

But even as that association may at length become inveterate, insomuch that when the first idea finds entry into the mind, we cannot withstand the importunity wherewith the second insists upon following it; so might the moral habit become alike inveterate—thoughts succeeding thoughts, and urging onward their counterpart desires, in that wonted order, which had hitherto connected the beginning of a temptation with its full and final victory. At each repetition, would he find it more difficult to break this order, or to lay an arrest upon it—till at length, as the fruit of this wretched regimen, its unhappy patient is lorded over by a power of moral evil, which possesses the whole man, and wields an irresistible or rather an unre-sisted ascendancy over him.

8. But this melancholy process, leading to a vicious indulgence, may be counteracted by an opposite process of resistance, though with far greater facility at the first—yet a facility ever augmenting, in proportion as the effectual resistance of temptation is persevered in. That balancing moment, at which pleasure would allure, and conscience is urging us to refrain, may be regarded as the point of departure or divergency, whence one or other of the two processes will take their commencement. Each of them consists in a particular succession of ideas with their attendant feelings; and whichever of them may happen to be described once, has, by the law of suggestion, the greater chance, in the same circumstances, of being described over again. Should the mind dwell on an object of allurements, and the consideration of a