

towns, in which they had been known, each by his own circle of neighborhood, and had lived, in consequence, under the wholesome influence of public opinion. In Edinburgh,—grown too large at the time to permit men to know aught of their neighbors,—they were set free from this wholesome influence, and, unless when under the guidance of higher principle, found themselves at liberty to do very much as they pleased. And,—with no *general* opinion to control,—cliques and parties of their wilder spirits soon formed in their sheds and workshops a standard of opinion of their own, and found only too effectual means of compelling their weaker comrades to conform to it. And hence a great deal of wild dissipation and profligacy, united, of course, to the inevitable improvidence. And though dissipation and improvidence are quite compatible with intelligence in the first generation, they are sure always to part company from it in the second. The family of the unsteady spendthrift workman is never a well-taught family. It is reared up in ignorance; and, with evil example set before and around it, it almost necessarily takes its place among the lapsed classes. In the third generation the descent is of course still greater and more hopeless than in the second. There is a type of even physical degradation already manifesting itself in some of our large towns, especially among degraded females, which is scarce less marked than that exhibited by the negro, and which both my Edinburgh and Glasgow readers must have often remarked on the respective High Streets of these cities. The features are generally bloated and overcharged, the profile lines usually concave, the complexion coarse and high, and the expression that of a dissipation and sensuality become chronic and inherent. And how this class,—constitutionally degraded, and with the moral sense, in most instances, utterly undeveloped and blind,—are ever to be reclaimed, it is difficult to see. The immigrant Irish form also a very appreciable element in the degradation of our large towns. They are, however, *pagans*, not of the new, but of the old type; and are chiefly formidable from the squalid wretchedness of a physical character which they have trans-