

wrote the dying man, with a hand fast forgetting its cunning, "is, to all human probability, my last letter; but the thought gives me little trouble; for my hope of salvation is in the blood of Jesus. Farewell, my sincerest friend!" There is a provision through which nature sets limits to both physical and mental suffering. A man partially stunned by a violent blow is sometimes conscious that it is followed by other blows, rather from seeing than from feeling them: his capacity of suffering has been exhausted by the first; and the others that fall upon him, though they may injure, fail to pain. And so also it is with strokes that fall on the affections. In other circumstances I would have grieved for the death of my friend, but my mind was already occupied to the full by the death of my uncle; and though I *saw* the new stroke, several days elapsed ere *I could feel* it. My friend, after half a lifetime of decline, had sunk suddenly. A comrade who lived with him—a stout, florid lad—had been seized by the same insidious malady as his own, about a twelvemonth before; and, previously unacquainted with sickness, in him the progress of the disease had been rapid, and his sufferings were so great, that he was incapacitated for work several months before his death. But my poor friend, though sinking at the time, wrought for both: he was able to prosecute his employments,—which, according to Bacon, "required rather the finger than the arm,"—in even the latter stages of his complaint; and after supporting and tending his dying comrade till he sank, he himself suddenly broke down and died. And thus perished, unknown and in the prime of his days, a man of sterling principle and fine genius. I found employment enough for the few weeks which still remained of the working season of this year, in hewing a tombstone for my Uncle James, on which I inscribed an epitaph of a few lines, that had the merit of being true. It characterized the deceased—"James Wright"—as "an honest, warm-hearted man, who had the happiness of living without reproach, and of dying without fear."