

would soon have rendered him permanently so. And such was but one of many stories of the kind.

There was of course a considerable diversity of talent and acquirement among my more reckless associates at the work ; and it was curious enough to mark their very various views regarding what constituted spirit or the want of it. One weak lad used to tell us about a singularly spirited brother apprentice of his, who not only drank, kept loose company and played all sorts of very mischievous practical jokes, but even occasionally stole out of warehouses ; which was of course a very dauntless thing, seeing that it brought him within wind of the gallows ; whereas another of our wild workmen,—a man of sense and intelligence,—not unfrequently cut short the narratives of the weaker brother, by characterizing his spirited apprentice as a mean, graceless scamp, who, had he got his deservings, would have been hung like a dog. I found that the intelligence which results from a fair school education, sharpened by a subsequent taste for reading, very much heightened in certain items the standard by which my comrades regulated their conduct. Mere intelligence formed no guard amongst them against intemperance or licentiousness ; but it did form a not ineffectual protection against what are peculiarly the mean vices,—such as theft, and the grosser and more creeping forms of untruthfulness and dishonesty. Of course, exceptional cases occur in all grades of society : there have been accomplished ladies of wealth and rank who have indulged in a propensity for stealing out of drapers' shops, and gentlemen of birth and education who could not be trusted in a library or a bookseller's back-room ; and what sometimes occurs in the higher walks must be occasionally exemplified in the lower also ; but, judging from what I have seen, I must hold it as a general rule, that a good intellectual education is a not inefficient protection against the meaner felonies, though not in any degree against the "pleasant vices." The only adequate protection against both equally is the sort of education which my friend John Wilson the laborer exemplified,—a kind of education not often acquired in schools,