:

“I am Anna!”

A sturdy fellow in a blue uniform cautiously moved between Candor and the other.

“Anna, Anna,” feebly moaned poor John. “You are not Anna. There is something wrong here, you are deceiving me. Gentlemen, where am I?”

The man on the stairs threw one leg over the banisters and with a chuckling laugh answered:

“*You are in a Keeley Institute!*”

CHAPTER II.

THE PRICE OF A MAN'S SOUL.

IN a front room of No. — Fifty-second Street, an old man was dying. One wasted arm hung limp from the bed, the hand touching the floor.

A massive creature last year; now face, body, and shanks shrunk to pitiful extremes.

Six feet John Candor, Sr., once stood; health, vigor, and activity in every motion, grandly endowed with a perfect animal organism.

Now dying unresistingly, giving up his ghost as feebly as a babe.

It does not matter to us at this moment what his disease may have been; perhaps even his physicians disagreed on that point. We will simply class it as—

Death.

For dead he was, to all intents and purposes; that is a condition of which the most unassuming may attempt a diagnosis.

Death!

The extreme penalty of natural law. The inevitable punishment of birth.

John Candor, the dying, had the face of the man we read of in our last chapter, and whom we saw safely bestowed under the roof of the "Susquehanna Institute."

A better face, however, for even now, with the ashes of dissolution on his brow, there was manhood in its best form in every curve and protuberance of the dear old fellow's countenance.

All men and women loved John Candor, the father, and this was something to be proud of, for a man must be well equipped to win the suffrages and good-will of our strangely endowed fellows.

They also loved the son whenever he permitted their affectionate regard, whenever he stood up before them as God made him to stand, brave, free-hearted, unselfish, undaunted, the counterpart of his father; but Heaven pity him!

A dipsomaniac!

Old Candor loved his boy with a multiplied tenderness because of his infirmity, just as he would have done had young John been a hunchback, or had he been born blind, or without feet.

The hunted, frightened look we saw on the quivering face of the man driving by the phantom animals was not apparent on the calm countenance of his dying father.

Now, my friendly or unfriendly reader as the case may be, this night's work, as I am about to narrate it, happened many months before Anna Candor went up the Susquehanna road, with John, her brother, clinging to her robes, and piteously imploring her with baby wails to whisper:

"Nothing there, dear."

I did not intend to write of John and Anna, and the "Home of Rescue," until I had shown you the death-bed of his father and introduced you to his Cousin Mark.

It does not matter. You will learn much of the latter's character as our story progresses. Suffice it to say of him now that in the course of speeding time he made his way into his relatives' confidence and affection.

When a man has an uncle worth two millions of dol-

lars, he is a fool if he fails to cultivate that uncle's acquaintance and good-will.

Mark did not fail. He entered the open citadel of the old man's heart with a rush, and captured the stronghold almost without a struggle.

Mr. Candor needed a confidant and adviser. He could not turn to the beloved product of his own body. He could not impart his secrets, the mysteries of his bank accounts, the intricacies of his stock transactions to his dipsomaniac boy.

And so when Mark presented himself to the millionaire as a substitute for his son, near to him as his hand, his heart, his blood, the disappointed father took the wanderer in, and believed in his professed love and fidelity.

And now that John Candor stretched himself for the last time on his luxurious couch and began to look beyond our earth, John, the son, was not by his side; John was not to be found; John was not at hand to hear the final appeal, the last prayer, the whispered farewell.

John was missing.

The other child, Anna, weeping and heart-broken, had been sent from the room to sob on the carpet of her bedchamber, while her dying father dealt with earthly matters for the last time. These disposed of, he promised to recall the loving girl to his bedside and fall asleep on her bosom, wound close in her fond embrace.

But God disposes.

The victim of death was now alone in the grand old room with his nephew Mark. And thus he spoke, almost borrowing breath from the other world, for this world's seemed all but spent:

"I have much matter to dispose of, and in a few words, nephew, and quickly they must be spoken. Then bring

Anna to me, let me die looking into her loving eyes; to her care I confide the trust of my wandering boy's soul."

Very kindly the old man whispered, though shaken with incessant pain.

Yet, ere he began to speak of earthly treasures that rust, he chose the better part, and strove to make his footing sure in that abode where thieves do not break in and steal.

Mark Candor listened to the solemn invocation, and for the moment relented.

The clock ticked on the mantel. The cuckoo fluttered out, and spoke the hour of midnight.

A splash of broken coals formed a crater in the grate, and fell in decayed and dying, like the whispering figure on the bed.

"I believe in God, the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," etc.

The simple prayer ceased, and the mellow call from St. Martin's belfry proclaimed the birth of another day.

"Mark," said the sinking man, "bring me the 'will' from the cedar tray in the upper drawer."

Mark moved lightly across the room, and the next moment the document was in the old man's hand.

Two millions of dollars trembling in the clutch of a babe. Millions of dollars already invested in the speculative thought of thrifty Mark Candor, for by the executive power of the paper fluttering in the skeleton hand he was the heir of John Candor, and the helpless dipsomaniac—

Disinherited!

So it read, such were its provisions; at least what follows is a fair abstract of the testament prepared by

the family lawyer two weeks before this, the night of death:

“I do hereby bequeath to my daughter, Anna Candor, one hundred thousand dollars, and my country seat at Newburgh.

“To Peter Latham, my butler, grown old in faithful service, ten thousand dollars.”

Then followed bequests and legacies to friends and servants, whom Candor loved and who would love and weep for him, money or not.

Next we have the vital part of the document; the heart, blood, soul of the literary structure:

“The remainder of my estates shall be held, in trust, by the executors named herein, for the term of two years.

“If at the expiration of that time, my son, John Candor, has abandoned strong drink, and has lived twelve consecutive months without drinking alcoholic liquors of any kind, all the property thus held in trust by my executors, Redmund and Jarvis, is to become by the terms of this will, *his*.

“But if at the expiration of two years he is still the slave of alcohol, and has not positively refrained from all intoxicants for the year preceding the expiration of the time of trust herein specified, then the whole of my remaining estates are to revert to my nephew, Mark Candor, and his heirs, forever.”

Mark had known the terms of his uncle's will, ever since it had been devised and drawn up.

At the request of the dying man, he now read the paper aloud from beginning to end.

Then there was a pause and silence. The sinking man scarcely broke the stillness of the night, as he said:

“*Put that will in the fire!*”

Mark Candor stood like a man of ice and snow. Put two millions in the fire?

His two millions!

He had been as sure of their possession as of the clothing he wore, as of the ring that encircled his finger.

He knew that John Candor could as soon exist without air as live a year without alcohol.

"Burn it?"

"Yes, nephew, I cannot disinherit my boy. I cannot go to my God to whom I have spoken in prayer, and leave behind me the possibility of an unjust act.

"I cannot leave behind me my irresponsible son, condemned to a life of poverty.

"Burn it!"

Mark was now on his feet, the "will" clutched tightly behind his back.

He looked down at the good old face, and marked the growing dimness of the eyes, the falling of the lip, the scant supply of breath.

How soon will he die?

He must have expressed this thought to John Candor, for his eyes revealed his wish.

"Burn it quick! Light it and bring it to me. Let me see it burn."

Mark Candor did not stir. This was open defiance, total renunciation of long-expressed affection, complete annihilation of well-built confidence.

"Do you hear me, sir?"

Candor's voice was stronger. Mark wondered and gazed greedily at the gasping man, gazed as sin looks upon chastity, into the livid face.

"How soon will he die?"

"Obey me!"

This came with a gurgle and a gasp; then a last mighty effort.

Mark Candor staggered back as though a stiletto had been driven into his throat, and fell against the wall.

Small wonder.

Before him on the bed knelt the trembling giant, risen from the coffin, uplifted from the grave, his head erect, his eyes wide open, one hand and arm stretched toward him, the other pointing to the flames.

"Burn! burn!"

Mark Candor for a time lost all power of thought, all sense of power, all resistance.

He was for the moment the spiritual and bodily slave of the kneeling figure on the bed, the abject serf of the index finger pointing to the white coals, a helpless imbecile in the hands of the dead.

The grand old lion eyes still uttered their silent command.

"Burn!"

The outstretched arm still pointed to the fire.

"Burn!"

Mark Candor obeyed and moved toward the flaming grate.

Step by step he crossed the room. He was alive, but temporarily suspended from all power of expressing will or life either by word of refusal or positive resistance.

His tongue was thick and dry in his mouth; he tried to close his eyes, but failed; they glared at the dead man's lips.

"Burn!"

Two millions, food for fire! two millions, snatched from him! Millions already disposed of in thought and dream.

Over the coals that snapped, over the flames that leaped.

The heat scorched his hand, the wax of the red seal melted and ran into the fire like a stream of blood.

Two millions gone!

No!

John Candor's stiffening arm fell, the head relaxed its pose, and the body slowly shrank away, the inert mass reposing as the dead always lie.

A woman's quick step without, a woman's hurried rap on the panel. The door thrown wide open; Anna Candor, clergyman, doctor, nurse, rush forward.

"Dead!" said the physician.

"Dead!" from the girl, accompanied by a wail of heart's sorrow.

"Dead!" from the white-faced nephew.

"Dead!" from the man of God.

"I am the resurrection and the life."

And standing in the doorway, helpless and irresponsive, the wretched dipsomaniac, *who had sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage.*

CHAPTER III.

"FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE."

Two millions, the price of a man's soul.

Souls should not be placed in the market for sale like stocks.

The theory of life should be to prepare for eternity, and the man who disposes of his spiritual possessions on earth is drawing largely in advance on his future claims.

Mark Candor killed his uncle. It was murder as foul as if he had battered in his skull or strangled him.

The old gentleman would in all probability have died in a few hours, but he was entitled to his chance, and Mark Candor's precipitation must be classed as a diabolical act.

The only jury competent to try such cases at once condemned the murderer; the Judge of all at once pronounced sentence, and the expiation must follow in the established order of sequence.

Mark sat quietly in a corner when the will was read and its astonishing provisions made public.

Even the lawyer who was responsible for the legal accuracy of the document, and who already knew its contents, half choked over the reading, while others who loved the dead man's memory, and still loved the diseased son, received the news with abrupt shocks of feeling as clause after clause was read and explained.

Young John Candor was a very different-looking man, as he sat listening to his practical disinheritance, than he appeared two weeks before, leering stupidly at the remains of the father he loved.

He had suffered the inevitable penalty pronounced against the man who goes on a protracted spree.

He had passed through the agony of nervous pulsation, each throb tearing body and soul like explosions of dynamite.

He had not turned over in his bed for forty-eight hours, but lay with his eyes fixed on a fracture in the ceiling, every moment a thousand years of hell.

The tortures of these men exceed in intensity all physical misery known to experience and investigation.

There is no earthly agony that can compare to the

unutterable and indescribable physical and mental slaughter that follows the immoderate use of alcohol.

I can only liken this peculiar condition to that of a soul wrought to frenzy by unnatural means, imprisoned in a dead body.

Every power of thought is strengthened and quickened a thousand-fold. Observation, memory, imagination, introspection, all expressing their restless vitality with ceaseless persistence and exaggerating the victim's awful state, with a multiplication of horrors none the less terrible because delusive.

This is alcoholic reactive effect. Thus John Candor, our hero, a drunken hero, agonized for three days.

Anna, ministering angel, suffered with her brother, groaning at her inability to relieve him.

Alas! sympathy does not heal. Tender nursing cannot cure a mind diseased.

So John endured alone, and then swallowed beef tea, and milk and seltzer, his stomach replying to such salutes by saying that soon he might send down "a soft boiled egg" and later on "a small tenderloin."

Next came thoughts of, and desire for, cleanliness. This train of meditation culminated in a razor and bathtub.

Finally, the morning paper and a burst of hysterical tears over the details of a railroad slaughter, a groan for the house-painter who fell from a scaffold, and downright sobs for the taking off of an urchin by drowning.

The sympathies of the dipsomaniac, struggling back to normal conditions of mind and body, are raw; drop your handkerchief on a worm, and he will weep.

Bread and butter corrects all this. Rare roast beef hardens the heart and enables the convalescent to sleep without nervous, spasmodic prayers.

John Candor the restored looked well, graced as he was with renewed physical honors. A sorry botch of a tailor who could not fit and tastefully adorn this splendid animal.

As we see him to-day, so his father was twenty years ago, massive, shapely, correct.

A front like Jove, crisp black curls, and a mustache like the crow's wing; weight two hundred; height six feet; agile as a panther.

Moreover, John was well dressed; an excellent habit in men's lives.

Good clothes make common men kings; kings they make gods. The dull man who habitually wears good garments is nearer success than the genius who is threadbare.

John would have done credit to a suit of armor; dressed for the arena, he would have excited the plaudits of bloodthirsty Romans.

To-day, at the reading, he looks every inch a man; in a tweed suit. A great, big, magnetic, graceful gentleman. Loved by men, and often worshipped by women.

Despised by many!

To-day he stands "the glass of fashion, the mould of form, the observed of all observers;" next week he may be again in the alcoholic sewer, and, *God pity him, he cannot help it.*

The sceptic turns with disgust from my statement.

Such declarations are innovations, and consequently unworthy of credit.

You offend the graybeards when you overthrow a tradition.

Destroy the conventional, and you are a vandal.

Steam applied to locomotion was once pronounced "diabolical."

Two hundred years ago, Edison would have been burned at the stake for witchcraft, for his mad electric pranks.

We have the children of these old-time cranks among us to-day.

And to-day progressive science throws its search light into some dark corners, and these same erudite "children" are shocked and outraged.

The industrious wizard of the chemical laboratory discovers that the crime of alcoholism is not a crime at all, but a disease, sharp and deadly as the knife of the assassin.

This beneficent investigator defines alcoholism as "a desperate malady" and suggests an antidote.

His unsupported assertion is at first received with silent contempt. At the start he meets with little opposition. He has not yet proved himself worthy of the kicks of scepticism. His theory is merely an infant, that will sicken and die, go out like a bursting bubble.

But the baby grows. The proclaimed infant thrives. The bubble does not burst, and one hundred thousand dipsomaniacs abandoned by despairing friends and helpless physicians are restored to life.

The magician waves his wand, the evil spirit is exorcised, the alcoholic devil cast out from his despotic rule.

At once we hear the howl of the sceptic, the bigot, and the non-participant. A man has dared to startle the world with his philanthropic thunder.

As a progressionist he is a nuisance, and must be suppressed.

The sceptic, slighted and ignored, snarls out his trite argument, struts his hour upon the stage, and then evaporates.

The physician, frightened at the progress of a cause which he has not helped to advance, with which he is not identified, and from the success of which he is not to benefit, denounces the "discoverer" and his theory, and magnificently wraps himself in the theatric armor of "professional ethics."

The saloon-keeper, who has laughed at sumptuary laws, chuckled at "no license," ridiculed "cold-water associations," "temperance crusaders," and ranting lecturers, now bristles with rage, for the magnetic coin of the "one hundred thousand saved" no longer jingles on the marble counter of his poison shop.

To return to our story. The company assembled to hear the reading of the will consisted of the following: John and Anna Candor, son and daughter of the deceased; Mark Candor, his nephew; James Redmund, executor and trustee, and William Jarvis, the same.

Lawyer Sharp crossed the door-mat exactly at eleven A.M., compared his watch with the timepiece on the mantel, pronounced the clock right, and seated himself at a table.

Then he turned to the company and remarked:

"I am waiting for Miss Nora Livingston."

The two executors said "Ah!" simultaneously, and crossed their legs together, as if by preconcerted arrangement and after frequent rehearsals.

Anna Candor brightened, and her sweet, sad face cleared up in smiles.

"I am glad you need Nora," she said.

"Yes!" answered Sharp, "she is named in the will for a small amount."

John and Mark were visibly affected by the mention of this girl's name.

Mark walked to the window and looked out at the bricks.

John colored slightly above his average ruddiness, and grew red as a peony when he met Anna's kind eye, and saw her smile.

Nora entered the room, bringing with her color, freshness, bloom, grace, vitality; a well-built young giantess, yet a girl all over, in spite of her inches and the vigor of her stride.

Yes, a girl, and a novelty. A frank, fearless creature; a "stick by my friend to the last" sort of woman.

She expressed the truth of her character by the dash of her smile, the candid beam of her eyes, the warmth of her hand-clasp.

She was the incarnation of sincerity, the embodiment of feminine fidelity. She was a reality. He who wins her will not clasp a shadow. Her character was made to wear. It will not change with her wedding-dress.

An unaffected American woman, well-bred, perfect in her deportment.

When Mark turned and bowed to Nora, he was sure that she would consent to share with him the two millions of cash he was preparing to steal. His salutation showed that he felt the importance of his position.

John simply smiled; handsome brute, was there ever such a smile?

Nora shook hands with the young men impartially, and then sat by Anna.

The Rev. Arthur Rose of St. Martin's entered the room, and Nora was sure that her friend's hand fluttered slightly in hers as the well-looking churchman appeared in the doorway.

Rose was a consequence of Nassau Hall and the Theological Seminary at Princeton.

While at college, study and athletics about equally divided his efforts.

Then he threw away his boxing-gloves and dumb-bells and settled down to absorb theology.

He was now in charge of St. Martin's and was Anna's pastor. Perhaps that is why the girl flushed so prettily when he entered the room.

The "will" was read by Lawyer Sharp, who disposed of the minor legacies in an off-hand manner as though dropping small coin into a contribution box; but whose manner changed as he threw ten thousand dollars into Nora's lap, and informed Anna that she was a hundred-thousand-dollar girl, with a handsome residence on the Hudson.

Then the voice of the reader grew harsh and vibrating, as if he were striving to convey to his readers the idea that he was not sorry for the handsome young gladiator who sat listening to his practical disinheritance.

The millions could only be his by the occurrence of the *impossible*.

The two executors did not look at the matter in this light, however, and, after congratulating the young ladies on their good fortune, took Candor in hand and "hailed him chief."

Mark watched this performance without a break of expression apparent on his face. He did not think it necessary to play the hypocrite, *he was so sure*; therefore he assumed a negative attitude and expressed his wisdom by his silence.

Yes, Mark's countenance denoted calm indifference; but behind that well-studied front was a brain seething with quick thought, forming plans, overthrowing complications.

His uncle's death; the will, the positive future; accession to wealth—these incidents were all strung together like precious stones on a silver wire; their arrangement was perfect.

Yet, without one jewel more his happiness would be incomplete. Lacking this, he was a poor man.

The love of Nora Livingston! Could she be persuaded to accept the stolen millions, and become an innocent partner in his crime?

Would she consent to fasten the diamond coil about her white throat?—*and pay him with herself?*

Nora had already refused him, six months ago, before his lucky "find."

Now all was changed. Had she the soul to place her matchless womanhood on the auction block, and step down the property of the highest bidder?

Nora had been engaged to John. Yet she dismissed him in disgust, because he staggered into her presence one night with the mark of the "wine god" on his face.

Yes; dismissed him, sent him reeling away, and bade him forfeit the paradise that had been his.

Yes; ordered John and his two millions and her grand love for him into the street.

To-day Mark had the millions in prospective; John was an outcast. What would this strange girl do now?

Mark trembled with anticipation as he caught Nora's magnificent head with his half-closed eyes, and let them fall slowly to her feet.

Luscious banquet! garden of delight! glowing with golden fruit.

Was it for sale?

Anna nestled closely to her beautiful companion. The palpitating houri responded to the caress and the two became a unit.

The clergyman, thirsty with sexual passion, drank in Anna for her sweetness alone, and forgot her hundred thousand dollars.

The lawyer peeled an orange. The trustees chatted in whispers. There was a tiresome wait of a minute or two. All knew it was but an intermission short as the snap of your thumb. All knew that the disinherited was preparing to speak. The vacation of a minute seemed an hour to these eager ones.

They waited with throbbing pulses. All knew that there was another scene to play, another climax to be reached.

John got up from his chair, and stood before them like a mountain pine.

Atlas, holding up the globe. Graceful Mercury bathing in rosy clouds. The brawn of Hercules, moulded with Apollo's divine beauty.

First in college honors, first in the senior shell, first in the friendly spar, first in the hearts of his fellows.

There he stands, radiant as the sun, the wretch who lately crawled from the gutter, and who will return to the gutter again.

And stupid ignorance proclaims that he should save himself by the exercise of *will*.

Then why does not this brainy giant save himself if he can? Surely he cannot covet the companionship of horrors too awful for description.

My sceptical friend, you have not an inch of ground to stand on.

Sit down!

Dr. Fudge, please prescribe for this man. Cannot you, erudite theorist, save him from his fate?

No! You are not able to locate the eruptive plague.

Here stands a man inoculated with an awful disease, and your formulas, your compounds, your tinctures are as water.

Loving ones, cannot you wind your arms about his throat, and hold him with love's fetters?

No! He melts in your grasp like a flake of snow. You cannot heal dipsomania with a kiss.

Men and women organize, prepare pledges, pray and persuade.

The wretched man signs the periodical pledge, listens to the prayers, confesses himself persuaded—

And calmly drinks again from the first glass offered!

Will not God save this man?

Yes!

God bids his servant, "Science," dig in the ground and bring forth roots and minerals, and prepare *in secret* a healing broth.

