

cause we were relatives, but from a congeniality of dispositions and a similarity of tastes, except in regard to the cup. We lived with our aunt, a maiden lady of the highest character and greatest amiability, (It is a remarkable thing, when I think of it, that she was allowed by—the *gallant* sex—to remain a maiden lady;) and she had a motherly affection for us, and filled our home with happiness. It was with great grief that she looked upon my cousin Charlie's weakness, but her most earnest expostulations were always in vain whenever he promised her he would endeavor to "keep right side up with care"—he never spoke of his intoxication by any other descriptive phrase—he invariably *would* fall over from the perpendicular, and not care which side was up. She loved him tenderly, but almost despaired of reforming him; and Charlie, poor victim of easy temptation! quite as much despaired of ever reforming himself.

"What shall I do, Fred?" said he to me one morning, when he was seriously lamenting his failing.

"Why," said I, "Charlie," I spoke to him kindly though with earnestness and emphasis, "be a man and sign the pledge."

"But," he replied, "if I do, I shall break it, and that will be worse than though I had never signed it."

"If you take the pledge," I urged, "it will show that you have at least a desire to reform."

"But if I cannot keep it, it will prove that I have not strength to fulfil a solemn promise."

"Fuddling is a weakness," I said with a smile of sarcasm which I well remember was all counterfeited.

He turned away his head to hide from me the look of shame that

overspread his face in consequence of my remark, and taking a seat upon a sofa in the gallery sheilded himself from my sight behind the morning paper, which he spread out before him to a breadth altogether unnecessary for the mere purpose of reading, and evidently inconvenient and fatiguing for the arms.

It occurred to me as I noticed the humbling effect of what I had said, that it might perhaps be well to prove his weakness with a little sarcasm, and endeavor thus to shame him from his degrading practice. I waited another good opportunity.

There are but few vices that are of more rapid and vigorous growth than that which is hypocritically called moderate drinking, and this is especially true when it has taken root on such a temperament as my cousin Charles. He began to drink more and more every day, and to delight more than ever in champagne revels. He even did not confine these genteel carousals to the hour of evening, but often attended a "select party of choice spirits," which was the title he gave to them, during the day, to the serious neglect of his business. My cousin always emphasised *select party*; though it is perhaps needless to say, he would have given a clearer idea of the truth, to have laid the stress on *choice spirits*.

The saloon he most frequented was in the basement of the building of which the gallery was the top floor. It was a pity that it was so convenient, for I think if it had been farther he would not have gone there so often: it would have been harder to get back.

One day, a clear and bright day, so auspicious to the practice of the art, Charlie shierred himself into a sound sleep of intoxication before