

## Hard Times.

BY HANNAH MOORE.

"We say the times are grievous hard,  
And hard they are 'tis true;  
But, drunkards, to your wives and babes  
They're harder made by you.

The drunkard's tax is self-imposed,  
Like every other sin;  
The taxes altogether cost  
Not half so much as GIN.

The state compels no man to drink,  
Compels no man to game;  
'Tis Gin and gambling sinks him down  
To rags, and want, and shame.

The kindest husband, changed by Gin,  
Is for a tyrant known;  
The tenderest heart that nature made,  
Becomes a heart of stone.

In many a house the harmless babes  
Are poorly clothed and fed,  
Because the craving Gin-shop takes  
The children's daily bread.

Come, neighbor, take a walk with me,  
Through many a London street,  
And see the cause of poverty,  
In hundreds that we meet.

Behold the shivering female there,  
Who plies her woeful trade!  
'Tis ten to one you'll find that Gin  
That helpless wretch has made.

Look down those steps, and view below  
Yon cellar under ground;  
There every want and every woe,  
And every sin are found.

Those little children trembling there,  
With hunger and with cold,  
Were by their parent's love of Gin,  
To sin and misery sold.

Look through this prison's iron bars!  
Look through that dismal grate,  
And learn what dire misfortune brought  
So terrible a fate!

The debtor, and the felon, too,  
Though differing much in sin,  
Too of you'll find were thither brought  
By all-destroying Gin.

See the pale manufacturer there,  
How lank and lean he lies!  
How haggard is his sickly cheek!  
How dim his hollow eyes!

How ample had his gains sufficed,  
On wife and children spent!  
But all must for his pleasure go;  
All to the Gin-shop went.

See that apprentice, young in years,  
But hackneyed long in sin!  
What made him rob his master's till?  
Alas! 'twas love of Gin.

That serving man! I knew him once,  
So jaunty, spruce, and smart!  
Why did he steal, then pawn the plate?  
'Twas Gin ensnared his heart!

But hark! what dreadful sound was that!  
'Tis Newgate's awful bell!  
It tolls, alas! for human guilt!  
Some malefactor's knell!

Oh woeful sound! Oh what could cause  
Such punishment and sin?  
Hark! hear his words—he owns the cause—  
"Bad company and Gin!"

And when the future lot is fix'd,  
Of darkness fire and chains,  
How can the drunkard hope to 'scape  
Those everlasting pains?"

## A TALE.

BY MRS. MILFORD.

Dignity, a mild and gentle, but still a most striking dignity, was the prime characteristic of Agnes Molesworth, in look and in mind.—Her beauty was the beauty of sculpture, as contradistinguished from that of painting; depending mainly on form and expression, little on color. There could hardly be a stronger contrast than existed between the purity of her finely-grained complexion, the softness of her deep gray eye, and the calm composure of her exquisitely moulded features, and the rosy cheeks, the brilliant glances, and the playful animation of Jessy. If a word, Jessy was a pretty girl, and Agnes was a beautiful woman. Of these several facts both sisters were, of course, perfectly aware: Jessy, because every body told her so, and she must have been deaf to have escaped the knowledge; Agnes, from some process equally certain but less direct; for few would have ventured to take the liberty of addressing a personal compliment to one evidently too proud to find pleasure in any thing so nearly resembling flattery as praise.

Few, excepting her looking-glass and her father, had ever told Agnes that she was handsome, and yet she was as conscious of her surpassing beauty as Jessy of her sparkling prettiness; and, perhaps, as a mere question of appearance and becomingness, there might have been as much coquetry in the severe simplicity of attire and of manner which distinguished one sister, as in the elaborate adornment and innocent showing-off of the other. There was, however, between them exactly such a real and internal difference of taste of character as the outward show served to indicate. Both were true, gentle, good, and kind; but the elder was as much lovelier in mind as in stature, was full of high purpose; had abandoned drawing, from feeling herself dissatisfied with her own performance, as compared with the works of real artists; reserved her musical talent entirely for her domestic circle, because she put too much soul into that delicious art to make it a mere amusement; and was only saved from becoming a poetess, by her almost exclusive devotion to the very great in poetry—to Woodsworth, to Milton and Shakespeare. These tastes she

very wisely kept to herself; but they gave a higher and firmer tone to her character and manners; and more than one peer, when seated at Mr. Molesworth's hospitable table, has thought within himself how well his beautiful daughter would become a coronet.

