TO MORROW.
TO M O R R O W.

Oh this detestable To Morrow!—a thing always "expected, yet never found."

Johnson.

CHAPTER 1.

It has long been my intention to write my own history; and I am determined to begin it to day; for half the good intentions of my life have been frustrated by my unfortunate habit of putting things off till to morrow.

When I was a young man, I used to be told that this was my only fault; I believed it; and my vanity or laziness persuaded me that this fault was but small, and that I should easily cure myself of it in time.

That time, however, has not yet arrived; and at my advanced time of life I must give up all thoughts of amendment, hoping, however, that sincere repentance may, stand instead of reformation.
My father was an eminent London bookseller: he happened to be looking over a new biographical dictionary on the day when I was brought into the world; and at the moment when my birth was announced to him, he had his finger upon the name *Basil*; he read aloud—"*Basil*, canonized bishop of *Cæsarea*, a theological, "controversial, and moral writer."

"My boy," continued my father, "shall be named after this great man, and I hope and believe that I shall live to see him either a celebrated theological, controversial, and moral author, or a bishop. I am not so sanguine as to expect that he should be both these good things."

I was christened Basil according to my father's wishes, and his hopes of my future celebrity and fortune were confirmed, during my childhood, by instances of wit and memory, which were not perhaps greater than what could have been found in my little contemporaries, but which appeared to the vanity of parental fondness extraordinary, if not supernatural. My father declared that it would be a sin not to give me a learned education, and he went even beyond his
means to procure for me all the advantages of the best modes of instruction. I was stimulated, even when a boy, by the idea that I should become a great man, and my masters had for some time reason to be satisfied; but what they called the quickness of my parts continually retarded my progress. The facility with which I learned my lessons encouraged me to put off learning them till the last moment; and this habit of procrastinating, which was begun in presumption, ended in disgrace.

When I was sent to a public school, I found among my companions so many temptations to idleness, that notwithstanding the quickness of my parts, I was generally flogged twice a week. As I grew older, my reason might perhaps have taught me to correct myself, but my vanity was excited to persist in idleness by certain imprudent sayings or whisperings of my father.

When I came home from school at the holidays, and when complaints were preferred against me in letters from my schoolmaster, my father, even while he affected to scold me for my negligence, flattered me in the
most dangerous manner by adding—aside to some friend of the family—

'My Basil is a strange fellow!—can do any thing he pleases—all his masters say so—but he is a sad idle dog—all your men of genius are so—puts off business always to the last moment—All your men of genius do so. For instance, there is—whose third edition of odes I have just published—what an idle dog he is. Yet who makes such a noise in the world as he does?—puts off every thing till to morrow, like my Basil—but can do more at the last moment than any man in England—that is, if the fit seizes him—for he does nothing but by fits—has no application—none—Says it would "petrify him to a dunce." I never knew a man of genius who was not an idle dog.'

Not a syllable of such speeches was lost upon me; the ideas of a man of genius and of an idle dog were soon so firmly joined together in my imagination, that it was impossible to separate them, either by my own reason or by that of my preceptors. I gloried in the very habits which my tutors laboured to correct: and I never was seriously morti-
fied by the consequences of my own folly till, at a public examination at Eton, I lost a premium by putting off till it was too late the finishing a copy of verses. The lines which I had written were said by all my young and old friends to be beautiful. The prize was gained by one Johnson, a heavy lad, of no sort of genius, but of great perseverance. His verses were finished, however, at the stated time.

"For dulness ever must be regular!"

My fragment, charming as it was, was useless, except to hand about afterward among my friends, to prove what I might have done if I had thought it worth while.

My father was extremely vexed by my missing an opportunity of distinguishing myself at this public exhibition, especially as the king had honoured the assembly with his presence; and, as those who had gained premiums were presented to his majesty, it was supposed that their being thus early marked as lads of talents would be highly advantageous to their advancement in life. All this my father felt, and, blaming himself for having encouraged in me the indolence of genius, he determined to counteract his former
imprudence, and was resolved, he said, to cure me at once of my habit of procrastination. For this purpose he took down from his shelves Young's Night Thoughts; from which he remembered a line, which has become a stock line among writing masters' copies:

"Procrastination is the thief of time."

He hunted the book for the words Procrastination, Time, To day, and To morrow, and made an extract of seven long pages on the dangers of delay.

'Now, my dear Basil,' said he, 'this is what will cure you for life, and this you must get perfectly by heart, before I give you one shilling more pocket-money.'

The motive was all-powerful, and with pains, iteration, and curses, I fixed the heterogeneous quotations so well in my memory that some of them have remained there to this day. For instance—

"Time destroy'd
Is suicide where more than blood is spilt.
Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,
Hell threatens.

We push Time from us, and we wish him back.

Man flies from Time, and Time from Man too soon;
In sad divorce this double flight must end;
And then where are we?
TO MORROW.

Be wise to day, 'tis madness to defer, &c.
Next day the fatal precedent will plead, &c.

Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!
To day is yesterday returned; return'd,
Full power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.
Let it not share its predecessor's fate,
Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool.

Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where:
You know him; he is near you; point him out;
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow?
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flow'rs?
Your golden wings now hover'ing o'er him shed
Protection: now are wav'ring in applause
To that blest son of foresight! Lord of fate!
That awful independent on to morrow!
Whose work is done; who triumph'd in the past:
Whose yesterdays look backward with a smile."

I spare you the rest of my task, and I earnestly hope, my dear reader, that these citations may have a better effect upon you than they had upon me. With shame I confess that even with the addition of Shakespear's eloquent

"To morrow, and To morrow, and To morrow, &c."

which I learnt by heart gratis, not a bit the better was I for all this poetical morality. What I wanted was not conviction of my folly, but resolution to amend.

When I say that I was not a bit the
better for these documents, I must not omit to observe to you that I was very near being four hundred pounds a year the better for them.

Being obliged to learn so much of Young's Night Thoughts by rote, I was rather disgusted, and my attention was roused to criticise the lines, which had been forced upon my admiration. Afterward, when I went to College, I delighted to maintain, in opposition to some of my companions, who were enthusiastic admirers of Young, that he was no poet. The more I was ridiculed, the more I persisted. I talked myself into notice; I became acquainted with several of the literary men at Cambridge; I wrote in defence of my opinion, or, as some called it, my heresy. I maintained that what all the world had mistaken for sublimity was bombast; that the Night Thoughts were fuller of witty conceits than of poetical images: I drew a parallel between Young and Cowley; and I finished by pronouncing Young to be the Cowley of the eighteenth century. To do myself justice, there was much ingenuity and some truth in my essay, but it was the declamation of a partisan, who
can think only on one side of a question, and who, in the heat of controversy, says more than he thinks, and more than he originally intended.

It is often the fortune of literary partisans to obtain a share of temporary celebrity far beyond their deserts, especially if they attack any writer of established reputation. The success of my essay exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and I began to think that my father was right; that I was born to be a great genius, and a great man. The notice taken of me by a learned prelate, who piqued himself upon being considered as the patron of young men of talents, confirmed me at once in my self-conceit and my hopes of preferment.

I mentioned to you that my father, in honour of my name-sake Basil, bishop of Caesarea, and to verify his own presentiments, had educated me for the church. My present patron, who seemed to like me the better the oftener I dined with him, gave me reason to hope that he would provide for me handsomely. I was not yet ordained, when a living of four hundred per annum fell into
his gift: he held it over for some months, as it was thought, on purpose for me.

In the mean time he employed me to write a charity sermon for him, which he was to preach, as it was expected, to a crowded congregation. None but those, who are themselves slaves to the habit of procrastination, will believe, that I could be so foolish as to put off writing this sermon till the Saturday evening before it was wanted. Some of my young companions came unexpectedly to sup with me; we sat late: in the vanity of a young author, who glories in the rapidity of composition, I said to myself that I could finish my sermon in an hour's time. But, alas! when my companions at length departed, they left me in no condition to complete a sermon. I fell fast asleep, and was wakened in the morning by the bishop's servant. The dismay I felt is indescribable; I started up—it was nine o'clock: I began to write; but my hand and my mind trembled, and my ideas were in such confusion, that I could not, great genius as I was, produce a beginning sentence in a quarter of an hour.

I kept the bishop's servant forty minutes
by his watch; wrote and rewrote two pages, and walked up and down the room; tore my two pages; and at last, when the footman said he could wait no longer, was obliged to let him go with an awkward note, pleading sudden sickness for my apology. It was true that I was sufficiently sick at the time when I penned this note; my head ached terribly; and I kept my room, reflecting upon my own folly, the whole of the day. I foresaw the consequences; the living was given away by my patron the next morning, and all hopes of future favour were absolutely at an end.

My father overwhelmed me with reproaches; and I might perhaps have been reformed by this disappointment; but an unexpected piece of good fortune, or what I then thought good fortune, was my ruin.

Among the multitude of my college-friends was a young gentleman, whose father was just appointed to go out upon the famous embassy to China, he came to our shop to buy Du Halde; and, upon hearing me express an enthusiastic desire to visit China, he undertook to apply to his father to take me in the ambassador's suite. His representation of
me as a young man of talents and literature, and the view of some botanical drawings, which I executed upon the spur of the occasion with tolerable neatness, procured me the favour which I so ardently desired.

My father objected to my taking this voyage. He was vexed to see me quit the profession for which I had been educated; and he could not, without a severe struggle, relinquish his hopes of seeing me a bishop. But I argued that, as I had not yet been ordained, there could be no disgrace or impropriety in my avoiding a mode of life which was not suited to my genius. This word genius had now, as upon all other occasions, a mighty effect upon my father; and observing this, I declared further, in a high tone of voice, that from the experience I had already had, I was perfectly certain that the drudgery of sermon writing would paralyse my genius; and that, to expand and invigorate my intellectual powers, it was absolutely necessary I should, to use a great author's expression, "view in foreign countries varied modes of existence."

My father's hopes that one half of his prophecy would at least be accomplished,
and that I should become a great author, revived; and he consented to my going to China, upon condition that I should promise to write a history of my voyage and journey, in two volumes octavo, or one quarto, with a folio of plates. This promise was readily made; for, in the plenitude of confidence in my own powers, octavos and quartos shrunk before me, and a folio appeared too small for the various information, and the useful reflections, which a voyage to China must supply.

Full of expectations and projects, I talked from morning till night of my journey: but, notwithstanding my father’s hourly remonstrances, I deferred my preparations till the last week. Then all was hurry and confusion: tailors and sempstresses, portmanteaus and trunks, portfolios and drawing-boxes, water-colours, crayons, and note-books, wet from the stationer’s, crowded my room. I had a dozen small note-books, and a huge commonplace book, which was to be divided and kept in the manner recommended by the judicious and immortal Locke.

In the midst of the last day’s bustle, I sat down at the corner of a table with compass, ruler, and red ink, to divide and rule my best
of all possible commonplace books; but the red ink was too thin, and the paper was not well-sized, and it blotted continually; because I was obliged to turn over the pages rapidly; and ink will not dry, nor blotting paper suck it up more quickly for a genius than for any other man. Besides, my attention was much distracted by the fear that the sempstress would not send home my dozen of new shirts, and that a vile procrastinating boot-maker would never come with my boots. Every rap at the door I started up to inquire whether that was the shirts, or the boots: thrice I overturned the red, and twice the black ink bottles by these starts; and the execrations which I bestowed upon those tradespeople, who will put off everything to the last moment, were innumerable.—I had orders to set off in the mail-coach for Portsmouth, to join the rest of the ambassador's suite.

The provoking watchman cried "past eleven o'clock," before I had half-finished ruling my commonplace book; my shirts and my boots were not come: the mail-coach, as you may guess, set off without me. My poor father was in a terrible tre-
mor, and walked from room to room, reproaching me and himself: but I persisted in repeating that Lord M. would not set out the day he had intended: that nobody, since the creation of the world, ever set out upon a long journey the day he first appointed—besides, there were at least a hundred chances in my favour, that his lordship would break down on his way to Portsmouth; that the wind would not be fair when he arrived there; that half the people in his suite would not be more punctual than myself, &c.

By these arguments, or by mere dint of assertion, I quieted my father's apprehensions and my own, and we agreed, that, as it was now impossible to go to day, it was best to stay till to morrow.

Upon my arrival at Portsmouth, the first thing I heard was that the Lion and Hindostan had sailed, some hours before, with the embassy for China. Despair deprived me of utterance. A charitable waiter at the inn, however, seeing my consternation and absolute inability to think or act for myself, ran to make farther inquiries, and brought me back the joyful tidings that the Jackal brig,
which was to carry out the remainder of the ambassador's suite, was not yet under way; that a gentleman, who was to go in the Jackal, had dined at a hotel in the next street, and that he had gone to the water side but ten minutes ago.

I hurried after him: the boat was gone. I paid another exorbitantly to take me and my goods to the brig, and reached the Jackal just as she was weighing anchor. Bad education for me! The moment I felt myself safe on board, having recovered breath to speak, I exclaimed, "Here am I, safe and sound! just as well as if I had been here yesterday; better indeed. Oh, after this, I shall always trust to my own good fortune. I knew I should not be too late."

When I came to reflect coolly, however, I was rather sorry that I had missed my passage in the Lion, with my friend and protector, and with most of the learned and ingenious men of the ambassador's suite, to whom I had been introduced, and who had seemed favourably disposed toward me. All the advantage I might have derived from their conversation, during this long voyage, was lost by my own negligence. The Jackal
lost company of the Lion and Hindostan in the channel.—As my friends afterward told me, they waited for us five days in Praya bay; but as no Jackal appeared, they sailed again without her. At length, to our great joy, we descried on the beach of Sumatra a board nailed to a post, which our friends had set up there, with a written notice to inform us that the Lion and Hindostan had touched on this shore on such a day, and to point out to us the course that we should keep in order to join them.

