

## LITTLE FRED, THE CANAL BOY.

### PART I.

In the outskirts of the little town of Toledo, in Ohio, might be seen a small, one-story cottage, whose external architecture no way distinguished it from dozens of other residences of the poor, by which it was surrounded. But over this dwelling, a presiding air of sanctity and neatness, of quiet and repose, marked it out as different from every other.

The little patch before the door, instead of being a loafing ground for swine, and a receptacle of litter and filth, was trimly set with flowers, weeded, watered, and fenced with dainty care. The scarlet bignonia clambered over the mouldering logs of the sides, shrouding their roughness in its gorgeous mantle of green and crimson, and the good old-fashioned morning glory, laced across the window, unfolded, every day, tints whose beauty, though cheap and common, the finest French milliner might in vain seek to rival.

When, in travelling the western country, you meet such a dwelling, do you not instinctively know what you shall see inside of it? Do you not seem to see the trimly-sanded floor, the well-kept furniture, the snowy muslin curtain? Are you not sure that on a neat stand you shall see, as on an altar, the dear old family Bible, brought, like the ancient ark of

the covenant, into the far wilderness, and ever overshadowed, as a bright cloud, with remembered prayers and counsels of father and mother, in a far off New England home?

And in this cottage there was such a Bible, brought from the wild hills of New Hampshire, and its middle page recorded the marriage of James Sandford to Mary Irving; and alas! after it another record, traced in a trembling hand--the death of James Sandford, at Toledo. And this fair, thin woman, in the black dress, with soft brown hair parted over a pale forehead, with calm, patient blue eyes, and fading cheek, is the once energetic, buoyant, light-hearted New Hampshire girl, who has brought with her the strongest religious faith, the active practical knowledge, the skilful, well-trained hand and clear head, with which cold New England portions her daughters. She had left all, and come to the western wilds with no other capital than her husband's manly heart and active brain--he young, strong, full of hope, prompt, energetic, and skilled to acquire--she careful, prudent, steady, no less skilled to save; and between the two no better firm for acquisition and prospective success could be desired. Every body prophesied that James Sandford would succeed, and Mary heard these praises with a quiet exultation. But alas! that whole capital of hers--that one strong, young heart, that ready, helpful hand--two weeks of the country's fever sufficed to lay them cold and low forever.

And Mary yet lived, with her babe in her arms, and one bright little boy by her side; and this boy is our little brown-eyed Fred--the hero of our

story. But few years had rolled over his curly head, when he first looked, weeping and wondering, on the face of death. Ah, one look on that awful face adds years at once to the age of the heart; and little Fred felt manly thoughts aroused in him by the cold stillness of his father, and the deep, calm anguish of his mother.

"O mamma, don't cry so, don't," said the little fellow. "I am alive, and I can take care of you. Dear mamma, I pray for you every day." And Mary was comforted even in her tears and thought, as she looked into those clear, loving brown eyes, that her little intercessor would not plead in vain; for saith Jesus, "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

In a few days she learned to look her sorrows calmly in the face, like a brave, true woman, as she was. She was a widow, and out of the sudden wreck of her husband's plans but a pittance remained to her, and she cast about, with busy hand and head, for some means to eke it out. She took in sewing--she took in washing and ironing; and happy did the young exquisite deem himself, whose shirts came with such faultless plaits, such snowy freshness, from the slender hands of Mary. With that matchless gift which old Yankee housewives call faculty, Mary kept together all the ends of her ravelled skein of life, and began to make them wind smoothly. Her baby was the neatest of all babies, as it was assuredly the prettiest, and her little Fred the handiest and most universal genius of all boys. It was Fred that could wring out all the stockings, and hang out all the small clothes, that tended the baby by

night and by day, that made her a wagon out of an old soap box, in which he drew her in triumph; and at their meals he stood reverently in his father's place, and with folded hands repeated, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his mercies;" and his mother's heart responded amen to the simple prayer. Then he learned, with manifold puffing and much haggling, to saw wood quite decently, and to swing an axe almost as big as himself in wood splitting; and he ran of errands, and did business with an air of bustling importance that was edifying to see; he knew the prices of lard, butter, and dried apples, as well as any man about, and, as the store-keeper approvingly told him, was a smart chap at a bargain. Fred grew three inches higher the moment he heard it.

