

JEMIMA'S INTERFERENCE.

CHAPTER I.—"THAT NOT IMPOSSIBLE SHE."

Mrs. Montgomery was the most popular woman in Wraymouth. "The sweetest woman in the world!" the little world of Wraymouth called the gracious lady who smiled so cordially at everyone she met, and whose house was famous for the most brilliant receptions and the most charming garden parties in the place. Perhaps one secret of her popularity was that she was such a contented little personage, and so thoroughly satisfied, not only with herself, but with everything and everyone about her—Miss Jemima always excepted, and just now Nora Desmond very particularly excepted indeed.

Miss Jemima, or Aunt Jemmy, was Mr. Montgomery's only sister, a maiden lady of considerable means, but with a tongue as blunt as her sister-in-law's was smooth, and a way of digging up other people's motives and dragging them into the light of day that Mrs. Montgomery considered positively indecent. But Miss Jemima's misdeeds had lately sunk into nothingness by the side of Nora Desmond's unpardonable sins.

Nora was an orphan niece of Mrs. Montgomery's, who had just resigned a situation as governess, and had been invited to West Mount while she looked out for another.

Mrs. Montgomery meant to be kind, and if Nora did take the children's lessons there was no need for Miss Jemima to congratulate her on getting a governess cheap. Cheap? As Mrs. Montgomery looked at Nora Desmond tonight, she felt that the asking her to West Mount had been a grave mistake, and might cost her very dear indeed.

For Nora had by no means shown what her aunt considered a proper sense of her position. She had agreed readily enough to take the younger children's lessons in the morning, but after that she behaved exactly as any other guest and relative might have done. The penniless orphan had shown no disposition to eat the bread of humbleness, or sit down in metaphorical dust and ashes. She had indeed shown—and felt—a grateful appreciation of her aunt's kindness, but she had not seemed at all overpowered by it, and, crowning sin of all, she had "flirted disgracefully" with Herbert Fleming, who was not only the most eligible bachelor in the neighborhood, but was considered the particular property of Linda Montgomery both by her mother and herself.

There was some excuse for their thinking so. The families had always been intimate, and Herbert was constantly at West Mount, where he was petted and made much of, and where the cheerful family life was a pleasant contrast to the virtual solitude of Fleming's house. Somehow or other—Fleming did not exactly know how, though perhaps Mrs. Montgomery did—he always found himself told off as Linda's cavalier. He had no objection so long as there was no one more attractive in the field. He knew Linda better, and liked her better than any other girl in Wraymouth, and, little as he suspected it, he might very probably have drifted into an engagement with Linda Montgomery, if—well, if he had not come into Mrs. Montgomery's drawing-room one August morning, and seen Nora Desmond.

There are many types of beauty in the world, but amongst the many there are few which stir the hearts of men like the mingled archness and grace of a young Irish girl. As Fleming looked at Nora tonight, he thought he had never seen so bewitching a creature. All at once he knew that he cared nothing for Linda, that he had never cared for her at all—that at last he had found the "not impossible she" of whom every man dreams, and whom, perhaps, not many find.

And all this while he had not even spoken to her! He had only stood and watched her while she was introduced to others, and marvelled at the grace of her movements and the sweetness of her voice. He had been burning to speak to her, but when the time came he had not a word to say. He could only stand and look at her with dazzled eyes, seeing nothing for the brightness of this celestial vision, as men are blinded by the noonday sun. He saw nothing it seemed to him then, but all his life long he remembered the look she wore and the smile she gave.

He thought of nothing else all the way home; but when Lady Fleming asked her son if he did not think that Irish niece of Mrs. Montgomery's an uncommonly pretty girl, it was curious how little Mr. Herbert Fleming had to say. Yes, he supposed she was, he assented indifferently. And then he declared himself too sleepy to talk, and went back in his corner of the carriage to paint the darkness with the outlines of that matchless face, and fill the silence with the echoes of her voice.

CHAPTER II.—AUNT AND NIECE.

"But—but, Mr. Fleming you have only known me a fortnight," said Nora, in a startled voice that was a little proud, and perhaps a little hurt too.

"I know," said the young man, humbly, "but I could not let you go without a word, and they tell me you are going away to-morrow. I thought you were to have been here for some time yet."

"Yes," said Nora, frankly; "I thought so, too. But Aunt Belinda heard of a friend who wanted a governess to go with her daughters to Switzerland, and she thought it was a chance I ought not to miss. They will give me all my expenses, and a pound a week besides, and of course I am earning nothing here."

