

to believe, that the respect and attention they meet with from the world are the tribute paid to their personal worth. Flattery looks like truth, and deference only a proper homage to merit. Our very defects are reflected back so pleasantly, and with such little distortion, that they become our amiable weaknesses, and they are left in full possession of the heart. But let fortune change, and the veil is torn aside! We then perceive how despicably false were those we most trusted. The fond friends who hung around us, partook of our hospitality, shared our purse, and who loved us for ourselves alone, are scared from the cover where they had nestled so pleasantly, and depart never to return. To find this out is sometimes worth a reverse or two in life. If the prosperous did not almost always think themselves exceptions to general rules, the knowledge of this fact, which every one finds out at some time or other, and certainly reads of in all the treatises which have ever unfolded the mazes of the human heart, would make a great difference in the conduct of men. Much of the wealth that is now scattered by the thoughtless and the vain, in securing the outward respect of the multitude, would be applied, with the fidelity of an honest stewardship, to the promotion of those benevolent and beneficial objects, for which humanity is ever pleading. The rustling silk and satin of the belle, would dismiss one or two shades of its brilliancy, to warm in modest folds the children of the poor; and the sumptuous dinners which folly provides, would be reduced in quantity by the generous share which went to fill the mouths of the hungry.

It is well, then, to consider prosperity and adversity as two necessary states of human existence, neither of which are permanent, both of which may be reversed; and which, if wisely considered, should make men better, and not worse. It is to this test of truth and experience, we should bring, if possible, every principle which regulates our conduct. It is the only way in which we benefit ourselves and others; and if in these occasional glances of ours at the condition of men, and those vindications of the great moral truths which meet us in our course through life, we can arouse the energies, or correct the errors, of a single reader, we shall not have lived in vain.

### CONFESSION OF A DRUNKARD.

THE following from the pen of Charles Lamb, the celebrated essayist, forms the most impressive sermon against intemperance that it has ever been our chance to meet, and the warning is the more solemn as it is no fancy sketch. The writer drew his materials from the melancholy lessons furnished by the latter days of his own life:—

"Could the youth to whom the flavor of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life, or the entering upon some newly discovered paradise, look into my desolation, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man feels himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will—to see his destruction, and have no power to stop it, and yet to feel it all the way emanating from himself; to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not be able to forget a time when it was other-

wise; to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own self-ruin; could he see my fevered eye—feverish with last night's drinking, and feverishly looking for this night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of death out of which I cry hourly with feebleness to be delivered—it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation.

O if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth when a draught from the next clear spring could slake any heats which summer suns and youthful exercise had power to stir up in the blood, how gladly would I return to thee pure element, the drink of children, and of child-like-hermits! In my dreams I can fancy the cool refreshment purling over my burning tongue. But my waking stomach rejects it. That which refreshes innocence only makes me sick and faint.

But is there no middle way betwixt total abstinence and the excess which kills you? For your sake, reader, and that you may never attain to experience, with pain I must utter the dreadful truth, that there is none, none that I can find. In my stage of habit, (I speak not of habits less confirmed; for some of them I believe to be prudential) in the stage of which I have reached, to stop short of that measure which is sufficient to draw on torpor and sleep—the benumbing apoplectic sleep of the drunkard—is to have taken none at all. The pain of self-denial is all one—what that is I had rather the reader should believe on my credit than know on his own trial. He will come to know it whenever he shall arrive at the state in which, paradoxical as it may appear, reason shall only visit him through intoxication; for it is a fearful truth, that the intellectual faculties, by repeated acts of intemperance, may be driven from their orderly sphere of action, their clear daylight ministries, until they shall be brought at last to depend for the faint manifestation of their departing energies upon the returning periods of the fatal madness to which they owe their devastation. The drinking man is never less himself than during his sooner intervals. Evil is so far good.

Behold me, then, in the robust period of life, reduced to imbecility and decay. Hear me count my gain, and the profits which I have derived from the midnight cup.

Twelve years ago I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body. I was never strong; but I think my constitution, for a weak one, was as happily exempt from a tendency to any malady, as it was possible to be. I scarcely knew what it was to ail anything. Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drink, I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach, which are much worse to bear than any definite pains and aches.

At that time I was seldom in bed after six in the morning, summer and winter. I awoke refreshed, and seldom without some merry thoughts in my head, or some piece of song to welcome the new-born day. Now, the first feeling which besets me, after stretching out the hours of recumbence to their last possible extent, is a forecast of the wearisome day that lies before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still, or never awaked.

Life itself, my waking life, has much of the confusion, the trouble and obscure perplexity, of an ill dream. In the day-time I stumble upon dark mountains.

Business, which though never particularly adapted to my nature, yet as something of necessity to be gone through, and therefore best undertaken with cheerfulness, I used to enter upon with some degree of alacrity, now wearies, affrights, perplexes me. I fancy all sorts of discouragements; and am apt to give up an occupation which gives me bread, from a harassing conceit of incapacity. The slightest commission given me by my friend or any small duty which I have to perform for myself, as giving orders to a tradesman, &c., haunts me as a labor impossible to be got through. So much the springs of action are broken.

The same cowardice attends me in all my intercourse with mankind. I dare not promise that a friend's honor, or his cause, would be safe in my keeping, if I were put to the expense of any manly resolution in defending it. So much the springs of moral action are deadened within me.

My favorite occupations in times past now cease to entertain. I can do nothing readily.

Application for ever so short a time kills me. This poor abstract of my condition was penned at long intervals, with scarcely any connection or thought, which is now difficult to me.