THE Weekly Chronicle.

"Nec Rege, Nec Populo, sed utroque."

Vol. 1. SAINT JOHN, (N. B.) FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 1836. No. 3.

The Chronicle,

is published every Friday afternoon, by Lewis W. Durant & Co. at their Office in Sands' brick house, Prince William Street.

Terms—15s. per annum, or 12s. 6d. if paid in advance.—When sent by mail, 2s. 6d. extra.

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PROSPECTUS

Of a new Weekly Newspaper, to be called

The Chronicle,

And Published by LEWIS W. DURANT & CO.

Sands' brick building, Prince Wm. Street.

IT cannot fail of striking every one who will reflect upon it for a moment, that the number of Newspapers published in this City bears no proportion to that published in other towns in British North America, or the United States, which are similarly situated and contain the same amount of population. To whatever causes the circumstance may be ascribed, the fact is undeniable. There is another fact which is more remarkable still;—in the last ten years, the city, (to say nothing of the Province at large) has nearly doubled itself in size and population; but during that period, only one has been added to the number of the newspapers.—It may therefore be confidently asserted that there is *room for another paper*: and many circumstances might be mentioned to prove that *another paper* is wanted.

To fill the vacancy here, and to supply what is thus wanted, is the object of those who take this opportunity of announcing the publication, (commencing with all possible despatch) of a newspaper, to be called *The Chronicle of News, Politics, Commerce, Science, and Literature*, and of which they offer the following brief sketch:

Under the head of News, they propose to give a summary account of what is passing, and worthy of being recorded, in the various quarters of the Globe, particularly in the Mother Country and her numerous Colonies.—Under that of Politics, the Parliamentary business of the Imperial Parliament and the neighbouring Colonies will be detailed; particularly the discussions in the House of Commons relating to Colonial affairs, and more especially those in which we are ourselves interested. With reference to Commerce, they propose to give both a copious Shipping List, and also the latest Price Currents from London, Liverpool, and New-York; for the securing of which they are making the necessary arrangements. They also intend to insert from time to time, such notices of Science and Literature as in their judgment may be generally useful; and in this department they respectfully solicit contributions from the friends of useful knowledge throughout the Province.

With respect to Domestic Politics, they need say but little. The Chronicle shall always be found ready to defend the rights of the people against the undue exercise of the Prerogative; and on the other hand whenever there may be occasion for it, to support the prerogative against any encroachments which may be attempted on the part of the popular branches of the Commonwealth. The Chronicle shall also be found open at all times for the temperate discussion of subjects of public interest.

The Proprietors of the Chronicle would take the liberty of noticing a claim to public favour of a personal nature, which they trust will not be disregarded. The name which will appear on the title page of the Chronicle will not be exhibited in such a situation for the first time; it has been connected with the public Press for nearly half a century! and it is to be hoped, in a manner which did not disgrace it; but on the contrary, which has laid the foundation of a claim for future patronage and support.

The terms of the Chronicle will be fifteen shillings per annum—*if paid in advance*, 12s. 6d.

St. John, July 1, 1836.

Miscellany.

From the Diary of a London Clergyman.

THE CONDEMNED.

[CONCLUDED.]

Repeat my visit to the Prisoner.—He is still obdurate.—Continue my visits daily.—His obduracy at length relaxes.—St. John's Gospel.—He acknowledges himself overcome.—Confesses his errors.—Solicits my future visits.—Promises to give me the History of his Life.—Relates it.

I quitted the prisoner, less dissatisfied with my visits than on the preceding day. From something that had transpired since the trial, he and his companion were reputed for three weeks. The following morning I again visited his cell. He was less austere than usual—his spirit, no doubt, having been somewhat quieted by the respite which had only been just communicated to him, when I entered his prison. Upon this occasion, I determined somewhat to change my mode of address, and try if I could elicit any lurking affection, which might aid me in my ultimate purpose.

"My friend," said I, "the King having granted you a short extension of life, the opportunity is, perhaps, afforded me of doing you a kindness, for which I only ask your good will. Have you a mother, a wife, a sister, or any one dear to you upon earth, to whom you would desire a message to be conveyed? Command me, and I will be the bearer of your communication to any part of the kingdom."

He paused: his lip gently quivered, but so slightly that I could scarcely perceive it, and only for a single instant.