"You sordid child! If you would only listen to me you should never earn another penny. I know it is soon to speak, but what has time to do with it? We don't want a fortnight, we don't want a week, or a day, or an hour, to find out if the sun is shining or if the birds are singing. I love you—and I could not love you better if I had known you for a hundred years. Why should I not tell you? Will you not believe it, now you know?"

What answer Nora might have made he was not to know. Just for a second her eyes lifted themselves to his with a sweet bewilderment, and then they opened wide in dismay.

"Someone is there!" she cried. "Oh, Mr. Fleming, I must go—indeed I must." The conservatory they were sitting in

opened into the drawing-room, and she fled away before he could utter a word. Fleming, looking around in startled confusion, saw someone disappearing through the door into the garden. Who it was he did not know, nor did he particularly care. The fact of the interruption was much more important to him than its cause. Would Nora listen to him again? and would her answer be the same he believed he had read in her eyes?

He went into the drawing room in hopes of seeing her, but she was pouring out tea for quite a number of people, and it was time to go before he had said a word. He could only wish her good-bye, and whisper a humble request that he might write to her.

"I—I suppose so," stammered Nora uncomfortably. Mrs. Montgomery was looking at them with an expression her niece had never seen in her pleasant, comely face before. Fleming did not see it now.

"Will you give me your address?" he said, "or," suddenly perceiving how disturbed she was, "will you send it to me?"

Nora's "yes" was so low that only a lover's ear could have caught it, but Fleming heard it distinctly. His tones were jubilant as he made his farewells to Mrs. Montgomery, and went away with a parting glance that was meant for Nora only, but was intercepted by two other pairs of eyes.

"So that is why the pretty niece is bustled off to Switzerland, is it?" thought Aunt Jemima, nodding her shrewd old head like a Chinese mandarin.

"I wouldn't have that girl here another week for a thousand pounds," thought Mrs. Montgomery. "However, I hope there is nothing serious between them yet. I wonder if she will tell me anything before she goes? She is frank and innocent, and she likes me, I think. I dare say a little persuasion will open her lips, and I confess I should like to know exactly how far it has gone."

For though Mrs. Montgomery had been the eaves-dropper in the conservatory, she had only caught a few words, and was very anxious to know if she had interrupted a mere flirtation, or something more serious. She went to Nora's room that night, and had not much difficulty in obtaining the information she desired. Motherless Nora was sorely in need of sympathy and counsel, and her aunt was so sweet and sympathetic that the happy girl poured out her tale.

"Do I understand that Mr. Fleming made you an offer?" Mrs. Montgomery asked, when Nora stopped at last.

"An offer? I—I suppose so," said Nora, blushing very prettily. "Well—he was interrupted, and I ran away. But he told me that he loved me—isn't it wonderful, Aunt Belinda, that he should care for me so soon?—and—that is all," ended Nora suddenly. Somehow her aunt's eyes were not quite so sympathetic as she had thought.

"All?" said Mrs. Montgomery. "I do not call that exactly an offer, Nora, though an inexperienced girl might easily have thought so. Certainly Mr. Fleming ought to have said either less or more."

"Someone was there, and I ran away," said Nora, in a tone of defence. "He could not say more than could he, Aunt Belinda? But he asked if he might write to me, and I promised to write and give him my address."

"There I think you were wrong, my love," said Mrs. Montgomery, decidedly. "You are very young, Nora, and have had no one to guide you, so I make every excuse, but it is not usual to correspond with young men unless you are engaged to them, and in my opinion it is scarcely maidenly to do so."

"Oh, Aunt Belinda!" cried Nora, with burning cheeks. "Not maidenly? I never thought, I never meant—"

"No, my dear, I am sure you did not," said her aunt soothingly. "But I assure you it is not a thing I should allow Linda to do, and girls in your position should be even more careful. I am afraid—I am very much afraid that Herbert Fleming is trifling with you."

"Oh, Aunt Belinda!"

The piteous eyes, the appealing tones, might have softened anybody except a mother doing, according to her lights, the best she could for her child.

"I don't see what else it all means," said Mrs. Montgomery. "If he was in earnest, would he not have come to your uncle or to me? He knows us well and he must know we should have offered no objection. But instead of doing that, instead of taking the only right and honorable course, he tries to entrap you into a clandestine correspondence."

"Not clandestine," murmured Nora. "I am sure he did not mean that."

