

nearly two feet of pavement for his one. And on this occasion my aunt, his wife, who had been no stranger to his previous complaints, was informed that her "stupid nephew" was to turn out "a grand workman after all."

A life of toil has, however, its peculiar temptations. When overwrought, and in my depressed moods, I learned to regard the ardent spirits of the dram-shop as high luxuries; they gave lightness and energy to both body and mind, and substituted for a state of dulness and gloom, one of exhilaration and enjoyment. Usquebhae was simply happiness doled out by the glass, and sold by the gill. The drinking usages of the profession in which I labored were at this time many; when a foundation was laid, the workmen were treated to drink; they were treated to drink when the walls were levelled for laying the joists; they were treated to drink when the building was finished; they were treated to drink when an apprentice joined the squad; treated to drink when his "apron was washed;" treated to drink when his "time was out;" and occasionally they learned to treat one another to drink. In laying down the foundation-stone of one of the larger houses built this year by Uncle David and his partner, the workmen had a royal "founding-pint," and two whole glasses of the whiskey came to my share. A full-grown man would not have deemed a gill of usquebhae an overdose, but it was considerably too much for me; and when the party broke up, and I got home to my books, I found, as I opened the pages of a favorite author, the letters dancing before my eyes, and that I could no longer master the sense. I have the volume at present before me,—a small edition of the Essays of Bacon, a good deal worn at the corners by the friction of the pocket; for of Bacon I never tired. The condition into which I had brought myself was, I felt, one of degradation. I had sunk, by my own act, for the time, to a lower level of intelligence than that on which it was my privilege to be placed; and though the state could have been no very favorable one for forming a resolution, I in that hour determined that I should never again sacrifice my capacity for intellectual enjoyment to