

gether. Brown's wife had committed some unpardonable indiscretion, and for that reason he had left home with the hope of hiding his disgrace in the society of strangers, and of allaying the feverish excitement of his mind, by new scenes and new associations. Scip, who had a natural indifference to women, could not understand how the *liaisons* of a woman could so seriously affect his friend's mind. He had a great respect for Brown's word, and he was willing to take it for granted that it was so.

The two friends boarded together, at a small, mean-looking house, situated at the corner of Lake and Pearl streets, called the "*Astor House*." Whether the house was so named for the purpose of heightening effect, by showing striking contrasts, or for the less amiable purpose of derision of its great namesake in New York, I am not able to say. However that might have been, Scip liked Brown, and Brown liked Scip, and the two were almost inseparable companions. They sat together at the table and in the bar-room, and they both occupied one bed in the chamber. But this intimacy, which had been so long and so agreeably entertained, was destined to come to a sudden conclusion; so sudden, indeed, as to preclude the possibility of even a friendly recognition at parting. One stormy night, the *Astor House* was struck with lightning; the fluid passed down the chimney, and over Scip, who was nearest to it, and struck Brown, killing him instantly.

In the morning, Scip stood long, looking at his friend, now cold and motionless in death. His wife's frailties, which had often occasioned paroxysms of insanity—which had haunted his day dreams, and disturbed the quiet of his slumber, could now trouble him no more. If he had known how to express himself, Scip might have said—

"After life's fitful fever's o'er, he sleeps well."

Scip, who always left all places of danger immediately after the danger had passed, took his departure from the *Astor*