Sheppard Lee, Volume 2

Robert Montgomery Bird

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SHEPPARD LEE. BOOK IV.—[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER IV. The Miser's children.

It will scarcely be supposed that, with the passion of covetousness gnawing at my heart, I had space or convenience for any other feeling. But Abram Skinner had loved his children; and to this passion I was introduced, as well as to the other. At first I was surprised that I should bestow the least regard upon them, seeing that they were no children of mine. I endeavoured to shake off the feeling of attachment, as an absurdity, but could not; in spite of myself, I found my spirit yearning towards them; and by−and−by, having lost my identity entirely, I could scarcely, even when I made the effort, recall the consciousness that I was not their parent in reality.

Indeed, the transformation that had now occurred to my spirit was more thorough than it had been in either previous instance; I could scarce convince myself I had not been born the being Irepresented; my past existence began to appear to my reflections only as some idle dream, that the fever of sickness had brought upon my mind; and I forgot that I was, or had been, Sheppard Lee.

Yes, reader, I was now Abram Skinner in all respects, and I loved his children, as he had done before me. In entering his body, I became, as I have mentioned repeatedly before, the subject of every peculiarity of being that marked the original possessor: without which, indeed, the great experiment my destiny permitted me to make of the comparative good and evil of different spheres of existence, must have been made in vain. What my prototype hated I was enforced to hate; what he loved I found myself compelled in like manner to love. While moving in the bodies of John H. Higginson and I. D. Dawkins, I do not remember that I experienced any affection for anybody; which happened, doubtless, because these individuals confined their affections to their own persons. Abram Skinner, on the contrary, loved his children; which I suppose was owing to their being the worst children that ever tormented a parent. He loved them, and so did I; he pondered with bitterness over the ingratitude of their tempers, and the profligacy of their lives, and I—despite all my attempts to the contrary—did the same. I forgot, at last, that I was not their parent, and my feelings showed me that I was; and I found in the anguish that attacked my spirit, when I thought of them, one of the modes in which Heaven visits with retribution the worshipper of the false god of the country. When the votary of Mammon has propitiated his deity, let him count the children he has sacrificed upon his altar. Avarice, as well as wrath, sows the storm only to reap the whirlwind.

I am growing serious upon this subject, but I cannot help it. This portion of my history dwells on my remembrance with gloom; it keeps me moralizing over the career of my neighbours. When I see or hear of a man who is bending all his energies to the acquisition of a fortune, and is already the master of his thousands, I ask, "What has become of his sons?" or, "What will become of them?"

With the affection for the children of Abram Skinner that took possession of my mind, came also a persuasion, exceedingly painful, that they were a triad of graceless, ungrateful reprobates; and, what was worse, there was something whispered within me that much, if not all, the evil of their lives and natures, was owing to the neglect in which their parent, while engrossed with the high thought of heaping up money, had allowed them to grow up. The consequences of this neglect I felt as if it had been my own act.

The first pang was inflicted by the girl Alicia, and I felt it keenly—not, indeed, that I had any particular parental affection for her, as doubtless I should have had, had she not run away so opportunely. On the contrary, a vague recollection of my amour, and the inconstancy of her temper,caused my feelings in relation to her to assume a very peculiar hue; so that I regarded her with sentiments due as much to the jilted lover as the injured father. But what chiefly afflicted me was the hint she had given in the postscript of her letter, warning me of the fatal call to be made upon me, within two months' space, to render up an account of my guardianship, and surrender into the hands of that detestable Sammy Wilkins, my late cousin, the rich legacy of her aunt Sally, which, being chiefly in real estate, I—or rather my prototype before me—had, without anticipating such a catastrophe, managed so prudently that it was now worth more than double its original value. The thought filled me with such rage and phrensy, that, had she been twice my daughter, I should have rewarded her with execrations.

My quondam uncle, Mr. Samuel Wilkins of Wilkinsbury Hall, who, it seems, received the girl as well as he afterward did his daughter's husband, thought fit to pay me a visit, a week after my transformation, to confer with

me on the subject; and receiving no satisfaction, for I was in a rage and refused to see him, sent me divers notes, proposing a reconciliation betwixt myself and his daughter−in−law; and these being cast into the fire, I received, in course of time, a letter from his lawyer, or his son Sammy's, in which I was politely asked what were my intentions in relation to settlement, and so forth, and so forth.

I received letters from the damsel also, but theywent into the fire like the others; and my rage waxing higher and higher as the time of settlement drew nigh, I set myself to work to frame such a guardian's account as would materially lessen the amount of my losses.

But all was in vain; the married Alicia was at last of age, and all I could do was to fling the matter into the lawyers' hands, so as to keep the money, the dear money, in my own as long as possible.

My reader may think this was not a very handsome or reputable way of treating a daughter; but he must recollect I was in Abram Skinner's body. The matter was still in suit when I departed from my borrowed flesh; but I have no doubt the execrable Samuel Wilkins, Jr. got possession of the legacy, as well as ten times as much to the back of it.

But this, great as was the anguish the evil inflicted, was nothing to the pangs I suffered on account of the two boys, Ralph and Abbot. On these I showered—not openly, indeed, for I was crabbed enough of temper, but in my secret heart—all the affection such a parent could feel. But I showered it in vain; the seeds of evil example and neglect had taken root; the prospect of wealth had long since turned brains untempered by education and moral culture, and the parsimony of their parent only drove them into profligacy of a more demoralizing species; they were ruined in morals, in prospects, and in reputation; and while yet upon the threshold of manhood, they presented upon theirbrows the stamp of degradation and the warrant of untimely graves.

The younger, Abbot, had evidently been a favourite from his childhood up, his temper being fierce and imperious, yet with an occasional dash of amiableness, that showed what his disposition might have been, if regulated by a careful and conscientious parent. He possessed a fine figure, of which he was vain; and being of a gay and convivial turn, there was the stronger propensity to dissipation, and greater fear of the consequences. These were now lamentable enough; he was already beyond redemption—a sot, and almost a madman.

The elder brother was a young man, to all appearance, of a saturnine mood and staid habits; but this was in appearance only. He was the associate of the junior in all his scenes of frolic, and an actor in others of which, perhaps, Abbot never dreamed. A strong head and a spirit of craft enabled him to conceal the effect of excesses which sent his brother home reeling and raging with drunkenness. I knew his habits well; and I knew that, besides being in a fairer way to the grave—if not to the gallows—he was a hypocrite of the worst order; his gravity being put on to cover a temper both fiery and malicious, and his apparent correctness of habits being the mere cover to the most scandalous irregularities. He was a creature all of duplicity, and wo to the father who made him such!

The scene in the dying chamber of their father they never forgot, though, perhaps, I might have done so. It drove the younger from all attempts at pretended regard or concealment of his profligacy, and was, I believe, the cause of his final ruin. He absconded, out of mere shame, for a week, and then returned to put a bold or indifferent face upon the matter, and to show himself as regardless of respect as restraint.

The other, after concealing himself in like manner for a few days, came to me, apparently in great contrition of spirit, and almost persuaded me that his brutal conduct on that eventful evening arose rather from grief than joy. He had been so much affected by my death, he assured me, as scarce to know what he did when swallowing a glass of brandy his brother gave him; that, he declared with half a dozen tears, had set him crazy, and he knew not what he had done—only he recollected something about going to the chamber, where, he believed, he had behaved very badly; for which he begged my forgiveness, and hoped I would not think his conduct was owing to any want of affecttion.

I had proof enough that the villain was telling me falsehoods, and I knew that if either should, in a moment of soberness and compunction, breathe a single sigh over my death−bed, he was not the one. In truth, they were both bad; both, perhaps, irreclaimable; but while the conduct of Abbot gave me most pain, that of Ralph filled me withconstant terror. Nothing but the daily excitement of speculation and gain could have made tolerable an existence cursed by incessant griefs and forebodings.

It may be supposed that I frequently took the young men to task for their excesses. I might as well have scolded the winds for blowing, or the waters for running. It is true that Ralph heard me commonly with great patience, and sometimes with apparent contrition; but at times a scowl came over his dark features that frightened

me into silence; and once, giving way to his fierce temper, he told me that if there was any thing amiss or disreputable in his conduct, it was the consequence of mine; that I, instead of granting him the means for reasonable indulgence, and elevating him to the station among honourable and worthy men to which my wealth gave him a claim, and which he had a right to expect of me, had kept him in a state of need and vassalage intolerable to any one of his age and spirit.

As for Abbot, this kind of recrimination was a daily thing with him. I scarce ever saw him except when inflamed with drink; and on such occasions he was wont to demand money, which being denied, he would give way to passion, and load me with reproaches still more bitter of spirit and violent of expression than those uttered by Ralph. Nay, upon my charging him with being an abandoned profligate and ruined man, he admitted the fact, and swore that I was the author of his destruction; that my niggardliness had deprived him of the opportunities that gave other young men professions and independence; that I had brought him up in idleness and ignorance, and, by still refusing him his rights, was consigning him to infamy and an early grave.

Such controversies between us were common, and perhaps expedited the fate that was in store for him, as well as his brother. I thought in my folly to punish, and at the same time check his excesses, by denying him all supplies of money, and by refusing to pay a single debt he contracted. A deep gloom suddenly invested him; he ceased to return home intoxicated, but stalked into and out of the house like a spectre, without bestowing any notice upon me. The change frighted me; and, in alarm lest the difficulties under which he might be placed were driving him to desperation, I followed him to his chamber, with almost the resolution to relieve his wants, let them be what they might.

The absence of intoxication for several days in succession had induced me to hope he had broken through the accursed bondage of drink, were it only from rage and shame. But I was fatally mistaken. As I entered the apartment I saw him place upon the table a large case−bottle of brandy, which he had just taken from a buffet. He looked over his shoulder as I stepped in, and, without regarding me, proceeded to pour a large draught into a tumbler. His hand was tremulous, and, indeed, shook so much, that the liquor was spilt in the operation. I was shocked at the sight, and struck dumb; seeing which he laughed, with what seemed to me as much triumph as derision, and said, "You see! This is the way we go it. Your health, father. Come, help yourself; don't stand on ceremony."

"I, Abbot!" said I, as he swallowed the vile potion; "have you neither respect nor shame? I never drank such poison in my life!"

"The more is the pity," muttered the young man, but rather as if speaking to himself than me; "I should have had the sooner and freer swing of it."

"You mean if it had killed me, as it is killing you," said I, pierced by the heartlessness of his expression. "Oh, Abbot! a judgment will come upon you yet!"

He stared me in the face, but without making a reply. Then pushing a chair towards me, he sat down himself, and deliberately filled his glass a second time.

"Abbot! for Heaven's sake," said I, wringing my very hands in despair, "what will tempt you to quit this horrid practice?"

"Nothing," said he; "you have asked the question a month too late. Look," he continued, pointing my attention again to his hand, shaking, as it held the bottle, as if under the palsy of age; "do you know what that means?"

"What does it mean?" said I, so confounded by the sight and his stolid merriment (for he laughed again while exposing the fruit of his degrading habit) that I scarce knew what I said.

"It means," said he, "that death is coming, to make equitable division betwixt Ralph and Alicia— unless the devil, after all, should carry them off before me; in which case you can build an hospital with your money."

He swallowed the draught, and then, leaning on the table, buried his face between his hands.

The sarcasm was not lost upon me, and the idea that he was about to become the victim of a passion from which he might be wrested by a sacrifice on my part, greatly excited my feelings.

"I will do any thing," said I; "what shall I do to save you? Oh, Abbot! can you not refrain from this dreadful indulgence? What shall I do?"

He leaped upon his feet, and eyed me with a look full of wildness.

"Pay my debts," he cried; "pay my debts, and make me independent; and I—I'll try."

"And what," said I, trembling with fear, "what sum will pay your debts?"

"Twenty thousand—perhaps," said he.

"Twenty thousand! what! twenty thousand dollars!" cried I, lost in confusion.

"You won't, then?" said the reprobate.

"Not a cent!" cried I, in a fury. "How came you to owe such a sum? Do you think I will believe you? How could you incur such a debt? What have you been doing?"

"Gambling, drinking, and so forth, and so forth, twenty times over."

He snatched up the bottle, and, locking it in thebuffet, deposited the key in his pocket. Then seizing upon his hat, and stepping to where I stood, transfixed with grief and indignation, he said,—

"You won't take the bargain, then?"

"Not a dollar, not a dime, not a cent!" said I.

"Not even to save my life, father?"

"Not a dollar, not a dime, not a cent!" I reiterated, incapable of saying another word.

"Farewell then," said he, "and good luck to you! It is a declaration of war, and now I'll keep no terms with you."

Then giving me a look that froze my blood, it was so furiously hostile and vindictive, he struck his hands together, rushed from the house, and I saw him no more for nearly a fortnight. I saw him no more, as I said; but coming home the following evening from the club, I found my strong−box broken open and rifled of the money that I left in it.

The sum was indeed but small, but the robbery had been perpetrated by my own son; and the reader, if he be a father, will judge what effect this discovery produced upon my mind. In good truth, I felt now that I was the most wretched of human beings, and was reduced nearly to distraction.

But this blow was but a buffet with the hand, compared with the thunder−bolt that fate was preparing to launch against my bosom. I cursed my miserable lot; yet it wanted one more stroke of misfortune to sever the chain with which avarice still bound me to my condition.

CHAPTER V. The fate of the firstborn.

On the eleventh day after the flight of Abbot, whom all my inquiries failed to discover, as I was walking towards the exchange, torn by my domestic woes, and by a threatened convulsion in stocks, which concerned me very nearly, I met one of my companions of the club, who, noting my disturbed countenance, drew me aside, and told me he was sorry I had got my foot into the fire; but the club had last night taken the matter into consideration, and agreed to stand by me, if it were possible.

All this was heathen Greek to me; and I told my friend I was in no trouble I knew of, and wanted no countenance from anybody.

"I am very glad to hear it," said he; "but what are you doing with so much paper in the market? That's no good sign, you'll allow!"

I started aghast, and he proceeded to inform me that he had himself seen two of my notes for considerable amounts, and had heard of others; and, finally, that he had just, parted with the president (an intimate friend of his) of a bank not a furlong off, who had asked divers questions as to the state of my affairs, and admitted there was paper of mine at that moment in the bank.

I was seized with consternation, assured him all such notes must be forgeries; and running with him to the bank, demanded to see any paper they had with my name to it. They produced two different notes for large amounts, which I instantly declared to be counterfeit; and then ran in search of others.

The hubbub created by this declaration was great, but the tumult in my mind was greater. A horrid suspicion as to the author of the forgeries entered my soul, and I became so deadly sick as to be unable to prosecute the inquisition further. My friend deposited me in a coach, and I was carried to my home, but in a condition more dead than alive. My suspicions were in a few hours dreadfully confirmed by my friend, who returned with the intelligence which he had acquired. The forger was discovered and arrested—it was the elder brother, Ralph Skinner.

Words cannot paint the agony with which I flew to the magistrate's office, and beheld the unfortunate youth in the hands of justice; but what was my horror to discover the extent and multiplicity of his frauds. The number of forgeries he had committed in his parent's name was indeed enormous; and it seems he had committed them with the intention of flying; for many of his guilty gains were found secreted on his person. But even after so much had been recovered, the residue to be refunded was appalling. The thought of making restitution drove me almost to a phrensy, while the idea of seeing him carried to jail, to meet the doom of a felon, was equally distracting. My misery was read on my face; and some one present, perhaps with a motive of humanity, cried out,

"Why persecute the young man? Here is his father, who acknowledges the notes to be genuine."

"Ah," said the magistrate, "does he so? Why, then we have had much foolish trouble for nothing."

I looked at the amount of the forgeries, a list of which some one put into my hands.

"It is false," I cried; "I will not pay a cent!"

I cast my eyes upon Ralph. He reached over a table behind which he stood, and waved his hand to and fro, as if, had he been nigh enough, he would have buffeted me on the face. His look was that of a demon, and he spat the foam from his lips, as if to testify the extremity of hatred.

"Let him go," I cried; "I will pay it all!"

"You can undoubtedly do so, if you will," said the magistrate, who had marked the malice that beamed from the visage of the young man; "but do not dream that that will discharge the prisoner from arrest, or from the necessity of answering the felony of which he now stands accused, before a court and jury. The extent of the forgeries, and the temper displayed by the accused, are such, that he must and shall abide the fruits of his delinquency. He stands committed—officer, remove him."

I heard no more; my brain spun round and round, and I was again carried insensible to my miserable dwelling.

CHAPTER VI. The catastrophe of a tragedy often performed on the great stage of life.

It may be supposed that the misery now weighing me to the earth was as much as could be imposed upon me; but I was destined to find, and that before the night was over, that misery is only comparative, and that there is no affliction so positively great that greater may not be experienced. In the dead of the night, when my woes had at last been drowned in slumber, I was roused by feeling a hand pressing upon my bosom; and, starting up, I saw, for there was a taper burning on a table hard by, a man standing over me, holding a pillow in his hand, which, the moment I caught sight of him, he thrust into my face, and there endeavoured to hold it, as if to suffocate me.

The horror of death endowed me with a strength not my own, and the ruffian held the pillow with a feeble and trembling arm. I dashed it aside, leaped up in the bed, and beheld in the countenance of the murderer the features of the long missing and abandoned son, Abbot Skinner.

His face was white and chalky, with livid stains around the eyes and mouth, the former of which were staring out of their orbits in a manner ghastly to behold, while his lips were drawn asunderand away from his teeth, as in the face of a mummy. He looked as if horror−struck at the act he was attempting; and yet there was something devilish and determined in his air, that increased my terror to ecstasy. I sprang from the bed, threw myself on the floor, and, grasping his knees, besought him to spare my life. There seemed indeed occasion for all my supplications: his bloated and altered visage, the neglected appearance of his garments and person, and a thousand other signs, showed that the whole period of his absence had been passed in excessive toping, and the murderous and unnatural act which he meditated manifested to what a pitch of phrensy he had brought himself by the indulgence.

As I grasped his knees, he put his hand into his bosom, and drew out a poniard, a weapon I had never before known him to carry; at the sight of which I considered myself a dead man. But the love of life still prevailing, I leaped up, and ran to a corner of the room, where I mingled adjurations and entreaties with loud screams for assistance. He stood as if rooted to the spot for a moment; then dropping his horrid weapon, he advanced a few paces, clasped his hands together, fell upon his knees, and burst into tears, and all the while without having uttered a single word. But now, my cries still continuing, he exclaimed, but with a most wild and disturbed look—"Father, I won't hurt you, and pray don't hurt me!"

By this time the housekeeper Barbara, havingbeen alarmed by my outcries, came into the chamber; and her presence relieving me of the immediate fear of death, I gave vent to the horror that his unnatural attempt on my life justly excited, and thus made the woman acquainted with his baseness.

The poor old creature, who had always loved him, was greatly affected, especially when, in reply to my reproaches, he began to talk incoherently, admitting the fact, one instant attempting to justify it by preferring some strange and incoherent complaint, and the next assuring me, in the most piteous manner, that he would do me no harm. To Barbara's upbraidings he replied with a like inconsistency; and when she reproached him for meditating violence at such a moment, while I was mourning the baseness of his brother, he paid little attention to what she said, seeming not only ignorant of Ralph's delinquency, but apparently indifferent to it.

For this reason I began to fear his brain was touched; of which, indeed, I had soon the most fatal proof; for Barbara, having led him to his chamber, came back, assuring me that he was going mad, that his mind was already in a ferment, and, in a word, that that horrible distraction which sooner or later overtakes the confirmed drinker, was lighting the torch in his brain that could only go out with life itself. A physician was sent for: our fears were but too just, and before dawn the miserable youth was raving distracted.

The day that followed was one of distraction, not only to the wretched Abbot, but to myself; and I remember it as a confused dream. The only thing that dwells on my recollection, apart from the outcries in Abbot's chamber and the tumult in my own heart, is, that some one who owed me a sum of money, due that day, came and paid it into my hands with great punctiliousness, and that I received and wrote the acquittance for it with as much accuracy as if nothing were the matter, though my thoughts were far from the subject before me.

At eleven o'clock at night a messenger came to me from the prison, and his news was indeed frightful. The wretched Ralph had just been discovered with his throat cut from ear to ear, having made way with himself in

despair.

A few moments after I was summoned to the death−bed of his brother.

I shall never forget the horror of that young man's dissolution. He lay, at times, the picture of terror, gazing upon the walls, along which, in his imagination, crept myriads of loathsome reptiles, with now some frightful monster, and now a fire−lipped demon, stealing out of the shadows and preparing to dart upon him as their prey. Now he would whine and weep, as if asking forgiveness for some act of wrong done to the being man is most constant to wrong—the loving, the feeble, the confiding; and anon, seized by a tempest of passion, the cause of which could only be imagined,he would start up, fight, foam at the mouth, and fall back in convulsions. Once he sat up in bed, and, looking like a corpse, began to sing a bacchanalian song; on another occasion, after lying for many minutes in apparent stupefaction, he leaped out of bed before he could be prevented, and, uttering a yell that was heard in the street, endeavoured to throw himself from the window.

But the last raving act of all was the most horrid. He rose upon his knees with a strength that could not be resisted, caught up his pillow, thrust it down upon the bed with both hands, and there held it, with a grim countenance and a chuckling laugh. None understood the act but myself: no other could read the devilish thoughts then at work in his bosom. It was the scene enacted in the chamber of his parent—he was repeating the deed of murder—he was exulting, in imagination, over a successful parricide.

In this thought he expired; for while still pressing upon the pillow with a giant's strength, he suddenly fell on his face, and when turned over was a corpse. He gave but a single gasp, and was no more.

The horror of the spectacle drove me from the chamber, and I ran to my own to fall down and die; when the blessed thought entered my mind, that the wo on my spirit, the anguish, the distraction, were but a dream—that my very existence, as the miser and broken−hearted father, was a phantasm rather than a reality, since it was a borrowedexistence—and that it was in my power to exchange it, as I had done other modes of being, for a better. I was Sheppard Lee, not Abram Skinner; and this was but a voluntary episode in my existence, which I was at liberty to terminate.

The thought was rapture. I resolved to sally out and fasten upon the first body I could find, being certain I could be in none so miserable as I had been in that I now inhabited. Nay, the idea was so agreeable, the execution of it seemed to promise such certain release from a load of wretchedness, that I resolved to attempt it without even waiting for morning.

I seized upon my hat and cloak, and, for fear I might stumble into some poor man's body, as I had done in the case of Dawkins's, I opened my strong−box, and clapped into my pockets all the money it contained, designing to take precautionary measures to transfer it along with my spirit to the new tenement. I seized upon the loaned money that had been repaid that day, together with a small sum that had been in the box before; and, had there been a million in the coffer, I should have nabbed it all, without much question of the right I actually possessed in it. The whole sum was small, not exceeding four hundred dollars, all being in bank−bills. I should have been glad of more, but was too eager to exchange my vile casing, with its miseries, for a better, to think of waiting till bank−hours next day.

Taking possession, therefore, of this sum, anda dozen silver spoons that had been left in pledge a few days before, I hastened to put my plan into execution. I slipped down stairs, let myself out of the door as softly as if I had been an intruder, and set out, in a night of February, to search for a new body.

CHAPTER VII. In which it is shown that a man may be more useful after death than while living.

The reflection that I possessed the power (already thrice successfully exercised) to transfer my spirit, whenever I willed it, from one man's body to another, and so get rid of any afflictions that might beset me, was highly agreeable, and, under the present circumstances, consolatory. But there was one drawback to my satisfaction; and that was a discovery which I now made, that men's bodies were not to be had every day, at a moment's warning. This was the more provoking, as I knew there was no lack of them in the world, between eighty and ninety thousand men, women, and children having given up the ghost in the natural way that very day, whose corses would be on the morrow consigned to miserable holes in the earth, where they could and would be of no service to any person or persons whatever, the young doctors only excepted.

And here I cannot help observing, that it is an extremely absurd practice thus to dispose of—to squander and throw away, as I may call it—the hosts of human bodies that are annually falling dead upon our hands; whereas, with the least management in the world, they might be converted into objects of great usefulness and value.

According to the computation of philosophers, the population of the world may be reckoned in round numbers at just one thousand millions; of which number the annual mortality, at the low rate of three in a hundred, is thirty millions—and that without counting the extra million or two knocked on the head in the wars. Let us see what benefit might be derived from a judicious disposition of this mountain of mortality—I say mountain, for it is plain such a number of bodies heaped together would make a Chimborazo. The great mass of mankind might be made to subserve the purpose for which nature designed them, namely—to enrich the soil from which they draw their sustenance. According to the economical Chinese method, each of these bodies could be converted into five tons of excellent manure; and the whole number would therefore produce just one hundred and fifty millions of tons; of which one hundred and fifty thousand, being their due proportion, would fall to the share of the United States of America, enabling our farmers, in the course of ten or twelve years, to double the value of their lands. This, therefore, would be a highly profitable way of disposing ofthe mass of mankind. Such a disposition of their bodies would prove especially advantageous among American cultivators in divers districts, as a remedy against bad agriculture, and as the only means of handing down their fields in good order to their descendants. Such a disposition of bodies should be made upon every field of victory, so that dead heroes might be made to repair some of the mischiefs inflicted by live ones. The English farmers, it is well known, made good use of the bones left on the field of Waterloo; and though they would have done much better had they carried off the flesh with them, they did enough to show that war may be reckoned a good as well as an evil, and a great battle looked upon as a public blessing. A similar disposition (to continue the subject) of their mortal flesh might be, with great propriety, required, in this land, of all politicians and office−holders, from the vice−president down to the county collector; who, being all patriots, would doubtless consent to a measure that would make them of some use to their country. As for the president, we would have him reserved for a nobler purpose; we would have him boiled down to soap, according to the plan recommended by the French chymists, to be used by his successor in scouring the constitution and the minds of the people.

In this manner, I repeat, the great bulk of human bodies could be profitably appropriated; but other methods should be taken with particular classes of men, who might claim a more distinguished and canonicaldisposition of their bodies. The rich and tender would esteem it a cruelty to be disposed of in the same way with the multitude. I would advise, therefore, that their bodies should be converted into adipocire, or spermaceti, to be made into candles, to be burnt at the tops of the lamp−posts; whereby those who never shone in life might scintillate as the lights of the public for a week or two after. Their bones might be made into rings and whistles, for infant democrats to cut their teeth on.

The French and Italian philosophers, as I have learned from the newspapers, have made sundry strange, and, as I think, useful discoveries, in relation to the practicability of converting the human body into different mineral substances. One man changes his neighbour's bones into fine glass; a second turns the blood into iron; while a third, more successful still, transforms the whole body into stone. If these things be true, and I have no reason to doubt them, seeing that I found them, as I said before, in the newspapers, they offer us new modes of

appropriation, applicable to the bodies of other interesting classes. Lovers might thus be converted into jewels, which, although false, could be worn with less fear of losing them than happens with living inamoratos; or, in case of extreme grief on the part of the survivers, into looking−glasses, where the mourners would find a solace in the contemplation of their own features. The second process, namely, the conversion of blood into iron, would be peculiarly applicable in the case of soldierstoo distinguished to be cast into corn−fields; and, indeed, nothing could be more natural than that those whose blood we buy with gold, should pay us back our change in iron. The last discovery could be turned to equal profit, and would do away with the necessity of employing statuaries in all cases where their services are now required. But I would confine the process of petrifaction to those in whom Nature had indicated its propriety by beginning the process herself. None could with greater justice claim to have their bodies turned into stone, than those whose hearts were of the same material; and I should propose, accordingly, that such a transformation of bodies should be made only in the case of tyrants, heroes, duns, and critics.

But this subject, though often reflected on, I have had no leisure to digest properly. For which reason, begging the reader's pardon for the digression, I shall now leave it, and resume my story.

CHAPTER VIII. Sheppard Lee's search for a body.—An uncommon incident.

I was provoked, I say, to think there were so many millions of dead bodies thrown away every year, for which I, in the greatest of my difficulties, should be none the better. Such was the extremity to which I was reduced, that I should have been content to change conditions with a beggar.

It was a night in February. The day had been uncommonly fine, with a soft southern air puffing through the streets; the frost was oozing from the pavement, and the flags—I beg their pardon, the bricks—were floating in the yellow mud, so that one walked as if upon a foundation of puddings. Such had been the state of things in the day; such also as late as at nine o'clock P. M.

But it was now eleven; the wind had chopped round to the northwest and northeast, and perhaps some half a dozen other points beside, for it seemed to blow in all directions, and the thermometer was galloping downward towards zero. A savage snow−storm had just set in, and with such sharp and piercing gusts of wind, and such fierce rattling of hail, that, had not my mind been in a ferment, I should have hesitated to expose myself to its fury. But I reflected that I was flying from wo and terror; and the hope of diving into some body that might introduce me to a life of sunshine, rendered me insensible to the rigours of the tempest.

Having stumbled about in the snow for a while, I began to inquire of myself whither I was going; and the answer, or rather the want of an answer, somewhat confounded me. Where was I to look for a dead body, at such a time of night? It occurred to me I had better refer to a newspaper, and see what persons had lately died in town and were yet unburied. I stepped accordingly into a barber's shop, that happened to be open, and snatched up an evening paper. The first paragraph I laidmy eyes on contained an account of the forgeries of my son, Ralph Skinner. It was headed Unheard−of Depravity, and it blazoned, in italics and capitals, the crime, the unnatural crime of committing frauds in the name of a father.

The shock with which I beheld the fatal publication renewed my horror, and sharpened my desire to end it. I threw down the paper, without consulting the column of obituaries, and ran towards the Hospital, where, it appeared to me, I should certainly find one or more bodies which the doctors had no longer occasion for. But my visit was at a highly unseasonable hour, and the porter, being knocked out of a comfortable nap, got up in an ill humour. "Whose cow's dead now?" I heard him grumble from his lodge—"I wonder people can't break their necks by daylight!"

But my neck was not broken; and he listened to my eager inquiry—"whether there were no dead bodies in the house?"—with rage and indignation.

"I tell you what, mister," said he, "we takes no mad people in here, except they comes the regular way,"

And with that he shut the door in my face, leaving me to wonder at his want of civility.

But the air was growing more frigid every moment, and the hour was waxing later and later. I ran to the Alms−house, not doubting, as that was a more democratic establishment, that I should be there received with greater respect. But good−breeding is not a whit more native to a leather shirtthan to a silk stocking. My Cerberus here was cut from the same flint as the other; his civility had been learned in the same school, and his English studied from the same grammar.

"I tell you what, uncle Barebones," said he, without waiting to be questioned, "we takes no paupers here, except they comes with an order."

And so saying, he slapped to the door with an energy that dislodged from the roof of his den a full hundred weight or more of snow, which fell in my face, and had wellnigh smothered me.

The case began to look desperate; but the difficulty of finding what I wanted only rendered my wits more active. I resolved to run to one of the medical schools, make my way into its anatomical repositories, and help myself to the best body I could find; for, indeed, I was in such a rage of desire to be released from my present tenement, that I did not design to stand upon trifles.

I set out accordingly, with this object in view; but fate willed I should seek my fortune in another quarter.

The storm had by this time begun to rage with uncommon violence; the winds were blowing like so many buglers and trumpeters on a militia−day, and the snow that had already fallen was whisked up every moment from the ground, and driven back again into the air, to mingle in contention with that which was falling. The

atmosphere was thickened, or rather wholly displaced, by the whirling particles, so that, in a short time, the wayfarercould neither see nor breathe in the white chaos around him. It was, in truth, a savage, inclement night. The watchman betook him to his box, to snooze away the hours in comfort; the lamps went out, being of a spirit still more economical than their founders, and thinking, with great justice, that the streets which could do with them, could do equally well without them; the dogs were no longer heard yelping at the corners; and the pigs—the only spectres of Philadelphia—that run squeaking and gibbering up and down the streets in the night, to vanish at early cock−crowing, provided the hog−catchers are in commission, were one by one retreating to their secret strongholds, leaving the street to solitude, the snow−storm, and me.

I plodded on as well as I could, and with such effect, that, after a quarter hour's trudging, I knew not well whither, I stopped at last, I knew as little where. Instead of being in the heart of the city, as I supposed, I found myself somewhere in the suburbs, wedged fast in a snow−drift. One single lamp, and one single wick of that single lamp, had escaped the puffs of the tempest; it shone from aloft, through the rack of snow, like a fire−fly in a fog, dividing its faint beam betwixt my frozen visage and a low open shed hard by, the only objects, beside itself, that were visible.

I perceived that I was lost; and being more than half dead with cold, I dragged myself into the shed, to shelter me from the fury of the storm, and lament the ill fate that attended my efforts.

As I stepped into the wretched hole, I stumbled over a man lying coiled up on the ground, and so exposed to the air that his legs were already heaped over with snow. There was just light enough to discern a black jug lying broken at his side, from which arose the odour of corn−juice, but by no means of the true Monongahela savour.

I was struck by the fellow's appearance; he had evidently been lying there all the evening; the stumble I had made over him did not disturb him in the least, and my hand chancing to touch his face, I found it could as marble. I perceived he was dead; a discovery that filled me with uncommon joy; for my eagerness to change my condition was such, that I only saw in him a body to be taken possession of, without reading in the broken jug, and the miserable corner in which its victim had breathed his last, the newer wretchedness and degradation upon which I was rushing. Such is the short−sightedness of discontent; such the folly of the man who deems himself the unluckiest of his species.

With a trembling hand I thrust into the pockets of the corse the money and the silver spoons I had brought with me, being so far prudent that I was resolved not to trust the transfer of such valuables to my new body to accident. This being accomplished, I uttered the wish that had thrice served my turn before.

I wished, however, in vain; I muttered thecharm a dozen times over, but with no more effect than if I had pronounced it to the lamp−post. The body lay unmoved, and I remained unchanged.

I became horribly disconcerted; a fear seized me that my good angel, if I had ever had one, had deserted me; or that the devil, if it was from him I derived my power of passing from body to body, had suddenly left me in the lurch;—in a word, that I had consumed all my privileges of transformation, and was chained to the body of Abram Skinner for life.

I beat my breast in despair, and then, changing from that to wrath, I began to belabour the ribs of the dead man with all the strength of my foot, as if he were answerable for my disappointment. Perhaps, indeed, the reader will think that he was; for at the third kick the corpse became animated, and to my astonishment rose upon its feet, saying, in accents tolerably articulate, though somewhat thick and tumultuous, "I say, Charlie, odd rabbit it, none on your jokes now, and none on your takin of folks up; 'cause how, folks is not half so drunk as you suppose. And so good night, and let's have no more words about it, and I'll consider you werry much of a gentleman."

With these words the corpse picked up that fragment of the jug that had the handle to it, leaving the others, as well as his hat, behind him; and staggering out of the shed, he began to walk away. I was petrified; he was stalking off with my money, and a dozen of Mrs. Smith's silver spoons!

"You villain!" said I, running after him, "give me back my property."

"I'm a free man," said the sot; "I'm no man's property. And so, Charlie, don't go for to disturb me, for I knows my way home as well as anybody."

"But the four hundred dollars and the silver spoons," said I, seizing him by the shoulders, and endeavouring to empty the pockets I had but a moment before filled. "If you resist, you rogue, I'll put you in jail."

"I won't go to jail for no Charlie in the liberty," said the man of the jug, who to the last moment seemed to have no other idea than that he had fallen into the hands of a guardian of the night, and was in danger of being

introduced to warmer quarters than those he was leaving. He spoke with the indignation of a freeborn republican, who felt his rights invaded, and was resolute to defend them; and, lifting up the fragment of his jug, he suddenly bestowed it upon my head with such good−will that I was felled to the earth. He took advantage of my downfall to decamp, carrying with him the treasure with which I had so bountifully freighted him. I pursued him as well as I could, calling upon the watch for assistance, and shouting murder and robbery at the top of my voice. But all was in vain; the watch were asleep, or I had wandered beyond their jurisdiction; and after a ten minutes' chase I found myself more bewildered than before, and the robber vanished with his plunder.

CHAPTER IX. In which the Author makes the acquaintance of a philanthropist.

I should have cursed my simplicity in mistaking a drunkard for a dead man; but I had other evils to distress me besides chagrin. I was lost in a snow−storm, fainting with fatigue, shivering with cold, and afar from assistance, there not being a single house in sight. It was in vain that I sought to recover my way; I plunged from one snow−bank into another; and I believe I should have actually perished, had not succour arrived at a moment when I had given over all hopes of receiving it.

I had just sunk down into a huge drift on the roadside, where I lay groaning, unable to extricate myself, when a man driving by in a chair, hearing my lamentations, drew up, and demanded, in a most benevolent voice, what was the matter.

"Who art thou, friend?" said he, "and what are thy distresses? If thou art in affliction, peradventure there is one nigh at hand who will succour thee."

"I am," said I, "the most miserable wretch on the earth."

"Heaven be praised!" said the stranger, with great devoutness of accent; "for in that case I will give thee help, and the night shall not pass away in vain. Yea, verily, I will do my best to assist thee; for it is both good and pleasant, a comeliness to the eye and a refreshment to the spirit, to do good deeds among those who are truly wretched."

