

What is the secret source of the great sorrow which has laid heavy burdens upon that old man's shoulders and made life a sad and weary pilgrimage to him? In his young manhood he was tempted, and he had not the courage or the conscience to say, *No, never!* The seduction to sin came to him, as it comes to many, in brilliant and fascinating forms. He was surrounded with the young, the gay and the thoughtless, who would make life a holiday of pleasure and death a dreaded thing to be thought of as little as possible. In such company, away from the restraints and safeguards of the parental home and the family altar, the young man thought he would enjoy life and never be the worse for having seen and shared what the world calls pleasure. He did not once think of becoming a bad man. He did nothing which the gay world would call by any worse name than youthful indiscretion. The temptation which came in his path met him with music and beauty and song and mirth. He was surrounded with the refinements of taste, and the splendors of art, and the most finished and delicate fascinations of gay and giddy life. And he thought that when the brilliant season was past, and he returned to his home, he should be able to resume his place by the parental hearth, and the jealous eye of affection would see in him nothing but the ease and innocence of former years.

But no. There was poison in the delirious cup of pleasure. The laws of life and health had been broken, and the unhappy youth must carry the consequences of his sin and folly to his grave. He repented fifty years in

suffering and sorrow. He learned to pity the poor, to uplift the cast down, to reclaim the wandering. He would gladly have surrendered all his wealth and worldly expectations to have received back again the fresh, untainted constitution of his youth. He trusted and believed that the sin of his soul was forgiven. But no repentance or forgiveness can change or annul the law of eternal providence which lays the physical consequences of transgression upon the head of the guilty. A terrible lesson was the life of that old man to warn the young against temptation, even though it should allure with the voice of angels and strew the path to the pit with the flowers of Paradise.

On the most crowded street of the great city there is many a door over which might fitly be written, as a sign of what is done within, "Destruction made easy." Amid the haunts of trade and the clustered homes of domestic life there is many a threshold, in crossing which the heedless youth passes the boundary which marks his destiny to glory or despair. On the one side is hope and light and heaven; on the other, darkness and despair and death. And there are eyes of light, yet baleful as those of the serpent in Paradise; there are forms of beauty arrayed like spirits of darkness in the robes of heaven; there are voices of music that allure only to destroy; and all conspiring to lend attractions to the way of death. The wealth of Mammon paves the path with gold, and proud reason demonstrates its safety, and imagination pictures the journey onward through an avenue of glories and delights, and ambition