

window and deep doorway. The rays of the August sun poured down upon him relentlessly, and the very pavement seemed to burn his feet. Opening one of the iron gates, he ran eagerly up the steps, and let himself in with his latch-key. The dining-room door stood open, as well as the window, but not a breath of air stirred the white curtains. Gertrude, looking paler and thinner than when we saw her last year, leaned back wearily in the rocking-chair, her baby on her knee. Richard stooped to imprint a tender kiss upon her forehead before taking his little son and tossing him up to the ceiling. This was an occupation to which Master Lionel was very partial, and he testified his approval by lusty crows and kicks.

"There, young man, that's as much as you'll get just now. Your unfortunate father will be worn to a shadow if you treat him in this way. Phew, how hot it is!" As he spoke Richard dropped into a chair, and taking out his handkerchief wiped the perspiration from his forehead.

"Well, dear, and how did the Mothers' Meeting get on this afternoon?" he asked presently, while the baby contentedly munched his watch-chain.

"Splendidly," rejoined his wife; "we had three new members—one of them such a thin, half-starved looking creature, it made my heart ache to look at her. Mrs Barty finished paying for her shirt, and carried it off in great triumph. I read to them a little, but it seemed better to let them tell their troubles, poor things! and try and lead them to the great Healer."

"I am afraid that meeting is too much for your strength, dear; you look so tired. By the way, did you get a letter from your father? What did he say?"

"He thinks the wine he prescribed for me before baby's birth is not sufficient now that I'm nursing him, and says I should take stout also, to give me a little strength. He prescribes a tonic as well."

She handed him the letter as she spoke, and, after perusing it in silence, he remarked,

"I'm so glad I thought of writing to the doctor; we shall soon have you strong again now, my lassie."

He rose and, after placing the child on her knee, crossed to the window and stood watching the postman as he worked his way up the street.

After a moment's pause, Gertrude said, with a little tremble in her voice, "Somehow, I wish father hadn't said that; I would rather not take stimulants at all than take more. When I see those poor women, and think what dreadful lives some of them lead, in terror of their drunken husbands, I fancy sometimes—I don't know, but I think, perhaps, it would be better if we didn't take

it. And O, Richard, I saw such an awful sight this afternoon. As I went down John-street, two policemen were taking a woman to the police-station. She was drunk, and they had her by the arms—half dragging, half carrying her, she protesting vigorously all the way. Her bonnet had fallen on her shoulders, her hair was hanging down her back, while a crowd of street boys were hooting and jeering, tearing her ragged gown, and tugging at her hair. The frenzied look in her face was terrible! Suppose she has little children who call her mother, and perhaps a dear little baby crying for her while she is locked up there!"

Gertrude's soft brown eyes filled with tears, and, clasping her own baby to her breast, she buried her flushed, earnest face in his dainty pinafore. Richard strode across the room and took up a position upon the rug before replying. "My dear, please do not mention yourself in the same breath with *that* creature. You surely are not going to join those fanatical teetotallers."

(To be continued.)

WOMAN'S MISSION.

'Tis thine to curb the passions' madd'ning sway,
And wipe the mourner's bitter tear away;
'Tis thine to sooth, when hope itself has fled,
And cheer with angel smile the sufferer's bed.
To give to earth its charm, to life its zest,
One only task—to bless, and to be blest.—*Graham.*

dull Do the thing that's next you,
Though it's ~~done~~ at whiles,
Helping when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles.—*Kingsley.*

CONCERNING WOMEN. — Are there not women who inspire us with courtesy, who unloose our tongues, and we speak; who anoint our eyes, and we see? We say things we never thought to have said. For once, our walls of habitual reserve vanished and left us at large; we were children playing with children in a wide field of flowers. Steep us, we cried, in these influences for days, for weeks, and we shall be sunny poets, and write out in many-coloured words the romance that you are.—*Emerson.*

The Quaker marriage ceremony is a very simple affair, the contracting parties merely agreeing to take each other "until it shall please the Lord by death to separate us." A story goes that there was once an old Friend going to be married who was very fond of emphasising his sentences by little additions of his own, and when making the declaration he finished up "Until it shall please the Lord, in His infinite mercy, by death to separate us"