"And besides," said I, "I am sticking fast in the snow, and am perishing with cold."

"Be of good heart, and hold still for a moment, and I will come to thy assistance."

And with that honest Broadbrim (for such I knew by his speech he must be) descended from the chair, and helped me out of the drift; all which he accomplished with zeal and alacrity, showing not more humanity, as I thought, than satisfaction at finding such a legitimate object for its display. He brushed the snow from my clothes, and perceiving I was shivering with cold, for I had lost my cloak some minutes before, he transferred one of his own outer garments, of which, I believe, he had two or three, to my shoulders, plying me all the time with questions as to how I came into such a difficulty, and what other griefs I might have to afflict me, and assuring me I should have his assistance.

"Hast thou no house to cover thy nakedness?" he cried; "verily, I will find thee a place wherein thou shalt shelter thyself from snow and from cold. Art thou suffering from lack of food? Verily, there is a crust of bread and the leg of a chicken yet left in my basket of cold bits, and thou shalt have them, with something further hereafter. Hast thou no family or friends? Verily, there are many humane persons of my acquaintance who will, likemyself, consider themselves as thy brothers and sisters. Art thou oppressed with years as well as poverty? Verily, then thou hast a stronger claim to pity, and it shall be accorded thee."

He heaped question upon question, and assurance upon assurance, with such haste and fervour, that it was some minutes before I could speak. I took advantage of his first pause to detail the latest, and, at that moment, the most oppressive of my griefs.

"I have been robbed," I cried, "of four hundred dollars, and a dozen silver spoons, by a rascal I found lying drunk under a shed. But I'll have the villain, if it costs me the half of his plunder, and—"

"Be not awroth with the poor man," said my deliverer. "It was a wickedness in him to rob thee; but thou shouldst reflect how wickedness comes of misery, and how misery of the inclemency of the season. Be merciful to the wicked man, as well as to the miserable; for thereby thou showest mercy to him who is doubly miserable. But how didst thou come by four hundred dollars and a dozen silver spoons? Thou canst not be so poor as to prove an object of charity?"

"No," said I, "I am no beggar. But I won't be robbed for nothing."

"Verily, I say unto thee again, be not awroth with the poor man. Thou shouldst reflect, if thou wert robbed, how far thou wast thyself the cause of the evil; for, having four hundred dollars about thee, thou mightst have relieved the poor creature'swants; in which case thou wouldst have prevented both a loss and a crime—the one on thy part, the other on his. Talk not, therefore, of persecuting the poor man; hunt him up, if thou canst, administer secretly to his wants, and give him virtuous counsel; and then, peradventure, he will sin no more."

I was struck by the tone and maxims of my deliverer; they expressed an ardour of benevolence, an enthusiasm of philanthropy, such as I had never dreamed of before. I could not see his face, the night being so thick and tempestuous; but there was a complacency, a bustling self−satisfaction in his voice, that convinced me he was not only a good, but a happy man. I regarded him with as much envy as respect; and a comparison, which I could not avoid mentally making, betwixt his condition and my own, drew from me a loud groan.

"Art thou hurt?" said the good Samaritan. "I will help thee into my wheeled convenience here, and take thee to thy home."

"No," said I, "I will never go near that wretched house again."

"What is it that makes it wretched?" said the Quaker.

"You will know, if you are of Philadelphia," I replied, "when I tell you my name. I am the miserable Abram Skinner."

"What! Abram Skinner, the money−lender?" said my friend, with a severe voice. "FriendAbram, I have heard of thy domestic calamities, and verily I have heard of those of many others, who laid them all at thy doors, as the author and cause thereof. Thou art indeed the most wretched of men; but if thou thinkest so thyself, then is there a hope thou mayst be yet restored to happiness. Thou hast made money, but what good hast thou done with it? thou hast accumulated thy hundreds, and thy thousands, and thy tens of thousands—but how many of thy fellow−creatures hast thou given cause to rejoice in thy prosperity? Truly, I have heard much said of thy wealth, and thy avarice, friend Abram; but, verily, not a word of thy kind−heartedness and charity: and know, that goodness and charity are the only securities against the ills, both sore and manifold, that spring from groaning coffers. I say to thee, friend Abram, hast thou ever given a dollar in alms to the poor, or acquitted a single penny of obligation to the hard−run of thy customers?"

My conscience smote me—not, however, that I felt any great remorse for not having thrown away my money in the way the Quaker meant: but his words brought a new idea into my mind. It was misery on the one hand, and the hope of arriving at happiness on the other, which had spurred me from transformation to transformation. Each change had, however, been productive of greater discontent than the other; and the woes with which I was oppressed in my three borrowed bodies, had been even greater than those that afflicted me in my own proper original casing. It was plain that I had not exercised a just discretion in the selection of bodies, since I had taken those of men whose modes of existence did not dispose to happiness. What mode of existence then was most likely to secure the content I sought? Such, I inferred from the Quaker's discourse, as would call into operation the love of goodness and of man— such as would cause to be cultivated the kindly virtues unknown to the selfish—such as would lead to the practice of charity and general philanthropy. I was grieved, therefore, that I had entered so many bodies for nothing; my conscience accused me of a blunder; and I longed to enter upon an existence of virtue; not that I had any great regard for virtue itself, but because I valued my own happiness. Had my deliverer chanced to break his neck while discoursing to me, I should have reanimated his corse, to try my hand at benevolence. As for being good and charitable in the body I then occupied, I felt that it was impossible: the impulse pointed to another existence.

The Quaker's indignation soon abated; he looked upon my silence as the effect of remorse, and the idea of converting me into an alms−giver and a friend of the poor, like himself, took possession of his imagination, and warmed his spirit. By such a conversion his philanthropic desires would be doubly gratified; it would make me happy, and, as I was a rich man, some hundreds of others also. He helped me into the chair, and driving slowlytowards the city, attempted the good work by describing the misery so prevalent in the suburbs, and dilating with uncommon enthusiasm upon the delight with which every act of benevolence would be recorded in my own bosom.

It seems that he was returning from a mission of charity in one of the remotest districts, where he had relieved the necessities of divers unhappy wretches; and, he gave me to understand, it was his purpose to make one more charitable visitation before returning home, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour and the fury of the tempest. And this visit he felt the more urged to make, since it would afford a practical illustration of his remarks, and show how doubly charity was blessed, both to the giver and receiver.

"Thou shalt see," said he, "even with thine own eyes, what power he that hath money hath over the afflictions of his race—what power to dry the tear of the mourning, and to check the wicked deeds of the vicious. He that I will now relieve is what thou didst foolishly call thyself—to wit, the most miserable of men; for he is both a

beggar and a convicted felon, having but a few days since been discharged from the penitentiary, where he had served out his three years, for, I believe, the third time in his life."

"Surely," said I, "he is then a reprobate entirely unworthy pity."

"On the contrary," said the philanthropist, "he is for that reason the more to be pitied, since allregard him with distrust and abhorrence, and refuse him the relief without which he must again become a criminal: the very boys say to him, 'Get up, thou old jail−bird;' and men and women hoot at him in the streets. Poverty made him a criminal, and scorn has hardened his heart; yet is he a man with a soul; and verily thou shalt see how that soul can be melted by the breath of compassion. In this little hovel we shall find him," said the Quaker, drawing up before a miserable frame building, which was of a most lonely aspect, and in a terrible state of dilapidation, the windows being without shutters and glasses, and even the door itself half torn from its hinges.

"It is a little tenement that belongeth to me," said my friend; "and here I told him he might shelter him, until I could come in person and relieve him. A negro−man whom I permitted to live here for a while did very ungratefully, that is to say, very thoughtlessly—destroy the window−shutters, and other loose work, for fire−wood, I having forgotten to supply him with that needful article, and he, poor man, being too bashful to acquaint me with his wants. Verily I do design to render it more comfortable; but in these hard times one cannot find more money than sufficeth to fill the mouths of the hungry. Descend, friend Abram, and let us enter. I see the poor man hath a fire shining through the door; this will warm thy frozen limbs, while the sound of his grateful acknowledgments will do the same good office for thy spirit."

CHAPTER X. Containing an affecting adventure with a victim of the law.

My benevolent friend, leaving his horse standing at the door, led the way into the hovel, the interior of which was still more ruinous than the outside. It consisted of but a single room below, with a garret above. A meager fire, which furnished the only light, was burning on the hearth, to supply which the planks had been torn from the floor, leaving the earth below almost bare. There was not a single article of furniture visible, save an old deal table without leaves, a broken chair, and a tattered scrap of carpet lying near the fire, which seemed to have served as both bed and blanket to the wretched tenant.

"How is this?" said the Friend, in surprise. "Verily I did direct my man Abel to carry divers small comforts hither, which have vanished, as well as the poor man, John Smith."

John Smith, it seems, was the name of the beneficiary, and that convinced me he was a rogue. I ventured to hint to our common friend, that John Smith, having disposed of those "small comforts" he spoke of to the best advantage, was now engaged seeking others in some of our neighbours' houses; and that the wisest thing we could do in such a case would be to take our departure.

"Verily," said my deliverer, with suavity, "it is not possible John can do the wicked things thou thinkest of; for, first, it is but three days since he left the penitentiary, and secondly, I sent him by my helper and friend, Abel Snipe, sufficient eatables to supply him a week; so that he could have no inducement to do a wicked thing. Still it doth surprise me that he is absent; nevertheless, we will tarry a little while, lest peradventure he should return, and be in trouble, with none to relieve him. It wants yet ten minutes to midnight," continued the benevolent man, drawing out a handsome gold watch, "and five of these at least we can devote to the poor creature."

I was about to remonstrate a second time, when a step was heard approaching at a distance in the street.

"Peradventure it is John himself," said my friend; "and peradventure it will be better thou shouldst step aside into yonder dark corner for an instant, that thou mayst witness, without restraining by thy presence, the feelings of virtue that remain in the spirit, even when tainted and hardened by depravity."

I crept away, as I was directed, to a corner, where I might easily remain unobserved, the room being illumined only by the fire, and that consisting of little besides embers and ashes. From this place I saw Mr. John Smith as he entered, which he declined doing until after he had peeped suspiciously into the apartment, and been summoned by the voice of his benefactor.

He was as ill−looking a dog as I had ever laid eyes on, and his appearance was in strange contrast with that of his benevolent patron. The latter was a tall and rawboned man of fifty, with an uncommonly prepossessing visage; rather lantern−jawed, perhaps, but handsome and good−natured. The other was a slouch of a fellow, short of stature, but full of fat and brawn, with bow legs, gibbon arms, and a hang−dog visage. He sidled up to the fire hesitatingly, and, indeed, with an air of shame and humility; while the philanthropist, laying his watch upon the table, extended his hand towards him.

"Be of good heart, friend John," he said; "I come, not to reproach thee for thy misdeeds, but to counsel thee how thou shalt amend them, and restore thyself again to the society of the virtuous."

"'Es, sir," grumbled John Smith, dodging his head in humble acknowledgment, rubbing his hands for warmth over the fire, and casting a sidelong look at his benefactor. "Werry good of you, sir; shall ever be beholden. Werry hard times for one what's been in the penitentiary—takes away all one's repurtation; and, Lord bless us, sir, a man's but a ruined man when a man hasn't no repurtation."

And with that worthy John drew his sleeve over his nose, which convinced me he was not so much of a rascal as I thought him.

"John, thou hast been but as a sinner and a foolish man."

"'Es, sir," said John, with another rub of his sleeve at his nose; "but hard times makes hardwork of a poor man. Always hoped to mend and be wirtuous; but, Lord bless us, Mr. Longstraw (beg pardon—can't think of making so free to say friend to such a great gentleman), one can't be wirtuous with nothing to live on."

"Verily, thou speakest, in a measure, the truth," said my friend; "and I intend thou shalt now be put in some way of earning an honest livelihood."

"'Es, sir," said John; "and sure I shall be werry much beholden."

But it is not my intention to record the conversation of the worthy pair. I am writing a history of myself, and not of other people; and I therefore think it proper to pursue no discourses in which I did not myself bear a part. It is sufficient to say, that my deliverer said a thousand excellent things in the way of counsel, which the other received very well, and many indicative of a disposition to be charitable, which Mr. John Smith received still better; and in the end, to relieve the pressing wants of the sufferer, which Mr. John Smith feelingly represented, drew forth a pocketbook, and took therefrom a silver dollar; at the sight of which, I thought, Mr. John Smith looked a little disappointed. Nay, it struck me that the appearance of the pocketbook, ancient and illlooking as it was, had captivated his imagination in a greater degree than the coin. I had before observed him steal several affectionate looks towards the gold watch lying on the table, which now, however, the sight of the well−thumbed wallet seemedto have driven from his thoughts entirely. Nevertheless, he received the silver dollar with many thanks, and with still more the assurance that the philanthropist would procure him employment on the morrow; and Mr. Longstraw's eyes, as he turned to beckon me from the corner, began to twinkle with the delight of self−approbation.

I was myself beginning to feel a sentiment of pleasure, and to picture to my mind the unfortunate felon, converted, by a few words of counsel, and still fewer dollars of charity, into an honest and worthy member of society, when—oh horror of horrors!—the repenting convict suddenly snatched up a brand from the fire, and discharged it, with a violence that would have felled an ox, full upon the head of his patron.

The sparks flew from the brand over the whole room, and my friend dropped upon the floor on his face, followed by the striker, who, seizing upon his cravat, twisted it tightly round the unfortunate man's throat, thus completing by strangulation the murder more than half accomplished by the below.

The whole affair was the work of an instant; and had I possessed the will or courage to interfere, I could not have done so in time to arrest the mischief. But, in truth, I had not the power to stir; horror and astonishment chained me to the corner, where I stood as if transformed to stone, unable even to vent my feelings in a cry. I was seized with a terrible apprehension on my own account; for I could not doubt that the wretch who would thus murder a benefactor for a few dollars, would have as little hesitation to despatch me, who had witnessed the deed. I feared every moment lest the villain should direct his eye to the corner in which I stood, separated from him only a few yards; but he was too busy with his horrid work to regard me; and, terrified as I was, I looked on in safety while my deliverer was murdered before my eyes.

How long Mr. John Smith was at his dreadful work I cannot say; but I saw him, after a while, relax his grasp from his victim's throat, and fall to rummaging his pockets. Then, leaping up, he seized upon the watch, and clapped it into his bosom, saying, with a most devilish chuckle and grin,

"Damn them 'ere old fellers what gives a man a dollar, and preaches about wirtue! I reckon, old Slabsides, there's none on your people will hang me for the smash. Much beholden to you for leaving the horse and chair; it makes all safer."

With these words the wretch slipped out of the hovel, and a moment after I heard the smothered roll of the vehicle as it swept from the door.

CHAPTER XI. In which the plot thickens, and the tragedy grows deeper.

I supposed that Mr. John Smith had taken himself away with as much speed as was consistent with the strength of his horse and the safety of his bones, and I recovered from the fears I had entertained on my own account. I crept up to the philanthropist to give him assistance, if such could be now rendered. But it was too late; he was already dead: Mr. John Smith had not taken his degrees without proper study in his profession; and I must say that his practice on the present occasion did not go far to confirm me in the love of benevolence.

Nevertheless, the appearance of the defunct threw my mind into a ferment. I had been hunting a body, and now I had one before me; I had come to believe that, if I wished for happiness, I must get possession of one whose occupant had previously been happy; and I had seen enough of the deceased to know that he had been an uncommonly comfortable and contented personage.

The end of all this was a resolution, which I instantly made, to take advantage of the poor man's misfortune, and convert his body to my own purposes. I had seen him for the first time that night; I did not remember ever to have heard his name mentioned before; and I consequently knew nothing of him beyond what I had just learned. Where he lived, who were his connexions, what his property, were all questions to which I was to find answers thereafter. It appeared to me that a philanthropist of his spirit and age (the latter of which I judged to be about fifty) could not but be very well known, and that all I should have to do, after reanimating his body, would be to seek the assistance of the first person I should find, and so be conducted at once to the gentleman's house; after which all would go well enough.

But, in truth, I took but little time for reflection; or perhaps I should not have been in such a hurry to attempt a transformation. A little prudence might have led me to inquire into the consequences of the change, inferred from the condition of the body. Suppose his scull should prove to be broken; who was to stand the woes of trepanning? I do say, it would have been wiser had I thought of that—but unluckily I did not: I was in too great a hurry to think of any thing save the transformation itself; and the result was, that I had a lesson on the demerits of leaping before looking, which I think will be of service to me for the remainder of my life, as it might be to the reader, could the reader be brought to believe that that experience is good for any thing, which costs nothing.

My resolution was quickened by a step which I heard approaching along the street. "It is a watchman," thought I to myself: "I will jump into the body and run out for assistance."

I turned to the defunct.

"Friend Longstraw," said I, "or whatever your name is, if you are really dead, I wish to occupy your body."

That moment I lost all consciousness. The reader may infer the transfer of spirit was accomplished.

And so it was. I came to my senses a few moments after, just in time to find myself tumbling into a hole in the earth beneath the floor of the hovel, with Mr. John Smith hard by, dragging to the same depository the mortal frame I had just deserted. I perceived at once the horrible dilemma in which I was placed; I was on the point of being buried, and, what was worse, of being buried alive!

"I conjure and beseech thee, friend John Smith," I cried—but cried no more. The villain had just reached the pit, dragging the body of the late Abram Skinner. He was startled at my voice; but it only quickened him in his labours. He snatched up the corse and cast it down upon me as one would a millstone; and the weight, though that was not very considerable, and the shock together, jarred the life more than half out of me.

"What! old Slabsides," said he, "ar'n't you past grumbling?"

With that, the bloody−minded miscreant seized upon a fragment of plank, and began to belabour me with all his strength.

I had entered the philanthropist's body only to be murdered. I uttered a direful scream; but that was only a waste of the breath which Mr. John Smith was determined to waste for me. He redoubled his blows with a vigour that showed he was in earnest; nor did he cease until his work was completed. In a word, he murdered me, and so effectually, that it is a wonder I am alive to tell it. He assassinated me, and even began to bury me, by tumbling earth down from the floor; when, as my good fate would have it, the scene was brought to a climax by the sudden entrance of a watchman, who, running up to the villain, served him the same turn he had served me, by laying a leaded mace over his head, and so knocking him out of his senses.

It seems (for I scorn to keep the reader in suspense, by indulging in mystery) that this faithful fellow, having made a shorter nap than was warranted by the state of the night, had taken a stroll into the air, to look about him; that he had passed the hovel, and, seeing the chair standing at the door, had looked through a crack, and perceived Mr. Longstraw, with whose person and benevolent character he was acquainted, and myself—that is, my late self—warming ourselves by the convict's fire; and that, after pursuing his beat for a while, he was about to return by another way, when, to his surprise, he lighted upon the vehicle at more than asquare's distance from the house; and the horse being tied to a post, it was evident he had not strayed thither. This awaking a suspicion that all was not right, he determined to pay a second visit to the hovel; and was on the way thither when I set up the scream mentioned before. Then quickening his pace, he arrived in time to witness the awful spectacle of Mr. John Smith thrusting the two bodies into the pit; which operation the courageous watchman brought to a close by knocking the operator on the head, as I have related.

What had brought Mr. John Smith back again, and why he should have troubled himself to conceal the victim of his murderous cupidity, must be conjectured, as well as the amazement with which, doubtless, he found he had two bodies to bury instead of one. He perhaps reflected, that the visit of his patron was known to other persons; who, upon finding his body, would readily conjecture who was the murderer; and therefore judged it proper to conceal the evidence of assassination, and leave the fate of his benefactor in entire mystery.

As it happened, his return had wellnigh proved fatal to me, and it was any thing but happy for himself. It caused him to take up his lodgings for a fourth time in the penitentiary; and there he is sawing stone, I believe, to this day, unless pardoned out by the Governor of Pennsylvania, according to the practice among governors in general. The visitation was, however, thus far advantageous to me, that it caused me to be conducted to thedwelling of Mr. Longstraw with all due expedition and care; whereas, had it not happened, I might have remained lying on the floor of my miserable tenement until frozen to death; for the night was uncommonly bitter.

As for my late body, it found its way to Abram Skinner's mansion; whence, having been handsomely coffined, it was carried to the grave, which, but for me, it would have filled three months before.

BOOK V. CONTAINING THE ADVENTURES OF A GOOD SAMARITAN.

CHAPTER I. The philanthropist's family.

If my first introduction to the life of the philanthropic Zachariah Longstraw (for that was his name) was attended with circumstances of fear and danger, I did not thereby escape those other evils, which, as I hinted before, might have been anticipated, had I reflected a moment on the situation of his body. It was covered with bruises from head to foot, and there was scarce a sound bone left in it; so that, as I may say, I had, in reanimating it, only exchanged anguish of spirit for anguish of body; and which of these is the more intolerable, I never could satisfactorily determine. Philosophers, indeed, contend for the superior poignancy of the former; but I must confess a leaning to the other side of the question. What is the pain of a broken heart to that of the toothache? The poets speak of vipers in the bosom; what are they compared to a bug in the ear? Be this, however, as it may, it is certain I had a most dreadful time of it in Mr. Longstraw's body; and it would have been much worse, had not the blows I had received on the head kept me for a long time in a delirium, and therefore in a measure unconscious of my sufferings. The truth is, the body which I so rashly entered was in such a dilapidated condition, so bruised and mangled, that it was next to an impossibility to restore its vital powers; and it was more than two weeks, after lying all that time in a state of insensibility, more dead than alive, before I came to my senses, and remembered what had befallen me; and it was not until four more had elapsed that I was finally able to leave my chamber, and snuff the early breezes of spring.

As soon as I began to take notice of what was passing about me, I perceived that I lay in a good, though plainly−furnished chamber, and that, besides the physicians and other persons who occasionally bustled around me, there were two individuals so constantly in attendance, and so careful and affectionate in all their deportment, that I did not doubt they were members of my new family. Indeed, I had no sooner looked upon their faces, and heard their voices, than I felt a glow of satisfaction within my spirit; which convinced me they were my very dear and faithful friends, and that I loved them exceedingly.

They were both young men, the one perhaps of twenty−five, the other six or seven years older. Both were decked in Quaker garments, the elder being uncommonly plain in his appearance, wearingsmallclothes, shoe−buckles, and a hat with a brim full five inches wide, which he seldom laid aside. These gave him a patriarchal appearance, highly striking in one of his youth, which was much increased by an uncommon air of gravity and benevolence beaming from his somewhat swarthy and hollow visage.

The younger had no such sanctimonious appearance. There was a janty look even in the cut of his straight coat; he had a handsome face, and seemed conscious of it; he swung about the room at times with a strut that excited his own admiration; and any three moments out of five he might be seen before the looking−glass, surveying his teeth, inspecting the sweep of his shoulders, and brushing up his hair with his fingers. His plain coat was set at naught by a vest and trousers of the most fashionable cut and pattern; he had a gold guard−chain, worn abroad, and his watch, which, in all likelihood, was gold also, was stuck in his vestpocket, in the manner approved of by bucks and men of the world, instead of being deposited, according to the system of the wise, in a fob over the epigastrium; and, to crown his list of vanities, he had in his shirt a breastpin, which he took care to keep constantly visible, containing jewels of seven or eight different colours. It was manifest the young gentleman, if a Quaker, as his coat showed him to be, was quite a free one; and, indeed, the first words I heard him utter (which were also the first that I distinguished after rousing from my longsleep of insensibility) set the matter beyond question. I saw him peer into my face very curiously, and directly heard him call out to his companion —"I say, Snipe, by jingo, uncle Zack's beginning to look like a man in his senses!"

These words imparted a sensation of pleasure to my breast, but I felt impelled to censure the young man for the freedom of his expressions. My tongue, however, seemed to have lost its function; and while I was vainly attempting to articulate a reprimand, the other rushed up, and, giving me an earnest stare, seized upon one of my hands, which he fell to mumbling and munching in a highly enthusiastic manner, crying out, with inexpressible joy and fervour, "Blessed be the day! and does thee open thee eyes again? Verily, this shall be a day of rejoicing, and not to me only, the loving Abel Snipe, but to thousands. Does thee feel better, Zachariah, my friend and patron? Verily, the poor man that has mourned for thee shall be now as one that rejoices; for thee shall again speak to him the words of tenderness, and open the hand of alms−giving; yea, verily, and the afflicted shall mourn

no more!"

These words were even more agreeable than those uttered by the junior; and I experienced a feeling of displeasure when the latter suddenly cut them short by exclaiming, "Come, Snipe, none of thee confounded nonsense. I reckon uncle Zack has had enough philanthropy for the season; and don't thee go to humbug him into it any more.Thee has made thee own fortune, and should be content."

"Verily, friend Jonathan," said the fervent Abel Snipe, addressing the junior, but still tugging at my hand, "thee does not seem to rejoice at thee uncle's recovery as thee should; but thee jokes and thee jests sha'n't make my spirit rejoice the less."

"Verily," said Jonathan, "so it seems; but if thee tugs at uncle Zack in that way, and talks so loud, thee will do his business."

"Verily," said Abel—

"And verily," said Jonathan, interrupting him, "thee will say it is thee business to do his business; which is very true—but not in the sense of murder. So let us hold our tongues; and do thou, uncle Zachariah," he added, addressing me, "keep thyself quiet, and take this dose of physic."

It was unspeakable how much my spirit was warmed within me by this friendly contest between the two young men, and by their looks of affection. I longed to embrace them both, but had not the strength; and, indeed, it was three or four days more before I felt myself able, or was allowed by the physicians, to indulge in conversation.

At the expiration of that period I found myself growing stronger; the twenty thousand different pangs that had besieged my body, from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, whenever I attempted to move, were less racking and poignant; and, waking from a slumber that had been more agreeable than usual, and finding no one near me save the ever faithful Abel Snipe, I could no longer resist the impulse to speak to him.

"Abel Snipe," said I.

"Blessed be thee kind voice, that it speaks again!" said Abel Snipe, devouring my hand as before, and blubbering as he devoured.

"Thy name is Abel Snipe?" said I.

"Verily and surely, it is Abel Snipe, and no other," said he; "I hope thee don't forget me?"

"Why, really," said I, "I can't exactly say, friend Abel, seeing that there has a confusion come over my brain. But art thou certain I am no longer Abram Skinner?"

At this question Abel Snipe's eyes jumped half out of his head, and they regarded me with wo and horror. I saw he thought my wits were unsettled, and I hastened to remove the impression.

"Don't be alarmed, friend Abel; but, of a verity, I think I was killed and buried."

"Yea," said Abel; "yea, verily, the vile, ungrateful, malicious John Smith did smite thee over the head with a club, so that the bone was broken, and thee was as one that was dead; but oh! the villain! we have him fast in jail; and oh! the unnatural rascal! we'll hang him!"

"Verily," said I, feeling uncommon concern at the idea, "we will do no such wicked deed; but we will admonish the poor man of the wickedness of his ways, and, relieving his wants, discharge him from bondage."

"Yea," said Abel Snipe, with an air of contrition; "so will we do, as becometh the merciful man and Christian. But, verily, the flesh did quarrel with the spirit, and the old Adam cried out to me, 'Blood for blood,' and the thing that is flesh said, 'Vengeance on the wicked man that smote the friend of the afflicted!' But now thy goodness reproves me, and teaches me better things: wherefore I say, be not hard with the miserable man, for such is the wicked, and such is John Smith; who is now mourning over his foolish acts in the county prison. Yea, verily, we will be exceeding lenient," —and so forth, and so forth.

I do not think it needful to repeat all the wise and humane things said by Abel Snipe: they convinced me he was the most benevolent of beings, and warmed a similar spirit that was now burning in my breast, and which burnt on until it became at last a general conflagration of philanthropy. Yea, the transformation was complete; I found within me, on the sudden, a raging desire to augment the happiness of my fellow−creatures; and wondered that I had ever experienced any other passion. The generous Abel discoursed to me of the thousands I—that is, my prototype, the true Zachariah —had rescued from want and affliction, and of the thousands whom I was yet to relieve. My brain took fire at the thought, and I exulted in a sense of my virtue; I perceived, in imagination, the tear of distress chased away by that of gratitude; I heard the sob of sorrow succeeded by the sigh of happiness,

and the prayer of beseeching changedto the prayer of praise and thanksgiving. A gentle warmth flowed from my bosom through the uttermost bounds of my frame, and I felt that I was a happy man; yea, reader, yea, and verily, I was at last happy. My only affliction was, that the battered condition of my body prevented my sallying out at once, and practising the noble art of charity. The tears sprang into my eyes when Abel recounted the numbers of the miserable who had besieged my doors during my two weeks of insensibility, crying for assistance.

"Why didst thou not relieve them, Abel Snipe?" I exclaimed.

"Verily," said Abel, turning his eyes to heaven with a look of fervent rapture, "I did relieve the sorrowing and destitute even to the uttermost penny that was in my pocket. Blessed be the deed, for I have not now a cent that I can call my own. As for thine, Zachariah, it became me not to dispense it, without thy spoken authority; the more especially as thy nephew, Jonathan, did hint, and vehemently insist, that thou hadst bestowed too much already for thy good, and his."

These words filled me with concern and displeasure.

"Surely," said I, "the young man Jonathan is not averse to deeds of charity?"

"Verily," said Abel, clasping his hands, and looking as if he would have wept, "the excellent and beloved youth doth value money more than the good which money may produce; and of thatgood he esteemeth chiefly the portion that falleth to his own lot. Of a surety, I do fear he hath an eagerness and hankering, a fleshly appetite and an exceeding strong desire, after the things of the world. He delighteth in the vanity of fine clothes, and his discourse is of women and the charms thereof. He hath bought the picture of a French dancing−woman, and hung it in his chamber, swearing (for he hath a contempt for affirmation) that it is a good likeness of the maiden Ellen Wild; and yesterday I did perceive him squeaking at a heathenish wind−instrument, called a flute, and thereupon he did avow an intention to try his hand at that more paganish thing of strings, called a fiddle; and, oh! what grieved me above all, and caused the spirit within me to cry 'avaunt! and get thee away, Jonathan,' he did offer me a ticket, of the cost of one dollar, to procure me admission into the place of sin and vanity, called the theatre, swearing 'by jingo' and 'by gemini' there was 'great fun there,' and offering to lend me a coat, hat, and trousers, so that the wicked should not know me. Yea, verily, the young man is as a young lion that roameth up and down—as a sheep that wandereth from the pinfold into the forbidden meadows—and as for charity, peradventure thee will not believe me, but he averred, 'the only charity he believed in was that which began at home.' "

These confessions of the faithful Abel in relation to the young man Jonathan, caused my spirit to wax sorrowful within me. But it is fitting, before pursuing such conversations further, that I should inform the reader who the faithful Abel and the young man Jonathan were.

The latter, as Abel himself informed me, was my—or, if the reader will, my prototype's—nephew, the only, and now orphan, son of a sister, who had married, as the phrase is, "out of meeting," and, dying destitute, left her boy to the charge of the benevolent Zachariah, who, being himself childless, adopted him as his son and heir, and had treated him as such, from his childhood up. The great wish of Zachariah was to make the adopted son a philanthropist, like himself; in which, however, he was destined to disappointment; for Jonathan was of a wild and worldly turn, fond of frolic and amusement, and extremely averse to squander in works of charity the possessions he designed applying in future years to his own benefit. Nevertheless, he was greatly beloved by his uncle; and I, who was imbued with that uncle's spirit, and destined to love and abhor what he had loved and abhorred, whether I would or not, soon began to regard him as one of the two apples of my eyes.

CHAPTER II. Some account of the worthy Abel Snipe.

The faithful Abel Snipe, it seems (his history was told me by Jonathan), was a man whom Zachariah, some years before, while playing the Howard in a neighbouring sovereignty, had found plunged in deep distress, and making shoes in the penitentiary. To this condition he had been reduced by sheer goodness; for, being an amateur in that virtuous art of which Zachariah was a professor, and having no means of his own to relieve the woes of the wretched, he had borrowed from the hoards of his employers (the president and directors of a certain stock−company, in whose office he had a petty appointment), and thus, perforce, made charitable an institution that was chartered to be uncharitable. He committed the fault, however, of borrowing without the previous ceremony of asking—either because he was of so innocent a temper as to think such a proceeding unnecessary, or because he knew beforehand that the request would not be granted; and the consequence was, that the president and directors, as aforesaid, did very mercilessly hand him over to the prosecuting attorney, the prosecuting attorney to a grand jury, the grand jury to a petit jury, the petit jury to apenitentiary, and the penitentiary to the devil—or such, at least, would have been the ending of the unfortunate amateur, had not the philanthropist, who always ordered his shoes, for charity's sake, at the prison, been struck with the uncommon excellence of a pair constructed by Abel's hands. He sought out the faithful maker (for sure a man must be faithful to make a good pair of shoes in a penitentiary), was melted by his tale of wo, even as the wax through which Abel was then drawing a bunch of ends was melted by the breath thereof; and shedding tears to find the poor creature's virtue so shabbily rewarded, ran to the prosecutors with a petition, which he induced them to sign, transmitted it to the governor, with a most eloquent essay on the divine character of mercy, and, in less than a week, walked Abel Snipe out of prison, a pardoned man.

The charity of the professor did not end with Abel's liberation. Enraptured with the fervour of his gratitude, touched by the artlessness of his character, and moved by the destitution to which a pardon in the winter−time exposed him, he carried him to his own land and house, fed, clothed, and employed him upon a new pair of shoes; and, discovering that he had talents for a nobler business, advanced him in time to the rank of accountant, or secretary, collector of rents, dispenser of secret charities, and, in general, factotum and fiduciary at large. Such a servant was needed by the humane Zachariah; his philanthropy left him notime to attend to his own affairs, and his nephew Jonathan had fallen in love, and become incompetent to their management.

Never was experiment more happy for subject and object: Abel Snipe was made an honest and useful man; and Zachariah Longstraw obtained a friend and servant without price. The gratitude of Abel was equal to his ability; humility, fidelity, and religion, were the least of his virtues—he became a philanthropist, like his master. He managed his affairs with such skill, that Zachariah had always pennies at hand for the unfortunate; which, it seems, had not always happened before; and, what was equally charming, the zealous Abel dived into every lane, alley, and gutter, to discover new objects of charity for his patron. To crown all, he felt moved in the spirit to profess the faith so greatly adorned by his protector; and, after due preparation and probation, appeared in the garb of peace and humility, and even went so far as to hold forth once at meeting.

In a word, Abel Snipe was a jewel of the first water, who supplied the place of the idle Jonathan in all matters of business, and almost in the affections of his kinsman. If not equally beloved, he was more highly esteemed; and his shining worth consoled the philanthropist for many of the derelictions of his nephew. He became the confidant, the coadjutor, and the adviser of Zachariah; and Zachariah never found occasion to lament the be nevolence that had redounded so much to his own advantage.

CHAPTER III. In which the young man Jonathan argues several cases of conscience, which are recommended to be brought before Yearly Meeting.

My nephew Jonathan had no great love for poor Abel; and he did not tell me his story without passing sundry sarcasms on him, as well as myself, for bestowing so much confidence on the poor unfortunate man. I rebuked the youth for his freedom and uncharitableness, and remembering what Abel had told me of his own idle and trifling course of life, I felt impelled by the new spirit of virtue that possessed me to take him to task; which I did in the following manner; and it is wondrous how completely and how soon (for I was yet lying on my back, groaning with my unhealed wounds and bruises) my spirit assumed and acted upon all that was peculiar in the nature of Zachariah Longstraw.

"Nevvy Jonathan," said I, "the uncharitableness of thy spirit afflicts me. Trouble not thyself to censure the worthy Abel Snipe; but think how thou shalt amend thine own crying faults. It has been said to me, Jonathan, my son, and verily I fear it is true, that thou squeakest upon flutes, and that thou makest profane noises with fiddles; and, furthermore, that thou runnest after, and dost buy,the vanity of pictures, and triest thy hand at painting the same."

"I do," said Jonathan; "and I find nothing against them in the Scripture."

"Verily," said I, "but dost thou find nothing against them in thine own spirit?"

"Not a whit," said Jonathan; "my heart says love them, and my head approves the counsel. Where's the harm in these things? I know thee don't say they are in themselves sinful."

"Verily, no," said I; "but they are indirectly so; for, being wholly useless, the time bestowed upon them is time lost and wasted; and that, nevvy Jonathan, I think thee will allow to be sinful."

"Not I," said Jonathan, stoutly; "I don't believe the wasting of time to be any such heinous matter as thee supposes; had it been so, man would not have been made to waste a third of his existence in slumber. But granting this, for the sake of argument, I deny thy premises, uncle Zachariah. The time bestowed upon these things is not wasted. Heaven has given to nine men out of ten a capacity to enjoy both music and painting; it has done more—it has set an example of both before our eyes, and thus laid the foundation of the divine arts in Nature. What is the world around us but a great concert−hall, echoing with the music of bird and beast, of wind, water, and foliage? what but a great gallery of pictures, painted by the hand of Providence? Nature is a painter—Nature is a musician; and her sons can donothing better than follow her example. But were Nature neither, it is not the less evident that these arts are lawful and sinless. They can be proved so, uncle Zachariah, upon thine own system of philanthropy; for they add to the happiness of our existence, and they do so without corrupting our morals or injuring our neighbours. I say, uncle," quoth Jonathan, who had pronounced this defence with much enthusiasm, and now concluded with a grin of triumph, "I have thee there dead as a herring!"