'No,' he said, 'I do not require your services. It is courteous of you to offer them, but did I desire to apprise any one of my condition, I should employ some other messenger. I candidly tell you that you have not gained my confidence.'

Though there was nothing very encouraging in this avowal, yet the tone in which it was uttered greatly increased my hope. There was no irritability: no courtesy, it is true, but still none of that truculent asperity which had characterised all his replies until now.

'Have you a father?'

'No.'

'A mother?'

'No.'

'Sisters?'

'No.'

'Have you no relations?'

'Ay: but what of that?' I wish not to disturb their peace. They cannot save me from hanging, and by death will be to them nothing more than a hideous dream. It will be forgotten as the darkness passes."

'I have no right to inquire into the affairs of your family, but can only say, that if you have any communications to make, I am ready to be the herald of your wishes, even to the extremity of the kingdom.'

He again slightly declined my offer, and relapsed into one of his fits of moody silence. I was struck with these alternations of temper, as developments of character, not upon the whole unfavourable, and was more than ever encouraged to hope, that by patience I should win this stubborn mind to sensibility and to penitence.

I quitted him now for the third time, determined to persevere in seeing him every day until the sentence of the law should be executed upon him. He invariably refused to see the Ordinary of the prison. The turnkey expressed his surprise, at my long daily visits, when, as he said, the man appeared, to be as savage as a bear, and would not give him a civil word. This I could easily understand, knowing the prisoner's character.

I continued to visit him in the same way, for nine successive days, but apparently with little success. He always grew turbulent the moment I introduced a topic of religion. He was however, upon the whole, sufficiently patient, though I could never entice him into a lengthened discussion upon any point.

On the tenth morning I found him calm, but more than usually taciturn. I could scarcely draw a word from him: nevertheless, he manifested no sign of irritation. After a while he seated himself on his bed: I seized the opportunity, knelt beside him, and prayed earnestly. My prayer was offered up for all sorts and conditions of men. I made no especial allusion to his spiritual state, but supplicated God's mercy for sinners of all classes, kinds, and degrees, including myself among them, as requiring Divine Grace no less than the most guilty. As I proceeded, I saw that he was moved; an emotion was kindling within him, yet so faintly was it portrayed upon his naturally rigid lineaments, that nothing but a close observation of the working of his feelings would have enabled me to detect it. When I concluded, he joined in a fervent Amen.

This was the first and only indication he had yet given of a devotional impulse. I took his hand. He did not withdraw it. I murmured a blessing upon him.

'It is strange,' said he, at length mildly, that you should give yourself so much trouble about one whom you must perceive to be a worthless wretch, since I am so insensible to your kindness, and have already repaid it with brutal violence.'

I told him it was my duty to hear and to forbear; but that I had particularly persisted in visiting him because I felt assured that he did not know himself,—that he was altogether not what he seemed, and that I had determined to use my best endeavours to bring to the surface the good which was in him only obscured, not extinct.

He smiled incredulously, yet there was a forebearance, and even a suavity, in his manner, which assured me. He listened to me with attention, and I was, at length, induced to lay the New Testament before him. He looked upon it, but his eye wandered languidly, sometimes vacantly, over the sacred pages. I took up the book and began to read. He listened. His attention increased as I proceeded, until his countenance finally expressed an interest which he heard. I turned to that beautiful passage in St John's Gospel, where the women taken in adultery is brought before Christ. His feelings were roused. His eyes brightened. I read in a subdued and tremulous voice, for I was deeply affected by the evident impression which this Divine history was producing. A tear glistened in his eye, the cheek and lip visibly quivered. I was so overcome at the effect wrought upon this lately ferocious man, that when I concluded the eloquent narrative, I laid down the book, and burst into tears. They were tears of strong emotion, but of joy. He cast his full black eyes, bearing with intense intelligence, upon me, directed them towards heaven, and uttered in a deep tone of calm but solemn devotion, "Saviour, thou hast conquered!" I again took his hand, and grasped it with fervour: he returned the pressure; and I felt that the man was reclaimed.

