

our brains, and languis at the God-sent gift? See—the fruit of six months' hard labor! I expected me from that, and money. I would have got both. The fiend had triumphed. When I awoke from my dream, I heard his laugh behind the canvass. I am undone." And he wrung his hands like a demented person, and sobbed bitterly. I was still silent; for any words I could have uttered would have destroyed the oppressiveness of the scene before me. When I had allowed the sensation of remorse to sink deeper into him, I spoke:—

"I am glad that you have wrought this destruction," said I; "you have produced an antidote to your own poison—let it work. I have no medicines in my laboratory that have half the efficacy of that once splendid emanation of your genius—now the monument of your folly, and to be, as I hope, the prophylactic to save you from ruin and death."

"Ah, God help me! it is a dear medicine," groaned he. "I feel that I never can produce such a work again." And he hung down his head as if the blackest cloud that covers hope had thrown over him its dark shadow. I again observed silence, and he remained with his hand on his breast for several minutes, without exhibiting a symptom of life beyond the deep sigh that raised his ribs. "You must hang that picture upon the wall," said I; "it is the most valuable you ever painted. Look at it daily, and, before the sun goes down, begin another on the same subject."

My words produced no effect upon him, and indeed I knew that he was in a condition that entirely excluded external aid to his revolving thoughts. He was in the fit of dejection, which lies on the far side of the elevation of factitious excitement—a place of darkness, where the scorpions of conscience stung to madness, and every thought that rises in the gloomy, bewildered mind, appears like a ghost that walks at midnight over open graves and the bones of the dead. To some, these specres have spoken in such a way as to rouse the dormant principles of energetic amendment, that lie beyond the reach of precept, or even that of conscience; but to the greater part of mankind this place of wailing and gnashing of teeth, yields nothing but an agony that only ends to make them climb again the delusive mount from which they had fallen, though only again to be precipitated into the dreadful abode where, in the end, they must die. I knew that words had no effect upon my patient. I rose accordingly, and left him to the unmitigated horrors of his situation, in the expectation that he might be one of the few that derive from it good. I had no fear of his falling again, immediately, into another fit; for the period of nausea was only begun, and he was safe in the keeping of a rebelling stomach, whatever he might be in that of burning conscience.

He remained, as his housekeeper told me, in that state of depression for two days, often recurring to the monument of his folly, the destroyed Scripture-piece; weeping over it, and ejaculating wild professions of amendment, clenched by oaths in which the blessed name of God was made the guarantee of the strength of resolution which the demon of his vice was standing with glaring eyes ready to overturn. After the medicine

of dejection had wrought its utmost effect, I waited upon him. He was arrayed in melancholy and gloom, but the agony of the lowest pit was gone, and he stood on a dangerous middle place, between a temporary fulfillment of his resolutions and a relapse. With a patient of this sort I never *continue* a system of argumentation and dehortation. I am satisfied it does injury; for it reaches the moral sore only to irritate it, and an argument surmounted, or sworn resolution vanquished, is a triumph and a *pabulum* to the spirit of the foe greater than years of domination. I told him, what he confessed frankly, that he stood, for a day or two, on the dangerous ground from which he had so often fallen, and requested him authoritatively, as if I had assumed the reins of his judgment which he had thrown over the back of his bad angel, to begin instantly another painting, and try once more the American weed. Command sometimes, persuasion never, succeeds with a drunkard. He set about stretching his canvass, and put on the first coat of the foundation of his picture. I told him I would call again in a week; but that, as it was not a part of my profession to reclaim drunkards, I would discontinue my efforts in his behalf, if I found that, at the end of that time, he had swerved from his resolution. The sense of degradation in the mind of these lost votaries of intemperance, while it inclines the unhappy individuals often to resign themselves to the command (from which, however, they often break) of those they respect, responds keenly to the manifestations of disregard and loss of esteem with which they are visited in consequence of their falling. He felt strongly the manner of my treatment, and I thought and observed even tears working for vent from his still blood-shot eyes.

"You, and all good men, have a privilege to despise him who has not the approval of his own conscience," he said. "I could bear your persuasive reproof; but the thought that I have rendered myself unworthy of the trouble of one I esteem, to save me from the ruin I have madly prepared for myself, sends me to that deep pit of despair, from which I have even now struggled to get free. You saved me from death; and I was no sooner cured than I plunged headlong again into the gulf from which my disease was derived. I have made myself an ingrate and a beggar; spurned your advice, and destroyed the work from which I expected honor and reward. I see myself as through a microscope, and you have diminished me still farther. Heaven help me!"

"You have powers within you, Sir," replied I, with affected sternness, "through the medium of which you might have surveyed yourself as through the telescope; and your size would not have been greater than that potential moral magnitude to which you might long ere now have arrived, and which is still within your own power. I exhort not—I leave you to yourself."

"I know it, I know it," he cried, with a swelling throat. "My ruin or my salvation lies within my own breast. For ten years I have resolved, and re-resolved; and it is only three days since I destroyed that picture, and rose with fiery eyes and a burning heart to survey the consequences of my vice. O God! where is this to end? You saw what I suffered when extended on that bed, racked with pain; my brain on fire; my intel-