

hood that it is wrong to attend such places."

"But your mother formed, perhaps, improper prejudices from exaggerated accounts given by others; for I have often heard her say she never attended one in her life."

He spoke eloquently of the drama, comedy, tragedy, and dwelt with pathos on the important lessons there to be learned of human nature.

"Go with me *once*," he said, "and judge for yourself."

Persuasion and curiosity triumphed over maternal precept and example, as she hesitatingly replied:

"I'll go but *once*."

She went, and in that theatre a charm came over her like that which the serpent sent forth from his dove-like eye. She went again and again, and from that house of mirth and laughter she was led to one from the portals of which she never returned.

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Around a centre-table, where an astral lamp was shedding its mild light, sat three girls, one holding in her hands a pack of cards. At the back of her chair stood a young man who, for years had successfully resisted every effort made by his companions to induce him to learn the character of cards.

"Come," said she, "we want one to make out our game. Play with us *once*. if you never play again."

Her eye, cheek, and lip conspired to form an eloquent battery, which sent forth its attack on the fortress of good resolutions in which he had long stood secure, until it fell like the walls of an ancient city when jarred by the fearful battering-ram. He learned the cards and played. A few weeks afterwards I was passing his door at a late hour, and a candle was shedding its dim light through the window. Since that time I have looked from my chamber nearly every hour of the night, from the close of day till early morn, and seen the light faintly struggling through the curtain that screened the in-

mates of that room from every eye, save His who seeth alike in darkness and noon-day. Gaming brought with it disease, and death came just as he numbered the half of his three-score years and ten. During his last hours I was sitting by his bedside, when he fixed on me a look I shall never forget, and bade me listen to his dying words:

"I might have been a different man from what I am, but it is now too late. I am convinced that there is a state of being beyond the grave; and when I think of the retribution which awaits me in another world, I feel a horror which language is inadequate to describe." These were among the last words he ever uttered.

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The Junior class of a Southern college had assembled in a student's room to spend the night in riot and debauch. Amid the crowd was one who had never recited a bad lesson since his matriculation: in his studies he was "head and shoulders" above the class. That day he had failed. A shade of the deepest gloom came over him, and he was melancholy. But the wine and jest passed round while he felt like Lucifer in Eden, where all was joy and gladness around him. Said a class-mate:

"Come, Bob, quaff this bumper, and it will make you feel bright as the hermit's lamp."

The tempter whispered in his ear, "Drink *once* and forget the past." A powerful struggle seemed to be going on in his mind for a moment; but at last he silently shook his head, and, retiring from the room, gave vent to a flood of tears. That boy never drank—not even *once*. He took the valedictory, and is now President of a college.

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*Once!*—Oh, on this slender point hath turned for weal or woe the destiny of a deathless spirit. Caesar paused but *once* on the banks of the Rubicon; but it was a pause like that which nature makes when gathering her elements for the dread tornado. Eve ate the forbidden fruit but