'Do you know, sir,' he said, at length, 'I am astonished at my feelings. You have prevailed: and I am henceforth whatever you desire. There still remain eleven days before the sentence of the law will be executed upon me. I, who have hitherto repelled your presence, now earnestly invite it, and hope you will see me daily, until I am called to expiate my crime in the manner which the law requires.' It is fit that you should know something of the person in whom you have taken so singular an interest. To-morrow, therefore, if you favour me with your accustomed visit, I will relate to you some particulars of my life, which will, perhaps, satisfy you, that I am less a ruffian than I may appear to the world, and show that a man's dark side may alone be visible to his fellow-man; but that, nevertheless, the bright and the dark alike exist, though only one be obvious to general scrutiny.'

'My friend,' said I, 'you excited in my breast, an interest from the first moment I beheld you, because to me there appeared a something in you to be discovered. I trust I have come at the one at last, and that it will still exhibit the true montage before you leave this world.'

'Nay, I shall have to tell you things, which will show a nature reckless, impatient of wrong, implacable in its revenge, yet withal—but you shall judge. Come to me to-morrow, and hear my history—it is a marked one, and the sum of it, as you perceive, will be a halter.'

'To-morrow I will be with you betimes. Meanwhile think of what I have said. Remember your time is short, and you have to make your peace with heaven. You have the sacrifice of a contrite heart to offer to your God. Offer it earnestly and devoutly. Let it not be a vain oblation. Let it be but fervent, and it will go up as incense upon the aspirations of a devout hope and holy alliance.'

"Well, well, I shall not forget your admonition.'

I quitted him. He was calm, and even cheerful. There was no longer any of that asperity which had up to this day invariably characterised his conduct towards me. I left a Bible with him. The change in the feelings of this strange being did not in the least surprise me, for I fully expected it, and was prepared to hear in the narrative of his life, which he expressed a desire to communicate to me, much that should sufficiently account for the unfavourable circumstances which had so painfully coloured the closing period of his existence.

It is surprising how little we become really acquainted with human nature, by looking superficially at the actions of men, as they rise to observation, in our common social intercourse with each other. How false are the conclusions we frequently come to, upon the merits and demerits of our fellow-creatures! Our observation must pierce much deeper than the visible sign seen in the mere overt act, or we shall mistake the mask for the countenance; and thus, looking at a fictitious index, read the heart through a false interpreter.

Early next day I repaired to the prisoner's cell. He arose to meet, and welcomed me courteously. His manner was frank and even gentle, and there was a general gesture of ease about his whole deportment which showed me evidently now, though I had already in a less decided degree remarked it, that he was a man of education, and not of plebeian origin.

'This is truly kind, sir,' he said. 'I have never felt your visit to be a favour before, but now I really do take it as one, and trust you will receive my acknowledgments with the same spirit in which they are tendered:—they are the acknowledgments of one who makes them, for the first time. Ay, sir, my life has been one of stern interdiction, of passionate struggles, and of fierce resistance. The end which I am to meet, is the fitting termination of such a life. But I anticipate. Be seated and you shall hear.'

I did not interrupt him, but sitting down upon his homely bed, he placed himself beside me, and commenced his interesting narrative.

'I was born of wealthy parents; the only son of a severe and inexorable father. He was a man of family and influence in his native county, but rather respected for his rigid integrity than beloved for the amenities of his nature. In fact, of these he had none. He was an obdurate, uncompromising person strict to the very letter in performing the assumed obligations of life, and as unbending in exacting from others an unqualified obedience to those rules which he had laid down as comprising his own moral and social canon. He was in every act in every thought, in every feeling, a fierce, haughty bigot—a bigot in religion, a bigot in morals, a bigot in social government: and that, as is almost invariably the case, the bigot merged in the tyrant.

'My mother was a weak woman: and having been inoculated with her husband's religious fervor, thought no person good who did not say a long grace before every meal, and devote several hours out of the daily twenty-four to praying, while she herself spent a large portion of her time in judging her neighbours, and condemning them in God's name, because they happened to be of a different way of thinking from herself and her husband. They both prayed and gave alms continually; but there was neither charity in their religion, nor religion in their charity. My father never forgave a provocation, and my mother followed him, with scrupulous exactness, in all his thoughts, words, and deeds.