"At any rate he has said nothing to us, your natural protectors, and you must not blame me if I draw my own conclusions. I don't want to damp your happiness, my dear child, but I should be sorry to see your wasting your affections on a flirt like Herbert Fleming."

"Is he a flirt?" whispered Nora, the red lips paling visibly.

"Is he not?" said Mrs. Montgomery. "I do not pretend to say, but I am afraid, my dear, there are too many girls who could answer the question for you."

Nora sat looking before her with wistful, troubled gaze.

"Then—then what do you advise me to do?" she asked at last. "You see I did promise to write to him—to send him my address."

"I should certainly not do it, Nora. Be guided by me, and you will soon know if he is in earnest or not. When he finds you do not write he will understand that you have seen the impropriety of doing so, and will respect you all the more. As for your address, he can easily learn it from me, and if he is in earnest he will do so. And now, my child, I shall say good-night. Go to sleep and forget your troubles."

CHAPTER III.—FROM A SENSE OF DUTY.

It is astonishing how easily we believe the thing we wish. Mrs. Montgomery by the time she came to the end of her little homily to her niece, entirely believed her own statements. She felt convinced that Fleming was only flirting—as he always did! thought Linda's mother vindictively,

and she congratulated herself on having opened her niece's eyes.

She said nothing to Linda; there was no need, she told herself; and confidences should be sacred, of course, especially when repeating them would do more harm than good. And so Linda heard nothing of Fleming's attachment to her cousin. He came to the house as frequently, as ever, and was as graciously received, but after the first week he seldom mentioned Nora's name, and certainly never asked for her address.

Mrs. Montgomery plumed herself on the fulfilment of her prophecies.

"A flirtation and nothing else," she thought triumphantly; "but Linda will keep him in order. I've no doubt." Which was a little premature—but Mrs. Montgomery was a genuine woman. She even thought that Fleming's silence proved that Nora was forgotten, till one day when the post came in while he was at West Mount.

"Do you ever hear from Miss Desmond?" he asked abruptly, but Mrs. Montgomery was equal to the occasion.

"I hear often—and I see there is a letter from her here," she said pleasantly, as she opened the foreign-looking letter. The young man's eyes rested hungrily upon the thin blue sheet, and then he turned resolutely away. "A delightful time she seems to be having," Mrs. Montgomery purred on. "The Spences are a large family, and the young man have joined them now. Dear Nora will be quite in her element, naughty little flirt that she is. But, I suppose, when a girl is so lively and so pretty, she can hardly help herself."

No, Mr. Fleming supposed not. But he supposed it in a voice that was hard and cold, and quite unlike his own. Mrs. Montgomery peeped up at the pale, stern face, and wondered if she dare venture to say more.

"Of course I am not detaching it," she said; "but men are always so ready to play the moth to the candle of a pretty face. And, to tell you the truth, Herbert, I have sometimes been afraid that short as was the time the dear, naughty child was with us, your own wings were not quite unused."

Fleming looked at her with gloomy eyes.

"If you mean that I loved—that I love her with all my heart, you are quite right," said he, with disconcerting frankness. "I always meant to tell you as soon as—"

"As soon as there was anything to tell," said Fleming, with a short, bitter laugh. "Apparently there is nothing, you see."

"I don't see, I assure you. Do you mean that you were refused?"

"It never got as far as that. I meant to write to her as soon as I had her address; and she promised to send it me. We were interrupted, but she knew, I am sure she knew, that I meant to renew my proposals as soon as I received it."

"Well?"

"Well, she has not sent it, that is all. I am afraid it is all, indeed," said Mrs. Montgomery, with a sympathetic sigh. "My poor boy, I feel for you, I assure you; but you must see for yourself what it means."

"There may be some misapprehension, some mistake. Perhaps if I wrote to her—"

"You will please yourself, of course, and I can easily give you her present address, though I believe they are leaving Montreux tomorrow. But, my dear Herbert, I must, as a friend, tell you honestly that I fear you have given your heart into very unsafe keeping. I cannot bear to blame my own niece, but I cannot shut my eyes to poor Nora's failings. The Irish are a most attractive race, but I fear constancy is not their strong point, and love of admiration has always been Nora's bane. Painful as it is to me, I feel it my duty to tell you that I believe she left her last situation in consequence of a flirtation with the eldest son."

Mrs. Montgomery's sense of duty did not go so far as to constrain her to add that Nora had left in order to escape the young man's unwelcome attentions. She shook her head with another sympathetic sigh, and settling her eye glasses comfortably, glanced over her niece's letter. "I am afraid it is the old story over again," she sighed. "She seems to be going everywhere with the young Spences, and we know what that means, where Nora is concerned."