In the evenings after the baby was asleep, Fred sat by his mother with slate and book, deep in the mysteries of reading, writing, and ciphering; and then the mother and son talked over their little plans, and hallowed their nightly rest by prayer; and when, before retiring, his mother knelt with him by his little bed and prayed, the child often sobbed with a strange emotion, for which he could give no reason. Something there is in the voice of real prayer that thrills a child's heart, even before he understands it; the holy tones are a kind of heavenly music, and far off in distant years, the callous and worldly man, often thrills to his heart's core, when some turn of life recalls to him his mother's prayer.

So passed the first years of the life of Fred. Meanwhile his little sister had come to toddle about the cottage floor, full of insatiable

and immeasurable schemes of mischief. It was she that upset the clothes basket, and pulled over the molasses pitcher on to her own astonished head, and with incredible labor upset every pail of water that by momentary thoughtlessness was put within reach. It was she that was found stuffing poor, solemn old pussy head first into the water jar, that wiped up the floor with her mother's freshly-ironed clothes, and jabbered meanwhile, in most unexampled Babylonish dialect, her own vindications and explanations of these misdemeanors. Every day her mother declared that she must begin to get that child into some kind of order; but still the merry little curly pate contemned law and order, and laughed at all ideas of retributive justice, and Fred and his mother laughed and deplored, in the same invariable succession, the various direful results of her activity and enterprise.

But still, as Mary toiled on, heavy cares weighed down her heart. Her boy grew larger and larger, and her own health grew feebler in proportion as it needed to be stronger. Sometimes a whole week at a time found her scarce able to crawl from her bed, shaking with ague, or burning with fever; and when there is little or nothing with which to replace them, how fast food seems to be consumed, and clothing to be worn out! And so at length it came to pass that, notwithstanding the labors of the most tireless of needles, and the cutting, clipping, and contriving of the most ingenious of hands, the poor mother was forced to own to herself that her darlings looked really shabby, and kind neighbors one by one hinted and said that she must do something with her boy--that he was old enough to earn his own living; and the same idea

occurred to the spirited little fellow himself.

He had often been along by the side of the canal, and admired the horses; for between a horse and Fred there was a perfect magnetic sympathy, and no lot in life looked to him so bright and desirable as to be able to sit on a horse and drive all day long; and when Captain W., pleased with the boy's bright face and prompt motions, sought to enlist him as one of his drivers, he found a delighted listener. "If he could only persuade mother, there was nothing like it." For many nights after the matter was proposed, Mary only cried; and all Fred's eloquence, and his brave promises of never doing any thing wrong, and being the best of all supposable boys, were insufficient to console her.

Every time she looked at the neat, pure little bed, beside her own, that bed hallowed by so many prayers, and saw her boy, with his glowing cheeks and long and dark lashes, sleeping so innocently and trustfully, her heart died within her, as she thought of a dirty berth on the canal boat, and rough boatmen, swearing, chewing tobacco, and drinking; and should she take her darling from her bosom and throw him out among these? Ah, happy mother! look at your little son of ten years, and ask yourself, if you were obliged to do this, should you not tremble! Give God thanks, therefore, you can hold your child to your heart till he is old enough to breast the dark wave of life. The poor must throw them in, to sink or swim, as happens. Not for ease--not for freedom from care--not for commodious house and fine furniture, and all that competence gives, should you thank God so much as for this, that you are

able to shelter, guide, restrain, and educate the helpless years of your children.

Mary yielded at last to that master who can subdue all wills--necessity. Sorrowfully, yet with hope in God, she made up the little package for her boy, and communicated to him with renewed minuteness her parting counsels and instructions. Fred was bright and full of hope. He was sure of the great point about which his mother's anxiety clustered--he should be a good boy, he knew he should; he never should swear; he never should touch a drop of spirits, no matter who asked him--that he was sure of. Then he liked horses so much: he should ride all day and never get tired, and he would come back and bring her some money; and so the boy and his mother parted.