Marriage, however, seemed little in her thoughts. Once or twice, indeed, her kind father had pressed on her the brilliant establishments that had offered—but her sweet questions, 'Are you tired of me? do you wish me away?' had always gone straight to his heart, and had put aside for the moment the ambition of his nature even for this his favorite child.

Of Jessy, with all her youthful attractions, he had always been less proud, perhaps, less fond. Besides, her destiny he had long in his own mind considered as decided. Charles Woodford, a poor relation, brought up by his kindness, and recently returned into his family from a great office in London, was the person on whom he had long ago fixed for the husband of his youngest daughter, and for the immediate partner and eventual successor to his great and flourishing business: a choice that seemed fully justified by the excellent conduct and remarkable talents of his orphan cousin, and by the apparently good understanding and mutual affection that subsisted between the young people.

The arrangement was the more agreeable to him, as providing munificently for Jessy, it allowed him the privilege of making, as in lawyer-phrase he used to boast, 'an elder son' of Agnes, who would by this marriage of her younger sister, become one of the richest heiresses of the country. He had even, in his own mind elected her future spouse, in the person of a young baronet who lately had been much at the house, and in favor of whose expected addresses (for the proposals had not yet been made—the gentleman had gone no further than attenuations,) he had determined to exert the paternal authority which had so long lain dormant.

But in the affairs of love, as in all others, man is born to disappointment. 'L'homme propose, et Dieu dispose' is never truer than in the greater matter of matrimony. So found poor Mr. Molesworth, who,—Jessy having arrived at the age of eighteen, and Charles at that of two-and-twenty,—offered his pretty daughter and the lucrative partnership, to his penniless relation, and was petrified with astonishment and indignation to find the connexion very respectfully but very firmly declined. The young man was much distressed and agitated; he had the highest respect for Miss Jessy; but he could not marry her—he loved another! And then he poured forth a confidence as unexpected as it was undesired by his incensed patron, who left him in undiminished wrath and increased perplexity.

This interview had taken place immediately after breakfast; and when the conference was ended, the provoked father sought his daughters, who happily unconscious of all that had occurred, were amusing themselves in the splendid conservatory—a scene always as becoming as it is agreeable to youth and beauty. Jessy was flitting about like a butterfly amongst the fragrant orange trees and bright geraniums.—Agnes standing under a superb fuchsia that hung over a large marble basin, her form and attitude, her white dress, and the classical arrangement of her dark hair, giving her the look of some nymph or naad, a rare relic of Grecian art. Jessy was prattling gaily, as she wandered about, of a concert which they had attended the evening before at the country town:

"I hate concerts!" said the pretty little fift. "To sit bolt upright on a hard bench for four hours, between the same four people, without the possibility of moving, or of speaking to any body, or of any body's getting to us! Oh! how tiresome it is!"

"I saw Sir Edmund trying to slide through the crowd to reach you," said Agnes, a little archly: "his presence would, perhaps, have mitigated the evil. But the barricade was too complete: he was forced to retreat, without accomplishing his object."

"Yes, I assure you, he thought it very tiresome; he told me so when we were coming out. And then the music!" pursued Jessy; "the noise they call music! Sir Edmund says that he likes no music except the guitar, or a flute on the water; and I like none except your playing on the organ, and singing Handel on a Sunday evening, or Charles Woodford's reading Milton and bits of Hamlet."