At the sight of this writing my spirits revived: the wind favoured us; but, alas! in passing the straits of Banka, we were damaged so that we were obliged to return to port to refit, and to take in fresh provision. Not a soul on board but wished it had been their fate to have had a birth in the other ships; and I more loudly than any one else expressed this wish twenty times a day. When my companions heard that I was to have sailed in the ambassador’s ship, if I had been time enough at Spithead, some pitied and some rallied me: but most said I deserved to be punished for my negligence. At length we joined the Lion and Hindostan
at North island. Our friends had quite given up all hopes of ever seeing us again, and had actually bought at Batavia a French brig, to supply the place of the Jackal. To my great satisfaction, I was now received on board the Lion, and had an opportunity of conversing with the men of literature and science, from whom I had been so unluckily separated during the former part of the voyage. Their conversation soon revived and increased my regret, when they told me of all that I had missed seeing at the various places where they had touched: they talked to me with provoking fluency of the culture of Manioc; of the root of Cassada, of which Tapioca is made; of the shrub called the Cactus; on which the cochineal insect swarms and feeds; and of the Ipecacuanha-plant; all which they had seen at Rio Janeiro, beside eight paintings representing the manner in which the diamond and gold mines in the Brazils are worked. Indeed, upon cross-examination, I found that these pictures were miserably executed, and scarcely worth seeing.

I regretted more the fine pine-apples which my companions assured me were in such abundance that they cleaned their
swords in them, as being the cheapest, acid that could be there procured. But, far beyond these vulgar objects of curiosity, I regretted not having learned any thing concerning the celebrated Upas-tree. I was persuaded that, if I had been at Batavia I should have extracted some information more precise than these gentlemen obtained from the keepers of the medical garden.

I confess that my mortification at this disappointment did not arise solely from the pure love of natural history: the Upas-tree would have made a conspicuous figure in my quarto volume. I comforted myself, however, by the determination to omit nothing that the vast empire of China could afford to render my work entertaining, instructive, interesting, and sublime. To a man of genius, objects and occurrences the most familiar and trivial present new aspects, or lead to important conclusions: what then may be expected from his powers, when a vast empire is presented to his view, whose inhabitants in their modes of life, customs, laws, and morals, differ essentially from those of any other nations on the face of the globe!—What philosophical observations
and rich discoveries in ethics, physics, and metaphysics—what lessons of policy and legislation may the world reasonably hope, in such circumstances, to receive from the pen of a great genius!

I delighted myself with the notion that the world should not be disappointed in their expectations; I anticipated the pride with which I should receive the compliments of my friends and the public, upon my valuable and incomparable work; I anticipated the pleasure with which my father would exult in the celebrity of his son, and in the accomplishment of his own prophecies; and, with these thoughts full in my mind, we landed at Mettow, in China.

I sat up late at night, writing a sketch of my preface, and notes for the heads of chapters. I was tired, fell into a profound sleep, dreamed I was teaching the emperor of China to pronounce Chrononhotonthologos, and in the morning was wakened by the sound of the gong; the signal that the accommodation junks were ready to sail with the embassy to Pekin. I hurried on my clothes, and was in the junk before the gong had done beating. I gloried in my celebrity;
but, before we had gone two leagues up the country, I found reason to repent of my precipitation: I wanted to note down my first impressions on entering the Chinese territories; but, alas! I felt in vain in my pocket for my pencil and note-book; I had left them both behind me on my bed. Not only one note-book, but my whole dozen; which, on leaving London, I had stuffed into a bag with my night-gown. Bag, night-gown, note-books, all were forgotten!

However trifling it may appear, this loss of the little note-books was of material consequence. To be sure it was easy to procure paper and make others; but, because it was so easy, it was delayed from hour to hour, and from day to day; and I went on writing my most important remarks on scraps of paper, which were always to be copied to morrow into a note-book that was then to be made.

We arrived at Pekin and were magnificently lodged in a palace in the city of Pekin; but here we were so strictly guarded that we could not stir beyond the courts of the palace. You will say that in this confinement I had leisure sufficient to make a
note-book, and to copy my notes: so I had, and it was my firm intention so to have done; but I put it off because I thought it would take up but a few hours' time, and it could be done any day. Besides the weather was so excessively hot, that for the first week, I could do nothing but unbutton my waistcoat and drink sherbet. Visits of ceremony from mandarins took up much of our time: they spoke and moved like machines; and it was with much difficulty that our interpreter made us understand the meaning of their formal sentences, which were seldom worth the trouble of deciphering. We saw them fan themselves, drink tea, eat sweetmeats and rice, and chew betel; but it was scarcely worth while to come all the way from Europe to see this, especially as any common Chinese paper or screen would give an adequate idea of these figures, in their accustomed attitudes.

I spent another week in railing at these abominably stupid, or unnecessarily cautious, creatures of ceremony, and made memorandums for an eloquent chapter in my work.

One morning, we were agreeably surprised by a visit from a mandarin of a very
different description. We were astonished to hear a person in the habit of a Chinese, and bearing the title of a mandarin, address us in French: he informed us that he was originally a French Jesuit, and came over to China with several missionaries from Paris; but, as they were prohibited from promulgating their doctrines in this country, most of them had returned to France; a few remained, assumed the dress and manners of the country, and had been elevated to the rank of mandarins, as a reward for their learning. The conversation of our Chinese Jesuit was extremely entertaining and instructive; he was delighted to hear news from Europe, and we were eager to obtain from him information respecting China. I paid particular attention to him, and I was so fortunate as to win his confidence, as far as the confidence of a Jesuit can be won. He came frequently to visit me, and did me the honour to spend some hours in my apartment.

As he made it understood that these were literary visits, and as his character for propriety was well established with the government, he excited no suspicion, and we spent our time most delightfully between
books and conversation. He gave me, by his anecdotes and descriptions, an insight into the characters and domestic lives of the inhabitants of Pekin, which I could not otherwise have obtained; his talent for description was admirable, and his characters were so new to me that I was in continual ecstasy. I called him the Chinese la Bruyère; and, anticipating the figure which his portraits would make in my future work, thought that I could never sufficiently applaud his eloquence. He was glad to lay aside the solemn gravity of a Chinese mandarin, and to indulge the vivacity of a Frenchman; his vanity was gratified by my praises, and he exerted himself to the utmost to enhance my opinion of his talents.

At length, we had notice that it was the emperor's pleasure to receive the embassy at his imperial residence in Tartary, at Jehol; the seat of grateful coolness, the garden of innumerable trees. From the very name of this place I augured that it would prove favourable to the inspirations of genius, and determined to date at least one of the chapters or letters of my future work from this delightful retreat, the Sans Souci of China.
Full of this intention, I set out upon our expedition into Tartary.

My good friend, the jesuit, who had a petition to present to the emperor relative to some Chinese manuscripts, determined, to my infinite satisfaction, to accompany us to Jehol; and our conducting mandarin, Van-Tadge, arranged things so upon our journey that I enjoyed as much of my friend's conversation as possible. Never European travelling in these countries had such advantages as mine; I had a companion who was able and willing to instruct me in every minute particular of the manners, and every general principle of the government and policy of the people. I was in no danger of falling into the ridiculous mistakes of travellers, who, having but a partial view of things and persons, argue absurdly, and grossly misrepresent, while they intend to be accurate. Many people, as my French mandarin observed, reason like Voltaire's famous traveller; who, happening to have a drunken landlord and a red-haired landlady, at the first inn where he stopped in Alsace, wrote down among his Memorandums—

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"All the men of Alsace drunkards: all the women red-haired."

When we arrived at Jehol, the hurry of preparing for our presentation to the emperor, the want of a convenient writing table, and perhaps my habit of procrastination, prevented my writing the chapter for my future work, or noting down any of the remarks which the Jesuit had made upon our journey. One morning, when I collected my papers and the scraps of memorandums, with which the pockets of all my clothes were stuffed, I was quite terrified at the heap of confusion, and thrust all these materials for my quarto into a canvas bag, purposing to lay them smooth in a portfolio the next day. But the next day I could do nothing of this sort, for we had the British presents to unpack, which had arrived from Pekin; the day after was taken up with our presentation to the emperor; and the day after that I had a new scheme in my head. The emperor, with much solemnity, presented with his own hand to our ambassador a casket, which he said was the most valuable present he could make to the King of Eng-
land; it contained the miniature pictures of the emperor's ancestors, with a few lines of poetry annexed to each, describing the character, and recording the principal events of each monarch's reign. It occurred to me that a set of similar portraits and poetical histories of the Kings of England would be a proper and agreeable offering to the Emperor of China: I consulted my friend, the French mandarin, and he encouraged me by assurances that, as far as he could pretend to judge, it would be a present peculiarly suited to the emperor's taste; and that, in all probability, I should be distinguished by some mark of his approbation, or some munificent reward. My friend promised to have the miniatures varnished for me in the Chinese taste; and he undertook to present the work to the emperor when it should be finished. As it was supposed that the embassy would spend the whole winter in Pekin, I thought that I should have time enough to complete the whole series of British sovereigns. It was not necessary to be very scrupulous as to the resemblance of my portraits, as the Emperor of China could not easily detect any errors of this nature: fortunately, I had
brought from London with me striking likenesses of all the Kings of England, with the principal events of their reign, in one large sheet of paper, which belonged to a joining-map of one of my little cousins. In the confusion of my packing up, I had put it into my trunk instead of a sheet almanack, which lay on the same table. In the course of my life, many lucky accidents have happened to me, even in consequence of my own carelessness, yet that carelessness has afterward prevented my reaping any permanent advantage from my good fortune.

Upon this occasion I was, however, determined that no laziness of mine should deprive me of an opportunity of making my fortune: I set to work immediately, and astonished my friend by the facility with which I made verses. It was my custom to retire from the noisy apartments of our palace to a sort of alcove, at the end of a long gallery, in one of the outer courts, where our corps of artillery used to parade. After their parade was over, the place was perfectly quiet and solitary for the remainder of the day and night. I used to sit up late, writing; and, one fine moon-light night, I went out of my
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alcove to walk in the gallery, while I composed some lines on our great Queen Eliza-
beth. I could not finish the last couplet to
my fancy: I sat down upon an artificial rock,
which was in the middle of the court, leaned
my head upon my hand, and, as I was search-
ing for an appropriate rhyme to glory, fell
fast asleep. A noise like that of a most
violent clap of thunder awakened me; I was
thrown with my face flat upon the ground.

When I recovered my senses, the court
was filled with persons, some European,
some Chinese; seemingly just risen from
their beds, with lanterns and torches in
their hands; all of them with faces of con-
sternation, asking one another what had
happened? The ground was covered with
scattered fragments of wooden pillars, mats,
and bamboo cane-work; I looked and saw
that one end of the gallery in which I had
been walking, and the alcove, were in ruins.
There was a strong smell of gunpowder. I
now recollected that I had borrowed a pow-
der-horn from one of the soldiers in the
morning; and that I had intended to load
my pistols, but I delayed doing so. The
horn, full of gunpowder, lay upon the table
in the alcove all day; and the pistols, out of which I had shaken the old priming. When I went out to walk in the gallery, I left the candle burning; and I suppose a spark fell upon the loose gunpowder, set fire to that in the horn, and blew up the alcove. It was built of light wood and cane, and communicated only with a cane-work gallery; otherwise the mischief would have been more serious. As it was, the explosion had alarmed not only all the ambassador's suite, who lodged in the palace, but many of the Chinese in the neighbourhood, who could not be made to comprehend how the accident had happened.

Reproaches from all our own people were poured upon me without mercy; and, in the midst of my contrition, I had not for some time leisure to lament the loss of all my Kings of England: no vestige of them remained; and all the labour that I had bestowed upon their portraits and their poetical histories was lost to the Emperor of China and to myself. What was still worse, I could not even utter a syllable of complaint, for nobody would sympathize with me, all my companions were so much provoked by
my negligence, and so apprehensive of the bad consequences which might ensue from this accident. The Chinese, who had been alarmed, and who departed evidently dissatisfied, would certainly mention what had happened to the mandarins of the city; and they would report it to the emperor.

I resolved to apply for advice to my friend, the jesuit; but he increased instead of diminishing our apprehensions: he said that the affair was much talked of and misrepresented in Pekin; and that the Chinese, naturally timid, and suspicious of strangers, could not believe that no injury was intended to them, and that the explosion was accidental. A child had been wounded by the fall of some of the ruins of the alcove, which were thrown with great violence into a neighbouring house: the butt end of one of my pistols was found in the street, and had been carried to the magistrate by the enraged populace, as evidence of our evil designs. My jesuit observed to me that there was no possibility of reasoning with the prejudices of any nation; and he confessed he expected that this unlucky accident would have the most serious conse-
quences. He told me in confidence a circumstance that tended much to confirm this opinion: a few days before, when the Emperor went to examine the British presents of artillery, and when the brass mortars were tried, though he admired the ingenuity of these instruments of destruction, yet he said that he deprecated the spirit of the people who employed them; and could not reconcile their improvements in the arts of war with the mild precepts of the religion which they professed.

My friend, the mandarin, promised he would do all in his power to make the exact truth known to the Emperor; and to prevent the evil impressions, which the prejudices of the populace, and perhaps the designing misrepresentations of the city mandarins, might tend to create. I must suppose that the good offices of my Jesuit were ineffectual, and that he either received a positive order to interfere no more in our affairs, or that he was afraid of being implicated in our disgrace if he continued his intimacy with me, for this was the last visit I ever received from him.
CHAPTER II.

In a few days the embassy had orders to return to Pekin. The ambassador’s palace was fitted up for his winter’s residence; and, after our arrival, he was arranging his establishment, when, by a fresh mandate from the Emperor, we were required to prepare with all possible expedition for our departure from the Chinese dominions. On Monday we received an order to leave Pekin the ensuing Wednesday; and all our remonstrances could procure only a delay of two days. Various causes were assigned for this peremptory order, and, among the rest, my unlucky accident was mentioned. However improbable it might seem that such a trifle could have had so great an effect, the idea was credited by many of my companions; and I saw that I was looked upon with an evil eye.

I suffered extremely. I have often observed, that even remorse for my past negligence has tended to increase the original defect of my character. During our whole journey from Pekin to Canton, my sorrow for the late accident was an excuse to myself
for neglecting to make either notes or observations. When we arrived at Canton, my time was taken up with certain commissions for my friends at home; which I had delayed to execute while at Pekin, from the idea that we should spend the whole winter there. The trunks were on board before all my commissions were ready, and I was obliged to pack up several toys and other articles in a basket. As to my papers, they still remained in the canvas bag into which I had stuffed them at Jehol: but I was certain of having leisure, during our voyage home, to arrange them, and to post my notes into Locke's commonplace book.

