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A STUDENT.

Over an ancient scroll I bent,
Steeping my soul in wise content,
Nor paused a moment, save to chide
A low voice whispering at my side.

I wove beneath the stars' pale shine
A dream, half-human, half divine;
And shook off (not to break the charm)
A little hand laid on my arm.

I read, until my heart would glow
With the great deeds of long ago;
Nor heard, while with those mighty dead,
Pass to and fro a faltering tread.

On the old theme I pondered long,
The struggle between right and wrong;
I could not check such visions high,
To soothe a little quivering sigh.

I tried to solve the problem—Life—
Dreaming of that mysterious strife,
How could I leave such reasonings wise,
To answer to two pleading eyes?

I strove how best to give, and when,
My blood to save my fellow-men,
How could I turn aside to look
At snowdrops laid upon my book?

Now time has fled—the world is strange;
Something there is of pain and change;
My books lie closed upon the shelf;
I miss the old heart in myself.

I miss the sunbeams in my room,
It was not always wrapped in gloom;
I miss my dreams, they fade so fast,
Or flit into some trivial past.

The great stream of the world goes by;
None care, or heed, or question, why
I, the lone student, cannot raise
My voice or hand as in old days.

No echo seems to wake again
My heart to anything but pain,
Save when a dream of twilight brings
The fluttering of an angel's wings!

RUTH GAYLORD'S VOW.

It lay, a fair sight under the wintry skies—the new completed capitol of a Western State. Its gilded dome sparkled in the sunlight, its ample dimensions and shapely proportions elicited naught but praise from proud citizens and transient visitor.

But while the public in general gave their attention to the pleasing exterior of this magnificent gift of a State to its people, the hearts of the few listened anxiously for the message that should come to them from within the walls. The Legislature was in session. An amendment to the Constitution was under consideration. The long and exciting debates for and against prohibition were over, and the final ballot in the Senate house was in progress.

On the same day, a hundred miles away, but within the boundaries of the State, in the assembly room of a college a fair girl of eighteen years had the floor. It was essay day, and in the paper required of her Ruth Gaylord made known to the small world assembled in that room her views on prohibition. The white sheets in her hand trembled as she read, but her intonation was clear, and the vibration in her voice only added pathos to the forceful sentences. The gift of prophecy was in them, for over the network of wires that span and intersect the State there rushed, an hour later, the message she foretold. The gratified faculty

listened to the production as intently as did friends and classmates. They gave her finely organized brain the credit, but there were students present who knew by intuition that painful heart-throes had urged on the hand which penned its truest words. That tall young man in the senior class, who listened with bowed head, could point out to you the very sentences that were born of a grief that had eaten into her young soul; others among 'the boys' understood why pity now softened her voice, and again scorn thrilled it. They all listened with sympathy, some with contrition. Each line she read told them that she had penetrated the iniquity which they all, whether sharing it or loathing it, had combined to conceal. The best of them wished earnestly that the president knew it all; the worst quailed and smarted under her scathing words, and wished they knew nothing about it. How did it happen that this innocent girl had access to the secret? It came to her in a brother's foul breath. By right of her sisterhood she gained admission to the room from which the professors had been excluded, and there learned that her talented brother's three days' illness had been but a three days' debauch. These two were orphans of English descent and so far as they knew could claim kindred with none. Three years before, Ruth and Horace Gaylord had nursed their sick, buried their dead, and found themselves alone in the world, with nothing to do but use the fortune which a strange lawyer held in trust for them. Up to this time Ruth had looked upon her handsome, high-spirited brother as a King among his companions; so in his eyes there was no sister to compare with his own. But, alas, this sudden access to power proved a snare to his unwary feet, and in an hour of social temptation he fell. Prohibition had hitherto been a meaningless word to them both. Now to her it was all-comprehensive. Alas, the 'amendment' came too late to bring help to the parched lips and confused brain of him who on the day of its passage was too ill to realize but one sensation—remorse; too weak to hold but one thought, 'Ruth, is reading her essay; after it is finished she will come to me!'

Two days afterward a long black crape hung upon his door. A strange sight within the college walls! But the only home these children knew was their chosen *alma mater*. 'Ought we to tie it with white or black ribbon?' asked the young lady students of the half dozen young men who stood with stern brows and compressed lips, watching the work of their unsteady fingers. One of them, with bloated and tearful face stepped forward fell on his knees before the door, and pressing his forehead against the hard wood, cried, tie it with white for him—his heart was pure; but if you ever do it for me tie it with black.