"Verily," said I, more pleased than offended at the young man's ingenuity, for my spirit yearned over him the more at every word, "thee has a talent for argument, which I would thee would cultivate; for then thee could get into the Assembly, and finally, perhaps, into Congress, and do much good to thy fellow−men, by reforming divers crying abuses."

"Verily," said he, "the first thing I should reform would be thy philanthropy."

"Don't be funny, nevvy," said I, "for I have not done with thee. Thee was dancing last night, in the house of the vain man Ebenezer Wild."

"I was," said Jonathan; "I was shaking my legs; and I can't see the harm of it, for the flies do the same thing all day long."

"Verily, thee should remember that a reasonable being, that hath a brain, should rather exercise that than his heels."

"I grant thee," said Jonathan; "but thee knowsbrains are not so abundant as heels; and thee should expect the mass of people to conduct according to their endowments."

"Jonathan," said I, "if thee thinks to make me laugh, thee is mistaken. Of a verity I will not be rigid with thee; but, verily, I must speak to thee of what I hold thy faults. Thou hast a vain and eager hankering after the society of giddy women."

"I have!" said Jonathan, with great fervour. "Heaven made women to be loved, and I love them—especially Ellen Wild!"

"Sure," said I, "I have heard that name?"

"Sure," said Jonathan, "it would be odd if thee had not; for thee knows her well—thine old friend Ebenezer's daughter."

"A giddy girl, Jonathan, I fear me; a giddy girl!"

"As giddy as the dev—that is, as giddy as a goose," said Jonathan.

"What!" said I; "thee meant something worse! Verily, I have heard thee uses bad language, Jonathan."

"By jingo!" said the youth, indignantly, "there is no end to the slanders people will say of one. I use bad language? By jingo!"

"Why, thee is at it now," said I; "let thy yea be yea, and thy nay nay; for all beyond is profanity or folly. But thee will allow, Jonathan, that when thee is among the people of the world, thee uses the language thereof, forgetting the language of simplicity and sobriety, which would best become thy lips?"

"Ay; there I plead guilty, and with good reason too," said Jonathan. "When I was a boy, thee had thoughts of making me a merchant, and thee compelled me to study French and German. Now, when I meet a Frenchman or a German unacquainted with the English tongue, in what language does thee suppose I address him?"

"Why, French or German, to be sure."

"Verily, I do," said the youth; "and when I get among the people of the world, I speak to them in the language of the world; for, poor ignorant creatures, they don't understand Quaker. Moreover, uncle, does thee know Ellen Wild is of opinion we Friends don't speak good grammar? Now she and I spent a whole hour the other evening, trying to parse 'thee is,' 'thee does,' 'thee loves,' and so on, and we could not work them according to Murray. I say, uncle, does thee know of any command in Scripture to speak bad grammar?"

"No," said I; "but it is not forbidden; and the phrases mentioned, thou knowest, have crept into our speech as corruptions, and are only used for conversational purposes."

"Truly," said Jonathan, "and the language of the world is used for conversational purposes also. I say, uncle Zachariah, that now's a clincher!"

"I won't quarrel with thee on this account, Jonathan. But how comes it thou wert seen in that wicked place, the theatre?"

"By jingo!" said he, "Snipe has been blabbing there too!"

"What!" said I, "does thou strive to conceal it?"

"Yea," said Jonathan; "for when we do our good deeds, we should do them in secret. Uncle Zachariah, I went to the theatre in charity."

"Thee did," said I, charmed more than I can express at the thought of the young man's virtue.

"Yes, uncle," said the youth; "and great need have the actors of charity; for a poorer set of fellows I think I never saw got together." And here the rogue fell a laughing in my face: "And so thee need not distress thyself; for I sha'n't go there again until they get a better company. But, uncle Zachariah, thee has exhorted me enough for one time, and it is my turn now. So do thou be conformable, and answer my questions; for, I can tell thee, I have a fault to find with thee. According to thine own system of philanthropy, it is thy duty to make thy fellow−creatures happy. Now I ask thee whether thou dost not think it thy duty to make me, thy loving nephew, happy, as well as a stranger?"

"Verily," said I, "I do."

"Why then," said Jonathan, "there is a short way of doing it. Uncle Zachariah, I want to be married. Ellen and I have talked the matter over, and she says she'll have me. Now, uncle, thee did once talk of giving me a counting−house, and ten or twenty thousand dollars, as the case might be, to begin a commission business; and Mr. Wild talked of doing as much in the way of dowry to Ellen. And now I say, uncle Zachariah, as the shipwrecked sailor did when he prayed among the breakers, if thee means to help me, now's the time."

"What!" said I, "have I so much property?"

"Thee is joking," said the youth; "thee is a rich man, and thee knows thee can afford it. But thee must do it soon, or it may be too late; for, I can tell thee, folks begin to talk of thy philanthropy, and say thou art flinging away so much money that presently thou wilt have nothing left to give me. Mr. Wild is of this mind, and he has hinted some things to me very plainly. In a word, uncle, if thee does not permit me to marry Ellen soon, he will

break the match. And so, if thee will make me a happy man—"

"I will," said I, with uncommon fervour; "thee shall marry the maiden, and I will straightway see what I can do for thee. Verily, what is wealth but the dross of the earth, unless used to purchase happiness for those that are worthy."

At these words Jonathan leaped for joy, seized my hand and kissed it, vowed I was "his dear old dad, for all I was only his uncle," and ran from the room—doubtless to impart the happy tidings to his mistress.

CHAPTER IV. Containing little or nothing save apostrophes, exhortations, and quarrels.

How happy was I, to think I had conferred happiness upon another! how agreeable my sensations! how delightful the approbation of my own heart! How much I rejoiced that my soul had at last found a habitation equal to its wishes! an abode of peace! a dwelling of content! "If I am Zachariah Longstraw," said I to myself, "I will show myself worthy of the name; I will spend his money in the great cause of philanthropy; I will make the afflicted smile; I will win the blessings of the poor; I will do more good than even Zachariah Longstraw himself: yea, of a surety, I will devote myself to a life of virtue!"

While I was making these virtuous resolutions, the faithful Abel Snipe came to my bedside, and told me there were divers suffering creatures, widows with nine small children, widowers with fourteen, sick old women, and starving old men, in great need of relief; and so affecting was the picture he drew of their griefs, that the tears rolled from my eyes, and I bade him, if there was any money he could honestly lay his hands on, carry comfort to them all.

"Verily," said he, "I have just collected the quarter's rent of the house in Market−street; and it will be enough, and more."

"Relieve the poor afflicted creatures, then.. And hark thee, Abel Snipe, does thee consider me a rich man? If so, let me know where I can find twenty thousand dollars to set up the young man Jonathan in business, and marry him to the maiden Ellen Wild."

"Alas!" said Abel Snipe; "of a verity, the young man is in a hurry; and alas! for, of a verity, if thee takes away at this time such a great sum from thee possessions, thee will cut off the right hand of thee charity."

And thereupon the benevolent creature, after showing me, which it was easy to do, that, with the mere revenue of the sum demanded, if kept in our own hands, we could carry smiles and rejoicing into at least a hundred families every year, exhorted me not to forget that I was the friend of the afflicted, nor to faint in the good work of philanthropy. Jonathan was a very young man, he said—only twenty−five—happy in his youth, happy in his affections, happy in the certain prospect he enjoyed of sooner or later arriving at the fullest felicity. Why should he not then consent, like us, to forego for a while his selfish desires, contribute his portion to the wants of the poor, and, by labouring a few years in their cause, approve himself worthy of fortune? How much better that he should endure a fancied ill, than that a hundred afflicted families should be given up to actual want? Hecontended that the young man's request was untimely and selfish, and that I would only harden his heart, while breaking a thousand others, if I granted it. In short, he said so many things, and painted so many affecting pictures of the miseries of my fellow−creatures, and the beauties of charity, that my mind was quite changed on the subject, and I perceived it was my duty to resist the young man's wishes.

This change, on the morrow (being the first day that I was able to sit up), I explained to Jonathan, exhorting him, with a feeling enthusiasm, to tear all narrow, selfish feelings from his heart, and embark with me, like a virtuous youth, in the great enterprise of philanthropy. He fell into a passion, told me my philanthropy was a fudge, and Abel Snipe a rogue and hypocrite; vowed I had a greater regard for knaves and paupers than for my own flesh and blood, and was flinging away my money only to encourage vice and beggary. It was in vain I sought to pacify the indignant youth. An evil spirit seized upon him. He did nothing for three days but scold, reproach, and complain. He abused the faithful Abel to his face, calling him a fox, viper, cormorant, harpy, and I know not what beside; all which Abel endured with patience and resignation, for he was of a meek and humble spirit. Nay, not content with this, he proceeded on the third day to greater lengths, and did very intemperately fall upon the said Abel Snipe, tweaking him by the nose and ears, until the poorman yelled with pain—and even endeavoured to kick him out of the house; after which, being censured for the same, and I siding with Abel, as justice demanded, in the controversy, his resentment grew to such a pitch that he left the house, declaring he would live with me no longer, but leave me to ruin myself at my leisure.

This was an occurrence that caused me much pain, for verily I had an exceeding great love for the young man, and I perceived that he was treating me with ingratitude. I was, however, greatly comforted by the increased zeal and affection of the ever−faithful Abel; who, coming to me with tears in his eyes, declared that he could not bear

the thought of being a cause of dissension between me and my nephew, and therefore besought me that I would discard him from my presence, when I could again live happily with my Jonathan.

I resisted, while duly appreciating the good man's friendship; and, fortunately, there needed no such sacrifice on my part; for, on the eleventh day, Jonathan returned of his own accord, and, confessing his folly, and entreating Abel's forgiveness, as well as mine, was restored again to favour. His return itself was grateful to my feelings; but the reader may judge how great was my rapture, when Jonathan avowed a change in his sentiments on the subject of philanthropy, and declared that the spirit at last moved him to think of his suffering fellow−creatures. He entreated to be conducted to the abodes of affliction, and there theconversion was completed. He became a changed man, and in a few days was almost as zealous an alms−giver as myself. I took him to my arms, and said—

"Now, Jonathan, thee is a man in whom I no longer fear the seductions of the flesh. Thee shall marry the maid Ellen, and be set up in business."

"Nay," said Jonathan; "not so. I am yet but as a youth in years, and the time sufficeth for all things. Let not the whirl of business and the joy of the honey−moon disturb the virtue that is yet young and frail in my bosom. Of a verity, Ellen Wild will wait till the fall; and if she don't, and my heart should be broken, verily I shall then be better enabled to sympathize with the wretched."

Such was the lofty, though new−born virtue of my Jonathan!

But of that, as well as our works of benevolence, I shall speak in the following chapters.

CHAPTER V. Which is short and moral, and can therefore be skipped.

I have already said that the mere presence of the philanthropic feeling, now infused into my spirit, filled me with happiness, even while I lay upon my back, aching with wounds and bruises. It may be inferred, therefore, that my soul was ecstasy itself, when, restored at last to health and strength, I stalked into the air, dispensing charity with both hands.

Of a verity, it was—at least, for a time; and I will say, that, during the first month of my new existence, I experienced a thousand agreeable sensations, such as had never occurred to me in my whole life before. And here let me observe, that, if what I have to add shall show that there are offsets of inconvenience and tribulation even to the satisfaction of the benevolent, I do not design to throw any discredit on the virtue of benevolence itself; which I truly regard as one of the divinest of endowments, angelic in its nature, and blessed in its effects, when practised with discretion; and amiable, if not lovely, even in its folly. I believe, indeed, that if Heaven looks with peculiar indulgence on the errors of any man, it is in the case of him who has the softest judgment for the errors, and the readiest reparation for the miseries, of his fellows. What I wish to be understood is, that man is an unthankful animal, and of such rare inconsistency of temper, that he seldom foregoes an opportunity to punish the virtue which he so loudly applauds.

I was now a philanthropist, and I will say (which I think I may do without shame, the merit being less attributable to me than to that worthy deceased personage whose body I inhabited), that a truer, purer, or more zealous one never walked the earth. I should fill a book as big as a family Bible, were Ito record all the good things I did or attempted, while a tenant in Zachariah Longstraw's body. All my feelings and desires were swallowed up in one great passion of philanthropy; universal benevolence was the maxim I engraved upon my heart; I had no thought but to relieve the distresses, meliorate the condition, and advance the happiness of my species. My generosity extended equally to individuals and communities; I toiled alike in the service of the beggar and the million, putting bread into the mouth of the one, and infusing moral principles into the breasts of the others. In a word, I was, as I have called myself already, a philanthropist; and if my virtue was somewhat excessive in degree, it proceeded from the sincerest promptings of spirit.

CHAPTER VI. An inconvenience of being in another man's body, when called upon to give evidence as to one's own exit.

It may be supposed that the treatment I (for, of a verity, I myself came in for some share of the hard usage that killed the true Zachariah) had received from the base and brutal John Smith, must have cooled my regard for him, if it did not affect my feelings of philanthropy in general. I confess that I did regard that personage with sentiments of disgust and indignation; but, nevertheless, I was very loath to appear against him when summoned(as I was, soon after leaving my sick−bed) to give evidence on the charges preferred against him. These were two in number, and afforded matter for as many separate endictments. In the first—and, verily, I was startled when I heard it—John Smith was charged with the murder of Abram Skinner; in the second, with an assault, with intent to kill, upon myself—that is, my second self, Zachariah Longstraw—and also with robbery.

Now, if the reader will reflect a moment upon the relation in which I stood to these charges, he will allow that the necessity of testifying on them reduced me to a quandary. In the first place, I knew very well that Mr. John Smith, rogue and assassin as he was, had not killed Abram Skinner, but that I had finished that unhappy gentleman myself; and I knew also, in the second, that my admitting this fact would, without doing Mr. John Smith any good, produce a decided inconvenience to myself:— not that there was any fear I should be arraigned for murder, but because nobody would believe me. I remembered how my telling the truth to my friend John Darling, the deputy attorney, in regard to my first transformation, had caused him to believe me mad; and I foresaw that telling the truth on the present occasion would reduce me to the same predicament, and perhaps the Friends' mad−house into the bargain.

There was the same difficulty in relation to the second charge, accompanied by another still greater; for, whereas John Smith was there only accusedof assault with intent to kill, he had in reality committed a murder; which if I had affirmed, as I must have done had I affirmed any thing at all, I should have been a living contradiction of my own testimony, and thus considered madder than ever.

The truth is, I was in a dilemma, out of which the truth could not extract me; and the more I thought the matter over, the greater was my embarrassment. A feeling of integrity within me (for Zachariah Longstraw was a man of conscience) urged me to speak the truth; while common sense showed me how much worse than useless truth would be in such an extraordinary conjuncture.

I received a visit from the prosecuting attorney, who very naturally expected a clear and satisfactory account of Mr. John Smith's doings on the night of the murder; and the difficulty I had with him (that is, the attorney) gave me a foretaste of what I was to expect when summoned into the witness's box in court. I remember that the gentleman, after plying me with many questions, to which he got that sort of replies invidiously termed "Quaker answers," flew into a huff, and threatened me with what would be the consequence if I should prove backward in court. And, sure enough, his prediction was verified; for, not giving a straight answer to any one question when the trial came on, I received divers reprimands from the court, and was finally committed for a contempt to prison; where I lay two or three days, until called into court again to give evidence on the second endictment, Mr. John Smith having been found not guilty on the first. This was owing in part, I presume, to the testimony of several surgeons, who deposed that there were no marks of violence upon Abram Skinner's body; although the evidence of the watchman, who had seen him alive through the window, and afterward found John Smith burying his dead body in the same hole with myself, went rather hard with him. I say the acquittal was perhaps owing in part to the testimony of the surgeons; though much of it might be attributed to the marvellous humanity that reigns in the criminal courts of the city of Brotherly Love, to the great benefit and encouragement of that proscribed and injured class of men, namely—murderers.

I made little better work of the second attempt at witnessing; but, as I have matters of much greater importance to demand my attention, and the reader can easily infer what I did and what I did not affirm, I must beg to despatch the second trial by relating that I was packed off a second time to prison for contempt, but that the evidence of the watchman, and my late wounds and bruises, were esteemed sufficient to secure the prisoner's conviction; and accordingly John Smith was convicted, and accommodated with lodgings in the penitentiary for the fourth time.

My own incarceration was of no long duration. My contumacy, as it was called, was considered extraordinary; but it was generally thought to be owing to a mistaken humanity, and a perverted,Quixotic conscientiousness, such as are common enough among persons of the persuasion I then belonged to. This, and perhaps the circumstance that I was yet in feeble health (for the trial, as I said, took place soon after I left my bed), caused me to be treated with lenity; and in a few days I was liberated.

All this, I beg the reader to understand, happened before the reconciliation with my nephew Jonathan, and, of course, before I had well begun my career of philanthropy. Of that career, of some of my deeds of goodness, and of the consequences they produced, I shall now speak.

CHAPTER VII. The sorrows of a philanthropist.

My benevolence was of a two−fold character, being both theoretic and practical. In the latter sense, is to be regarded the relief which I granted with my own hands to such suffering persons as I could lay them on; and there was no way in which I did not personally relieve some one wretch or other. By the former, I understand a thousand schemes which I devised and framed, to enlist the sympathies of communities, and so relieve the afflicted in a mass; besides a thousand others which were designed to bestow upon the poor and viciousthat virtuous knowledge and those virtuous principles, which are better than alms of gold and silver. I instituted some half a dozen charitable societies, to supply fuel, clothing, food, and employment to the suffering poor; as well as others to exhort them to economy, industry, prudence, fortitude, and so forth. I formed societies even among themselves, classing divers isolated creatures into bands, who wrought in common, and disposed of their wares, either in a shop kept for the purpose, or at fairs. I established schools to keep the children of the poor out of mischief, and one in particular I supported solely from my own, that is to say, Zachariah Longstraw's pocket.

I bestowed much of my regards upon the poor wretches in prison, doing all that I was permitted to effect a reformation in their habits and feelings; and I took uncommon pains to scatter light and sentiments of a civilized character among the worthy representatives of the Green Island, who make up so large a portion of our suffering population.

And let it not be supposed that I neglected that other class of poor creatures, called negroes, whom, although allowed the name, and most of the privileges of freemen, their white brethren refuse to take to their bosoms, merely because they have black faces, woolly heads, and an ill savour of body. For myself, verily, if they were not comely in my sight, nor agreeable to my nostrils, I said, "Heaven hath made them so;" and although my nephew Jonathan insisted that Heaven had done thesame thing with other animals, and that, upon my principles, men should be as affectionate with pigs and badgers as they were with cats and lap−dogs, I perceived that they were my brethern, and that it became me to conquer the prejudices lying only in my eyes and nostrils. I girded my loins to the work, and verily, I prevailed over the weakness of the old Adam. Of a verity, I was the African's friend.

But, oh! the wickedness of the world, and the ingratitude thereof! The heart of man is even as the soil of the earth, which, the more it is stirred up by cultivation, the more barren and worthless it becomes. It is as the fields of the Ancient Dominion, where, if a man soweth barley and corn, he shall reap a harvest of Jamestown weed, poke−berries, and scrub pines. It is as the bulldog that one feedeth with beef and other wholesome viands, who, the moment he has done his dinner, snaps, for his dessert, at the feeder's heel. It is as the tender flowers, which, in the winter−time, a man taketh from the cold, to warm, by night, in his chamber, and which smother him with foul air before morning. Verily, it was my lot to find, even as my nephew Jonathan had once foolishly contended, that even philanthropy is not secure from the sting of unthankfulness—that benevolence is, in one sense, the great parent of ingratitude—since it begets it. For a period of full seven months (for so long did I remain in Zachariah's body, after recoving my health), I laboured to do good to my fellows, and, verily, I laboured with might and main, Yet, had I toiled with the same energy to injure and oppress, I almost doubt whether I should have been rewarded with more manifold outpourings of wrath and fury. Verily, as I said before, the world is a wicked world, and I begin to doubt whether man can make it better.

One of the first mishaps that befell me was of the following nature. Stepping one morning into the mayor's office, which was a favourite haunt with me, seeing that misery doth there greatly abound, I fell upon a man whom the magistrate was about to commit to jail, for being drunk and beating his wife and children, he being unable to pay the fine imposed upon him, and to find surety for his future good behaviour.

The spirit stirred within me as I beheld the contrite looks of the culprit, and I said to myself— "While he lies in jail, his poor wife and his infants may perish with hunger." I paid the fine, and, though the mayor did very broadly hint to me that a little punishment would do the man good, and his wife too, seeing that he was a barbarous fellow, I offered myself for his security, and thus sent him back to his rejoicing family. I said to myself— "This very night will I witness the happiness I have created." I went accordingly to the man's house, where I found the wicked fellow raving with drink, and beating his wife as before, his children screaming with terror, and the neighbours crying out for a constable. I did but say a word of reprehension to him, when the brutish

ingrate, leavinghis rib, fell foul of myself, mauling me cruelly; and I believe he would have beaten me to death, had I not been rescued by the timely appearance of a constable. "Thee sees the end of thy humanity!" said the mayor, when I entered his office the next morning, that my black eye and bruised visage might testify against the ungrateful man; "thee will not object to my committing the fellow now?"

"Nay," said I; "it is drunkenness that has made the poor man mad. Therefore lock him up in prison until his madness hath departed."

"I will," said the mayor; "and thee will have the goodness to pay over to the clerk the hundred dollars in which thee bound thyself that the rascal should keep the peace."

"Verily," said I, "it is not just I should pay the money; for the beating was upon my own body."

"Truly," said the mayor, "and so it was; and therefore it is the harder that thee should have to pay it. But pay it thee must, the man having broken the peace as much in beating thee, as if it had been any other citizen of the commonwealth."

And so much satisfaction I had for befriending the sot; the charity, which did more harm than good even to the man's poor family, since it exposed them a second time to his fury, costing me, without counting the fine paid on the first day, a sore beating and one hundred dollars.

My next misadventure was the being cheated in a very aggravated way by a poor man to whom Iloaned money, without exacting bond or voucher, the same being loaned to re−establish him in a gainful business, which had been interrupted by an unfortunate accident. For, having prospered in his business, and I requiring that he should now repay the money, that I might devote it to the service of others, he very impudently averred that he had never had any thing of me, except advice and a good word of recommendation here and there; swore that he never paid away or received a cent without giving or taking a receipt; defied me to prove my claim; and concluded his baseness by threatening to kick me out of his workshop.

These instances of ingratitude were followed by others of a still deeper die, and so numerous, that I can mention only a few of them.

Walking one day to that infant school which I had established, to keep children out of mischief while their hard−working parents were at their daily labours, I perceived the urchins standing at the door, pelting the passers−by with mud. Reproving them for this misconduct, the graceless vagabonds did speedily turn their battery upon myself; and, not content to plaster and bespatter me with mudballs from head to foot, they fell upon me, and, being very numerous, did actually roll me about in a gutter, where was a deep slough, so that I had nearly perished with suffocation, being sorely bruised into the bargain. To crown all, having expelled from my school the ringleaders in this marvellous outbreaking of precocious ingratitude, I was visitedby their parents, all of them abusing me for my tyrannical usage of their children (although, of a truth, the tyranny was all on the side of the juveniles), and impudently demanding that I should pay them for their boys' time, at the rate of twenty−five cents a week each, for as many weeks as I had had them at school. Of a surety, some people are very unreasonable.

It was also my misfortune to offend divers tailors and shopkeepers, by benevolently taking part in the efforts of their poor unfortunate needle−women to obtain better wages; and one day, in the streets, these angry men did hustle me, and tear a tail from my coat. But I consoled myself for this violence, by thinking of the gratitude of the poor creatures I was defending; when, making my way, the following evening, to their place of assembly, I was set upon by the whole crew, for that I did hint, that, as their difficulties did chiefly proceed from their numbers, there being more hands at the business of sewing than were required, they would greatly benefit themselves, and the community too, by going, two thirds of them at least, into service, there being ever a great want of domestics in our respectable families. I say, I did but hint this reasonable and undeniable truth, together with a friendly remark upon the exposed state of their morals, when there arose such a storm among them as was never perhaps witnessed by any other human being. "Hear the old hunks!" said one: "he wants to make niggur servants ofus! us, that is freeborn American girls!"—"Yes, ladies!" said another, "and he is insinivating we are no better nor we should be!"—"Turn the old rip out!" said a third; and "Turn him out!" cried the other three hundred and fifty there present. Of a verity, they did assail me with both tongue and nail, testifying such vigour of spirit and strength of arm, that, were I a philanthropist now, which I fortunately am not, and were I moved to consult their interests as before, I should endeavour to form them into a regiment of soldiers, not doubting that they would, at any moment, prevail over twice their numbers of male fighting men. Of a verity, I say, they did violently pull me about, thrusting me at last from the apartment: and their ingratitude was a sore wound to my spirit.

CHAPTER VIII. The same subject continued.

Another evil that befell me about the same time, was equally afflicting. A negro−man that had fled from bondage in a neighbouring state, being sharply hunted, and about to be captured by the person that called him his property, I carried him to my house, and there concealed him for three days and mights, until his master had departed; "For," said I, "of a surety, slavery is a bitterpill, and one that cures neither the rheumatism nor the ague; and, therefore, why should my brother Pompey be compelled to swallow it?" My brother Pompey, having eaten, drunk, and slept at my expense for the three days mentioned, disappeared on the morning of the fourth before daylight, carrying with him twenty−seven pounds of silver, in spoons, teapots, and other vessels, the three watches belonging to myself, my nephew, and Abel Snipe, as well as Jonathan's best coat and trousers. Verily, I was confounded at the fellow's ingratitude, and the loss of my valuables, all of which, however, though broken up, it was my good fortune to recover, together with the three watches. The thief himself, being taken, was clapped into jail for a while, and then surrendered to his master, and carried back to bondage; and this stirring up the choler of the free Africans in town, they did naught but cry out upon me as the author of his misfortune, surrounding my house with a mob, and proceeding to the length of even burning it down. At least, the house taking fire, and manifestly by the act of an incendiary, it was charged by my friends upon these raging foolish people, though I was never able to prove it upon any one in particular. As my good fortune would have it, Abel Snipe had taken out a policy of ensurance, so that I recovered the money from the company; but not without going to law, the company averring that my humanity rendered me careless.

I caused another dwelling to be built; and, inbuilding it, received another strong and inconvenient proof, not merely of man's ingratitude, but of his natural hostility to the charity which benefits his neighbours. I bought my marble out of the prison, in order to encourage industry among the prisoners, and thus lighten the load of taxation on the community at large. This being known, the marble−cutters fell into wrath, denounced me as the friend of villany and the enemy of honest industry; and being joined by the shoemakers, who had put me down in their character−book as a patron to none but prison−workmen, and by divers other mechanics that had some grudge of the same kind, they seized upon me, as I stood surveying my rising mansion, and bedaubed me from head to foot with thick whitewash, painting in great black letters, on the broad of my back, the following words, namely—"The Rogue's Friend;" which caused me, after I had escaped from their hands, to be hooted at by boys and men along the street, and to be bitten by a great cur−dog, that was amazed at my appearance.

Another misfortune, still more distressing, befell me one day, as I walked among the western suburbs, seeking whom I might relieve. I espied a company of men surrounding a ring, made with stakes and ropes, in which two wretched creatures were stripping off their garments, with the intention to do battle upon one another with their fists. These were gentlemen of the fancy, as it is called; though imagination can paint nothing of a more grossly animaland brutish character, afar from all that is fanciful, than that very class that calls itself of the fancy. I was shocked that the poor creatures should, in their ignorance, agree to maul and beat one another, for the amusement of a mob; and I was concerned that a mob, containing so many rational beings, should be willing to harry on two such silly fellows to harm each other for their pastime. I stepped among them, therefore, and addressed them, exhorting them to peace and harmony; and this producing but little effect on them, I upbraided them with breaking the laws, both human and divine, and assured them I would go hunt up the police, to prevent the mischief they meditated. Alas! how ungratefully they used me! There was a man at a distance who was heating a great pot of tar, to pay the bottom of a canal−boat; and just a moment before, a carter had stopped to look on the affray, leaving on the roadside his cart, on which, among other articles of domestic furniture, was an old feather−bed, lying on the top of all. The devil had surely brought these things upon the ground, that his sinful children, the gentlemen of the fancy, might be at no loss how to testify their hatred of humanity. The very combatants themselves were the first to seize me, and cry out, "Tar and feather the old Bother'em! Douse down the bed, and dab the pot off the fire." And "Daub him well!" they cried, all the while that their wretched companions, drowning the cries I made for assistance, with savage yells of rage and merriment, covered me from head to foot with the nasty pitch, and then, tearing the bed to pieces, emptied its contents over my reeking body. Then, having feathered me all over, and so transformed me that I looked more like an ostrich than a human being,

they tied me to a post, where I was forced to remain, looking upon the fight that immediately ensued between the champions. A horrid sight it was; but I was so devoured with shame and indignation, that I should have cared little had they dashed each other's brains out. So much I endured for exhorting men to live together in peace and amity.

The very beasts seemed to conspire to treat me with ingratitude. My first effort in their cause was an attempt I made one day, on the tow−path near the Water−Works, to protect a poor brokendown barge−horse, which the driver was cruelly beating. My interference cost me a dip in the basin, the man, who was both savage and strong, pitching me in headlong, and (what I deemed still more provoking) a kick from the horse, who let fly at me with his heels, merely because mine, as they were tripped into the air, came in contact with his hind−quarters; so that I was both lamed and half drowned for my charity.

In the same way, I was scratched half to death, and much more savagely than I had been before by the needle−women, by a cat that I took out of a dog's mouth,—without counting upon a nip that I had from the cur also. And, to end this small catalogue of animal ingratitude, I may say, that, withina fortnight after, I was served in the same way by a rat that I strove to liberate from the fangs of my own gray tabby; for, while Tabby was clawing at my fingers, the rat took me by the thumb; and between them I was near perishing with lockjaw, the weather being uncommonly hot, and the time midsummer.

There were a thousand other mischances of a like nature which befell me, but which I have not leisure to describe, nor even to enumerate. Some few of them, however, I think proper to record; but, to save space, I will clap them into a short list, along with those already mentioned, where they may be examined at a glance, and where, in that glance, the reader may perceive what are sometimes the rewards of philanthropy.

•

Beaten by a drunkard whom I had taken out of prison, and bailed to keep the peace.

•

Mulcted out of $100 surety−money, because my gentleman broke the peace by beating me.

•

Driven, and almost kicked, out of a man's workshop, because I asked payment of a loan made without bond or voucher.

•

My nose pulled by a merchant to whom I had (out of charity to the latter, who was unfortunate) recommended a customer, who swindled him.

•

Rolled in the mud by the boys of my own charity−school, whom I had exhorted not to daub the passers−by.

•

Abused by their parents for not paying them 25 cents per week for the time I had the boys at school.

•

Hustled by tailors, slop−shopkeepers, and others, for taking part with the needle−women in a strike.

•

Scolded, scratched, and tumbled down stairs by the needle−women, for advising them to go into domestic service, and take care of their morals.

•

Robbed by a fugitive slave whom I had concealed three days and nights in my house from his master.

•

House burnt down by the free blacks (or so it was suspected) for putting the thief as aforesaid into jail, so that his master got him.

•

Whitewashed and libelled on my own back by the stonecutters, for buying wrought marble out of the prison.

•

Tarred and feathered by a gang of the fancy, whom I exhorted at the ring to peace and amity.

•

Scalded at my own house (which I had converted, at a season of suffering, into a gratis soup−house), and with my own soup, by a beggar, because there was too little meat and too much salt in it.

- Soused in the canal by a boat−driver, for rebuking his cruelty to an old barge−horse.
- Kicked by the horse for taking his part.
- Scratched by a cat, for taking her out of a dog's mouth: item, bitten by the dog.
- Bitten by a rat, which I rescued from a cat: item, scratched by the cat.
- Gored by a cow for helping her calf out of the mire: item, the calf splashed me all over with mud.
- Beaten about the ears with a half−skinned eel, by a fishwoman, whom I reproved for skinning it alive.

Such were some of the unhappy circumstances that rewarded a seven months' life of philanthropy. But there were others to follow still more discouraging and afflicting.

CHAPTER IX. Containing a difficulty.

It is a common belief among those who are more religious than wise, that a man never catches a cold going to church of a wet Sunday, or being baptized in midwinter. I am myself of opinion, the belief of such good people to the contrary notwithstanding, that many devout persons, by wading to church in the slush, or washing out their sins in snow−water, have gone to heaven much sooner than they expected. In the same way, and on the same principle of distrusting all miraculous interposition of Heaven in cases where human reason is sufficientfor our protection, I have my doubts in the truth of another maxim of great acceptation in the world,—namely, "that a man never grows poor by giving." I believe, indeed, that the charity of a discreet and truly conscientious man never injures his fortune, but may, in many instances, actually tend to its increase; since the love of benevolence may stimulate him to new labours of acquisition, that he may have the greater means of doing good. But I am also of opinion, and I think it may be demonstrated by a good accountant, that a man who has a revenue of a thousand a year, and bestows fifteen hundred in charity, will, in due course of time, find himself as poor as his pensioners. When a man hath a goose with golden eggs, whatever he may do with the eggs, he should take great care of the goose.

The reader may infer from these remarks, that my philanthropy was as little profitable to my pocket as it proved to my person; and such indeed was the truth. I am of opinion I should myself, in a very few years, have consumed the whole estate of Zachariah Longstraw, ample as it was, in works of charity. How much faster it went with my nephew and my friend Abel to assist me, may be imagined. My nephew became a very dragon of charity, and dispensed my money upon such objects of pity as he could find (for he soon began to practise the profession upon what Abel called his own hook), with a zeal little short of fury; so that, to supply his demands, I was sometimes obliged even tostint myself. Had Abel Snipe been equally profuse, there is no saying how soon I might have found myself at the end of my estate. But Abel Snipe was a jewel; his charity was great, but his conscientiousness was greater; he had ever a watchful eye to my good; and his solicitude to husband and improve my means kept his benevolence within the bounds of discretion.

But, notwithstanding all his care, Abel perceived that our philanthropy was beginning to eat holes into my possessions; and coming to me one day with a long face, he assured me, that, unless some means were devised to increase my income, we should soon find ourselves driven to resort to the capital.

"Verily, and of a truth," said I, not a whit frighted at this communication, "and why should that chill us in the good work, Abel Snipe? Of a surety, all that I possess, is it not the property of the poor?"

"Verily," said Abel, "verily and yea; but if we betake us to the capital, verily, it will happen that sooner or later it shall be consumed, and nothing left to us wherewithal to befriend the afflicted. I say to thee, Zachariah, thy wealth is, as thou sayest, the property of the poor; and it becomes thee, as a true and faithful servant thereof, to see that it be not wasted, but, on the contrary, husbanded with care and foresight, and put out to profit, so that the single talent may become two, and peradventurethree; whereby the poor, as aforesaid, shall be twice, and, it may be, thrice benefited."

"Thou speakest the words of sense and seriousness," said I, struck by the new view of the case. "But how shall this happy object be effected? What shall we do, Abel Snipe, to make the one talent three, and thereby increase our means of doing good?"

"Thee nephew Jonathan," said Abel Snipe, with a look of devout joy, "is now a changed man, a man of seriousness and virtue, a scorner of vain things, and a giver of alms—a man whom we can trust. I say to thee, Zachariah, thee shall establish thee nephew in a gainful business, and he shall make money; thee shall give him what is thee property for his capital, remaining theeself but as a sleeping partner: and thus it shall happen that thee capital shall be turned over three times a year, producing, on each occasion, dividends three times as great as now accrue from thy investments: and thus, Zachariah (and verily it is pleasant to think upon), where thee now has a thousand dollars of revenue, thee shall then have nine; and where thee now relieves nine afflicted persons, thee shall there−upon relieve nine times nine, which is eighty−one."

I need not assure the reader that this proposition of Abel's fastened mightily upon my imagination, and that I was eager to embrace it; and Jonathan coming in at the moment, I repeated the conversation to him, assuring him

that, if he thought himself able, with Abel's assistance, to undertake sucha business, he should have my money to begin upon instanter, and marry the maiden Ellen into the bargain.

"Nay, verily," said Jonathan, "I will not marry, and I will not do this thing whereof thee speaks. Uncle Zachariah, thee may think me light of mind thus to speak of Ellen Wild, who is much lighter; but, of a surety, I find the spirit moves me to regard her as one not to be regarded any longer. In the matter of the money−making, I say, let Abel Snipe be thy merchant, or whatsoever it may be thee has determined on; for Abel Snipe is a good business man, and he knows how to make money. He shall have my advice and assistance, as far as may be in my power. But, truly, my thoughts now run in the paths of the unfortunate; and thither let my footsteps follow also."