'I was the offspring of their mature years: my sire being forty-one, and my mother thirty-seven. When I was ushered into the world. I was brought up under extreme and intolerant restriction. Even before I could understand the meaning of religion, or comprehend its obligations, I was forced to kneel until my young limbs ached: and when my spirit rebelled against such untimely discipline, I was beaten into obedience. This strictness of government, to which I was thus early subjected, was never softened by any act of kindness: I grew up under a rigour which was destructive and unmitigated, that at length my parents, my home, and religion became, one and all, objects of my utter detestation. My temper was naturally violent, and this tendency was confirmed by the daily tyranny to which I was exposed. I had no respite from it, so that I absolutely lived in perpetual gall and bitterness of soul.' The severity with which my father frequently chastised me, instead of crushing my spirit, inflamed it into fierce rebellion, and even before I had attained the age of twelve years, had made up my mind, when the opportunity should occur, of showing a headlong and intractable resistance.

'When twelve years old I was placed at school. I bore a letter to the master, containing a strong injunction to put me under the most rigid restrictions; and this was so faithfully observed, that on balancing evils, I thought my home the least of the two. I was goaded to desperation. My very soul was stung by the harshness of paternal domination, and I writhed under the vulgar despotism of my parents' accredited deputy. The natural keenness of my temperament was daily ground to an edge, until at length it became the formidable instrument of my own misery.

'One day, a school-fellow, about my own age, having excited me by contradiction, I struck him with a large clasp-knife. He received the full force of the blow, given under the impulse of excessive irritation, upon the back of his hand. It severed the tendons, and he was lamed for life. My stubborn spirit would acknowledge no compunction. I was flogged with a severity that confined me to my bed for several days, but it roused a devil to life within me, and from that moment the church of peace was banished from my bosom.

'While the poor boy, whom I had wounded, was suffering the undeserved penalty inflicted by my brutality, I frequently felt a pang as I saw his pale countenance, when he was recovering from the immediate danger of the wound. A thousand times I could have embraced him, and implored his pardon for the savage outrage—but a stubborn pride withheld me. I struggled against the rising ebullition, and repelled it. Often have I curled my lip in fictitious scorn, in the presence of that much-injured youth, when my heart yearned to tell him its emotion. My haughty temper placed a mask upon my heart; and so repelling was the disguise, that he whom I had so deeply injured, shrank from me, whenever I approached him, with fear and trembling; still, in secret, I was deeply moved.

'My misery was extreme. My life appeared to me a wilderness without an oasis, and young as I was, with savage and reckless determination, I braced my mind to suffering. I was shunned by my school-fellows, as a morose thing, with whom all intercourse was interdicted. My pedagogue treated me as a rebel, from whom even the common boon of pity should be withheld; and my father looked upon me as an outcast from Heaven, from whom God's endearing attribute of mercy was withdrawn, and who, therefore, was thus cut off from the reciprocations of all human sympathies. I was, as it were, alone in the world.

Stubborn as my nature was, I nevertheless perceived that the fountains of feeling were not dried up within me. I had often deep and intense emotions. My bosom continually recoiled from the strong shock of passion, into moods of tenderness. The flow of morbid exasperation occasionally ebbed into the calm of profound sensibility."

'This state of things could not last; the tension of my mind was too strong for endurance: but it at length sought relief in affections of an amiable and lovely girl, who, I am sure, if my course had been pursued with her, would have won me back to peace, and cast a glory round the dim sphere of my existence, that has ever since been eclipsed by those dreary circumstances into which my dark and bitter destiny has compelled me.

'The object of my attachment was the daughter of a lieutenant in the navy, who had nothing for the maintenance of himself and daughter but his half-pay, and a small pension for the loss of an arm. Still they lived in homely comfort. The fair Lucy was a kind-hearted, innocent girl, not beautiful, but of so affectionate a nature, that she won all hearts; and after she had won mine, I loved her with an affection intense in proportion as she was the only object that had ever awakened within my bosom the sentiment of true devotion. She completely tamed my refractory spirit down to that of a compliant thing, which in her presence found a repose before unknown, and a delight in doing her bidding that seemed like the discovery of a new sense. I had never until now known what happiness, or even what true enjoyment was. A new atmosphere was brightening around me. A green spot was growing up in the desert of my existence, when a sudden blight passed over the blooms which were hourly overspreading it, and I was left once more a doomed and blasted thing. From this moment the sombre colours of my life became engrained, and they have never since known change. There has not been one bright hue among them.