And the servant heard the word of God; and lo! the earth gave forth strange things, and he ground them in his mill, and gave them to the stricken men who came to him, saying unto them, "Thy wish hath made thee whole; go thy way in peace."

And all those who had this same faith and *desired* physical salvation and mental restoration were healed from the hour of their coming. But others who doubted, and listened to the advice of slander, and who heeded the voice of the heathen, and hearkened to the cry of the ignorant man, died in their alcoholic tracks, and were buried in the City of Degradation.

John Candor, like all dipsomaniacs, knew everything about alcohol, *except the way to down it.*

He had tried all known remedies and failed in darkness.

He had yet to learn of "*the light that never fails.*"

As he stood before his sister, the sister he loved, and the other woman he worshipped, the poor fellow believed himself *doomed*.

John knew that he would drink again. He had cast aside his one hope of salvation; *so he believed*.

Nora Livingston, by the power of her mighty will, her matchless charms, her womanly love, might have saved him; *so he believed*.

John had turned down his last chance; *so he believed*.

"My father was right, my friends; I am not a responsible being—I am a leper, an outcast, a pariah!

"The love I bear to you prompts me to say, that in hoping for my redemption you are merely prolonging suspense.

"One year ago I threw away my last chance. She who might have been my saviour, in her just anger, turned from me and closed the gates of heaven against me."

Nora, with heaving bosom and flashing eyes, sprang to her feet:

"*Those gates are open to you again.*"

Mark Candor for a moment fought back his words; then they burst forth like the report of musketry.

"What do you mean?" he cried.

"I mean that John Candor, stricken with disease and deprived of his inheritance, shall be my husband and I will be his wife, for good or evil, for better or for worse, through life, even unto death."

John could not reply. His heart was bursting with rapture. But these two fair mortals looked into each other's eyes, and Mark Candor looked on both. And yonder is little Anna crying for joy on the coat-sleeve of the Reverend Arthur Rose of St. Martin's.

CHAPTER IV.

“WE WILL TAKE HIS WORD.”

TRUSTEES Redmund and Jarvis were friends of forty years' standing, and were tolerably well acquainted with each other's mannerisms and eccentricities.

Both had retired from business after having accumulated a fortune, and as they passed through life's journey the men took no care for the morrow, knowing that their money was well invested, and that there was plenty of it.

Both loved the dead millionaire, both mourned his loss and respected his memory.

To-night we find them in the cozy study of little Jarvis.

Jarvis was listening quietly to his companion, who stood by the fire balancing a glass of potent refreshment in his hand.

“Do you think, Jarvis, you could keep from it for a year if some one should offer you two millions?”

“I do not know,” replied Jarvis; “I should not want to.”

Then the two old fellows nodded to each other over their little glasses of false excitement; then both swallowed together, and made wry faces in concert, dashing their outraged palates with cold water just in time to prevent strangulation.

“Redmund,” began Jarvis, after all danger of suffocation had departed, “I am glad Candor stipulated as he did regarding John.”

"Why so?" gasped Redmund, who was still working hard for breath.

"Because the young man will be *forced* into reformation. Not the most worthy motive, to be sure, but when millions are involved we must not question too closely as to a man's motives," replied Jarvis.

"Are you sure that he *will* reform?"

"Why, you do not suppose that he would be fool enough to drink, under the circumstances?"

"The two millions would not keep him from alcohol," grunted Redmund.

"No? Well, I admire his disregard for money," said Jarvis.

"Could you stop breathing for a year?" shouted Redmund.

"I am liable to stop at any moment, my dear Redmund."

"Exactly; and young Candor will cease drinking only when forced to face the same issue."

"You believe these men to be helpless, then?"

"Helpless!" cried Redmund. "They are worse than helpless, they are actively armed against themselves; they put in the knife and turn it around with as much deliberation as you use your razor.

"These poor fellows know that one glass will bring them to the whipping-post—that one drink means an orgie, that one drink is but an appetizer for the five gallons to follow."

"Do they fight against this influence?" timidly inquired Jarvis.

"Do they fight against it? My God, yes! desperately! But after repeated failures they say, 'What's the use? If I don't drink to-night, I shall to-morrow, or next week.'

"Fight? Yes! I knew a poor wretch who used to stretch himself on the floor and clutch the carpet, during his agonizing appeals for mercy.

"From this dipsomaniac I heard the only real prayer of my life. That poor creature's supplication to God to remove his craving for alcohol was a piteous exhibition of helpless despair.

"I once saw a fellow jammed in between two wrecked Pullman cars, with the flames all around him. That man was pleading for relief, I tell you; but his prayer was a farce-comedy, compared to the appeal of my unhappy friend on the floor.

I saw him the following day, leaning against a barber's pole, and his little girl in her sweet pretty way was trying to entice him home.

"Well, he struck the child in the face, and kicked her when she fell.

"This man knew the effect of strong drink on his brain, and that is why he prayed for death when he felt the approach of his periodical disaster.

"He was a quiet gentleman and an affectionate father when sober. He knew what rum did for him."

"Why didn't he cut his throat?" whispered Jarvis.

"He did," answered Redmund.

"Oh, dear!" cried little Jarvis, "poor fellow."

"It seems to be about all that is left for these unhappy ones," groaned big Redmund.

"Another of this class was summoned home one day to the bedside of his only child, a fine lad of ten years.

"He was dotingly fond of the youngster, who had just been struck by an electric car.

"The mother was on the sofa in hysterics and the room full of useless people who shouted alternately for physicians and police.

"The nearest doctor lived several blocks away, and the maddened father started on a dead run for the office.

"Midway was the saloon where he usually began his spree.

"And into that saloon he turned and got drunk."

"But the child," whimpered Jarvis.

"What has the child got to do with the sequel? I am reading you an object-lesson; don't interrupt!

"That father would have stretched himself on live coals and said he liked them, to save his boy from an hour's pain. He cared more for the rosy-cheeked urchin than Candor does for the millions at stake; so be perfectly sure that the fear of pecuniary loss will not keep alcohol out of our friend's system."

"Terrible, terrible!" murmured Jarvis.

"Why, you dear old jay, Candor is the sickest man in New York, he is diseased from head to heel; and the most distressing part of the calamity is, we have no antidote that will overthrow the poison."

"Two millions of dollars for a glass of champagne," said Jarvis mournfully.

"Yes, and he will count the liquor cheap at that, when the desire comes to him."

"Then the sum of your belief is that poor John will forfeit this money, and drink himself to death," said Jarvis with tears in his eyes.

"I am not sentencing any man to such a fate; besides, our boy has still a fighting chance."

"Good gracious, what is it?" said Jarvis, rising. "Come, do say something pleasant before you go."

"Well, there is a bare possibility that Miss Livingston may get under him and lift him out; she has a strong pull on the lad, and women occasionally gain the upper hand in a fight to the finish."

"True, you are a married man yourself, Redmund," said the quaint Jarvis.

"Don't be disagreeable, sir. This is a question on which we old beaux must be in perfect accord. We need harmony. Miss Livingston is a front line hustler."

"She *is* a front line hustler," said Jarvis. "I have not the most remote idea what that is, but for the sake of harmony she is, as you say, 'a hustler.'"

"And now tell me this," continued the little man; "how are we to know whether John Candor complies with the terms of the 'will' or not? He may drink and we know nothing of such a performance. I am sure I do not intend to sleep with the young giant, or watch him while he is awake."

Both men poured themselves a final drink, "a night-cap," and then stood in silence.

"I tell you what we will do," answered Redmund, clutching his glass, and covering three fingers of "Ante Deluvian" whiskey.

"What will we do?" inquired Jarvis eagerly.

"We will take John Candor's word."

"Good heavens, Redmund!"

"That's right, his word. If, at the expiration of two years, he comes to us and says that for one year he has not tasted liquor, would you hesitate to believe him?"

The little bald-headed man deposited his glass on the table, and held out his hand to his companion:

"Yes, dear Redmund, you are right. *We will take John Candor's word.*"

CHAPTER V.

FROM FATHER TO SON.

THREE months after date of last chapter, and John Candor's lips had not touched the scalding poison prohibited by the sumptuary provisions of the remarkable will.

Please do not tire of this legal parchment so often spoken of in these pages, for the tough bit of paper must go with us to the end.

One evening our fighting hero leaped up the steps of Richard Livingston's house on Seventy-first Street, jerked the bell as if pulling a health-lift, and entered Nora's magnetic presence.

Some young women require winding up like a watch. They do everything mechanically, by rule.

But Nora was not a machine. She was a blithe-hearted, unaffected girl whose *instincts* were correct, and when she entered the opened avenue of her lover's extended arms she did so without coyness or hesitation.

Let it be recorded here that John responded with equal frankness.

The look this young woman threw over his face made Candor glow like a brazier of hot coals and tingle like an electric battery.

There was an admirable understanding between the twain.

"Are you happy, Nora?"

John said this very tenderly and softly; these big fellows can purr and coo, when the spirit moves them.

"Do I look unhappy?" asked the girl with a smile like sunrise.

"You look very beautiful, my velvet rose, grown in Paradise and transplanted to earth for my special benefit."

A girl can stand a great deal of this kind of talk, and enjoy it with the color deepening on her cheek at every word.

They pretend to laugh it away. The pretty creatures want to cry with joy. Women and tears are synonymous.

Nora in her own business-like way took John's face between her hands, kissed his lips, and put him in a seat.

Then she spoke:

"How glad I am to stand here, John, and be *almost* sure of you. A short period of probation, and then hope will give birth to certainty. You begin to be sure of yourself—don't you?"

The man paused before replying. Why did he hesitate to reply to this appeal with a hearty affirmation?

At last he answered her. "I wish to avoid too much confidence in myself; I want to doubt; to fear; anxiety is a sentinel I dare not dismiss. It warns and protects."

"I will be your sentinel," said this mortal angel, placing her hand on the loved one's head as if in blessing.

For a moment the strong man's frame was shaken with a spasm of mental agony.

He concealed this from her; but he could not shut back the livid growth that turned the ruddy glow on his face to ashes. Nora threw her arms about him—a protective power against some unknown foe.

"Tell me all, John!" she cried.

He dared not!

How could he turn the bright hope of her heart to black despair?

Why could he not suffer alone? Why could he not endure alone the agony stealing upon him?

He came to her, brave, hopeful, strong.

Three months of total abstinence! He could have sworn that he was free from the power of his destroyer.

He had passed over his last periodical era, and had not been assaulted.

When he gathered Nora in his arms this night, prayers of gratitude trembled on his lips and found an answering cry in her soul.

Then, in the twinkling of an eye, came to him the terrible doubt, the infinitesimal fragment of the old-time despair.

He knew from experience that the return of the deadly curse was always foretold by symptoms that never lied.

He knew that now in the hour of his strength and rejoicing the monster was approaching.

The double-toothed dragoon before the stench of whose nostrils armies of men have fallen and hosts of women have wept.

And to come at such an hour when charmed into heavenly happiness by the divine sweetness of the fair, the chaste, the unexpressive *She!*

To know that she must witness the beginning of his degradation. To know that with her pure caresses must come the foul beast and his retinue of crawling followers.

He tried to speak calmly and comfort her.

Both suffered as though bound to the stake and surrounded by flames. *Yet, God be praised, they suffered together.*

She read the truth in his face, the approach of the desolating fiend whose incursions they had been guarding against.

In her mortal agony the girl cried out: "Speak to me, for God's sake speak!"

Then she dragged the trembling man to his feet.

"It is not my fault," he cried; "I am guiltless."

Nora soothed him in her womanly way.

"Here is the proof!" He plunged his hand into his breast-pocket and, quivering with nervous haste, tore from it

A written letter!

"You must share my confidence, Nora. You must know that of which my father died in ignorance, dear old father."

"This letter I found among his papers. It is from the physician who treated him secretly for the disease named on this page."

The paper shook in the poor fellow's hand, as if in a fierce wind.

"Give it to me, John," she whispered.

"Stop!"

"Let me explain while my reason serves me. That will not be for long.

"Upon the discovery of this secret I hastened to our physician and told him that I knew all.

"Then his pale lips confessed the truth, and he told me that the disease my father suffered from *came down to the son* intensified in horror a thousand times."

"Speak out, John, speak or you will kill me!" Nora cried.

His eyes were fixed and glassy, his lips were parted, and his teeth clenched. He held her away from him and broke the silence with a fierce whisper:

“When the father is a victim of epilepsy, the son is born—

“*A dipsomaniac!*”

CHAPTER VI.

A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH.

ANNA CANDOR stood under the chandelier in her chamber, one white arm thrust upward; the hand about to turn off the gas.

Anna was about to retire for the night.

The girl had just arisen from her knees, a very thankful, happy maiden, and as she stood there in her snowy draperies, all smiles and blushes, an observing artist would have said:

A very pretty picture.

And now for sleep, the sleep of the just; the soft, fluttering breath of the unsoiled dove, nestling in her white retirement.

Holy dreams! Night's sacred volumes, read in the dark.

All these luxuries were Anna's nightly dues, carefully collected.

One little white foot rested on a black velvet stool; the pose was charming, the subject chaste.

The taper fingers clasped the instrument. In another moment darkness would have fallen on the breathing statue.

Three quick, sharp knocks!

The girl paused; then like a flash buried her arms in a huge wardrobe, and stood draped in fur from head to toe.

Then she became conscious of having exhibited a charming female characteristic—cowardice. Her precaution was useless.

The door of the sanctuary was locked.

Then she laughed and spoke:

“What is it?”

A man’s voice answered from the hall:

“Messenger has just left this letter, Miss Anna.”

“Put it under the door.”

A white envelope with enclosure glided into the room and lay at her feet. She was no longer alone. A letter is a visitor.

Anna picked up the “caller,” and wondered as girls always do, and puzzled and pouted, turning it over, trying to guess the sender—at last opening it to read the signature of

Nora Livingston.

Oh! the pity of it.

Anna’s happy face clouded, tears came to the beautiful eyes, sobs shook her delicate frame as she read that her brother was again threatened with a fate

Worse than death!

CHAPTER VII.

A CHILD OF SIN.

MARK CANDOR lived a correct life for thirty years and became a villain in as many seconds.

The chances are that this man would have idled through life and gone feet first into the family vault, without exciting the ire or the curiosity of his fellows, had not his “uncle’s will” become a factor in his career.

And yet Mark must have been instinctively bad and *ready* for sin, or he would not have accepted moral degradation with such fervor. He did not gradually approach iniquity, *he leaped to meet it.*

The face of this man denoted truth. Physiognomy is a most unreliable knave.

He was a sleek, well-fed, well-groomed animal. He showed this in his looks.

Since his uncle's death, however, there was a change manifest.

Thought and anxiety gave character to the old-time colorless exterior.

As week followed week, and John Candor did not drink, he became serious, moody, reflective.

If John Candor, the dipsomaniac, could endure a month without pollution, why not a year, two years, forever?

He knew nothing of the disease itself, or of its wonderful inconsistencies.

In his eyes the *cousin* was merely the object named by ignorance "a common drunkard," a creature who, under strong restraining power, might successfully fight the enemy.

To his surprise and anxiety, the restraining power appeared in the person of Nora Livingston.

Now that three months had elapsed and John had remained steadfast, Mark began to lie awake nights; Mark began to accumulate wrinkles.

The man who worries, feeds upon himself. Ceaseless thought devours the body, and under this condition of mind men grow old rapidly, wear out, unravel.

Mark Candor began to look with horror on his handsome cousin. The man was positively growing away from him. He began to pity himself.

Thrown over by the woman he loved, and his successful rival preparing to rob him of his inheritance.

He had contemplated so calmly the possession of John Candor's millions, that he now felt a sense of injury at the successful struggle of the rightful heir to hold his own.

By hook or crook, John must return to his cups. He must be brought back to the slaughter-pen, and butchered in cold blood.

Mark still retained his rooms in the family mansion.

Anna thought he might have found a plausible excuse for retiring, and that, under the circumstances, it would not have evinced an excess of delicacy on his part had he absented himself from the premises until he was acknowledged their lawful owner.

But Mark thought otherwise. He preferred remaining on the ground. To abandon his "point of observation" would be an error; so he stuck closely to his cozy quarters and *watched*.

On the night the "messenger" brought the note from Nora Livingston to Anna Candor, Mark was at his club.

While there he played a game of whist, and drank a glass of brandy and soda; then having assured himself by referring to his watch that it was ten o'clock he left the place and moved slowly homeward, his eyes on the pavement, his chin on his shirt-bosom.

As he ascended the steps of the house on Fifty-second Street, the tired boy with Nora's letter was about to pull the bell.

Mark took the note, signed for it, gave the lad a coin, and entered the house with his latch-key, just as the boy ran around the corner.

He went up to his room, turned up the gas, shut the door, locked it, and sat down with the letter before him.

How well he knew those graceful flourishes, the clear, womanly handwriting.

An intense desire consumed him; a desire to master the contents of the enclosed paper.

Why did Nora find it necessary to write to Anna at such an hour?

He scented trouble. His active mind evolved a critical situation, possibly a catastrophe.

Nora Livingston and Anna Candor were bound together by a tie of mutual sympathy; united by one intense passion, a mutual desire:

The salvation of John Candor!

Mark knew this, and the knowledge was wormwood.

Bitter the cup he had prepared for his own lips. His path was paved with ragged flint; already his feet left bloody tracks on the way.

He moistened the mucilage that fastened the envelope, and opened it.

A very delicate stab his conscience received as he committed this offence against decency and manliness.

The man with the sin of *murder* on his soul will readily accept the responsibility of lesser crimes.

And so Mark Candor possessed himself of the following information:

“In great haste, dear Anna, I write to tell you that our unhappiness is again at hand. John has been with me for several hours. Hand in hand we have walked through the labyrinth of black mystery, for *mystery* it is to us all.

“Can you think of our idolized hero kneeling at my feet and covering my hands with his tears?

“Again the irresistible appetite is upon him. It

came in the hour of our security, came when the earth was brightest, heaven most near.

“John has left me to take a quick walk, one of his ‘spins.’ He will then return home. He is strong and determined to fight.

“Let us try and pull him back from the awful pit.

“*Above all things, keep alcohol out of his sight.* He will remain in his room for a few days, so as to be away from the temptation. In that seclusion he will fight out his battle.

“I will see you early in the morning. “NORA.”

The wondering man read this through twice, and then sat as if in a trance, his eyes closed, his breath almost suspended.

This was the pause that precedes action. So the tiger pauses before he springs, the rattlesnake before he strikes.

Then suddenly rising, he moistened the adhesive gum, and closed the letter.

He rang his bell, and a servant answered the call.

The tried and trusted butler of the dead millionaire.

The man stood in the darkened hall, and did not offer to enter the room.

Mark attempted a cheerful tone of voice, and said:

“I did not expect you to answer the bell, Latham.”

“I saw fit to do so, sir,” answered the old retainer.

“Where are the women servants?”

“Probably asleep, in bed certainly, sir.”

“Has Miss Candor retired?”

“Probably, sir.”

“I found a messenger on the front steps just now from whom I took this letter for your young lady; I

wish you would knock at her door and ask if she will be good enough to receive it."

Latham did not stir nor speak.

"Well?" inquired Mark.

"I was wondering, sir, how you could have taken the letter from the messenger 'just now,' when for the last half you have been in your room."

Mark involuntarily clutched the paper. "I see that you have *your* eyes open, if the other servants have closed theirs in blissful slumber," said Mark.

"Yes, sir."

"When I said '*just now*,' worthy Latham, I did not look at my watch, and calculate the lapse of time that has taken place since the transfer of the feminine epistle."

"May I ask, sir, how you know it is a 'feminine epistle'?"

Mark made a mental calculation as to the cost of an open assault upon the impassive speaker.

He did not assault, and answered with a smile:

"Because a woman's delicate fingers evidently wrote the address. Now you must excuse me from further explanations, and if possible deliver the letter at once."

He crossed the threshold, and gave up the missive to Latham.

"Will you oblige me at once?"

"I will knock at Miss Candor's door, if her light is still burning. If not, I will hand it to her in the morning."

"Very well. Has Mr. Candor come in yet?"

"Not yet, sir."

"Thank you; good-night."

Latham did not reply.

Mark turned and entered the room.

"Good-night, Latham."

No answer.

He flashed about with both hands clinched.

"Damn you, sir!"

He spoke to the air: Latham had disappeared.

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS LIGHT FAILS.

HOPE, the anchor of men's souls, good and bad alike, began to revive in Mark Candor's breast.

He had watched his cousin like a detective for the last three months.

He saw with terror that John not only positively refrained from alcohol, but that he did so without apparent effort.

There seemed to be no emphatic struggle, no desperate fight. He went about each day's pleasures, each day's work, with a zest and abandon that denoted his keen appreciation of the new life, life without unnatural stimulation.

Mark began to despair, and tortured himself into a frame of mind that savored of ultimate madness.

To-night there came to him a relief so sweet, so grateful, so satisfying, that he could have waved his hands aloft and shouted for joy.

Blessed news! The strong man was weakening, his light was going out. Now the treasure would be secure from the thieves who were plotting to despoil him.

Mark was by no means a hard drinker; but now

there came to him, with this new joy, a desire to revel, to pour down wine, and view his future through alcoholic vapors.