At the beginning of the voyage, however, I suffered much from sea-sickness: toward the middle of the time I grew better, and indulged myself in the amusement of fishing while the weather was fine. When the weather was not inviting to idleness, innumerable other petty causes of delay occurred: there was so much eating and drinking, so much singing and laughing, and such frequent card-playing in the cabin, that, though I produced my canvas bag above a hundred times, I never could accomplish sorting its
contents: indeed, I seldom proceeded farther than to untie the strings.

One day I had the state cabin fairly to myself, and had really begun my work, when the steward came to let me know that my Chinese basket was just washed overboard. In this basket were all the presents and commissions which I had bought at Canton for my friends at home. I ran to the cabin window, and had the mortification to see all my beautiful scarlet cali-bash boxes, the fan for my cousin Lucy, and the variety of toys, which I had bought for my little cousins, all floating on the sea far out of my reach. I had been warned before that the basket would be washed overboard, and had intended to put it into a safe place; but, unluckily, I delayed to do so.

I was so much vexed by this accident, that I could not go on with my writing; if it had not been for this interruption, I do believe I should that day have accomplished my long postponed task. I will not, indeed I cannot, record all the minute causes which afterwards prevented my executing my intentions. The papers were still in the same disorder, stuffed into the canvas bag, when
I arrived in England. I promised myself that I would sort them the very day after I got home: but visits of congratulation from my friends, upon my return, induced me to delay doing any thing for the first week. The succeeding week, I had a multiplicity of engagements; all my acquaintance, curious to hear a man converse who was fresh from China, invited me to dinner and tea parties; and I could not possibly refuse these kind invitations, and shut myself up in my room, like a hackney author, to write. My father often urged me to begin my quarto; for he knew that other gentlemen, who went out with the embassy, designed to write the history of the voyage; and he, being a bookseller, and used to the ways of authors, foresaw what would happen. A fortnight after we came home, the following advertisement appeared in the papers: 'Now in the Press, and speedily will be published, a Narrative of the British Embassy to China, containing the various Circumstances of the Embassy; with Accounts of the Customs and Manners of the Chinese; and a Description of the Country, Towns, Cities, &c.'

I never saw my poor father turn so pale
or look so angry as when he saw this advertisement: he handed it across the breakfast-table to me.

'There, Basil,' cried he, 'I told you what would happen, and you would not believe me. But this is the way you have served me all your life, and this is the way you will go on to the day of your death, putting things off till to morrow! This is the way you have lost every opportunity of distinguishing yourself; every chance, and you have had many, of advancing yourself in the world! What signifies all I have done for you, or all you can do for yourself? Your genius and education are of no manner of use! Why, there is that heavy dog, as you used to call him at Eton, Johnson: look how he is getting on in the world, by mere dint of application and sticking steadily to his profession. He will beat you at every thing, as he beat you at Eton in writing verses.'

'Only in copying them, Sir. My verses, every body said, were far better than his; only, unluckily, I had not mine finished and copied out in time.'

'Well, Sir, and that is the very thing I complain of. I suppose you will tell me that
your voyage to China will be far better than this which is advertised this morning.'

'To be sure it will, father; for I have had opportunities, and collected materials, which this man, whoever he is, cannot possibly have obtained. To say nothing of my own abilities, I have had such assistance, such information from my friend the missionary——'

'But what signifies your missionary, your information, your abilities, and your materials?' cried my father, raising his voice: 

'Your book is not out, your book will never be finished: or it will be done too late, and nobody will read it; and then you may throw it into the fire. Here you have an opportunity of establishing your fame, and making yourself a great author at once; and, if you throw it away, Basil, I give you fair notice I never will pardon you.'

I promised my father that I would set about my work to morrow; and pacified him by repeating that this hasty publication, which had just been advertised, must be a catch-penny, and that it would serve only to stimulate instead of satisfying the public curiosity. My quarto, I said, would appear afterwards with a much better grace, and
would be sought for by every person of science, taste, and literature.

Soothed by these assurances, my father recovered his good-humour, and trusted to my promise that I would commence my great work the ensuing day. I was fully in earnest. I went to my canvas bag to prepare my materials. Alas, I found them in a terrible condition! The seawater, somehow or other, had got to them during the voyage; and many of my most precious documents were absolutely illegible. The notes, written in pencil, were almost effaced, and, when I had smoothed the crumpled scraps, I could make nothing of them. It was with the utmost difficulty I could read even those that were written in ink; they were so villainously scrawled and so terribly blotted. When I had made out the words, I was often at a loss for the sense, because I had trusted so much to the excellence of my memory, that my notes were never either sufficiently full or accurate. Ideas which I had thought could never be effaced from my mind were now totally forgotten, and I could not comprehend my own mysterious elliptical hints and memorandums. I remember spending
two hours in trying to make out what the following words could mean: Hoy—allu—hoia;—hoya, hoya,—hoy—waudi-hoya.

At last, I recollected that they were merely the sounds of the words used by the Chinese sailors, in towing the junks, and I was much provoked at having wasted my time in trying to remember what was not worth recording. Another day I was puzzled by the following memorandum: 'W:C: 30 f. h.—24 b.—120 m—I—mandarin—C.tradition—2000—200 before J.C.—' which, after three quarters of an hour's study, I discovered to mean that the wall of China is 30 feet high, 24 feet broad, and 120 miles long; and that a mandarin told me, that, according to Chinese tradition, this wall had been built above 2000 years, that is, 200 before the birth of our Saviour.

On another scrap of paper, at the very bottom of the bag, I found the words, 'Wheazou—Chanchin—Cuaboocow—Caungchumfoa—Callachottueng—Quanshanglein—Callachotre shansu,' &c.; all which I found to be a list of towns and villages through which we had passed, or palaces that we had seen; but how to distinguish these asunder I knew not, for all
To MorroW.

recollection of them was obliterated from my mind, and no farther notes respecting them were to be found.

After many days' tiresome attempts, I was obliged to give up all hopes of deciphering the most important of my notes, those which I had made from the information of the French missionary. Most of what I had trusted so securely to my memory was defective in some slight circumstances, which rendered the whole useless. My materials for my quarto shrunk into a very small compass. I flattered myself, however, that the elegance of my composition, and the moral and political reflections with which I intended to intersperse the work, would compensate for the paucity of facts in my narrative. That I might devote my whole attention to the business of writing, I determined to leave London, where I met with so many temptations to idleness, and set off to pay a visit to my uncle Lowe, who lived in the country, in a retired part of England. He was a farmer, a plain, sensible, affectionate man; and as he had often invited me to come and see him, I made no doubt that I should be an agreeable guest. I had intended to have
written a few lines the week before I set out, to say that I was coming; but I put it off till at last I thought that it would be useless, because I should get there as soon as my letter.

I had soon reason to regret that I had been so negligent: for my appearance at my uncle's, instead of creating that general joy which I had expected, threw the whole house into confusion. It happened that there was company in the house, and all the beds were occupied: while I was taking off my boots I had the mortification to hear my aunt Lowe say, in a voice of mingled distress and reproach, 'Come! is he?—My goodness! What shall we do for a bed?—How could he think of coming without writing a line before-hand. My goodness! I wish he was a hundred miles off, I'm sure.'

My uncle shook hands with me, and welcomed me to old England again, and to his house; which, he said, should always be open to all his relations. I saw that he was not pleased; and, as he was a man who, according to the English phrase, scorned to keep a thing long upon his mind, he let me know, before he had finished his first glass of ale to my good health, that he was
inclinable to take it very unkind indeed that, after all he had said about my writing a letter now and then, just to say how I did, and how I was going on, I had never put pen to paper to answer one of his letters since the day I first promised to write, which was the day I went to Eton school, till this present time of speaking. I had no good apology to make for myself, but I attempted all manner of excuses; that I had put off writing from day to day, and from year to year, till I was ashamed to write at all; that it was not from want of affection; &c.

My uncle took up his pipe and puffed away, while I spoke; and, when I had said all that I could devise, I sat silent; for I saw, by the looks of all present, that I had not mended the matter. My aunt pursed up her mouth, and 'wondered, if she must tell the plain truth, that so great a scholar as Mr. Basil could not, when it must give him so little trouble to indite a letter, write a few lines to an uncle, who had begged it so often, and who had ever been a good friend.'

'Say nothing of that,' said my uncle:—
'I scorn to have that put into account.'
loved the boy, and all I could do was done of course; that's nothing to the purpose; but the longest day I have to live I'll never trouble him with begging a letter from him no more. For now I see he does not care a fig for me; and of course I do not care a fig for he. Lucy, hold up your head, girl; and do 'nt look as if you were going to be hanged.'

My cousin Lucy was the only person present who seemed to have any compassion for me; and, as I lifted up my eyes to look at her when her father spoke, she appeared to me quite beautiful. I had always thought her a pretty girl, but she never struck me as any thing very extraordinary till this moment. I was very sorry that I had offended my uncle: I saw he was seriously displeased, and that his pride, of which he had a large portion, had conquered his affection for me.

'Tis easier to lose a friend than gain one, young man,' said he, 'and take my word for it, as this world goes, 'tis a foolish thing to lose a friend for want of writing a letter or so. Here's seven years I have been begging a letter now and then, and could not get one. Never wrote a line to me before
you went to China; should not have known a word about it but for my wife, who met you by mere chance in London, and gave you some little commissions for the children, which it seems you forgot till it was too late. Then after you came back, never wrote to me.'

'And even not to write a line to give one notice of his coming here to night,' added my aunt.

'Oh, as to that,' replied my uncle, 'he can never find our larder at a nonplus: we have no dishes for him dressed Chinese fashion; but as to roast beef of old England, which, I take it, is worth all the foreign meats, he is welcome to it, and to as much of it as he pleases. I shall always be glad to see him as an acquaintance, and so forth, as a good Christian ought, but not as the favourite he used to be—that is out of the question; for things cannot be both done and undone, and time that's past cannot come back again, that is clear; and cold water thrown on a warm heart puts it out; and there's an end of the matter.---Lucy, bring me my night-cap.'

Lucy, I think, sighed once; and I am sure I sighed above a dozen times; but my uncle
put on his red night-cap, and heeded us not. I was in hopes that the next morning he would have been better disposed toward me after having slept off his anger. The moment that I appeared in the morning, the children, who had been in bed when I arrived the preceding night, crowded round me; and one cried,

'Cousin Basil, have you brought me the tumbler you promised me from China?'

'Cousin Basil, where's my boat?'

'Oh, Basil, did you bring me the calibash box that you promised me?'

'And pray,' cried my aunt, 'did you bring my Lucy the fan that she commissioned you to get?'

'No, I'll warrant,' said my uncle. 'He that cannot bring himself to write a letter in the course of seven years, to his friends, will not be apt to trouble his head about their foolish commissions, when he is in foreign parts.'

Though I was abashed and vexed, I summoned sufficient courage to reply that I had not neglected to execute the commissions of any of my friends; but that, by an unlucky accident, the basket into which I had packed all their things was washed overboard.
‘Hum!’ said my uncle.

‘And pray,’ said my aunt, ‘why were they all packed in a basket? Why were not they put into your trunks, where they might have been safe?’

I was obliged to confess that I had delayed to purchase them till after we left Pekin; and that the trunks were put on board before they were all procured at Canton. My vile habit of procrastination! How did I suffer for it at this moment! Lucy began to make excuses for me, which made me blame myself the more: she said that, as to her fan, it would have been of little or no use to her; that she was sure she should have broken it before it had been a week in her possession; and that, therefore, she was glad that she had it not. The children were clamorous in their grief for the loss of the boat, the tumbler, and the calibash boxes; but Lucy contrived to quiet them in time, and to make my peace with all the younger part of the family. To reinstate me in my uncle’s good graces was impossible; he would only repeat to her — ‘The young man has lost my good opi-
nation; he will never do any good. From a child upward he has always put off doing every thing he ought to do. He will never do any good; he will never be any thing.

My aunt was not my friend, because she suspected that Lucy liked me; and she thought her daughter might do much better than marry a man who had quitted the profession to which he was bred, and was, as it seemed, little likely to settle to any other. My pretensions to genius and my literary qualifications were of no advantage to me, either with my uncle or my aunt; the one being only a good farmer, and the other only a good house-wife.—They contented themselves with asking me, coolly, what I had ever made by being an author? And, when I was forced to answer, nothing, they smiled upon me in scorn. My pride was roused, and I boasted that I expected to receive at least 600l. for my voyage to China, which I hoped to complete in a few weeks. My aunt looked at me with astonishment; and, to prove to her that I was not passing the bounds of truth, I added, that one of my travelling companions had, as I was credi-
bly informed, received a thousand pounds for his narrative, to which mine would certainly be far superior.

'Then it is done, and when you have the money in your hand to show us, I shall believe you,' said my aunt; 'and then, and not till then, you may begin to think of my Lucy.'

'He shall never have her,' said my uncle; 'he will never come to good. He shall never have her.'

The time which I ought to have spent in composing my quarto I now wasted in fruitless endeavours to recover the good graces of my uncle. Love, assisted as usual by the spirit of opposition, took possession of my heart; and how can a man in love write quartos? I became more indolent than ever, for I persuaded myself that no exertions could overcome my uncle's prejudice against me; and, without his approbation, I despaired of ever obtaining Lucy's hand.

During my stay at my uncle's, I received several letters from my father, inquiring how my work went on, and urging me to proceed as rapidly as possible, lest another Voyage to China, which it was reported was now con-
posing by a gentleman of high reputation, should come out and preclude mine for ever. I cannot account for my folly; the power of habit is imperceptible to those who submit passively to its tyranny. From day to day I continued procrastinating and sighing, till at last the fatal news came that Sir George Staunton's History of the Embassy to China, in two volumes quarto, was actually published.

There was an end of all my hopes. I left my uncle's house in despair; I dreaded to see my father. He overwhelmed me with well-merited reproaches. All his expectations of my success in life were disappointed; he was now convinced that I should never make my talents useful to myself or to my family. A settled melancholy appeared in his countenance; he soon ceased to urge me to any exertion, and I idled away my time, deploring that I could not marry my Lucy, and resolving upon a thousand schemes for advancing myself; but always delaying their execution till to-morrow.
CHAPTER IV.