'When my father heard of my attachment to the lieutenant's daughter, with the cold malignity of a demon, he determined to thwart my purpose. He had the audacity to fall upon his knees before God, and beseech Him that he might be enabled to subdue my rebellion, as he called it, and commanded me to kneel and unite in his prayer. I refused with loud indignation. I was now twenty, stout and muscular as an ancient athletic, strong and active as the tawny lion,—equally impatient of opposition, and ever ready to avenge a wrong. I listened to my father's prayer with scorn and disgust. I saw his dull grey eye roll inward with all the earnestness of resolved and unalterable purpose, and I heard his voice pronounce those unnatural supplications, which were virtually nothing more than audacious blasphemies against God's justice, though uttered with the tone and in the language of the humblest imploration.

'On rising from his knees, with his eyes half shut, and turning upon me his sharp, withered countenance, on which was engrossed the legible record of immutable determination, he solemnly assured me, that not only would he never consent to my marrying the girl of my selection; but, if I did so, from that moment, abandon all thoughts of a matrimonial alliance with her. I should cease to be his son. I smiled bitterly at his callous obligations. His savage, his monstrous opposition, hung down all feelings of decorum. I laughed at, and defied him. He had forbidden all thoughts of a conjugal connexion, and I fiercely taunted him with suggesting an intercourse alike abhorrent to divine and human laws. I told him his religion was a mockery, and, worked up at last to an uncontrollable acerbity of spirit, cursed him and that religion which had converted him into such a monster of domestic tyranny. But I mistook the instrument. Religion had not perverted him, he had perverted religion, and I now live to repeat that curse, but it has passed my lips, and I must abide it at the reckoning. If there be a great and last assize for all, that father who cast a foul blight over the spirit of his son, and stifled every bud of promise in his youthful heart, shall stand before the Arbiter, stripped of the fictitious robe of righteousness, and shudder under the awful denunciation that shall cut him off from all hope in an eternal world. I shall see this in a state of things where earthly relationships will not awake a pang for those who are cast out into the 'blackness of darkness.'

'I quitted my father's roof in a perturbation of mind not to be described, and sought shelter under that of the father of her to whom my young faith was plighted. I offered instantly to marry her; but this proposal was over-ruled by her more considerate parent, who pointed out to me that, if my intended father should put his determination into practice, and cut me off, I had nothing save a single hundred a year which had been left me by my godfather. It was suggested that I should embrace some profession, and hoped, that when I was in a fair way of obtaining a comfortable subsistence, I should espouse the object of my choice. In this plan I cheerfully acquiesced, feeling confident that with my energies of mind and constitutional strength, I should be in a condition, ere long, to give Lucy a home. But how soon are the fallacies of human expectation realized before us. Disappointment springs up in our path with the elastic coil of that mighty serpent which hugs the tiger in its deadly embrace, and in a moment, does the work of death, where, a few moments before, life was in its full operation of vigour and of power.

'The only parent of my beloved suddenly died, and she was left without a human protector. I was then at a distance from home, being engaged in a speculation that took me into the north. At the period of her bereavement, she did not know where to address to me a communication of the melancholy event. Her grief was most intense,—silent but absorbing. I had the following particulars, afterwards, from her own mouth. She had not a soul near to condole with, or take from her a portion of that sad burden inseparable from the death of those who are near and dear to us. Her neighbours offered their officious consolations, but, in the depths of her agony, both of mind and heart, she had to direct all the minute matters of the funeral; and when all was prepared, she followed, alone, to its silent home, her father's last earthly remains. This was not her saddest trial. What followed is the great black link in my destiny, that has chained my misery, and worn my soul down into the gross and carnal thing which you have witnessed. I have never ceased to feel the deep and unchanging gall of that accursed give.

'Shortly after the death of Lucy's father, to her astonishment, mine called upon her and offered her the protection of his house. It was a specious but horrible proposal, as the issue proved. She looked upon it as a brightening, after the storm, and gladly embraced it. She was, artless as the unfledged dove, and her uncorrupted bosom yearned towards the father of the man she loved. Pictures of reconciliation and of peace, between the angry parent and discarded son, floated in fairy visions before her, and she repaired to my paternal home, with a sad but yet a lighter heart. My father received her courteously, though coldly, and my mother's constrained politeness at first damped the buoyancy of her young feelings; these, however, were very soon composed by the assurances of welcome.

