

ADOLPH BRUNER.

BY HORACE GREELEY.

MIDNIGHT—*one*; two; three; had been successively tolled by all the clocks of Gottingen; the most inveterate book-worms had forborne, for that night, the further prosecution of their studies—the hardiest revellers had reeled to their turbid slumbers—the solemn dullness of the most wakeful among the Professors had bowed to the invincible soporific of his own meditations. Nature and man were alike buried in darkness and repose; yet from a single window gleamed the taper of a student who seemed likely to outwatch the stars! Yet it was not study, nor gaming; nor dissipation, nor the last new romance, that thus had driven sleep from his eye-lids. Unheeding—immovable—unconscious even of himself and his loneliness—he sat in his narrow chamber, his face resting on his hand, and his eye, with intensest gaze, devouring vacancy, while the silence within and the war of elements without the scholastic pile he tenanted, were, alike with the books which seemed looking down from their shelves in wonder at his unwonted abstraction as things which were not, or had never been.

Not that the abstraction of intense thoughtfulness was, of itself, so foreign to his nature and his habits.

Adolph Bruner had been a dreamer from his infancy. Born to penury and rugged fortune, his life had been rendered endurable not less by its waking dreams than its stern exertions. From a child his thirst had been to Know—strengthened and deepened as the field of knowledge, attainable to human energy, opened wider and wider upon his mental vision, and a consciousness of the god-like ends to which its mastery may be rendered subservient, had possessed his whole moral being, step by step had he won his way aided by that good Providence which men irreverently miscall fortune—from the ignorance and destitution of his infancy to the higher sources of knowledge and instruction—to the most learned University of Germany. Here his career had been a brief but a brilliant one. Single-hearted, enthusiastic, and devoted—with no prospect in life but such as flowed from or interested themselves with his achievements as a scholar—his progress had been most rapid, and his deportment such as to win for him the undisguised approbation of his superiors, and

the admiration of his fellows. He had no enemies; for he interfered with the pursuits or aims of none, but the devoted followers of knowledge; and the true votary of science, though an ardent, is seldom an envious competitor for her honours. He struck out like a strong and bold swimmer into the great ocean of truth—as one to whom the very exertion is a pleasure, independent of the emerald islets which form the goal to which he is tending.

Yet now the thoughts of Adolph more impetuous and engrossing in their wild career, had found a channel far different from that hitherto traversed. An incident had occurred the evening previous which threatened to influence the whole character of his after life.

Returning on that evening from his usual walk, in which he was accustomed to ramble wherever accident or fancy should suggest, he had been at first an involuntary spectator of, and ultimately a participator in, a scene not likely to be soon effaced from his memory. A young female, alone and obviously a stranger to the city, was approaching it from abroad, and perplexed and bewildered by the darkness closing in upon her novel and unfriended condition, had addressed some natural inquiry to three of the most graceless of the young collegians, whom she happened to meet. The object of this inquiry and the character of the fair questioner it had suited those accosted to misunderstand; and, their insolence being repelled with indignation, they were fired to more unpardonable rudeness and insult.

"Those pretty lips shall answer for that imprudence with a kiss," exclaimed the ringleader, "we will see if their sweetness is equal to their tartness," and, with a single spring, he had caught her so tightly in his arms, as to repress the shriek of mingled indignation and terror that rose to and died upon her lips.

Adolph stood for one moment rooted in amazement to the earth—for one moment only did his faculties forsake him, as he looked to see the ruffian hurled to the earth by his comrades, and looked—shame to manhood that we should say it—in vain! They were evidently far more inclined