Did you notice that young student who walked near the coffin? asked the officiating clergymen of the president at the close of the sad funeral service. If he had inadvertently murdered young Gaylord he could not have given to more despairing grief. Twenty months passed by, and in the same room where she had read her essay on prohibition, Ruth Gaylord stood with her class awaiting the diploma she had earned. The president's voice grew tremulous as he reached the slender girl in black robes. He remembered her scholarship, and many rich qualities of heart and mind that had endeared her classmates and teachers; but, clearest of all he remembered her essay of a year and a half ago, and the sad event that followed. Ruth's thoughts were outside of herself now, with the young student at her side, her brother's chum the same who had walked near the coffin. An hour before he had told her that he loved her and asked her to be his wife and she had refused. It was this refusal, and the pain it had caused him, that filled her thoughts now to the exclusion of everything else.

I admire your fine mind, she had said to this classmate. I know you have the ability to make for yourself a great career; but if I ever give my heart away, it will be to the man who has devoted his talents and energies—ay, more, who has shown himself ready to risk his life, if necessary—to make temperance a success in our State. Such a man may be wanting in comeliness of features, in great intellectual powers in promise of worldly success; but, if such an one, toiling and daring for the accomplishment of this high purpose, should ask me to be the helper of his life, I would gladly take my place at his side.

With her diploma in her hand, and pity in her heart, Ruth sped to her room and recorded in her journal the words in which she had rejected her young lover; and to her they had all the significance of a solemn vow.

At the close of her school life Ruth Gaylord found a quiet home in a small Western village whose only attraction to her was the fact that two of her class-mates lived in it. Blessed with usual beauty of person, with wealth and an earnest nature, she seemed to be furnished for good work in this needy world; and she was on the watch for it. One day, as she sat sewing by the window, she saw a boy leaning upon the low gate in front. She thought him ill and sprang to the door. Catching a sound of steps the boy tried to move away, staggered, caught again by the gate post, when his uplifted face and heavy eye told the sad story: Oh her cruel past; bury it as deeply as she might, it would force up the coffin lid and come forth, by day and by night, to haunt her soul! In a moment she was bending over the boy. Who sold it to you? Who sold it to you? she cried in unconscious excitement.

Tim McCan, miss—curse him! answered the lad frightened into confession by her wild eyes. He had no right! He is a law-breaker! Come with me and we'll complain of him!

The country boy looked at the dainty white hand held out to him; and then at his own grimy fingers. I couldn't quite do that miss, he said hiding his hands behind him, when he gave it to me; but curse him, all the same!

Sobered somewhat by her sudden appearance, he steadied himself and walked on. Ruth watched him out of sight. Turning into the gate a white paper caught her eye; it had dropped from the boy's unsteady fingers. She picked it up and read:

JIMMY KUHN, I've as good a brand of whisky as was ever sold here. Come in the house door when you come to town, and I will sell you some of my high-priced cigars and give you a bottle of the Simon pure.

TIM McCAN.

Fifteen minutes later, Ruth stood before the office of the nearest justice of the peace. Are you Mr. Strong? she inquired of the white haired gentleman who rose from his chair as she stepped before him. Yes, Miss Gaylord.

She did not notice that he called her by name; did not know that she had more than one auditor.

Will the law let that man lure young boys to drunkenness? she spread the smutty note before him, and told the story of the boy who refused to betray, even while he cursed his destroyer.

I know them, said the lawyer, all of them. This note is to the boy's father; he was undoubtedly sent for the promised bottle, and is carrying it home in his pocket. You have brought us just the proof we wanted, Miss Gaylord. I will enter your complaint and send the marshal after Tim.

Enter the complaint in my name, Mr. Strong.

The voices came from the back part of the room. Ruth turned at the sound, and met the quiet, resolute face of the speaker. Why not in my name? she asked, in her earnestness, forgetting that she addressed a stranger.

You cannot understand now, was the same steady, but kind voice. The speaker drew near, and looking down into her eager face said, Tim McCan and his customers are a rough and cruel set; they can easily make it unpleasant if not unsafe for you.

And not for you?

His dark face flushed, but the squire answered quickly; Yes, for him, they mean not only to make it unsafe, but impossible for you to stay here, Mr. Wilber. Their threats grow louder every day. Better wait, till you have supporters.

This work has to be done, my friend. It is necessarily dangerous; some one must face the danger. I have put my hand to the plow, and I shall not turn back.

Mr. Wilber was the new preacher at the little village church. Many times already had his hearers listened to his words, as it were of living fire, as he pointed to the harvest of intemperance, ripening on every side, and called men and women to wake from sleep and go forth to this work of the Lord against the mighty. Ruth became one of his hearers, and her whole soul responded to the master's call. The two workers often met thereafter, in temperance

meetings, in Sunday school and in the homes of the poor and perishing. The preacher never had a sister; he could not remember his mother; and his father's passion for strong drink had robbed his two young brothers of home and love. It was that memory which had planted in his very being the hatred of intemperance, and determined for him his life-work.