'Knowing that my parents were extremely rigid in their views of religion, she confided in this knowledge as a safeguard against wrong. She had not, she could not have the slightest suspicion of any sinister intention; but, alas, how soon was she doomed to be deceived. Within a fortnight after her reception under my paternal roof, I returned, and found her an outcast from her and my own parent's home, an injured and degraded being. It was a deed of hell,—but I can endure to repeat the record now, as the wound has long ceased to bleed, though I bear the cicatrice still deeply seared upon my heart.

'This is the brief history of her ruin. In my father's house was a friend of his upon a visit, one of those cold, heartless betrayers who lurk, like serpents, in the path of innocence, to fascinate and destroy. He had reached the middle age, but his long familiar intercourse with the world had given him a certain polish of manners, which passed for elegance; and being of a shrewd discriminating mind, his conversation was fluent and entertaining. He was what, in common parlance, is called an accomplished man. He was not handsome, but possessed a fine person and insinuating manners. The very day after my poor unsuspecting Lucy had become an inmate of my paternal dwelling, this villain with the concurrence of my father and my mother also, as I have good reason to believe, made her offers at which her innocence was scandalized, and she repelled them, with gentle but indignant scorn. She turned from him in disgust, and appealed to my father for protection against the insulting proposals of his guest: he treated her appeal with indifference; she, therefore, determined without a moment's hesitation, no longer to remain in so precarious an asylum. Fully resolved upon quitting the house on the following day, she made known her determination to my parents.

'I pass over the revolting occurrences of the intervening night. To utter them, even at this distance of time, would unman me. It is enough to say, that she became the victim of as foul a plot as ever disgraced the black annals of human crime. The too-confiding girl was thrust from the threshhold, which she had been induced to enter under the pledge of protection, a degraded creature for the world's scorn,—an object loathed by woman, and from whom man withholds his pity,—an outcast and a branded wretch.

'When I returned to my beloved Lucy, I found her a blasted blossom, prostrated to the earth by the storm, and with scarcely a shelter from the pitiless outpourings of human contempt. I was maddened. I would have made her mine in spite of her degradation, but she would not, and I loved her the more for her magnanimous purity of soul. No argument of mine could stir her from her resolved and holy purpose. I implored her to marry me; but nothing could shake her.

'How did I adore that excellent but ill-requited girl. My pure, though energetic passion, was increased by the circumstances under which I now beheld her. There was no stain upon her moral purity. She had been the victim of a plot as heartless as it was demoniacal, and I was involved in her suffering. My heart swelled against the man who had thus flung her into the gulf from which no human hand could drag her; and, in my secret soul, I vowed a deep and sanguinary revenge. No ear heard the vow; thy tongue did not utter it, but it was breathed from my exacerbated spirit with an intensity—a lasting expiration. I loathed the name father. I thought him in his den of infamy,—in that house where the mockeries of religion had been made the base manders to his abominable malice—where, with blasphemous prayers upon his lips, he had plotted, and, by means of his infernal agent, accomplished, the ruin of a woman almost without an equal. I sought the hoary hypocrite. He was my father. The name was a discord, and the sight of that withered representative of paternity a bane. I looked upon him with the glance of a demon: I taunted him with his hypocrisy: I denounced him as a traitor to his God,—as a base conspirator against his children,—as a disgrace to the species with whom he claimed a human kindred. In the first paroxysm of my passion, I spat upon him. He ordered me to quit his threshold. I refused to stir. He laid his hand upon my collar, and I struck him senseless to the earth. I saw the blood stream from his mouth and nostrils, and indulged in a ferocious joy as I looked upon the hoary father and villain, lying prostrate under the arm of a son whom he had so irreparably wronged.

'I quitted his doors for ever. His friend, the instrument of his base scheme of pollution, was not in the house when I entered it, or I should have murdered him upon the spot. My vow of retribution was recorded, and I was determined that its accomplishment should be signalized: but the consummation of my vengeance was delayed.

'After quitting my father's house, I sought the unhappy girl, into whose cup of bright and radiant life he had so mercilessly poured a foul and fetid increment. From this moment she declined. I soon saw that she had not long to live. There was a worm at the core of the languishing flower; and I watched, with intense agony of sorrow, the daily drooping of one of the purest spirits that ever emanated from the great source of life. Within the short space of six weeks, she died in these arms, and I was alone in the world,—a blighted and a blasted thing,—alone and superlatively wretched. I became a hardened and a desperate man.