To this proposal the faithful Abel, with tears in his eyes (for he was moved that Jonathan should express such confidence in him at last), demurred, averring that it would be better, and more seemly, for Jonathan himself to undertake the affair, he, Abel Snipe, giving help and counsel, according to his humble ability. Jonathan objected as before, and again declared that Abel, and Abel alone, was, as he expressed it, "the man for my money." In short, the two young men, now the best friends in the world, contested the matter, each arguing so warmly in favour of the other, that it was plain the thing could never be determined without my casting vote, which I, seeing that Jonathan was positive, and bent upon a life of virtue, gave in Abel's favour, and it was resolved accordingly that Abel should be made the money−maker.

CHAPTER X. In what manner Mr. Zachariah Longstraw determined to improve his fortune.

And now, the question occurring to me, I demanded into what kind of business we should enter.

"That," said Jonathan, "is a question more easily made than answered, seeing that there are so many ways of making money in this wicked world, that an honest man can scarce tell which to choose among them;" and then proceeded with great gravity to indicate divers callings, which he pronounced the most gainful in the world, and all or any of which, he thought, Abel could easily turn his hand to.

The first he advised was quackery—the making and vending of nostrums to cure all manner of diseases, including corns and the toothache; which was a business that had the merit of requiring no previous study or education, a tinker or cobbler being just as fit to follow it as a man that had read Paracelsus; and which, besides, as was evident from the speed with which its professors in general stepped from the kitchen−pot to the carriage, was the quickest way of making a fortune that could beimagined. I should have thought the young man was joking (for he had that vice in him to the last), had it not been for the fervour with which he pointed out the advantages of the vocation. A great recommendation, he averred, was, that it required no capital beyond a few hundred dollars, to be laid out in bottles and logwood, or some other colouring material. Pump−water, he said, was cheap; and as for the other sovereign ingredient, it was furnished by the buyer himself. "Yes!" said Jonathan, "faith is furnished by the buyer, who pays us for the privilege of swallowing it; we sell men their own conceits, bottled up with green, red, and brown water; and thereby we make them their own doctors. Who then can say the calling of the quack is not honest—nay, even philanthropic? He is a public benefactor—a friend even of physicians; for he frees them from the painful necessity of killing, by making men their own executioners."

And thus he went on until I cut him short by averring, that the whole business was little better than wholesale cheating and murder. He then recommended we should make Abel a tailor, solemnly declaring that, next to quackery, tailoring, which was a quackery of another sort, was the most profitable trade that could be followed; the mere gain from cabbaging, considering that an ingenious tailor got at least one inch of cloth out of every armhole, without counting the nails cribbed from other parts of a coat, being immense, and his profits, seeing that he lost nothing by a bad customerthat he did not charge to a good one, as certain and immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

In short, my nephew Jonathan was in the mood for expatiating on the merits of all money−making vocations; in which I should follow him, were I not urged by the exigencies arising from limited time and space to adhere to my story. He made divers recommendations, none of which I thought of weight; and upon Abel, who had heard him with gravity and attention, I was at last forced to call for advice and assistance. It was his opinion, and he advised accordingly, that all the money I could raise should be thrown into the stock−market, where, being applied to purchase and sale in the usual way, he had no doubt it could be made to yield a revenue of at least twenty per cent., and perhaps twice as much; and this proposal, strange as it may seem to the reader, after the experience Abram Skinner had given me in such matters, I did, after sundry doubts and hesitations, finally agree to.

"Verily," said I, "this is a gainful business, friend Abel; but, of a surety, neither honest nor humane, seeing that it is practised at the expense of the ignorant, and often the needy."

"Verily, no," said Abel Snipe, with fervour; "it shall be at the expense of the rich and niggardly— the man that is a miser and uncharitable—the broker and the gambler—the bull and the bear. Our dealings shall not be with the poor and ignorantman that dabbleth in stocks; but him will we charitably pluck from the grasp of the covetous, and thus protect, while drawing from the covetous man those alms of benevolence which he would never himself apply to the use of the afflicted."

"Verily," said I, pleased with the idea, "if we can make the covetous man charitable, it will be a good thing; and if we can protect the foolish ignorant person from his grasp, it will be still better. But, of a surety, Abel Snipe, this business will be as gambling?"

"Yea, and verily," said Abel Snipe, "it is as gambling when a gambler follows it; but in the hands of an honest man it is an honest profession. Is not money, bagged up in stocks and other investments, as merchandise? and, as

merchandise, shall it not be lawfully bought and sold?"

"And moreover," said Jonathan, with equal earnestness, "if it be no better than cheating and swindling, this same buying and selling, are we not embarking in it out of charity? Verily, uncle Zachariah, in such a case as this, the end sanctifies the means. Behold what is the crying evil arising from money that is chartered in stocks, whether it be in banks, rail−roads, loans, or otherwise. This is money that is not taxed for charitable purposes; it is money appropriated solely to the purposes of gain. Why is it that a private man should be taxed to support the poor, and a bank, that has greater facilities for making money, be not taxed for the purpose at all? Verily, uncle Zachariah, we will do what the commonwealth should be doing; we will impose a tax upon the gains of chartered money, and distribute the proceeds among the needy."

To make short work of the matter, I will not pursue our debate further, but merely state that I was soon brought to consider Abel Snipe's scheme the best, honestest, and most philanthropic in the world, and to agree that he should open an office as a stock−broker, turning a penny or two in that way, while making much more by buying and selling on his own account. To this I was brought, in a great measure, by the representations and arguments of Jonathan, among which I esteem as still worthy of consideration that which stands above expressed in his own words. I am still of opinion that a tax, and a round one, should be imposed upon the profits of all banks and other money−making corporations, the same to be specifically appropriated to hospitals, and other charitable foundations, and perhaps also to public schools. In this way evil might be made productive of good, and our avarice rendered the parent of benevolence and knowledge. Of a verity, my philanthropy is not yet got out of me!

The aforementioned arrangement was made at an early period of my new existence, that is to say, at the close of spring; and the faithful Abel soon began to render a good account of his stewardship, by handing me over divers handsome sums of money, the profits of his speculations, which Jonathanand myself disbursed with rival enthusiasm. The experiment was continued in a prosperous manner until the month of September, when there happened a catastrophe not less unexpected than calamitous.

CHAPTER XI. In which a catastrophe begins.

The various mischances and afflictions, as narrated in the preceding chapter, which rewarded my virtue, had begun to affect my mind with sundry pangs of melancholy and misgiving. I perceived that the world was ungrateful, and I had my doubts whether it was a whit the better for my goodness. These doubts and this persuasion were confirmed by the experience of each succeeding day; and by the month of September as aforesaid, I found myself becoming just as miserable a man as I had ever been before, and perhaps more so, being pierced not merely with the ingratitude of those I had befriended, but convinced that the unworthiness of man was a thing man was determined to persevere in.

It was at the moment of my greatest distress, that the catastrophe alluded to before happened; and this was nothing less than the sudden bankruptcy of Abel Snipe, whereby I was reduced in amoment from affluence to destitution; and what made the calamity still more painful, was a conviction forced upon me by my own reflections, as well as the representations of others, that the failure could not have happened without a fraudulent design on the part of the fiduciary. It is true, this worthy gentleman was the first to inform me of his mishap, which he did with tears in his eyes, and with divers outbreaks of self−accusation and despair; he declared that his imprudence had ruined me, his benefactor, and implored me, his benefactor, to knock him on the head with a poker I had begun to embrace in my agitation; but how he had effected such a catastrophe I could not bring him clearly to explain. The only answers I could get from him were, "Speculation, speculation—bad speculation!—ruined my benefactor! might as well have murdered thee!" and so on; and having given vent to some dozen or more of such frantic interjections, he ran out of the house.

Enter Jonathan the very next moment. The sight of him renewed my grief; he, poor youth, was ruined as well as myself, yet not wholly; for, as good luck would have it, I had, a week or two before, after long cogitation on the subject, resolved to marry him to the maid Ellen Wild, and so secure his happiness more certainly than, it appeared to me, it could be secured by a life of philanthropy. To effect this desirable purpose I bestowed upon him the only property which I had not thought fit to put into Abel Snipe's hands, being the newhouse I was then building, promising also to add a sum of money, as soon as it could be conveniently withdrawn from the concern. He received the gift and the promise with much joy and gratitude, but betrayed surprising indifference on the score of matrimony, saying that he was in no great hurry, and in fact giving me to understand that there was a difference between him and the maiden.

"Jonathan," said I, as soon as I saw him, "thee is a ruined young man. Abel has broken."

"All to smash!" said Jonathan; "I know all about it. Horrible pickle we're in. But I say, uncle, if thee can borrow twenty thousand dollars, we can save friend Abel yet."

"Does thee say so?" said I; "is it true?"

"Verily," said Jonathan, "I have looked over the demands, and twenty thousand dollars by nine o'clock to−morrow will make all straight. But where will thee get twenty thousand dollars?"

"Where?" said I, fairly dancing for joy. "It was but two days since that thy friend Ebenezer Wild did offer me exactly the sum of twenty thousand dollars for the new house as it stood, not knowing I had conveyed it to thee, until I told him the same, as a reason why I could not take such a handsome offer."

"Well," said Jonathan, opening his eyes, "what then?"

"Surely," said I, "if he would give twenty thousand then, he will give twenty thousand now. And so, Jonathan—"

"And so," said Jonathan, "thee wants me to sell the house, does thee? and give thee back the money? Uncle Zachariah, thee should be a little more reasonable. Thee must remember that the house is mine; and as it seems to be all I am ever to get, why, uncle, thee must excuse me, but—I have no notion of parting with it."

If Jonathan had picked up the poker and served me the turn Abel Snipe had so piteously entreated me to serve him—that is, knocked me on the head, I could not have been more shocked and horror−struck than I was by these words.

"What, Jonathan," said I, "does thee refuse to save me from ruin—me, who have been a father to thee, and given thee all that thou hast?"

"No," said Jonathan, coolly, "I am not so bad as that; but as this house is all I have, I can't think of running too much risk with it. Suppose thee borrows that twenty thousand dollars that Ebenezer Wild has so handy: he is thy friend as well as mine. Or suppose thee tries some of thy other friends. Thee has often loaned to them, and not often borrowed. Sure thee has many friends who can spare money better than I can."

"Oh, thou ungrateful young man!" said I.

"Don't go to call me hard names," said the perfidious and unfeeling youth; "for, if thee comes to that, uncle Zachariah, I can tell thee, thee is the ungrateful man—though not a young one. Haven't I been as a son to thee for eighteen long years? haven't I humoured all thy foolish old notions, evento the point of giving alms, talking about virtue and philanthropy, and so on? haven't I given up Ellen Wild to please thee? And hasn't thee, after all my pains, choused me out of the portion I had a right to expect of thee, except a poor beggarly unfinished house, only worth twenty thousand dollars? Yes, thee has, uncle Zachariah, thee can't deny it. Don't thee talk to me of ingratitude."

"Thou art a viper," said I.

"If I am," said Jonathan in a huff, "I won't stay to be trodden on."

And with that, the heartless creature, tossing up his head like an emperor, stalked out of the house, leaving me petrified by the enormity of his baseness.

CHAPTER XII. In which the catastrophe is continued.

I was, indeed, so shocked, so overwhelmed, by ingratitude coming from such a quarter, that it was some time before I could recover myself sufficiently to think of the steps necessary to be taken for my preservation. I remembered, however, that he, even he, my thrice unfeeling nephew, had recommended me to borrow of my friends what would be enough to retrieve my affairs from ruin. I ran from the house, not doubting that I could easilyraise the sum. Fifty paces distant was my new house—that is, Jonathan's. My old friend Ebenezer, the father of the maid Ellen, was standing before it, looking up to the carpenters, who were nailing the shingles on the roof.

"Ebenezer," said I, "thee is my friend—does thee know I am on the brink of ruin?"

"Very sorry," said Ebenezer—"all the town−talk; looked for nothing better. Perhaps thee will sell the house—pho! I forgot; thee gave it to Jonathan."

"Ebenezer Wild," said I, "if thee is my friend, lend me that twenty thousand dollars. It will save me from ruin."

"Really, Mr. Longstraw," said Ebenezer Wild, (who was no Quaker, though his father had been before him), "I am surprised a reasonable man should make such a request. I have told you twenty times you would ruin yourself by your cursed philanthropy—can't consent to be ruined with you. Pity you, Mr. Longstraw—awfully swindled; wonder you could trust such a knave as Abel Snipe —sorry to hear matters look so black for Jonathan —thought better of him—quite unnatural to be defrauded by one's own flesh and blood."

What Ebenezer meant by his concluding remarks I did not, at that moment, understand. But I comprehended them well enough when I had run to five or six other friends, rich men like him, all of whom treated my request to borrow with as little respect, while all wound up their commonplacecondolings by assuring me, first, that Abel Snipe had swindled me; and, secondly, that there was much reason to believe my nephew Jonathan had done the same thing.

Reader, this is a very wicked world we live in. My philanthropy did not make me, as philanthropy often does, selfish with my friends. I felt as much pleasure in obliging one who happened to be in a difficulty, with a loan of any sum within my reach, as in relieving actual distress. Of twelve different persons whom I now sought in my dilemma, I had in this manner, at different times, obliged no less than eleven; of not one of whom could I now borrow a dollar. Every man pitied my misfortune, every one inveighed with becoming severity against the villany of those by whom I was ruined, but every one was astonished that a reasonable man like me should expect another reasonable man to part with his money. In short, it was evident that my friends loved borrowing better than lending; and I left the door of the twelfth with the agreeable conviction on my spirit, that human nature was of the nature of a stone, I being the only man of the thousand million in the world that had actually a heart in my bosom.

This consideration was racking enough; but it made a small part of my distress. Every man had charged my friend, honest Abel Snipe, with having swindled me, as Ebenezer Wild had charged before; and every one, in like manner, swore that my nephew Jonathan had borne a part in the nefarioustransaction. This seemed to me incredible enough; but when I remembered Jonathan's late behaviour, his unexpected defection, his hard, unfeeling, nay, his treacherous selfishness, I felt prepared to believe almost any wickedness that might be said of him.

I ran to Abel's office, resolved to sift the affair to the bottom. The work was already done to my hands; I found the office full of people, some of whom were officers of the police, who had seized upon books and papers, and (awful to be said!) the body of Abel Snipe; and all raging with vociferation and confusion, except the latter worthy, who looked as if astounded out of his senses. "It's a clear case of swindling," cried a dozen voices as I entered, "a design to defraud—fraud from beginning to end; flagrant, scandalous, scoundrelly swindling—nay, worse than swindling—it is a conspiracy! Jonathan has confessed it—been going on this three months;—Jonathan has confessed it!"

Jonathan had confessed it! confessed what? Why, confessed, as every one gave me to understand, and confessed in the hands of justice (for it seems he had been arrested), that he and Abel Snipe had entered into a conspiracy to defraud me of my property, which had been carried on from the moment that the latter was established in business, and was now completed by a long−designed bankruptcy.

Let the reader imagine my feelings at this disclosure of ingratitude and villany so monstrous.My best friend—a man whom I had wrested from the extremity of poverty and disgrace, and my only relative—a youth whom I had adopted and reared as my son, who was my heir at law, and the living partner, as I may say, in all my possessions—had leagued together feloniously to deprive me of what I never denied them the privilege to share,—to rob, to fleece, to reduce me to beggary.

Words cannot paint my grief. I crept away from the scene of confusion, ashamed of my manhood, ashamed even of my philanthropy. I reached the door of my house; it was just dusk; a poor man standing at the door implored my charity for a miserable creature, as he called himself. "Go to the devil!" said I.

"You are Zachariah Longstraw?" said another man, tapping me on the shoulder. "I am," said I, supposing he was a beggar like the other; "and you may go to the devil too."

"Very much obliged to you," said the man; "but you're my prisoner; and so come along, if you please." And with that he took me by the arm, and began to march me down the street.

CHAPTER XIII. The dénouement of the drama.

Why I was arrested, and at whose instance, I knew not; I was too downcast and spirit−broken to inquire. I had, doubtless, divers small debts due to persons with whom I was accustomed to deal; and it seemed to me natural enough, as all men were ungrateful rascals, that all such persons, now that I was known to be penniless, should fall upon me without shame or mercy, demanding their dues. I say I thought such a consummation was natural enough, and I asked no questions of my captor. I let my head drop upon my bosom, and, without resisting or remonstrating, and looking neither to the right nor the left, suffered him to conduct me whither he would.

Our progress was rapid, our journey short; in a few moments I found myself led into a house, and ushered into a lighted apartment.

I looked up, to see into what alderman's hands I had fallen. The reader may judge of my surprise, amounting almost to consternation, when I beheld myself in an elegant saloon, brilliantly lighted, and surrounded by a dozen or more gayly−dressed people of both sexes, among whom was my friend Ebenezer Wild, and two or three others whose countenances seemed familiar, but whom, inmy surprise and confusion, I did not immediately recognise.

A maiden, beautiful as the morning, and smiling as if her little heart was dancing out of her eyes, ran from the throng, and seized me by the hands, crying,—

"Now, uncle Zachariah, thee shall pay me what thee owes me, or be turned over to some other creditor!"

I looked upon her in astonishment, and began to fancy I was in a dream.

"What!" said my friend Ebenezer, "don't you know my little Ellen?" And thereupon he added other expressions, but what they were I retain no remembrance of, my wits being utterly amazed and confounded.

To make my confusion still greater, the door suddenly opened, and in rushed my nephew Jonathan, dressed, like a dandy of the first water, in a blue cloth coat with shining buttons, white trousers, and satin waistcoat, and exclaiming "Bravo!" and "Victoria!" as if a very demon of joy and exultation possessed him. As soon as he beheld me he ran forward, snatched one of my hands from the maiden, and, dropping on his knees, cried, with a comical look of contrition,—

"Forgive me all my sins, uncle Zachariah, and I'll behave better for the future."

"Oh thou ungrateful wretch!" said I, "how canst thou look me in the face, having ruined me?"

"Don't say so!" cried Ellen Wild; "you don't know how Jonathan has saved you."

"The deuse he don't!" said Jonathan, jumping up; "why then we've got the play all wrong. I say, uncle, don't look so solemn and wrathful. You are no more ruined than I am, and you are out of the clutches of the harpy!"

"Haven't I been swindled?" said I.

"Unutterably!" said Jonathan; "but, as the swindler has been swindled also, there's no great harm done. Uncle Zachariah, a'n't you satisfied Abel Snipe is a rascal?"

"I am," said I; "but what shall I say of thee?"

"That I have broken the spell the villain cast over your senses," said Jonathan, "and so saved you from the ruin your confidence invited him to attempt. Uncle Zachariah, you think I am as bad as Abel. Now listen to my story. I knew that Abel Snipe was a rogue and hypocrite, but could not make you believe it; I saw that he was daily fleecing you of sums of money under pretence of giving to the poor; that he was artfully goading and inflaming your benevolence into a passion, nay, into a monomania (for, uncle, everybody said you were mad), for his own base purposes; and that, sooner or later, he would strip you of every thing. This I could not make you believe; I resolved you should see it. I turned hypocrite myself, and began to fleece you ten times harder than Abel. The rogue was alarmed; he perceived I was ousting him from his employment—that I had greater facilities for cheating (having more of your affection) than himself. His alarm, added to another feelingwhich you shall hear all about, brought him into the trap from which cautiousness at first secured him. I convinced him I was as great a rogue as himself, and he then agreed with me—yes, uncle, formally agreed—to join in a plan to strip you of fortune. We arranged the whole scheme from beginning to end—the business, the speculations, the bankruptcy. Abel was to play Sir Smash—his reputation could stand it. The sums received from you were to be handed over to me, and accounted for as lost in bad speculations; to make which appear straight, his books were filled with fictitious sales and purchases, very ingeniously got up. After the grand crash we were to make a division of the

plunder, he being content, honest man, to receive one fourth, of which he considered himself secure enough as long as I had any value for good name or fear of the penitentiary. Now you may wonder how such a cautious rogue could be so easily gulled. Here stands the fairy," said Jonathan, pointing to the maid Ellen, "who dazzled the eyes of his wisdom. Yes, uncle, would you believe it? the impudent, the audacious fellow had the vanity to think he had found favour in her eyes, at a time when I had lost favour in those of her father. You must know we had a coolness—that is, father Wild and I; it was about you—that confounded philanthropy—but we'll say nothing of that. I used to communicate with Ellen by letter, and Abel was often my Ganymede. Now, you must know, Ellen is a coquette—'

"Fy, Jonathan!" said the damsel; "it was all that vicious Abel's presumption and folly. Because I was glad to see him, and treated him well, just because he brought me letters—oh, the monster! I soon saw what was running in his head!"

"Yes," said Jonathan, "Ellen's a much smarter girl than people suppose her."

"Oh! you great Quaker bear!" said the maiden.

"Well," continued Jonathan, "she boasted her conquest, and then I saw I had the ogre by the nose. It was this put me upon turning swindler; I had a talk with father Wild, who approved my plan, and Ellen agreed to cultivate Abel's good opinion as far as a smile or two. We affected to quarrel; I began to coquet with another, abusing poor Ellen to Abel as hard as I could, until he was persuaded the breach between us was incurable. Ellen gave him a smile—her papa became condescending. In a word, the rascal thought nothing was wanting to make him the happiest man in the world, save the one full fourth of his patron's estate, and as much more as he could cheat me of. Here was the rock upon which Abel split, and split he has; he is now safe. The moment matters came to a crisis, which was this afternoon, I ran to a magistrate—my friend Jones there" (pointing to an elderly gentleman who had entered with him), "and made confession of our roguery; deposed the whole matter; accused myself and Abel of conspiracy to defraud, and so forth, and so forth; and was admitted to the honourable privileges of evidencefor the commonwealth, and allowed to walk about on bail, while my rascally colleague takes up his lodgings in prison. There's the whole story; I have exposed Snipe's rogueries, and secured his conviction; and, what is equally agreeable, I have saved your property. Here, uncle—you called me a viper—I only wanted to make you believe I could be ungrateful, as well as others. By−the−way, that was a plan of father Wild's, to have your friends refuse to assist you; they were let into the secret, and I recommended you to apply to them. Here, uncle, you'll see what a viper I am," he continued, a little impetuously; "here are the deeds for the house; here is a roll of bank−notes I cheated you of, to play the philanthropist; you will be surprised at the amount, but I did spend some, I confess, for there are wretches who deserve our charity. And here, and here, and here you have the property out of which Abel and I conspired to cheat you—at least, the chief part of it; the rest we will soon get possession of, having laid the villain in limbo. Here, uncle Zachariah, take them, and be as philanthropic as you please; we have no fear of you, now your familiar is tied up; take your property, and much good may it do you. As for me, I am content to take Ellen—that is, if you have no objection."

This was a turn of circumstances that confounded me more than ever; and, verily, I knew not whether I was standing on my head or feet. I stood staring Jonathan in the face, without saying a word, until the youth was seized with the idea that the surprise of the thing had turned my wits; at which, being alarmed, he took me again by the hand, and said, with the tears in his eyes,—

"Oh, my dear uncle! do consider it is nothing more than a joke, and that I never meant to offend thee."

"No," said I, "thee did not. Therefore thee shall have it all, and thee shall marry the maiden."

And with that, being seized with uncommon generosity, or perhaps not well knowing what I did, I put into his hands the conveyance of the house, the bank−bills, and other papers which he had given me but a moment before, and turned to leave the house.

"Stay, uncle—I am just going to be married," said he; and "Stay, Zachariah!" said a dozen others; when some one suddenly calling out, "Let him go; he is afraid of being turned out of meeting if he witnesses the ceremony," I was suffered to obey the impulses of the spirit within me, and walk out of the house; which I did without exactly knowing what I was doing.

To tell the honest truth—as, indeed, I have been trying to do all along—I was in a kind of maze and bewilderment of mind, which the first shock of ruin had produced, and which Jonathan's story rather increased than diminished. The effect of this was divided in my brain with the impression of the various proofs of

ingratitude and baseness to whichthe day had given birth, the latter, however, being greatly preponderant. Of one feeling only I had entire consciousness, and that was a hearty disgust of philanthropy, coupled with a sense of shame at having been so basely cheated as I seemed to have been on all sides. I had been cheated out of my senses, as the saying is; and the only cure for me was to be cheated into them again; which was not an agreeable reflection, the whole affair being a reproach on my good sense.

On the whole, I felt very melancholy and lugubrious, and began to have my thoughts of leaving Zachariah Longstraw's body at the first convenient opportunity. The great difficulty was, however, to find a tenement in which I might promise myself content, the disappointment I had experienced in my present adventure having filled me with doubts as to the reality of any human happiness. "At least," said I to myself "I will henceforth look before I leap. I will cast mine eyes about me, I will gird up my loins and look abroad into the human family, and peradventure I shall find some man whose body is worth reanimating. Yea, verily, I will next time be certain I am not putting my soul, as the pickpocket did his hand, into a sack of fish−hooks."

With this resolution on my mind I walked towards my house, and was just about to pass the door, when an adventure befell me which knocked the aforesaid resolution entirely on the head. But before I relate it my conscience impels me tomake one remark, which I beg the reader, if he be a man of fortune and blood, to peruse, without excusing himself on the score of its dulness.

CHAPTER XIV. A remark, in which the Author appears as a politician, and abuses both parties.

There are other persons besides Zachariah the philanthropist, who have experienced the ingratitude of the poor; and, truth to say, if we can believe the accounts of those who profess to have the best means of judging, there is more of it among that class of beings in the United States than in any other Christian land. If it be so, let not the reader wonder at its existence. It springs, like a thousand other evils of a worse, because of a political complexion, from that constitution of society which, notwithstanding its being in opposition to all the interests of the land and the character of our institutions, is founded in, and perpetuated by, the folly of the richer classes. It lies, not in the natural enmity supposed to exist between the rich and the poor, but in the unnatural hatred provoked in the bosoms of the one by the offensive pride and arrogance of the other. The poor man in America feels himself, in a political view, as he really is, the equal of the millionaire; but this very consciousness of equality adds double bitterness to thesense of actual inferiority, which the richer and more fortunate usually do their best, as far as manners and deportment are concerned, to keep alive. Why should the folly of a feudal aristocracy prevail under the shadow of a purely democratic government? It is to the stupid pride, the insensate effort at pomp and ostentation, the unconcealed contempt of labour, the determination, manifested in a thousand ways, and always as unfeelingly as absurdly, to keep the "base mechanical" aware of the gulf between him and his betters—in a word, to the puerile vanity and stolid pride of the genteel and refined, that we owe the exasperation of those classes in whose hands lie the reins of power, and who will use them for good or bad purposes, according as they are kept in a good or bad humour. It is to these things we trace, besides the general demoralization ever resulting from passions long encouraged, besides the unwilling and unthankful reception of benefits coming from the hands of the detested, all those political evils which demagoguism, agrarianism, mobocracism, and all other isms of a vulgar stamp, have brought upon the land. There is pride in the poor, as well as the rich: the wise man and the patriot will take care not to offend it.

Reader, if thou art a rich man, and despisest thy neighbour, remember that he has a thousand friends of his class where thou hast one of thine, and that he can beat thee at the elections. If thou art a gentleman, remember that thy cobbler is another, or thinks himself so—which is all the same thing in America. At all events, remember this—namely, that the poor man will find no fault with thy wealth, if thou findest none with his poverty.

CHAPTER XV. An uncommon adventure that befell the Author.

I said that, just as I arrived at the door of my dwelling, an adventure befell me; and truly, it was such an extraordinary one as has happened to no other individual in the land since the days of the unfortunate William Morgan. As I passed towards the door, a man whose countenance I could not see, for it was more than two hours after nightfall, and who seemed to have been lying in wait on the stoop, suddenly started up, exclaiming, in accents highly nasal, and somewhat dolorous,

"Well! I guess, if there's no offence, there's no mistake. I rather estimate that you're Mr. Zachariah Longstraw?"

"Well, friend! and what is that thy business?" said I, in no amiable tone.

"Well, not above more than's partickilar," said the stranger; "but I've heern tell much on your goodness, and I'm in rather a bit of the darnedest pickle jist now, with a sick wife and nine smallchildren, the oldest only six years old, that ever you heerd tell on. And so, I rather estimated—"

"Thee may estimate theeself to the devil," said I. "How can the oldest child of nine be only six years old?"

"Oh, darn it," said the fellow, "there was three on 'em twins. But if you'll jest step round to my wife, she'll tell you all about it. Always heern you was a great andyfist, or what−d'−ye−call−it."

"Then thee has heard a great lie," said I, "and so thee may go about thee business, for I'll give thee nothing."

"Well now, do tell!" said the man, with a tone of surprise that conveyed a part of the emotion to myself, particularly when, by way of pointing his discourse with the broadest note of admiration, he suddenly clapped a foot to my heels, and laid me sprawling on the broad of my back.

My astonishment and wrath may well be imagined; but they were nothing to the terror that beset me, when, recovering a little from the stunning effects of the fall, I opened my mouth to cry aloud, and found it instantly stuffed full of handkerchiefs, or some such soft material, which the pretended beggar took that opportunity to gag me with. The next moment I felt myself whipped up from the ground and borne aloft, like a corpse, on the shoulders of two men, who trudged along at a rapid pace, and apparently with the greatest unconcern possible; for some of the people in the street hearing my groans, which were the only sounds I couldmake, and demanding what was the matter, were answered by my cool captors, "Oh, nothing more than's partickilar—only a poor mad gentleman that broke hospital; guess he won't do it again. Raving mad, and hollers a gag out. I say, Sam, hold fast to his legs, and don't let him jump; for I rather estimate, if he gets loose, he'll kill some on these here people."

The villain! I had begun to hope my moans and struggles, which I made for the purpose as loud and furious as I could, having no other way of calling for help, would cause some of the persons collected to arrest the rogues, and inquire into the matter a little more closely; but no sooner had the villain expressed his fears of the mischief I might do, than all inquiries ceased, and a horrible scraping and rattling of feet told me that assistance and curiosity had scampered off together.

In three minutes more I found myself clapped into a little covered, or rather boxed wagon, such as is used by travelling tinmen, and held fast by one of the rogues, while the other seized upon the reins, and whipping up a little nag that was geared to it, we began to roll through the streets at a round gait, and with such a rattle of wheels and pattypans, that there was little hope of making myself heard, had I possessed the voice even of an oysterman. My companion took this opportunity to secure my wrists in a pair of wooden handcuffs, and to lock my feet in a sort of stocks, secured against the side of the wagon. Then, overhauling thehandkerchiefs, and arranging them more to his liking, though not a whit more to mine, he opened his mouth and spoke, saying,

"Now, uncle Longlegs, I estimate we'll be comfortable. So keep easy; or, if you will grunt, just grunt in tune, and see what sort of a bass you'll make to Old Hundred."

With that the rascal, after pitching his voice so as to accommodate mine as much as possible, began to sing a song; of which all that I recollect is, that it related the joys of a travelling tinman— tricks, rogueries, and all;—that it began somewhat in the following fashion;—

"When I was a driving along Down East,
I met old Deacon Dobbs on his beast;
The beast was fat, and the man was thin—

'I'll cheat Deacon Dobbs,' says I, 'to the skin,—' "

that it was as long and soporific as a state constitution, or a governor's message—that it was actually sung to a psalm−tune, or something like it— and that, during the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and half of the fourteenth stanza, the little wagon rolled leisurely over a long and hollow−sounding bridge, which I had no doubt was one of the wooden Rialtos of the Schuylkill—having passed which, the driver whipped up, and away we went at a speed of at least six miles an hour.

CHAPTER XVI. In which Sheppard Lee takes a journey, and discovers the secret object of his captors.

Verily, reader, the thing was to me as an amazement and a marvel, and the wonder thereof filled my spirit with anguish and perturbation. But if I was dismayed at my seizure and abduction, at my involuntary journey, prolonged through the space of a whole night, how much greater was my alarm to find it continued for five days and nights longer, during which I was never allowed to speak or breathe the fresh air, except when my captors halted to rest and eat, which they did at irregular intervals, and always in solitary places among woods and thickets. It was in vain that I demanded by what authority they treated me with such violence, what purpose they had in view, and whither they were conducting me. The rogues assured me they were very honest fellows, who made their living according to law, and had no design to harm me; and as to what they designed doing with me, that, they said, I should know all in good time; recommending me, in the meanwhile, to take things patiently. I studied their appearance well. They were common−looking personages, with a vulgar shrewdness of visage, and would have been readily taken for Yankeepedlers of the nutmeg and side−saddle order—that is, of the inferior branch of that adventurous class —as indeed they were. There was nothing of the cut−throat about them whatever, and I soon ceased to feel any apprehension of their doing me a personal injury. But what did the villains mean? what was their object in carrying me off? what did they design doing with me? To these questions, which I asked myself and them in vain, I had, on the sixth day of my captivity, an answer; and verily it was one that filled me with horror and astonishment. Oh! the wickedness of man! the covetousness, the depravity, the audacity! the enterprise and originality thereof!

During the first three days of my captivity, my roguish captors had taken great pains to conceal me from, and to prevent any noises I might make from being heard by, any persons they met on the road. On the fourth day they relaxed somewhat from their severity; on the fifth they unbound my arms; and on the sixth they even removed the gag from my mouth, assuring me, however, that it should be replaced if I attempted any outcries, and giving me, moreover, to understand, that I was now in a land where outcries would be of no service to me whatever; and, indeed, I had soon the most mournful proof that, in this particular, they spoke nothing but the truth.

The evening before, I heard, while passing by a farmhouse, a great sawing of fiddles and strumming of banjoes, with a shuffling of feet, as of peopleengaged in a dance, while a voice, which I knew, by its undoubted Congo tang, could be none but a negro's, sang, in concert with the fiddles,—

"Ole Vaginnee! nebber ti—ah!

Kick'm up, Juba, a leetle high—ah,—"

or something to that effect. And, while I was marvelling what could make a negro in Pennsylvania chant the praises of Virginia, having rolled a little further on, I heard, far in the distance, while our little nag stopped to drink from a brook, the sound of many voices, which I knew also were those of negroes. They were labourers husking corn in the light of the moon, and singing as they laboured; and, verily, there was something uncommonly agreeable in the tones, now swelling, now dying in the distance, as many or fewer voices joined in the song. There was a pleasing wildness in the music; but it was to me still more enchanting, as showing the light−heartedness of the singers. "Verily," said I, forgetting my woes in a sudden impulse of philanthropy, "the negro that is free is a happy being"—not doubting that I was still in Pennsylvania.

But oh, how grievously this conceit was dispersed on the following morning! I was roused out of sleep by the sound of voices and clanking of chains, and looking from the door of my prison, which my conductors had left open to give me air, I spied, just at the tail of the cart, a long train of negroes, men, women, and children, of whom some of the males were chained together, the childrenriding for the most part in covered wagons, while two white men on horseback, armed with great whips and pistols, rode before and behind, keeping the whole procession in order.

"What!" said I, filled with virtuous indignation, and thrusting my head from the cart so as to address the foremost rider, "what does thee mean, friend? Are these people slaves or freemen? and why dost thou conduct them thus in chains through the free state of Pennsylvania?"

"Pennsylvanee!" cried the man, with a stare; "I reckon we're fifty miles south of Mason's and Dixon's, and fast

enough in old Virginnee."

"Virginia!" said I, seized with dismay. Before I could add any thing farther, one of my captors, jumping from the front of the cart, where he had been riding with the other, clapped to the door of the box, swearing at me for an old fool, who could not keep myself out of mischief.

"Hillo, stranger!" I heard the horseman cry to my jailer, "what white man's that you've got locked up thaw?"

"Oh, darn it," was the answer, "it's an old fellow of the north, jist as mad as the dickens."

"Friend!" cried I from my prison, seized with a sudden hope of escape, "the man tells thee a fib. If thee is an honest man and a lover of the law, I charge thee to give me help; for these men are villains, who have dragged me from my home contrary to law, and now have me fastened up by the legs."

"I say, strange−aw! by hooky!" cried the horseman, in very emphatic tones, addressing himself to my captor, as I saw through a crack, while his companion rode up to his assistance, "what's the meaning of all this he−aw? What aw you doing, toting a white man off in this style, like a wild baw?"

What a "wild baw" was I could not conveniently comprehend; but I saw that I had lighted on a friend, who had the power to deliver me from thraldom.

"My name," said I, "is Zachariah Longstraw, and I can reward thee for thy trouble."

"You hear him!" said my jailer, with all imaginable coolness. "Well now, darn it, if I must tell, it is Zachariah Longstraw, the famous Zachariah Longstraw. You understand!" And here he nodded and winked at the questioner with great significancy; but, as it appeared, all in vain.

"Never heard of the man in my life," said my friend, "and I've followed niggur−driving ever since I could hold a two−year−old bo' pig."

"What!" cried my jailer, "never heard of Zachariah Longstraw, the famous abolitionist?"