"Do you call that music?" asked Agnes, laughing. "And yet," continued she, "it is most truly so, with his rich Pasta-like voice, and his fine sense of sound: and to you, who do not greatly love poetry for its own sake, it is doubtless, a pleasure much resembling in kind that of hearing the most thrilling of instruments. I myself have felt such a gratification in hearing him recite the verses of Homer or of Sophocles in the original Greek.—Charles Woodford's reading is music."

"It is music which you are neither of you likely to hear again," interrupted Mr. Molesworth advancing suddenly towards them; "for he has been ungrateful, and I have discarded him."

Jessy stood as if petrified: "Ungrateful, oh, father!"

"You can't have discarded him, to be sure, papa," said Jessy, always good natured, "poor Charles! what can he have done?"

"Refused your hand, child," said the angry parent, "refused to be my partner and son-in-law, and fallen in love with another lady! What have you to say for him now?"

"Why really papa," replied Jessy, "I'm much more obliged to him for refusing my hand than to you for offering it. I like Charles very well for a cousin, but I should not like such a husband at all; so that if this refusal be the worst that has happened, there's no great harm done." And off the gipsy ran, declaring that she must put on

her habit, for she had promised to ride with Sir Edmund and his sister, and expected them every minute.

The father and the daughter remained in the conservatory.

"That heart is untouched, however," said Mr. Molesworth, looking after her with a smile.

"Untouched by Charles Woodford, undoubtedly," replied Agnes, "but has he really refused my sister?"

"'Absolutely'?"

"And does he love another?"

"He says so, and I believe him."

"Is he loved again?"

"That he did not say."

"Did he tell you the name of the lady?"

"Yes."

"Do you know her?"

"Yes."

"Is she worthy of him?"

"Most worthy."

"Has he any hope of gaining her affections? Oh! he must! he must! what woman could refuse him?"

"He is determined not to try. The lady whom he loves is above him in every way; and much as he has counterfeited my wishes, it is an honorable part of Charles Woodford's conduct, that he intends to leave his affection unsuspected by its object."

Here ensued a short pause in the dialogue, during which Agnes appeared to be collecting the blossoms of a Cape jessamine, and watering a favorite geranium, but it would not do; the subject was at her heart, and she could not force her mind to indifferent occupations.—She returned to her father, who had been anxiously watching her motions, and the varying expression of her countenance, and resumed the conversation.

"Father! perhaps it is hardly maidenly to avow so much, but although you have never set words told me your intentions, I have yet seen and known, I can hardly tell how, all that your kind partiality towards me has designed for your children. You have mistaken me, dearest father, doubly mistaken me; first in thinking me fit to fill a splendid place in society; next in imagining that I deserved such splendor. You meant to give Jessy, and the lucrative partnership to Charles Woodford, and designed me and your large possessions for our wealthy and titled neighbor. And with some little change of persons these arrangements may still, for the most part hold good. Sir Edmund may still be your son-in-law and your heir, for he loves Jessy, and Jessy loves him. Charles Woodford may still be your partner and your adopted son, for nothing has changed that need diminish your affection or his merit. Marry him to the woman he loves. She must be ambitious indeed, if she be not content with her destiny. And let me live with you dear father, single and unwedded, with no other thought but to contribute to your comfort, to cheer and brighten your declining years. Do not let your too great fondness for me stand in the way of their happiness! Make me not so odious to them and to myself, dear father! Let me live always with you, and for you—always your own poor Agnes!" And, blushing at the earnestness with which she had spoken, she bent her head over the marble basin, whose water reflected her fair image, as if she had really been the Grecian statue, to which, whilst he listened, her fond father's fancy had compared her; "Let me live single with you, and marry Charles to the woman whom he loves."

"Have you heard the name of the lady in question? Have you formed any guess whom she may be?"

"Not the slightest. I imagined from what you said, that she was a stranger to me. Have I ever seen her?"

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