He lit a cigar, and sprang to a closet where he kept a supply of liquors.

He first drew forth a bottle of sealed brandy, and read the epitaph on the label.

"Brandy!" write the word on the drunkard's tombstone.

"No!" he cried. "Brandy for the poor devil who cannot buy the costly product of the vine."

Champagne for the millionaire!

Then from a case of wine in the closet he drew forth a gold-headed siren, stamped *Pommery!*

He placed the wicked girl on the table, and inserted a corkscrew in her brain.

Why did he pause, why remove his clutch from the instrument and fold his hands behind him?

Mark Candor stood for five minutes without a perceptive respiration.

He could not have been more absolutely inactive, nailed down in his coffin.

At last the pale face flushed, the eyes glistened, and the set mouth curved in a smile.

Satan's counterfeit!

Both hands flew toward the table; with one he grasped the bottle of brandy, the other clutched the wine.

Then he uttered a truism:

"Fools drink!"

With his burden of corked-up sin, he glided to the door and opened it.

He listened.

All was as silent as a dead man's heart. Cautiously

he made his way along the hall, and paused before a half-opened door.

The door of John Candor's room.

The interior of this apartment might have been a tomb, so dark and gloomy it lay before him.

Mark entered, and moved straight forward from the door, until stopped by a collision with a marble table.

He knew the location of every article of furniture in the room. He placed the two bottles on the slab, assured himself that they rested securely, and then left the room, closing the door behind him.

Back to his own chamber he moved cautiously, the plump carpet smothering his tread.

Then he closed his door to a crack, and stood beside the opening.

Waiting! damned assassin!

Fifteen minutes passed, half an hour, waiting patiently for a sound he longed to hear.

It came at last.

Click! click! click!

A latch-key, and a man. The door opened, the man and key came in together.

John Candor was the man. He moved to the foot of the stairs, as if expecting an occurrence of note.

From the lower regions blundered a sleepy man who came to John.

“Is it you, Mr. John?”

“Yes, Latham; I am late to-night; why did you sit up for me?”

“I never go to bed, Mr. John, while you are away from the house.”

“Suppose I should not return at all, old friend?”

“I would come and seek you.”

John extended his hand, the other grasped it eagerly.

"You are very good to me, Latham."

"I wish I could be of real good to you, sir."

"I know it, old friend. Good-night!" said Candor.

"God bless you, Mr. John! Good-night."

And the old man's blessing followed him up the dark stairs and into his room, and the benediction seemed to bring to the weary man some portion of that "peace which passeth all understanding."

The most mediocre of men finds one part in life's drama exactly suited to his *incapacity*.

Mark found in villany a successful rôle. He did not shudder as his helpless cousin passed him on his way to destruction.

The intended victim closed his door, lit the gas, then sank into a chair, tired and wet with the sweat of toil.

He had walked and run twenty miles, returning drenched with perspiration.

Since leaving Nora, he had been moving with nervous haste; on, on, striving to change the topic of his thought; giving forth but one cry—

"*Alcohol!*"

He crossed the ferry, and sped along the Newark road.

He tried to outrun the yelling fiend; leaped a fence, dashed through a pasture-field, awaking the sleeping cows, stumbling over rocks, the nimble-footed tiger ever at his elbow—

"*Alcohol!*"

He breasted "Snake Mountain" like a locomotive, and reached a height from which, in the moonlight, he could look over land and sea. It was painted on the soil; it shimmered on the waves—

"*Alcohol.*"

He brought it back with him, this foul malaria from the bottomless pit.

On his way he met a brother unfortunate; a sick man like himself, clutched and clubbed by a policeman.

He stumbled over another, sleeping on a doorstep; half a dozen in the gutter, all waiting to be kicked and clubbed and dashed into the stone caves of the station-house.

Good men and women, knowing all this, lift up their hands and weep.

Thousands, in every State of our dear Union, cry: "Pray for them! persuade them! pledge them!"

Alas, for one trumpet voice, charged with the power of heaven's thunder, to cry:

"Heal them!"

The physician would answer by hiding his face, ashamed and helpless.

Hundreds of thousands, whom science has taught and sent forth to pour oil into gaping wounds, turn from the dipsomaniac, and abandon him to physical and spiritual death—

"Powerless to heal."

Hear me! Men and women of the universe!

Out of this host of wise men arises the figure of a Redeemer.

A man who vows that the stricken inebriate may be healed, his leprous scales removed, his diseased body purged.

His voice is heard throughout the land, and limping wretches, denied the rights of manhood, denied the touch of skilful hands, denied the burial our Christ received, flock to the standard of this new deliverer—

"Whose star is seen in the east!"

John Candor, parched and exhausted, sank upon the cushions of a sofa. Sleep might have come to him now, but for a fatal accident.

His quick ear caught a faint sound, not unlike the escape of steam from a miniature engine.

He listened! then raised his head, until his eyes rested on the half-released cork in Mark's bottle of "Pommery Sec."

In a twinkling he was at the table.

He did not stop to think how the wine came to be in his room.

It was there!

He placed his hand on the green, glittering neck. It was cool and soothing to his touch.

Bravely he fought, tore his hand from the deadly embrace, and staggered back against the bed, clinging to himself as though striving to lift body and soul from destruction.

The spitting effervescence ceased, and with a loud explosion the cork left the bottle, struck the ceiling and vanished, its work done. The fragrant liquid curled its amber loveliness into the air.

John seized the black throat of the tempter, and prepared to kiss the opened lips.

Then for the first time he noticed the bottle of *brandy*.

"Hark!"

He thought he heard a step in the hall. Oh, the cunning of the drunkard!

John seized the bottle of potent poison, and concealed it under his pillow.

"Hark!"

No! only the blood, pounding against his heart.

Maddened by delay, he lifted the champagne from the table, and placed it—

In the hands of his sister!

When a good woman learns to love, she grows doubly good, no matter how good she was before.

At this hour Anna Candor was an angel. Useless to reproduce the scene of tears, entreaties, prayers, and promises.

At last Anna triumphed and left the room, carrying the wine in her cold, trembling hands. She was comforted and encouraged.

All through that long night, two women "watched for the day," and prayed for John Candor.

At ten o'clock the next morning, they found his room deserted, and on the table an empty bottle labelled "*Hennessey Brandy.*"

CHAPTER IX.

THE CRITICAL DAY.

"IN another week, John Candor will have forfeited his inheritance, and I, 'born lucky,' will become rich.

"I saw him last night standing up at the bar of the 'Casino,' drinking champagne, and hastening to the devil at break-neck speed; my amiable cousin will stop drinking when he stops breathing."

So said Cousin Mark; he had long since thrown off all anxiety; doubt of success was an element that did not enter into his life.

He *knew* that John could not comply with the stipulations of the dead man's will.

And he was right.

The "dipsomaniac Candor" for nine months went through the formula of repeated orgie, and pulling himself back, through days and nights of torture, to comparative health, though never to happiness or restored confidence in himself.

John read "the handwriting on the wall," and let himself drift.

Two women who loved him wept together and faced the ordeal of "heart-breaking," hand in hand.

Nora's father, very justly, as John admitted, forbade him the house.

Nora was sternly ordered to renounce him and stifle her love. She, like a true woman, did neither.

"For better or for worse," that was the agreement, and being an honest girl Nora stood by her contract.

To be sure, the gallant maiden had about given John up, as had his sister; but she could not see in that conclusion any reason why she should *abandon* him.

Nora knew that this man was wrecking her life as well as his own.

She submitted to her fate, and prepared to go down by his side, *with her colors flying*.

Woman's fidelity.

Anna could turn to her handsome pastor, and find a measure of consolation by a critical observation of his life, the ruling characteristic of which was love for her.

Rose was worth a couple of hundred thousand dollars, and did not need his "sweetheart's" money.

It was not with him the unclean story of seeking a maid for her dowry.

Cupid left them no resource but to fall into each other's arms; he drew his crooked bow and remorselessly drove a golden shaft through their hearts.

Of course there followed the usual awakening, the superb dazzle, all have known; the overwhelming delight, the manly summons, the womanly capitulation.

And now Anna found it a great "rest" to lean heavily on the heart of her chosen knight.

She did not love her dying brother less, but loved her parson more.

And Rose himself, a good fellow, worked hard over the problems of Candor's life and fatal decline.

He did everything that ingenious thought could suggest and happily applied practice effect.

He threw aside many of the labors and joys of his office to share the company and participate in the struggles of the sinking man.

Arthur Rose, generous priest of God, simply said, "Why am I different from my brother?" and then went to work and tried to save the "brother."

My fellow-men will say that John Candor had every chance in life to pull himself away from alcohol, and stay away.

You err, sir; err through ignorance. You measure other men's lives by your own; you are free from the drunkard's disease, inherited or acquired, and you cannot understand his condition.

God speed the light!

The dipsomaniac gladly forfeits heaven to earthly indulgence; what power is strong enough to save him then? Will he render to mortals that which he denies to God?

Is this indulgence, or disease? Think it over!

The trustees, Redmund and Jarvis, were holding their nightly meeting in the house of the latter, on the date of this chapter's opening.

There was a splendid show of blazing coals in the grate, and hot water and hotter stimulants on the table.

The grog steamed in their glasses, and the mellow content that comes with hot alcohol and sugar was now apparent in their posture of ease.

Each man had swallowed a glass of disguised poison,

and the duplicate was ready on the table to answer the encore when demanded by the stomach.

Both men were "moderate" (?) drinkers; both men were drunk to a certain degree.

He who drinks one glass is drunk; not in the gutter perhaps, but removed from a state of sobriety.

There is no such individual as the moderate drinker; one glass signifies immoderation.

Men are intoxicated, less or more, in proportion to the amount of alcohol taken; and this rule holds good, from one drop to one gallon.

Our friends Redmund and Jarvis were basking in bliss; contentedly absorbing the precious compound man's stomach refuses to digest, and which goes at once into the blood, just as the contents of the sewer enter the pure mountain stream.

Redmund as usual broke the silence: "When are you going to stop, Jarvis?"

"After my death, Redmund."

"I doubt it," said the bulky executor; "you will find some means of supplying your inordinate desire for whiskey, even after your decease."

"My best plan will be to keep you in sight."

"The toddy has gone to your head, Jarvis."

"To what part of my anatomy ought it to go?"

Redmund did not reply at once. He looked into the fire and thought, while one may count a dozen; then he turned on Jarvis and said:

"We are not here to-night for the sole purpose of drinking punch, or exchanging badinage; we have a serious purpose in meeting to-night."

"What purpose, Redmund?"

"To discuss the condition of our ward, John Candor."

"I'm afraid he is past argument; it only remains to pass sentence."

"Why so, Jarvis?"

"Because, dear Redmund, much as I deplore the conclusion, I am convinced that the poor fellow is a confirmed drunkard."

"I agree with you; but it by no means follows that there is no hope for the confirmed drunkard."

"I think it does follow. John Candor has tried everything."

"Not everything."

"No?"

"No!" thundered Redmund; "drunkenness is a disease."

"Well?" said Jarvis.

"Cure it!" roared Redmund, with both hands raised in frantic gesture.

"How?"

"As you would any other deadly plague, by medical treatment."

"John Candor has been in the hands of a dozen medical experts; physicians say that there is no hope for him," ventured Jarvis.

"Not all; one man claims that he can cure John Candor."

"What is his name?"

"*Leslie E. Keeley!*"

"And do you believe in that system of quackery?"

"Now see here, Jarvis, I desire most earnestly to continue my respect and friendship for you, so don't let me think you unjust."

Redmund was in earnest now, and little Jarvis crawled into his hole and peered timidly out through the opening.

Redmund continued:

"In common with hundreds of thousands of your

countrymen, you disbelieve because you are totally ignorant; you follow in the wake of scepticism because it is a human characteristic to fight the incomprehensible, to condemn the unconventional, to quarrel with that which you cannot understand.

“This is rank injustice.”

“I do not wish to be unjust,” meekly muttered Jarvis.

“Very well, then, listen to words of truth from an investigator.”

“Two months ago I stumbled into the town hall at Wellington, to pass an hour while waiting for a train to the city.

“The hall was comfortably filled with men and women, who were listening to an orator delivering a lecture on a subject he was pleased to call ‘practical temperance.’

“He was a fair speaker with any quantity of earnestness, and no one listening to his impassioned delivery could for a moment doubt his sincerity.

“He informed the audience that he had been a drunkard for twenty-five years; that he had used every means to overcome his alcoholic desire, without success, and finally saw nothing before him but suicide and eternal destruction.

“In a state of helpless indifference he was carried to the Keeley Institute at Susquehanna and there received the treatment prescribed by Dr. Keeley.

“Following this statement came a burst of eloquence that fairly thrilled the audience, myself included, as it would have thrilled you, doubting little Jarvis, had you been there.”

“Go on,” said the other trustee; “don’t joke; I am interested.”

“Behold the indorsement!” cried the speaker.

“Yonder it is, a vast army one hundred thousand strong, marching shoulder to shoulder.

“Those soldiers are the men of the institute; Keeley graduates.

“I point to this grand organization as it sweeps proudly by, and assure you that every soldier in that unwavering line has broken the chains of alcoholic serfdom and lost forever the desire for alcohol.

“After the lecture I permitted my train to depart without me, and sought an interview with the speaker at his hotel.

“After an hour’s conversation with Mr. Carlisle, I found my unbelief giving way to conviction, and departed from Wellington, fully determined to make a test of the ‘Cure’ as applied by Dr. Keeley at Susquehanna and a hundred other institutes.”

“What did you do?” inquired the highly interested and excited Jarvis.

“Assisted by Carlisle, I secured four inebriates; men entirely helpless and worn-out; creatures who had passed through every stage of drunkenness from the primary phase of ‘moderation’ down to the last and final estate of the terrible object-lesson.

“After promising drinks all around I persuaded these men to take a bath; this, you will admit, was an important advance.

“Then I clothed them in wool, and shod them in leather.

“They agreed to assist me in my experiment to the extent of going together to a Keeley Institute and there submitting to the Double Chloride of Gold Treatment.

“To make a long story short, I will simply add that these men at the expiration of four weeks returned to New York completely regenerated.

“That was a month ago, and my happy protégés get up in the morning and cheer for Keeley; and go to bed at night blessing the name of Redmund.

“Yesterday my recruits marched in upon me, sound, hearty, and entirely free from alcoholic desire.

“Now, Jarvis, this is the much-abused Keeley Cure, as administered at Susquehanna. You had better pack your trunks and go at once.”

The little trustee leaped out of his hole.

“What!” he cried.

“Yes, my dear Jarvis, your nose is growing red.”

“The alcoholic tears dim your eyes, brother Redmund; but no more of this: I think I see the object of your investigations; you have been working to save our young friend John.”

“You are a funny little terrier, Jarvis.”

“And you are a great, big, good-hearted mastiff; give me your hand, my dear partner; I begin to breathe easier; there is yet a possibility of securing the two millions, and of marrying our man to the lady of his choice.”

“*And of saving his immortal soul,*” said the Rev. Arthur Rose, standing in the doorway of his friend’s sitting-room.

CHAPTER X.

THE ARK OF SAFETY.

ANNA CANDOR and Nora Livingston, names to conjure by; two good women loving and loved; industrious workers in a common cause, yet working in vain.

They labored in the dark!

The stricken man, helpless as a babe, and riven like

some great oak under the lightning's stroke, staggered through his days and nights, fought his enemy, grew weaker after each assault; and finally lifted up his voice and implored the great Jehovah to destroy him with one blow.

He had long since given up all thought of the money he was to gain or lose—he had in fact ceased to desire it; and when at last Anna came to him and standing by his bedside told him that the hour had almost arrived when to drink again would entail the destruction of his last hope, he simply answered: "Let it go, dear; I shall never need it."

Now this was positive despair.

But one day there came a sunrise of renewed hope for him and those he loved, for tender-hearted friends with tears of joy told of the healing waters that were washing away the wounds of many thousands such as he.

John heard their words as voices from heaven, cries from the unknown spirit-land, and his heart opened, and he longed to believe.

Then with a cry of hysterical joy the leper put them forth from his room, and burst into prayers that went aloft and brought back the electric response:

"Arise! take up thy bed and walk!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE AWFUL PREDICTION.

A WEEK later Mark Candor walked into the presence of the trustees, Redmund and Jarvis, with his nose in the air.

Redmund arose like a sultan about to order the decapitation of his prime minister.

Seeing that this assumption of dignity was thrown away on the "claimant," the grand reserve was abandoned, and a tone of jocular badinage assumed.

"You are looking cheery, my young friend, I may say chipper."

Jarvis walked to the window without paying the slightest attention to the visitor.

These men were not hypocrites nor diplomats; they were straightforward, honest fellows, who hated and despised Mark Candor; why should they pretend otherwise?

Mark did not throw aside one atom of his imperturbable demeanor, however; a man about to pick up two millions in the street can afford to pass over an occasional slight, or even appear oblivious to a positive insult.

Mark certainly was "in it," and he was aware of the fact; he knew these men hated him because of his coming triumph, and the young gentleman forgave them in advance of any solicitation on their part.

He could afford to laugh certainly.

"I have come to you to-day, gentlemen, on a matter of business which will scarcely admit of a much longer postponement," said Mark.

"Then, for heaven's sake, don't delay! You know the old back-number sign that used to hang up in the counting houses," said Redmund.

"Can't say that I call to mind any *particular* sign, sir," answered Mark, with his two-million-dollar smile.

"If I remember correctly, it read something like this:

"'Call upon a business man, during business hours, on business; transact your business, and go about your business.'"

Redmund roared this out like a second mate hailing the masthead during a gale of wind, and accompanied the words with a look that added a decided emphasis.

But Mark remained calm and unbroken; his case was a strong one and he knew it.

Jarvis laid his little hand on his big partner's arm, and stood beside him like a jolly-boat hooked on to a frigate.

Then he made a nice little speech:

"Gently, gently, Redmund. I know it would be very much to your taste were you to take this gentleman by the back of the neck and that portion of his trousers most worn out, and by this means hasten his return to the street, but I do not see that such an act would help us to ascertain why he has done us the honor of calling this evening."

Mark gently stroked his long golden beard.

"Don't be rude, Jarvis," thundered Redmund; "restrain yourself as I do. I know you would enjoy the exercise of knocking that gentleman to the land of the Esquimau and the polar bear, but don't do it, Jarvis; restrain yourself and let him live."

Poor little Jarvis answered very meekly, "I will, Redmund."

Mark, taking the advantage of the lull in the storm, quietly said:

"I am afraid you have been drinking, gentlemen."

"We have," answered Redmund, clinching both hands; "two glasses each, our nightly allowance, quantity carefully measured, quality the best."

Mark bowed and expressed his delight at their temperate habit of life, then continued:

"I have no need, gentlemen, to enter into the details of our commercial or financial relations.

"You are the guardians of John Candor, the executors of his father's will. The stipulations of that will are well known to you: If John Candor does not refrain from alcoholic drink during the year following the latter part of next week, I then become the lawful heir."

"Well?" grunted Redmund, surveying the speaker as if he were a piece of gamey meat.

"I am here seeking information. My cousin John cannot be found."

"You mean that *you* cannot find him?" said Redmund. Mark twisted his beard and continued:

"Of course, as we well know, the poor lad is away on a spree."

"Indeed!" grunted Redmund. "Well?"

"Now I would like to know what course you intend to pursue, if he is not in a place where his habits may be known and testified to at the commencement of and during the passage of the last year of his probation."

"My dear sir," said Redmund, "if John Candor is not to be found at or after the time you specify, and if we are unable to fix his whereabouts, these circumstances will certainly operate against him in any decision we may be called upon to make."

"I thought I could rely on your discretion," said Mark, working over the folds of his inevitable beard.

Redmund paid no attention to the implied compliment, but bowled straight ahead:

"But you may be perfectly sure that John Candor can and will be found, at any time we may require his presence; found, purged of the evil spirit born with his birth, and which you hoped would follow him to his grave."

"Nonsense!" cried Mark, startled into the loss of his imperturbability.

"There is no cure for the dipsomaniac."

"You lie!" laughed Redmund in triumph. "There is a cure, and we have found it; and to-day your cousin stands with his white arm bare to the shoulder, receiving in his blood the blessed rain from heaven, the healing gold of the scientist Keeley!

"Now away with you; go and weep and wail, gnash you teeth; you have lost the game."

"No!" cried the now excited man, "I have not lost the game; I have won!

"The Keeley system cannot cure John Candor!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE LIGHT THAT NEVER FAILS.

THE Susquehanna Institute is situated half-way up the rocky range that towers east of the Tiger River.

It is a mile from the famous little town of Blue Wing. The spacious buildings of the Institute are shut in by grand old forest giants, and surrounded by glittering trout-streams that come from away up yonder and go everywhere.

In summer nature's verdant upholstering, thick and violet-studded, covers the black, fertile soil that gives spontaneous growth to the wild strawberry, the arbutus, and the fair lily of the valley.

A scene of complete loveliness and peace, nature's climatic triumph, a heavenly abode evacuated by the gods, where men throw away the burden of their ills and are born again.

Here it is the clouded heavens begin to shine again for many a wondering man; here the song of the moun-

tain bird is tuned anew to their awakened ear; here the cold earth begins to glow as does the sun, and at night the stars come out and bless them with a silent serenade.