"Abolitionist!" cried the two horsemen together, and they cried it with a yell that made my hair stand on end. "Can't say ever heard the name, but reckon he's one of them 'aw New−Yorkers and Yankees what sends 'cendiary things down he−aw! I say, strange−aw! is it a true, right up−and−down, no−mistake abolitionist?"

"Darn it, I think you'd say so, if you had ever read the papers."

"Jist open the box then, and if I don't take the scalp off him, call me a black man!"

You won't do no sitch thing, meaning no offence," said my jailer. "Didn't go to the expense to fetch him so far for nothing; and don't mean him for the Virginnee market. Bound down to Louisianee, stranger; that's the best market for abolitionists; seen a public advertisement offering fifty thousand dollars for fellers not half so bad. I rather estimate we'll get full price for our venture."

With that my jailers whipped up, and succeeded in putting a proper distance betwixt them and that ferocious person who had such a desire to rob me of my scalp.

CHAPTER XVII. Containing other secrets, but not so important.

Reader, if thou art an abolitionist (and, verily, I hope thou art not), thou wilt conceive the mingled wo and astonishment with which I listened to these words of the chief kidnapper—whose Christian name, by−the−way, was Joshua, though as for his surname, I must confess I never heard it—and appreciate, even to the cold creeping of the flesh, the terrible situation in which I was placed. I was an abolitionist—or, at least, my captors chose so toconsider me, and they were now carrying me down south, to sell me on speculation. For this they had kidnapped me! for this they had fastened me up by the legs like a "wild baw!" for this—but it is vain to accumulate phrases expressive of their villany and my distresses. What mattered it to my captors if, after all, I was no abolitionist? (for, of a verity, though opposed in principle to the whole institution of slavery, my mind had been so fully occupied with other philanthropic considerations that I had had no time to play the liberator)— it was all one to my captors. The genius which could convert a hemlock−knot into a shoulder of bacon, a bundle of elder twigs into good Havana cigars, and bags of carpet−rags into Bologna sausages, could be at no fault when the demand was only to transform a peaceable follower of George Fox into a roaring lion of abolition. I felt that they had got me into a quandary more dreadful than any that had ever before afflicted my spirit. I knew we were already far south of Mason's and Dixon's.

The moment my vile kidnappers slackened their speed a little, having ridden hard to escape the negro−drivers, I called a parley, in the course of which two circumstances were brought to light, which greatly increased the afflictions of my spirit. I began by remonstrating with the villains upon the wickedness, cruelty, and injustice of their proceedings; to which Joshua made answer, that "times was hard—that a poor man was put to a hard shiftto get a living—that, for his part, he was an honest man who turned his hand to any honest matter— that he knew what was lawful, and what was not —that he was agin all abolition, which was anti−constitutional, and clear for keeping the peace betwixt the North and South"—and twenty other things of a like nature, of which the most important was, a declaration that the good people of some parish or other in Louisiana had offered a reward of fifty thousand dollars for either of two individuals whose names I have forgotten, though they were very famous abolitionists, and although Joshua, to settle the matter at once, showed me their names in the advertisement, which he had cut from a newspaper.

"Friend," said I, "I don't see that these foolish people have offered any reward for me."

"Well, darn it, I know it," said Joshua; "but I rather estimate they'll give half price for you; and that will pay us right smart for the venture. For, you see, what they want is an abolitionist, and I rather estimate they're not over and above partickilar as to who he may be. Now I have heern tell of a heap of incendiary papers you sent down south to free the niggurs—"

"I never did any such thing!"

"Oh, well," said Joshua, "it's all one; them there sugar−growing fellers will think so; and so it's all right. And there's them runaway niggurs you Phil'delphy Quakers are always hiding away fromtheir masters. I rather estimate we'll make a good venture out of you."

"What!" said I, "will you sell my life for money?"

"No," said the vile Joshua, "it's a mere trade in flesh and blood—wouldn't take a man's life on no consideration."

"Friend, thee shall have money if thee will permit me to escape."

"Well," said Joshua, with an indifferent drawl, "I estimate not. Abel Snipe told me you was cleaned out as clear as a gourd−shell."

"Abel Snipe!" said I; "is thee a friend of that villain, Abel Snipe?"

"A sorter," said Joshua; "or rather Sam is. Him and Abel was friends together at Sing—"

"Oh, blast your jaw," said Sam, speaking for almost the first time on the whole journey, for he had been, until then, uncommonly glum and taciturn; "where's the difference where it was? Says Abel Snipe to me, says he, 'If you want's an abolitionist, there's my old friend Zachariah; he's your true go.' And so, d'ye see, that's what made us snap you; for we was thinking of snapping another."

"Oh, the wretch! the base, ungrateful, hypocritical wretch!"

"Come, blast it," said Sam, "don't abuse a man's friends."

"Fellow," said I, "hast thou no human feeling in that breast of thine? Wilt thou sell me to violent men and madmen, who will wrongfully take my life?Think what thou doest! Hast thou no conscience? Thou art selling a fellow−being! Hast thou no fear of death and judgment? of the devil and the world of torment?"

"Oh, hold your gab," said the ruffian. "As for selling fellow−critters, why, that was once a reggelar business of mine; for, d'ye see, I was a body−snatcher. And I reckon I was more skeared once snapping up a dead body, than ever I shall be lifting a live one. You must know, I was snatching for the doctors, over there in Jarsey; for, d'ye see, I'm a Jarseyman myself: I reckon it was some fourteen months ago: it was summer. What the devil−be−cursed the doctor wanted with a body in summer, I don't know; but it was none on my business. So we, went, me and Tim Stokes, and the doctor, to an old burying−ground where they had just earthed a youngster that the doctor said would suit him. Well, d'ye see, when we came to the grave, up jumps a blasted devil, as big as a cow, or it might ha' been a ghost, and set up a cry. So we takes to our heels. But the doctor said 'twas a man's cry, and no ghost's. And so, d'ye see, blast it, we was for going back again, after having a confab; when what should we do but find a poor devil of a feller lying dead by a hole under a beech−tree. The doctor said he would do better nor the other; and so, blast it, d'ye see, we nabbed him."

"Of a surety," said I, eagerly, "it was thebeech−tree at the Owl−roost! and that was the body of poor Sheppard Lee!"

"Well, they did call him summat of that like; and they made a great fuss about him in the papers. But I'm hanged if I wasn't skeared after that out of all body−snatching."

"Friend," said I, "can thee tell me what the doctor did with that body?"

"Why, cut him up, blast him, and made a rawhead−and−bloody−bones of him. The doctor was so cussed partickilar, he wouldn't let us even knock the teeth out; though that was no great loss, for Jarseymen hasn't no great shakes in the tooth way."

Alas! what an ending for poor Sheppard Lee! His body subjected to the knife of an anatomist, his bones scraped, boiled, bleached, hung together on wires, and set up in a museum, while his spirit was wandering about from body to body, enduring more afflictions in each than it had ever mourned even in that unlucky original dwelling it was so glad to leave! I am not of a sentimental turn, and I cannot say that, as Zachariah Longstraw, I felt any peculiar sorrow for the woes of Sheppard Lee. Nevertheless, I did not hear this account of the brutal way in which his body had been stolen and anatomized, without some touch of indignation and grief; which, perhaps, I should have expressed, had not there arisen, before the brutal Samuel had quite finished his remarks on Jerseymen's teeth, an occasion to exercise those feelings on my own immediate behalf.

This was produced by the vile Joshua, who had then the reins, telling a brace of horsemen whom we met that he had "the great abolitionist, the celebrated Zachariah Longstraw, in his cart," and was carrying him to be Lynched in Louisiana; a confession that threw the strangers into transports of satisfaction, one of them swearing he would accompany my captors to the Mississippi, or to the end of the earth, for the mere purpose of seeing me get my deservings.

CHAPTER XVIII. In which the Author approaches a climax in his adventures.

And now arose a train of incidents, by which I was taught three things, namely—first, the manner in which my merchants designed giving a value to their merchandise not inherent and intrinsic to it (for, of a truth, my abolition principles, as I said before, had never been carried to the point of notoriety, or even notice); secondly, the love with which a southron regards those pious philanthropists who will have him good and virtuous against his own will; and, thirdly, the religious respect for law and order which is so prominent a feature in the American character.

To make me valuable, it was necessary I should be made famous; and this was easily accomplishedin a land where men make up their opinions for themselves, according as they are instructed. It was only necessary to assure some half dozen or more independent sovereigns that I was famous, to ensure their making me so. And this my kidnappers did. They told everybody they met that they had secured Zachariah Longstraw, the famous abolitionist, the very life and soul of northern incendiarism, whom they were carrying to Louisiana, to be Lynched according to law; and as the circumstance would, of course, get into every patriotic newspaper along the way, it was certain I should be made famous enough before I got there, and they thus enjoy the advantage of advertising their commodity without paying a cent to the printer.

It was astonishing (and to none more than myself) to witness the suddenness with which I was exalted from obscurity to distinction, and the readiness with which every living soul, upon being told my name, character, and reputation, remembered all about me and my misdeeds. "Yes," cried one worthy personage, shaking at me a fist minus two fingers and a half, "I have heerd of him often enough: he lives in New−York, and he sells sendary pictures, packed up between the soles of niggur shoes."—"Yes!" cried another, who had but one eye, "I have read all about him: he lives in Boston, keeps a niggur school, and prints sendary papers, a hundred thousand at a time, to set niggurs insurrecting." In short, they remembered not only all that the unworthy Joshua told them to mydisparagement, but a thousand things that the imagination of one suggested to the credulity of another. It was in vain that I endeavoured to say any thing in denial or defence; ridicule and revilement, threats and execrations, were my only answers. It was clear, that by the time we reached the Mississippi, I should be the most important personage in America; and that, if my value as an article of merchandise was to be determined by the distinction I won on the road, my friends, Joshua and Samuel, would make their fortunes by the speculation. But it was not my fate to travel beyond the bounds of the Ancient Dominion.

It happened, that on this day an election was held in the district through which we were travelling, to return a representative to Congress, in lieu of one who had fought his way into the shoes of a chargé. All the world—that is, all the district—was therefore in arms; and men and boys, Americans and Irishmen, were making their way to the polls as fast and comfortably as two−mile−an−hour hardtrotting horses could carry them; and thither also, as it appeared, or in that direction, we were ourselves bending our course. As we advanced, therefore, we found ourselves gliding into a current of human bodies—honest republicans, moving onward to the polls, all of whom were ready to add their approval to my claims, or those the kidnappers made for me, to the honour of Lynchdom. The word was passed from one to another, that the Yankee cart contained the famous abolitionist, Zachariah Longstraw; they pressed around to look at and revile me, to discourse with the kidnappers on my demerits, and to express their delight that such a renowned member of the incendiary gang, as they called that class of conscientious people, should at last be on the road to justice.

And thus I was rolled along, attended by sundry groups, which grew fast into crowds, consisting of persons who rejoiced over my capture, and painted to my ears, in words uncommonly rough and ferocious, the fate that awaited me when arrived at my place of destination.

That place, as it chanced, was nearer than I either expected or desired. As the crowd thickened, the sounds of wrath and triumph increased, becoming more terrible to my auditories. A new idea came into the minds of the sovereigns. A villain, seven feet and a half high, mounted on a horse just half that altitude, who had a great knife−scar across his nose and cheek, and a dozen similar seams on his hands, rode up to the cart, and giving me a diabolical look, cried out "Whaw! what aw the use of carrying the crittur so faw? I say, Vawginnee is the place for

Lynching, atter all. I say, gentlemen and Vawginians! I go for Lynching right off−hand. Old Vawginnee for evvaw!"

Loud and terrible was the roar of voices with which the throng testified their approbation of the barbarian's proposal. It was agreed I ought to be, and should be, Lynched on the spot. The kidnappers appealed to the justice of "Virginians," requestingthem not to invade "the sacred rights of private property,"—"they could not think of giving up their prisoner for nothing; they meant him solely for the Louisiana market." But things were coming to a crisis, and that my conductors perceived. They whipped up to escape the throng; but in vain. The further they went, the more they became involved in the crowd, having now arrived at the village where the favourite candidate was stumping among his constituents, and promising them worlds of reform, retrenchment, and public virtue, provided they would send him to Congress. I could hear from my box (my friend Joshua having taken care to lock me up at the first sign of danger), as we entered the village, the distant cries of "Hampden Jones for ever!" mingled with those nearer ones of my persecutors, "Lynch the abolitionist!" and the loudly−expressed remonstrances of my friends against invasion of their rights, coupled with threats to have the law of any one who robbed them of their property.

But threats and appeals were alike wasted on the independent freemen of that district. Joined by the voters and others already assembled at the polls, who, at the cry of "Lynch the abolitionist!" had deserted their orator, to join in the nobler sport of Lynching, they increased in wrath and enthusiasm; and, stopping the cart and breaking open my prison−house, they dragged me into the light of day, one man calling for a pistol, another a knife, a third a rope, and a fourth a cord of good dry wood and a coal of fire, to "burn the villain alive." Such a horrible clamour never before afflicted my ears or soul. I saw that, abolitionist or not, it was all over with me; and so saw honest Joshua and Samuel, whose only solace for this unlucky interruption to their speculation, was a call some one generously made to take up a subscription for their benefit, seeing that it was "beneath the dignity of the chivalry of Virginia to cheat even a Yankee of what was justly his due."

CHAPTER XIX. Containing a specimen of eloquence, with some account of the dangers of Lynchdom.

At this moment the orator and candidate of the day, stalking up in high dudgeon to find what superior attraction had robbed him of his audience, laid eyes upon me. I thought I had seen him before; and verily I had. He was that identical gentleman, the master of the fugitive slave whom I had concealed in my house in Philadelphia, and then clapped into prison for robbing me, whence his master recovered him. There was no mistaking the gentleman: He was a young man of twenty−six or seven, six feet high and one foot wide, long−limbed, with small feet and huge hands, a great shock of Indian−looking hair, vast, solemn black eyes, a mouth wide and square, and a browthat might have suited a patriarch, it was so wide, and lofty, and wrinkled. He was evidently a man destined to shake the walls of the Capitol, and cause stenographers to groan; the Tully shone in his eye, the Demosthenes moved on his lip—there was genius even in the shape of his nose.

"I recollect the man," said he, with a voice that might have come from the bowels of a double−bass, it was so deep, rolling, and sonorous; "he hid my boy Pompey. His name is Longshanks; he is a Quaker, a philanthropist—an abolitionist!"

"Hampden Jones for ever!" cried the delighted sovereigns. "We'll hang him" (meaning me, however, and not the orator) "over the poll−window, and then vote for Hampden Jones, the friend of the law, the friend of the constitution, the friend of the south!"

"Stay, friends," said Hampden Jones, and his voice stilled the tumult; "I have a word to say on the subject of abolition."

"Hampden Jones for ever!" cried the republicans; and Hampden Jones stepped up on the head of a barrel, and stretched forth his right arm. He stretched forth his left also, and then, clinching both fists, and pursing his brows together until the balls beneath them looked like rolling grape−shot, he said,—

"Gentlemen—fellow−freemen of Virginia! The bulwarks of a nation's liberties are the virtues of her children. Compared with these, what is wealth? what is grandeur? what even are powerand glory? These—riches and greatness, power and renown—are the possessions of the Old World; yet what have they availed her? Look around that ancient hemisphere, and tell me where among its blood−stained battle−fields! where under its polluted palaces! where in its haunts of the despot and the slave! you can find the love of liberty, the love of law, the love of order, the love of justice, that give permanence to the institutions they adorn, and, like the laurel crown of the Cesars, guard from the thunderbolt the temples they bind in the wreath of honour? Look for them in the Old World, but look in vain. The mighty Colossus of Christendom, once vital with virtue, lifts its decrepit bulk beyond the verge of the Atlantic, a vast and mournful monument of decay! Age and the shocks of the elements, the wash of the tempest and the lightning−stroke, have ploughed its marble forehead with wrinkles; mosses hang from its brows, and the dust of its own ruin—dust animated only by insects and reptiles, the offspring of corruption—moulders over its buried feet! The virtues that once distinguished—that almost deified—the immortal Colossus, have fled from the old, to find their home in the New World. I look for them only in the bosoms of Americans!"

Here the orator, who had pronounced this sublime exordium with prodigious earnestness and effect, paused, while the welkin rung with the shouts of rapture its complimentary close was so well fitted to inspire. As for me, I felt a doleful skepticismas to the justness of the compliment, having the very best reason to distrust that love of liberty, law, order, and justice, which was about to consign me to ropes and flames, without asking the permission of a judge and jury. Moreover, I could not exactly see how Mr. Hampden Jones's remarks on the old and new world had any thing to do with the subject of abolition, which he had risen to discuss; and, indeed, this difficulty seemed to have beset others as well as myself, several crying out with great enthusiasm, "Let's have something on abolition; and then to the Lynching!" while others exclaimed, "Let's have the Lynching first, and the speech afterward."

"Abolition, my fellow−citizens!" said the orator, "it is my intention to address you on the subject of abolition. But first let me apply what I have already said. I have said, and I repeat, that the love of liberty, of law, of order, of justice, belongs peculiarly to the free sons of America. Let me counsel, let me advise, let me entreat you, to

have this noble truth in remembrance on this present occasion. Beware lest, in what you now intend to do, you give occasion to the enemies of freedom to doubt your virtue, to suspect the reality of your love of law, order, and justice, to stigmatize you as friends only of riot and outrage."

These words filled me with joyful astonishment. I began to believe the youthful Tully was about to interfere in my favour, to rebuke the violence of his adherents, and so save them from the sin of bloodguiltiness. So also thought the indignant sovereigns themselves; and many, elevating their voices, demanded furiously, "if he meant to protect the bloody abolitionist?"

"By no means," said Mr. Hampden Jones, with great emphasis; "what I have to advise is, that if we are to do execution upon the wretch, we shall proceed about it in an orderly and dignified way, resolve ourselves into a great and solemn tribunal, and so adjudge him to death with a regularity and decorum which shall excite the admiration and win the approbation of the whole world."

"Hampden Jones for ever!" cried the sovereigns; and so it appeared that all the benefit I was to derive from his interference, was only to be despatched in an orderly manner.

CHAPTER XX. In which Sheppard Lee reaches the darkest period of his existence.

Seeing this, I became horribly frightened—indeed, so much so, that I was incapable of observing properly what ensued. I have a faint recollection that Mr. Hampden Jones resumed his discourse and harangued those who would listen, on the subject he had promised to discuss; and I remember that his auditors echoed every tenth word with tremendousshouts. But what I remember better than all was, a spectacle that soon attracted my attention, being nothing less than the apparition of five or six stout negroes climbing up a tree hard by, dragging a rope after them, and tying it round a branch; all which they executed with uncommon spirit and zeal, shaking their fists at me all the time, and calling me a "cussed bobolitionist."

What was to become of me now? Had I entered the body of the most generous and humane of men only to be hanged? A cold sweat broke over me; my knees knocked together. The men who held me, held me faster. My judges, the members of the great and solemn tribunal, began to decide upon my fate with the regularity and decorum (advised by their orator) which were to win the approbation and admiration of the whole world— that is to say, by each man marching up to the orator's barrel, where stood a committee appointed to receive the votes, pronouncing his name, and voting to "hang the incendiary."

All this while, I believe, I was endeavouring to say something in my defence; but I have not the slightest recollection of what it was. Matters were coming—I may say had come—to a crisis, and my life hung upon a thread; when suddenly a negro, who had been among the most active and zealous of the volunteers on the tree, fell from a high branch to the ground, and besides breaking his own neck, as I understood by the cry that wasset up, crushed two or three white men that stood below.

This produced a great hubbub, and those who had stationed themselves about me as guards ran forward to see what mischief had been done. As they ran one way, I betook me to my heels and ran another. I rushed into the nearest house; but, being instantly pursued and ousted, I fled into a garden, from which I was as quickly chased by men and dogs, the first screaming, and the second howling and barking, so that the uproar they made was inexpressible.

Fear lent me wings; but I was surrounded; and run whithersoever I might, I always found myself brought up by some party or other presenting itself in front. The exercise, while it inflamed my own terrors, only exasperated the rage of my persecutors; and I was persuaded they would tear me to pieces the moment they caught me. Judge of my feelings, then, when I found myself hemmed in on all sides in a little field on the skirts of the village, with a party close at my elbow, on which I had stumbled without seeing it until roused by its cries.

I looked up and saw that it consisted of about a dozen negroes, who were carrying the body of their companion, the unlucky volunteer who had broken his neck falling from the tree; but which body they now threw upon the ground, and with loud screams of "He−ah, mossa John!" and "He−ah, mossaDickey!" began to scamper after me with all their might.

There was but one resource left me, and that let the reader determine hereafter of how deplorable a character. I made a successful dodge, followed by a dash right through the screaming Africans, who perhaps hesitated to lay a rough hand on one of my colour, and, reaching the body of their companion, cried, half to myself and half to the insensible clay, "It is better to be a slave than a dead man; and the scourge, whatever romantic persons may say to the contrary, is preferable, at any time, to the halter. If thou art dead, my sable brother, yield my spirit a refuge in thy useless body!"

That was the last I remember of the adventure, for I had no sooner uttered the words than I fell into a trance.

BOOK VI. CONTAINING A HISTORY AND A MORAL.

CHAPTER I. In which Sheppard Lee finds every thing black about him.

When I opened my eyes I found that I was lying in a hovel, very mean of appearance, yet with a certain neatness and cleanliness about it that prevented it from looking squalid. It is true that the floor, which was of planks, was somewhat awry and dilapidated; that the little window, which, with the door, furnished, or was meant to furnish, its only light, was rather bountifully bedecked with old hats and scraps of brown paper; and that the walls of ill−plastered logs displayed divers gleaming chinks, and vistas through them of the sunny prospects without. Nevertheless, the place did not look amiss for a poor man, and, in my experience as a philanthropist, I had seen hundreds much more miserable.

An old woman sat at the fireplace, nodding over a stew, the fumes of which were both savoury and agreeable. The old woman was, however, as black as the outside of her stew−pan—in other words, a negress; and this circumstance striking upon thechords of association, I began to remember what had lately befallen me. A terrible suspicion flashed into my mind. Had I not—but before I could ask myself the question, my hand, which I had raised to scratch my head, came into contact with a mop of elastic wool, such as never grew upon the scalp of a white man. I started up in bed and looked at my hands and arms; they were of the hue of ebony—or, to speak more strictly, of smoked mahogany. I saw a fragment of looking−glass hanging on the wall within my reach. I snatched it down, and took a survey of my physiognomy. Miserable me! my face was as black as my arms —and, indeed, somewhat more so—presenting a sable globe, broken only by two red lips of immense magnitude, and a brace of eyes as white and as wide as plain China saucers, or peeled turnips.

"Whaw dah!" cried the old woman, roused by the noise I made; "whaw dat, you nigga Tom? what you doin' dah? Lorra bless us! if a nigga break a neck, can't a nigga hold−a still?"

Alas! and had my fate brought me to this grievous pass? Was there no other situation in life sufficiently wretched, but that I must take up my lot in the body of a miserable negro slave? How idle had been all my past discontent! how foolish the persuasion I had indulged five different times, that I was, on each occasion, the most unhappy of men! I had forgotten the state of the bondman, the condition of the expatriated African. Now I was at last to learn in reality what it was to bethe victim of fortune, what to be the exemplar of wretchedness, the true repository of all the griefs that can afflict a human being. Already I felt, in imagination, the blow of the task−master on my back, the fetter on my limb, the iron in my soul; and when the old woman made a step towards me, perhaps to discover why I made no reply to her questions, I was so prepossessed with the idea of whips and lashes, that I made a dodge under the bedclothes, as if to escape a thwack.

"Golly matty! is de nigga mad?" cried the Jezebel. "I say, you nigga Tom, what you doin'? How you neck feel now?"

"My neck?" thought I, recollecting that it had been broken, and wondering in what way it had been mended. I clapped my hands to it; it was very stiff and sore: while I felt at it, the old woman told me some great doctor had twisted a great "kink" out of it; but I bestowed little notice on what she said. My mind ran upon other matters; I could think of nothing but cowhides and cat−o'nine−tails nine−tails, that were to welcome me to bondage.

"Aunty," said I—why I addressed the old lady thus I know not; but I have observed that negroes always address their seniors by the titles of uncle and aunt, and I suppose the instinct was on me— "am I a slave?"

"What a fool nigga to ax a question!" said she. "What you gwying to be, den, but old Massa Jodge's nigga−boy Tom? What you git up faw, ha?" —(I was making an attempt to rise)—"Massa docta say you stay a−bed. What you git up faw, ha?"

"I intend to run away," said I; and truly that was the notion then uppermost in my mind; and it is very likely I should have made a bolt for the door that moment, had I not discovered an uncommon weakness in my lower limbs, which prevented my getting out of bed.

"Whaw! what a fool!" cried the beldam, regarding me with surprise and contempt; "what you do when you run away, ha? Who'll hab you? who'll feed you? who'll take care of you? who'll own a good−fo'−nothin' runaway nigga, I say, ha? Kick him 'bout h'yah, kick him 'bout dah, poor despise nigga wid no massa, jist as despise as any free nigga! You run away, ha? what den?" continued my sable monitress, warming into eloquence as she spoke: "take up constable, clap him in jail, salt him down cowskin. Dat all? No! sell him low price, send

Mississippi—what den? Work in de cotton−field, pull at de cane. Dat all? No! cussed overseer wid a long whip—cut h'yah, cut dah, cut high, cut low—whip all day, cuff all night—take all de skin off—oh! dey do whip to de debbil in de Mississippi!" And as the old lady concluded, to give more effect to her expressions, she fell to rubbing her back and dodging her head from side to side, until I had the liveliest idea in the world of that very castigation of which I stood in such horror.

CHAPTER II. In which Sheppard Lee is introduced to his master.

Just at this moment, to make my anguish more complete, in stepped a tall and dignified person, bearing a huge walking−stick; with which I was so certain he would proceed to maul me, that I made a second dive under the bedclothes, loudly beseeching him for mercy.

To my surprise, however, instead of beating me, he spoke to the old woman, whom he called aunt Phœbe (and who, in return, entitled him Massa Jodge), asked "if I was not light−headed?" said that "it was a great pity I had so hard a time of it," that "I was very much hurt," that "he would be sorry to lose me," and so on; and, in fine, expressed what he said in accents so humane and gentle, that I was encouraged to steal a peep at him; seeing which he sat down on a stool, felt my pulse, and giving me quite a good−natured look, asked me "if I felt in much pain?"

I was astonished that he should treat me thus, if my master. But, surveying him more intently, I perceived there was little in his appearance to justify any fears of cruelty. He was an aged man, with a head of silver that gave him an uncommonly venerable air; and, though his visage was grave,it expressed a native good−humour and amiableness.

My terrors fled before his soothing accents and benevolent looks; but being still confused, I was unable to reply in proper terms to his questions; so that when he asked me, as he soon did, what I meant by crying for mercy, I made answer, "Oh Lord, sir, I was afraid you was going to beat me!" at which he laughed, and said "my conscience was growing tenderer than common;" adding, that "there was no doubt I deserved a trouncing, as did every other boy on his estate; for a set of greater scoundrels than his was not to be found in all Virginia; and if they had their deserts, they would get a round dozen apiece every day."

He then began to ask me particularly about my ailments; and I judged from his questions and certain occasional remarks which he let fall, that I had been lying insensible for several days, that my neck had been put out of place, or dislocated, and reduced again by some practitioner of uncommon skill. And here, lest the reader should think such a circumstance improbable, I beg leave to say that I have lately seen an account of a similar operation performed by an English surgeon on the neck of a fox−hunting squire; and as the story appeared in the newspapers, there can be no doubt of its truth.

While the gentleman—my master—was thus asking me of my pains, and betraying an interest in my welfare that softened my heart towards him,there came into the hovel a young lady of a very sweet countenance, followed by two or three younger girls and a little boy, all of whom seemed glad to see me, the little boy in particular, shaking me by the hand, while his youthful sisters (for all were my master's children) began to drag from a basket and display before my eyes the legs of a roasted chicken, a little tart, a jelly, and divers other dainty viands, which they had brought with them, as they said, "for poor sick Tom," and insisted upon seeing him eat on the spot. As for the young lady, the eldest sister, she smiled on them and on me (for I was not backward to accept and dispose of the savoury gifts), but told me I must not be imprudent, nor eat too much, and I would soon be well. "What!" thought I, "does a slave ever eat too much?"

It is astonishing what a revolution was effected in my feelings by the gentle deportment of my master, and the kindly act of his children. I looked upon them and myself with entirely new eyes; I felt a sort of affection for them steal through my spirit, and I wondered why I had ever thought of them with fear. I took a particular liking to the little boy, who, by−the−by, was a namesake of mine, he being Massa Tommy, and I plain Tom, and I had an unaccountable longing come over me to take him on my back and go galloping on allfours over the grass at the door. I had no more thoughts of running away to avoid the dreadful lash, and the shame of bonds; and, my master andhis children presently leaving the hovel, having first charged me to keep myself quiet and easy, I fell sound asleep, and dreamed I lay a whole day on my back on a clay−bank, eating johnny−cake and fried bacon.

CHAPTER III. An old woman's cure for a disease extremely prevalent both in the coloured and uncoloured creation.

The next day I was visited again by my master, and by other members of his family whom I had not seen before, and of whom I shall say nothing now, having occasion to mention them hereafter. The children brought me "goodies" as before, and little Tommy told me to "make haste and get well, for there were none of the other 'boys' "—meaning negroes—"who knew how to gallop the cock−horse half so well as I." In short, I was treated like a human being, and fed like a king, and began to grow wondrous content with my situation. The doctor also came, and having fingered about my neck for a while, declared my case to be the most marvellous one ever known, and concluded by telling me I was well enough to get up, and that I might do so whenever I chose.

Now this was a matter of which I was as well satisfied as he could be, being quite certain I never was better in my life; but I felt amazing delight inlolling a−bed, doing nothing except feeding on the good things with which my master's children so liberally supplied me; and, I believe; had they left the matter to be decided by my own will, I should have been lying on that bed, luxuriating in happy laziness, to this day. It is certain I fabricated falsehoods without number, for the mere purpose of keeping my bed; for whenever my master, who came to inquire about me at least once a day, ventured to hint I was well enough to get up if I would but choose to think so, I felt myself unaccountably impelled to declare, with sighs and groans, that I could scarce move a limb, and that I suffered endless pangs; all which was false, for I was strong as a horse, and without any pain whatever.

"Well, well," my venerable master used to say, "I know you are cheating me, you rascal. But that's the way with you all. A negro will be a negro; and, sure, I have the laziest set of scoundrels on my estate that ever ate up a good−natured master."

Unhappily, for so I then thought it, old aunt Phœbe, who had been appointed to nurse me, and who was very conscientious about her master's interest in all cases where her own was not involved, was by no means so easily imposed upon as the old gentleman; and on the seventh day after I opened my eyes, she dispelled a pleasing revery in which I was indulging, by bidding me arise and begone. I began to plead my pains: "Can't play'possum with me!" said she; "good−for−nothin' nigga, not worth you cawn!" and, not deigning to employ any other argument, she took a broomstick to me, and fairly beat me out of the hovel. I thought it was very odd I should get my first beating of a fellow−slave, and I was somewhat incensed at the old woman for her cruelty; but by−and−by, when I had taken a seat in the sunshine, snuffed the fresh autumn air, and looked about me a little, I fell into a better humour with her, and—if that were possible—with myself.

CHAPTER IV. Some account of Ridgewood Hill, and the Author's occupations.

My master's lands lay on and near the Potomac, and his house was built on a hill, which bore his own name, and gave name also to the estate—that is, Ridgewood Hill. It overlooked that wide and beautiful river, being separated from it only by a lawn, which in the centre was hollow, and ran down to the river in a ravine, while its flanks or extremities, sloping but gently in their whole course, suddenly fell down to the shore in wooded bluffs, that looked very bold and romantic from the water. In the hollow of the lawn was a little brook, that rose from a spring further up the hill, and found its way to the river through the ravine, where it made manypretty little pools and cascades among the bushes; while a creek, that was wide but shallow, swept in from the river above, and went winding away among the hills behind.

My master's house was ancient, and, I must say, not in so good repair as it might have been; but there were so many beautiful trees about it that one would not think of its defects, the more especially as it appeared only the more venerable for them. It looked handsome enough from the river; and even from the negro−huts, which were nearer the creek, it had an agreeable appearance; particularly when the children were playing together on the lawn, which they did, and sometimes white and black together, nearly all day long. They were thus engaged in their sports when aunt Phœbe drove me from the hovel; and I remember how soon my indignation at the unceremonious ejection was pacified by looking on the happy creatures, thus enjoying themselves on the grass, while my master and his eldest daughter sat on the porch,.regarding them with smiles.

How greatly I had changed within a few short days! Instead of being moved by the sight of juvenile independence and happiness to think of my own bitter state of servitude, I was filled with a foolish glee; and little Tommy running up to me with shouts of joy, down I dropped on my hands and knees, and taking him on my back, began to trot, and gallop, and rear, and curvet over the lawn, to the infinite gratification of himself, hislittle sisters, and the children of my own colour, all of whom rewarded my efforts of horseship with screams of approbation. Now the reader will be surprised to hear it, but I, Tom the slave (I never remember to have heard myself called any thing but Tom), enjoyed this foolish sport just as much as Tommy the rider, to whom I felt, I think, some such feelings of affection—I know not how I got them, but feel them I did—as a father experiences while playing the courser to his own child. Nay, I was thrown into such good−humour, and felt so content with myself, that when my master came to me, and bade me "take care lest I should hurt myself by my exertions," I told him, in the fervour of my heart, I was doing very well, and that I was as strong as ever I had been; which caused him to laugh, and say I was growing marvellous honest of a sudden.

About this time the field−hands returned from their daily labour, and, having despatched their evening meal, they came, the women and children with them, under the trees before the door, with banjoes, fiddles, and clacking−bones (that is, a sort of castanets made of the ribs of an ox), and began to sing and dance, as was their custom always every fair evening; for my master greatly delighted, as he said, to see the poor devils enjoy themselves; in which the poor devils were ever ready to oblige him. They had no sooner begun the diversion, than I was seized with an unaccountable desire to join them, which I did, dancing with all my might, and singing and clapping my hands, the merriest and happiest of them all. And this sort of amusement, I may as well now inform the reader, we were in the habit of repeating so long as the mildness of the weather permitted.

CHAPTER V. In which the Author further describes his situation, and philosophizes on the state of slavery.

Having thus shown myself to be perfectly cured of my broken neck, it followed that, as a slave, I was now compelled to go into the fields and labour. This I did, at first, very reluctantly; but by−and−by I discovered there was but little toil expected of me, or indeed of any other bondman; for the overseer was a good−natured man like his employer, and lazy like ourselves. I do not know how it may be with the slaves on other estates; but I must confess that, so far as mere labour went, there was less done by, and less looked for from, my master's hands, than I have ever known to be the case with the white labourers of New−Jersey. My master owned extensive tracts of land, from which, although now greatly empoverished and almost exhausted, he might have drawn a princely revenue, had he exacted of his slaves the degree of labour always demanded of able−bodied hirelings in a freestate. But such was not the custom of Virginia, or such, at least, was not the custom of my master. He was of a happy, easy temper, neglectful of his interest, and though often—nay, I may say incessantly—grumbling at the flagrant laziness of all who called him master, and at the yearly depreciation of his lands, he was content enough if the gains of the year counterbalanced the expenses; and as but a slight degree of toil was required to effect this happy object, it was commonly rendered, and without repugnance, on the part of his slaves. His great consolation, and he was always pronouncing it to himself and to us, was, "that his hands were the greatest set of scoundrels in the world,"— which, if unutterable laziness be scoundrelism, was true. He was pretty generally beloved by them; which, I suppose, was because he was so good−natured; though many used to tell me they loved him because he was their "right−born master,"— that is, put over them by birth, and not by purchase; for he lived upon the land occupied by his fathers before him, and his slaves were the descendants of those who had served them.

The reader, who has seen with what horror and fear I began the life of a slave, may ask if, after I found myself restored to health and strength, I sought no opportunity to give my master the slip, and make a bold push for freedom. I did not; a change had come over the spirit of my dream: I found myself, for the first time in my life, content, or very nearly so, with my condition, free from cares, far removed from disquiet, and, if not actually in love with my lot, so far from being dissatisfied, that I had not the least desire to exchange it for another.

Methinks I see the reader throw up his hands at this, crying, "What! content with slavery!" I assure him, now I ponder the matter over, that I am as much surprised as himself, and that I consider my being content with a state of bondage a very singular and unaccountable circumstance. Nevertheless, such was the fact. I was no longer Sheppard Lee, Zachariah Longstraw, nor anybody else, except simply Tom, Thomas, or Tommy, the slave. I forgot that I once had been a freeman, or, to speak more strictly, I did not remember it, the act of remembering involving an effort of mind which it did not comport with my new habits of laziness and indifference to make, though perhaps I might have done so, had I chosen. I had ceased to remember all my previous states of existence. I could not have been an African had I troubled myself with thoughts of any thing but the present.

