

Father stood tearless and stricken with grief, though his hopes were sealed up in the coffin of his children. In his agony, he uttered words of strange meaning. The doubts of the Seeker burst forth in the accents of despair. The neighbours gazed at each other. They had before had doubts of the religious principles of Dr. Storie, now those doubts were confirmed. In the bitterness of his grief, he had spoken of the grave as the eternal prison of the dead, and of futurity and resurrection as things he hoped for, but believed not.

His words were circulated through the village, and over the country; and, as they spread, they were exaggerated. Many began to regard him as an unsafe man to visit deathbed, where he might attempt to rob the dying of the everlasting hope which enables them to triumph over the last enemy.—His practice fell off, and the wants of his family increased. He was no longer able to maintain an appearance of respectability; his coat had assumed a melancholy hue; and he gave up assembling with his family amidst the congregation over which his father had been pastor. His circumstances aggravated the gloom of his mind; and, for a time, he became not a Seeker, but one who abandoned himself to callousness and despair. Even the affliction of his wife—which knew no change, but rather increased as affliction and misfortune came upon them—with the smiles and affection of his children, became irksome. Their love increased his misery. His own house was all but forsaken, and the blacksmith's shop became his consulting room, the village alehouse his laboratory. Misery and contempt heightened the "shadows, clouds; and darkness," which rested on his mind. To his anguish and excitement he had now added habits of intemperance—his health became a wreck, and he lay upon his bed, a miserable and a ruined man. The shadow of death seemed lowering over him, and he lay trembling, shrinking from its approach, shuddering and brooding over the cheerless, the horrible thought, *annihilation!* But, even then, his poor Agnes watched over him with a love stronger than death. She strove to cheer him with the thought that he would still live—that they would again be happy. "O my husband!" cried she, fondly, "yield not to despair; seek, and ye shall find!"

"O heavens, Agnes!" exclaimed he, "I have sought! I have sought! I have been a Seeker until now; but Truth flies from me,

Hope mocks me, and the terrors of death only find me!"

"Kneel with me, my children," she cried; "let us pray for mercy and peace of mind for your poor father?" And the fond wife and her offspring knelt around the bed where her husband lay. A gleam of joy passed over the sick man's countenance, as the voice of her supplication rose upon his ear, and a ray of hope fell upon his heart. "Amen!" he uttered as she arose; and "Amen!" responded their children.

On the bed of sickness, his heart had been humbled; he had, as it were, seen death face to face, and the nearer it approached, the stronger assurances did he feel of the immortality he had dared to doubt. He arose from his bed a new man; hope illumined, and faith began to glow in his bosom. His doubts were vanquished, his fears dispelled. He had sought, and at length found—found the joys and the hopes of the Christian. He regained the esteem of men, and again prospered; and this was the advice of the Seeker to his children: "*Avoid trusting to reason when it would flatter you with your own wisdom; for it begetteth doubt; doubt, unbelief; unbelief, despair; and despair, death!*"

LOTTERY HALL.

I had slept on the preceeding night at Brampton, and without entering so far into particulars as to say whether I took the road towards Carlisle, Newcastle, Anran, or to the south, suffice it to say that towards evening, and just as I was again beginning to think of a resting place. I overtook a man sauntering along the road with his hands behind his back. A single glance informed me that he was not one who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow, but the same glance also told me that he had not bread enough and to spare. His back was covered with a well-worn black coat, the fashion of which belonged to a period at least twelve years preceeding the time of which I write. The other parts of his outer man harmonized with his coat so far as apparent age and colour went. His head was covered with a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, and on his nose he wore a pair of silver-mounted spectacles. To my mind he presented the picture of a poor scholar, or of gentility in rags.