

sently I saw a miniature—a perfect image of your face. Surprised, I looked up; but you and all the company were gone! I was alone, in a strange, desolate, inelegantly furnished room. The table was still beside me, and on it yet remained the glass towards which my eyes turned with a fascination I could not resist. Into the liquor at the bottom I gazed, and there, more distinct than at first, I saw your face; but now the eyes had a sharp eager look, that seemed to go through me with a sense of pain. The tender arching of your lips was gone, and they were drawn against the teeth with a cruel expression. I feel the shudder still which then ran through my heart. O, Henry! a look such as I then saw on your face would kill me!"

And the wife of Henry Erskine, overcome with feeling, laid her head upon his shoulder and sobbed.

"Dear Anna! Forget the wretched dream!" said Erskine, as he drew his arm tightly around her. "I wonder that a phantom of the night can have such power to move you."

"But that was not all," resumed Mrs. Erskine, as soon as she had grown calm enough to speak. "The face now began to rise up from the top of the glass, rounding as it rose, into a head and well-defined neck stood above the vessel; and all the while a malignant change was progressing on the countenance. More horrible still! The glass suddenly enlarged enormously its dimensions, and in it I now saw in fearful coils, the body of a serpent, bearing up higher and higher the face and head of a man. Another instant, and horrid, slimy folds were around my neck and body! In their tightening, suffocating clasp I awoke. Oh, Henry! was it not terrible? What could have excited such a phantasm?"

"A horrible nightmare," said Erskine, "a nightmare only. And yet, how strange it is, that such an image found entrance into your innocent, guarded mind!"

It was all in vain that Mrs. Erskine strove, throughout the day, to drive the shadow from her heart. The dream was of too peculiar and startling a nature to admit of this. Moreover, its singular connection with the neighborly conviviality of the previous evening, when she was forced to observe the unusual elation of her husband's mind, gave food for questionings and thoughts, which in no way served to obliterate the dream, or to tranquilize her feelings. When her husband returned home at the close of the day, he saw in her countenance, for the first time, something that annoyed and repelled him. Why was this? What was the meaning of the expression? Did she doubt him in any thing? Ah! how could she forget her dream, that malignant face and slimy serpent? The fatal cup and the death hidden in its fascinating contents!

It was later in the evening. The flitting shadows had been chased away by the sunny faces that gathered around the tea-table. Amid their children all sense of oppression, of doubt, had vanished. The kneeling little ones had said, in low, reverent tones, "Our Father," and were sleeping in sweet unconsciousness. The evening had waned, and now, in accordance with habit, Mr. Erskine brought forth a decanter, and was about filling a glass therefrom, when his wife, laying her hand on his arm, said, with a sad earnestness of manner which she strove to conceal with a smile—

"Henry dear, forgive me for saying so, but the sight of that decanter and glass makes me shudder. I have

thought all day about my dream. The serpent is in the glass."

"Bearing your husband's face," said Erskine, quickly, and with rather more of feeling than he meant to express, "and you fear that he will prove the serpent in the end, to suffocate you in his horrid folds."

Henry Erskine! what could have tempted you to this utterance! Ah! the truth must be told. It was the serpent in the glass! False friends, as he came home that evening, had drawn him aside to drink with them. Alas! a malignant demon was in the cup, and its poison entered his bosom. He did not drink even to partial physical intoxication; but far enough to disturb the calm, rational balance of his mind, and thus to change the order of mental influx. He was no longer in orderly association with pure angelic spirits. Just in the degree he was separated from these, came he into association with spirits of an opposite character—demons in their eager desire to extinguish all that is pure and good in human nature. And thus it ever is, in a greater or less degree, with all who disturb the rational balance of their minds, either partially or permanently, by the use of what intoxicates. This is the reason why the way of the inebriate, even from the beginning, is marked by such strange infatuation. He seems to be in the power of evil spirits who govern him at will, and he is, in reality, thus in their power.

An instant pallor overspread the face of Mrs. Erskine, at her husband's cruel retort. What an age of wretchedness was comprised in a single instant of time! Erskine saw the effect of his words, and repeated their utterance. He even, for a moment, partially yielded to an impulse to put up the liquor untasted; but the demon tempter was too close to his side and too prompt to whisper that such an act would be an unmanly (!) concession to his wife's foolish weakness. And so his mind, already partially unbalanced, as has been seen, he completed the dethronement of manly reason by pouring out and drinking a larger draught of spirits than he was accustomed to take.

Alas! how quickly has the man become eclipsed—partially now, and to shine forth again in the unclouded heavens. Yet to be eclipsed again and again, until final darkness covers all.

Reader, we have shown you the man. When your eyes first rested upon him, at a single point of the orbit in which he moved, was not the form beautiful to look upon, and the ministry of his affections full of good to others? We have another picture. Not that of a man; but of a demon. Will you look upon it! Ah! if you turn your eyes away, we will not question the act. It is a picture upon which some need to look, and, therefore, it is sketched, though with a hurried and reluctant hand. Here it is.

(To be continued.)

Editorial Difficulty—A Sketch.

The old Cause again! The oftener we write upon it the more difficult we find it to get something fresh; but on the other hand our determination always grows with our difficulties, and we will not, therefore, give it up. Besides, if the cause is an old one, it is also dear to us,—and as it is a good old cause, and one which we love more and more every day, we will not be baffled. We have scratched our head and changed our position, and picked our teeth for an idea; but wearied, worried, cha-