To the rear and left of the Institute leap and tumble over sable rocks and snow-white sand, the world-known, Lover's Falls.

A tiny Niagara, fed by mountain brooks, that lift their silver chorus of everlasting praise to the kind Creator of all.

In the rear to the right, the Snow Crest Spring, bright and clear and cold as an iceberg, "goes on forever."

Sweet waters, blessed balm to parching throats, healing elixir, gurgling fountain of health! I kneel to worship thee, and kiss thy morning freshness.

Across the valley, under a mighty cliff, nestles, pure as woman's chastity, white as burnished silver, "Fair Lily Lake."

I stand upon thy golden shores, O Lake of Pearl! and call upon the name of one I love; and be that loved one quick or dead, a thousand voices warble in return, glad tidings of great joy—

"Her name!"

I scale the iron front of ancient Tyrone, sit on his knees, lift aside his shaggy beard of moss and pink arbutus, and peer into the sparkling waters of chaste "Olina's Baths."

But with eager eyes I turn from all, and seek to find again the sacred spot where branded slaves cast off their chains and learn to live as freemen.

The sun sinking away to warm the grain prairies of the West throws back a good-night kiss, and a halo of glory crowns the cool fragrance of the distant

"Susquehanna."

Down in the valley a black monster winds his way, serpent-like, over rushing streams and through silent forests.

A puff of steam makes a white mark on the darkening landscape; then another, and in an instant the locomotive chime floods the air, strikes the mountain-side, and is chanted back over hill and dale, announcing to the happy valley that the "New York Flyer" is thundering down the grade ready to cast forth its human freight at fair "Blue Wing's" doors.

Many a suffering man on that vestibuled village slips quietly away from business, home, and club, with a merry good-by to friends, and the gilded fable on his tongue—

"Only a short trip to the mountains."

Yes, sir, to the mountains, but not to mingle with the gay throng, not to sit at the festive board, for the doors of the Keeley Institute are thrown wide, and the limping believer seeking salvation is carried to that abode of peace and happiness up among the verdant slopes.

But it is winter now; the "Ice King" waves his sceptre—the winds speak, the heavens open, and the valleys fill with snow.

Fierce the trumpet-call of the wild mountain blizzard.

The storm lion shakes his tangled mane, roars through the bending forest, and thunders around the sleeping mountain giants.

Within the walls of the grand old Susquehanna, one may easily forget the war of monsters, and rest in luxurious ease.

Huge fireplaces, each with the traditional back-log, throw up their volume of cozy warmth and merry flame.

The patients are resting quietly in their private

apartments or lounging in the comfortable chairs of the drawing-rooms.

In the "library," studious convalescents may be seen deep in the contemplation of standard authors.

With the new life comes the craving for rational action, intellectual research, burnishing away the rust of years.

New thoughts spring from the old brain soil; new desires from hearts newly born; a grand resurrection of ambitions long entombed.

Eight o'clock A.M.

The patients on this particular morning were assembled in the smoking-rooms.

Not smoking!

Some sat quietly by the fireside, others looked out at the gambols of the snow-birds, but all were unoccupied.

These men were waiting.

Eagerly waiting. Something was about to happen which they evidently regarded as the most important event of the day.

Ah! my brave fellows, treasure it as the most important event of your lives.

Hark!

A man in the physician's office touches an electric wart on the wall.

A shrill appeal sounds through the house.

Quickly, yet without confusion, the patients place themselves in line, and stand like soldiers on parade.

Seventy in all, and the throbbing, breathing, living row stretches into the drawing-room and overflows into the parlors.

The physician stands in his office, and before him is the precious golden fluid, wrung from the crucibles of the great chemist's laboratory.

Dr. Hardy was a bright, happy-looking individual; educated and prepared for his present responsible work under the eye of the great Keeley himself.

He understood every patient in the Institute, and the patients understood and respected him.

A grand point gained in this union.

The first eager fellow standing at the head of the line advances; his coat hangs over his right arm; the left is free for the physician's work, the shirt-sleeve open from the elbow to the shoulder.

"How did you sleep last night, Mr. Fleming?" inquires the watchful Hardy with a genuine smile.

"Well, sir!" is the answer, and there is a wealth of happiness and gratitude in the reply.

"Good hearty breakfast, too, Mr. Fleming?"

"I am ashamed to speak about my breakfast," laughs the happy man.

The doctor grasps the arm, and examines the tongue.

Then with a quick, deft motion, he touches the bare arm with the penetrating needle, and Fleming receives an injection of the precious element.

The next man comes forward; the same questions are asked, the same formula repeated.

The answers are different, of course, for the men are in various stages of cure.

Some are still nervous, having passed the night without sleep, and avoided the sumptuous breakfast-table; but mark this, all are happy; yes, even that tottering wretch, scarcely able to extend his arm to receive the "treatment," is happy.

He knows that he has taken his last drink, and is about to become a man again; ay! feels the blood of renewed manhood stirring within him.

This falling into line for "the shot" is repeated four

times during the day, the soldiers advancing to the front and receiving the healing discharge of the patient physician.

Eight times during the day a powerful tonic is administered.

These conditions of discipline complied with, the men under the treatment may amuse themselves as they please; life indoors and out is theirs to possess and enjoy, and they do enjoy life at the Keeley Institute.

As I heard my friend Crawford say,

“We have been sent to Paradise for our sins.”

All through the night of his arrival at the Institute John Candor remained in his comfortable chamber.

Dark as a dungeon to him, however.

Without pausing once for rest, the half-frantic man paced the floor.

A four-ounce phial containing whiskey stood on the mantel.

But the poison did not relieve him. He had reached that critical stage of dipsomania when alcohol refuses to soothe or intoxicate.

No help in the draught, yet the terrible craving still present.

At regular intervals Dr. Hardy came to him and administered a quieting potion.

As regularly the tireless walker threw the medicine from his stomach, and resumed his tramp.

The appearance of a glass of beef tea, offered by the gentle Anna, nearly threw John Candor into convulsions.

Lucky day for him when Keeley proclaimed to the world

Eureka!

I have found it.

Happy man! in spite of his present awful woe, there was safety in his agony.

But John was as yet an unbeliever. His mind was in that state just verging on delirium, when little fancies developed into monstrous conceptions.

Dr. Hardy came to him with the syringe charged with the precious element of cure.

Candor shrank from him in terror, and refused to receive the treatment.

In reply to the doctor's arguments, he said:

"I have been brought to this place without my knowledge or consent."

"John, dear," whispered Anna, "do you not remember how you received the news of Dr. Keeley's promises; how hopefully you accepted this chance of redemption?"

"Don't worry about me, child, I am lost; I do not desire to be cured, even were it possible; I do not care for my father's millions, or for woman's love; I desire nothing but alcohol and death.

"I will not receive the treatment!"

Patiently the faithful doctor waited, and then made preparations to spend the night in his office, knowing that he had to deal with a most critical case—one that would require constant watching.

Dr. Hardy knew that this man in his present condition would in all probability embrace the first opportunity of committing suicide.

Two strong attendants were placed outside his door. John would not permit them to enter the room; he fancied they were hired ruffians sent to murder him.

Dr. Hardy advised Anna to retire. "You can do no good, and you are only wearing yourself out, my dear young lady."

The devoted girl gently refused. At times she moved with the restless man, walking and turning with him, listening to his faint moans and ever clasping his feverish hand.

At last, worn out, she sank into a seat, and prayed for day, for light, for any change.

John's sudden relapse and insane obstinacy came like a fierce blow to the sweet, hoping sister.

In conjunction with Nora and Redmund, she had succeeded in starting John for the famous Institute.

Her many battles on the road with his fitful inebriate moods had been severe, but at last she had succeeded in her womanly endeavors, and the way apparently opened for her brother's salvation.

Nora wished to be allowed to join the adventurous party.

Her father, ever on the watch, suspecting something wrong, refused to permit his daughter to leave the house.

A miserable scene ensued, which almost developed into brutality on the part of the furious father.

It ended in his locking Nora in her room, and placing a detective under her window.

All rum this, remember.

The next day Nora Livingston was surrounded by physicians and nurses.

Brain fever!

Father sorry!

Anna, devoted girl, had no stern father to fasten her in her room, so to-night she was in a Keeley Institute, surrounded by strangers, looking on in an agony of fear at the antics of her loved brother.

And now, after all her sufferings, all her feminine strategy, all her reviving hopes, *with positive cure at hand,*

John Candor refused the treatment of the great physician, *and but twenty-four hours before the expiration of the first year.*

Daylight at last—no change; except that the bottle on the mantel was twice emptied, twice refilled; except that the burning man weakened in his tracks, and seemed to totter.

Except that the girl's delicate limbs grew feeble, and her heart began to die of loneliness, and starve for love and consolation.

Tramp, tramp, no cessation.

The weary attendants blinked and gaped in the entry.

Anna looked out on the white land, a vast shroud over all.

Suddenly there came a transformation, and the room brightened, not with the sun, but with

One man's face.

A tall, handsome gentleman with clear-cut features, kindly eyes, and a smile that said *sincerity*, and that meant loving-kindness.

That man's presence would have thawed an iceberg and forced flowers to grow in the sand.

The face belonged to Manager Worth, chief of the Institute, and general friend, brother, father to every man and woman inside of its walls.

The man of all men most worthy to fill this place, the man most capable of assuming this grand responsibility.

A counsellor to his band of suffering clients, a loving shepherd in the midst of his flock.

He smiled on Anna, and gave her a cheerful "good-morning."

He spoke gently to John, and held his hand, flushed and burning.

For the first time in all those weary hours of watching, Anna saw her brother pause in his walk.

She arose and went to them. She wanted to be near to this new-comer; she desired to clasp his moist healthy hand, and see him smile on her again.

He spoke, and in that low, soft voice there was a power, a charm that rested and revived her.

“Go, Miss Candor,” he said, “and leave your brother with me.”

She had now no thought of refusing.

The manager called in one of the “attendants.”

John shrank back, trembling, but still clutching his new friend’s hand.

Mr. Worth spoke to the attendant:

“Take this lady to my office, and see that she has breakfast served there.” Then to Anna, “Go to your room, my child, and freshen up those pale cheeks, and afterward eat that you may live; much virtue in coffee and chops.”

John tried to detain her.

“She shall not go.”

Mr. Worth soothed him with a few reassuring words. Anna left the room.

Hope began to revive in the maiden’s heart.

Five minutes later she stood in Worth’s office, her face pressed against the half-glass door that intervened between her and the line of men in the surgery.

She looked on the faces of those redeemed beings, and knew as she watched their childlike confidence in the doctor and his work that this great remedy, berated by the sceptics, was indeed the grand scientific truth of the century.

“Yes, the truth,” she moaned; “and my loved one denies it; the truth, and he refuses to believe it.”

She could not weep; her tears were all spent. She could only gaze on the line of patient, hoping men, and quiver with anguish.

He was not in that line, the line she knew would go on forever.

Yes, to all eternity!

One hundred thousand saved, and her lost one refusing succor.

Her dying mother bade her care for the son she was leaving, and now Anna's heart yearned over his body and spirit and moaned as for the dead, for he was away from that line of safety.

The white face pressed against the glass grew whiter, the beautiful eyes sadder and more wistful.

The last patient received his treatment and disappeared. The doctor wiped his instrument and prepared to depart. Then his cheery voice rang out:

"Any more?"

Yes, another!

For John Candor tottered across the threshold, and stretching out his mighty arm—

Ceased to be a dipsomaniac.

"And now, then, Miss Candor, to breakfast."

Anna turned and met the smile of Manager Worth. Womanlike she wanted to cry, but, being only woman, she obeyed her master, man, and began to eat.

CHAPTER XIII.

READY FOR THE RACK.

Do not think, dear friends, that this man's troubles ceased the hour he submitted to Dr. Keeley's treatment.

His physical organism had been racked and torn by

years of unnatural indulgence; his blood was as impure as the hot fluid that races through the sufferer from yellow fever.

His stomach, long abused and neglected, served his needs scarcely more than a pouch of leather.

Every nerve in his body was at war with nature; the restless activity of these sensitive tissues overcame every product of manly reason, and reduced the victim to hysterical imbecility.

Viewed even from a rational standpoint, as weighed by a mind deliberate and normal, his condition was pitiable.

As seen through the magnifying lens of a distorted imagination, such as now held possession of Candor's brain, his condition was agonizing beyond description.

Through the chaos of kaleidoscopic thoughts, one vivid reflection ever bore itself to the front, with vivid power:

"I did it!"

Though by birth and inheritance the legatee of this fierce desire, he found little comfort in the thought of his irresponsibility.

"I did it!"

That was the wormwood in his cup.

The world at large looked upon him as a drunken sot, wilfully accepting illicit pleasure, treading under his heel every instinct of goodness and nobility.

The ignorant world, with its cautious, unwilling approach to the new and startling, refused to inquire; they simply classed Candor with the mass of "unhung outcasts," lumped all together, threw them into a cell, and turned the hose on them.

John knew all this, and if at one time he had been disposed to look upon his fitful, feverish life with char-

itable introspection, he had since learned that his fellow-men preferred to quarrel with such a theory, ignoring everything in connection with his case but the fact that he was a

“*Perpetual nuisance.*”

This constant application of the old rule, an “eye for an eye,” became at last accepted by John as simple justice, and in the end he discarded the comforting thought that he was an innocent sinner, and began to feel that mere accident of birth and money kept him from the fate of the beer-soaked tramp who serves his time with periodical regularity on “Blackwell’s Island.”

Many men of many minds and bodies; no two individuals are formed alike: one brother may enter a small-pox hospital and nurse the sick for weeks without receiving a taint of disease. Another brother walks within a mile of the plague-spot, and is overthrown.

I do not know *why* this is so; I am only aware of the fact; neither can you, my friend, *boast* because your appetite is not an alcoholic one. If you are free from this taint, it is simply because you are differently constituted from the dipsomaniac at your doors, who may be your superior in everything but his involuntary weakness.

Men go to the Keeley treatment, each with his own excuse, each with a different story.

Some arrive nearly whole; they may not have acquired the disease, nor inherited it.

With them it is simply a habit which they fancy will in the end become a fixture.

Very wisely they take it in time. Others of the dipsomaniac class present themselves after weeks, or perhaps months, of total abstinence.

These men feel the certainty of an early fall, and manfully decide to burn their bridges and put their enemy in the flames.

The steady drinkers come in multitudes, men who carry on life's work through the inspiration given by twenty glasses per day.

Next year, however, the twenty drinks per day "don't quite go around," and the "steady"—I mean "unsteady"—man adds another five to the old-time number.

He says, "he knows when to stop." Some one suggests that he "try to stop for forty-eight hours."

He tries, and, frightened at the result, presents himself at the Institute.

John Candor belonged to the class of patients who come to the "ark" in a deplorable condition of mind and body.

Whatever became of those poor wretches before Dr. Keeley discovered means for their relief, I cannot imagine. I do not want to know.

John Candor, who had been indulging in a series of protracted sprees, without the help of solid food or natural sleep, knew from experience that he had before him days of suffering and nights of torture.

He was nearer to the realization of delirium tremens than ever before; and had he been abandoned now to the formula of the ordinary practitioner, John would of necessity have participated in phantom combats with snakes and other disagreeable monsters.

The old routine of the "Inebriates' Retreat," would have fastened him down with straps to prevent him from decapitating himself with a razor or leaping from the window.

But they manage these things by a different rule in the Keeley Institute, and after John received his first hypodermic injection at the hands of Dr. Hardy he walked from the physician's office straight into the arms of loving confederates.

All knew his exact condition; all were ready to minister to his needs.

The fact that he was among friends, that he was in the right place, that he had done the wise act of his life in following his little sister to Blue Wing, was already an element of encouraging strength on which to lean.

With the first act of obedience to the peculiar method of Dr. Keeley's treatment comes hope to the despairing man.

John Candor now anchored his soul to this hope, and believed.

What Manager Worth said to the obstinate man in his own room, after Anna's departure, no one knows but those twain, and

God.

Perhaps that interview is recorded above; perhaps for that hour's work the pleading man, fighting for a brother's soul, will one day reap a reward far above the worth of earthly harvest of gold or grain. Perhaps, in some unknown future, a voice will say to him:

"Well done! good and faithful servant!"

From the moment the needle discharged the golden liquid into his arm, Candor became a new man.

The potent fluid, entering his veins, conferred the magical delight found by the thirsty traveller who drinks and drinks again of the cold spring.

The first injection administered, Dr. Hardy released the patient's hand, and the feeble man, flushed with a sudden hope, a joy never before known by him, staggered back and leaned against the wall.

The alert physician hurried to his side, and seized his hand again.

Then these two men looked into each other's eyes!

Hardy said afterward that he was "dazzled" by what he saw; for on that instant there came over John Candor's face a glow one might expect to see on the countenance of the tortured martyr, who, his earthly sufferings ended, gazes for the first time on the Christ for whose sake he has endured.

That look on Candor's face meant salvation. "What is it, Mr. Candor?" inquired Dr. Hardy.

"What is it, man?" cried out the shivering invalid, "what is it?"

"The curse of my birth has fallen from me.

"*Now I am ready for the rack!*"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE OATH.

AT the time of my present interview with you, my fair and masculine reader, in the year of our Lord, December 25th, 1892, one hundred thousand men and women have been treated by the "Keeley system of cure."

Of this enormous army, but five per cent have relapsed into their old habits, while the mighty majority, ninety-five out of every hundred, remain steadfast.

This is Christmas eve, 1892, as I sit fastening my grateful thoughts to this paper, every word of which is heavy with gratitude for my own redemption from the curse of self-murder.

Last Christmas I looked upon the world as a yellow desert peopled with thieves, hypocrites, and general soul-destroyers.

Last Christmas I shuddered at the clang of my own door-bell and became frantic with nervous terror at the rattle of an elevated train.

I had reached that stage of dipsomania when will power was dead and ready for burial.

Looking into the near future, I saw speedy dissolution of life by my own hand.

With me it was simply the time, the place, and the instrument of death.

A newspaper lay upon the table before me, describing the unhappy end of my dearest friend who had committed suicide in a New York hotel.

A vivid picture of his fearful death-struggle was given in the sensational sheet, a bold feature of which was the folding back and breaking of his spine.

And so they found him.

A year has passed.

Mingled with my prayers of gratitude to God for my own regeneration are miserable regrets that I cannot call that loved one back and heal him.

Too late!

Terrible words, too late.

If you need those healing waters, go to them and drink your fill; do not wait another year.

Go now!

A year from now that fountain may be closed to you forever.

Blessed Christmas of to-day, I greet you with joy and laughter.

Come weal or woe, I am ready for the work of Him who has said—

"Thy faith hath made thee whole."

John Candor went bravely to meet the suffering he knew no skill could avert.

He saw men around him healed and ready to depart.

Others gradually throwing off their weakness and accepting with manly delight the gift of freedom.

John knew that after a weary period of tremulous pain he would join the happy band whose cry was ever:

“Hasten to our ranks and wear the accoutrements of the brave.”

He received four applications of the treatment during his first day.

The insidious compound darted into his veins and at once attacked the alcoholic fungus clustering about his lacerated nerves.

With every breath he drew, John Candor was conscious of the struggle going on in his system.

He resolved to assist the remedy by manly endurance and patience.

The watchful doctor ordered him to his room after the last treatment at 7:30, and to prevent positive suffering during the night, gave him a four-ounce phial filled with whiskey. John retired and waited alone.

Anna entered the apartment, a sister's privilege, and drew a chair to the bedside.

“John, you are saved.”

“Am I worth it?”

“Yes, my brother!” and the fond girl kissed his brow and let her tears fall on his face, every drop a good woman's prayer.

Then they spoke of Nora. Candor's heart well-nigh broke when he thought of the knife he had driven into her soul.

“Do you remember what day this is?” gasped Anna through a burst of sobs.

“The day, little girl? No, I do not count the days any more; they are all the same to me.”

“Listen to me, John. I do not mean that. Father's will is twelve months old after twelve o'clock to-night; from that hour you enter on the last year.”

John sat upright in the bed.

“Two millions of dollars may be squandered half an hour after midnight.

“Two millions of dollars for a drink of whiskey, and your own destruction accomplished.”

Piteously Anna wept and entreated.

“You will not drink and destroy all; the doctor is sure that if you will fight it for a few hours longer, the desire will leave you; let me take that bottle away.”

He fell back on the pillow and moaned; Anna placed her tired hand on his forehead.

The white blessing rested there until he slept.

Poor girl, she nodded at her task and forgot the fatal phial. Worth, good Samaritan, entered the room, and drew her noiselessly into the hall.

“You need sleep, child; we must look out for your nerves as well as your brother’s.”

He rang a bell communicating with the matron’s room.

The motherly creature came on the first click of the electricity; watchful, cautious, patient, tireless Mrs. Fairchild, you honor this page when I write your name on it.

Mr. Worth turned the tired girl over to the lady’s care and then returned to John.

He was sleeping quietly. The manager darkened the room and arranged the fire.

Then he stood and looked down at the figure on the bed.

What was passing in his soul as he stood there where he had so often stood by the bed of the suffering, who can tell?