Fleming took his hat.

"I know you mean kindly," he said; "but I would rather not hear her blamed."

"I do mean kindly," Mrs. Montgomery protested. "Must you go, Herbert? Linda will be so disappointed to miss you. And as for blaming Nora, that is the last thing I wish to do. If I have said anything that looks like it, it is because I should like to save you from sorrow."

"You are always kind," said the young man gratefully. "But do you really mean you think she was only playing with me?"

"That is what I think," Mrs. Montgomery owned. "But time will show. If she sends you her address, I will withdraw, and gladly, all that I have said."

"Yes," said Fleming, after a moment's pause. "The test is a fair one. If Miss Desmond keeps her promise, I will ask her pardon for having doubted her. If not—well, if not, I will try to forget that I ever saw her face."

CHAPTER IV.—MISS JEMIMA'S ADVICE.

"Why, bless my kind!" cried Miss Jemima, "its Belinda's pretty niece!"

Miss Jemima, got up in the most correct tourist costume, was standing on the deck of a channel steamer bound from Boulogne to Folkestone, and staring hard at Nora, as she sat amongst her pupils and their friends. Miss Jemima did not know the Spences, but there was no doubt about their governess, and the kind old lady bustled across the deck and claimed acquaintance at once.

"Dear me! It seems an age since we met, doesn't it?" she said, when she had been duly introduced to the Spence family, who, after a few civil words, considerably evolved a lively interest in the view from the other side, and left Miss Desmond and her friend together. "I've been all over France with a maid and a valise, and you—why, bless me, child? you look as if you'd taken a ticket for a good deal longer journey, and on a line where they don't get returns. What have you been doing to yourself? I never saw anybody so gone off in my life!"

"I haven't been doing anything," said Nora, with what seemed to Miss Jemima the merest shadow of the brilliant smile she used to admire so much.

"Humph! Walked you off your legs all day, I expect, and kept you up correcting copy-books at night."

"Indeed, no. No people could have been kinder or more considerate."

"Then—then you are in love, and that's all about it," said Miss Jemima. "I know what it means when a girl looks as you do and vows there's nothing the matter. And surely—yes, I'm sure Belinda said something about a young—what-d'ye call—em—Spence, isn't it?"

"I don't think the Spences are dangerous to anybody's peace of mind," said Nora, with a frank laugh. "The eldest is engaged, and the next is only seventeen."

"Humph!" said Miss Jemima dryly, "I told you Belinda said it—I didn't say I believed it, did I?" She was silent a moment, and then she said abruptly, "Do you ever hear anything of that young man at Wraymouth—young Fleming, I mean?"

"No," said Nora shortly, her cheeks flaming, and her hands trembling sorely against her will. She turned away her head, dreading what the next question might be, but Miss Jemima asked no more. Perhaps she had seen enough.

"I do love Belinda!" she said softly, rubbing her nose till it got quite wrathfully red.

Miss Jemima laid her hand kindly on Nora's arm.

"People always tell me their troubles, my dear, suppose you tell me yours?"

"I haven't any to tell, Miss Jemima."

"Exactly! They always begin that way," said Miss Jemima. "Get the fibs over, my child, and then the truth will come out. I've taken a liking to that pretty face of yours, and I've a good deal of respect for Herbert Fleming. I don't think he is the man to play fast and loose with anybody."

"You—you don't think he is a flirt then?" whispered Nora shyly.

"Why no—what put such a notion in your head?"

Aunt Belinda said she was afraid he was.

"Aunt Belinda is not infallible. I wonder what else Her Sapience was pleased to observe. I wouldn't take too much notice of Aunt Belinda, if I were you."

Nora felt quite guilty of listening to such remarks, but there was a certain comfort in them too. She looked at Miss Jemima's kind, sensible face, and felt that she would like to know her opinion about that unfortunate promise, the remembrance of which made her cheeks burn every day. So, with many blushes and a few hot tears, the story was told, and by the time Folkestone was in sight, Miss Jemima had heard everything, and had given her opinion thus:—

"Unmaidenly! That is all balderdash, my dear, if it isn't something worse. In my opinion you have behaved disgracefully to the poor young man, and if you take my advice you will write to him at once. There is no need to do more than send him your address, but you promised to do that, and a promise must be kept."

