

## THE VOTARY OF DISSIPATION.

BY ADAM HOOD BURWELL.

I saw him when the roseate bloom  
Of health full on his cheek appeared,  
Where stately manhood's gallant plume  
High o'er his temples fair was reared.  
I saw him when his look was bold,  
And firm his step along the ground ;  
When every movement meetly told  
A body active, strong and sound.

I saw him when his manly breast  
Disdained the paths of sin and shame ;  
When not a stain was known to rest  
Upon his pure and spotless fame.  
I saw him when his friends were proud  
To name him as a friend is named ;  
The tongue of praise for him was loud,  
And high her grateful altars flamed.

And wedded love his life had crowned  
With bliss that hymen's hand bestowed  
On kindred hearts together bound  
By all the ties that virtue knows.  
His wife was like a fruitful vine  
Amidst a blooming garden placed ;  
His offspring like the tuneful nine,  
The hall of his forefathers graced.

And then I saw him not again  
Till earth ten times her course had run  
Around the bright ethereal plain—  
But oh ! how changed this favored one !  
No more the manly step, no more  
The full toned voice—the eagle eye—  
The firmness which that forehead bore—  
That air of graceful dignity !

The hand of ruin has been here ;  
His fearful ravages I trace,  
That eye is fiery, swollen, and blear,  
And all bespotted in that face.  
Thy locks are blanched—but not by time ;  
His frosts have not adorned thy head ;  
Thy years have not subdued thy prime ;  
And yet thy beauty all is fled.

Age has not bowed thy shoulders down,  
Nor touched at all thy trembling hand,  
Nor plucked the honors from thy crown,  
And yet this wreck I see thee stand.  
Tell, what has wrought thy fearful change ;  
What demon of destruction tore  
Thee down and left thee ?—O how strange !  
The ghost of what thou wert before !

He answered not, but on me raised  
His face—some demon sure was there !—  
He answered not, but on me gazed  
With half collected, guilty stare.  
He answered not.—A stander by  
Replied to tell the mournful tale :—  
The fruits of sin you here descrie,  
Ripe in destructions gloomy vale.

Gay dissipation spread her charms,  
Enticed to her forbidden seat ;  
Then lured him from his Laura's arms,  
And in her fetters bound his feet.  
Her hateful Orgies now he kept,  
His voice the midnight revel swelled ;  
His heart run mad, while conscience slept,  
In wild intoxication held.

Deserted was the house of prayer,  
Dark unbelief his reason stole ;  
The Atheist's God came in to share  
The plunder of his ruined soul.

Blind chance this god :—his temple stands,  
Secluded from the eye of day ;  
'Twas built by renegade hands ;  
'Tis haunted by the sons of PLAY.

His priests are cunning, fraud and theft ;  
His votaries are fools and knaves ;  
His victims—those whom CHANCE has left  
To sink into untimely graves.  
His victims—innocence and truth,  
Heart-broken mothers, sires undone,  
Deserted orphans, hapless youth,  
The lovely—loving—faithful one.

His victims—those whom wild despair  
Impels to crimes of deepest die ;  
And then, his full reward to share,  
The work of self destruction try.  
Blind chance his god—his life, his all  
Must be devoted at his feet ;  
Till chance and plunder wrought his fall,  
And hurled him headlong from their seat.

His wife—her tale's already told,  
His children—their's you can't but know :  
His manly fire is quenched and cold,  
And he—brutality below !  
He lives by chance—by chance he finds,  
Or meanly begs the madd'ning bowl ;  
Each draught but deeper—deeper blinds—  
And darker stains his deathless soul.

The work of death is but begun  
When honor fame and fortune fall ;  
But oh ! that fearful work is done  
When he obeys the tyrants call.  
Such is the man who turns away  
From virtue's peaceful heavenly road ;  
Who seeks the night, who shuns the day,  
And hates the holy law of God.

Sin hardens him in unbelief,  
And unbelief impels to sin ;  
Each plays the cunning, cruel thief,  
And plunders what he cannot win.  
Hell from beneath her forces brings  
To tempt and aid his traitor hands ;  
Till he defies the King of Kings ;—  
And thus the outcast rebel stands.

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