

and bright-faced creature whose every gesture was wont to express her impulsive character.

Let none of those would-be moralists, who, seated in luxurious ease at their cheerful fire-side, pretend to measure the temptations, and weigh the resisting virtues of their brethren; let none such pretend that poverty is not an evil. Disguise it as we will, it is ever an evil shape, and whether it covers beside the dying rubbers on the pauper's hearth, or hides its gaunt limbs beneath the furred robe of the votary of fashion, still is it a fearful thing. Talk not with stoical contempt of that which has power to break down the barriers of principle, and summon the demons of avarice and dishonesty to rule over the souls of men; which can chill the heart and best affections, and chase the sweet charities of life from the cold hearthstone and the scanty board,—which can bow down the lofty intellect, and put fetters of triple brass on the pinions of genius;—which can bend the most untameable will, and crush the haughtiest spirit to the dust. The power which can extinguish the taper, whose feeble glare sheds a last earthly light on the features of the dying child, and robs the weeping mother of that last fond look which is turned upon her even from the portals of the tomb;—the power which can make the strong man lie down in childlike weakness to perish beside his starving little ones;—the power which beyond all other evils of our fallen state, can torture the body and tempt the soul, is one which our hearts may contemplate with awe, but not with contempt. Yet is poverty but a ministrant of the designs of a wise and good Providence; and, as in the olden time, men were hospitable to all comers knowing that they sometimes entertained angels unawares, so may we welcome all the messengers of Heaven whether of good or evil import, believing that in the end they will leave on us a blessing. So long as poverty loosens not the tie of kindred love,—so long as its shadow darkness not over the pure fountain of affection in our hearts,—so long as no mildew is shed from its baleful influences upon the snowy whiteness of the soul, it may be endured patiently, nay even cheerfully, and as there are certain flowers which shun the sunshine but thrive and blossom only in the shade, so may we find many a virtue which prosperity called not forth, springing up in our hearts beneath the gloom of a sky of clouds.

Yet, if poverty be an evil, surely riches are a snare. When did man ever say to his avarice, "peace, thou art filled!" When did the

still, small voice of tenderness ever reach the ear of him who was delving the deep mine for gold? When was the cry of warning ever heeded by him who cast his net again and again into the deep waters, until his barque sinks beneath the weight of his useless draught. Year after year rolled on, and found Horace Medwin still wearing the chains of avarice in a foreign land. Those years had not passed away without leaving their trace upon the inner as well as upon the outward man. The cares which had imprinted deep wrinkles on his brow had destroyed many a fresh feeling within his heart.

Alas! alas! the world too soon exaleth

The dewy freshness of the heart's young flowers,

We water them with tears, but naught availeth,
They wither on through all life's later hours.

Horace would have spurned the idea of being covetous. He fancied that the motives which actuated him, ennobled the pursuit of wealth. The sophistry of the passions is ever skilful in silencing the voice of the truthful monitor within man's heart, and suppressing that yearning tenderness which urged him to return to her who so patiently awaited him, he toiled on for a future which might never come. Oh! how rarely do men learn the true enjoyments of this unstable life! Ever anticipating or procrastinating, while some, like idle children, strip from the fair young tree of Hope its blossoms, and then weep because they gather no fruit; others are found to pass their whole existence in watching the growth of some centennial plant, whose scentless blossoms they can never hope to behold.

Absorbed in the engrossing cares of business, his mind fully occupied with schemes of fortune, and his heart calmly reposing in the security of undoubting affection, Horace had led a life of toil but not of sorrow, during his self-imposed exile. The excitement of commerce, the pleasure of success, and the enjoyments of that semi-civilized mode of life which enabled him to satisfy with Oriental luxury the tastes that a refined education had engendered, all gave a charm to his existence. How little could he imagine the heart sickness which was consuming the strength of her for whom he toiled; how little did he suspect that she who could have borne every misfortune in life, if she had been aided by the presence of affection, was slowly but surely wasting beneath the unsupported burden of a lonely heart.—Yet a tone of despondency in her later letters,