John’s slumber deepened and the manager touched his pulse.

Then he left the room and closed the door.

An attendant received orders to sit outside the sick man's apartment.

Mrs. Fairchild came from Anna's room with her kind smile appearing too large for her sweet face.

"Has Miss Candor retired?" inquired Mr. Worth.

"Yes, sir, after falling dead asleep in my arms; she is good for twelve hours at least."

"The worst will soon be over for them both, I hope; good-night, Mrs. Fairchild."

And these two busy people went their way, each bent on some errand of mercy.

But left the phial behind them.

On this night that was to usher *in* the struggle for the two millions John Candor slept soundly.

The doctor had given him a sedative that produced the effect desired, *sleep!*

John knew that it was the trustees' decision to accept his word as to his having complied with the conditions that would make the millions his own, or give them to his cousin.

This was not so much an admission of their perfect faith in his truth, as it was the recognition of a necessity.

The will provided no course of action by which the total abstinence of the possible legatee was to be established.

This omission of force left the decision in the hands of the executors, and if the truth was known these gentlemen were but too glad to avail themselves of a circumstance that would relieve them of all doubt in the matter, or legal intervention.

They would simply take John's word.

Of the justice of this, both were positive: John Can-

dor, Sr., was a man of most pronounced honesty and truth.

Young John had been known from cradle to school, from school to manhood, as "Honest John, truthful John."

The legacy of misery he had inherited had not made a liar of him.

He still retained the chivalrous devotion to truth that distinguished him throughout life.

To win the money by a lie!

Never!

To yield to the tempter and revel in the prohibited sin and then deny his guilt in order to win that which his father had written "Thou shalt not have;" no! Though following in many ways the habits of the dipsomaniac, John was head and shoulders above meanness or voluntary crime.

Cousin Mark was of course much troubled at the decision of the executors.

If John Candor went before them at the expiration of the opening year, and protested that he had not tasted alcohol, and these men accepted his unsupported word, what should he do?

Give up his millions; quietly submit to the decision and throw himself on John's generosity?

Mark did not remain long in a state of indecision.

He took a solemn oath that should his cousin speak the words that would deprive him of his uncle's bequest he would then by force, fraud, and cruelty be prepared to prove such declarations—

"*A lie!*"

CHAPTER XV.

THE LIGHT DOES NOT FAIL.

ONE o'clock A.M.

John slept five hours, and the force of the hypnotic having spent itself he awoke trembling and parched, and rolled from the bed a mass of burning flesh.

His slippers stood ready for use.

His feet entered them.

A heavy gown hung on the chair.

He put it on.

His hands shook so terribly that he could not button it, so he merely drew the cord about his waist.

His condition was now pitiable—I may say critical, desperate.

Yes, the crisis had arrived. Bent and trembling, this man stood under the watchful eye of his God.

That God who helps men who helps themselves.

The God who answers prayer when it is followed by action.

By coming to this Institute, he had placed himself in the way of God's help, though now he was but a mass of flesh and blood *on fire*.

Moisture cannot exist under such circumstances, and the juices of his body were congealed and coagulated.

For ten years he had known what it was to long for alcoholic relief, to fight it, and yield in the end.

Now the craving for the hell-broth was upon him as never before.

The critical moment arrived.

He turned his eye to the half-filled phial, and in imagination allowed the red poison to glide over his tongue and trickle down his throat.

The fancy itself was an ecstasy, the very thought a joy beyond expression.

With the anticipation of this frenzied delight came the hellish thought that salvation was not for him.

That he was among the five in every hundred doomed to despair.

The promises of the medicine were not to be fulfilled. He had taken the remedy, believed, and rejoiced.

Now he stood before the alcoholic king, more abject in his slavery than ever before.

Appetite uncontrollable!

He must drink.

The pale face of the clock held out in bold relief its black hands:

“Fifteen minutes after one.”

Each pointer on the dial seemed to speak a warning. Every response of the swaying pendulum whispered:

“*Hold back!*”

The man's mind, active almost to delirium, fully realized the awful meaning of the coming sacrifice.

Two millions of dollars, and an immortal soul for an ounce of whiskey.

This is dipsomania.

Should he kill himself or drink? That was the question.

With the means at hand, a knife, a pistol, a deep pool in which to plunge, he would have chosen suicide. He must drink and pay the forfeit.

The phial was in his hands.

The cork was drawn.

Slowly from the crystal lips arose the foul breath of

the sleeping beast within. The mournful clock chimed half-past one.

The dipsomaniac heard not that still, small voice.

The hand claspng the phial was raised, then stopped half-way in its passage to the mouth.

Again that potent vapor arose from the opened bottle.

Watch the working face and note the change. A moment since, eager desire, uncontrollable lust, desperate appetite; now in every feature

"Disgust."

Wonder, and rejoice with him, all ye inhabitants of God's earth.

He did not want to drink!

Face to face with the greatest danger of his life, he found that Keeley did not lie.

Without knowing that he laughed he shouted for joy.

Free!

Throwing aside the cover of the stove, he poured the liquor on the coals.

Again he laughed.

Doors opened on each floor, hurrying feet carried anxious men and women to the spot whence came the pealing cries of joy.

First Manager Worth, ready to assist and succor; then the doctor; then Anna and the matron.

Faces peered in at the door, white and startled.

Candor stood in the middle of the room, the phial in his hands.

Anna rushed to him and seized the bottle.

Empty!

A hysterical shriek burst from her lips: "Lost! Lost your money and your soul!"

John pointed to the blue flame arising from the stove:

“No, Anna. I drank alcohol for the last time yesterday. My father’s millions are mine, and

“*My soul belongs to God!*”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GAUNTLET THROWN DOWN.

“DOUBLE chloride of gold,” together with Dr. Keeley’s mysterious ingredient administered to Candor, came to his succor at the critical moment, and drove the alcoholic thirst from its intrenched stronghold.

My fellow-beings in every portion of our country, there are men in your midst who will look you in the face and vouch for the accuracy of what you have just read.

Certain incidents narrated may have been dressed in pleasingly romantic colors, but so far as I have gone, so far as I shall go in this volume, nothing has been or will be written regarding the value of this great remedy but what is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, *so help me God!*

The case of John Candor and his wonderful rescue is not an isolated one.

Thousands who have been dashed to the dust by the hand of alcoholic hate have been lifted from their filthy beds and enthroned among God’s elect, by the firm but gentle work of the Keeley Cure.

I ask you to go among these men and demand a corroboration or a denial of what has been given to you in these pages.

Listen to their reply, listen to their words of praise and gratitude. Mark the glow illumine their happy faces, the bright sparkle in their eyes.

Ask them if the case of John Candor is an invention, its publication the crusade of the advertiser. And this redeemed host will answer to a man, "*No! It is the truth, simple God-like truth!*" Go to their homes, ask their wives, fathers, mothers, sisters. Seek information from their little ones, renewed, healthy, happy little children, once welcomed to the arms of Him who said, "*Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven!*"

Each glad witness will point to the rescued, and say, "The half had not been told us."

Candor's appetite for strong drink had gone forever, cast down at the altar with his burden of sin and woe, from which he departed clothed and in his right mind.

The Keeley graduate never returns to alcohol through the coercion of animal desire; the five per cent who relapse prefer the drunkard's life to the delights of home and family.

They prefer the gutter to green fields, darkness to light. *Hell to Heaven!*

These men are mere animals, lower than the beasts. Keeley does not treat quadrupeds. Grateful hearts bless the great physician, cheerful voices sing the praises of Manager Worth and his home of rescue.

It was now a direct fact firmly planted, thoroughly established, that Candor was saved, and his millions snatched from the hands of his cousin Mark.

The trustees heard the news by wire and rejoiced.

Nora read it on her sick bed in Anna's dainty hand and it was a bracing tonic to the sick girl.

The Rev. Arthur Rose heard it with both ears and with delight, and at once redoubled the amount of his already extravagant charities.

Mark Candor heard it, rushed to his room, and locked himself in. Then he swallowed that which his cousin John had thrown in the fire:

Two ounces of whiskey.

Mark now became a conspirator.

When he retired that night, he felt confident of success; he nourished himself with the assurance that John was an imbecile inebriate, and would, of force, continue to drink.

When he heard of his arrival at the Institute, his calmness remained undisturbed; he was sure that the treatment would fail when applied to his rival, John Candor.

The news of its successful application came to him like a blow between the eyes.

When two weeks had passed, and confirmation of John's stability reached him, he ground his teeth with rage, and, strange to say, turned to alcohol for advice.

This is what he evolved through the suggestion of his new ally:

"Keeley cures dipsomania by a systematic course of medicine.

"I will overthrow Keeley's work so far as it relates to John Candor, by a systematic course of villany."

He threw the gauntlet at the feet of the great physician.

And Dr. Keeley picked it up.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE RACK.

"A FEW days of despondency and gloom, a few nights of weird fancies, and then for the strength of my new life."

So said John to himself after bravely extinguishing his light, locking his door, and turning into bed.

He refused the hypnotic suggested by his watchful sister, and got under the sheets determined to fight it out alone.

Many a man in John's condition escapes wakeful delirium to be tortured with whips scarcely less painful.

Dreams.

They came to John this night.

He stood in the office of his favorite New York hotel and secured a room in which to conceal a satchel filled with golden eagles and bonds.

By the direction of the clerk, he was conducted to the elevator, and started on his skyward journey.

They left the office floor, passed the second, third, and fifth flights without halting.

Up rose the "lift" until John had counted thirty stories.

Then he turned and inquired:

"Where are we going?"

The attendant who had started the elevator was a light-colored, polite lad, well known to John.

The object now standing before him was a black monster!—so black indeed that coal tar would have made a white splash on his face.

He was nude to the waist, about four feet high, and measured the same across the shoulders.

The face must have been battered out of all human semblance and then allowed to heal in great seams and rugged furrows, gashes, and protuberances which effectually eradicated everything like mouth, nose, or eyes.

A huge gash ran across his face, terminating on either side where the ears should have been—this was his mouth.

His one eye, if we may so designate the round hole

in his forehead, was green in color, and revolved like a firework wheel.

Between the lips of his canal-like mouth this giant dwarf clinched a half-smoked cigar, the lighted end of which sputtered and burned like molten iron.

His breast was covered with black moss, and the huge arms were tattooed with devices that gave out a phosphorescent light and smell.

The enormous feet were uncovered; the toes twisted, knotted, and combined; anon spread out like a mighty fan and again clinched and snapped, as one snaps his fingers.

With this unnamable monstrosity, John was imprisoned miles above the city of New York, and the frail elevator still ascending.

The first act of the human fiend was to snatch the bag of gold from John's hand *and swallow it*.

Candor's right fist flew out from his shoulder, straight at the monster's face.

The opened mouth received his hand, and the iron teeth closed on his wrist.

Then with a snort of pleasure the "man animal" placed the lighted end of his cigar in his victim's eyes, first the right and then the left.

Candor became stone-blind.

He struck out desperately; his blows fell against the side of the elevator.

Monster and gold had disappeared. John was now conscious that the elevator was descending, and at a rate of speed fifty times faster than the swiftest locomotive can fly.

And so amid the horrors of blindness and rapidly approaching death, he fell downward, and struck the earth, or rather the floor of his room; for there the poor fel-

low found himself clutching the table and shaking in helpless agony.

He did not call for assistance, however. His slightest appeal would have been answered instantly.

Brain came to the front.

"Only a dream."

But the brave fellow who refused to call for help, or touch his bell, burst into tears and wept like a child. All this means outraged nerves, nothing more.

After a short tussle with himself, John walked to the mantel and took a drink of Keeley's generous tonic; it warmed him like a hot blanket, and under its inspiration he ventured to return to his bed.

Again he tried the effect of sleep, manfully resolving to "down the phantoms," black and white.

Worn out, he again sank into fitful slumber.

Fancy now led him to take a walk in the orchard of his country home and stand under his favorite apple-tree.

Suddenly he found himself bound hand and foot.

He could not move a finger. Around his legs, body, arms, and throat a stout rope was wound.

This rope gradually changed into a serpent, whose cold, flat head rested on his bosom.

The reptile slept.

The jaws were slightly parted, disclosing deadly fangs from which poison trickled and fell in great drops to the ground.

His first impulse was to seize the reptile by the throat and strangle it.

He could not stir!

Next he remembered that the hideous sleeper must not be disturbed.

Should it awaken, the sharp teeth charged with poison would be buried in his throat.

He suspended his breath lest the motion of his lungs might disturb that awful slumber.

Suddenly his old enemy, the elevator monster, appeared before him, his outstretched hand holding the never-dying cigar close to the serpent's tail.

Contemplate if you can the suspense of agony of the dream-haunted man.

Years of hell in one little atom of time!

The burning tobacco fell on the reptile's scales, and with a thousand wild contortions it shook Candor's frame and vanished, leaving its victim entangled in the folds of bedclothing.

"Shall I fight it out?" he muttered between his chattering teeth.

"Yes, it is my own work, I did it!"

White as snow and large as a tiger, there came a new visitor even now while he was awake.

A cat, demure and observing, stood on the foot of his bed.

The animal seemed to rise in the air, impelled by other power than its own; the magic of its motion defied analysis; it rested for an instant above the bed, and then sank silently to the floor.

Not a sound!

Had John Candor at this point of agony shrieked in terror and buried his head under the clothing, the usual mode of action in such emergencies, he would in another moment have been in the throes of delirium tremens.

He did nothing of the kind; the man's grand will, *returning* will, came to his aid with rational suggestions.

Wet to drowning with cold sweat, he braced himself manfully and grimly muttered Anna's old words:

"Nothing there!"

Then in a half-jocular way he spoke:

“Call off your dogs, Satan. I am not to be driven mad.”

And now the sufferer performed an act of “horse sense”—common sense, if you will.

Like a brave fellow he had fought, and conquered, for the time at least. Now to find partial relief.

With some difficulty he lit his lamp.

“Now come on, animals,” he said; “we will receive you one by one, or in groups.”

Brain conquered.

He walked to his door, unlocked, and opened it.

An attendant stood before him, patient and sentry-like; near at hand was a step-ladder; finding the sick man's door fastened, he had provided this means of crawling through the transom, should such a mode of entrance become necessary.

“Always be prepared for the unexpected.” This is the rule of the Institute.

“How are you, sir?” inquired the attendant.

“Very thirsty.”

The man touched a button on the wall, and a boy with winged feet brought a pitcher of sparkling water.

“Thank you,” murmured poor Candor, with a burst of gratitude. Then he drank like a thirsty horse, emptying the pitcher at a draught.

“Do you need anything more?” asked the attendant, who had entered the room and arranged John's tumbled bed.

For a moment the thought occurred to this newly born man to request the strong keeper to remain with him.

Then came the courage of manhood, and with a kind “good-night” he closed his door and patiently awaited his further punishment.

It came after a time in this shape: The vision of a girl, the fairest of the fair, standing by his bedside, holding in her hands fresh-found roses, violets, and clusters of sweet arbutus.

She spoke the language of flowers, which is love.

And the troubled sleep became peaceful, and the tired spirit of the overwrought man found balm in the words:

“I love you, John; be of good cheer.”

The figure was that of an angel and the face was—

Nora Livingston's!

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. PECK OF WORCESTER.

A WEEK after date John Candor was climbing mountains, singing through the forests, eating three noble meals a day, and putting in ten hours' natural sleep without turning over in bed.

That means strength, health, nerve. Always a splendid-looking animal, he now expanded into the figure of a god.

The digestion and assimilation of nutritious food is one of the first factors in physical health.

Quiet sleep in maximum quantities tempers the nerves and subdues friction.

A healthy stomach makes a healthy brain.

Perfection implies complete unison of body and soul.

Mind and matter must harmonize to make spiritual and physical perfection possible.

When this is an accomplished fact, we find red cheeks, pink patches on the temples, and eyes with the sparkle of the stars.

Health is happiness and salvation to a large degree.

Therefore I say, heal the inebriate's body, and God will take care of his soul.

The dipsomaniac is a very sick individual. Treat him as such and you will save yourself many conscientious regrets hereafter.

Every inmate of the Institute liked John Candor and rejoiced over his speedy recovery.

John did nothing by halves, so he forced people to like him all over; no "rose-water, skim-milk" friendship satisfied this great magnetizer.

Anna was a worthy running mate for her brother, and the gentle girl found a respectful admirer in every gentleman at the Susquehanna.

A man upon whose speedy cure depended the possession of two millions of dollars could scarcely sink below the standard of positive fame; and when this interesting fact became known, John sprang at once into the position of ultra-heroism and fascinating romance.

Every man seemed to feel himself the chosen custodian of the young heir; and be sure the eyes of these good fellows will follow him closely for the next year, all of them deeply interested in the result.

Riches may not mean much beyond dirty dollars and cents when the possessor is dirtier than his money; ill-looking, miserly, ill-bred.

But give the bags of lucre to a dashing fellow, bright, genial, handsome, and generous as a prince, and the money becomes the man and the man dignifies the money.

Golden eagles in rapid circulation are the blood of the world; tie them up in a bag and bury them in a cellar, and ordinary checker-men are more valuable.

There was no fear that John Candor would hide his wealth under a bushel or bury it in his cellar.

Before his second week had expired, Mr. Worth had been interviewed several times regarding the disposition of a sum of money to be set aside for the redemption of dipsomaniacs who were unable to pay for their own course of treatment.

The natural goodness of this man grew into expression as soon as alcohol was driven out.

His first thought, after his own salvation was accomplished, was of the best methods to be used for the deliverance of his perishing fellows.

"New York is full of them," he said; "men utterly helpless, but who only need this grand treatment to restore them to the manhood they have lost; it is to the necessities of such as these that I intend to devote my time and money in the future.

"And what a stir I intend to make among the kid-gloved drunkards of my class.

"Why, Mr. Worth, half the club men of New York would be better for 'the cure,' and at least one-third of them absolutely require it.

"Yes, indeed; next summer there will be a grand break for the Keeley Institute; many a visit will be planned that will have for its culmination a four weeks' sojourn in this Institute."

Happy the ringing in of each new day for John Candor; joyful the departure of the old.

He was in earnest at last and determined that if heaven's crown was to be won by life's work being done,

He would win it.

As a reward for his knightly resolves the fair Anna in conjunction with Mr. Worth prepared a happy surprise for him.

And without engaging the confidence of any one, John prepared a surprise for Anna, the consequence of these two surprises being the arrival at the Blue Wing station of Miss Nora Livingston and the Rev. Arthur Rose.

These additions were the occasion of much public hand-shaking and much private blushing; John was in raptures, and Anna—well, it did not take much to make this contented little woman happy; Arthur Rose did it.

The train from New York that was responsible for the safe delivery of the lady and gentleman above mentioned brought another passenger who alighted at Blue Wing.

A man closely wrapped in a huge ulster; a “wide awake” slouch drawn down over his nose completely concealed his identity.

He held a place in the last seat of the rear car, closely observing Nora and her escort.

No one noticed him but the conductor, who kindly punched holes in his ticket and let him severely alone.

From time to time the masked gentleman drank spirits from a flask.

Then he subsided.

At the station he turned abruptly from the crowd, and made his way to the only hotel open to receive guests at that season of the year.

The landlord yawned, of course, as he pushed over the register, and inquired, “if it was cold enough for him,” and receiving no answer, yawned again, placed the pen in a bottle of ink and water, curiously following its course over the slimy page, as his guest wrote:

James Peck, Worcester, Mass.

Mr. Peck was shown to his room, the door of which he closed and bolted.

Mr. Peck of Worcester next turned down his cape,

threw off his hat, shook out his yellow beard, and was transformed into

Mr. Mark Candor of New York.

CHAPTER XIX.

A PITIFUL EXCHANGE.

THE arrival of this distinguished party at Blue Wing will cause the reader to exclaim:

“Nigger in the wood-pile.”

Mark Candor certainly did not leave his comfortable quarters on Fifty-second Street and ride two hundred miles in midwinter simply for pleasure or glory.

The secretive design evident in his masquerading disguise denoted that he was anxious to complete his journey unrecognized and remain so after arrival.

James Peck is a first-class name when it is a lawful inheritance from the baptismal font, but when a chap picks it up between New York and Blue Wing, and with barefaced assurance puts it on a hotel register as his own property, then the cognomen “Peck” is no better than a dead rabbit, and the subscriber becomes an object of curiosity.

Rogues and detectives are the only individuals who assume aliases.

Mark Candor was both.

What follows will prove my assertion to be true; if not, Mr. Candor has a clear right to sue me for libel. The pride of Mark’s physical life was the oft-quoted blonde beard that began at his cheek-bones and terminated at his shirt-stud.

It was a curly, silky, downy mass, and its proprietor loved it, petted it, nurtured it.

To-day, for the first time, he treated it with angry disdain. Observe.

From a large, genuine sheep-skin, goat-skin, "alligator" satchel, he poured a mass of toilet articles, and arranged them before the olive-colored looking-glass.

Powders, perfumes, lotions, pomatums, brushes, combs, tweezers, razors, and a large

Pair of shears.

For a few minutes he contemplated his soft hirsute appendage, stroked it fondly as if in farewell, and then plunged the blades of Sheffield steel deep into the mass of golden foam.

Clip! Clip! Clip!