Two years passed away in this manner; about the end of which time my poor father died. I cannot describe the mixed sensations of grief and self-reproach which I felt at his death. I knew that I had never fulfilled his sanguine prophecies, and that disappointment had long preyed upon his spirits. This was a severe shock to me: I was roused from a state of stupefaction by the necessity of acting as my father's executor.

Among his bequests was one which touched me particularly, because I was sensible that it was made from kindness to me. "I give and bequeath the full-length picture of my son Basil, taken when a boy (a very promising boy) at Eton school, to my brother, Lowe. I should say to my sweet niece, Lucy Lowe, but am afraid of giving offence."

I sent the picture to my uncle Lowe, with a copy of the words of the will, and a letter written in the bitterness of grief. My uncle, who was of an affectionate though positive temper, returned me the following answer:
"DEAR NEPHEW BASIL:

"Taking it for granted you feel as much as I do, it being natural you should, and even more, I shall not refuse to let my Lucy have the picture bequeathed to me by my good brother, who could not offend me dying, never having done so living. As to you, Basil, this is no time for reproaches, which would be cruel; but, without meaning to look back to the past, I must add that I mean nothing by giving the picture to Lucy but respect for my poor brother's memory. My opinions remaining as heretofore, I think it a duty to my girl to be steady in my determination; convinced that no man (not meaning you in particular) of what I call a putting off temper, could make her happy, she being too mild to scold and bustle, and do the man's business in a family. This is the whole of my mind without malice; for how could I, if I were malicious, which I am not, bear malice, and at such a time as this, against my own nephew; and as to anger, that is soon over with me; and though I said I never would forgive you, Basil, for not writing to me for seven years, I do now forgive you with all my heart. So let that be off your conscience. And now I hope we shall be very good friends all the rest of our lives; that is to say, putting Lucy out of the question; for, in my opinion, it is a disagreeable thing to have any bickerings between near relations. So, my dear nephew, wishing you all health and happiness, I hope you will now settle to business. My wife tells me she hears you are left in a good way by my poor brother's care and industry; and she sends her love to you, in which all the family unites; and, hoping you will write from time to time, I remain,

My dear nephew, Basil,
Your affectionate uncle,
THOMAS LOWE."

My aunt Lowe added a postscript, inquiring more particularly into the state of my
affairs. I answered, by return of post, that my good father had left me much richer than I either expected or deserved: his credit in the bookseller's line was extensive and well established; his shop was well furnished, and he had a considerable sum of money in bank; beside many good debts due from authors, to whom he had advanced cash.

My aunt Lowe was governed by her interest as decidedly as my uncle was swayed by his humour and affection; and, of course, became more favourable toward me, when she found that my fortune was better than she had expected. She wrote to exhort me to attend to my business, and to prove to my uncle that I could cure myself of my negligent habits. She promised to befriend me, and to do every thing to obtain my uncle's consent to my union with Lucy, upon condition that I would for six months steadily persevere, or, as she expressed herself, show that I could come to good.

The motive was powerful, sufficiently powerful to conquer the force of inveterate habit. I applied resolutely to business, and supported the credit which my father's punce-
tuality had obtained from his customers. During the course of six entire months, I am not conscious of having neglected or delayed to do any thing of consequence that I ought to have done, except whetting my razor. My aunt Lowe faithfully kept her word with me, and took every opportunity of representing, in the most favourable manner to my uncle, the reformation that love had wrought in my character.

I went to the country, full of hope, at the end of my six probationary months. My uncle, however, with a mixture of obstinacy and good-sense, replied to my aunt in my presence: 'This reformation that you talk of, wife, won't last. 'T was begun by love, as you say; and will end with love, as I say. You and I know, my dear, love lasts little longer than the honey-moon; and Lucy is not, or ought not to be, such a simpleton as to look only to what a husband will be for one short month of his life, when she is to live with him for twenty, thirty, may be forty long years; and no help for it, let him turn out what he will. I beg your pardon, nephew Basil; but, where my Lucy's happi-
ness is at stake, I must speak my mind as a father should. My opinion, Lucy, is, that he is not a whit changed; and so I now let you understand, if you marry the man, it must be without my consent.'

Lucy turned exceedingly pale, and I grew extremely angry. My uncle had, as usual, recourse to his pipe; and to all the eloquence which love and indignation could inspire, he would only answer, between the whiffs of his smoking, 'if my girl marries you, nephew Basil, I say she must do so without my consent.'

Lucy's affection for me struggled for some time with her sense of duty to her father; her mother supported my cause with much warmth; having once declared in my favour, she considered herself as bound to maintain her side of the question. It became a trial of power between my uncle and aunt; and their passions rose so high in the conflict that Lucy trembled for the consequences.

One day she took an opportunity of speaking to me in private. 'My dear Basil,' said she, 'we must part. You see that I can never be yours with my father's consent; and without it I could never be happy, even
in being united to you. 'I will not be the cause of misery to all those whom I love best in the world. I will not set my father and mother at variance. I cannot bear to hear the altercations, which rise higher and higher between them every day. Let us part, and all will be right again.'

It was in vain that I combated her resolution; I alternately resented and deplored the weakness which induced Lucy to sacrifice her own happiness and mine to the obstinate prejudices of a father; yet I could not avoid respecting her the more for her adhering to what she believed to be her duty. The sweetness of temper, gentleness of disposition, and filial piety, which she showed on this trying occasion, endeared her to me beyond expression.

Her father, notwithstanding his determination to be as inmoveable as a rock, began to manifest symptoms of internal agitation; and one night, after breaking his pipe, and throwing down the tongs and poker twice, which Lucy twice replaced, he exclaimed, 'Lucy, girl, you are a fool! and, what is worse, you are grown into a mere shadow. You are breaking my heart. Why
I know this man, this Basil, this cursed nephew of mine, will never come to good. But cannot you marry him without my consent? Upon this hint Lucy's scruples vanished; and, a few days afterward, we were married. Prudence, virtue, pride, love, every strong motive which can act upon the human mind, stimulated me to exert myself to prove that I was worthy of this most amiable woman. A year passed away, and my Lucy said that she had no reason to repent of her choice. She took the most affectionate pains to convince her father that she was perfectly happy, and that he had judged of me too harshly. His delight, at seeing his daughter happy, vanquished his reluctance to acknowledge that he had changed his opinion. I never shall forget the pleasure I felt at hearing him confess that he had been too positive, and that his Lucy had made a good match for herself.

Alas! when I had obtained this testimony in my favour, when I had established a character for exertion and punctuality, I began to relax in my efforts to deserve it: I indulged myself in my old habits of procrastination. My customers and country correspondents
began to complain that their letters were unanswered, and that their orders were neglected. Their remonstrances became more and more urgent in process of time; and nothing but actually seeing the dates of their letters could convince me that they were in the right, and I was in the wrong. An old friend of my father's, a rich gentleman, who loved books and bought all that were worth buying, sent me, in March, an order for books to a considerable amount. In April he wrote to remind me of his first letter.

April 3.

"My dear Sir,

"Last month I wrote to request that you would send me the following books:—I have been much disappointed by not receiving them; and I request you will be so good as to forward them immediately.

"I am, my dear Sir,
Yours sincerely,

J. C."

In May he wrote to me again.

"Dear Sir,

"I am much surprised at not having yet received the books I wrote for last March—beg to know the cause of this delay; and am,

Dear Sir,
Yours, &c.

J. C."
TO MORROW.

A fortnight afterward, as I was packing up the books for this gentleman, I received the following:

"SIR,

"As it is now above a quarter of a year since I wrote to you for books, which you have not yet sent to me, I have been obliged to apply to another bookseller.

"I am much concerned at being compelled to this: I had a great regard for your father, and would not willingly break off my connection with his son; but really you have tried my patience too far. Last year I never had from you any new publication, until it was in the hands of all my neighbours; and I have often been under the necessity of borrowing books which I had bespoken from you months before. I hope you will take this as a warning, and that you will not use any of your other friends as you have used,

Sir,

Your humble Servant,

J. C.

This reprimand had little effect upon me because, at the time when I received it, I was intent upon an object, in comparison with which the trade of a bookseller appeared absolutely below my consideration. I was inventing a set of new taxes for the minister for which I expected to be liberally rewarded. Like many men of genius, I was alway
disposed to think that my fortune was to be made by some extraordinary exertion of talent, instead of the vulgar means of daily industry. I was ever searching for some short cut to the temple of Fame, instead of following the beaten road.

I was much encouraged by persons intimately connected with those high in power, to hope that my new taxes would be adopted: and I spent my time in attendance upon my patrons, leaving the care of my business to my foreman; a young man whose head the whole week was intent upon riding out on Sunday. With such a master and such a foreman affairs could not go on well.

My Lucy, notwithstanding her great respect for my abilities, and her confidence in my promises, often hinted that she feared ministers might not at last make me amends for the time I devoted to my system of taxation; but I persisted. The file of unanswered letters was filled even to the top of the wire; the drawer of unsettled accounts made me sigh profoundly, whenever it was accidentally opened. I soon acquired a horror of business, and practised all the arts of apology, evasion, and invisibility, to which pro-
crastiners must sooner or later be reduced. My conscience gradually became callous; and I could, without compunction, promise, with a face of truth, to settle an account to morrow, without having the slightest hope of keeping my word.

I was a publisher, as well as a bookseller, and was assailed by a tribe of rich and poor authors. The rich complained continually of delays that affected their fame; the poor of delays that concerned their interest, and sometimes their very existence. I was cursed with a compassionate as well as with a procrastinating temper; and I frequently advanced money to my poor authors, to compensate for my neglect to settle their accounts, and to free myself from the torment of their reproaches.

They soon learned to take a double advantage of my virtues and my vices. The list of my poor authors increased, for I was an encourager of genius. I trusted to my own judgment concerning every performance that was offered to me; and I was often obliged to pay for having neglected to read, or to send to press, these multifarious manuscripts. After having kept a poor devil of an
author upon the tenter-hooks of expectation for an unconscionable time, I could not say to him, "Sir, I have never opened your manuscript; there it is, in that heap of rubbish; take it away for Heaven's sake." No, hardened as I was, I never failed to make some compliment, or some retribution: and my compliments were often in the end the most expensive species of retribution.

My rich authors soon deserted me, and hurt my credit in the circles of literary fashion by their clamours. I had ample experience, yet I have never been able to decide whether I would rather meet the "desperate misery" of a famishing pamphleteer, or the exasperated vanity of a rich amateur. Every one of my authors seemed convinced that the fate of Europe or the salvation of the world depended upon the publication of their book on some particular day; while I all the time was equally persuaded that their works were mere trash, in comparison with my new system of taxation; consequently, I postponed their business, and pursued my favourite tax scheme.

I have the pride and pleasure to say that all my taxes were approved and adopted,
and brought in an immense increase of revenue to the state: but I have the mortification to be obliged to add that I never, directly or indirectly, received the slightest pecuniary reward; and the credit of all I had proposed was snatched from me by a rogue, who had no other merit than that of being shaved sooner than I was one frosty morning. If I had not put off whetting my razor the preceding day, this would not have happened. To such a trifling instance of my unfortunate habit of procrastination must I attribute one of the most severe disappointments of my life. A rival financier, who laid claim to the prior invention and suggestion of my principal taxes, was appointed to meet me at the house of my great man at ten o'clock in the morning. My opponent was punctual, I was half an hour too late: his claims were established; mine were rejected, because I was not present to produce my proofs. When I arrived at my patron's door, the insolent porter shut the door in my face; and so ended all hopes from my grand system of taxation.

I went home and shut myself up in my room, to give vent to my grief at leisure;
but I was not permitted to indulge my sorrow long in peace: I was summoned by my foreman to come down stairs to one of my enraged authors, who positively refused to quit the shop without seeing me. Of the whole irritable race, the man who was now waiting to see me was the most violent. He was a man of some genius and learning, with great pretensions, and a vindictive spirit. He was poor, yet lived among the rich; and his arrogance could be equalled only by his susceptibility. He was known in our house by the name of Thaumaturgos, the retailer of wonders, because he had sent me a manuscript with this title; and once or twice a week we received a letter or message from him, to inquire when it would be published. I had unfortunately mislaid this precious manuscript. Under this circumstance, to meet the author was almost as dreadful as to stand the shot of a pistol. Down stairs I went, unprovided with any apology.

'Sir,' cried my angry man, suppressing his passion, 'as you do not find it worth your while to publish Thaumaturgos, you will be so obliging as to let me have my manuscript.'
'Pardon me, my dear Sir,' interrupted I, it shall certainly appear this spring.'

'Spring! Zounds, Sir, don't talk to me of spring. Why you told me it should be out at Christmas; you said it should be out last June; you promised to send it to press before last Easter. Is this the way I am to be treated?'

'Pardon me, my dear Sir. I confess I have used you and the world very ill; but the pressure of business must plead my apology.'

'Look you, Mr. Basil Lowe, I am not comesthere to listen to commonplace excuses: I have been ill used, and know it; and the world shall know it. I am not ignorant of the designs of my enemies; but no cabal shall succeed against me. Thaumaturgos shall not be suppressed! Thaumaturgos shall see the light! Thaumaturgos shall have justice, in spite of all the machinations of malice. Sir, I demand my manuscript.'

'Sir, it shall be sent to you to morrow.'

'To morrow, Sir, will not do for me. I have heard of to morrow from you this twelvemonth past. I will have my manuscript to day. I do not leave this spot without Thaumaturgos.'
Thus driven to extremities, I was compelled to confess that I could not immediately lay my hand upon it; but I added—that the whole house should be searched for it instantly. It is impossible to describe the indignation which my author expressed. I ran away to search the house. He followed me, and stood by while I rummaged in drawers and boxes full of papers, and tossed over heaps of manuscripts. No Thaumaturgos could be found. The author declared that he had no copy of the manuscript; that he had been offered 500£. for it by another bookseller; and that, for his own part, he would not lose it for twice that sum. Lost, however, it evidently was. He stalked out of my house, bidding me prepare to abide by the consequences. I racked my memory in vain, to discover what I had done with this bundle of wonders. I could recollect only that I carried it a week in my great coat pocket, resolving every day to lock it up; and that I went to the Mount coffee-house in this coat several times. These recollections were of little use.