Perhaps this defect of memory will account for my being satisfied with my new condition. I had no recollection of the sweets of liberty to compare and contrast with the disgusts of servitude. Perhaps my mind was stupified—sunk beneath the ordinary level of the human understanding, and therefore incapable of realizing the evils of my condition. Or, perhaps, after all, considering the circumstancesof my lot with reference to those of my mind and nature, such evils did not in reality exist.

The reader may settle the difficulty for himself, which he can do when he has read a little more of my history. In the meanwhile, the fact is true: I was satisfied with my lot—I was satisfied even with myself. The first time I looked at my new face I was shocked at what I considered its ugliness. But having peeped at it a dozen times or more, my ideas began to alter, and, by−and−by, I thought it quite beautiful. I used to look at myself in aunt Phœbe's glass by the hour, and I well remember the satisfaction with which I listened to the following rebuke of my vanity from her, namely, "All you pritty young niggurs with handsome faces is good for nothin, not wuth so much as you cawn!" In short, I was something of a coxcomb; and nothing could equal the pride and happiness of my heart, when, of a Sabbath morning, dressed in one of my master's old coats well brushed up, a bran−new rabbit−fur hat, the gift of little Tommy, a ruffled shirt, and a white neckcloth, with a pair of leather gloves swinging in one hand, and a peeled beechen wand by way of cane in the other, I went stalking over the fields to

church in the little village, near to which my master resided.

I say again, I cannot account for my being so contented with bondage. It may be, however, that there is nothing necessarily adverse to happiness in slavery itself, unaccompanied by other evils; and that when the slave is ground by no oppression and goaded by no cruelty, he is not apt to repine or moralize upon his condition, nor to seek for those torments of sentiment which imagination associates with the idea of slavery in the abstract.

Of one thing, at least, I can be very certain. I never had so easy and idle a time of it in my whole life. My little master Tommy had grown very fond of me. It is strange anybody should be fond of a slave; but it is true. It appears I was what they call a mere field−hand, that is, a labourer, and quite unfit for domestic service. Nevertheless, to please Tommy, I was taken from the tobacco−fields, and, without being appointed to any peculiar duty about the house, was allowed to do what I pleased, provided I made myself sufficiently agreeable to young master. So I made him tops, kites, wind−mills, corn−stalk fiddles, and little shingle ships with paper sails, gave him a trot every now and then on my back, and had, in return, a due share of his oranges and gingerbread.

In this way my time passed along more agreeably than I can describe. My little master, it is true, used to fall into a passion and thump me now and then; but that I held to be prime fun; particularly as,—provided I chose to blubber a little, and pretend to be hurt,—the little rogue would relent, and give me all the goodies he could beg, borrow, or steal, to "make up with me," as he called it.

Little Tommy and his sisters, four in number, were the children of my master by a second wife,who had died two years before. The oldest was the young lady of whom I have already spoken, and she was, I believe, not above seventeen. Her name was Isabella, and she was uncommonly handsome. A young gentleman of the neighbourhood, named Andrews, was paying court to her. Indeed, she had a great many admirers, and there was much company came to see her.

My master's oldest son, the only child left by his first wife, lived on a plantation beyond the creek, being already married, and having children. His name was George, like his father, and the slaves used to distinguish them as "Massa Cunnel Jodge," and "Massa Maja Jodge;" for all the gentlemen in those parts were either colonels or majors. The major's seat being at so short a distance, and the plantation he cultivated a part of the colonel's great estate of Ridgewood Hill, we used to regard him as belonging still to our master's family, and the slaves on both plantations considered themselves as forming but a single community. Nevertheless, we of the south side had a sort of contempt for those of the north; for "Massa Maja," though a good master, was by no means so easy as his father. He exacted more work; and when he rode into the fields on our side, as he often did, he used to swear at us for lazy loons, and declare he would, some day or other turn over a new leaf with us.

CHAPTER VI. Recollections of slavery.

I must again repeat what I have said, namely, that I was contented with my servile condition, and that I was so far from looking back with regret to my past life of freedom, that I ceased at last to remember it altogether. I was troubled with no sense of degradation, afflicted with no consciousness of oppression; and instead of looking upon my master as a tyrant who had robbed me of my rights, I regarded him as a great and powerful friend, whose protection and kindness I was bound to requite with a loyal affection, and with so much of the labour of my hands as was necessary to my own subsistence. What would have been my feelings had my master been really a cruel and tyrannical man, I will not pretend to say; but doubtless they would have been the opposite of those I have confessed.

The above remarks apply equally to my fellowbondmen, of whom there were, young and old, and men and women together, more than a hundred on the two estates. The exact number I never knew; but I remember there were above twenty able−bodied men, or "full hands," as they were called, when all were mustered together. There weremany, especially among the women, who were great grumblers; but that was their nature: such a thing as serious discontent was, I am persuaded, entirely unknown. The labours of the plantation were light, the indulgences granted frequent and many. There was scarce a slave on the estate who, if he laboured at all, did not labour more for himself than his master; for all had their little lots or gardens, the produce of which was entirely their own, and which they were free to sell to whomsoever they listed. And hard merchants they were sometimes, even to my master, when he would buy of them, as he often did. I remember one day seeing old aunt Phœbe, to whom he had sent to buy some chickens, fall into a passion and refuse to let the messenger have any, because her master had forgotten to send the money. "Go tell old Massa Jodge," said she, with great ire, "I no old fool to be cheated out of my money; and I don't vally his promise to pay not dat!"—snapping her fingers—"he owe me two ninepence already!" And the old gentleman was compelled to send her the cash before she complied with his wishes.

The truth is, my master was, in some respects, a greater slave than his bondmen; and all the tyranny I ever witnessed on the estate was exercised by them, and at his expense; for there was a general conspiracy on the part of all to cheat him, as far as was practicable, out of their services, while they were, all the time, great sticklers for their own rights and privileges. He was, as I have said before, universally beloved; but his good−nature was abused a thousand times a day.

There existed no substantial causes for dissatisfaction; and there was therefore the best reason for content. Singing and dancing were more practised than hard work. In a word, my master's slaves were an idle, worthless set, but as happy as the day was long. I may say the same of myself; I certainly was a very merry and joyous personage, and my companions, who envied me for being the favourite of young master, used to call me Giggling Tom.

But there is an end to the mirth of the slave, as well as the joy of the master. A cloud at last came betwixt me and the sun; a new thought awoke in my bosom, bringing with it a revolution of feeling, which extended to the breasts of all my companions. It was but a small cause to produce such great effects; but an ounce of gunpowder may be made to blow up an army, and a drop of venom from the lip of a dog may cause the destruction of a whole herd.

CHAPTER VII. A scene on the banks of the Potomac, with the humours of an African improvisatore.

Beneath the bluff, and at the mouth of the creek which divided the two plantations, was a wharf or landing, where our fishing−boats (for we had a good fishery hard by) used to discharge their cargoes, and where, also, small shallops, coming with supplies to the plantation, put out their freight. Here, one day, some seven or eight of the hands were engaged removing a cargo of timber, which had just been discharged by a small vessel; my master having bought it for the express purpose of repairing the negro−houses, and building a new one for a fellow that was to be married; for it seems, his crops of corn and tobacco had turned out unusually well, and when that happened the slaves were the first who received the benefit.

Hither I strolled, having nothing better to do, to take a position on the side of the bluff, where I could both bask in the sunshine, which was very agreeable (for it was now the end of October, though fine weather), and overlook the hands working—which was still more agreeable; for I had uncommon satisfaction to look at others labouring while I myself was doing nothing.

Having selected a place to my liking, I lay downon the warm clay, enjoying myself, while the others intermitted their labour to abuse me, crying, "Cuss' lazy nigga, gigglin' Tom dah! why you no come down work?" having employed themselves at which for a time, they resumed their labours; and I, turning over on my back and taking a twig that grew nigh betwixt my teeth, began to think to myself what an agreeable thing it was to be a slave and have nothing to do.

By−and−by, hearing a great chattering and laughing among the men below, I looked down and beheld one of them diverting himself with a ludicrous sport, frequently practised by slaves to whom the lash is unknown. He was frisking and dodging about pretty much as aunt Phœbe had done when endeavouring to show me how the whip was handled in Mississippi; and, like her, he rubbed his back, now here, now there, now with the right, now with the left hand; now ducking to the earth, now jumping into the air, as though some lusty overseer were plying him, whip in hand, with all his might. The wonder of the thing was, however, that Governor (for that was the fellow's name) had in his hand a pamphlet, or sheet of printed paper, the contents of which he was endeavouring both to convey to his companions and to illustrate by those ridiculous antics. The contents of the paper were varied, for varied also was the representation.

"Dah you go, nigga!" he cried, leaping as if from a blow; "slap on'e leg, hit right on'e shin! yah, yah, yah—chah, chah, ch−ch−ch−ch−ah! chah,chah, massa!—oh de dam overseeah! dat de way he whip a nigga!" Then pausing a moment and turning a leaf of the book, he fell to leaping again, crying—"What dat? dat you, Rose? what you been doin? stealin' sugah?

"Jump! you nigga gal!

Hab a hard massa!

So much you git for stealin' sugah!

So much for lickin' lassa!

"Dem hard massa, licky de gals!

"Ole Vaginnee, nebber ti−ah!

what 'e debbil's de use ob floggin' like fia−ah!"

Then came another scene. "Yah, yah, yah!— what dat? Massa Maja kickin' de pawson! I say, whaw Pawson Jim? you Jim pawson, he−ah you git'em!" And then another—"Lorra−gorry, what he−ah? He−ah a nigga tied up in a gum—

"Oh! de possum up de gum−tree,

'Coony in de hollow:

Two white men whip a nigga,

How de nigga holla!

"Jump, nigga, jump! yah, yah, yah! did you ebber see de debbil? jump, nigga, jump! two white men whip a nigga? gib a nigga fay−ah play!

When de white man comes to sticky, sticky,

Lorra−gorr! he licky, licky!

"Gib a nigga fay−ah play!"

And so he went on, describing and acting what he affected to read, to the infinite delight of his companions, who, ceasing their work, crowded round him, to snatch a peep at the paper, which, I observed, no one got a good look at without jumping back immediately, rubbing his sides, and launching into other antics, in rivalry with Governor.

CHAPTER VIII. The Author descends among the slaves, and suddenly becomes a man of figure, and an interpreter of new doctrines.

I wasmoved with curiosity to know what they had laid their hands on, and I descended the bank to solve the mystery. The paper had passed from the hands of Governor to those of a fellow named Jim, or Parson Jim, as we usually called him; for he was fond of praying and preaching, which he had been allowed to do until detected in a piece of roguery a few weeks before by Master Major, who, besides putting a check on his clerical propensities for the future, saluted him with two or three kicks well laid on, on the spot. It was to this personage and his punishment that Governor alluded, when he cried, "What he−ah? Massa Maja kickin' de pawson!" as mentioned above. Although a great rogue, he was a prime favourite among the negroes, who had a great respect for his learning; for he could read print, and was even thought to have some idea of writing. This fellow was employed, on the present occasion, at theox−cart; and, as it is no part of a slave's system to do the work of others, he had been sitting apart singing a psalm, while the others were loading his cart; and apart he had remained, until a call was made upon him to explain so much of the paper, being the printed portion, as Governor could not. The paper, it is here proper to observe, had been found by Governor among the boards and scantling; though how it got there no one knew, nor was it ever discovered. It was a pamphlet, or magazine, I know not which (and the name I have unfortunately forgotten), containing, besides a deal of strange matter about slavery, some half a dozen or more wood−cuts, representing negroes in chains, under the lash, exposed in the market for sale, and I know not what other situations; and it was these which had afforded the delighted Governor so much matter for mimicry and merriment. There was one cut on the first page, serving as a frontispiece; it represented a negro kneeling in chains, and raising his fettered hands in beseeching to a white man, who was lashing him with a whip. Beneath it was a legend, which being, or being deemed, explanatory of the picture, and at the same time the initial sentence of the book, Parson Jim was essaying to read: and thus it was he proceeded:—

"T−h−e, the—dat's de; f−a−t−e, fat—de fat; o−f, ob—de fat ob; t−h−e, de—de fat ob de; s−l−a−v−e, slave—de fat ob de slave. My gorry, what's dat? Brederen, I can't say as how I misprehends dat."

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Governor; "plain as de nose on you face. De fat ob de slave—what he mean, heh? Why, gorry, you dumb nigga, he mean—massa, dah, is whippin de fat out ob de nigger! Dem hard massa dat−ah, heh? Whip de fat out!

"Lorra−gorry, massa, don't like you whippy:

Don't sell Gubbe'nor down a Mississippi!"

"Let me read it," said I.

"You read, you nigga! whar you larn to read?" cried my friends. It was a question I could not well answer; for, as I said before, the memory of my past existence had quite faded from my mind: nevertheless, I had a feeling in me as if I could read; and taking the book from the parson, I succeeded in deciphering the legend—"The Fate of the Slave."

"Whaw dat?" said Governor; "de chain and de cowhide? Does de book say dat's de luck for nigga? Don't b'leeb 'm; dem lie: Massa Cunnel nebber lick a nigga in 'm life!"

The reading of that little sentence seemed, I know not why, to have cast a sudden damper on the spirits of all present. Until that moment, there had been much shouting, laughing, and mimicking of the pains of men undergoing flagellation. Every picture had been examined, commented on, and illustrated with glee; it associated only the idea of some idle vagabond or other winning his deserts. A new face, a new interpretation was given to the matter by the words I had read. The chain andscourge appeared no longer as the punishment of an individual; they were to be regarded as the doom of the race. The laughing and mimicry ceased, and I beheld around me nothing but blank faces. It was manifest, however, that the feeling was rather indignation than anxiety; and that my friends looked upon the ominous words as a libel upon their masters and themselves.

"What for book say dat?" cried Governor, who, from being the merriest, had now become the angriest of all; "who ebber hear of chain a nigga, escept nigga runaway, or nigga gwyin' down gin' will to Mississippi? Who ebber hear of lash a nigga, escept nigga sassbox, nigga thief, nigga drunk, nigga break hoss' leg?"

"Brudders," said Parson Jim, "this here is a thing what is 'portant to hear on; for, blessed be Gorra−matty,

there is white men what writes books what is friends of the Vaginnee niggur."

"All cuss' bobbolitionist!" said Governor, with sovereign contempt—"don't b'leeb in 'm. Who says chain nigga in Vaginnee? who says cowhide nigga in Vaginnee? De fate ob de slave! Cuss' lie! An't I slave, hah? Who chains Gubbe'nor? who licks Gubbe'nor? Little book big lie!"

And "little book big lie!" echoed all, in extreme wrath. The parson took things more coolly. He rolled his eyes, hitched up his collar, stroked his chin, and suggesting the propriety of reading a little farther, proposed that "brudder Tom, who had an uncommon good hidear of that ar sort of print, should hunt out the root of the matter;" and lamented that "it was a sort of print he could not well get along with without his spectacles."

CHAPTER IX. What it was the negroes had discovered among the scantling.

Thus called upon, I made a second essay, and succeeded, though not without pain, in deciphering enough of the text to give me a notion of the object for which the tract had been written. It was entitled "An Address to the Owners of Slaves," and could not, therefore, be classed among those "incendiary publications" which certain over−zealous philanthropists are accused of sending among slaves themselves, to inflame them into insurrection and murder. No such imputation could be cast upon the writer. His object was of a more humane and Christian character; it was to convince the master he was a robber and villain, and, by this pleasing mode of argument, induce him to liberate his bond−men. The only ill consequence that might be produced was, that the book might, provided it fell into their hands, convince the bondmen of the same thing; but that was a result for which the writer was not responsible—he addressed himself only to the master. It began with the following pithy questions and answers—or something very like them— for I cannot pretend to recollect them to the letter.

"Why scourgest thou this man? and why dost thou hold him in bonds? Is he a murderer? a house−burner? a ravisher? a blasphemer? a thief? No. What then is the crime for which thou art punishing him so bitterly? He is a negro, and my slave."

Then followed a demand "how he became, and by what right the master claimed him as a slave;" to which the master replied, "By right of purchase," exhibiting, at the same time, a bill of sale. At this the querist expressed great indignation, and calling the master a robber, cheat, and usurper, bade him show, as the only title a Christian would sanction, "a bill of sale signed by the negro's Maker!" who alone had the right to dispose of man's liberty; and he concluded the paragraph by averring, "that the claim was fraudulent; that the slave was unjustly, treacherously, unrighteously held in bonds; and that he was, or of right should be, as free as the master himself."

Here I paused for breath; my companions looked at me with eyes staring out of their heads. Astonishment, suspicion, and fear were depicted in their countenances. A new idea had entered their brains. All opened their mouths, but Governor was the only one who could speak, and he stuttered and stammered in his eagerness so much that I could scarcely understand him.

"Wh−wh−wh−wh−what dat!" he cried; "hab a right to fr−fr−fr−freedom, 'case Gorra−matty no s−s−s−sell sell me? Why den, wh−wh−wh−who's slave? Gorra−mattyno trade in niggurs! I say, you Pawson Jim, wh−wh−wh−what you say dat doctrine?"

The parson was dumb−founded. The difficulty was solved by an old negro, who rolled his quid of tobacco and his eyes together, and said,

"Whaw de debbil's de difference? Massa Cunnel no buy us; we born him slave, ebbery nigga he−ah!"

Unluckily, the very next paragraph was opened by the quotation from the Declaration of Independence, that "all men were born free and equal," which was asserted to be true of all men, negroes as well as others; from which it followed that the master's claim to the slave born in thraldom was as fraudulent as in the case of one obtained by purchase.

"Whaw dat?" said Governor; "Decoration of Independence say dat? Gen'ral Jodge Washington, him make dat; and Gen'ral Tommie Jefferson, him put hand to it! 'All men born free and equal.' A nigga is a man! who says no to dat? How come Massa Cunnel to be massa den?"

That question had never before been asked on Ridgewood Hill. But all now asked it, and all, for the first time in their lives, began to think of their master as a foe and usurper. The strangely−expressed idea in the pamphlet, namely—that none but their Maker could rightfully sell them to bond−age, and that other in relation to natural freedom and equality, had captivated their imaginations, and made an impression on their minds not readily tobe forgotten. Black looks passed from one to another, and angry expressions were uttered; and I know not where the excitement that was fast awaking would have ended, had not our master himself suddenly made his appearance descending the bluff.

For the first time in their lives, the slaves beheld his approach with terror; and all, darting upon the timber, began to labour with a zeal and bustling eagerness which they had never shown before. But, first, the pamphlet was snatched out of my hands, and concealed in a hollow of the bank. Our uncommon industry (for even Parson Jim and myself were seized with a fit of zeal, and gave our labour with the rest) somewhat surprised the venerable

old man. But as the timber was destined to contribute to our own comforts, he attributed it to a selfish motive, and chiding us good−humouredly and with a laugh, said, "That's the way with you, you rogues; you can work well enough when it is for yourselves."

"Dat's all de tanks we gits!" muttered Governor, hard by. "Wonder if we ha'n't a better right to work than Massa Jodge to make us?"

CHAPTER X. The effect of the pamphlet on its reader and hearers.

We had seen the last day of content on Ridgewood Hill. That little scrap of paper, thrown among us perhaps by accident, or, as I have sometimes thought, dropped by the fiend of darkness himself, had conjured up a thousand of his imps, who, one after another, took up their dwelling in our breasts, until their name was Legion. My fellow−slaves cared little now for singing and dancing. Their only desire, in the intervals of labour, was to assemble together below the bluff, and dive deeper into the mysteries of the pamphlet; and as I was the only one who could explain them, and was ready enough to do so, I often neglected my little friend Tommy to preside over their convocations.

Nor were these meetings confined to the original finders of the precious document. The news had been whispered from man to man, and the sensation spread over the whole estate, so that those who lived with the major were as eager to escape from their labours and listen to the new revelation as ourselves. Nay, so great was the curiosity among them, that many who could not come when I was present to expound the secrets of the book, would betake themselves to the bluff, to indulge alook at it, and guess out its contents as they could from the pictures. And by−and−by, the news having spread to a distance, we had visiters also from the gangs of other plantations.

It was perhaps a week or more before the composition was read through and understood by us all; and in that time it had wrought a revolution in our feelings as surprising as it was fearful. And now, lest the reader should doubt that the great effects I am about to record should have really arisen from so slight a cause as a little book, I think it proper to tell him more fully than I have done what that little book contained.

It was, as I have said, an address to the owners of slaves, and its object purported to be to awaken their minds to the cruelty, injustice, and wickedness of slavery. This was sought to be effected, in the first place, by numerous cuts, representing all the cruelties and indignities that negro slaves had suffered, or could suffer, either in reality, or in the imaginations of the philanthropists. Some of these were horrible, many shocking, and all disgusting; and some of them, I think, were copied out of Fox's Book of Martyrs, though of that I am not certain. The moral turpitude and illegality of the institution were shown, or attempted to be shown, now by arguments that were handled like daggers and broad−axes, and now by savage denunciations of the enslaver and oppressor, who were proved to be murderers, blasphemers, tyrants, devils, and I know not what beside. The vengeance of Heaven wasinvoked upon their heads, coupled with predictions of the retribution that would sooner or later fall upon them, these being borne out by monitory allusions to the servile wars of Rome, Syria, Egypt, Sicily, St. Domingo, It was threatened that Heaven would repeat the plagues of Egypt in America, to punish the task−masters of the Ethiopian, as it had punished those of the Israelite, and that, in addition, the horrors of Hayti would be enacted a second time, and within our own borders. It was contended that the negro was, in organic and mental structure, the white man's equal, if not his superior, and that there was a peculiar injustice in subjecting to bondage his race, which had been (or so the writer averred), in the earlier days of the world, the sole possessors of knowledge and civilization; and there were many triumphant references to Hannibal, Queen Sheba, Cleopatra, and the Pharaohs, all of whom were proved to have been woolly−headed, and as bright in spirit as they were black in visage. In short, the book was full of strange things, and, among others, of insurrection and murder; though it is but charitable to suppose that the writer did not know it.

There was scarce a word in it that did not contribute to increase the evil spirit which its first paragraph had excited among my companions. It taught them to look on themselves as the victims of avarice, the play−things of cruelty, the foot−balls of oppression, the most injured people in the world: and the original greatness of their race, which wasan idea they received with uncommon pleasure, and its reviving grandeur in the liberated Hayti, convinced them they possessed the power to redress their wrongs, and raise themselves into a mighty nation.

With the sense of injury came a thirst for revenge. My companions began to talk of violence and dream of blood. A week before there was not one of them who would not have risked his life to save his master's; the scene was now changed— my master walked daily, though without knowing it, among volcanoes; all looked upon him askant, and muttered curses as he passed. A kinder−hearted man and easier master never lived; and it may seem incredible that he should be hated without any real cause. Imaginary causes are, however, always the most

efficacious in exciting jealousy and hatred, In affairs of the affections, slaves and the members of political factions are equally unreasonable. The only difference in the effect is, that the one cannot, while the other can, and does, change his masters when his whim changes.

That fatal book infected my own spirit as deeply as it did those of the others, and made me as sour and discontented as they. I began to have sentimental notions about liberty and equality, the dignity of man, the nobleness of freedom, and so−forth; and a stupid ambition, a vague notion that I was born to be a king or president, or some such great personage, filled my imagination, and made me a willing listener to, and sharer in, the schemes of violence and desperation which my fellow−slaves soon began to frame. It is wonderful, that among the many thoughts that now crowded my brain, no memory of my original condition arose to teach me the folly of my desires. But, and I repeat it again, the past was dead with me; I lived only for the present.

A little incident that soon befell me will show the reader how completely my feelings were identified with my condition, and how deeply the lessons of that unlucky pamphlet had sunk into my spirit. My little playmate, master Tommy, who was not above six years old, being of an irascible temper, sometimes quarrelled with me; on which occasions, as I mentioned before, he used to beat me; a liberty I rather encouraged than otherwise, since I gained by it—though my master strictly forbade the youth to take it. Now, as soon as my head began to fill with the direful and magnificent conceptions of a malecontent and conspirator, I waxed weary of child's play and master Tommy, who, falling into a passion with me for that reason, proceeded, on a certain occasion, to pommel my ribs with a fist about equal in weight to the paw of a gadfly. I was incensed, I may say enraged, at the poor child, and repaid the violence by shaking him almost to death. Indeed, I felt for a while as if I could have killed him; and I know not whether I might not have done it (for the devil had on the sudden got into my spirit), had not his father discovered what I was doing, and run to his assistance.I then pretended that I had shaken him in sport, and thus escaped a drubbing, of which I was at first in danger. The threat of this, however, sank deeply into my mind, and I ever after felt a deep hatred of both father and son. This may well be called a blind malice, for neither had given me any real cause for it.

CHAPTER XI. The hatching of a conspiracy.

In the meanwhile the devil was doing his work among the others, and disaffection grew into wrath and fury, that were not so perfectly concealed but that my master, or rather his eldest son, who was of a more observant disposition, began to suspect that mischief was brewing; and in a short time it was reported among us that our master had marked some of us as being dangerous, and was resolved to sell us to a Mississippi trader who was then in the county. This was reported by a spy, a house−servant, who professed to have overheard the conversation, and who reported, besides, that our master and his son were furbishing up their fire−arms, and laying in terrible supply of balls and powder.

Now whether this account was true or not I never knew, and I suppose I never shall until I am in my grave. It was enough, however, to drive us to a phrensy, those in particular who had been indicated as the intended victims of the Mississippi trader; and the more especially, as those men had wives and children, from whom they were told they were to be parted. One of these was the blacksmith of the estate, who, being a resolute and fierce−tempered fellow, instantly began to convert all the old horseshoes and iron hoops about his shop into a kind of blades or spear−heads, which we fastened upon poles, and hid away in secret places. There were among us three or four men who had muskets, with which they used to shoot wild fowl on the river, there being great abundance at this season. These weapons were also put into requisition; besides which we stored away butcherknives and bludgeons, old scythe−blades and sickles beaten straight, until we could boast quite an armory. And here I may observe, that the faster these weapons increased upon our hands, the more deadly became our resolutions, the more fierce and malignant our desires; until, having at last what we thought a sufficiency for our purpose, we gave a loose to our passions, and determined upon a plan of proceedings that may well be called infernal.

I believe that when we began to collect these offensive weapons we had but vague ideas of mischief, thinking rather of defending ourselves from some meditated outrage on the part of our master, than of beginning an assault upon him ourselves. But now, the armory being complete, and several cunning fellows, who had been spying out amongthe surrounding plantations, bringing us word that the gangs (so they sometimes call the whole number of hands on a farm) of most of them were ready to strike with us for freedom; another having brought us word that a great outbreaking had already taken place south of James river, which, however, was not true; a third reminding us that we were more numerous than our masters; and a fourth bidding us remember that the negroes had once, as the little book told us, been the masters of all the white men in the world, and might be again; I say, these things being represented to us, as we were handling our arms and thinking what execution we could do with them, we shook hands together, and kissing the little pamphlet (for which we had conceived a high regard), as we had seen white men kiss the book in courts of law, we swore we would exterminate all the white men in Virginia, beginning with our master and his family.

CHAPTER XII. How the spoils of victory were intended to be divided.

The chief men in the conspiracy were, by all consent, the fellow called Governor, of whom I have said so much before; Parson Jim, who, although a little in the background at first, had soon taken a foremost stand, and was, indeed, the first to proposemurder; myself,—not that I was really very active or fiery in the matter, but because I had become prominent as the reader of the little book; Cesar, the blacksmith; and a fellow named Zip, or Scipio, who was the chief fiddler and banjo−player, and had been therefore in great favour with the family, until he lost it by some misconduct.

The parson having uttered the diabolical proposal I mentioned before, and seeing it well received, got up to make a speech to inflame our courage. There was in his oration a good deal of preaching, with a considerable sprinkling of scraps from the Bible, such as he had picked up in the course of his clerical career. What he chiefly harped on was that greatness of the negro nation spoken of before, and he discoursed so energetically of the great kings and generals, "the great Faroes and Cannibals," as he called them, who had distinguished the race in olden time, that all became ambitious to figure with similar dignity in story.

"What you speak faw, pawson?" said Governor, interrupting him, and looking round with the air of a lord; "I be king, hah? and hab my sarvants to wait on me!"

"What you say dah, Gub'nor?" cried Zip the fiddler, with equal spirit: "You be king, I be president."

"I be emp'ror, like dat ah nigga in High−ty!" said another.

"I be constable!" cried a fourth.

"You be cuss'! you no go for de best man!"cried Governor, in a heat: "I be constable myself, and I lick any nigga I like! Who say me no, hah? I smash him brain out—dem nigga!" Governor was a tyrant already, and all began to be more or less afraid of him. "I'll be de great man, and I shall hab my choice ob de women: what you say dat? I sall hab Missa Isabella faw my wife! Who say me no dah?"

"Berry well!" cried Scipio: "I hab Missa Edie"—that is, Miss Edith, the next in age, who was, however, not yet thirteen, and therefore but a poor little child.

"Brudder Zip," said Jim the parson, "I speak fust dah! The labourer is wordy ob his hiah—I shall put my hand to de plough, and I shall hab Missa Edie for my wife. Arter me, if you please, brudder Zip!"

"Hold you jaw, Zip," said King Governor to the fiddler, who was ready to knock the parson down. "You shall hab Massa Maja's wife, and you shall cut his head off fust. As faw de oder niggas he−ah, what faw use ob quar'lin? We shall have wifes enough when we kills white massas; gorry! we shall hab pick!"

And thus my companions apportioned among themselves, in prospective, the wives and daughters of their intended victims; and thus, doubtless, they would have apportioned them in reality, had the bloody enterprise been allowed the success its projectors anticipated. I remember that my blood suddenly froze within my veins when the conspiracyhad reached this point; and the idea of seeing those innocent, helpless maidens made the prey of brutal murderers, was so shocking to my spirit that I lost speech, and could scarce support myself on my feet.

While I stood thus confused among them, the conspirators determined upon a plan of action by which, as far as I understood it, the houses of my master and his son, the two being previously murdered, were to be set on fire at the same moment, on the following night, and at the sight of the flames the slaves on several neighbouring plantations were to fall upon their masters in like manner: after which, the gangs from all the burnt estates were to meet at a common rendezvous, and march in a body against the neighbouring village, the sacking of which they joyously looked forward to as the first step in a career of conquest and triumph—in other words, of murder and rapine.

Who would have thought that a little book, framed by a philanthropist, for the humane purpose of turning his neighbour from the error of his way, should have lighted a torch in his dwelling only to be quenched by blood! I am myself a witness that the pamphlet was not one of those incendiary publications of which so much is said, as being designed for the eyes of slaves themselves, to exasperate them to revolt. By no means; it was addressed to the master, and of course was only designed for him. Why the pictures were put in it, however, I cannot imagine, since it may be supposed the mastercould understand the argument and exhortation of the writer well enough without them. Perhaps they were intended to divert his children.

The book, however, whatever may have been the object for which it was written, had the effect to make a hundred men, who were previously contented with their lot in life, and perhaps as happy as any other men ordained to a life of labour, the victims of dissatisfaction and range, the enemies of those they had once loved, and, in fine, the contrivers and authors of their own destruction.

CHAPTER XIII. The attack of the insurgents upon the mansion at Ridgewood Hill.

I said, that when the conspiracy reached the crisis mentioned before, I was suddenly seized with terror. I began to think with what kindness I had been treated by those I had leagued to destroy; and the baseness and ingratitude of the whole design struck me with such force, that I was two or three times on the point of going to my master, and revealing it to him while he had yet the power to escape. But my fears of him and of my fellow−ruffians deterred me. I thought he looked fierce and stern; and as for my companions, I conceited that they were watching me, dogging my every step, prepared to kill me the moment I attemptedto play them false. It was unfortunate that my rudeness to Master Tommy had caused me to be banished the house; for although my master did not beat me, he was persuaded my violence in that case was not altogether jocose, and therefore punished me by sending me to the fields. Hence I had no opportunity to see him in private, unless I had sought it, which would have exposed me to observation.

The night came, and it came to me bringing such gloom and horror, that my agitation was observed by Governor and others, who railed at me for a coward, and threatened to take my life if I did not behave more like a man. This only increased my alarm; and, truly, my disorder of mind became so great, that I was in a species of stupid distraction when the moment for action arrived; for which reason I retain but a confused recollection of the first events, and cannot therefore give a clear relation of them.

I remember that there was some confusion produced by an unexpected act on the part of our master, who, it was generally supposed, designed crossing the creek to visit the major, having ordered his carriage and the ferry−boat to be got ready, and it was resolved to kill him while crossing the creek on his return; after which we were to fire a volley of guns, as a signal to the major's gang, and then assault and burn our master's dwelling. Instead of departing, however, when the night came, he remained at home, shut up with the overseer andyoung Mr. Andrews, his daughter's lover; and it was reported that they had barred up the doors and windows, and were sitting at a table covered with loaded pistols; thus making it manifest that they suspected our intentions, and were resolved to defend themselves to the last.

For my part, I have never believed that our master suspected his danger at all; he perceived, indeed, that an ill spirit had got among his people, but neither he nor any of his family really believed that mischief was intended. Had they done so, he would undoubtedly have procured assistance, or at least removed his children. The windows were barred indeed, and perhaps earlier than usual, which may have been accidental; and as for the fire−arms on the table, I believe they were only fowling−pieces, which my master, Mr. Andrews, and the overseer, who was a great fowler, and therefore much favoured by my master, who was a veteran sportsman, were getting ready to shoot wild ducks with in the morning.

My companions, however, were persuaded that our victims were on their guard; and the hour drawing nigh at which they had appointed to strike the first blow, and give the signal to the neighbouring gangs, they were at a loss, not knowing what to do; for they were afraid to attack the house while three resolute men, armed with pistols, stood ready to receive them. In this conjuncture it was proposed by Governor, who, from having been a fellow notorious for nothing savemonkey tricks and waggery, was now become a devil incarnate, he was so bold, cunning, and eager for blood, to fire the pile of timber where it stood near the quarters, or negro−huts; the burning of which would serve the double purpose of drawing our intended victims from the house, and giving the signal to the neighbouring estates.

The proposal was instantly adopted, and in a few moments the pile of dry resinous wood was in a flame, burning with prodigious violence, and casting a bright light over the whole mansion, the lawn, and even the neighbouring river. At the same moment, and just as we were about to raise the treacherous alarm, we heard a sudden firing of guns and shouting beyond the creek at the major's house, which made us suppose the negroes there had anticipated us in the rising.

Emulous not to be outdone, our own party now set up a horrid alarm of "Fire!" accompanied with screams and yells that might have roused the dead, and ran to the mansion door, as if to demand assistance of their master.

Never shall I forget the scene that ensued. I stood rooted to the ground, not twenty steps from the house, when

the door was thrown open, and my master rushed out, followed by Andrews and the overseer. They had scarce put foot on the porch before six or seven guns, being all that the conspirators could muster, and which the owners held in readiness, were discharged at them, and then they were set upon by others with the spears,The light of the fire illuminated the porch, so that objects were plainly distinguishable; yet so violent was the rush of assailants, so wild the tumult, so brief the contest, that I can scarce say I really witnessed the particulars of the tragedy. I beheld, indeed, my master's gray hairs, for he was of towering stature, floating an instant over the heads of the assailants; but the next moment they had vanished; and I saw but a single white man struggling in the hall against a mass of foes, and crying out to Miss Isabella by name, "to escape with the children." Vain counsel, vain sacrifice of safety to humanity; the faithful overseer (for it was he who made this heroic effort to save his master's children, his master and young Andrews lying dead or mortally wounded on the porch) was cut down on the spot, and the shrieks of the children as they fled, some into the open air by a back door, and others to the upper chambers, and the savage yells of triumph with which they were pursued, told how vainly he had devoted himself to save them.

CHAPTER XIV. The tragical occurrences that followed.

While I stood thus observing the horrors I had been instrumental in provoking, as incapable of putting a stop to as of assisting in them, I saw two of the children, little Tommy and his youngest sister, Lucy, a girl of seven or eight years, running wildly over the lawn, several of my ruffian companions pursuing them. The girl was snatched up by old aunt Phæbe, who, with other women, had come among us, wringing her hands, and beseeching us not to kill their young misses, and was thus saved. As for the boy, he caught sight of me, and sprang into my arms, entreating me "not to let them kill him, and he would never hurt me again in all his life, and would give me all his money."

Poor child! I would have defended him at that moment with my life, for my heart bled for what had already been done; but he was snatched out of my hands, and I saw no more of him. I heard afterward, however, that he was not hurt, having been saved by the women, who had protected in like manner his two little sisters, Jane and Lucy. As for the others, that is, Isabella and Edith, I witnessed their fate with my own eyes; and it was the suddenness and horror of it that, by unmanning me entirely, prevented my giving aid to the boy when he was torn from my arms.