'The phases of moral infirmity gradually become more and more distinct when a injury once forces us to throw of all restraint, and defy the opinions of men. I had now no care for the judgment of the world, and held converse with beings desperate as myself: set at defiance the restrictions of religion, and soon ceased to be guided by any moral, either social or moral. My father died, without leaving me a shilling. I cursed his memory, and smiled bitterly at the impotent malice which followed him to his eternal home.

'After my mother's death, the whole of the property went to his poor relations, and I was left without a farthing of a friend upon earth. The small income which I possessed, independent of my father, had been long consumed. I had no regular means of employment, having ceased to follow any settled pursuit, and was, therefore, left to my wits for a maintenance. I gambled, as you may suppose; from gambling the ascent to swindling is a quick and direct step. The moment a man who has no money resorts to desperate games of chance for his daily bread, he becomes a sharper—one of the worst of villains.

'I had no character I cared to preserve; no hope of common comfort in this life; no object in the world to love;—I therefore ran heedlessly on my course, without fear or reflection; bounding from sin to sin, like a ball set in motion at the top of a rugged and steep descent,—conscious at the same time that I should go on in my wild career until it should be stopped for ever.

'I was disappointed, and, consequently, a reckless man. The one great absorbing thought of my life was revenge. I had hitherto been disappointed, because the author of my misery and of her ruin, which induced that misery, had gone abroad almost immediately after he had thus signally triumphed in his deed of guilt, so that I had no opportunity of meeting him.

'Years flew by, and the pinions of time were sorely encumbered by my grief; nevertheless, he seemed to move with a rapidity that almost stunned me, as I looked back upon his flight, mocking my vengeance, and every year leaving me still more determined to seal it in the blood of the oppressor. This man at length returned, and with a wife. He had married, for her money, an ugly but wealthy widow, who despised him as heartily as he hated her. I dogged him like his shadow. I now perceived, with a satisfaction which was a positive balm to my stricken heart, that revenge was nigh to be accomplished. I was, relatively, a happy man. The excitement of my passions was the temporary delirium of intoxication, in which there is a high physical enjoyment to the wretched beings who seek it, and sunk before the reaction by which it is followed with a positive perception of misery. The object of my sanguinary vengeance was near me, and I was satisfied. I haunted him like the unquiet spirit of one doomed to torment him for his guilt; but the opportunity so long sought for did not quickly come. I made myself acquainted with all his movements; and at length the fatal moment arrived.

'I had allied myself with a desperate man, a gambler and sharper like myself, but a fellow of pitiful soul, with whom I associated because he was a pliant villain, who shrank from no dirty occupation so long as anything was to be gained by it. We reciprocated no kindly feelings, but we knew each other, and he had found his alliance with me hitherto an advantage. The advantage indeed was mutual; yet I despised even while I was confederated with this rotten shred of humanity.

'The man upon whose death I had determined, had retired to a lodging at Blackheath. There I and my companion took up our temporary abode. I did not communicate to this miserable associate my intentions, but pretended that I meditated a robbery upon a person whom I knew to be rich, and who generally carried a large sum of money about his person. To him it was a matter of perfect indifference in what he engaged, so long as it held out a prospect of good remuneration. My victim I discovered had gone as far as Chatham, and was expected home the same evening. I had now felt that the hour for which I had endured a wretched existence for so many years was at length arrived. My companion and myself stationed ourselves about the middle of Shooter's Hill,—he, prepared to commit a robbery, and I, a murder. The night was fine. The moon was nearly at the full, and its beams were cast with a clear, but sober gray light upon the surrounding landscape. We stood within the shadow of the high hedge on either side, and were thus concealed from remote observation. I awaited the approach of my victim with intense anxiety. It was a moment of agonizing suspense; but I kept down my passionate feelings, with a convulsive energy of resolution, that almost seemed as if it would burst my bosom.

'My suspense was at length ended by the appearance of the villain, whose life I sought with an unremitting activity of purpose which years had not subdued or abated. He rode slowly up the hill, towards the spot where we stood awaiting him. He was carelessly whistling an old ballad tune, not apparently to banish thought, but to fill up the vacuities which thought should have supplied. The moon fell upon his harsh repulsive countenance, when he was within a few yards of the spot where we were standing, and exhibiting to my view those hard lineaments, added a stimulus to my stern but solemn revenge. I felt the deed, was about to do, a holy obligation.