Physical want or hardship is not the great thing which a mother need dread for her child in our country. There is scarce any situation in America where a child would not receive, as a matter of course, good food and shelter; nor is he often overworked. In these respects a general spirit of good nature is perceptible among employers, so that our Fred meets none of the harrowing adventures of an Oliver Twist in his new situation.

To be sure he soon found it was not as good fun to ride a horse hour after hour, and day after day, as it was to prance and caper about for the first few minutes. At first his back ached, and his little hands grew stiff, and he wished his turn were out, hours before the time; but

time mended all this. He grew healthy and strong, and though occasionally kicked and tumbled about rather unceremoniously by the rough men among whom he had been cast, yet, as they said, "he was a chap that always came down on his feet, throw him which way you would;" and for this reason he was rather a favorite among them. The fat, black cook, who piqued himself particularly on making corn cake and singing Methodist hymns in a style of unsurpassed excellence, took Fred into particular favor, and being equally at home in kitchen and camp meeting lore, not only put by for him various dainty scraps and fragments, but also undertook to further his moral education by occasional luminous exhortations and expositions of Scripture, which somewhat puzzled poor Fred, and greatly amused the deck hands.

Often, after driving all day, Fred sat on deck beside his fat friend, while the boat glided on through miles and miles of solemn, unbroken old woods, and heard him sing about "de New Jerusalem," about "good old Moses, and Paul, and Silas," with a kind of dreamy, wild pleasure. To be sure it was not like his mother's singing; but then it had a sort of good sound, although he never could very precisely make out the meaning.

As to being a good boy, Fred, to do him justice, certainly tried to very considerable purpose. He did not swear as yet, although he heard so much of it daily that it seemed the most natural thing in the world; and although one and another of the hands often offered him tempting portions of their potations, as they said, "to make a man of him," yet Fred faithfully kept his little temperance pledge to his mother. Many a



weary hour, as he rode, and rode, and rode through hundreds of miles of unvarying forest, he strengthened his good resolutions by thoughts of home and its scenes.

There sat his mother; there stood his own little bed; there his baby sister, toddling about in her night gown; and he repeated the prayers and sung the hymns his mother taught him, and thus the good seed still grew within him. In fact, with no very distinguished adventures, Fred achieved the journey to Cincinnati and back, and proud of his laurels, and with his wages in his pocket, found himself again at the familiar door.

Poor Fred! a sad surprise awaited him. The elfin shadow that was once ever flitting about the dwelling was gone; the little pattering footsteps, the tireless, busy fingers, all gone! and his mother, paler, sicker, sadder than before, clasped him to her bosom, and called him her only comfort. Fred had brought a pocket full of sugar plums, and the brightest of yellow oranges to his little pet; alas! how mournfully he regarded them now!

How little do we realize, when we hear that such and such a poor woman has lost her baby, how much is implied to her in the loss! She is poor; she must work hard; the child was a great addition to her cares; and even pitying neighbors say, "It was better for her, poor thing! and for the child too." But perhaps this very child was the only flower of a life else wholly barren and desolate. There is often, even in the

humblest and most uncultured nature, an undefined longing and pining for the beautiful. It expresses itself sometimes in the love of birds and of flowers, and one sees the rosebush or the canary bird in a dwelling from which is banished every trace of luxury. But the little child, with its sweet, spiritual eyes, its thousand bird-like tones, its prattling, endearing ways, its guileless, loving heart, is a full and perfect answer to the most ardent craving of the soul. It is a whole little Eden of itself; and the poor woman whose whole life else is one dreary waste of toil, clasps her babe to her bosom, and feels proud, and rich, and happy. Truly said the Son of God, "Of such are the kingdom of heaven."