A suit was instituted against me for the value of Thaumaturgos; and the damages
were modestly laid by the author at eight hundred guineas. The cause was highly interesting to all the tribe of London booksellers and authors. The court was crowded at an early hour; several people of fashion, who were partisans of the plaintiff, appeared in the gallery; many more, who were his enemies, attended on purpose to hear my counsel ridicule and abuse the pompous Thaumaturgos. I had great hopes, myself, that we might win the day; especially as the lawyer on the opposite side was my old competitor at Eton, that Johnson, whom I had always considered as a mere laborious drudge, and a very heavy fellow. How this heavy fellow got up in the world, and how he contrived to supply, by dint of study, the want of natural talents, I cannot tell; but this I know, to my cost, that he managed his client's cause so ably, and made a speech so full of sound law and clear sense, as effectually to decide the cause against me. I was condemned to pay 500l. damages, and costs of suit. Five hundred pounds lost, by delaying to lock up a bundle of papers! Every body pitied me, because the punishment seemed so disproportioned to
the offence. The pity of every body, however, did not console me for the loss of my money.

CHAPTER V.

The trial was published in the papers: my uncle Lowe read it, and all my credit with him was lost for ever. Lucy did not utter a syllable of reproach or complaint; but she used all her gentle influence to prevail upon me to lay aside the various schemes, which I had formed for making a rapid fortune, and urged me to devote my whole attention to my business.

The loss which I had sustained, though great, was not irremediable. I was moved more by my wife's kindness than I could have been by the most outrageous invective. But what is kindness, what is affection, what are the best resolutions, opposed to all-powerful habit? I put off settling my affairs till I had finished a pamphlet against government, which my friends and the critics assured me would make my fortune, by attaching to my shop all the opposition members.

My pamphlet succeeded, was highly
praised, and loudly abused: answers appeared, and I was called upon to provide rejoinders. Time thus passed away, and, while I was gaining fame, I every hour lost money. I was threatened with bankruptcy. I threw aside my pamphlets, and, in the utmost terror and confusion, began, too late, to look into my affairs. I now attempted too much: I expected to repair by bustle the effects of procrastination. The nervous anxiety of my mind prevented me from doing any thing well; whatever I was employed about appeared to me of less consequence than a hundred other things, which ought to be done. The letter that I was writing, or the account that I was settling, was but one of a multitude; which had all equal claims to be expedited immediately. My courage failed; I abandoned my business in despair. A commission of bankruptcy was taken out against me; all my goods were seized, and I became a prisoner in the King's Bench.

My wife's relations refused to give me any assistance; but her father offered to receive her and her little boy, on condition that she would part from me, and spend the remain-
tively refused; and I never shall forget the manner of her refusal. Her character rose in adversity. With the utmost feminine gentleness and delicacy, she had a degree of courage and fortitude which I have seldom seen equalled in any of my own sex. She followed me to prison, and supported my spirits by a thousand daily instances of kindness. During eighteen months that she passed with me in a prison, which we then thought must be my abode for life, she never, by word or look, reminded me that I was the cause of our misfortunes: on the contrary, she drove this idea from my thoughts with all the address of female affection. I cannot, even at this distance of time, recall these things to memory without tears.

What a woman, what a wife had I reduced to distress! I never saw her, even in the first months of our marriage, so cheerful and so tender as at this period. She seemed to have no existence but in me, and in our little boy; of whom she was doatingly fond. He was at this time just able to run about and talk; his playful caresses, his thoughtless gayety, and at times a certain tone of compassion for poor papa were very touching. Alas! he little forcsaw . . . . . .
But let me go on with my history, if I can, without anticipation.

Among my creditors was a Mr. Nun, a paper-maker, who, from his frequent dealings with me, had occasion to see something of my character and of my wife's; he admired her, and pitied me. He was in easy circumstances, and delighted in doing all the good in his power. One morning my Lucy came into my room with a face radiant with joy.

' My love,' said she, 'here is Mr. Nun below, waiting to see you; but he says he will not see you till I have told you the good news. He has got all our creditors to enter into a compromise, and to set you at liberty.'

I was transported with joy and gratitude: our benevolent friend was waiting in a hackney-coach to carry us away from prison. When I began to thank him, he stopped me with a blunt declaration that I was not a bit obliged to him; for that, if I had been a man of straw, he would have done just the same for the sake of my wife, whom he looked upon to be one or other the best woman he had ever seen, Mrs. Nun always excepted.

He proceeded to inform me how he had settled my affairs, and how he had obtained
from my creditors a small allowance for the immediate support of myself and family. He had given up the third part of a considerable sum due to himself. As my own house was shut up, he insisted upon taking us home with him: 'Mrs. Nun,' he said, 'had provided a good dinner; and he must not have her ducks and green pease upon the table, and no friends to eat them.'

Never were ducks and green pease more acceptable; never was a dinner eaten with more appetite, or given with more goodwill. I have often thought of this dinner, and compared the hospitality of this simple-hearted man with the ostentation of great folks, who give splendid entertainments to those who do not want them. In trifles and in matters of consequence this Mr. Nun was one of the most liberal and unaffectedly generous men I ever knew; but the generous actions of men in middle life are lost in obscurity. No matter. They do not act from the love of fame; they act from a better motive, and they have their reward in their own hearts.

As I was passing through Mr. Nun's warehouse, I was thinking of writing some-
thing on this subject; but whether it should be a poetic effusion, in the form of "An Ode to him who least expects it," or a prose work, under the title of "Modern Parallels," in the manner of Plutarch, I had not decided, when I was roused from my reverie by my wife, who, pointing to a large bale of paper that was directed to "Ezekiel Croft, Merchant, Philadelphia," asked me if I knew that this gentleman was a very near relation of her mother? 'Is he indeed?' said Mr. Nun. 'Then I can assure you that you have a relation of whom you have no occasion to be ashamed: he is one of the most respectable merchants in Philadelphia.'

'He was not very rich when he left this country about six years ago,' said Lucy.

'He has a very good fortune now,' answered Mr. Nun.

'And has he made this very good fortune in six years?' cried I. 'My dear Lucy, I did not know that you had any relations in America. I have a great mind to go over there myself.'

'Away from all our friends!' said Lucy.

'I shall be ashamed,' replied I, 'to see them after all that has happened.' A bank-
rupt cannot have many friends. The best thing that I can possibly do is to go over to a new world, where I may establish a new character, and make a new fortune.'

'But we must not forget,' said Mr. Nun, 'that in the new world, as in the old one, a character and a fortune must be made by much the same means. And, forgive me if I add, the same bad habits that are against a man in one country will be as much against him in another.'

True, thought I, as I recollected at this instant my unfortunate voyage to China. But, now that the idea of going to America had come into my mind, I saw so many chances of success in my favour, and I felt so much convinced I should not relapse into my former faults, that I could not abandon the scheme. My Lucy consented to accompany me. She spent a week in the country with her father and friends, by my particular desire; and they did all they could to prevail upon her to stay with them, promising to take the best possible care of her and her little boy during my absence; but she steadily persisted in her determination to accompany her husband. I was not too late in
going on ship-board this time; and, during the whole voyage, I did not lose any of my goods; for, in the first place, I had very few goods to lose, and, in the next, my wife took the entire charge of those few.

And now behold me safely landed at Philadelphia, with one hundred pounds in my pocket—a small sum of money; but many, from yet more trifling beginnings, had grown rich in America. My wife's relation, Mr. Croft, had not so much as I was told when he left England. Many passengers, who came over in the same ship with me, had not half so much. Several of them were, indeed, wretchedly poor.

Among others, there was an Irishman, who was known by the name of Barny, a contraction, I believe, for Barnaby. As to his surname he could not undertake to spell it; but he assured me there was no better. This man, with many of his relatives, had come to England, according to their custom, during harvest time, to assist in reaping, because they gain higher wages than in their own country. Barny heard that he should get still higher wages for labour in America, and accordingly he, and his two sons, lads
of eighteen and twenty, took their passage for Philadelphia. A merrier mortal I never saw. We used to hear him upon deck, continually singing or whistling his Irish tunes; and I should never have guessed that this man's life had been a series of hardships and misfortunes.

When we were leaving the ship I saw him, to my great surprise, crying bitterly; and, upon inquiring what was the matter, he answered that it was not for himself, but for his sons, he was grieving, because they were to be made *Redemption men.*—That is, they were to be bound to work, during a certain time, for the captain, or for whomsoever he pleased, till the money due for their passage should be paid. Though I was somewhat surprised at any one's thinking of coming on board a vessel without having one farthing in his pocket, yet I could not forbear paying the money for this poor fellow. He dropped down on the deck upon both his knees as suddenly as if he had been shot, and, holding up his hands to Heaven, prayed, first in Irish, and then in English, with fervent fluency, that "I and mine might never want; that I might live long to
reign over him; that success might attend my honour wherever I went; and that I might enjoy for evermore all sorts of blessings and crowns of glory.” As I had an English prejudice in favour of silent gratitude, I was rather disgusted by all this eloquence; I turned away abruptly, and got into the boat which waited to carry me to shore.

As we rowed away I looked at my wife and child, and reproached myself with having indulged in the luxury of generosity perhaps at their expense.

My wife’s relation, Mr. Croft, received us better than she expected, and worse than I hoped. He had the face of an acute money-making man; his manners were methodical; caution was in his eye, and prudence in all his motions. In our first half hour’s conversation he convinced me that he deserved the character he had obtained, of being upright and exact in all his dealings. His ideas were just and clear, but confined to the objects immediately relating to his business; as to his heart, he seemed to have no notion of general philanthropy, but to have perfectly learned by rote his duty to his neigh-
bourn. He appeared disposed to do charitable and good-natured actions from reason, and not from feeling; because they were proper, not merely because they were agreeable. I felt that I should respect, but never love him; and that he would never either love or respect me, because the virtue which he held in the highest veneration was that in which I was most deficient—punctuality.

But I will give, as nearly as I can, my first conversation with him; and from that a better idea of his character may be formed than I can afford by any description.

I presented to him Mr. Nun’s letter of introduction, and mentioned that my wife had the honour of being related to him. He perused Mr. Nun’s letter very slowly. I was determined not to leave him in any doubt, respecting who and what I was; and I briefly told him the particulars of my history. He listened with immoveable attention; and when I had finished he said ‘You have not yet told me what your views are in coming to America.’

I replied, ‘that my plans were not yet fixed.’

‘But of course,’ said he, ‘you cannot have left home without forming some plan for the
future. May I ask what line of life you mean to pursue?'

I answered, 'that I was undetermined, and meant to be guided by circumstances.'

'Circumstances!' said he, 'May I request you to explain yourself more fully? for I do not precisely understand to what circumstances you allude.'

I was provoked with the man for being so slow of apprehension; but, when driven to the necessity of explaining, I found that I did not myself understand what I meant.

I changed my ground; and, lowering my tone of confidence, said that, as I was totally ignorant of the country, I should wish to be guided by the advice of better informed persons; and that I begged leave to address myself to him, as having had the most successful experience.

After a considerable pause he replied, it was a hazardous thing to give advice; but that, as my wife was his relation, and, as he held it a duty to assist his relations, he should not decline giving me—all the advice in his power.

I bowed, and felt chilled all over by his manner.
'And not only my advice,' continued he, 'but my assistance—in reason.

I said, 'I was much obliged to him.'

'Not in the least, young man; you are not in the least obliged to me yet, for I have done nothing for you.'

This was true, and not knowing what to say, I was silent.

'And that which I may be able to do for you in future must depend as much upon yourself as upon me. In the first place, before I can give any advice, I must know what you are worth in the world?'

My worth in money, I told him, with a forced smile, was but very trifling indeed. With some hesitation, I named the sum.

'And you have a wife and child to support!' said he, shaking his head. 'And your child is too young and your wife too delicate to work. They will be sad burdens upon your hands; these are not the things for America. Why did you bring them with you? But, as that is done, and cannot be mended,' continued he, 'we must make the best of it, and support them. You say you are ignorant of the country. I must explain to you then how money is to be made here;
and by whom. The class of labourers make money readily, if they are industrious; because they have high wages and constant employment; artificers and mechanics, carpenters, shipwrights, wheelwrights, smiths, bricklayers, masons, get rich here, without difficulty, from the same causes; but all these things are out of the question for you. You have head, not hands, I perceive. Now mere head, in the line of bookmaking or bookselling, brings in but poor profit in this country. The sale for imported books is extensive; and our printers are doing something, by subscription here, in Philadelphia, and in New-York, they tell me. But London is the place for a good bookseller to thrive; and you come from London, where you tell me you were a bankrupt. I would not advise you to have any thing more to do with bookselling or bookmaking. Then, as to becoming a planter—Our planters, if they are skilful and laborious, thrive well; but you have not capital sufficient to clear land and build a house; or hire servants to do the work for which you are not yourself sufficiently robust. Besides, I do not imagine you know much of agricultural concerns, or
country business; and even to oversee and guide others, experience is necessary. The life of a back settler I do not advise, because you and your wife are not equal to it. You are not accustomed to live in a log-house, or to feed upon racoons and squirrels: not to omit the constant dread, if not imminent danger, of being burnt in your beds, or scalped, by the Indians with whom you would be surrounded. Upon the whole, I see no line of life that promises well for you but that of a merchant; and I see no means of your getting into this line without property and without credit, except by going into some established house as a clerk. You are a good penman and ready accountant, I think you tell me; and I presume you have a sufficient knowledge of book-keeping. With sobriety, diligence, and honesty, you may do well in this way; and may look forward to being a partner, and in a lucrative situation, some years hence. This is the way I managed, and rose myself by degrees to what you see. It is true, I was not at first encumbered with a wife and young child. In due time I married my master's daughter, which was a great furtherance to
me; but then, on the other hand, your wife is my relation; and to be married to the relation of a rich merchant is next best to not being married at all, in your situation. I told you I thought it my duty to proffer assistance as well as advice: so take up your abode with me for a fortnight: in that time I shall be able to judge whether you are capable of being a clerk; and, if you and I should suit, we will talk farther. You understand that I enter into no engagement, and make no promise; but shall be glad to lodge you and your wife, and little boy, for a fortnight: and it will be your own fault, and must be your own loss, if the visit turns out waste of time.—I cannot stay to talk to you any longer at present,” added he, pulling out his watch, ‘for I have business, and business waits for no man. Go back to your inn for my relation, and her little one. We dine at two precisely.’