Something less than a pound of the luxuriant harvest fell before this cruel attack, and lay on the bureau, twisting and writhing as if in the throes of death.

Five minutes later, the cheeks, chin, and lips were ready for the razor, and at the expiration of half an hour this lovely wretch was clean shaved, sported a pair of green spectacles, and turned from the glass no longer Mark Candor of New York.

Had he removed his head instead of his beard, the decapitation would not have rendered his disguise more absolute, and the green glasses successfully masked the blue eyes, the Candor eyes, that might have recalled to familiar gaze the old-time nephew of John Candor deceased.

Mark placed his shorn fleece in a newspaper and buried it with due solemnity in the depths of his satchel.

Then he pulled the bell-handle, hidden behind the bed, and after the expiration of a quarter of an hour the hostler, holding sponge and curry-comb, answered

the ring, and stood in the doorway awaiting developments.

"Is the adjoining room vacant?" inquired Mark.

"Guess they're all vacant," answered the genial soul, chewing tobacco furiously.

"Please have it prepared for me, fire built, and bed-clothing changed."

"Don't this room suit you?" inquired the stableman, looking around the chamber.

"Yes, but I want two rooms."

"Two rooms! What on airth do ye want of two rooms?"

"I am expecting a friend who will occupy the other."

"A man?"

"Yes."

"Why can't he sleep with you? We ain't got but one chambermaid, and she's got to cook, and I hate to make beds except for hosses, be gosh!"

"If I give you a dollar will you stop talking and have the room prepared?"

"If you give me a dollar, I guess I'll have the room prepared, but Cleveland himself ain't got money enough to make me stop talking, be gosh!"

"There's your tip; now go and try and make me comfortable."

"Is them your razors?"

"Yes."

"What's in that yellow bottle?"

"Tooth-powder."

"Got toothache?"

"No, no! tooth paste."

"Paste your teeth in, hey? Gosh!"

"Will you go?" shouted Mark; "get a fire made, quick!"

"Quick, hey! Well, all right; if I kin find the axe, I'll split some kindlings and git Nancy-Bruce to put coverings on the bed if there is any."

"Stop! What time does the next train get in from Albany?"

"Expecting any one?"

"Yes."

"Man?"

"Yes. Answer me, will you?"

"If it's late, it won't git in on time."

"When is it due?"

"Due?"

"Yes!" roared Mark.

"From Albany?"

"Yes."

"Durned if I know."

"Go then, and fix the room, and when the train arrives look after my friend, and send him up."

The spirited Roman lumbered downstairs, spitting over the banister, and wondering what "the darned green-eyed crittur did with all them bottles; must be a doctor; wonder if he's married; friend coming, hey! Two rooms—be gosh!"

An hour passed, and at the expiration of that time Mark was startled by a sound in the next room like the smashing together of two freight trains.

Reuben had deposited his armful of wood on the floor.

"Be gosh!"

Then followed a dialogue between maid and man, during the course of which it was intimated that "some city folks wanted the airth and all the ocean."

After a lapse of time sufficiently long to lay a cable to China, the door was opened between the rooms, and Nancy Bruce entered, covered with cobwebs and wearing a man's overcoat.

"The other room is ready," said the gentle rustic, with palpable emphasis on the *other*.

Mark walked to the door and looked in. Rube was seated on the bed, picking his teeth with a piece of kindling-wood.

"How's that, guest."

"All right," answered Mark. "I hope you find the bed comfortable."

"I'm tired, guest," replied Reuben, spitting with accurate skill into the stove door six feet away; "tired out, be gosh!"

"And so be I," said Nancy; "when people cum to a hotel and wants so much done they ought to send word ahead."

"That's right, be gosh!"

"Here is something for your trouble," said Mark, handing the spinster a silver cart-wheel.

Nancy clutched it as if it were a life-buoy, and she overboard.

"Stay long in these parts?"

"Oh, yes; I am going to the Keeley Institute, and the man coming to-day is to be my attendant."

"Sakes alive! be you a retreat man? Bin takin' hard to licker?" asked Rube, chewing as if at dinner.

"Not lately; I am a dipsomaniac and have not had any appetite for liquor for several weeks; but feeling sure that it will return, I have determined to make myself safe for the future."

"Well, you kin jist bet all your glass fixin's on that bureor in there, that Mr. Worth will cure you, quick as hot cakes goin' down Nancy's throat."

Nancy looked sourer than ever and more yellow, and Rube spat furiously and dashed ahead:

"When Judas Perkins went up there, every one said 'if ye kin cure Judas, ye kin cure anybody.'

“Judas was as full of bad ‘corn rum’ and frozen cider as one of them pine trees is full of sap.

“Judas’s breath alone would quarry granite; they say it killed his first wife.

“He drank six gallons of hard stuff a week, and couldn’t stop no more nor a train of cars.

“But Judas went up to the Institute and planked down a hundred dollars and said to ‘em: ‘Now go to work and squirt gold into my hide; and if ye kin shut me off molasses rum, I’ll give ye my farm, and the old woman in the bargain.’

“Well, Dr. Hardy began on him one morning, and inside of forty-eight hours Judas was among the anointed, and took to spring water like a trout.

“That was nigh on to a year ago, and Judas don’t know no more about whiskey than saleratus.

“He’s pottered up the farm into shape for crops, made new fences, bought a yoke of oxen, ten cows, and had a baby.”

Nancy left the room.

“Have they many patients at the Institute now?” asked Mark.

“Comin’ and departin’ all the time, like folks at the post-office; sometimes a big crowd, and sometimes bigger yit; they scute up from York and all over the country, rich and poor, high-toned and corn-fed.

“A man is there now worth a wagonful of money; they was a-goin’ to cut him off without a cent if he had not give up rum, but they say he is as good as cured already, better nor Judas even.”

Mark walked to the window and looked over the fields, across the rising ground, where stands the country home of the millionaire manager of a mighty railroad.

The man who saw room at the top and went straight

up, filling a niche in the temple of advancement from which he looks down on the wrangling mass below.

Alone he did it.

What honor is it to be dropped on fortune's hill? the glory is to mount it.

Rube joined the "guest" at the window, and filled in Mark's silence with his erudite observations:

"That's Frank Cummings' up there; he's to Buffalo in winter makin' railroads and shovin' checks into banks.

"Frank cuts a wide swathe and there bean't a durned crittur grudges him his luck, fur he is chock full of what Parson Gilfeather calls 'milk of human kindness;' I never drank none, but it must be two-thirds cream."

"Please go down now, hitch up a team, drive over to the Institute, and ask the manager if he can make it convenient to see me to-night."

Reuben went out of the room with another dollar in his vest; so much coin had not fallen into his slot for many a day; this wonderful overflow was exciting, and his expectorations while "hitching up" were phenomenally long and direct.

Mark continued to gaze on the cottage on the hill, but his thoughts were with the owner in the city, miles away.

"Why not throw away his evil half and give the little good in his soul a chance to gain?"

"Why not begin as this man of yonder mansion had begun, starting squarely and living by that rule; laboring by day and working while others slept?"

Perhaps at this moment his good angel would have conquered, perhaps this man of inborn sin was "almost persuaded."

Then his eyes wandered up the mountain-side until

they rested on the walls of the grand Susquehanna, now bright and glowing in the flood of good-night sun.

Two millions.

His by right of testament and common law. And the man who was preparing to rob him of his luminous dollars was yonder within a rifle-shot, drinking in health and nerve that he might conquer.

Yes, and drinking and feasting with the woman he loved, who could not take them both; so prompted by her pure heart, she chose away from him.

Wife and fortune taken at one fell swoop. Away fled all desire for worldly peace and eternal rest; away the soft Christian meekness that once in the life of every man clamors for admission to his soul.

The bright-faced angel fled; the sun went down along the falling western grade, darkness fell upon the silent valley, and the soul of Mark Candor turned from the vineyards of the just man and flashed away up the height to the twinkling lights of the Institute, and as he peered through that cold young night a bitter oath crept from his heart and fluttered between his lips.

Dating from this hour, the wandering spirit of Mark Candor was

Lost.

CHAPTER XX.

“A SERPENT IN A NEST OF DOVES.”

MR. WORTH, blithe, cheery, and hearty, called on Mark an hour later and arranged for his admission to the Institute.

“I have been a periodical drinker for years, Mr. Worth, but have abstained of late, not having indulged for many weeks.

"My health is good and my nervous system fairly normal. Be frank with me, sir; do you think it is reasonably certain that I will drink again?"

"If you are a dipsomaniac, yes."

"Will Dr. Keeley's treatment, as given at your establishment, rid me permanently of alcoholic appetite?"

"If you have a positive desire for cure, yes; at mine or at any of the institutes you may receive permanent cure."

"Then with your permission I will come to you for treatment and remain as long as your physician considers necessary."

"When shall I expect you, sir?"

"As soon as possible, sir. A friend is to join me here to-night who will do a great deal of right-hand work for me during my stay with you; he is to act as my attendant. I hope such an arrangement is not in opposition to your rules."

"Not at all; many of my patients bring their own attendants."

"Thank you. I have no doubt I shall be more comfortable with you than I am with my present surroundings, which seem to afford little more than actual shelter."

Mr. Worth smiled. "This is an excellent hotel in summer, when the guests are as numerous as the rooms; in winter there is scarcely the degree of comfort some people would think necessary. I imagine we will be able to place you up yonder to your entire satisfaction."

"I will be with you in twenty-four hours then."

Mr. Worth took his leave of the pale gentleman in green spectacles and was driven to the Institute by Rube, who, during the intervals of spitting at the tree-tops, told the manager all he knew concerning the

“durned fool” who wanted two rooms, and who shed silver dollars as if they were china buttons.

The Albany express came in covered with snow and an hour late.

A few minutes after the train pulled in, another guest arrived at the Meadow House, tall, six feet two, broad-shouldered, well-built, clean cut, like a newly launched ship.

He wrote his name on the register, spreading himself over the counter, kicking away the spittoon with his heel, and cursing the ink as he wrote.

“Gilbert Dawson, Rochester, N. Y.”

Rube fairly groaned with curiosity and peered timidly over the giant’s shoulder as he scratched his name with the rickety pen.

Unable to refrain, the hostler cleared his mouth, and timidly asked:

“Railroadin’ all day long, mister?”

Gilbert Dawson went up his full height, made a pivot of his heels, and swung around on Rube like a revolving cannon about to go off.

“What’s that?” he roared.

It was not so much what the new man said as the way he said, it that made the inquiring Rube sink down into his stockings and wish himself in Alaska.

The only thing on earth the shrinking man could do was to chew furiously.

“Show me Mr. Peck’s room—Mr. Peck of Worcester, do you hear?”

Rube heard, and never ascended stairs so fast in his life.

He navigated upward as if in momentary expectation of being seized by the neck and hurled through the roof.

The guest followed and knocked on the door which

the trembling guide designated by a crook of his thumb, standing ready near the stairs to descend in a hurry in case of need.

Dawson entered the room and disappeared from sight; as Reuben hoped, forever.

Mark received the fellow quietly and gave him a chair.

"So you hit the Albany train? I am glad we did not come together.

"I created a decided sensation alone. Had we arrived in company, the mountains might have fallen."

Dawson did not reply directly to the address of Mr. Candor, but sat gazing grimly at the speaker.

"Well?" said Mark.

"I can hardly believe my eyesight, Mr. Candor—I mean Mr. Peck. Upon my soul, you need have no fear of discovery; your most esteemed friend would pass you in broad daylight and be uncivil enough to omit saying good-morning."

"Ten minutes did it all, Dawson; I hope you will be as successful."

"Oh, I have tried everything on, and have had what the actors would call several rehearsals. I know the importance of making no mistakes, and have neglected no details of my work."

"And I have received a call from the worthy manager," said Mark. "I told him my sad story and arranged to go to the Institute to-morrow. You are to accompany me as my attendant; I may need one by the time I go there."

"I am quite willing to act as your bootblack with the prospect of a check for fifty thousand dollars before me."

"A promised check," suggested Mark.

"Just so; I never look for money on the track if my horse loses.

"If the plan fails, I am out my time, and fifty thousand dollars, while you are out two millions."

"Perhaps not," said Mark.

"Try it again, hey? I admire your promised endurance. You have good sand and plenty of it," emphasized Dawson.

"I shall continue to fight until the year's departure settles the matter one way or the other; I find I am learning to be a first-class hater."

"May I ask if there is a lady in the case as well as money?"

"No, you may not ask," cried Mark, rising; "there is your room, come. Let us take a drink."

Mark produced a flask from the inexhaustible satchel and the two spoke the old formula:

"Here's luck!" and swallowed their whiskey, and luck with it.

Then Dawson declared he would take a spin up the mountain before rolling into bed, and the big fellow filled his lungs, struck himself a tremendous blow on the chest, and raced down the stairs four at a time; Rube, who was listening at the keyhole, taking in the entire flight at a leap, and not pausing until he was at the bottom of a manger and covered with hay.

Mark emptied his flask, and refilled it from a bottle of case goods taken from the alligator's mouth.

Deep into the night the wretched man drank the double-distilled sin, and began again the next day, so that when the time came for departure Dawson was obliged to pick him up and deposit him in the sleigh.

When the conveyance arrived at the Institute they carried him to his room, and deposited his carcass on

the bed; the man without one friend in the wide world
and who had

Lost his soul!

CHAPTER XXI.

I WOULD KNOW HIM IN THE DARK.

MARK remained in seclusion for twenty-four hours.

He awoke on the morning following his arrival at the Susquehanna with "one of those heads," assuming a severe illness, but, if the truth had been known, quite able to go about.

This, however, was not a part of the combination he was playing; he desired to remain in bed, and *think*.

Did you ever notice how much valuable thought can be turned over and put into shape while one is lying down with closed eyes?

Mark had other reasons for not wishing to mingle with the patients; he did not want to face his cousin or the ladies if he could help it. He had perfect confidence in his disguise but preferred taking no unnecessary chances.

Nor did he want to fall into that line with the eager young soldiers of temperance and receive the healing equipments of health and honor. This man was rapidly approaching acute alcoholism, but was not aware of his danger, and like many another was content to drift over the alcoholic river, forgetting the roar of the Niagara below.

While confined to his room the "hypodermic injection" would not be administered, and the time had not arrived when this man was to come humbly to Dr. Keeley and holding forth his hands exclaim:

"Save me, or I perish!"

Dawson, the attendant, had no such reason to shut himself out of the sun and keep his tongue still.

On the contrary, it was necessary that he should show himself and look at others; there was much information to be gained, the whole place explored, and its local arrangement reported to the sick man at once.

He was to all in the Institute "a great unknown," a passing phenomenon; all speculated on his sudden advent among them, admired his splendid proportions, and liked to hear him laugh. A laugh is an excellent quality in man.

Homely men have won the favor of kings and captured rich wives by the sweetness of their smile and music of their laughter.

This man playing for a large stake was not likely to be ignorant of any detail that might further his plans.

He could not work in the dark, so he secured light, and was now ready to go ahead with his eyes open.

First of all he struck hands with his companions, then put himself in direct angling communication with the fish he hoped to land.

He tried to *smile* himself into the unsuspecting John's affections.

He succeeded!

Then, with marked deference and respect, he tried to smile himself into the good graces of the sister.

He succeeded!

He then threw his magnetic mirth against Miss Nora Livingston.

Failure!

Nora was still somewhat of an invalid; the doctors had enabled her to leave her bed and sit in an easy-

chair after her first week's confinement, and at the end of the second they allowed her to travel by easy stages to Blue Wing, but Nora was still on the road, and had not finished her journey to complete recovery.

Now this same Keeley system is a great leveller; it places all men and women participating in its benefits on one common basis.

At the Institute, the aristocracy of brains, cash, or birth ceases to dominate; for the prevailing four weeks the cry is "Union!"

"Union and brotherhood."

A union born of mutual suffering and deliverance.

This entails no sacrifice of caste or position, there is nothing revolting in such association.

The poor tramp redeemed from the sewer by the hand of charity, and carried gratis to this grand rendezvous, wonderful to relate, at once develops the quality of gentility.

All have an equal chance at Blue Wing with Dr. Keeley; no man receives a social black eye because the sleeves of his coat are glossy, or his shirt-cuffs decorated with fringe.

Therefore it was not the feeling that she was above the level of a "Keeley attendant" that prompted Nora to administer a decided snub to the genial Gilbert Dawson.

Instinctively, and instinct is a reliable monitor with most women, she shrank from anything like a response to the cooing music of the big man's voice.

The same dread that shook poor Rube to his toe-nails when Gilbert turned on him with the voice of a hungry lion now took possession of Nora Livingston, when this professional smiler offered her the cadenced speech of the dove.

It would not do; the grand eyes ran the man over as though he were an advertisement posted on a wall.

She turned from him without a word, without a wink, and entered Mr. Worth's private sleigh, the manager having invited the ladies to a dash across the country.

The two girls nestled in together and were covered with robes by the careful Roberts until there was nothing of either visible but Anna's little nose and Nora's great eyes.

These were wide open.

"Look!" she whispered to Anna as they were about to drive away.

The girls saw two men of equal height standing on the extreme end of the long piazza.

Their backs were turned toward them. Gilbert Dawson and John Candor.

Anna started amazed from the down of her warm nest.

"Wonderful!" she cried; "which is my brother? I cannot tell them apart."

Nora answered on the instant: "The one to the left."

At that moment the men turned and faced them.

Nora was right.

"Tell them apart," she cried—

"Yes! in the dark!"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS.

THE sinful confederates sat together in Mark's room over the parlor. Dr. Hardy made several professional calls on "the unhappy Mr. Peck," and it was decided that the regular treatment should begin on the following morning.

Mark had no intention of adhering to such a contract, and Gilbert Dawson was officially informed by his commander-in-chief that their carefully concealed mine must be exploded at once.

That very night!

"I am ready," replied the merry Dawson, "and have made a thorough investigation of the premises."

"You have talked with my cousin?"

"I have; a splendid fellow he is, and as for that Goddess of Liberty, his *fiancée*—"

"Stop!" cried Mark.

A spasm of pain shot over his face as if the other's words had been branded on his forehead with a hot iron.

"I beg your pardon," said Dawson soothingly.

"Never mind," muttered Mark. "I am a man of head, not heart."

"Tell me, what does John Candor think of his present condition?"

"That he will never drink again; that his physical nature is entirely renewed; that the Keeley medicine has done its work effectually, and that he can face alcohol for the next hundred years without knowing the slightest temptation."

Mark became very thoughtful and did not speak for several minutes; then he asked quietly:

"Where is the physician's whiskey kept?"

"In a closet in the surgery; this closet is locked and never opened unless the doctor requires stimulants for a patient's use."

"How will you open that closet?"

Dawson smiled. "You forget that I have found my way through iron safes without the aid of key or combination."

Mark turned things over in his mind for a minute and then said:

“John Candor must drink from that bottle to-night.”

“He shall,” said Dawson.

“And in the presence of witnesses,” continued Mark.

“You must provide the witnesses,” put in Dawson.

“Where are the manager’s private apartments?” inquired Mark.

“At the end of the hall, the last door to the left,” answered the giant.

“Where does the physician sleep?”

“In the first room on this side of the manager’s apartments.”

“At what time will the house be quiet?”

“Most of the patients retire at ten o’clock. The visitors of Candor’s party will remain to-night in the manager’s office until after eleven, where a collation will be served and a whist party extemporized.”

“You are well informed,” said Mark.

“Information is one of my tools; I should be handicapped without it.”

“What means of rapid exit is there from the surgery?”

“Two doors which are not to be thought of, and a window opening on the piazza.”

“Is that window unfastened?”

“It will be.”

“And a dim lamp burning in the office?”

“Yes.”

Mark arose and motioned Dawson to do the same.

The two stood before each other, Dawson calm and erect, Mark nervous and trembling.

The latter placed his hands on the big fellow’s shoulders, and then studied his anatomy from head to foot.

Dawson was clean shaved, wearing no mustache or whiskers; his hair was cut down to the scalp.

Mark observed all this and then said: "You are sure you have forgotten nothing, left nothing undone?"

"I never forget; I leave nothing undone. Carry out your part of the programme and John Candor will drink to-night."

"And forfeit his inheritance, which *I will win*," said Mark, turning away.

Dawson lit a cigar and between puffs muttered to himself another construction of results to follow:

"*Which we will win!*"

CHAPTER XXIII.

DANCING AND KISSING.

THE day at Blue Wing ends just as it does in New York and London.

The sun goes down, darkness falls, stars appear, and if on time the moon comes out.

On this particular night, both stars and moon appeared at their proper cue, the bright light on the snow emphasizing the blackness of the surrounding ever-greens—patient trees that live the whole year through.

Mr. Worth walked out on the piazza and stood looking up the valley at the lovely night.

The voice of that bewitching scene said to him:

"Peace on earth, good-will toward men," and as he thought of the thousands perishing in the flooded trenches by the wayside, his heart yearned over all mankind, and he longed to gather these unhappy heathen into his fold that they might believe and receive salvation.

He entered the drawing-room and found a goodly company awaiting his arrival.

In a huge fireplace which might have received a load of hay, roared a conflagration of fragrant pine.

The room was spacious, bright, inviting.

Nearly a hundred patients were assembled, each secretly paying homage to the loveliness of the Misses Candor and Livingston.