"Very well—I will," said Nora meekly, and Miss Jemima actually chuckled as she thought of her sister-in-law.

She smiled to herself every now and then as she journeyed towards home, but the first thing she saw there was a letter from Mrs. Montgomery, and Miss Jemima's smiles died out as she read the opening words:—

"WEST MOUNT, SEPT. 28.

"My Dear Jemima,—I know you will be pleased to hear that our darling Linda is engaged to Herbert Fleming."

"Pleased!" ejaculated Miss Jemima. "Pleased! I should like to slap them both."

CHAPTER V.—LINDA ASSETS HERSELF.

The letter Nora sent Fleming was brief:—

"Dear Mr. Fleming,—In accordance with my promise, I send you my address. I have come back to England with Mrs. Spence, and am staying at her house, Melton Priors, nr., Wraymouth."

"Yours sincerely,
"NORA DESMOND."

"In accordance with her promise!" Was three months after date Miss Desmond's idea of keeping a promise? thought Fleming savagely. Oh, why had he been so foolish, so mad, as to utter the hasty, half-despairing words that had bound him to Linda Montgomery? He had known now that it was just a fit of pique, but at the time he had told himself that if he could not be happy himself he might make some one else so, and that it was his duty to do it. His duty! He was a nice fellow to talk of duty, when the sight of another girl's writing could set his pulses beating like a trip-hammer, and a few cold words from her could move him more than his betrothed's caresses.

To think that she was so near him now! Melton Priors was on the road to Wraymouth, and he felt that he must see her before he went to West Mount. Did she know of his engagement? he wondered. But some instinct told him she would not have sent him even that cold and brief epistle if she had known.

How should he answer it? He felt that he could not do so. He could only go and see her, and tell her the truth as best he could. He scarcely knew the Spences, and he felt relieved as he neared Melton Priors and saw Nora coming through a gate in the park.

For a moment neither spoke. Fleming was being picturing the meeting all the way, and wondering how he should get his story told, but he did not think of his story now. He only remembered that there was but one woman he loved, and that she stood before him.

"Nora!" he cried passionately. "Nora!"

She looked at him with a pale scorn that struck him dumb.

"My name is Desmond," she said quietly. "Allow me to congratulate you on your engagement, and to wish you every happiness."

"You—you knew of it then? He stammered, in blank surprise.

"I heard of it at breakfast this morning."

"Why did you not write to me sooner?" he cried, with a terrible pain in his voice. "Did you not guess—did you not know why I wanted your address?"

"Was it to tell me of your engagement to my cousin?"

"You are mocking me! You know I do not love your cousin!"

"You are insulting her and me to dare to tell me so! I will wish you good morning, Mr. Fleming. My way lies down this lane."

"My way lies wherever yours does—at

least till you have heard me out." She turned away impatiently, but he kept resolutely at her side. "Will you not let me explain?" he asked humbly. "The blindest criminal is allowed to speak in self defence."

"Defence is unnecessary where no accusation is made," said Nora proudly.

It was all the protest she made, feeling, perhaps, how vain all protest was against his desperate earnestness. And so, by degrees, she heard all there was to tell, and understood the story even better than he.

"So!" she said bitterly, "it was my aunt, was it, who told you I should write if—I cared for you?"

"She certainly told me so. But why do you ask? And why do you look at me like that?"

"My aunt told me it would be unmaidenly to write. She said that if you really cared you could get my address from her."

They were silent, looking into each other's eyes with a sort of dreamy despair. Then Nora put out a trembling hand.

"Good-bye," she said gently. "I—I am glad that I know."

"I am glad that I know—but I am not going to say good-bye, unless it is to Linda."

"Yes—because it is right. You must keep your word; and I shall not mind so much now I know."

The quivering voice trailed off into silence; but though Fleming pleaded hard, he could not alter her decision. His promise to her cousin must and should be kept, she declared. Linda was not to blame, and Linda should not suffer for her mother's sins.

They were both too absorbed to see that Linda herself was coming toward them. She was riding, but the groom was far behind, and as she came up to her betrothed she reined in her horse. She was flushed with excitement, and spoke without any preliminary greeting.

"I thought I should meet you, so I came. I wish to give you this," taking from her finger the ring he had given her. "I think there has been a—mistake."

"A mistake?" gasped Fleming, while the brilliant gem slipped unheeded from his palm. "Linda, how did you know?"

"I had a letter from Aunt Jemima this morning," said Linda simply. And then she turned her horses head, and rode abruptly away.