I left Mr. Croft’s house with a vague indescribable feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment; but when I arrived at my inn, and repeated all that had passed to my wife, she seemed quite surprised and delighted by the civil and friendly manner in which this
gentleman had behaved. She tried to reason the matter with me; but there is no reasoning with imagination.

The fact was, Mr. Croft had destroyed certain vague and visionary ideas, that I had indulged, of making, by some unknown means, a rapid fortune in America; and to be reduced to real life, and sink into a clerk in a merchant's counting house, was mortification and misery. Lucy, in vain, dwelt upon the advantage of having found, immediately upon my arrival in Philadelphia, a certain mode of employment; and a probability of rising to be a partner in one of the first mercantile houses, if I went on steadily for a few years. I was forced to acknowledge that her relation was very good; that I was certainly very fortunate: and that I ought to think myself very much obliged to Mr. Croft. But after avowing all this, I walked up and down the room in melancholy reverie for a considerable length of time. My wife reminded me repeatedly that Mr. Croft said he dined precisely at two o'clock; that he was a very punctual man; that it was a long walk, as I had found it, from the inn to his house; that I had better dress myself
for dinner; and that my clean shirt and cravat were ready for me. I still walked up and down the room in reverie till my wife was completely ready, had dressed the child, and held up my watch before my eyes to show me that it wanted but ten minutes of two. I then began to dress in the greatest hurry imaginable; and, unluckily, as I was pulling on my silk stocking, I tore a hole in the leg, or, as my wife expressed it, a stitch dropped, and I was forced to wait while she repaired the evil. Certainly this operation of taking up a stitch, as I am instructed to call it, is one of the slowest operations in nature; or rather, one of the most tedious and teasing manoeuvres of art. Though the most willing and the most dexterous fingers that ever touched a needle were employed in my service, I thought the work would never be finished.

At last, I was hosed and shod, and out we set. It struck a quarter past two as we left the house; we came to Mr. Croft's in the middle of dinner. He had a large company at table; every body was disturbed; my Lucy was a stranger to Mrs. Croft, and was to be introduced; and nothing could
be more awkward and embarrassing than our entrée and introduction. There were such compliments and apologies, such changing of places, such shuffling of chairs, and running about of servants, that I thought we should never be seated.

In the midst of the bustle my little chap began to roar most horribly, and to struggle to get away from a black servant, who was helping him up on his chair. The child's terror at the sudden approach of the negro could not be conquered, nor could he by any means be quieted. Mrs. Croft, at last, ordered the negro out of the room, the roaring ceased, and nothing but the child's sob was heard for some instants.

The guests were all silent, and had ceased eating; Mrs. Croft was vexed because everything was cold; Mr. Croft looked much discomfited, and said not a syllable more than was absolutely necessary, as master of the house. I never ate, or rather I was never at, a more disagreeable dinner. I was in pain for Lucy, as well as for myself; her colour rose up to her temples. I cursed myself a hundred times for not having gone to dress in time.
At length, to my great relief, the cloth was taken away; but even when we came to the wine after dinner, the cold formality of my host continued unabated, and I began to fear that he had taken an insurmountable dislike to me, and that I should lose all the advantages of his protection and assistance: advantages which rose considerably in my estimation, when I apprehended I was upon the point of losing them.

Soon after dinner, a young gentleman, of the name of Hudson, joined the company; his manners and appearance were prepossessing; he was frank and well bred; and the effect of his politeness was soon felt, as if by magic, for everybody became at their ease; his countenance was full of life and fire; and, though he said nothing that showed remarkable abilities, every thing he said pleased. As soon as he found that I was a stranger, he addressed his conversation principally to me. I recovered my spirits, exerted myself to entertain him, and succeeded. He was delighted to hear news from England, and especially from London; a city which he said he had an ardent desire to visit. When he took
leave of me in the evening, he expressed very warmly the wish to cultivate my acquaintance, and I was the more flattered and obliged by this civility, because I was certain that he knew exactly my situation and circumstances, Mrs. Croft having explained them to him very fully even in my hearing.

CHAPTER V.

In the course of the ensuing week, young Mr. Hudson and I saw one another almost every day; and our mutual liking for each other’s company increased. He introduced me to his father, who had been a planter; and, having made a large fortune, came to reside at Philadelphia to enjoy himself, as he said, for the remainder of his days. He lived in what the sober Americans called a most luxurious and magnificent style. The best company in Philadelphia met at his house; and he delighted particularly in seeing those who had convivial talents, and who would supply him with wit and gayety, in which he was naturally rather deficient.

On my first visit, I perceived that his son had boasted of me as one of the best com-
companions in the world; and I determined to support the character that had been given of me: I told two or three good stories, and sung two or three good songs. The company were charmed with me; old Mr. Hudson was particularly delighted; he gave me a pressing general invitation to his house, and most of the principal guests followed his example. I was not a little elated with this success. Mr. Croft was with me at this entertainment; and I own I was peculiarly gratified by feeling that I at once became conspicuous, by my talents, in a company where he was apparently of no consequence, notwithstanding all his wealth and prudence.

As we went home together, he said to me very gravely, 'I would not advise you, Mr. Basil Lowe, to accept of all these invitations; nor to connect yourself intimately with young Hudson. The society at Mr. Hudson's is very well for those who have made a fortune, and want to spend it; but for those who have a fortune to make, in my opinion, it is not only useless but dangerous.'

I was in no humour, at this moment, to profit by this sober advice; especially as I fancied it might be dictated, in some degree,
by envy of my superior talents and accomplishments. My wife, however, supported his advice by many excellent and kind arguments. She observed that these people, who invited me to their houses as a good companion, followed merely their own pleasure, and would never be of any real advantage to me; that Mr. Croft, on the contrary, showed, from the first hour when I applied to him, a desire to serve me; that he had pointed out the means of establishing myself; and that, in the advice he gave me, he could be actuated only by a wish to be of use to me; that it was more reasonable to suspect him of despising than of envying talents, which were not directed to the grand object of gaining money.

Good sense, from the lips of a woman whom a man loves, has a mighty effect upon his understanding, especially if he sincerely believe that the woman has no desire to rule. This was my singular case. I promised Lucy I would refuse all invitations for the ensuing fortnight, and devote myself to whatever business Mr. Croft might devise. No one could be more assiduous than I was for ten days, and I perceived that Mr. Croft,
though it was not his custom to praise, was well satisfied with my diligence. Unluckily, on the eleventh day, I put off in the morning making out an invoice, which he left for me to do, and I was persuaded in the evening to go out with young Mr. Hudson. I had expressed, in conversation with him, some curiosity about the American frog-concerts; of which I had read, in modern books of travels, extraordinary accounts*.

* "I confess the first frog-concert I heard in America was so much beyond any thing I could conceive of the powers of these musicians, that I was truly astonished. This performance was al fresco, and took place on the night of the 18th of April, in a large swamp, where there were at least ten thousand performers, and I really believe not two exactly in the same pitch.****

"I have been since informed by an amateur, who resided many years in this country, and made this species of music his peculiar study, that on these occasions the treble is performed by the tree-frogs, the smallest and most beautiful species; they are always of the same colour as the bark of the tree they inhabit, and their note is not unlike the chirp of a cricket; the next in size is our counter-tenors, they have a note resembling the setting of a saw. A still larger species sing tenor: and the under-part is supported by the bull-frogs, which are as large as a man's foot, and bellow out the bass in a tone as loud and sonorous as that of the animal from which they take their name."—Extract of a Letter from
Mr. Hudson persuaded me to accompany him to a swamp, at some miles distant from Philadelphia, to hear one of these concerts. The performance lasted some time, and it was late before we returned to town; I went to bed tired, and waked in the morning with a cold, which I had caught by standing so long in the swamp. I lay an hour after I was called, in hopes of getting rid of my cold: when I was at last up and dressed, I recollected my invoice, and resolved to do it the first thing after breakfast, but unluckily, I put it off till I had looked for some lines in Homer's "Battle of the Frogs and Mice." There was no Homer, as you may guess, in Mr. Croft's house, and I went to a bookseller's to borrow one: he had Pope's Iliad and Odyssey, but no Battle of the Frogs and Mice. I walked over half the town in search of it; at length I found it, and was returning in triumph, with Homer in each pocket, when at the door of Mr. Croft's house I found half a dozen porters, with heavy loads upon their backs.

'Where are you going, my good fellows,' said I.

'To the quay, Sir, with the cargo for the Betsey.'

'My God!' cried I, 'Stop.—Can't you stop a minute. I thought the Betsey was not to sail till to morrow. Stop one minute.'

'No, Sir,' said they, 'that we can't; for the captain bade us make what haste we could to the quay to load her.'

I ran into the house; the captain of the Betsey was bawling in the hall, with his hat on the back of his head; Mr. Croft on the landing-place of the warehouse-stairs with open letters in his hand, and two or three of the under clerks were running different ways with pens in their mouths.

'Mr. Basil! the invoice!' exclaimed all the clerks at once, the moment I made my appearance.

'Mr. Basil Lowe, the invoice and the copy, if you please,' repeated Mr. Croft. 'We have sent three messengers after you. Very extraordinary to go out at this time of day, and not even to leave word where you were to be found. Here's the captain of the Betsey has been waiting this half hour for the in-
voice. Well, Sir! Will you go for it now? And at the same time bring me the copy, to inclose in this letter to our correspondent by post.'

I stood petrified.—'Sir, the invoice, Sir!—Good Heavens! I forgot it entirely.'

'You remember it now, Sir, I suppose. Keep your apologies till we have leisure. The invoices if you please.'

'The invoices! My God, Sir! I beg ten thousand pardons! They are not drawn out.'

'Not drawn out.—Impossible!' said Mr. Croft.

'Then I'm off!' cried the captain, with a tremendous oath. 'I can't wait another tide for any clerk breathing.'

'Send back the porters, Captain, if you please,' said Mr. Croft, coolly. 'The whole cargo must be unpacked. I took it for granted, Mr. Basil, that you had drawn the invoice, according to order, yesterday morning; and of course the goods were packed in the evening. I was certainly wrong in taking it for granted that you would be punctual. A man of business should take nothing for granted. This is a thing that will not occur to me again as long as I live.'
I poured forth expressions of contrition; but apparently unmoved by them, and without anger or impatience in his manner, he turned from me as soon as the porters came back with the goods, and ordered them all to be unpacked and replaced in the warehouse. I was truly concerned!

'I believe you spent your evening yesterday with young Mr. Hudson?' said he, returning to me.

'Yes, Sir,—I am sincerely sorry—-

'Sorrow, in these cases, does no good, Sir;' interrupted he. 'I thought I had sufficiently warned you of the danger of forming that intimacy. Midnight carousing will not do for men of business.'

'Carousing, Sir!' said I. 'Give me leave to assure you that we were not carousing. We were only at a frog-concert.'

Mr. Croft, who had at least suppressed his displeasure till now, looked absolutely angry; he thought I was making a joke of him. When I convinced him that I was in earnest, he changed from anger to astonishment, with a large mixture of contempt in his nasal muscles.

'A frog-concert!' repeated he. 'And
is it possible that any man could neglect an invoice merely to go to hear a parcel of frogs croaking in a swamp? Sir, you will never do in a mercantile house." He walked off to the warehouse, and left me half mortified and half provoked.

From this time forward all hopes from Mr. Croft's friendship were at an end.—He was coldly civil to me during the few remaining days of the fortnight that we stayed at his house. He took the trouble, however, of looking out for a cheap and tolerably comfortable lodging for my wife and boy; the rent of which he desired to pay for his relation, he said, as long as I should remain in Philadelphia, or till I should find myself in some eligible situation. He seemed pleased with Lucy, and said she was a very properly conducted, well disposed, prudent young woman, whom he was not ashamed to own for a cousin. He repeated, at parting, that he should be happy to afford me every assistance in reason, toward pursuing any feasible plan of advancing myself; but it was his decided opinion that I could never succeed in a mercantile line.

I never liked Mr. Croft; he was much too
punctual, too much of an automaton. For me; but I should have felt more regret at leaving him, and losing his friendship, and should have expressed more gratitude for his kindness to Lucy and my boy, if my head had not at the time been full of young Hudson. He professed the warmest regard for me; congratulated me on getting free from old Croft’s mercantile clutches, and assured me that such a man as I was could not fail to succeed in the world by my own talents and the assistance of friends and good connections.

I was now almost every day at his father’s house, in company with numbers of rich and gay people, who were all my friends. I was the life of society, was invited everywhere, and accepted every invitation, because I could not offend Mr. Hudson’s intimate acquaintance.

From day to day, from week to week, from month to month, I went on in this style. I was old Hudson’s grand favourite, and everybody told me he could do any thing he pleased for me. I had formed a scheme, a bold scheme, of obtaining from government a large tract of territory in the ceded lands
of Louisiana, and of collecting a subscription in Philadelphia, among my friends, to make a settlement there: the subscribers to be paid by instalments, so much the first year, so much the second, and so onward, till the whole should be liquidated. I was to collect hands from the next ships, which were expected to be full of emigrants from Ireland and Scotland. I had soon a long list of subscribers, who gave me their names always after dinner, or after supper. Old Hudson wrote his name at the head of the list, with an ostentatiously large sum opposite to it.

