

The scholar who comes under the magic influence of Homer's winsome verse; or is captivated by the penetrating marvels of science, or explores the rich bequests of History, may not suffer so violent an assault, but he is assailed and that at his weakest point, be that what it may. The betrayal is with a kiss. No sign, no portent warns of coming peril; no torches flash in the darkness; no tramp of armed men invades the silence of the soul. The spirit of the man like that of the Unique One is betrayed in the guise of affection. Insidiously assailed and undermined in the night-watches; we grow weaker and more torpid; as if our veins had been opened in our sleep and yet we know not that the warm current of our true life is oozing away, and vital strength slipping from us. The oft repeated word loses its incisive ring. The oft repeated petition fails to buoy up the soul and bear it to within sound of the heavenly choir. Conscience has its lullaby sung. Reason sways no longer an impartial sceptre. One band of the affections are inveigled into compromise, if not into disloyalty. The harmony of the faculties ceases. Fulllest and highest happiness is unknown. From time to time we summon up our strength but we have no reserved powers to draw upon any more than we have a lease of our breath. Voices call to the individual soul "Come up higher," but they are more and more faintly heard among the Babel of tongues. Stories that once had a potent charm and ravished the soul fall upon a closed ear; objects of pity that moved the emotions once are now passed by with the indifference of a steeled heart—disclosing a loss of feeling far more to be deplored by the passer-by than the loss of a gift by the destitute one. Occasions and enterprises that arouse and stir the great heart of humanity do not arouse us; and impulses that once thrilled us and still thrill others pass over and leave us unstirred. The soul is led away captive to suffer many stripes; to bear many wounds from the war of the inharmonious faculties; to endure many indignities and griefs, and lose much happiness. We came to measure greatness by possessions and not by worth; by the load a man bears rather than what he is, forgetting that the pack of the camel remains when the beast of burden departs; and we think that we must *first* get rich and *then* have high thoughts, noble impulses and live for others, and lo! blessed life whose highest symbol is Home becomes Selfishness, and manhood, whose attitude in its felicity is Aspiration degenerates into mere Routine.

Young man! Young woman! Is the process even now going on?