"She is a grand creature!" said Fleming. "I did not think she had it in her. But, Nora, my own—"

Linda was a grand creature after all, for to this day Mrs. Montgomery does not know why her daughter broke off her engagement, or what she thought of her mother's manoeuvres.—*Cassell's Family Magazine.*

THE POOR OF LONDON.

The Fight With Giant Despair Round About Collier's Rents.

The late Mr. Collier died about the same time as the lamented Queen Anne, but his name survives in his Rents, says *The Christian World*. To refer to his memories, however, it is as well to remind them that Collier's Rents, since the raising of Mr. Mearns's "Bitter Cry" the centre of the outcast work of the London Congregational union, is in a short and shabby street of the Borough of Southwark, about two hundred yards to the east of St. George's church. The Rents have been in turn Independent chapel, Anglican chapel-of-ease, Plymouth brethren's meeting house, and then Independent chapel again before the final transformation to a plain but comfortable mission-hall, with platform in place of pulpit, Windsor chairs for pews, sanded floor, and a busy kitchen attached. The hall will hold 400 people. The cellars beneath, under separate renters, have had a more startling history. The corpses of victims of the cholera were deposited in them in 1850, and much about the same time it was discovered that they were the hiding-places of contraband spirits.

The neighbourhood is not Arcadian. It is dingy, unwholesome, overcrowded, and unromantic, very different from what it was when Chaucer's pilgrims sallied from the old Tabard Inn on their story-telling journey to Canterbury. Cold and hunger, sickness and black despair are unweelcome guests in many a poor home. It is on a freezing morning, when the streets were dirty, as only London streets can be, with a churned up mixture of snow and refuse, that the writer visits some of these homes with the Rents missionary. We enter a dingy *cul-de-sac*, and knock at a door. There are four small rooms in the house. The upper two are let, and in the remaining two live a wife, husband, and three children. 7s. 6d. is the rent of the whole house. The man does odd jobs at the market, sometimes earning perhaps 2s. a week, often nothing at all. A sailor son contributes 8s. a month, which nearly pays the 2s. 3d. a week rent for the two tiny rooms in which the whole family live. A little child comes in. The feet of the underclass bairnie are protected with some pieces of cloth, which a mother's ingenuity has sewn together into boots. We hear a sad story of one wayward child's folly, which has borne bitter fruit. We are able to promise a little much-needed help to this honest and struggling family. Then we go to the one room in which a three years' widower caters for himself and four delicate children, the eldest just out of hospital, with incipient consumption. Alas! the man himself looks it, as he tells us he is feeling very ill. Willing to work, but there often is no work; and sometimes when there is work, he is too ill to accept it.

"What have been your average earnings during the last twelve months?"

"I get, is the reply, '4s. a day when in full work, but taking the year through, it hasn't come to 10s. a week. Out of that I have to pay half-a-crown for the room, then there are five mouths to be filled (they are pretty often empty, though), and there's the doctor and clothes and lots of things, but there, I mustn't think about it."

But let the fathers and mothers who will read about it think about that pitiful ten shillings, and what it is expected to do! How do the poor live? None but themselves can understand. In cases like the present a blanket at night, a little extra clothing, and one good nourishing meal a day would make an incalculable difference in the health and stamina of parents and little ones. Husband, wife, and five children live in two small rooms, for which 4s. 6d. weekly is paid, in the barrack-like buildings which we next visit. Until

three months ago the parents got regularly drunk. Then they both signed the pledge, and have kept it—no common effort of heroism. In the last drinking bout the pair quarrelled and the woman lost the sight of one eye.

"It wasn't all his fault. There's some excuse for him, because I had been drinking too," pleaded the wife.

She tells us her husband feels ashamed to go to the hall because 'He can't forget all that he has done. I tell him,' she says, 'that he ought to put all that away. Perhaps he will soon, but he's quite steady.'

Poor woman! Her face is painfully anxious as she tells us, 'I was able to do some washing the other day, and was glad of it. I got a little money. But then I caught cold, and have been very bad with the neuralgia. I'm better now, and want to be at work again.' A silent little girl sits scarlet fever, and her legs are swollen with water. The doctor says it's Bright's disease, and that there's no cure for it, but perhaps she may grow out of it. I hope so. When does a mother cease to hope? Were it not for her capacity of hoping when there is no hope, her overcharged heart must break.

As we pass along the street we stop to speak to a paralyzed and semi-speechless man. Why is paralysis so common among the very poor? Our friend sits by the wayside