As nothing could be done till the ensuing spring; when the ships were expected, I spent my time in the same convivial manner. The spring came, but there was no answer obtained from Government respecting the ceded territory; and a delay of a few months was necessary. Mr. Hudson, the father, was the person who had undertaken to apply for the grant; and he spoke always of the scheme, and of his own powers of carrying it into effect, in the most confident manner. From his conversation any body would have supposed that the mines of Peru were upon his plantation; and that in comparison with
his, the influence of the president of the United States was nothing. I was a full twelvemonth before I was convinced that he was a boaster and a fabulist; and I was another twelvemonth before I could persuade myself that he was one of the most selfish, indolent, and obstinate of human beings. He was delighted to have me always at his table to entertain him and his guests, but he had not the slightest real regard for me, or care for my interests. He would talk to me as long as I pleased of his possessions, and his improvements, and his wonderful crops; but the moment I touched upon any of my own affairs he would begin to yawn, throw himself upon a sofa, and seem going to sleep. Whenever I mentioned his subscription, he would say, with a frown—"We will talk of that, Basil, to morrow."

Of my whole list of subscribers not above four ever paid a shilling into my hands: their excuse always was—"When government has given an answer about the ceded territory, we will pay the subscriptions;" and the answer of government always was—"When the subscriptions are paid we will make out a grant of the land." I was disgusted, and
out of spirits; but I thought all my chance was to persevere, and to keep my friends in good humour: so that I was continually under the necessity of appearing the same jovial companion, laughing, singing and drinking, when, Heaven knows, my heart was heavy enough.

At the end of the second year of promises, delays, and disappointments, my Lucy, who had always foretold how things would turn out, urged me to withdraw myself from this idle society, to give up my scheme, and to take the management of a small plantation in conjunction with the brother of Mr. Croft. His regard for my wife, who had won much upon this family by her excellent conduct, induced him to make me this offer; but I considered so long, and hesitated so much, whether I should accept of this proposal, that the time for accepting it passed away.

I had still hopes that my friend, young Hudson, would enable me to carry my grand project into execution; he had a considerable plantation in Jamaica, left to him by his grandfather on the mother's side; he was to be of age, and to take possession of it, the ensuing year, and he proposed to sell it, and
to apply some of the purchase money to our scheme, of the success of which he had as sanguine expectations as I had myself. He was of a most enthusiastic generous temper. I had obtained the greatest influence over him, and I am convinced, at this time, there was nothing in the world he would not have sacrificed for my sake. All that he required from me was to be his constant companion. He was extravagantly fond of field sports; and, though a Londoner, I was a good huntsman, a good shot, and a good angler; for, during the time I was courting Lucy, I found it necessary to make myself a sportsman to win the favour of her brothers. With these accomplishments my hold upon the esteem and affections of my friend was all-powerful. Every day in the season we went out hunting, or shooting, or fishing together; then, in the winter time, we had various employments, I mean various excuses for idleness. Hudson was a great skaiter, and he had infinite diversion in teaching me to skait at the hazard of my skull. He was also to initiate me in the American pastime of sleighing, or sledgeing. Many a desperately cold winter's day I have submitted to be driven in his sledge, when
I would much rather, I own, have been safe and snug by my own fire-side, with my wife. Poor Lucy spent her time in a disagreeable and melancholy way during these three years: for, while I was out almost every day and all day long, she was alone in her lodging for numberless hours. She never repined, but always received me with a good-humoured countenance when I came home, even after sitting up half the night to wait for my return from Hudson's suppers. It grieved me to the heart to see her thus seemingly deserted; but I comforted myself with the reflection that this way of life would last but for a short time; that my friend would soon be of age, and able to fulfil all his promises; and that we should then all live together in happiness. I assured Lucy that the present idle, if not dissipated, manner in which I spent my days was not agreeable to my taste: that I was often extremely melancholy, even when I was forced to appear in the highest spirits; and that I often longed to be quietly with her when I was obliged to sacrifice my time to friendship.

It would have been impossible that she and my child could have subsisted all this time independently, but for her steadiness and
exertions. She would not accept of any pecuniary assistance except from her relation, Mr. Croft, who regularly paid the rent of her lodgings. She undertook to teach some young ladies, whom Mrs. Croft introduced to her, various kinds of fine needle-work, in which she excelled: and for this she was well paid. I know that she never cost me one farthing, during the three years and three months that we lived in Philadelphia. But even for this I do not give her so much credit as for her sweet temper, during these trials, and her great forbearance in never reproaching or disputing with me. Many wives, who are called excellent managers, make their husbands pay tenfold in suffering what they save in money. This was not my Lucy’s way; and, therefore, with my esteem and respect, she ever had my fondest affections. I was in hopes that the hour was just coming when I should be able to prove this to her, and when we should no longer be doomed to spend our days asunder. But, alas! her judgment was better than mine.

My friend Hudson was now within six weeks of being of age, when, unfortunately, there arrived in Philadelphia a company of
players from England. Hudson, who was eager for every thing that had the name of pleasure, insisted upon my going with him to their first representation. Among the actresses there was a girl of the name of Marion, who seemed to be ordinary enough, just fit for a company of strolling players, but she danced passably well, and danced a great deal between the acts that night. Hudson clapped his hands till I was quite out of patience. He was in raptures; and the more I depreciated the more he extolled the girl. I wished her in Nova Zembla, for I saw he was falling in love with her, and had a kind of presentiment of all that was to follow. To tell the matter briefly, for what signifies dwelling upon past misfortunes, the more young Hudson’s passion increased for this dancing girl, the more his friendship for me declined, for I had frequent arguments with him upon the subject, and did all I could to open his eyes. I saw that the damsel had art, that she knew the extent of her power, and that she would draw her infatuated lover in to marry her. He was head-strong and violent in all his passions; he quarrelled with me, carried the
girl off to Jamaica; married her the day he was of age, and settled upon his plantation. There was an end of all my hopes about the ceded territory.

Lucy, who was always my resource in misfortune, comforted me by saying I had done my duty in combating my friend’s folly at the expense of my own interest; and that, though he had quarrelled with me, she loved me the better for it. All things considered, I would not have exchanged feelings and situations with him.

Reflecting upon my own history and character, I have often thought it a pity that, with certain good qualities, and I will add talents, which deserved a better fate, I should have never succeeded in any thing I attempted, because I could not conquer one seemingly slight defect in my disposition, which had grown into a habit. Thoroughly determined by Lucy’s advice to write to Mr. Croft, to request he would give me another trial, I put off sending the letter till the next day; and that very morning Mr. Croft set off on a journey to a distant part of the country, to see a daughter who was newly married.
I was vexed, and, from a want of something better to do, went out a shooting, to get rid of disagreeable thoughts. I shot several pheasants, and when I came home carried them, as was my custom, to old Mr. Hudson’s kitchen, and gave them to the cook. I happened to stay in the kitchen to feed a favourite dog, while the cook was preparing the birds I had brought. I observed, in the crop of one of the pheasants, some bright green leaves, and some buds; which I suspected to be the leaves and buds of the *kalmia latifolia*, a poisonous shrub. I was not quite certain, for I had almost forgotten the little botany which I knew before I went to China. I took the leaves home with me, to examine them at leisure, and to compare them with the botanical description: and I begged that the cook would not dress the birds till she saw or heard from me again. I promised to see her, or send to her, the next day. But the next day, when I went to the library, to look into a book of botany, my attention was caught by some new reviews, which were just arrived from London. I put off the examination of the *kalmia latifolia* till the day after. To-morrow, said I, will do
just as well, for I know the cook will not dress the pheasants to day: old Hudson does not like them till they have been kept a day or two.

To morrow came, and the leaves were forgotten till evening, when I saw them lying on my table, and put them out of the way, lest my little boy should find and eat them. I was sorry that I had not examined them this day, but I satisfied myself in the same way as I had done before: to morrow will do as well; the cook will not dress the pheasants to day: old Hudson thinks them the better for being kept two or three days.

To morrow came; but, as the leaves of the *kalmia latifolia* were out of my sight, they went out of my mind. I was invited to an entertainment this day at the Mayor's; there was a large company, and after dinner I was called upon, as usual, for a song: the favourite song of

"Dance and sing, Time's on the wing,
"Life never knows return of spring;"

when a gentleman came in, pale and breathless, to tell us that Mr. Hudson and three gentlemen, who had been dining with him,
were suddenly seized with convulsions after eating of a pheasant, and that they were not expected to live—My blood ran cold—I exclaimed—'My God! I am answerable for this.' On my making this exclamation, there was immediate silence in the room; and every eye turned upon me with astonishment and horror. I fell back in my chair, and what passed afterward I know not; but when I came to myself, I found two men in the room with me, who were set to guard me. The bottles and glasses were still upon the table, but the company had all dispersed; and the mayor, as my guards informed me, was gone to Mr. Hudson's to take his dying deposition.

In this instance, as in all cases of sudden alarm, report had exaggerated the evil: Mr. Hudson, though extremely ill, was not dying; his three guests, after some hours' illness, were perfectly recovered. Mr. Hudson, who had eaten the most plentifully of the pheasant, was not himself, as he said, for two days: the third day he was able to see company at dinner as usual, and my mind was relieved from an insupportable state of anxiety.
Upon examination, the mayor was convinced that I was perfectly innocent; the cook told the exact truth, blamed herself for not sending to me before she dressed the birds, but said that she concluded I had found the leaves I took home were harmless, as I never came to tell her the contrary.

I was liberated, and went home to my wife. She clasped me in her arms, but could not articulate a syllable. By her joy at seeing me again, she left me to judge of what she must have suffered during this terrible interval.

For some time after this unfortunate accident happened, it continued to be the subject of general conversation in Philadelphia. The story was told a thousand different ways, and the comments upon it were in various ways injurious to me. Some blamed me, for what indeed I deserved to be most severely blamed, my delaying one hour to examine the leaves found in the crop of the pheasant; others affected to think it absolutely impossible that any human being could be so dilatory, or negligent, where the lives of fellow creatures and friends, and friends by whom I had been treated with the
utmost hospitality for years, were concerned. Others, still more malicious, hinted that, though I had been favoured by the mayor, and perhaps by the goodness of poor Mr. Hudson, there must be something more than had come to light in the business; and some boldly pronounced that the story of the leaves of the *kalmania latifolia* was a mere blind; for that the pheasant could not have been rendered poisonous by such means*.

That a motive might not be wanting for the crime, it was whispered that old Mr. Hudson had talked of leaving me a considerable legacy, which I was impatient to

* "In the severe winter of the years 1790 and 1791, there appeared to be such unequivocal reasons for believing that several persons, in Philadelphia, had died in consequence of their eating pheasants, in whose crops the leaves and buds of the *kalmania latifolia* were found, that the mayor of the city thought it prudent and his duty to warn the people against the use of this bird, by a public proclamation. I know that by many persons, especially by some lovers of pheasants' flesh, the circumstance just mentioned was supposed to be destitute of foundation: but the foundation was a solid one."

_Vide_ a paper by B. Smith Barton, M. D. _American Transactions_, V. 51.
TO MORROW.

touch, that I might carry my adventuring schemes into execution. I was astonished as much as shocked at the sudden alteration in the manners of all my acquaintance. The tide of popularity changed, and I was deserted. That those who had lived with me so long in convivial intimacy, that those who had courted, admired, flattered me; those who had so often professed themselves my friends, could suddenly, without the slightest probability, believe me capable of the most horrible crime, appeared to me scarcely credible. In reality, many would not give themselves the trouble to think about the matter, but were glad of a pretence to shake off the acquaintance of a man of whose stories and songs they began to be weary; and who had put their names to a subscription, which they did not wish to be called upon to pay. Such is the world! Such is the fate of all good fellows, and excellent bottle companions! Certain to be deserted, by their dear friends, at the least reverse of fortune.
CHAPTER V.

My situation in Philadelphia was now so disagreeable, and my disgust and indignation were so great, that I determined to quit the country. My real friend, Mr. Croft, was absent all this time from town. I am sure, if he had been at home, he would have done me justice; for, though he never liked me, he was a just, slow-judging man, who would not have been run away with by the hurry of popular prejudice. I had other reasons for regretting his absence: I could not conveniently quit America without money, and he was the only person to whom I could or would apply for assistance. We had not many debts, for which I must thank my excellent wife; but, when every thing to the last farthing was paid, I was obliged to sell my watch and some trinkets, to get money for our voyage. I was not accustomed to such things, and I was ashamed to go to the pawnbroker's, lest I should be met and recognized by some of my friends. I wrapped myself up in an old surtout, and slouched my hat over my face.

As I was crossing the quay, I met a party
of gentlemen walking arm in arm. I squeezed past them, but one stopped to look after me; and, though I turned down another street to escape him, he dodged me unperceived. Just as I came out of the pawnbroker's shop, I saw him posted opposite to me: I brushed by; I could with pleasure have knocked him down for his impertinence. By the time that I had reached the corner of the street, I heard a child calling after me. I stopped, and a little boy put into my hands my watch, saying, 'Sir, the gentleman says you left your watch and these thingumbobs by mistake.'

'What gentleman?'

'I don't know, but he was one that said I looked like an honest chap, and he'd trust me to run and give you the watch. He is dressed in a blue coat. He went toward the quay. That's all I know.'

On opening the paper of trinkets, I found a card with these words:

"Barny—with kind thanks."

Barny! Poor Barny! The Irishman whose passage I paid coming to America three years ago. Is it possible?

I ran after him the way which the child
directed, and was so fortunate as just to catch a glimse of the skirt of his coat as he went into a neat good-looking house. I walk up and down some time, expecting him to come out again; for I could not suppose that it belonged to Barny. I asked a grocer who was leaning over his hatch door, if he knew who lived in the next house?

'An Irish gentleman, of the name of O'Grady.'

'And his christian name?'

'Here it is in my books, Sir—Barnaby O'Grady.'

I knocked at Mr. O'Grady's door, and made my way into the parlour; where I found him, his two sons, and his wife, sitting very sociably at tea. He and the two young men rose immediately, to set me a chair.

'You are welcome, kindly welcome, Sir,' said he. 'This is an honour I never expected any way. Be pleased to take the seat near the fire. 'T would be hard indeed if you would not have the best seat that's to be had in this house, where we none of us never should have sat, nor had seats to sit upon, but for you.'

* Should.
The sons pulled off my shabby greatcoat, and took away my hat, and the wife made up the fire. There was something in their manner, altogether, which touched me so much that it was with difficulty I could keep myself from bursting into tears. They saw this, and Barny (for I shall never call him anything else), as he thought that I should like better to hear of public affairs than to speak of my own, began to ask his sons if they had seen the day's papers, and what news there were?