The fire had by this time spread from the timber to an adjacent cabin, and a light equal to that of noon, though red as blood itself, was shed over the whole mansion, on the roof of which was a little cupola, or observatory, open to the weather, where was room for five or six persons to sit together, and enjoy the prospect of the river and surrounding hills; and on either side of this cupola was a platform, though without a balustrade, on which was space for as many more.

The observatory being strongly illuminated by the flames, and my eyes being turned thitherward by a furious yell which was suddenly set up around me, I beheld my master's daughter Isabella rush into it,—that is, into the observatory,—from the staircase below, hotly pursued, as was evident from what followed. She bore in her arms, or rather dragged after her, for the child was in a swoon, her sister Edith, who was but small of stature and light; and as she reached this forlorn place of refuge, she threw down the trapdoor that covered its entrance, and endeavoured to keep it down with her foot. There was something inexpressibly fearful in her appearance, independent of the dreadfulness of her situation, separated only by a narrow plank from ruffians maddened by rage and carnage, from whom death itself was a boon too merciful to be expected, and from whom she was to guard not only herself, but the feeble, unconscious being hanging on her neck. Her hair was all dishevelled, her dress torn and disordered, and her face as white as snow; yet there was a wild energy and fierceness breathing from every feature, and she looked like a lioness defending to the last her young from the hunters, from whom she yet knows there is no escape.

The trapdoor shook under her foot, and was at last thrown violently up; and up, with screams of triumph, darted the infuriated Governor, followedby Jim and others, to grasp their prey. Their prey had fled: without uttering a word or scream, she sprang from the cupola to the platform at its side, and then, with a fearlessness only derived from desperation, and still bearing her insensible sister, she stepped upon the roof, which was high and steep, and ran along it to its extremity.

Even the ferocious Governor was for a moment daunted at the boldness of the act, and afraid to follow; until the parson—well worthy he of the name!—set him the example by leaping on the shingles, and pursuing the unhappy girl to her last refuge. He approached—he stretched forth his arm to seize her; but he was not destined to lay an impure touch on the devoted and heroic creature. I saw her lay her lips once on those of the poor Edith—the next instant the frail figure of the little sister was hurled from her arms, to be dashed to pieces on the stones below. In another, the hapless Isabella herself had followed her, having thrown herself headlong from the height, to escape by death a fate otherwise inevitable.

Of what followed I have but a faint and disordered recollection. I remember that the fall of the two maidens caused loud cries of horror from the men, and of lamentation from the women; and I remember, also, that these were renewed almost immediately after, but mingled with the sound of fire−arms discharged by a party of foes, and the voices of white men (among which I distinguished that of my master's son, the major) calling uponone another to "give no quarter to the miscreants." A party of armed horsemen had in fact ridden among us, and were

now dealing death on all hands from pistols and sabres. From one of the latter weapons I myself received a severe cut, and was at the same time struck down by the hoofs of a horse, and left insensible.

CHAPTER XV. The results of the insurrection, with a truly strange and fatal catastrophe that befell the Author.

When I recovered my senses I found myself a prisoner, bound hand and foot, and lying, with six or seven of my late companions, in a cart, in which, groaning with pain, for most of us were wounded, and anticipating a direful end to our dreams of conquest and revenge, we were trundled to the village, and there deposited in the county jail, to repent at leisure the rashness and enormity of our enterprise.

The power of that little pamphlet, of which I have said so much, to produce an effect for which we must charitably suppose it was not intended, was shown in the numbers of wretches by whom the prison was crowded; for it had been used to inflame the passions of the negroes on several different estates, all of whom had agreed to rise in insurrection, although, as it providentially happened the revolt extended to the length of murder only on Ridgewood Hill. The conspiracy was detected—I believe confessed by a slave—on a plantation adjacent to that of my master's son; who, being informed of it, and assisted by a party that brought the news, proceeded to seize the ringleaders in his own gang, some of whom, attempting to make their escape, were fired on; and this was the cause of the volley which we had heard, and supposed was fired by our fellow−conspirators beyond the creek. The major then crossed over to his father's estate, but too late to avert the tragedy which I have related. His father, his eldest sister, and her lover were already dead; as for the younger, Edith, she was taken up alive, but cruelly mangled, and she expired in a few hours. The faithful and devoted overseer, I have the happiness to believe, ultimately escaped with his life; for, although covered with wounds, and at first reported dead, he revived sufficiently to make deposition to the facts of the assault and murder, as far as he was cognizant of them, and I heard he was expected to recover.

Of those who perished, the father, the children, and the gallant friend, there was not one who was not, a fortnight before, respected and beloved by those who slew them; and at their death−hour they were as guiltless of wrong, and as deserving of affection and gratitude, as they ever had been. How, therefore, they came to be hated, and why they were killed, I am unable to divine. All that I know is, that we who loved them read a book which fell in our way, and from that moment knew themonly as enemies—objects on whom we had a right to glut our fiercest passions.

As for ourselves—my deluded companions, at least—their fate can be easily imagined. Some were killed at the scene of murder; among others the chief leader, Governor, who was shot on the roof of the house. Parson Jim was wounded on the same place, and, rolling from the roof, was horribly crushed by the fall, but lingered in unspeakable agonies for several days, and then died. Scipio, the fiddler, was taken alive, tried, condemned, and executed, with many others whose participation in the crime left them no hope of mercy.

With these, I was myself put upon trial and adjudged to death; for although it was made apparent that I had not lifted my hand against any one, it was proved that I was more than privy to the plot—that I had been instrumental in fomenting it; and the known favour with which I had been treated, added the double die of ingratitude to my offence. I was therefore condemned, and bade to expect no mercy; nor did I expect it; for the fatal day appointed for the execution having arrived, a rope was put round my neck, and I was led to the gibbet.

And now I am about to relate what will greatly surprise the reader—I was not only found guilty and condemned—I was hanged! Escape was impossible, and I perceived it. The anguish of my mind—for in anguish it may be supposed I looked forward to my fate—was increased by the consciousness—so long slumbering—that flashed on it, as I was driven to the fatal tree, that I was, in reality, not Tom the slave, but Sheppard Lee the freeman, and that I possessed a power of evading the halter, or any other inconvenience, provided I were allowed but one opportunity to exercise it. But where was I now to look for a dead body? It is true, there were bodies enough by−and−by, when my accomplices were tucked up around me; but what advantage could I derive from entering any one of them, since my fate must be equally certain to be hanged?

My distress, I repeat, was uncommonly great, and in the midst of it I was executed; which put an end to the quandary.

CHAPTER XVI. In which it is related what became of the Author after being hanged.

Here, it would seem, that my history should find its natural close; but I hope to convince the world that a man may live to record his own death and burial. I say burial; for, from all I have heard, I judge that I was buried as well as hanged, and that I lay in the earth in a coarse deal coffin, from two o'clock in the afternoon of a November day, until nine at night; when certain young doctorsof the village, who were desirous to show their skill in anatomy, came to the place of execution, and dug up the three best bodies, of which, as my good luck would have it, my own was one— Zip the fiddler's being another, while the third was that of a young fellow named Sam, notorious for nothing so much as a great passion he had for butting with his head against brick walls, or even stone ones, provided they were smooth enough.

The young anatomists, previous to hacking us, resolved to try some galvanic experiments on us, having procured a battery for that purpose; and they invited a dozen or more respectable gentlemen to be present, and witness the effects of that extraordinary fluid, galvanism, on our lifeless bodies.

The first essayed was that of the unfortunate Scipio, who, being well charged, began, to the admiration of all present, to raise first one arm, and then the other, then to twist the fingers of his left hand in a peculiar way, as if turning a screw, inclining his head the while towards his left shoulder, and then to saw the air, sweeping his right hand to and fro across his breast, with great briskness and energy, the fingers of his left titillating at the air all the while, so as to present the lively spectacle of a man playing the fiddle; and, indeed, it was judged, so natural was every motion, that had the party been provided with a fiddle and bow to put into his hands, they would have played such a jig as would have set all present dancing.

The next experiment tried was upon the body of Sam, whose muscles were speedily excited to exercise themselves in the way to which they had been most accustomed, though not in one so agreeable to the chief operator; for, in this case, the lifeless corse suddenly lifting up its head, bestowed it, with a jerk of propulsion equal in force to the but of a battering−ram, full against the stomach of the operator, whereby he was tumbled head over heels, and all the breath beaten out of his body.

The reader may suppose, as it was proved to be the virtue of galvanism to set the dead muscles doing those acts to which the living ones had been longest habituated, that I, upon being charged, could do nothing less than throw myself upon my hands and knees, and go galloping about the table, as I had been used to do over the lawn, when master Tommy was mounted upon my back.

Such, however, was not the fact. The first thing I did upon feeling the magical fluid penetrate my nerves, was to open my eyes and snap them twice or thrice; the second to utter a horrible groan, which greatly disconcerted the spectators; and the third to start bolt upright on my feet, and ask them "what the devil they were after?" In a word, I was suddenly resuscitated, and to the great horror of all present, doctors and lookers−on, who, fetching a yell, that caused me to think I had got among condemned spirits in purgatory, fled from the room, exclaiming that I "was the devil, and no niggur!" What was particularly lamentable, though Iwas far from so esteeming it, one of them, a young gentleman who had come to the exhibition out of curiosity, being invited by one of the doctors, was so overcome with terror, that before he reached the door of the room he fell down in a fit, and being neglected by the others, none of whom stopped to give him help, expired on the spot.

As for me, the cause of all the alarm, I believe I was ten times more frightened than any of the spectators, especially when I came to recollect that I had just been hanged, and that I would, in all probability, be hanged again, unless I now succeeded in making my escape. As for the cause of my resuscitation, and the events that accompanied it, I was then entirely ignorant of them; and, indeed, I must confess I learned them afterward out of the newspapers. I knew, however, that I had been hanged, and that I had been, by some extraordinary means or other, brought to life again; and I perceived that if I did not make my escape without delay, I should certainly be recaptured by the returning doctors.

I ran towards the door, and then, for the first time, beheld that unfortunate spectator who had fallen dead, as I mentioned before, and lay upon the floor with his face turned up. I recollected him on the instant, as being a young gentleman whom I had once or twice seen at my late master's house. All that I knew of him was, that his

name was Megrim, that he was reputed to be very wealthy, and a great genius, or, as some said,eccentric, and that he was admired by the ladies, and, doubtless, because he was a genius.

As I looked him in the face, I heard in the distance the uproar of voices, which had succeeded the flight of the doctors, suddenly burst out afresh, with the sound of returning footsteps; and a loud bully−like voice, which I thought very much like that of the under−turnkey at the prison—a man whom I had learned to fear—cried out, "Let me see your devil; for may I be cussed up hill and down hill if I ever seed a bigger one than myself."

Horrible as was the voice, I was not dismayed. I saw at my feet a city of refuge, into which my enemies could not pursue me. My escape was within my own power.

"Master," said I, touching my head (for I had no hat) to the corpse, "if it is all the same to you, I beg you'll let me take possession of your body."

As I pronounced the words the translation was effected, and that so rapidly, that just as I drew my first breath in the body of Mr. Megrim, it was knocked out of me by the fall of my old one, which —I not having taken the precaution to stand a little to one side—fell down like a thunderbolt upon me, bruising me very considerably about the precordia.

In this state, being half suffocated, and somewhat frightened, I was picked up and carried away by my new friends, and put to bed, where, having swallowed an anodyne, I fell directly sound asleep.

And here, before proceeding farther, I will say, that the doctors and their friends were greatly surprisedto discover my late body lying dead, having expected to find it as animated as when they left it. But by−and−by, having reflected that the galvanism, or artificial life, infused into its nerves had been naturally exhausted at last, whereupon it as naturally followed that the body should return to its lifeless condition, they began to aver that the most surprising part of the business was, that it had kept me alive so long, and enabled me, after groaning and speaking as I had actually done, to walk so far from the table on which I had been lying.

On the whole, the phenomenon was considered curious and wonderful; and an account of it having been drawn up by the doctors, and headed "Extraordinary Case of the Effects of Galvanism on a Dead Body," it was printed for the benefit of scientific men throughout the world, in a medical journal, where, I doubt not, it may be found at this day.

BOOK VII. WHICH IS INTENDED AS A PENDANT TO BOOK I., AND CONTAINS THE HISTORY OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN OF FORTUNE.

CHAPTER I. Containing an inkling of the life and habits of Mr. Arthur Megrim.

Having been carried from the scene of my late transformation, as I mentioned before, physicked, put to bed, and allowed to sleep off my troubles, I awoke late on the following morning, feeling very comfortable, notwithstanding the bruises on my ribs, and with an uncommonly agreeable, though lazy sense of the enjoyment of lying a−bed. Indeed, this was my only feeling. I woke to a consciousness, though a vague one, of the change in my condition; and this, together with what I saw around me, when I had succeeded, after some effort, in getting my eyes a little opened, it may be supposed, would have filled me with surprise, and excited in me a great curiosity to inquire into matters relating to Mr. Arthur Megrim.

Such, however, was not the case. I looked upon the elegantly−adorned chamber in which I lay, and the sumptuous robes of my bed, with as much indifferenceas if I had been accustomed to them all my life; and as for the happy destiny that now seemed opening upon me, I scarce thought on it at all.

Nor can I say that I felt in any way elated at my fortunate escape from the hangman and the anatomists. I remembered that affair with a drowsy indifference, as being a matter of no further consequence to me; and as for Mr. Arthur Megrim's friends and kinsmen, his interests and relations in life, I thought to myself, with a yawn, "I shall know them all in good time."

I was content to take things as they might come, and eschew labours of mind as well as efforts of body. Curiosity, I felt, was a tumultuous passion, and I therefore resolved to avoid it. In this mood I turned over on the other side, and took a second nap.

From this I was roused, after a time, by some one tugging at my shoulder, who proved, upon examination, to be a very elegant−looking mulatto−boy —that is, a boy of twenty−five years or thereabouts —who signified, in language as genteel as his person, that it was exactly half past eleven o'clock, and therefore time for me to get up.

"Augh—well!" said I, taking about thirty seconds to gape out each word, it seemed such tiresome work to articulate; "what do you want?"

"Want you to get up, sah. Missie Ann says it does you no good to sleep so long."

"Augh—who is Missie Ann?"

"Lar bless us," said the gentleman, turning up the white of his eye, "Missie Ann is massa's sister!"

"Who is massa?"

"You, massa—Massa Arthur!"

"Augh—well; and who are you?"

"'Paminondas, massa. Coat very nicely brushed; very fine day; will do you good, sah, to get up and taste the air. Regular Indian summer, sah."

"You may go to the devil."

"Yes, sah."

With that I turned over for another nap, which I should undoubtedly have taken, had I not been interrupted, just as I was falling asleep, by the entrance of a lady of a somewhat starched and venerable appearance, though not more than six or seven years older than myself, I being perhaps twenty−five or six.

"A'n't you ashamed of yourself, Arthur!" said she. "Do tell me—do you intend to lie a−bed for ever?"

"Augh—pshaw!" said I. "Pray, madam, be so good as to inform me who you are, and—augh —what you want in my chamber?"

"Come," said the lady, "don't be ridiculous, and fall into any of your hyppoes again. Don't pretend you don't know your own sister, Ann Megrim."

"I won't," said I; "but—augh—sister, if you have no objection, I should like—augh—to sleep till dinner is ready."

"Dinner!" screamed my sister, Ann Megrim; "don't suppose you will ever be able to eat a dinner again. You know the doctor says it is your hard eating and your laziness together that have destroyed your digestive apparatus; and that, if you don't adhere to the bran bread and hickory ashes tea, you'll never be cured in the world."

"What!" said I, "am I sick?"

"Undoubtedly," said my sister Ann; "your digestive apparatus is all destroyed, and your nerves too. Did not you faint last night when they were galvanizing the bodies? Have you not lost all muscular power, so that you do nothing but lie on a bed or sofa all day long? Oh, really, brother Arthur Megrim, I am ashamed of you. A man like you—a young man and a rich man, a man of family and genius, a gentleman and a scholar, a man who might make himself governor of the state, or president of the nation, or any thing—yet to be nothing at all except the laziest man in Virginia, a man with no digestive apparatus, a poor nervous hyppo—oh, it is too bad! Do get up and stir yourself. Mount your horse, or go out in the carriage. Exercise, you know, is the only thing to restore strength to the digestive apparatus."

"Sister Ann," said I, "the more you speak of my digestive apparatus, the more—augh—the more I am convinced you don't know what you are talking about. I am resolved to get up and eat my dinner—"

"Of bran bread and hickory ashes," said my sister.

"Of canvass−back ducks and terapins," said I. At which Miss Ann Megrim expressed terror and aversion, and endeavoured to convince me that such indulgence would be punished by a horrible indigestion, as had been the case a thousand times before.

But cogent as were her arguments, I had, or felt, one still stronger on my side, being a savage appetite, which was waking within that very digestive apparatus she held in such disesteem, and which became the more eager the more she besought me to resist it.

The discussion was so far advantageous that it set me wide awake; and by−and−by, the zealous Epaminondas having made his second appearance, I succeeded, with his assistance, in getting on my clothes and descending to the dining−room, where, to the great horror and grief of my affectionate relative, I demolished two ducks and a half (being the true canvass−backs, or white−backs, as they call them in that country), and a full grown tortoise, of the genus emys, and species palustris. And in this operation, I may say, I found the first excitement of pleasure which I had yet known in my new body, and displayed an energy of application of which I did not before know that I was capable. Nor am I certain that any ill consequences followed the meal. I felt, indeed, a strong propensity to throw myself on a sofa and recruit after the laboursof eating; but this Miss Megrim resisted, insisting I should get into my carriage (for it seems I had one, and a very handsome one too), and drive about to avoid a surfeit.

In this I consented to gratify her wishes, whereby I gratified one of my own; for I fell sound asleep within five minutes after starting, and so remained until the excursion was over.

Then, being as hungry as ever, and not knowing what else to do, I picked my teeth over a newspaper, and nodded at a novel until supper was got ready, which (disregarding Miss Megrim's exhortations, as before) I attacked with the good−will I had carried to my dinner, eating on this occasion two terapins and a half and one whole duck, of the genus anas, and species vallisneria.*

The only ill consequences were, that I dreamed of the devil and his imps all night, and that I awoke in a crusty humour next morning.

CHAPTER II. The happy condition in which Sheppard Lee is at last placed.

If there be among my readers any person so discontented with his lot that he would be glad to exchange conditions with another, I think, hadhe been acquainted with Mr. Arthur Megrim, he would have desired an exchange with him above all other persons in the world; for Mr. Megrim possessed all those requisites which are thought to ensure happiness to a human being. He was young, rich, and independent; of a good family (he boasted the chivalrous blood of the Megrims); of a sound body, and serene temper; and with no appetite for those excesses which ruin the reputation, while they debase the minds and destroy the peace of youth. His years, as I have mentioned already, were twenty−five or six; his revenues were far above his wants, and enabled him to support his town−house, which was the most elegant one in the village, where he lived remote from the care and trouble of his plantations; and as for independence, that was manifestly complete, he being a bachelor, and the sole surviver of his family, excepting only his sister, Miss Ann Megrim, who managed his household, and thus took from his mind the only care that could otherwise have disturbed it.

What then in the whole world had Mr. Megrim to trouble him? Nothing on earth—and for that reason, to speak paradoxically, he was more troubled than any one else on earth. Labour, pain, and care—the evils which men are so apt to censure Providence for entailing upon the race—I have had experience enough to know, are essential to the true enjoyment of life, serving, like salt, pepper, mustard, and other condiments and spices, which are, by themselves, ungrateful to the palate, to givea relish to the dish that is insipid and cloying without them. Who enjoys health—who is so sensible of the rapture of being well, as he who has just been relieved from sickness? Who can appreciate the delightful luxury of repose so well as the labourer released from his daily toil? Who, in fine, tastes of the bliss of happiness like him who is introduced to it after a probation of suffering? The surest way to cure a boy of a love of cakes and comfils, is to put him apprentice to a confectioner. The truth is, that the sweets of life, enjoyed by themselves, are just as disgusting as the bitters, and can only be properly relished when alternated or mingled with the latter.

But as this is philosophy, and the reader will skip it, I will pursue the subject no further, but jump at once from the principle to the practical illustration, as seen in my history while a resident in the body of Mr. Arthur Megrim.

I was, on the sudden, a rich young man, with nothing on earth to trouble me. I had lands and houses, rich plantations, a nation or two of negroes, herds of sheep and cattle, with mills, fisheries, and some half dozen or more gold−mines, which last— and it may be considered, out of Virginia, a wondrous evidence of my wealth—were decidedly the least valuable of all my possessions. With all these things I was made acquainted by my sister Ann, or otherwise, it is highly probable, I should have known nothing about them; for during the whole period of my seventh existence, I confined myself to my property in the village, not having the least curiosity to visit my plantations, which, as everybody told me, were in good hands.

In the village itself I had every thing about me to secure happiness—a fine house, abundance of servants, the whole under the management of the best of housekeepers, my sister Ann, with horses and carriages—for which, however, I cared but little, thinking it laborious to ride, and as tedious to be driven—and, above all, friends without number, who treated me with a respect amounting to veneration (for, it must be remembered, I was the richest man in the county), and with a degree of affection little short of idolatry; but whom, however, I thought very troublesome, tiresome people, seeing that they visited me too often, and wearied me to death with long conversations about every thing.

Among them all, there was but one for whom I felt any friendship; and he was a young doctor named Tibbikens, for whom my sister Ann had a great respect, and who had been retained by her to assist in taking care of my digestive apparatus— that same digestive apparatus of mine being a hobby on which my sister lavished more thought and anxiety than I believe she did upon her own soul —not meaning to reflect upon her religion, however, for she was a member of the Presbyterian church, and quite devout about the time of communion. The cause of her solicitude, as she gave me frequent opportunity to know by her allusion to the fact, was her having been once afflicted in herown person with a disorder of the digestive apparatus, which it had been the good fortune of Doctor Tibbikens to cure by a regimen of bran bread and hickory ashes water; and hence her affection for the doctor and the remedy. I liked the doctor myself because he had the same solicitude about my health,

without troubling me with advice except when I asked it, or finding much fault when I did not follow it; because his conversation was agreeable, except when he was in a scientific humour, and did not require any efforts on my part to keep it up; because he liked terapins and white−backs as well as myself, and was of opinion they were wholesome, provided one ate them in moderation; and, in fine, because he took pains to help me to amusement, and was of great assistance in dissipating somewhat of that tedium which was the first evil with which I was afflicted in the body of Mr. Arthur Megrim. I believe the doctor had a strong fancy for my sister; but she used to declare she could never think of marrying, and thus being drawn from what she felt to be the chief duty of her existence, namely—the care of my digestive apparatus.

CHAPTER III. The employments of a young gentleman of fortune.

And now, having mentioned tedium of existence as being an evil to which I soon felt myself subject, I will say that it was one I found more oppressive than the reader can readily imagine. I had nothing in the world to do, and, as it happened, my disposition did not lead me to seek any thing. I was, in a word, the very man my sister had so reproachfully called me in our first conversation— that is, the laziest man in all Virginia; and, upon reflection, I can think of no person in the world who would bear a comparison with me in that particular, except myself. "None but himself can be his parallel," as somebody or other says, I don't know who, a sentiment that is supposed to be absurd, inasmuch as it involves an impossibility, but which becomes good sense when applied to me. In my original condition, in the body in which I was first introduced to life, I certainly had a great aversion to all troublesome employments, whether of business or amusement, being supposed by many persons to be then what as many considered me now—to wit, the laziest man in my state. Whether I was lazier as Sheppard Lee the Jerseyman or Arthur Megrim the Virginian, I am not able to say. In both cases indolence was at the bottom of allmy troubles. There was this difference, however, between the two conditions, that whereas I had felt in one the evils of laziness to a poor man, I was now to discover in the other what were its evils to a man of fortune.

My chief employments in the body of Mr. Arthur Megrim were eating and sleeping; and I certainly should have done nothing else, had I been allowed to follow my own humours. Eating and sleeping, therefore, consumed the greater portion of my time; but it could not consume all; nor could the residue be filled up by the occasional excursions in my curricle, and the still more unfrequent strolls through the village, into which I was driven by my affectionate sister, or cajoled by her coadjutor, the doctor, in their zealous care of my digestive apparatus. As for visits and visitations, I abhorred them all, whether they related to the bustling young gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or the loquacious ladies, old and young, who cultivated the friendship of my sister.

Employ myself, however, as I might, there always remained a portion of each day which I could not get rid of, either in bed or at the table. On such occasions I was devoured by ennui, and thought that even existence was an infliction—that it was hard work to live. According to my sister's account, I was a scholar and a genius; in which case I ought to have found employment enough of an intellectual nature, either in books or the reflections of my own mind. I certainly had a very large and fine library in my house, and there was scarce a week passed by in which I did not receive a huge bundle of the newest publications from a book−seller, who had long had it in charge thus to supply me. Of these I usually read the title−pages, and then turned them over to my sister, or, which was more common, lent them to my neighbours, who, male and female together, came flocking to borrow the day after, and sometimes the day before, the arrival of each package, taking good care to rob me of those that were most interesting. The truth is, if I ever had had the power of reading, I had now lost it. Books only set me nodding.

As for exercising my mind in reflections of its own, that was even more laborious than reading; and I contracted a dislike to it, particularly as my mind wore itself out every night in dreaming, that being a result of the goodly suppers I used to eat. It is true, that I one day fell into a sudden ferment, and being inspired, actually seized upon pen and paper, and wrote a poem in blank verse, forty lines long, with which I was so pleased that I read it to Tibbikens and my sister, both of whom were in raptures with it, the former carrying it off to the editor of the village paper, who printed it with such a eulogium upon its merits, as made me believe Byron was a fool to me, while all the young ladies immediately paid my sister Ann a visit, that they might tell me how they admired the beautiful piece, and lament that I wrote so seldom. I forget what the poem was about; but I remember I was sodelighted with the praise bestowed on it, that I resolved to write another, which, however, I did not do, having unfortunately begun it in rhyme, which was difficult, and my fit of inspiration and energy having left me before I got through with my next dinner. It was my writing verses, I suppose, that caused me to be called a genius; but it seems I was too lazy to be inspired more than once or twice a year.

I relapsed into ennui, and, truly, I became more tired of it before it was done with me, than was ever a labourer of his hod or mattock.

CHAPTER IV. Some account of the inconveniences of having a digestive apparatus.

But ennui was not the worst of the evils that clouded my happy lot. Some touches of that diabolical disorder, the curse of the rich man, which, as my sister so often gave me to know, had threatened the peace of Mr. Arthur Megrim several times before, now began to assail my own serenity, and threw gall and ratsbane over my dinners. I had slighted her warnings, and despised her advice, and now I was to pay the price of indiscretion. In a word, that very digestive apparatus, on which she read me a lecture at least thrice a day, began to grumble, refuse to do duty, and strike; though, unlikethe industrious artisans, who were in all quarters setting it the example, it struck, not for high wages, of which it had had a surfeit, but for low ones, in which, however, its master was scarce able to oblige it, having an uncommonly good appetite most of the time; and even when he had not, not well knowing how to dispose of his time unless at the table.

My faithful sister, who had been so constant to predict, was the first to detect the coming evil, and, step by step, she pointed it out to my unwilling observation.

"Arthur," said she, one morning as we sat at breakfast, "your eyelid is winking."

"Augh—" said I, "yes; it is winking."

"It is a sign," said she, "your digestive apparatus is getting out of order!"

"Augh!" said I, "hang the digestive apparatus!" for I was tired of hearing it mentioned.

"Arthur," said she, the next day, "you are beginning to look yellow and bilious!"

"Yes," said I; on which she declared that "the alkalis of my biliary fluids"—she had studied the whole theory and nomenclature of dyspepsy out of a book the doctor lent her—"were beginning to fail to coalesce, in the natural chymical way, with the acids of the chymous mass; and that no better argument could be desired to prove that my digestive apparatus was getting out of order." And she concluded by recommending me to regulate my diet, and fall back upon bran bread and hickory ashes.

In short, my dear sister assailed me with a pertinacity equal to the disease itself, so that I came, in a short time, to consider her as one of its worst symptoms.

To add to my woes, Dr. Tibbikens began to go over to her opinion, to talk of my digestive apparatus, and to drop hints in relation to bran bread and hickory ashes, which would decidedly have robbed him of my friendship, had I not at last found myself unable to do without him.

To make a long story short, I will omit a detailed history of my tribulations during the winter, and skip at once to the following spring; at the opening of which I found myself, young, rich, and independent as I was, the bond−slave and victim of a malady to which the woes of age and penury are as the sting of moschetoes to the teeth of raging tigers.

Reader, I have, in the course of this history, related to thee many miseries which it was my lot, on different occasions, to encounter, and some of them of a truly cruel and insupportable character. Could I, however, give thee a just conception of the ills I was now doomed to suffer, which, of a certainty, I cannot do, unless thou art at this moment the victim of a similar infliction, I am convinced thou wouldst agree with me, that I had now stumbled upon a grief that concentrated in itself all others of which human nature is capable.

Dost thou know what it is to have thy stomach stuffed, like an ostrich's, with old iron hoops and brickbats—or feeling as if it were? to have it now drowned in vinegar, now scorched as with hot potatoes? thy head filled with achings, dizziness, and streaks of lightning? thy heart transformed into the heels of a hornpipe−dancer, and plying thy ribs, lungs, and diaphragm with the energy of an artiste in the last agony?

If thou dost, then thou wilt know that bodily distress, of which the above miseries form but a small portion, is the least of the evils of dyspepsy—that its most horrible symptoms develop themselves in the mind. What care those devils, falsely called blue (for they are as black as midnight, or the bile which engenders them), for the youth, the wealth, the independence, the gentility of a man whose digestive apparatus is out of order? The less cause he may have in reality to be dissatisfied with his lot, the more cause they will find him; the greater and more legitimate his claims to be a happy man, the more fierce and determined their efforts to make him a miserable one.

The serenity of my mind gave way before the attacks of these monsters; sleeping and waking, by day and by night, they assailed me with equal pertinacity and fury. If I slept, it was only to be tormented by demon and caco−demon—to be ridden double by incubus and succuba, under whose bestriding limbs I felt like a Shetland pony carrying two elephants. My dreams, indeed, so varied and terrific were the images with which they afflicted me, I can compare to nothing but the horrors or last delirium of a toper. Hanging, drowning, and tumblingdown church−steeples were the common and least frightful of the fancies that crowded my sleeping brain: now I was blown up in a steamboat, or run over by a railroad car; now I was sticking fast in a burning chimney, scorching and smothering, and now, head downwards, in a hollow tree, with a bear below snapping at my nose; now I was plastered up in a thick wall, with masons hard at work running the superstructure up higher, and now I was enclosed in a huge apple−dumpling, boiling in a pot over a hot fire. One while I was crushed by a boa constrictor; another, perishing by inches in the mouth of a Bengal tiger; and, again, I was in the hands of Dr. Tibbikens and his scientific coadjutors of the village, who were dissecting me alive. In short, there was no end to the torments I endured in slumber, and nothing could equal them except those that beset me while awake.

A miserable melancholy seized upon my spirits, in which those very qualifications which everybody envied me the possession of were regarded with disgust, as serving only the purpose of adding to my tortures. What cared I for youth, when it opened only a longer vista of living wretchedness? What to me was the wealth which I could not enjoy? which had been given me only to tantalize? And as for independence, the idea was a mockery; the servitude of a galley−slave was freedom, unlimited license, compared with my subjection to dyspepsy, and—for the truth must be confessed—the doctor; to whom I was at last obliged to submit, nolens volens.

CHAPTER V. The same subject continued, with an account of several surprising transformations.

Whether Dr. Tibbikens treated me secundum artem or not, I cannot say; but true it is, that instead of getting better, I grew gradually worse, until my melancholy became a confirmed hypochondriasis, and fancies gloomy and dire, wild and strange, seized upon my brain, and conjured up new afflictions.

Getting up early one morning, I found, to my horror, that I had been, in my sleep, converted into a coffee−pot; a transformation which I thought so much more extraordinary than any other I had ever undergone, that I sent for my sister Ann, and imparted to her the singular secret.

"Oh!" said she, bursting into tears, "it is all on account of your unfortunate digestive apparatus. But, oh! brother Arthur, don't let such notions get into your head. A coffee−pot, indeed! that's too ridiculous!"

I was quite incensed at her skepticism, but still more so at the conduct of Dr. Tibbikens, who, being sent for, hearing of my misfortune, and seeing me stand in the middle of the floor, with my left arm akimbo, like a crooked handle, and theright stretched out in the manner of a spout, seized me by the shoulders and marched me towards a great hickory fire that was blazing on the hearth.

"What do you mean, Tibbikens?" said I.

"To warm you," said he: "I like my coffee hot; and so I intend to boil you over again on that very fire!"

At these words I started, trembled, and awoke as from a dream, assuring him I had made a great mistake, and was no more of a coffee−pot than he was; an assurance that doubtless prevented my undergoing an ordeal which I was neither saint nor fire−king enough to endure with impunity. Indeed, I was quite ashamed of having permitted such a delusion to enter my brain.

The next day, however, a still more afflicting change came over me; for having tried to read a book, in which I was interrupted by a great dog barking in the street, I was seized with a rage of a most unaccountable nature, and falling on my hands and feet, I responded to the animal's cries, and barked in like manner, being quite certain that I was as much of a dog as he. Nay, my servant Epaminondas coming in, I seized him by the leg and would have worried him, had he not run roaring out of the chamber; and my sister Ann coming to the door, I flew at her with such ferocity that she was fain to escape down stairs. The doctor was again sent for, and popping suddenly into the chamber, he rushed upon me with a great horsewhip he had snatched up along the way, and fellto belabouring me without mercy, crying out all the while, "Get out, you rascal, get out!"

"Villain!" said I, jumping on my hind legs, and dancing about to avoid his lashes, "what do you mean?"

"To whip you down stairs, you cur!" said he, flourishing his weapon again.

On which I assured him as earnestly as I could that "I was no cur whatever;" and indeed I was quite cured of the fancy.

My next conceit was (the morning being cold, and my fire having gone out), that I was an icicle; which fancy was dispelled by the doctor saluting me with a bucket of water, on pretence of melting me; and I was doubtless melted all the sooner for being drenched in water exactly at the freezing−point.

After this I experienced divers other transformations, being now a chicken, now a loaded cannon, now a clock, now a hamper of crockery−ware, and a thousand things besides; all which conceits the doctor cured without much difficulty, and with as little consideration for the roughness of his remedies. Being a chicken, he attempted to wring my neck, calling me a dunghill rooster, fit only for the pot; he discharged the cannon from my fancies by clapping a red−hot poker to my nose; and the crate of crockery he broke to pieces by casting it on the floor, to the infinite injury of my bones. The clock at first gave him some trouble, until, pronouncing it to have a screw out of order, heseized upon one of my front teeth with a pair of pincers, and by a single wrench dissipated the delusion for ever.

CHAPTER VI. An account of the woes of an Emperor of France, which have never before appeared in history.

In short (for I do not design particularizing my transformations further), there was no conceit entered my brain which Dr. Tibbikens did not cure by a conceit; until, one morning, by some mysterious revelation, the nature and means of which can only be guessed at, I found that I had been elected the Emperor of France, and announced my intention to set sail for my government immediately, in the first ship of the line which the American executive could put at my disposal.

This fancy quite disconcerted Dr. Tibbikens, and I heard him say to my sister, "He is a gone case now,—quite mad, I assure you;" which expression so much offended me, that I ordered him from my presence, and told him that, were it not for my respect for the American government, whose subject he was, I would have his head for his impertinence.

But wo betide the day! the doctor returned to me in less than an hour, bringing with him every physician in the village, who, having looked at mea moment, went into another apartment, where they argued hotly together for another hour. At the expiration of this they returned, led by Tibbikens, who, to my great satisfaction, now fell on his knees, and "begged my imperial majesty's pardon for presuming to request that I would allow myself to be dressed in my imperial majesty's robe of state;" which robe of state, although I was surprised at its plainness (for it was of a coarse linen texture, without gold lace or jewels, and of a very strange shape—closed in front and open in the rear), I immediately consented to put on, so pleased was I with the homage of the doctor.

If I was surprised at the appearance of the imperial garment, much more was I astonished when, having slipped my arms into its sleeves, I found them,—that is, my arms,—suddenly pinioned, buried, sewed up, as it were, among the folds of the robe, so that, when it was tied behind me, as it immediately was, I was as well secured as when I was tied up for execution on a former occasion. Alas! the disappointment to my pride! I understood the whole matter in a moment: my imperial robe of state was nothing less nor more than a strait waistcoat, constructed upon the spur of the moment, but still on scientific principles.