Poor Mary! how glad she was to see her boy again--most of all, that they could talk together of their lost one! How they discoursed for hours about her! How they cried together over the little faded bonnet, that once could scarce be kept for a moment on the busy, curly head! How they treasured, as relics, the small finger marks on the doors, and consecrated with sacred care even the traces of her merry mischief about the cottage, and never tired of telling over to each other, with smiles and tears, the record of the past gleesome pranks!

But the fact was, that Mary herself was fast wearing away. She had borne up bravely against life; but she had but a gentle nature, and gradually she sank from day to day. Fred was her patient, unwearied nurse, and neighbors--never wanting in such kindnesses as they can understand--supplied her few wants. The child never wanted for food, and the mantle shelf was filled with infallible specifics, each one of which

was able, according to the showing, to insure perfect recovery in every case whatever; and yet, strange to tell, she still declined. At last, one still autumn morning, Fred awoke, and started at the icy coldness of the hand clasped in his own. He looked in his mother's face; it was sweet and calm as that of a sleeping infant, but he knew in his heart that she was dead.

## PART II.

Months afterwards, a cold December day found Fred turned loose in the streets of Cincinnati. Since his mother's death he had driven on the canal boat; but now the boat was to lie by for winter, and the hands of course turned loose to find employment till spring. Fred was told that he must look up a place; every body was busy about their own affairs, and he must shift for himself; and so with half his wages in his pocket, and promises for the rest, he started to seek his fortune.

It was a cold, cheerless, gray-eyed day, with an air that pinched fingers and toes, and seemed to penetrate one's clothes like snow water--such a day as it needs the brightest fire and the happiest heart to get along at all with; and, unluckily, Fred had neither. Christmas was approaching, and all the shops had put on their holiday dresses; the confectioners' windows were glittering with sparkling pyramids of candy, with frosted cake, and unfading fruits and flowers of the very best of sugar. There, too, was Santa Claus, large as life, with queer, wrinkled visage, and back bowed with the weight of all desirable knickknacks, going down chimney, in sight of all the children of Cincinnati, who gathered around the shop with constantly-renewed acclamations. On all sides might be seen the little people, thronging, gazing, chattering, while anxious papas and mammas in the shops were gravely discussing tin trumpets, dolls, spades, wheelbarrows, and toy wagons.

Fred never had heard of the man who said, "How sad a thing it is to look

into happiness through another man's eyes!" but he felt something very like it as he moved through the gay and bustling streets, where every body seemed to be finding what they wanted but himself.

He had determined to keep up a stout heart; but in spite of himself, all this bustling show and merriment made him feel sadder and sadder, and lonelier and lonelier. He knocked and rang at door after door, but nobody wanted a boy: nobody ever does want a boy when a boy is wanting a place. He got tired of ringing door bells, and tried some of the shops. No, they didn't want him. One said if he was bigger he might do; another wanted to know if he could keep accounts; one thought that the man around the corner wanted a boy, and when Fred got there he had just engaged one. Weary, disappointed, and discouraged, he sat down by the iron railing that fenced a showy house, and thought what he should do. It was almost five in the afternoon: cold, dismal, leaden-gray was the sky--the darkness already coming on. Fred sat listlessly watching the great snow feathers, as they slowly sailed down from the sky. Now he heard gay laughs, as groups of merry children passed; and then he started, as he saw some woman in a black bonnet, and thought she looked like his mother. But all passed, and nobody looked at him, nobody wanted him, nobody noticed him.

Just then a patter of little feet was heard behind him on the flagstones, and a soft, baby voice said, "How do 'oo do?" Fred turned in amazement; and there stood a plump, rosy little creature of about two years, with dimpled cheek, ruby lips, and long, fair hair curling about

her sweet face. She was dressed in a blue pelisse, trimmed with swan's down, and her complexion was so exquisitely fair, her eyes so clear and sweet, that Fred felt almost as if it were an angel. The little thing toddled up to him, and holding up before him a new wax doll, all splendid in silk and lace, seemed quite disposed to make his acquaintance. Fred thought of his lost sister, and his eyes filled up with tears. The little one put up one dimpled hand to wipe them away, while with the other holding up before him the wax doll, she said, coaxingly, "No no ky."