As soon as I could command my voice, I congratulated this family upon the happy situation in which I found them; and asked by what lucky accidents they had succeeded so well?

"The luckiest accident ever happened me before or since I came to America," said Barny, "was being on board the same vessel with such a man as you. If you had not given me the first lift, I had been down for good and all, and trampled under foot long and long ago. But, after that first lift, all was as easy as life. My two sons here were not taken from me—God bless you! for I never can bless you enough for that. The lads were left to work for me and with me;"
and we never parted, hand or heart, but just kept working on together, and put all our earnings, as fast as we got them, into the hands of that good woman, and lived hard at first, as we were bred and born to do, thanks be to Heaven! Then we swore against drink of all sorts entirely. And, as I had occasionally served the masons, when I lived a labouring man in the county of Dublin, and knew something of that business, why whatever I knew I made the most of, and a trowel felt no ways strange to me; so I went to work, and had higher wages at first than I deserved. The same with the two boys: one was as much of a blacksmith as would shoe a horse: and t’other a bit of a carpenter; and the one got plenty of work in the forges, and t’other in the dock-yards, as a ship-carpenter. So early and late, morning and evening, we were all at the work, and just went this way struggling on even for a twelvemonth, and found, with the high wages and constant employ we had met, that we were getting greatly better in the world. Besides, the wife was not idle. When a girl, she had seen baking, and had always a good notion of it, and just tried her hand upon it now, and found the
loaves went down with the customers, and the customers coming faster and faster for them; and this was a great help. Then I grew master mason, and had my men under me, and took a house to build by the job, and that did; and then on to another and another; and, after building many for the neighbours, ’twas fit and my turn, I thought, to build one for myself, which I did out of theirs, without wrongdoing them of a penny. And the boys grew master-men, in their line; and when they got good coats, nobody could say against them, for they had come fairly by them, and became them well perhaps for that rason. So, not to be tiring you too much, we went on from good to better, and better to best; and if it pleased God to question me how it was we got on so well in the world, I should answer, Upon my conscience, myself does not know; except it be that we never made saint-monday*, nor never put off till the morrow what we could do the day.’

* Saint Monday, or Saint Crispin. It is a custom in Ireland, among shoemakers, if they intoxicate themselves on Sunday, to do no work on Monday; and this they call making a saint Monday, or keeping Saint Crispin’s day. Many have adopted this good custom from the example of the shoemakers.
I believe I sighed deeply at this observation, notwithstanding the comic phraseology in which it was expressed.

'But all this is no rule for a gentleman born,' pursued the good-natured Barny, in answer, I suppose, to the sigh which I uttered: 'nor is it any disparagement to him if he has not done as well in a place like America, where he had not the means; not being used to bricklaying and slaving with his hands, and striving as we did. Would it be too much liberty to ask you to drink a cup of tea, and to taste a slice of my good woman's bread and butter? And happy the day we see you eating it, and only wish we could serve you in any way whatsoever.'

I verily believe the generous fellow forgot, at this instant, that he had redeemed my watch and wife's trinkets. He would not let me thank him as much as I wished, but kept pressing upon me fresh offers of service. When he found I was going to leave America, he asked what vessel we should go in? I was really afraid to tell him, lest he should attempt to pay for my passage. But for this he had, as I afterward found, too much delicacy of sentiment. He discovered, by
questioning the captains, in what ship we were to sail; and, when we went on board, we found him and his sons there to take leave of us, which they did in the most affectionate manner; and, after they were gone, we found in the state cabin, directed to me, every thing that could be useful or agreeable to us, as sea-stores for a long voyage.

How I wronged this man, when I thought his expressions of gratitude were not sincere, because they were not made exactly in the mode and with the accent of my own countrymen! I little thought that Barny and his sons would be the only persons who would bid us a friendly adieu when were to leave America.

We had not exhausted our bountiful provision of sea-stores when we were set ashore in England. We landed at Liverpool; and I cannot describe the melancholy feelings with which I sat down, in the little back parlour of the inn, to count my money, and to calculate whether we had enough to carry us to London. Is this, thought I, as I looked at the few guineas and shillings spread on the table—Is this all I have in this world? I, my wife and child! And is this
the end of three years' absence from my native country? As the negroes say of a fool who takes a voyage in vain, I am come back, "with little more than the hair upon my head." Is this the end of all my hopes, and all my talents? What will become of my wife and child? I ought to insist upon her going home to her friends, that she may at least have the necessaries and comforts of life, till I am able to maintain her.

The tears started from my eyes; they fell upon an old newspaper, which lay upon the table under my elbow. I took it up to hide my face from Lucy and my child, who just then came into the room; and, as I read without well knowing what, I came among the advertisements to my own name.

"If Mr. Basil Lowe, or his heir, will apply to Mr. Gregory, attorney, No. 34, Cecil street, he will hear of something to his advantage."

I started up with an exclamation of joy, wiped my tears from the newspaper, put it into Lucy's hand, pointed to the advertisement, and ran to take places in the London coach for the next morning. Upon this occasion, I certainly did not delay. Nor
did I, when we arrived in London, put off one moment going to Mr. Gregory's, No. 34, Cecil street.

Upon application to him, I was informed that a very distant relation of mine, a rich miser, had just died, and had left his accumulated treasures to me, "because I was the only one of his relations who had never cost him a single farthing." Other men have to complain of their ill fortune, perhaps with justice; and this is a great satisfaction, which I have never enjoyed: for I must acknowledge that all my disasters have arisen from my own folly. Fortune has been uncommonly favourable to me. Without any merit of my own, or rather, as it appeared, in consequence of my negligent habits, which prevented me from visiting a rich relation, I was suddenly raised from the lowest state of pecuniary distress to the height of affluent prosperity.

I took possession of a handsome house in an agreeable part of the town, and enjoyed the delight of sharing all the comforts and luxuries which wealth could procure, with the excellent woman who had been my support in adversity. I must do myself the
justice, to observe that I did not become dissipated or extravagant; affection and gratitude to my Lucy filled my whole mind, and preserved me from the faults incident to those who rise suddenly from poverty to wealth. I did not forget my good friend, Mr. Nun, who had relieved me formerly from prison; of course I paid the debt, which he had forgiven, and lost no opportunity of showing him kindness and gratitude.

I was now placed in a situation where the best parts of my character appeared to advantage, and where the grand defect of my disposition was not apparently of any consequence. I was not now obliged, like a man of business, to be punctual; and delay, in mere engagements of pleasure, was a trifling offence, and a matter of raillery among my acquaintance. My talents in conversation were admired, and, if I postponed letter-writing, my correspondents only tormented me a little with polite remonstrances. I was conscious that I was not cured of my faults; but I rejoiced that I was not now obliged to reform, or in any danger of involving those I loved in distress, by my negligence.

For one year I was happy, and flattered
myself that I did not waste my time; for, at my leisure, I read with attention all the ancient and modern works upon education. I resolved to select from them what appeared most judicious and practicable; and so to form, from the beauties of each, a perfect system for the advantage of my son. He was my only child; he had lived with me eighteen months in prison; he was the darling of his mother, whom I adored, and he was thought to be in mind and person a striking resemblance of myself.—How many reasons had I to love him!—I doated upon the child. He certainly shewed great quickness of intellect, and gave as fair a promise of talents as could be expected at his age. I formed hopes of his future excellence and success in the world, as sanguine as those which my poor father had early formed of mine. I determined to watch carefully over his temper, and to guard him particularly against that habit of procrastination, which had been the bane of my life.

One day, while I was alone in my study, leaning on my elbow and meditating upon the system of education which I designed for my son, my wife came to me and said,
'My dear, I have just heard from our friend, Mr. Nun, a circumstance that alarms me a good deal. You know little Harry Nun was inoculated at the same time with our Basil, and by the same person. Mrs. Nun, and all the family, thought he had several spots, just as much as our boy had, and that that was enough; but two years afterward, while we were in America, Harry Nun caught the small-pox in the natural way and died. Now, it seems the man who inoculated him was quite ignorant; for two or three other children, whom he attended, have caught the disease since, though he was positive that they were safe. Don't you think we had better have our boy inoculated again immediately, by some proper person?'

'Undoubtedly, my dear: undoubtedly. But I think we had better have him vaccinated. I am not sure, however; but I will ask Dr.——'s opinion this day, and be guided by that; I shall see him at dinner: he has promised to dine with us.'

Some accident prevented him from coming, and I thought of writing to him the next day, but afterward put it off.—Lucy came again into my study where she was sure to
find me in the morning. 'My dear,' said she, 'do you recollect that you desired me to defer inoculating our little boy till you could decide whether it be best to inoculate him in the common way, or the vaccine?'

'Yes, my dear, I recollect it perfectly well. I am much inclined to the vaccine. My friend, Mr. L—, has had all his children vaccinated, and I just wait to see the effect.'

'Oh, my love!' said Lucy, 'do not wait any longer; for you know we run a terrible risk of his catching the small-pox every day, every hour.'

'We have run that risk, and escaped for these three years past,' said I; 'and, in my opinion, the boy has had the small-pox.'

'So Mr. and Mrs. Nun thought, and you see what has happened. Remember our boy was inoculated by the same man. I am sure, ever since Mr. Nun mentioned this, I never take little Basil out to walk, I never see him in a shop, I never have him in the carriage with me without being in terror. Yesterday a woman came to the coach-door with a child in her arms, who had a breaking out on his face. I thought it was the small-pox, and
was so terrified that I had scarcely strength or presence of mind enough to draw up the glass. Our little boy was leaning out of the door to give a halfpenny to the child. My God! if that child had the small-pox!

'My love,' said I, 'do not alarm yourself so terribly; the boy shall be inoculated to morrow.

'To morrow! Oh, my dearest love, do not put it off till to morrow,' said Lucy: 'let him be inoculated to day.'

'Well, my dear, only keep your mind easy, and he shall be inoculated to day, if possible; surely you must know I love the boy as well as you do, and am as anxious about him as you can be.'

'I am sure of it, my love,' said Lucy.—'I meant no reproach. But, since you have decided that the boy shall be vaccinated, let us send directly for the surgeon, and have it done, and then he will be safe.'

She caught hold of the bell-cord to ring for a servant.—I stopped her.

'No, my dear, don't ring,' said I; 'for the men are both out. I have sent one to the library, for the new Letters on Education,
and the other to the rational toy-shop for
some things I want for the child.'

'Then, if the servants are out, I had bet-
ter walk to the surgeon's, and bring him
back with me.'

'No, my dear,' said I; 'I must see Mr.
L—'s children first. I am going out im-
nediately; I will call upon them: they are
healthy children: we can have the vaccine
infection from them, and I will inoculate
the boy myself.'

Lucy submitted: I take a melancholy
pleasure in doing her justice, by recording
every argument that she used, and every
persuasive word that she said to me, upon
this occasion. I am anxious to shew that
she was not in the least to blame. I alone,
am guilty! I alone ought to have been the
sufferer. It will scarcely be believed—I
can hardly believe it myself, that, after all
Lucy said to me, I delayed two hours, and
stayed to finish making an extract from
Rousseau's Emilius before I set out. When
I arrived at Mr. L—'s, the children were
just gone out to take an airing, and I could
not see them. A few hours may sometimes
make all the difference between health and sickness, happiness and misery! I put off till the next day the inoculation of my child!

In the mean time a coachman came to me to be hired: my boy was playing about the room, and, as I afterward collected, went close up to the man, and, while I was talking, stood examining a greyhound upon his buttons. I asked the coachman many questions, and kept him for some time in the room. Just as I agreed to take him into my service, he said he could not come to live with me till the next week, because one of his children was ill of the small-pox.

These words struck me to the heart. I had a dreadful presentiment of what was to follow. I remember starting from my seat, and driving the man out of the house with violent menaces. My boy, poor innocent victim, followed, trying to pacify me, and holding me back by the skirts of my coat. I caught him up in my arms.—I could not kiss him; I felt as if I was his murderer. I set him down again; indeed I trembled so violently that I could not hold him. The child ran for his mother.
I cannot dwell on these things.—Our boy sickened the next week—and the week afterward died in his mother's arms!

Her health had suffered much by the trials which she had gone through since our marriage. The disapprobation of her father, the separation from all her friends, who were at variance with me, my imprisonment, and then the death of her only child, were too much for her fortitude.—She endeavoured to conceal this from me; but I saw that her health was rapidly declining. She was always fond of the country; and, as my sole object now in life was to do whatsoever I could to console and please her, I proposed to sell our house in town, and to settle somewhere in the country. In the neighbourhood of her father and mother there was a pretty place to be let, which I had often heard her mention with delight; I determined to take it: I had secret hopes that her friends would be gratified by this measure, and that they would live upon good terms with us.—Her mother had seemed, by her letters, to be better disposed toward me since my rich relation had left me his fortune.—Lucy expressed great pleasure at
the idea of going to live in the country, near her parents; and I was rejoiced to see her smile once more. Being naturally of a sanguine disposition, hope revived in my heart; I flattered myself that we might yet be happy; that my Lucy would recover her peace of mind and her health; and that perhaps Heaven might bless us with another child.

I lost no time in entering into treaty for the estate in the country, and I soon found a purchaser for my excellent house in town. But my evil genius prevailed.—I had neglected to renew the insurance of my house; the policy was out but nine days*, when a fire broke out in one of my servant’s rooms at midnight, and, in spite of all the assistance we could procure, the house was burnt to the ground. I carried my wife out senseless in my arms; and, when I had deposited her in a place of safety, returned to search for a portfolio, in which was the purchase-money of the country estate, all in bank-notes. But whether this portfolio was carried off by some of the crowd, which

* Founded on fact.
had assembled round the ruins of my house, or whether it was consumed in the flames, I cannot determine. A more miserable wretch than I was could now scarcely be found in the world; and, to complete my misfortunes, I felt the consciousness that they were all occasioned by my own folly.

I am now coming to the most extraordinary and the most interesting part of my history. A new and surprising accident happened.

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Note by the Editor.—What this accident was can never now be known; for Basil put off finishing his history till To Morrow.

This fragment was found in an old escritoir, in an obscure lodging in Swallow-street.

August, 1803.

The End.