It is not strange, therefore, that the sweet and earnest face of his gentle fellow-worker became a necessary presence to him, and that, learning the sad story which had proved the secret spring of her own consecrated life, he asked her to go with him and help to make a home which might not only be the shelter and joy of his own life, but hold out the light of hope to many whose steps were going down to death. Neither is it strange that Ruth Gaylord, recognizing the manliness and nobility of this tried friend, remembered her vow, long ago recorded, and gladly answered, 'where thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.'

In a distant Western city, by their united and tireless efforts, through God's grace, many have been snatched from dark and evil ways; and some, at least, have entered spotless on the eternal life.

LAUGHING VOICES.

It seems strange that people should lay away money for a rainy day, when it is almost impossible to spend money, except in fine, sunshiny weather.—Puck.

From the number of lynchings by indignant citizens of the West, lately, it is evident that 'Westward the course of hempire takes its way.'—Exchange.

Sam Jones, the revivalist, raised \$21,000 in Nashville the other day on a sermon sixteen minutes long. This encouraging little incident should teach clergymen to limit their sermons to sixteen minutes.—Norristown Herald.

MUSICAL ITEM.—One of these dollars is a counterfeit, ma'am. How can you tell? Simply by the sound. Just tap it and hear how clear the genuine sounds. That's tenor. Notice when I tap the other one. That's base.—Texas Siftings.

Call a girl a chick, and she smiles; call a woman a hen, and she howls. Call a young woman a witch, and she is pleased; call an old woman a witch, and she is indignant. Call a girl a kitten, and she rather likes it; call a woman a cat and she'll hate you. Queer sex, isn't it?—Red Bluff (Cal.) News.

A PIECE OF LAUNDRY WORK.—Now, then, said the captain of police to the janitor of the station-house. Give the prisoner a bath, and when that is done let him be handcuffed and sent off to the jail. In other words, remarked the janitor, you desire the prisoner washed and ironed and sent off. Precisely. And it was done.—Boston Courier.

A COOK-BOOK.—Scene, a Cincinnati book-store. Enter countryman, who walked up to a salesman and said: Look yer, mister, my wife says that 'ere cook-book is no good! Salesman: What cook-book? Countryman: Whv, this 'ere one. My wife says she understands her P's and Q's; but this 'ere book is all full of them, so she can't make head nor tail of them. Salesman: Cook-book! Why, that's Cook's 'Synopsis of Chess Openings,' a book on a game that is played among a certain class of people. Countryman: Yer don't say so! Why, I thought it war a cook-book and Chess Openings war the feller's name wot got it up!—Southern Trade Gazette.

SUBJECTS FOR THOUGHT

Love is the true revealer of secrets, because it makes one with the object regarded.

As love without esteem is volatile and capricious, esteem without love is languid and cold.

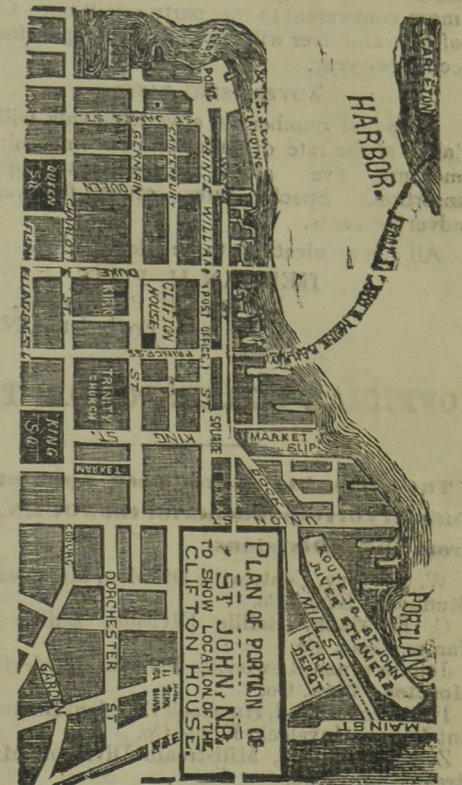
Two young pigeons of the poor were just as acceptable to God as the fat bullocks of the rich.

The advantage to be derived from virtue is so evident that the wicked practice it from interested motives.

There is in every true woman's heart a spark of heavenly fire, which beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity.

In languages the tongue is more pliant to all sounds, the joints more supple to all feats of activity, in youth than afterwards.

In the want and ignorance of almost all things they looked upon themselves as the happiest and wisest people of the universe.



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