'The man was now within three yards of me. I rushed forward, and seizing the reins of his horse, made him dismount. He struck his spurs into the animal's sides; but I held him with too tenacious hand to render his escape a matter of such easy accomplishment. His horse fretted by so severe an application of the spur, flung out its heels with such violence, that its rider was fairly thrown over its head. My companion immediately grasped the prostrate man by the collar. Seeing that he was within my power, I relinquished the reins of his steed: the animal bounded forward, and was soon out of sight. I now approached my victim, who was by this time on his legs, and taking two loaded pistols from my pocket, put one into his hand, and said,

"William, do you not know me?"

"No," he replied, with a blanched cheek and quivering lip.

"Then I will bring to your recollection one whose whole life you have rendered a continued potion of gall and wormwood. Do you remember Lucy?"

He stood mute and trembling before me. 'Now,' said I, 'you shall expiate that crime with your heart's blood: but I will not rob you of life like a cowardly assassin, who can take that life which he fears himself to lose. You are armed; so am I. We stand within three yards of each other. At a given signal we shall instantly fire.' I had scarcely uttered these words, than he cocked his pistol, presented it with desperate celerity, and pulled the trigger: it missed fire. I lost not a moment, but shot him thro' the head. He fell without a groan. My companion immediately searched him, and having secured his money, we retreated from its scene of blood, and came to London.

'You know the rest. I have been tried for highway robbery and murder: my condemnation has followed, and I acknowledge that I deserve to die, though I am not that criminal which the world imagines me to be. What I have related to you would have gone with me to the grave, had you not won my gratitude by kindness, which I never before experienced, and which I did not conceive to be an inheritance of the human breast. I do not repent the deed, committed in satisfaction of a warrantable revenge, but feel that I have only been the minister of Almighty justice, in punishing the iniquity of a monster.'

'Nay,' said I, 'assuming not that God, though he frequently works by human agencies, can tolerate an act which is a direct violation of his own law: you admit that you deserve to die,—and could you come to such a stern conclusion against yourself, if you had really performed an act of retributive justice under a divine sanction? Human judgments presuppose the divine; for man would never dare condemn what God approved. He would not suffer you to be punished for a crime which he either sanctioned or suggested. No: you have violated one of his most solemn prohibitions; and all you can now do, in order to render your Redeemer's atonement effectual in wiping out this foul stain of crime, is to strive earnestly to make your peace with him before death at once cuts you off from all hope and from all endeavour.'

'You are right,' he said, sublimely. 'I feel a load removed from my bosom, since I have unburdened my sorrows before you. I have room now for other reflections, and other feelings. I have thought little of futurity, because I little heeded it. I entertain no fear of death, but court it rather as a refuge from mental anguish, though I have no security of a happy immortality. Still any change will be to me a boon. My sufferings can scarcely be greater than they have been.'

'But it is now time you should look forward to their ceasing, and prepare yourself to enter upon that new state where alone true joys are to be found, and to pass the short remnant of your life in that earnest devotion of mind and heart, which shall give you the only chance of securing them.'

'What would you have me do?' said, he anxiously.

'First fall upon your knees and pray. Appear before your God with a broken spirit, and offer up on his altar the sacrifice of a contrite heart.'

He threw himself upon his knees. I knelt by him, and we mutually prayed. When he arose from his posture of fervent supplication, he confessed that he felt a relief from the depression which had weighed upon his soul, though it had failed to subdue it.

'It is strange,' he said, with quiet earnestness, 'but when I retrace the dark scenes of the past, though I can see little that has not the hue of gilt deeply and foully perpetrated, still the bright beams of hope radiate through the gloom, and seem as a beacon light to the gaol which is now immediately before me.'

'If your confidence implies a justification of crime, it is not a holy reliance on the Divine mercy, but a presumptuous dependance upon a divine attribute. It is to convert that attribute into a weakness, which cannot belong to God, in whom all perfections are combined. You must remember that his condition of forgiveness is not a bare reliance upon his mercy. You can have no valid hope but through faith in the Redeemer of mankind, and