Just then the house door opened, and a lady, richly dressed, darted out, exclaiming, "Why, Mary, you little rogue, how came you out here?" Then stopping short, and looking narrowly on Fred, she said, somewhat sharply, "Whose boy are you? and how came you here?"

"I'm nobody's boy," said Fred, getting up, with a bitter choking in his throat; "my mother's dead; I only sat down here to rest me for a while."

"Well, run away from here," said the lady; but the little girl pressed before her mother, and jabbering very earnestly in unimaginable English, seemed determined to give Fred her wax doll, in which, she evidently thought, resided every possible consolation.

The lady felt in her pocket and found a quarter, which she threw towards Fred. "There, my boy, that will get you lodging and supper, and to-morrow you can find some place to work, I dare say;" and she hurried

in with the little girl, and shut the door.

It was not money that Fred wanted just then, and he picked up the quarter with a heavy heart. The sky looked darker, and the street drearier, and the cold wind froze the tear on his cheeks as he walked listlessly down the street in the dismal twilight.

"I can go back to the canal boat, and find the cook," he thought to himself. "He told me I might sleep with him to-night if I couldn't find a place;" and he quickened his steps with this determination. Just as he was passing a brightly-lighted coffee house, familiar voices hailed him, and Fred stopped; he would be glad even to see a dog he had ever met before, and of course he was glad when two boys, old canal boat acquaintances, hailed him, and invited him into the coffee house. The blazing fire was a brave light on that dismal night, and the faces of the two boys were full of glee, and they began rallying Fred on his doleful appearance, and insisting on it that he should take something warm with them.

Fred hesitated a moment; but he was tired and desperate, and the steaming, well-sweetened beverage was too tempting. "Who cares for me?" thought he, "and why should I care?" and down went the first spirituous liquor the boy had ever tasted; and in a few moments, he felt a wonderful change. He was no longer a timid, cold, disheartened, heart-sick boy, but felt somehow so brave, so full of hope and courage, that he began to swagger, to laugh very loud, and to boast in such high

terms of the money in his pocket, and of his future intentions and prospects, that the two boys winked significantly at each other. They proposed, after sitting a while, to walk out and see the shop windows. All three of the boys had taken enough to put them to extra merriment; but Fred, who was entirely unused to the stimulant, was quite beside himself. If they sung, he shouted; if they laughed, he screamed; and he thought within himself he never had heard and thought so many witty things as on that very evening. At last they fell in with quite a press of boys, who were crowding round a confectionery window, and, as usual in such cases, there began an elbowing and scuffling contest for places, in which Fred was quite conspicuous. At last a big boy presumed on his superior size to edge in front of our hero, and cut off his prospect; and Fred, without more ado, sent him smashing through the shop window. There was a general scrabble, every one ran for himself, and Fred, never having been used to the business, was not very skilful in escaping, and of course was caught, and committed to an officer, who, with small ceremony, carried him off and locked him up in the watch house, from which he was the next morning taken before the mayor, and after examination sent to jail.

This sobered Fred. He came to himself as out of a dream, and he was overwhelmed with an agony of shame and self-reproach. He had broken his promise to his dead mother--he had been drinking! and his heart failed him when he thought of the horrors that his mother had always associated with that word. And then he was in jail--that place that his mother had always represented as an almost impossible horror, the climax of shame



and disgrace. The next night the poor boy stretched himself on his hard, lonely bed, and laid under his head his little bundle, containing his few clothes and his mother's Bible, and then sobbed himself to sleep.

Cold and gray dawned the following morning on little Fred, as he slowly and heavily awoke, and with a bitter chill of despair recalled the events of the last two nights, and looked up at the iron-grated window, and round on the cheerless walls; and, as if in bitter contrast, arose before him an image of his lost home--the neat, quiet room, the white curtains and snowy floor, his mother's bed, with his own little cot beside it, and his mother's mild blue eyes, as they looked upon him only six months ago. Mechanically he untied the check handkerchief which contained his few clothes, and worldly possessions, and relics of home.

