

petition would we 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 unresisted ascendancy over him.

7. 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 considerations of principle not be entertained—it will pass onward from the first incitement to the final and guilty indulgence by a series of stepping-stones, each of which will present itself more readily in future; and with less chance of arrest or interruption by the suggestions of conscience