There were men in that happy crowd who knew how to waltz, and waltz well, and Mr. Worth's cheery voice ordered the doctor, a fine musician, to the piano, upon which word two hundred feet began to figure various devices on the carpet.

A motley company. Rugged sea-captains dancing with trim lawyers from New York.

Lumbermen "vis-à-vis" with Boston dudes.

A hack-driver from Portland yoked with a State senator.

Anna with the delighted Arthur Rose—a waltzing clergyman, think of it! and Candor floating through rosy clouds with fair Nora, the lady a mass of flying draperies and seldom permitted to touch the floor.

The servants gathered in the doorways or whirled in pairs on the piazza or in the smoking-rooms.

And Richard Worth sat beaming on their joy even as God's moon without beamed on the "Silver Mountains."

Then Dr. Hardy sang the "Larboard Watch," and for an encore gave the "Old Sexton."

An actor from New York recited a thrilling dramatic poem, and two men of comic instincts, discarding their own sex, came stalking into the room representing two old maids in search of husbands.

Joyous shouts pealed forth, the merry jest went

around as heart answered heart in that hour of innocent glee.

In the room above, "Mr. Peck of Worcester" and Dawson of everywhere, quietly planned destruction and arranged disaster.

Ten o'clock found the boys ready for their luxurious beds, and soon after that hour they departed to seek the blessed physical virtue found in "golden sleep."

Special arrangements were made nightly for the entertainment of Mr. Worth's visitors, and on this occasion our two ladies with Candor and Rose were conducted to the manager's private office, where they found a generous supply of chicken, lobster, and steaming chocolate awaiting their mastication, and subsequently digestion.

Mr. Worth was an early riser and turned over a great deal of labor, both mental and physical, during the day.

He enjoyed his bed just as he did his work, and here his labor found its recompense.

On the night in question he was tired, and excusing himself to his guests departed to make his final rounds and then attempt the sleep of the just.

Nora was thoughtful, Anna loquacious and chattered like a magpie.

Talkative women with more tongue than gray tissue are not my favorites for a long race; but Anna Candor usually had something good to say and possessed the faculty of saying it well.

Her association with a highly bred fellow like Rose strengthened her intellect, and added silken finish to the splendid material used in her make-up.

Poor Nora had received many hard knocks during the course of her sexual affection, and, unlike her friend,

missed the strong protecting power that carried the latter over many of life's rough places.

She was happy now in the change already manifested in her lover's character, but repeated disaster had made the girl cautious, watchful, and slow to believe.

The treasure entrusted to her keeping seemed secure at last and safe from outside marauders, but as yet Nora Livingston did not fully trust her lover.

Time alone could change her newly fledged hopes to established certainties.

Her extreme watchfulness at once leaped to the surface when John arose and declared his intention of taking a "quick spin up the mountain," before retiring.

"Let me go with you," she said eagerly, her face twitching with excitement.

John laughed, and Nora, reassured, laughed with him.

"You, sweetheart? Why, I am going to walk and run at the rate of ten miles an hour; besides, it is bitterly cold, and such precious flowers were not made to blossom in an atmosphere below zero."

And with these words the audacious Candor, king of lovers, gathered the blushing Nora in his arms and kissed her as a man only kisses the woman who has grown fast to his heart, and who is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh.

Arthur Rose, observing this interesting incident, made an involuntary movement in the direction of Anna's chair as though he intended to follow John's example, but the gentle girl checked his rush with a movement of her little hand and then allowed it to glide into his by way of compromise and consolation.

Arthur accepted the amendment.

"I will return in half an hour," said John; "do not

wait up for me," and the vigorous fellow departed to throw on his cap and ulster.

After this Nora turned her feet to the fire and pretended to read an uncut magazine, while Anna and her pastor, forgetting Nora's existence, began a silent conversation with their eyes that ended with a still more expressive argument.

Some people would call it a kiss.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A NIGHT OF PERIL.

HALF an hour later Mr. Worth was awakened by a sharp knock on his door.

The active man, ever on the alert, sprang into dressing-gown and slippers and opened the door.

"Mr. Peck!" exclaimed Worth.

"Yes, sir. Excuse me; I am sure you will, for certainly you would be unwilling to remain ignorant of any great wrong transpiring in your well-regulated establishment."

Mr. Worth looked carefully over Peck, and at once assumed that he was not in a responsible state of mind.

He knew that the man had been confined to his room for cause, after a wild debauch, and was in all probability in a humor for creating impossibilities and inventing improbabilities. He determined to humor him.

"Very kind of you, Mr. Peck. Pray tell me what you find out of order about the place," craftily suggested Worth.

"Indeed, sir, I am quite rational, quite self-possessed, and confident of what I state."

"Go on with what you have to say, Mr. Peck," continued Mr. Worth.

Mark was now shivering with real anxiety; he no longer assumed distress.

Worth attributed his emotion to alcoholic reaction, and listened calmly.

"Quick, sir! and do not delay. Thinking that all was quiet below stairs, I went down to catch a breath of mountain air."

Mark spoke in a sharp, hurried tone that excited the commiseration of the manager, who possessed himself of the patient's hand and gently pressed his pulse.

The speaker now went ahead in the most frantic manner.

He was sincere at last.

"I walked out on the piazza and passed from the front doors to the second window on the right.

"I found the window open!"

"I glanced in, and, to my horror, perceived by the dim lamplight a man forcing open a closet in the back of the room."

Mr. Worth simply adopted the formula used to quiet the hallucinations of the alcohol-demented, and accepted the story as told.

Assuming an earnestness he did not feel, the manager professed horror and surprise at the singular circumstance, and said:

"We will go at once and drive away this house-breaker; come, Mr. Peck, together we will prove a match for the daring robber."

The men descended the stairs and entered the main office below.

This was now deserted by all but the watchman who was just entering from his eleven o'clock rounds.

“And here is Wilbur, he will help us. Wilbur, there is a burglar in Dr. Hardy’s office; we must drive him away.”

Wilbur caught the spirit of the moment and expressed himself as prepared to annihilate all the housebreakers outside of prison walls.

Mark accepted this evident disbelief without protest and pushed ahead through the “smoking-room,” anxious to end the work before his nerves should refuse longer service.

This apartment connected with the doctor’s office, the door of which was always locked before the physician retired for the night.

Mr. Worth’s office was on the other side of the surgery, the door of communication being also locked after hours.

As I have already said, one-half of these doors were of glass, an old contrivance modernized.

Mark glided to the transparent obstruction and started back in well-assumed terror.

For the first time since Peck came to him the manager became interested if not startled.

There was indeed a light in the office!

Mark did not give him long to surmise or reason.

“There, there!” he cried, “take him away! Don’t let him kill me.”

What a superb actor was lost to the legitimate stage when Mark Candor took up professional villany! His exhibition of terror was masterly.

He clung to Mr. Worth as if that gentleman was Candor’s two millions and about to vanish.

He clutched Wilbur’s hand like a compound cotton-press; he shook like one in an ague.

The men tried to soothe him and drew him toward the closed door.

He held back for a brief time, and then allowed himself to be drawn forward.

"Now, see," said the manager, "there is no one there."

The three men placed their eyes before the glass.

Then Mark sank to his knees and crawled from sight *unobserved*.

Master and man remained upright—

Frozen with surprise.

A minute before, as Mr. Worth and party entered the smoking-room, Anna, Nora, and Rose, seated in the manager's office, threw up their heads and listened.

"What was that?" inquired Nora, tossing away her book and frowning.

They heard the sound of breaking wood in the surgery.

"Some one kindling a fire in the doctor's stove," suggested Rose.

It was a thought mentally disallowed by all; even Rose knew otherwise; but at such times a man feels called on to say something if he wishes to be regarded as an authority.

The trio sat in silence, the lovers hand in hand, Nora with her ear turned to catch the next sound.

For a moment all was still.

Then a cry of horror, Manager Worth's voice.

The three darted to the glass sash and looked across at the opposite door.

Pressed closely against the panes, they saw the face of Worth and beside him Wilbur.

The two were staring in dismay at something in the room.

The women and their companion peered eagerly in the direction indicated by the opposite line of eyes, and saw standing under the light

John Candor.

John Candor holding in one hand a flask of liquor and with the other pressing a glass to his lips.

The watchman's duplicate key clicked in the lock.

Flask and tumbler fell to the floor, and with a bound like a hunted deer Candor sprang through the open window.

But not quicker than Nora Livingston darted through the door of the manager's room, opening on the piazza.

Women who are in earnest generally accomplish their purpose, and the light-footed girl gained on her fleeing lover.

Behind her thundered the manager and his officer.

"Quick!" he cried; "we may save him yet."

The man now made a fatal but necessary pause before a five-barred fence, the pause that athletes are obliged to make ere taking their leap.

Just a slight cessation of flight, and then he vaulted, or tried to vault.

Nora leaped forward six feet, and fastened her fingers in his coat-collar.

Their hot, panting breath mingled as the momentary struggle began; his redolent with the fumes of the fatal draught just taken.

Then they fell together in the snow. The brave girl received a cruel blow on her face from the man's clinched fist, but the Spartan maid only tightened her hold.

Then Richard Worth gave an exhibition of quickness and strength as welcome as unexpected.

With one hand he quickly drew away the bleeding

girl, and with the other clinched Candor's wrist and dragged him to his knees.

The desperate man attempted another struggle, but Wilbur and Rose threw themselves upon him.

This ended the fray. Nora and Anna clung together, frantic with misery.

Each tasted the bitterness of death without dying.

The captive quietly submitted and stood with his chin on his bosom panting and subdued.

The clergyman spoke first.

"John Candor, why have you done this?"

The wretched man was silent.

A white moon on the white snow made black objects thrown on the surface sharply visible.

The object that came swiftly from the dark mountain pines cried out: *"What has John Candor done now?"*

An exclamation of wonder burst from all.

Side by side the giants stood.

Exactly alike.

Amazement fell upon the awe-stricken watchers.

Nora's heart spoke, and her nimble fingers performed their office.

Quick as a flash the upper lip of her late opponent lost its hairy covering, and as the unmasked ruffian leaped forward, the girl's strong, white hand clutched his hair and tore from his scalp a wig of glossy curls.

The captive Dawson sprang over the fence like a frightened kangaroo, and with a cry of joy the gallant Nora leaped into the arms of her

Astonished lover!

CHAPTER XXV.

A WOMAN WITH A HEAD ON HER SHOULDERS.

A PAIR of wild eyes from which the green glass covering had fallen saw all this; then the pale face and trembling body went away into the black night, and a baffled conspirator stormed up the mountain road.

In this most discourteous manner Mr. James Peck of Worcester left Blue Wing for the good of the community.

Above all things else, Mark had impressed upon Dawson's mind the necessity of his *escape*, before he could be identified or before the real Candor could appear upon the scene to confront him and challenge his identity.

The plan was well laid and helped along by several accidents favorable to the conspirators, but it failed at the very instant of success from the cause Mark most dreaded, Dawson's inability to escape, and thus complete the work he had so admirably accomplished up to the instant of his capture.

In the face of such testimony, John's simple denial would have only served the purpose of establishing his insanity and of landing him in a "mad house."

The lenient trustees, Redmund and Jarvis, could never have enforced their own wishes against the mountain of fact that would have arisen, giant-like, to oppose the succession of John Candor to the forfeited estates.

This would have been the consequence had Dawson completed his work by *escaping*.

But he did not escape.

Nora's hand prevented this; Nora's fair face received the terrible assault and with it no thought of yielding.

Of course at first the girl believed she was struggling with her lover. She believed that to let him escape in his insane condition, for mad she certainly thought him, would simply result in his plunge into some mountain snow-drift, or a leap from some lofty crag.

And so the plucky girl held on with both hands and feet. She could not be shaken off in spite of Dawson's terrible blows; and to-day she bears a tiny scar over her pretty nose; a mark that John views with reverential awe; and if at any time he is refractory, and refuses to go to church, or insists on smoking in the drawing-room, Nora has but to point laughingly to the little red dimple on her forehead in order to secure immediate obedience.

Had the two girls suffered at the stake, they could not have known more misery than was compressed into those few moments when they believed in John Candor's frailty.

The relief following such a strain of woe came none too soon to save Nora from a relapse, and Anna from an untimely sepulchre.

When despair gave way to joy and assured peace, all hands cast their wits and eyes about them to find a solution of the mysterious night's work.

Mr. Peck and his attendant had not been visible since the hour of their defeat.

Search failed to discover the Worcester gentleman, but in his room remained the gold-mounted "alligator satchel."

The contents of this receptacle were turned over in search of letters or other papers that might serve to

identify and locate the man who had vanished into air.

Not a line of writing that could furnish the slightest clue was found.

Linen, underwear, slippers, toilet articles were scattered about the room, nothing more. Mr. Peck of Worcester left no sign, no convicting marks behind him; every track was covered, even those he made scurrying over the mountain road, fleeing from imaginary pursuers, fleeing in vain *from himself!*

The falling snow quickly covered his footprints; the icy shroud came within a hair's breadth of covering him also.

Who was the man most directly interested in establishing proof that John Candor had forfeited his inheritance?

Our New Yorkers at the Institute did not hesitate long before answering that question.

The man most interested was he who, by the terms of the dead man's will, would in the event of default by Candor inherit the millions.

Of course Mark Candor was at once arraigned before our young friends, and forced to undergo a preliminary examination.

The defendant absent.

Manager Worth was the principal witness.

He described the now notorious Mr. Peck as a smooth-faced, gentlemanly person, wearing colored glasses.

He detailed the circumstances of his visit to the distinguished foreigner from Massachusetts at the Meadow House.

He named the arrangements made for his transfer to the Institute, and wound up his testimony with a description of Peck's midnight visit to his room and their

subsequent discovery of Gilbert Dawson in Dr. Hardy's office.

A verdict was at once brought in against the absent Peck.

He was the instigator, Dawson the tool.

But who was Peck?

"Probably an envoy extraordinary of the interested party in New York," said Rose.

"Then Mr. Peck must be found, and if possible forced into a revelation of the truth!" this bit of wisdom came from Nora.

"I think not, Nora," said John; "this whole business is rotten to the core; an investigation, unless such an act becomes necessary, would be unwise.

"My past life will hardly bear turning over, and to fasten a greater degree of criminality on my cousin might reflect on our family inclusively. Yes, on my dear father's judgment in having selected such unworthy scamps as his heirs.

"No, Nora; I do not think we can afford the luxury of running Mr. Peck to earth."

"You are right," said Mr. Worth. "Besides, last night's work will operate to your advantage: you know now that your enemy is armed against you; that he has resolved to resort to the most desperate means to attain his end. Forewarned is forearmed, and I certainly believe, my young friend, that the only effect of this ill-advised attempt against your interests, yes, against your life, will be to strengthen your determination and increase your self-watchfulness."

Anna, John, and Arthur said "*Amen!*" to all this.

Nora said nothing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A FEMALE DETECTIVE.

BUT if Miss Livingston was silent she prepared for a great deal of action.

The first move of the young lady was to go to the room recently occupied by Mr. Peck.

She shut herself in and began investigating the case in her own way.

Every piece of linen remaining was examined separately; not a collar or a cuff escaped her dexterous fingers or vigilant eyes. All the articles were new, evidently purchased for the trip; no name or initial appeared to help her.

Then she reopened the satchel and inspected the interior. There was nothing inside but an old newspaper folded and evidently abandoned as useless.

Nora removed the paper from the alligator's stomach and closed her fingers over the printed sheet.

Something inside resisted the delicate pressure, and the young lady proceeded to explore.

She placed the paper on the table before her and opened it; her eyes fell upon the golden beauty of

Mark Candor's beard.

Instinctively she grasped the fact; the truth was revealed in the object before her. Already on the look-out for traces of suspected Mark, her mind at once accepted the information conveyed by the mass of human wool under her eyes.

Her belief mounted to certainty, when under a fold of the paper she found a

Huge pair of shears!

No man would carry such a weapon but for some particular purpose.

Nora put the evidence of the whiskers and the shears together, decided that both belonged to the absent Peck, and that the absent Peck was none other than Mark Candor of New York.

As yet, however, her suspicions lacked positive confirmation; links were missing.

She could not swear to the beard, but was working out a very useful chain of evidence.

Mr. Worth described the absconding Peck as a man *destitute of beard*.

Well, a beard was palpable to her sight, a beard that had in all probability been cut from Peck's face.

She put the shears and the hair together, folded the paper around them, and left the room, to place the lucky find in a secure corner of her trunk.

Mr. Worth five minutes later saw the lithe creature, clad in rubber boots and sealskin, striding down the avenue leading to the village.

The gentleman shouted a hearty salute, and Nora turned, kissed her pretty fingers, and forged ahead without pausing.

Ten minutes later she marched into the parlor of the Meadow House and inquired for the landlord.

Nancy Bruce, with a dishcloth in each hand, appeared and informed her the landlord was "abed."

"Please send the clerk to me, then."

Nancy, after considering the request for a minute, went in search of the only man about the premises, and after a reasonable delay Rube stumbled over the doormat and stood before the impatient Nora.

"Are you the clerk, sir?" she inquired.

Reuben expectorated over his shoulder and looked in wonder at the questioner.

During his sojourn at the Meadow he had been called everything but "clerk." He rather fancied the new dignity, however, and answered:

"S'pose so."

"I am here in order to learn if a friend of mine has been with you during the last few days. Can you give me any information?"

"A friend of yourn?"

"Yes."

"Woman?"

"No, a man."

"Be gosh! there were two men here day before yesterday, but I don't know as they was friends of yourn."

"Do you remember their names?"

Reuben scratched his nose with his thumb-nail and answered:

"I never knowed their names."

"I suppose they registered when they came here," said Nora.

"S'pose so."

"Bring me your register, please."

Reuben's consternation at this demand culminated in a catastrophe.

He swallowed his tobacco.

Before the disastrous effects consequent upon such an accident could be manifest, Nora opened her pocket-book and drew forth a long green five-dollar bill, and handed it to the other.

The man of many offices at once recovered his presence of mind. He was fond of tips; quarters and half-dollars sometimes came his way during the summer

months when city folks were plenty as whortleberries, but five dollars all in a lump was a strike made but once in a lifetime.

“Five dollars!” At the mandate of this most generous young princess, he would have lifted the snoring landlord from his bed, and deposited him in a snow bank.

His long legs measured six feet at a stride, and inside of thirty seconds the “register” was snatched from the office desk and banged down on the parlor table.

“Now leave me, please,” said Nora. Rube glanced diplomatically in the direction of Nora’s pocketbook; he was prepared for surprises, and would not have fallen in a fit had the lady issued a second edition of her readable paper.

As soon as Nora found herself alone, she closed the door and looked for the key.

This was not in the lock, so taking the register under her arm she placed a chair against the door and seated herself in it; much to the chagrin of Rube, who had turned at the sound of the closing door and placed his eye at the keyhole.

Nora rested the book on her knees and opened it at the desired date, two days old.

She carefully scrutinized the names recorded. Reuben was right: there were two names, and only two, written on the page before her.

James Peck, Worcester, Mass.

Gilbert Dawson, Rochester, N. Y.

Peck had been assigned to No. 6 and Dawson to No. 8.

To the last name inscribed in the register the young lady paid little attention, but fastened her eyes eagerly on the bold signature of the man from Massachusetts.

She uttered no sound, no exclamation of joy or sur-

prise, but as she continued to gaze a flame denoting feminine rage began to glow on her fair face, and her parted lips fell together over her white teeth.

Nora was mad.

Again she drew from her pocket the repository of cash, and this time extracted a folded paper.

This she opened and eagerly scanned. It was a letter, a love-letter—an ardent appeal from a love-stricken man. It was dated a year back and signed

“Mark Candor.”

This signature she quickly compared with the name of Peck written in the register. With a swift, dexterous motion of her hand and arm the glowing girl tore the page from the book and put it in her pocket, and after overthrowing Reuben in the hallway strode from the house out into the falling night. *The girl with a head on her shoulders!*

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE DUEL IN THE SNOW.

As the afternoon began to thicken into night John Candor looked down the long avenue of naked trees, anxious for Nora's appearance.

He took a few turns up and down the piazza, then snatching his great-coat from the rack inside the door, started down the road, a little anxious at his sweetheart's prolonged absence.

When the light-footed girl departed from the Meadow House she took the path across the hills, upon one of which stands the Cummings mansion.

After reaching the summit Nora paused for a moment's rest, and to snatch a glimpse of hoary Mt. Elizabeth, still visible through the half-born night.

Startled at the rapid approach of darkness she hastened onward in the direction of the lonely mountain road.

This she reached where a bridge crosses a rushing stream, and on the stone-work of the span she sat for a moment, palpitating, glowing, and a little tired.

Nora looked down at the bright waters and heard their everlasting song; the sound was peace, rest, content.

The grinding of a stone under a heavy boot startled her into turning in the direction of the sound.

A pair of broad shoulders towered above her; a pair of strong arms caught her and held her close.

One moment she quietly and not unwillingly submitted; the next brought mad terror to her soul, for Nora found herself in the embrace of

Gilbert Dawson!

The frightened girl lived ten years of horrors in the ten seconds the fierce bravo held her in his strong arms.