There was the small, clean-printed Bible his mother had given him with so many tears on their first parting; there was a lock of her soft brown hair; there, too, were a pair of little worn shoes and stockings, a baby's rattle, and a curl of golden hair, which he had laid up in memory of his lost little pet. Fred laid his head down over all these, his forlorn treasures, and sobbed as if his heart would break.

After a while the jailer came in, and really seemed affected by the distress of the child, and said what he could to console him; and in the course of the day, as the boy "seemed to be so lonesome like," he introduced another boy into the room as company for him. This was a cruel mercy; for while the child was alone with himself and the memories

of the past, he was, if sad, at least safe, and in a few hours after this new introduction he was neither. His new companion was a tall boy of fourteen, with small, cunning, gray eyes, to which a slight cast gave an additional expression of shrewdness and drollery. He was a young gentleman of great natural talent,--in a certain line,--with very precocious attainments in all that kind of information which a boy gains by running at large for several years in a city's streets without any thing particular to do, or any body in particular to obey--any conscience, any principle, any fear either of God or man. We should not say that he had never seen the inside of a church, for he had been, for various purposes, into every one of the city, and to every camp meeting for miles around; and so much had he profited by these exercises, that he could mimic to perfection every minister who had any perceptible peculiarity, could caricature every species of psalm-singing, and give ludicrous imitations of every form of worship. Then he was au fait in all coffee house lore, and knew the names and qualities of every kind of beverage therein compounded; and as to smoking and chewing, the first elements of which he mastered when he was about six years old, he was now a connoisseur in the higher branches. He had been in jail dozens of times--rather liked the fun; had served one term on the chain-gang--not so bad either--shouldn't mind another--learned a good many prime things there.

At first Fred seemed inclined to shrink from his new associate. An instinctive feeling, like the warning of an invisible angel, seemed to whisper, "Beware!" But he was alone, with a heart full of bitter

thoughts, and the sight of a fellow-face was some comfort. Then his companion was so dashing, so funny, so free and easy, and seemed to make such a comfortable matter of being in jail, that Fred's heart, naturally buoyant, began to come up again in his breast. Dick Jones soon drew out of him his simple history as to how he came there, and finding that he was a raw hand, seemed to feel bound to patronize and take him under his wing. He laughed quite heartily at Fred's story, and soon succeeded in getting him to laugh at it too.

How strange!--the very scenes that in the morning he looked at only with bitter anguish and remorse, this noon he was laughing at as good jokes--so much for the influence of good society! An instinctive feeling, soon after Dick Jones came in, led Fred to push his little bundle into the farthest corner, under the bed, far out of sight or inquiry; and the same reason led him to suppress all mention of his mother, and all the sacred part of his former life. He did this more studiously, because, having once accidentally remarked how his mother used to forbid him certain things, the well-educated Dick broke out,--

"Well, for my part, I could whip my mother when I wa'n't higher than that!" with a significant gesture.

"Whip your mother!" exclaimed Fred, with a face full of horror.

"To be sure, greenie! Why not? Precious fun it was in those times. I used to slip in and steal the old woman's whiskey and sugar when she was

just too far over to walk a crack--she'd throw the tongs at me, and I'd throw the shovel at her, and so it went square and square."

Goethe says somewhere, "Miserable is that man whose mother has not made all other mothers venerable." Our new acquaintance bade fair to come under this category.

Fred's education, under this talented instructor, made progress. He sat hours and hours laughing at his stories--sometimes obscene, sometimes profane, but always so full of life, drollery, and mimicry that a more steady head than Fred's was needed to withstand the contagion. Dick had been to the theatre--knew it all like a book, and would take Fred there as soon as they got out; then he had a first-rate pack of cards, and he could teach Fred to play; and the gay tempters were soon spread out on their bed, and Fred and his instructor sat hour after hour absorbed in what to him was a new world of interest. He soon learned, could play for small stakes, and felt in himself the first glimmering of that fire which, when fully kindled, many waters cannot quench, nor floods drown!

