

on the road. Through burnt bridges and torn up tracks they had narrowly escaped with their lives. On crossing the northern line Mrs. Abbott seemed elated in their safe delivery and the anticipated meeting of her husband. But how quickly these pleasant feelings relapsed into deeper sadness. What is more painful than to be transported from trouble into joy, and this joy to be suddenly changed into sorrow, like the appearing and disappearing of a meteor in the darkness of the night.

We must not pass over Uncle Ben and Aunt Betsy. It was intended to leave them to take care of the family homestead, but they pleaded so piteously to accompany the family that Mrs. Abbott could do no other than consent. While the two families were waiting in the station, Mr. Abbott and Mr. Sparks were busily engaged in looking after the baggage. The peculiar utterance of "Massa Abbott" from Uncle Ben seemed to attract particular attention from the bystanders.

"Ma, what makes pa's breath smell so strange?" asked little Albert while examining a present that his father had just given him. "And what makes his nose look so red, like Pat Johnson's?"

Mrs. Abbott threw her arm around the child and said,

"My dear, you will too soon learn the cause of all this."

Then she endeavored to drive away the haunting thought by talking with him about the present he held in his hand.

Mr. Abbott soon had the family made comfortable in a neat cottage. As he intended to return to Tennessee, most of their furniture was left behind. But Mrs. Abbott had brought her piano, never dreaming that it would produce her pain instead of pleasure. Passers by would often pause to catch the strains of her melodious voice.

"Dar is somethin' that is not goin' right with massa," said Aunt Betsy to Uncle Ben a few weeks after the family had arrived in their new abode.

"Ah me! I tink dar is, Betsy," said Uncle Ben. Massa isn't de same man he were in old Tennessee. "I tell you, Betsy, what de trouble is; he is a pertakin' of too muca of de strong beverage. De oder day I hears de people talk of him. Squire Simms dat took dinner here de oder day, said massa were not de man he tinks he were."

"It 'pears to me dat massa wouldn't take de cursed stuff if he had de comforts dat he had in old Tennessee," said Aunt Betsy with a knowing look.

"Upon my stars!" said Uncle Ben, "who ever heard de like before? Such logic as dat would make all de world drunkards; yes, all de colored folks too."

At this point Mr. Abbott passed by the kitchen window with flushed face and unsteady gait. He crept softly up stairs, and no one of the family knew of his presence in the house till the following morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

When wealth is left to itself how quickly it takes wings and disappears. Since Mr. Abbott had closed his business in Tennessee his means had become greatly decreased. And when he was prepared to start in business, he found that he had but little to commence with. But his losses were not known by the public until after he had started in business. Let us see how the public treats his intemperance before and after his wealth had become impoverished.

Often at a late hour at night Mr. Abbott was brought home by Mr. Sherwin intoxicated. Mr. Sherwin endeavored to conceal his intemperance both from the church and public. He used every means possible to win him back to a temperate life.

"I wonder what is the reason that Mrs. Abbott has not come over to-day," said Mrs. T. at the close of a meeting of the Ladies' Aid Society.

"I presume it is through her mind being so much troubled lately," said Mrs. Sherwin.

"It was only last night that I saw Mr.