Ten seconds, certainly not longer, for John Candor came down on them like a thunderbolt, tore the fainting girl from the ruffian's arms, and struck him twice before he could wink once.

He seated his living treasure on the stone wall of the bridge and pressed her burning temples with the soft, cold snow.

Nora needed nothing more, and quickly regained her courage and her feet.

She took a firm hold of her lover's arm, and gloried in the delicious sense of protection found in that substantial mass of bone and muscle.

Dawson had risen from the snow-bank on which he so suddenly sat down, and now stood before them, erect and composed.

He described a half-circle in the road and thus placed himself between the lovers and the Institute.

"Stand out of the way, you cowardly cur, or I'll down you again, and harder next time, be sure of that!" cried John.

"You struck me unawares," answered the ruffian, "and I do not think that under fair conditions you can put me down or save yourself from the thrashing I am going to give you."

John gently removed Nora's hand from his arm, and seated her as before.

"Do not be afraid, Miss Livingston; I only regret that you will be obliged to witness the opening of our road to the Institute; I will not detain you long, and promise to remove the obstruction in a manner both expeditious and scientific."

And so these gladiators stood, face to face, foot to foot, ready for their *duel in the snow*.

The men were evenly matched so far as physical conditions were concerned, and both possessed the modern accomplishment of being able "to put up their hands."

John wished to avoid this encounter for Nora's sake; he was not a pugilist and had that true feeling of gentility which makes it an unpleasant task to display combative physical prowess in the presence of a lady.

"Will you stand aside and allow this lady to pass?" said John quietly.

"No!" answered Dawson; "I'm going to whip you first and kill you afterward, and I want a witness to the proceeding."

Nora uttered a cry of dismay.

“Don't be alarmed, Miss Livingston, this jail-bird shall soon be at your feet asking forgiveness.”

Without a word of warning Dawson led with his right, straight from the shoulder; Candor ducked under the blow and, as he recovered, “upper cut” his man with a force that made every tooth in his jaws rattle.

Dawson drove his right straight against Candor's heart, and the punishment sent our lad back a step or two.

Nora sickened with terror.

Then Dawson, following up his advantage, quick as lightning led his right and left straight out.

John ducked under one blow, and “countered” the other.

Dawson rushed and slugged, and Candor watched him coolly and avoided the blows with quick, light leaps to the rear.

Maddened at his failure, Dawson opened his guard for a moment, and tried to close; this was Candor's chance and he saw it.

Dropping his right our hero threw his left with terrible force against Dawson's unguarded face; then before the latter could recover John swung his right and let his body go with it. The bunch of fives landed directly under Dawson's ear.

One moment the bully stood and clutched at the air; then like a great tree he swayéd forward and fell on his face in the snow.

Candor quickly arranged his disordered clothing and, offering his arm to Nora, quietly said:

“Now, Miss Livingston, let us go to supper.”

Ten minutes later he returned with Arthur Rose to secure the defeated pugilist.

Dawson had disappeared!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LIGHT FOLLOWS HIM.

THE remaining days of seclusion from the world necessary passed like a happy dream to John Candor and his Institute associates.

Mr. Worth was ever at hand with some charming scheme for the entertainment of his patients and their visitors.

Several of the gentlemen brought their wives with them, and the hundred inmates of this splendid home lived together as brothers and sisters, sharing each other's joys and sorrows, cheering the despondent, and laughing with those who found a blessed realization of hopes long deferred and at times lost altogether.

The approach of the Keeley patient to positive cure is a gradual one.

When we think of the utterly disorganized condition of the men who come to Blue Wing for treatment, it is scarcely a matter of wonder that they do not in a day attain a normal state of mind and body.

John Candor did not now indulge in idle moments, those sad decayers of a man's progressive vitality.

We are ever pulling ahead or relapsing in our mental and physical condition. The indulgence in sloth to-day carries us backward and we forfeit the attainments of yesterday.

John Candor progressed rapidly, paying strict attention to "Keeley laws," and improving his spare hours with study or physical work in the open.

And during his four weeks of probation seventy renewed believers went forth to fight the good fight and send others to drink at the golden fountain.

To-day that silent, noble work of redemption is going forward, as it will go forward to the end of all time. Its blessings will be felt throughout eternity.

And now Candor and his mates stood on the piazza of the Susquehanna for the last time, prepared to depart from the ministering care of Manager Worth.

Robert dashed up with the sleigh filled with the skins of the mountain bear and prairie buffalo.

The patients gathered around the parting guests, ready to speed and cheer them.

All had known the good-will of John Candor; many had felt the weight of his bountiful hand and heart.

The manager took the two young girls in his arms and kissed them almost as tenderly as he has so often kissed his loved wife and charming daughters, now far away.

At this the patients cheered, and of course the girls blushed.

Then the handsome young doctor came forward. He was allowed to kiss the young ladies also on the back of their gloves.

Another cheer.

Hands were clasped all around, murmured blessings, slaps on the back, "Good-by, old boy, God bless you!" and amid a perfect storm of acclamations John Candor was whirled away, leaving the robes of the dipsomaniac behind him, but taking with him a bounteous portion of

The light that never fails!

CHAPTER XXIX.

KING ALCOHOL.

ELEVEN months later Mark Candor returned from a reputed trip to Europe.

Latham stated his belief in the most emphatic terms when he declared that "the gentleman had never left New York, but had been spying around Mr. John."

His old rooms were prepared for him, and without the slightest degree of embarrassment this undaunted irrepressible took possession.

"I like his cheek," muttered Latham when John laughingly told the old butler that his cousin "was about to pay them a short visit."

Anna thought his return an act of assurance and cold-blooded audacity, but John smiled away her frowns; for he had it in his brave, kind heart to feel for the man who was about to lose the wealth he had believed his own without dispute.

He never questioned as to the probability of Mark's complicity in the Blue Wing escapade. He desired above all things to forget the perils of that remarkable transaction.

The well-laid plans of the designers had been overthrown, the designers themselves floored. He was the victor, and while he could feel nothing but contempt for the actors in this farcical tragedy, he was too grateful and happy to desire the conviction and punishment

of the ill-starred promoters and executors of the wicked plot.

On the contrary John had quietly determined to return his cousin's ill-will by an act of manly generosity, and already the family lawyer had been instructed to settle a handsome sum on Mark Candor as soon as the transfer of his father's estate had been made.

No one knew of this but the young heir and the lawyer. In the event of its publicity Anna would rebel, perhaps weep, and Nora positively resort to firearms or dynamite.

He would not tell Mark because he did not desire to pose before his cousin as his patron, or place him in the position of a pensioner.

Had John read correctly the heart of this scheming fraud, he would hardly have troubled himself to advance his worldly interests, or delicately cater to his sensitive feelings.

So Mark stalked back into the abode of kindly hospitality, the devil still in his heart, and the glory of his golden beard returned.

This man had changed in one respect, however, and the alteration was a most radical one.

The disease which John Candor had lost, Mark had found. The erring man was now at the mercy of a tyrant who never pardons.

King Alcohol!

CHAPTER XXX.

A CONVICTED FELON.

THE trustees, Redmund and Jarvis, were in the handsome parlors of the Jarvis mansion, posing gracefully at either end of the marble mantel.

These extensive apartments were thrown open and illuminated for the first time since the trustee became that most interesting of all men, "a widower."

The two gentlemen were in evening dress and evidently expected company.

Redmund, the aggressive, paced the floor with measured strides. Jarvis stood before the fire listening meekly to the declaration of his coadjutor.

"The hour has arrived, Jarvis, when we, the executors of the Candor estate, must prepare to perform the duty imposed upon us by the will.

"Two years ago the conditions of that will were made known. The question now to be decided is: Who is the lawful heir?"

"I did not know that you entertained a doubt of that," said Jarvis.

"You, of course, will say," continued Redmund, "that John Candor is the lawful legatee, and of course I am delighted to agree with you.

"John, in *our* opinion, has complied with the conditions of the will, and has not taken alcoholic drink for the term of twelve months. So far, so good. I believe him to have abstained; so do you. Yes, we know it.

His nearest friends can vouch for his total abstinence, *so far as they know*. But have you ever thought that when the will is offered for probate, serious objections may be thrown in the way of John's succession?"

"By whom may these obstructions be offered?" inquired Jarvis.

"By Mark Candor, of course."

"What will he do?"

"I don't say will do, but may be able to do. He may throw the burden of proof on us and force us to prove to the satisfaction of the courts that John has not drank during the time of probation.

"We are willing to accept the spirit of the will as its legal interpretation. We are willing to accept as positive evidence the young man's word. The court will probably accept his sworn testimony and consider it sufficient, and decide, as we have done, if there is no one to oppose this fair and liberal course."

"And if obstruction is offered by Mark Candor?" inquired Jarvis, picking his nails nervously.

"This is my reply to your hypothetical question, my venerable friend. If Mark chooses to obstruct and delay the course of settlement, he can do so. My lawyer even believes that he can tie up the estate, and force Candor to prove absolutely that he has not drank a drop of alcohol for twelve months.

"Of course this will be impossible."

Jarvis tried to digest all this before replying, then said:

"I see, and by such action bring on expensive and interminable suits of law, by which the two millions would melt in the crucibles of our legal representatives and their antagonists."

"You have touched the proper key, Jarvis, and must agree with me in thinking that, after all, our man is

not to have so much of a walk-over as we believed he would."

"Then John is in his cousin's power?"

"To a degree, yes, and doubtless Mark Candor has found this out before now. I have every reason to believe that he will either obstruct the work of settlement or demand a compromise."

"Then let us compromise," said the sensible Jarvis, who dreaded legal pugilism.

"Certainly, if the fellow is reasonable. It is always better to eat than fight. We shall see. Ah! here are the arrivals," and the worthy coadjutors, assuming the dignity of Roman emperors, drew themselves upright and prepared for the important work of the evening.

A carriage rattled up to the door, and disgorged Nora and John, Anna and Rose.

The inseparables advanced in good order up the steps, and as soon as the portals of Castle Jarvis were thrown open they invaded the hallway and stormed the hospitable-looking parlors.

They formed a jolly party, the new-comers and their hosts. John was as full of animal spirits as a colt in the paddock; while the others, drawing fun from his never-failing fund of wit and humor, bubbled over with happiness and conducted themselves more like the early arrivals at a ball than men and women called together to listen to a decision affecting most seriously the future of them all.

Next came Mark Candor, bowing with gentlemanly ease, not a trace of the loser on his face, not a sign that he was there as a subordinate actor in the drama about to be enacted.

A prominent lawyer came with Mark, who, after be-

ing presented in due form, sank into a seat and assumed a careless indifference to his surroundings.

Yet this man was the keenest and most watchful individual in the room.

Lawyer Sharp began the evening's work. He stated that the meeting was merely a preliminary one, and to a great extent informal and unofficial.

"After we have talked over the matter of the succession we will refer the whole matter of final settlement to the judiciary, which will be a mere formality."

Lawyer Prod said nothing in reply. The trustees would have given five thousand dollars each to know what was passing in his fertile mind.

Redmund arose and in his hearty manner assumed everything as settled as a matter of course. He congratulated John Candor on the successful termination of his year of probation, and in the end hailed him as the heir to his father's millions.

Jarvis spoke in the same vein, his speech implying little more than a "me too" argument, and a perfect agreement with Redmund's views.

John Candor next addressed the interested spectators, and spoke in his own frank, manly way, claiming no credit for himself, and gratefully referring to the powerful system of cure that had enabled him to withstand every temptation, and carried him successfully to the issue of his final trial.

Then there was a slight pause in the proceedings.

At last Lawyer Sharp, who had been looking over a copy of the Candor will, put a leading question to John:

"Have you complied with the conditions contained in your father's will, Mr. Candor?"

"I have," replied John.

“For the term of one year have you totally abstained from alcoholic drink?”

“*I have, so help me God!*”

Anna rushed across the room and kissed her brother. Nora wanted to do the same, but concluded to wait for a more fitting occasion.

“That settles it!” thundered Redmund, bringing his big hand down on the shoulder of the shrinking Jarvis, who saw the love-pat coming, and tried to dodge it.

“*Not quite, I think!*”

Lawyer Prod spoke for the first time. He was smiling at his client now, and Mark was smiling back at him.

“I would like to inquire if Mr. John Candor is prepared to furnish actual proof that he has complied with the terms of this will in having abstained as is therein provided?”

Prod articulated each word distinctly. His enunciation was as clear as a bell, his voice as incisive as the edge of a razor.

Redmund, Jarvis, and Sharp were prepared, in a measure, for this question of the opposition. It fell on the others like a thunderbolt.

The quick mind of Anna suggested the thought, “How can he prove it?”

As usual when in trouble she now permitted her hand to be made a prisoner by the gentle clutch of her pastor.

John Candor sat without replying. For the first time, he realized the difficulty of his position.

During the last year he could have swallowed alcohol, and no man have witnessed the act, and now, even with the two million of dollars to stimulate his intellectual effort, he could see no possible chance of presenting the *positive* proof of his total abstinence.

John began to wonder if, after all, this was a question that would have to be settled by judges and lawyers.

The weak point of old Candor's testament was now apparent to all, and Sharp, who had drawn the will, began to feel a twinge of professional remorse.

Prod went ahead in the same clear-cut style of elocution as before:

"I ask again if my brother Sharp is prepared to substantiate the declaration of his client?"

Sharp now arose to the critical occasion and said:

"I do not think that it will be necessary. This will simply requires the compliance with a certain condition. It stipulates nothing more; and when you demand that my client shall furnish proof that he has *not* drank alcohol I demand your proof that he *has*. The burden rests with you."

This was a point well taken, words well chosen, spoken with a good accent and good discretion.

Prod spoke in a low tone to Mark, then addressed the triumphant Sharp:

"There may be reason in what you say, Brother Sharp, and on the other hand your claim may be meaningless. We have nothing to do with either view of the case, and I am confident that the regularly constituted authorities alone can decide the question."

"What do you mean, sir, by 'regularly constituted authorities?'" thundered the indignant Redmund.

"Yes, what do you mean?" echoed little Jarvis, frowning severely.

"I mean that my client, who is equally interested in this most important decision with Mr. John Candor, will, if necessary, ask for a decision from a court of justice."

"Where the money, or a large part of it, would be

swallowed up in litigation," suggested Jarvis with tears in his voice.

Prod simply shrugged his shoulders in answer to Jarvis, and turning to his professional brother spoke as follows:

"The result of long-drawn-out proceedings and delayed decisions, appeals, postponements, etc., would entail vast expenses, and make sad havoc with the disputed money; and even should a decision finally favor your client, his inheritance would come to him in a state of most unhappy depreciation."

"Well," said Sharp.

"It is not the wish of my client to witness such a disposition of his honored uncle's money, and he will gladly agree to any plan that will enable us to reach an immediate settlement."

All present now saw the drift of Prod's argument. He was throwing himself open to an offer of compromise. His scheme was a sort of

Legalized blackmail!

"I mean an equitable adjustment of these funds," continued Prod. "In the event of our disproving your claim, my client will inherit all the money involved; or, failing this, force you to attempt the impossible. That is our case."

"You mean to infer," said Sharp, "that under the terms of this will, no settlement is possible outside of the courts?"

"Not without the consent of my client, and he is ready to meet you on fair ground."

"In other words, he demands a share of the estate," said Sharp.

"Demands? Oh! no. Mr. Candor only suggests that

an amicable understanding can be reached without trouble or delay."

"Have you decided on the amount?"

"Of course you have given that portion of the question your passing thought!" Sarcastic Redmund said this.

"Oh, yes!" answered Prod with a smile. "That was the least of our trouble."

"How much?" quietly inquired Sharp. Prod paused a moment, and all waited with suspended breath and compressed lips for the reply that came thus:

"One million of dollars!"

Redmund burst into a roar of angry laughter.

Jarvis turned pale and moved away from dear Redmund's reach.

The rest looked at one another, almost disbelieving their own ears.

Sharp alone remained cool and sagacious, and spoke quietly.

"And in the event of our refusal to entertain your extraordinary proposal, what then?"

Up to this moment Mark had silently regarded the progress of events; now he sprang to his feet.

Prod attempted to restrain him. He might as well have tried to wipe up Niagara with a sponge. Hate and rage urged him on, and thus he spoke:

"I will tell you what then. Failing to divide this money equally with me, I will keep it from that man as long as there is a court to receive my legal papers or a judge to listen to our arguments. After that you will be welcome to the crumbs left by the legal cormorants, Mr. John Candor."

Again silence fell on the party. *What a mess!* thought every one.

John cut the knot with his quick, hot reply:

"Mark Candor, I have complied with the terms of my father's will. I am his lawful heir. You have no more right to a five-dollar note of that money than the driver of yonder street-car. When I became perfectly sure of my redemption by the Keeley Cure and of my ability to fulfil the conditions of my father's will, my first thought was of you, my first wish was to soften the blow which I knew you would feel so keenly.

"On my return from Blue Wing, I instructed Lawyer Sharp to prepare the transfer of a sum of money to you, sufficiently large to enable you to live in comfort and luxury to the end of your days.

"Your misfortunes appealed to my sympathies, your practical disinheritance touched the soft side of my nature; now, your arrogant assumption of so-called *rights* appeals to the fighting side of my nature. I will not surrender one dollar. No! not if I spend it all in protracted legal battles, and go down to my grave a beggar."

"I accept your challenge, and will fight you to the bitter end!"

Mark shouted out this defiance, and started to leave the room.

"Stop!"

The tall figure of Nora Livingston, straight and supple as a beautiful young poplar, towered over gentle Anna, seated by her side.

All eyes turned to her.

"Stop!"

At her command the furious Mark obeyed.

"If you accept the challenge of legal warfare with your cousin, your side of the fight will take place inside the walls of a prison."

Instantly Mark ran over in his mind all he had done, reviewed his responsibility, and grew confident.

"Indeed!" he said; "what law have I outraged, fair lady, that I should be cast into a prison cell, away from the world and from you?"

Mark tried to be sarcastic, but the attempt confounded him; there was so much anger in his speech that the penetrating venom was lost.

Nora now blazed forth:

"You have conspired with another to deprive John Candor of his inheritance. Conspiracy is a state prison offence."

"An offence of which I have never been guilty," laughed Mark.

"*Guilty by the law of God and man!*" cried Nora.

"With your hired brother assassin, you conspired to ruin John Candor. With him you burglarized the Keeley Institute at Blue Wing."

Mark made a praiseworthy effort to smile. It was a ghastly failure, a very pale smile; then he stammered:

"I—have—never—been to Blue Wing."

Nora drew two papers from the feminine repository dangling at her belt.

"Behold the proofs of your falsehood, your handwriting in the register of the Meadow Hotel."

Then she opened a newspaper, and held aloft that "golden fleece," carefully guarded for this supreme moment.

"See the beard you cut from your face in room No. 6, Meadow Hotel, and behold the shears with which you cut it."

"Take off the hair now adorning your pale, wicked face, and Manager Worth will swear it was you who invaded the Keeley Institute at Blue Wing, and will

send you to state prison for burglary and conspiracy, not as—

“James Peck of Worcester, but as *Mark Candor of New York!*”

CHAPTER XXXI.

GOOD-BY! SWEETHEARTS, GOOD-BY!

“ALL is well that ends well,” and John makes his final bow to you, kind reader, a very happy man.

Cousin Mark, by the advice of Lawyer Prod, concluded to keep as far away from judges and juries as possible, that astute practitioner securing for him a yearly income sufficiently large to keep him from theft or beggary.

For six months he drank like a beaver, and at last crawled to the Institute, humbled and abashed. Manager Worth and Dr. Hardy worked patiently over the remains of his body and soul, and sent him away fitted to become a useful member of society.

He went to Texas, married a Mexican girl with some money, and he will undoubtedly get through the world and earn his coffin without much trouble.

Redmund and Jarvis determined that while alcohol did no positive harm to them, as individuals, their example was pernicious to others who could not successfully handle the treacherous element of sin.

Both trustees swore off.

Then these two moderate drinkers found themselves buried in a very deep cavity.

They discovered they had undertaken a task disagreeable, and almost impossible. The habit of thirty

years could not be abandoned without causing friction and discontent.

Redmund became irritable beyond endurance, and even his happy little friend gained the name of "Cranky Jarvis."

One day Redmund packed his grip, said good-by to the other, and started for Chicago.

The same evening Jarvis ordered his linen to be packed and informed his weeping housekeeper that he was off for Europe.

Twenty-four hours later the two worthies met in the "line" at the Susquehanna Institute, and were cured together, and never relapsed, although Redmund always insisted that he took the cure as an example to Jarvis.

John Candor and his lovely wife are co-workers in the cause of *practical temperance*. Their advice is often backed up with necessary dollars.

Day by day the human tide continues to flow from North, South, East, and West.

Wide swing the portals of those noble mansions to receive the limping believers, clamoring for salvation.

Hark to the grateful shouts of the redeemed host! Mark how their numbers multiply! Behold the rush for places in the line, that now goes on forever.

Go to that home of rescue! Drink of the healing potion, God's latest gift to man, sent through his ambassador, Science.

Drink of the healing waters and find rest, poor weary lost one!

Rest for body and soul. The road to lasting peace and happiness, made bright and sure by the

Light that never fails.

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