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Lying in wickedness has a powerful
tendency to stamp upon the soul its
own harsh and unlovely features,
in place ^{of the} fair characters delineated
by divine hands.

Thus it appears by these documents,
that before he had reached his six-
teenth year, the contaminating in-
fluences of evil communication, that
powerful corrupter of good manners,
had nearly obliterated all the traces
of those tender impressions which had
been made upon his mind, and
that about this time a severe sick-
ness, from which recovery seemed
very doubtful, was the means used,

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in the operations of infinite wisdom,
to draw him back into the paths of
innocence and safety. - Deeply con-
-cised under this heavy affliction, from
a distressful consciousness of departure
from the pathings of truth, he was
reduced to a willingness to enter into
covenant with the creator and preserver
of man, that if he would spare him
longer he would endeavour to be
more circumspect in life, and conver-
-sation. For about four years after his
recovery from the above mentioned
sickness, he passed his time mostly in
retirement, being chiefly employed in
reading and study, and was in some