Dick was, as we said, precocious. He had the cool eye and steady hand of an experienced gamester, and in a few days he won, of course, all Fred's little earnings. But then he was quite liberal and free with his money. He added to their prison fare such various improvements as his abundance of money enabled him to buy. He had brought with him the foundation of good cheer in a capacious bottle which emerged the first night from his pocket, for he said he never went to jail without his provision; then

hot water, and sugar, and lemons, and peppermint drops were all forthcoming for money, and Fred learned once and again, and again, the fatal secret of hushing conscience, and memory, and bitter despair in delirious happiness, and as Dick said, was "getting to be a right jolly 'un that would make something yet."

And was it all gone, all washed away by this sudden wave of evil?--every trace of prayer, and hope, and sacred memory in this poor child's heart? No, not all; for many a night, when his tempter slept by his side, the child lived over the past; again he kneeled in prayer, and felt his mother's guardian hand on his head, and he wept tears of bitter remorse, and wondered at the dread change that had come over him. Then he dreamed, and he saw his mother and sister walking in white, fair as angels, and would go to them; but between him and them was a great gulf fixed, which widened and widened, and grew darker and darker, till he could see them no more, and he awoke in utter misery and despair.

Again and again he resolved, in the darkness of the night, that to-morrow he would not drink, and he would not speak a wicked word, and he would not play cards, nor laugh at Dick's bad stories. Ah, how many such midnight resolves have evil angels sneered at and good ones sighed over! for with daylight back comes the old temptation, and with it the old mind; and with daylight came back the inexorable prison walls which held Fred and his successful tempter together.

At last he gave himself up. No, he could not be good with Dick--there

was no use in trying!--and he made no more midnight resolves, and drank more freely of the dreadful remedy for unquiet thoughts.

And now is Fred growing in truth a wicked boy. In a little while more and he shall be such a one as you will on no account take under your roof, lest he corrupt your own children; and yet, father, mother, look at your son of twelve years, your bright, darling boy, and think of him shut up for a month with such a companion, in such a cell, and ask yourselves if he would be any better.

And was there no eye, heavenly or earthly, to look after this lost one? Was there no eye which could see through all the traces of sin, the yet lingering drops of that baptism and early prayer and watchfulness which consecrated it? Yes; He whose mercy extends to the third and fourth generations of those who love him, sent a friend to our poor boy in his last distress.

It is one of the most refined and characteristic modifications of Christianity, that those who are themselves sheltered, guarded, fenced by good education, knowledge, and competence, appoint and sustain a pastor and guardian in our large cities to be the shepherd of the wandering and lost, and of them who, in the Scripture phrase, "have none to help." Justly is he called the "City Missionary," for what is more truly missionary ground? In the hospital, among the old, the sick, the friendless, the forlorn--in the prison, among the hardened, the blaspheming--among the discouraged and despairing, still holding with

unsteady hand on to some forlorn fragment of virtue and self-respect, goes this missionary to stir the dying embers of good, to warn, entreat, implore, to adjure by sacred recollections of father, mother, and home, the fallen wanderers to return. He finds friends, and places, and employment for some, and by timely aid and encouragement saves many a one from destruction.

In this friendly shape appeared a man of prayer to visit the cell in which Fred was confined. Dick listened to his instructions with cool complacency, rolling his tobacco from side to side in his mouth, and meditating on him as a subject for some future histrionic exercise of his talent.

But his voice was as welcome to poor Fred as daylight in a dungeon. All the smothered remorse and despair of his heart burst forth in bitter confessions, as, with many tears, he poured forth his story to the friendly man. It needs not to prolong our story, for now the day has dawned and the hour of release is come.

It is not needful to carry our readers through all the steps by which Fred was transferred, first to the fireside of the friendly missionary, and afterwards to the guardian care of a good old couple who resided on a thriving farm not far from Cincinnati. Set free from evil influences, the first carefully planted and watered seeds of good began to grow again, and he became as a son to the kind family who had adopted him.