And now, being entirely at the mercy of the deceitful Tibbikens, I was seized upon with a strong hand, my head shaved and thrust into a sack of pounded ice, from which it was not taken until after a six days' congelation, and then only to be transferredto a nightcap of Spanish flies, exceedingly comfortable on the first application, but which, within a few hours, I had every reason to pronounce the most execrable covering in existence. And what made it still more intolerable, I never complained of it that Tibbikens did not assure me "it was the imperial coronet of France," and then exclaim, in the words of some old play, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

And then I was physicked and starved, phlebotomized, soused in cold water and scalded in hot, rubbed down with rough blanket cloths and hair−brushes as stiff as wool−cards, scorched with mustard plasters, bombarded by an electrical machine, and in general attacked by every weapon of art which the zeal of my tormentors could bring into play against me.

In this way, if I was not cured of my disease, I was, at least, brought into subjection. I ceased complaining, which I did at first, and with becoming indignation, of the traitorous and sacrilegious violence done to my anointed body, for such I at first considered it. The arguments of my persecutors, however, to prove the contrary, were irresistible, being chiefly syllogisms, of which the major proposition was calomel and jalap, the minor mustard plasters and blisters, and the conclusion cold water, phlebotomy, and flax−seed tea. The same arguments, varied categorically according to circumstances, convinced me that if my imperial elevation, or the notion thereof, was not sheer insanityon my own part, my doctors thought so— which was the same thing in effect; and I therefore took good care, when bewailing my hard fate, not to charge it, as I at first did, to the democratic wrath and jealousy of my tormentors.

CHAPTER VII. In which Sheppard Lee is convinced that all is not gold which glistens.

This conversion of mine to their own opinion— or, if the reader will so have it, my return to rationality—had a favourable effect on my doctors. They removed (very circumspectly indeed) the strait jacket from my arms; and then, seeing I made no attempt to tear them to pieces, but was, on the contrary, very quiet and submissive, and that, instead of claiming to be Charlemagne the Second of France, I was content to be Mr. Arthur Megrim, of Virginia, they were so well satisfied of the cure they had effected, that they agreed to free me of their company, and so left me in the sole charge of Tibbikens and my affectionate sister.

In this manner I was cured of hypochondriasis; for although I felt, ever and anon, a strong propensity to confess myself a joint−stool, a Greek demigod, or some such other fanciful creature, I retained so lively a recollection of the penalties I had alreadypaid for indulging in such vagaries, that I put a curb on my imagination, and resolved for the future to be nothing but plain Mr. Megrim, a gentleman with a disordered digestive apparatus.

I was cured of my hypochondriasis—I may say, also, of my dyspepsy—being kept by Tibbikens and my sister in such a starved condition, that it was impossible I should ever more complain of indigestion. But I was not yet cured of my melancholy; nothing but canvass−backs and terapins could cure that—and these, alas! were never more to bless my lips. Tibbikens had pronounced their fate, and with them, mine: thenceforth and for ever my diet was to be looked for in those—next to my digestive apparatus—chief favourites of my sister, bran bread and hickory ashes; my stomach, he solemnly assured me, would never be able to sustain any thing else.

I say, therefore, I was melancholy; and great reason had I to be so, condemned to live a life of ascetic denial, with the means in my hand to purchase all the luxuries in the world, and, which was worse, an eternal desire to enjoy them.

To banish this melancholy—alas! never to be banished—and perhaps to give me a little appetite for my bran bread and ashes, for which I never could contract a relish, the friendly Tibbikens again seduced me into the open air and my carriage, and carried me about to different places in which he thought I might find amusement. In this way he had conducted my prototype, the true ArthurMegrim, before me, whenever indolence and the luxuries of the table brought him too near to dyspepsy; and it was this uncommon kindness of the physician, in dragging the unfortunate gentleman to witness the galvanic experiments on the bodies of the executed felons, which had helped him so suddenly out of his own. Dr. Tibbikens was not, indeed, very choice whither he carried me, lugging me along with equal alacrity to a horse−race, a barbacue, or to the bed−sides of his patients.

All his efforts, however, were vain. The memory of what I had suffered, with the anticipation of what I was yet to endure, with, doubtless, the addition of the ills for the time being, preyed upon my spirit. I followed him mechanically, and in a sort of torpor, incapable of enjoying myself, incapable almost of noting what passed before me. I was tired of the life of the young and affluent Mr. Megrim, and I should have been glad to exchange his body for some one's else: but, unluckily, my mind was so weighed down with indolence, melancholy, and stupefaction, that I really did not think of so natural a means of ending my troubles.

In this condition, greatly to the concern of my friendly physician, I remained until towards the end of March, when an incident happened which gave an impulse to my spirit greater than it had ever before experienced.

CHAPTER VIII. In which the Author stumbles upon an old acquaintance.

The doctor being accustomed to lead or drive me whithersoever he would, and I, half the time, following without question, I found myself led one day to a house in the town, where was a remarkable exhibition, or show, as our people called it, which had for two days kept the whole village in an uproar. So great, however, was the abstraction and indifference of my mind to all objects, ordinary and extraordinary alike, that I had paid not the least attention to the accounts of the matter which my sister and other persons, and especially the faithful Epaminondas, had, during these two days, poured into my ears. Hence, when I entered the exhibition−room I was ignorant of its nature, and, indeed, indifferent as to making myself better acquainted with it.

Tibbikens, however, appeared to be unusually delighted, and saying, "Now, Megrim, my lad, you shall see a wonderful proof of the strides that science is making," led me through a crowd of the villagers, old and young, and male and female, who were present, up to a large table, where, truly enough, in glass cases placed upon the same, was a spectacle quite remarkable; though I must confessit did not make so strong an impression upon me as Tibbikens expected.

It consisted of an infinite variety of fragments from the bodies of animals and human beings, imitations, as I supposed at first, in wax, or some other suitable substance, and done to the life; but Tibbikens assured me they were real specimens, taken from animal bodies, and converted by scientific processes, known only to the exhibiter, into the substances we now saw; some being stony and harder than flint, some again only a little indurated, while others retained their natural softness, elasticity, and other peculiarities of texture. There were a dozen or more human feet, as many hands, three heads (one of which was a woman's with long hair, and another a child's), a calf's head, a dog's leg, the ear of a pig, the nose of a horse, an ox's liver and heart, a rat, a snake, and a catfish, and dozens of other things that I cannot now remember, all of which were surprisingly natural to behold, especially the head of the woman with the long hair, which looked as if it had just been cut off—or rather not cut off at all, for there was no appearance of death about it whatever, the lips and cheeks being quite ruddy, and the eyes open and bright, though fixed.

"So much for science!" said Tibbikens. "Look at that boy's head! it don't look so well as the others; but who would believe it was solid stone? Sir, it is stone, and silicious stone too; for last night I did myself knock fire out of its nose withthe back of my knife; and that's the cause of the nick there on the nostril. Well now, there's the man's head; its texture is ligneous, or, to speak more strictly, imperfectly carbonaceous, though the doctor calls it calcareous. But the wonder of all is the woman's head; look at that! That, sir, is neither silicious nor carbonaceous, but fleshy—I say, sir, fleshy. It remains in its natural condition; the skin is soft and resilient; you see the naturalness of the colour, of the lips, and, above all, of the eyes. And yet, sir, that head, that flesh is indestructible, unless, indeed, by fire, and strong acids or alkalis. It is embalmed, sir! embalmed according to the new process of this doctor with the unpronounceable Dutch name; and I can tell you, sir, that the man is a chymist such as was never heard of before. Davy, Lavoisier, Berzelius—sir, I presume to say they are fools to him, and will be as soon forgotten as their stupid, uncivilized system. How little they knew of the true science of chymistry! They stopped short at the elements— our doctor here converts one element into another!"

Tibbikens spoke with an air of consequence and some little oratorical emphasis, for he was surrounded by spectators, who listened to what he said with reverence. As for me, the little interest excited in my bosom by the novelty of the exhibition had begun to wear away, and I was sinking again into apathy—the faster, perhaps, for the doctor's conversation, of which I had a sufficiency every day—and I suppose I should, in a few moments,have lost all consciousness of what was going on around me, when suddenly a buzz began, and a murmuring of voices, saying, "Here comes the doctor! now we shall have the grand show!" At the same moment a grinding organ began its lugubrious grunting and squeaking, and the master of the exhibition, stalking up to the table, and making his patrons a sweeping semicircular bow, cried, in a rumbling bass voice, and in accents strongly foreigh,—

"Zhentlemens and leddees—I peg you will excuse me for keep you waiting. Vat you see here, zhentlemens and leddees, is very strange—pieces of de poddies human and animal, shanged py a process of philosophie very astonish, misty, and unknown to de multitude; some hard shtone, some shtone not so hard, and some not shtone at all. But I shall show you de representation vich is de triumph of art, de vonder of science, de excellence of

philosophie! For, zhentlemens and leddees, I am no mountepank and showmans, put a man of de science, a friend of de species human, and a zhentleman of de medical profession; and vat I make dese tings for is not for show, nor for pastime, nor for de money, but for de utilitie of de vorld."

"Surely," thought I to myself, "I have heard that voice before!"

I looked into the man's face as soon as the spectators had cleared away a little—for I was too indifferent to put myself to any trouble—and I saidto myself—nay, I said aloud to Tibbikens, "Surely I have seen that man before!"

"Where?" said Tibbikens.

"In Jersey," I replied, hastily; for I could not forget the tall frame, the hollow jaws, the solemn eyes, and the ever−grinning mouth of Feuerteufel, the German doctor, who had made himself so famous in my native village, and who was one of the last persons I remembered to have seen upon that day when I bade farewell to my original body.

"Come," said Tibbikens, looking alarmed at my last words, "you don't pretend to say you were ever out of Virginia in your whole life!"

"Augh—oh!" said I, recollecting myself; "I wonder what I was talking about? What—augh —what is the man's name?"

"Feuerteufel," said Tibbikens.

CHAPTER IX. Containing an account of the wonderful discoveries of the German doctor.

I was not then mistaken! It was Feuerteufel himself, only he had learned a little more English. This was the first and only one of my original acquaintances whom I had laid eyes on since my departure from New−Jersey, nearly two years before. I felt some interest, therefore, in the man, but it was accompanied with a feeling of dislike, and even apprehension. The truth is, I never liked the German doctor, though why I never could tell. But what was he doing—what could be his object going about the country with petrified legs, arms, and heads? I had scarce asked myself the question before it was answered by the gentleman himself, who had been speaking, though I know not what, all the time I was talking with Tibbikens, and while I was cogitating afterward.

He had worked himself into a fit of eloquence, warming with enthusiasm as he dwelt upon the grandeur and usefulness of his discovery. He made antic gestures with hands, head, and shoulders; he rolled and snapped his eyes in the most extraordinary manner in the world; and as for his mouth, there is no describing the grimaces and contortions which it made over every particularly bright idea or felicitous word.

"Zhentlemens!" said he, "I have discover de great art to preserve de human poddie; I can make him shtone, I can make him plaster−Paree, I can make him shuse as he is, dat is flesh—put flesh vat is never corrupt. Very well! vat shall I do mit de great discoaver? Mit de first I shall preserve de poddies of de great men—de kings, and de shenerals, and de poets, and de oder great men; and you shall see how mosh petter it is tan de statues marple. How mosh petter to have de great man as de great man look in de flesh, mit his eyes shining, his skin and his colour all de purenatural! How mosh petter dat dan de imitation! Suppose you have de painter who take de looking−glass; and when you look in him, glue down de reflection dare for ever!—de natural colour, de natural drawing, de light and de shade? How mosh petter dat dan de picture in dirty oil and ochre! (I tell you, py−the−py, zhentlemens, I do study dat art, and I hopes some day to make de grand discoaver—to put you reflection on de proper substance, like de looking−glass, dat shall hold on to de colours, and hold'em on for ever!) Vell, zhentlemens, I do de same ting mit de statue; I take de nature as I find him—de shape, de colour, de lips, de eyes, de hair, de all—and I do, py my process, make him indestructeeble, and not to alter for ever. Here is de little poy's head dat I have done in dat style. Dat is de art! dat is de art of making de shtone mummee! It shall pe de most costly, de most expense, and derefore only for de great, great men—de shenerals of war, de preshidents, and de mens in Congress vat makes de pig speech. Vell! den I shall make de oder style—de process to turn de poddie into plaster−Paree—vat I call de plaster mummee. Dat is not so dear; dat is de art for de great men vat is not so great as de oders —for de leetle great men—de goavernors, de editors of de paper, and de mens vat you give de grand dinners to. Vell! den I shall make de oder style —de style for de zhentlemens and leddees in zheneral, vat vill not go to rot in de ground like de horse and de dog—de style of de flesh unshange—vat Icall de flesh and plood mummee, shuse like dis woman head mit de long hair. Dis is de sheep plan; it vill cost no more dan de price of de funeral. It vill be done in tree days. De poddie is made incorruptible, proof against de water, vat you call water−proof. It is de process for de peoples in zheneral; and I do hopes to see de day ven it shall pe in universal adopt by all, and no more poddies put into de earth to rot, and to make de pad health for de peoples dat live. It is de shtyle for de unwholesome countrees. Zhentlemens, you have know dat de Egyptians did make all dare friends mummee. Why for dey do dat? Very good reason. De land upon de Nile vas unwholesome, and de purrying of de poddies made it vorse. There vas no wood dere to purn de poddies. Vell den, dey did soak dem in de petrolium, de naptha, and oder substance antiseptique, and hide dem in de catacomb and de pyramid. Dere vas no decay, no corruption to poison de air; it vas vise plan!

"Now, zhentlemens, I have devise my plan for de benefit of America, vich is de most unwholesome land in de earth, full of de exhalation and de miasm, de effluvium from de decay animal and vegetable. You shall adopt my plan for embalm your friends, and you no have no more pad air for de fevers, de bilious, de agues, and de plack vomit. Zhentlemens, I have shuse complete my great secret; it vas de study of my whole life; I have shuse succeed. I have de full and complete specimens of de process for make de sheep mummee,de mummee of flesh and plood, de plan for de men in zheneral, vich do always love to pe sheep. I have start carry dem to de great city New−Orleans; and if de peoples do adopt him dere, dey shall have no more complain of de great sickness vat kills

de peoples; for dere shall be no more rot of man's flesh in de swampy ground. Here you see de oxheart, de catfish, de bullfrog, de six hands and feet, all done into flesh and plood mummee. Here is de woman's head. It has been done dis tree year. But you shall see de grand specimen, de complete figure, de grown man turn into de mummee, and look more natural dan de life. Dat is de triumph of mine art! It was my first grand specimen, done dere is now two year almost, and it did cost me mosh expense and money, and some leetle danger. Now you shall say de specimen is perfect, or you shall have my head; it is vat I value apove my life —de complete! de grand! de peautiful!—But you shall see!"

CHAPTER X. Containing a more wonderful discovery on the part of Sheppard Lee, with perhaps the most surprising adventure that ever befell him.

Having thus completed his lecture, or oration, of which I must confess I had begun to grow tired, the German doctor suddenly stepped to a great round box, like a watchman's box, that stood at the further end of the room, and unlocking the folding leaves of which it was composed, swung them round with a jerk, exhibiting an inner case, evidently of glass, but entirely covered over with a thick curtain. This he proceeded to remove, by tugging at a string which hoisted it to the ceiling; and as it ascended there was disclosed to the eyes of the wondering spectators a human figure within the case, clad loosely in a sort of Roman garment, and for all the world looking entirely like a living being, except that the eyes were fixed in a set unnatural stare, and the attitude was a little stiff and awkward.

A murmur, with twenty or more faint shrieks from the females present, attested the admiration with which the spectators caught sight of this wonderful triumph of skill and science; but I—heavens and earth! what were my feelings, what was my astonishment, when I beheld in that lifeless mummy my own lost body! the mortal tenement in which I had first drawn the breath, and experienced the woes, of life! the body of Sheppard Lee the Jerseyman! This, then, was its fate—not to be anatomized and degraded into a skeleton, as the vile Samuel the kidnapper had told me, but converted into a mummy by a new process, for the especial benefit of science and the world; and Dr. Feuerteufel, the man for whom I had always cherished an instinctive dislike and horror, was the worthy personage who had stolen it, what time I had myself interrupted his designs upon the body of thefarmer's boy, in the old graveyard near the Owlroost!

I looked upon my face—that is, the face of the mummy—and a thousand recollections of my original home and condition burst upon my mind; the tears started into my eyes with them. What had I gained by forsaking the lot to which Providence had assigned me? In a moment, the woes of Higginson, of Dawkins, Skinner, Longstraw, Tom the slave, and Megrim the dyspeptic, rushed over my memory, contrasted with those lesser ones of Sheppard Lee, which I had so falsely considered as rendering me the most miserable man in the world.

What other notions may have crowded my brain, what feeling may have entered my bosom, I am now unable to describe. The sight of my body thus restored to me, and in the midst of my sorrow and affliction, inviting me, as it were, back to my proper home, threw me into an indescribable ferment. I stretched out my arms, I uttered a cry, and then rushing forward, to the astonishment of all present, I struck my foot against the glass case with a fury that shivered it to atoms—or, at least, the portion of it serving as a door, which, being dislodged by the violence of the blow, fell upon the floor and was dashed to pieces. The next instant, disregarding the cries of surprise and fear which the act occasioned, I seized upon the cold and rigid hand of the mummy, murmuring, "Let me live again in my own body, and never—no! never more in another's!"

Happiness of happiness! although, while I uttered the words, a boding fear was on my mind, lest the long period the body had lain inanimate, and more especially the mummifying process to which it had been subjected, might have rendered it unfit for further habitation, I had scarce breathed the wish before I found myself in that very body, descending from the box which had so long been its prison, and stepping over the mortal frame of Mr. Arthur Megrim, now lying dead on the floor.

Indescribable was the terror produced among the spectators by this double catastrophe—the death of their townsman, and the revival of the mummy. The women fell down in fits, and the men took to their heels; and a little boy, who was frightened into a paroxysm of devotion, dropped on his knees, and began fervently to exclaim,

"Now I lay me down to sleep,

I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

In short, the agitation was truly inexpressible, and fear distracted all. But on no countenance was this passion (mingled with a due degree of amazement) more strikingly depicted than on that of the German doctor, who, thus compelled to witness the object of a thousand cares, the greatest and most perfect result of his wonderful discovery, slipping off its pedestal and out of his hands, as by a stroke of enchantment, stared upon me with eyes, nose, and mouth, speechless, rooted to the floor, and apparentlyconverted into a mummy himself. As I stepped

past him, however, hurrying to the door, with a vague idea that the sooner I reached it the better, his lips were unlocked, and his feelings found vent in a horrible exclamation—"Der tyfel!" which I believe means the devil—"Der tyfel! I have empalm him too well!"

Then making a dart at me, he cried, in tones of distraction, "Stop my mummy! mine gott! which has cost me so much expense!—stop my mummy!"

I saw that he designed seizing me, and being myself as much overcome with fear as the others, I made a bolt for the door, knocking down my friend Tibbikens and half a dozen other retreating spectators as I left it, darted into the air, and in a moment was flying out of the village on the wings of the wind.

I had a double cause for terror; for, first, before I had got twenty steps from the exhibition−room (for my Roman garments were in the way of my legs, and I did not run so fast as I managed to do afterward), I heard certain furious voices cry from the room—"It is all a cheat! the mummy was a living man! let us Lynch him and the doctor!" and, secondly, I could also hear, close at my heels, the voice of the doctor himself, who had escaped close behind me, eagerly vociferating, "Stop my mummy, and I will pay twenty dollare! stop my mummy!"—by both which noises it was made apparent that I was in danger of being Lynched, or subjected to a second process of mummification.

Nerved therefore by my fears, I gathered the skirts of my toga about my arms, and fled with all my might, blessing my stars that I had at last recovered that mortal tenement, which, with all its troubles, I was now convinced was the best for my purposes in the whole world.

BOOK VIII. CONTAINING THE CONCLUSION OF THE HISTORY.

CHAPTER I. Sheppard Lee flies from the German doctor, and finds himself again in New−Jersey.

The faster I fled, the faster it seemed to me I was followed by the German doctor, who, I have always believed, was driven crazy by the sudden loss of his beloved mummy, and who, I had therefore the greatest reason to fear, would, if he succeeded in retaking me, be content with nothing short of clapping me again into his glass case, were it even a needful preliminary, as, in truth, it must have been, to kill and embalm me over again. And indeed I think the reader will allow, that the fact of his following me three days and three nights, still calling me a mummy, charging everybody he met to stop me, and persisting to claim me as his property, even after I had got among my own friends, was a proof not only of insanity, but of a desperate determination to rob me of life and liberty.

Of this determination on his part I was myself so strongly persuaded, and, in consequence, soovercome by terror, that I am inclined to think I was for a time nearly as mad as himself; and I fled from before him with a speed which the reader can only conceive when I tell him, that I ran from the scene of my transformation on the banks of the Potomac to my native village in New−Jersey, a distance which I estimate at full one hundred and eighty miles, in the short space of three days and three nights, during which period I rested but once, and that on the second night, when, being very faint and weary, I lay down on the earth and slept two hours.

This may be justly esteemed a truly wonderful exploit, and it exceeds that of the great Daniel Boone of Kentucky, of whom it is related that he ran before a band of wild Indians the same distance, or thereabouts, in four days' time; but it must be remembered that I was fleeing from a raging madman, whose speed was so nearly equal to my own, that if I chanced but to flag a little in my exertions at any time, I was sure to see him make his appearance on the rear, or to hear his voice screaming on the winds to "stop his mummy." Indeed, I ran with such haste, that I took no note of the road upon which I travelled, and to this day I am ignorant how I succeeded in passing the three great rivers, the Potomac, the Chesapeake, and the Delaware, which lay in my route, and which I must have crossed in some way or other. And, for the same reason, I am ignorant in what manner I sustained existence during those three days, having notthe slightest recollection of eating a single meal on the whole journey.

All that I can remember of the journey is, that I ran I knew not whither, but with an instinctive turning of my face towards the north; that I was closely followed by the German doctor; and that, about sundown on the third day, I found myself, to my unspeakable joy, rushing through the Owl−roost swamp, across the meadow, and by that identical beech−tree where I had first lost my body, in full view of my own house. The sight of that once happy home of my childhood filled me with rapture. I rushed towards it, hailed by a shout from old Jim Jumble, my negro−man, backed by another from his wife Dinah, that might have waked the dead, they were so loud and uproarious, and found myself in the arms of my dear, but long−neglected sister Prudence, who, with her husband Alderwood, and her three young children, was standing on the porch.

Then, being wholly overcome by exhaustion of body and mind, and having endured such fatigues and sufferings from hunger and thirst, without speaking of terror, as have seldom oppressed a poor feeble human being, I fell into a swoon, from which I awoke only to be assailed by a violent fever and delirium, the direct consequences of my superhuman exertions, that kept me a−bed, in a condition between life and death, for more than two weeks.

During all this period I recollect being tormented by the hateful visage of the German doctor,who, having followed me like a bloodhound, daily forced himself into my chamber, claimed me as his property, and would doubtless have carried me off, had it not been for my sister, my brother−in−law, and the faithful Jim Jumble, the first of whom watched at my bed−side like an angel, while the two others opposed themselves to the enemy, and drove him from the room. His persecutions, indeed, affected me to a degree I cannot express, and were the cause that, at the end of the two weeks as above mentioned, I suddenly fell into a lethargy or trance, the crisis of my disease, in which I lay two days, and then awoke in my full senses, free from fever, and convalescent.

How great was my satisfaction then to behold myself surrounded by my friends, and in my own house; how much greater to know I was no longer to be persecuted by the odious German doctor, who, my brother−in−law

gave me to understand, in reply to my anxious questions, had not only given over all designs on my person, but had actually departed from the neighbourhood, and from the State of New−Jersey, satisfied, doubtless, that I was a living man, and no longer a mummy.

CHAPTER II. What had happened at Watermelon Hill during the Author's absence.

This intelligence was balm to my spirit and medicine to my body; and the consequence was, that I recovered so rapidly as to be able to leave my bed in less than a week, and receive the visits and congratulations of many old friends, who seemed really glad of my return and recovery, though I have no doubt they were moved as much by curiosity to learn where I had been, and what adventures had befallen me during the long period of my exile; in which, however, I did not think it advisable to gratify them.

And now it was that I discovered that many changes, personally interesting to myself, had happened during my absence. When I first got upon my porch and looked about me, I almost doubted whether I was really on the forty−acre. My house had been carefully reparied, both within and without; a new and substantial stable, with other outbuildings, had been erected; new fences had been put up around my fields and orchards; cattle were lowing on my meadows, and horses whinnying in the stable, to be let loose with them upon the early grass. In a word, the forty−acre now looked more prosperous and flourishing than it had everbefore looked mean and empoverished: it looked almost as well as it had done in the days of my father.

"How was all this change brought about?" I demanded of my brother−in−law, who, with my sister, had accompanied, or, indeed, rather led me to the porch.

"By the magic of money, industry, and a little common sense," said Alderwood, who, although a plain and bluff man, was a sensible one, and a most excellent farmer. "You must know, my dear Sheppard," said he, "that, when we found you were so far gone—"

"How," said I, in surprise, "how did you know I had gone far? I thought the general opinion was that I was murdered."

"Oh, yes," said my sister, nodding at her husband; "it was just as you say."

With that Alderwood smiled, and nodded back again, saying,

"Prue is right. When we discovered your condition—that is, when we found you had been murdered, as you say, and that there was no one to look to the poor forty−acre except the sheriff and the mortgagee, it was agreed between your sister and myself that I should take the matter in hand; for we were loath the property should go into the possession of strangers. Besides, Prudence insisted upon being near you—"

"That is," said Prudence, "near to where we supposed the murderers must have concealed your body."

"Exactly so," said Alderwood. "For this reason I left my own farm in the hands of my young brother Robert, came down hither, bag and baggage, applied a little of my loose cash (for I believe I have been somewhat more prosperous than you) to stopping the mouth of your mortgagee, building fences, banking meadows, spreading marl, and so on; and the consequence is, that we are getting the forty−acre into good condition again, so that, in a few years, it will pay the debts, and perhaps begin to make the fortune of its owner."

I grasped my brother−in−law's hand. I was moved by his kindness; and remembering how, after quarrelling with him, as related in the first book of this history, I had refused a reconciliation, and rejected his offers of assistance, his friendship and generosity appeared still more worthy of my gratitude.

"Poh!" said he, interrupting my thanks and professions of regard, but looking well pleased that I should be disposed to make them, "I was persuaded you would come to some day—that is, I mean, come back."

"That is," said Prudence, "we always had a notion you were not really dead, and that we should see you again, some time, alive and happy."

"I trust," said I, "you will long see me so; for I am now a changed, I hope, a wiser man—disposed to make the best of the lot to which Heaven has assigned me, and to sigh no longer with envy at the supposed superior advantages of others. I think, brother Alderwood, I shall now be contented with my condition, humble and even toilsome as it may be. I have seen enough of the miseries of my fellows—those even whom I most envied—during the two years of my absence, to teach me that every man has his share of them; that there is nothing peculiarly wretched in my own lot, and that I can be happy or not, just as I may choose to make myself. For this reason, I shall now bid adieu to indolence and discontent, the vile mother and viler daughter together, and do as my father did before me, that is, cultivate these few acres which my folly has left me, with my own hands;

nor will I rest from my labours until I have discharged every claim against it, your own, my dear Alderwood, first of all; though I am sensible I can never repay the debt of kindness I owe you."

"And this is really your intention?" demanded Alderwood, looking prodigiously gratified. "Your possessions are now limited, indeed; yet you have enough, with a little industry and care, to render you independent for life. And if you will really apply yourself to the farm—"

"I will," said I. "If labour and perseverance can do it, I will attain the independence you speak of; I will remove every encumbrance on the forty−acre, and then trust to pass such a life as modest wishes and a contented temper can secure me."

"You may begin to pass it immediately, then," said Alderwood, "for the forty−acre is already clear of every encumbrance. Yes," he continued, seeingme look surprised, "I tell you nothing but the truth. Aikin Jones, your old friend and overseer—"

"He is a villain!" said I, "and he defrauded me."

"So it is pretty commonly supposed; but, as we have no legal proof of his dishonesty, the less we say of it the better. He has gone to settle his accounts at a tribunal where craft and policy can avail him nothing. He died eight months ago, and they say who know best, in great agony and fear of spirit. Now, whether he was moved by old feelings of friendship, or was struck with remorse at seeing the condition to which he had reduced you—"

"What condition?" said I.

"Oh," said my sister, "the ruin of your affairs; nothing more." And Alderwood nodded his head by way of assent to the explanation.

"In short," said he, "Mr. Aikin Jones, whatever may have been his motive, thought fit to bequeath you a legacy—"

"What!" said I; "how could he leave a legacy to a man universally considered dead?"

"Oh," said my sister, "he never would believe that. There were a good many people had their doubts on that subject."

"Yes," said Alderwood; "and Mr. Aikin Jones was one of them. And so, finding himself dying, and being seized perhaps with compunction for the wrongs he had done you, he left you a legacy,—no great matter, indeed, considering how much of your estate he died possessed of. It sufficed, however, to pay off your mortgage, principal and interest, and to improve and stock the forty−acre just as you now see it. So you see, my dear Sheppard, you are not so badly off as you supposed. Your farm is small, yet your father drew from it a fortune; and I believe a good farmer might do the same thing a second time. But you are not very learned in agricultural matters. I will remain with you a while —at least until your health is re−established—and be your teacher. When you find yourself competent to the management of the farm I will bid you farewell, assured that you will lead a happier life than you ever knew before."

This intelligence with regard to my little homestead was highly agreeable to me; nor was I less pleased with my brother−in−law's resolution to remain with me for a time, while I acquired a knowledge of agriculture, and confirmed myself in new habits of industrious and active application.

CHAPTER III. Containing the substance of a singular debate betwixt the Author and his brother, with a philosophic defence of the Author's credibility.

And now, having arrived at the close of my adventurous career, I have but a few additions to make to my story before concluding it entirely.

I took an early opportunity to impart to my brother−in−law a faithful account of my adventures, as well as a resolution which I had already formed to commit them to writing, and publish them for the benefit of the world; for I was persuaded they contained a moral which might prove of service to many persons, who, like myself, had fallen into the error of supposing they were assigned to a harsher lot than their fellows.

This resolution Alderwood opposed with all his might, being concerned lest such an enterprise as writing a book should divert my mind from the labours of the farm, and, indeed, seduce me again into habits of idleness. Besides, he was afraid the strangeness of my adventures would cause them to be received with incredulity, whereby I might suffer in reputation, and be looked upon only as a dreamer and teller of falsehoods. His chief reasons, however, I doubt not, were the two first mentioned; for he was anxious I should now think of nothing but my farm. His dislike to my design was, in truth, so great, that, having exhausted all the arguments he could muster in the vain design to overcome it, he had resort to a new mode of opposition, an expedient highly ingenious, but not a little ridiculous. He endeavoured to shake my own faith in my story!—to convince me that I had imagined all I have related, and that, in a word, I had never encountered any adventures at all. I protest I am diverted to this day when I think of the mingled anxiety and address which he displayedon the occasion. He assured me, and that quite plumply, that during the whole two years (to speak strictly, it was only twenty months) of my wanderings, I had never once been off the forty−acre farm; that I had never been in any body besides my own; and that the whole source of the notion on my part lay in a hallucination of mind which had suddenly attacked me, filling me with ridiculous conceits of various transformations, such as never had happened, and never could happen, to any human being. And this absurd account he persisted in as long as he could with any decency, giving me repeated hints that my mother had died insane, and that it was not therefore strange I should have been a little odd once in my life. I showed him the place where I had been digging under the beech−tree (where, by−the−way, I was weak enough afterward to make Jim Jumble sink a pit twelve feet deep, to satisfy myself that Captain Kid's money really did not lie there); which place, however, he averred was as great a proof of the truth of his story as of mine: "For," said he, "none but a madman would dig for Captain Kid's money." I led him to the willow−bushes, and the old worm fence in the marsh, where I had found Squire Higginson's body; which he allowed I might have done, but protested that other persons had found it also; and that instead of going home alive in Squire Higginson's barouche, it had been carried to Philadelphia in a coffin; and as for Higginson's being clapped into prison for my murder, it was I, he said who hadbeen confined on suspicion of having been concerned in his, until, as he said, it was found that I was out of my wits, and that Higginson had died of an apoplexy.

I then referred to a circumstance that had happened during my late sickness, as affording the fullest confirmation of my story. The circumstance was this. While still lying tormented with fever, but at a moment when my mind was sound and lucid, Jim Jumble put a newspaper into my hand, in which, by a singular coincidence, appeared an account of my late transformation in Virginia, with an allusion to the fate of Zachariah Longstraw, by which I learned, for the first time, what had become of his body after I left it. From the article, which, strangely, and yet naturally enough, was headed "Outrageous Humbug, and Fatal Consequence thereof," it seemed to be universally believed that Dr. Feuerteufel's mummy was no mummy at all, but a living man, as I myself had heard it called in the village, with whom he had leagued in a conspiracy to hoax and swindle the good people of the south out of their money; and that the imposture had been detected by Mr. Arthur Megrim, who, proceeding to force the glass box, was knocked down by the pretended dead man, and so unfortunately killed, the mummy and his accomplice, the doctor, making their escape in the confusion. The editor of the paper, after noticing a second account, by which it was asserted that the unfortunate Megrim, though overturned by the pretended mummyin his flight, had received no injury from him, but, on the contrary, had died of sheer fright and horror, being of a nervous, hypochondriacal turn, and acknowledging that this account was more probable,

inveighed warmly against the villany and audacity of the swindlers; who, he said, were more legitimate objects on whom to wreak the vengeance of Lynchdom than the people of that district had found in Zachariah Longstraw, the philanthropist. And here the editor reminded his readers of the fate of that excellent and distinguished individual, who had died in the Lynchers' hands the preceding autumn, against the ringleaders of whom his nephew, Mr. Jonathan Truelove, had so vainly attempted to establish legal proceedings.

To this account, I say, I referred as containing an argument of my truth not to be resisted; but, unfortunately, the paper had by some means or other vanished, and Alderwood said my story went for nothing without it. That paper, I have always thought, he had himself got possession of and secreted. But had I even retained and shown it to him, I doubt whether it would have affected him in the least; for he was one of those skeptical men who believed a thing none the sooner for finding it in a newspaper.

In a word, there is no expressing the obstinacy of my brother in rejecting my story, nor the adroitness with which he met such proofs as I could give him of the truth of it. The last instance of it which I shall relate was his taking the part of theGerman doctor, Feuerteufel, who, he declared, had not only never made a mummy of me, but had not laid claim to me as his property, though he himself (that is, my brother−in−law) had been present at least a dozen times when the German doctor did so in my sick−chamber, from which Alderwood was so instrumental in expelling him. He even insisted that this man, having made a second and last visit to our village to hunt plants and reptiles, had been employed (and at his own instance too) to cure me of that very malady he so ridiculously would have me believe I had been afflicted with, and that it was to him, under Heaven, I owed my restoration to health. Nay, he even went the length of showing me what he called the doctor's bill; and, true enough, it was a bill, with a receipt in full upon it; but the amount being prodigiously great, I saw at once into the whole affair, which was nothing less than a masked contract betwixt my brother−in−law and the doctor, whereby the latter secretly covenanted, in consideration of the large sum received from the former, to persecute me no longer with his claims, and perhaps to leave the country altogether.

Besides all this, my brother attacked me by demanding by what means it was that I had transferred my spirit so often, and so easily, from one body to another. And this being a question on which the reader may require satisfaction as well as my brother, I must allow that it presents a difficulty, and a very great one. All that I can say to this is, first, that I did transfer my spirit from body to body, and no less than seven different times; secondly, that these seven translations of spirit indicated in me the possession of a peculiar power to make them; and thirdly, that the existence of such a peculiar power, however wonderful it may appear, is not beyond the bounds of philosophic probability.

No man can be so ignorant or skeptical as to deny, that there are several different faculties of a most marvellous nature, with which a few individuals in the world are mysteriously endowed, while the great mass of men are entirely without them; and to the number of these supernatural endowments there is scarce a year passes by without adding a new one. What can be, or ought to be, considered a more surprising faculty than that of ventriloquism,—the art of throwing the voice into places and things afar from the operator, of taking, as it were, the lungs, glottis, from his body, and clapping them into a chest, log, stone wall, or other inanimate substance, or into the body of another? and how few are there in the world who possess the power of doing so! One man thumps his chin with his fingers, and draws from it pure and agreeable musical tones, and another whistles a melody in parts; while men in general might thump and whistle till their teeth fell out without producing any music worth listening to. What can be more wonderful than the faculty recently developed by the advocates and practitioners of a new system of medicine, who, by shaking a bottle in a peculiar way,give to its contents a medical virtue which did not exist before, and which another man,—the patient, for example,—might shake till doomsday without imparting?*

The Natural Bonesetter is one instance of the possession of a faculty both rare and astonishing, and so is any old woman who can pow−wow the fire out of a burn. Not to multiply inferior instances, however, I will ask the reader if any faculty can be deemed more incredible than that of the magnetizer, who, by flourishing his digits about your body, now cures your rheumatism, and now sets you sound asleep—unless it be that of the magnetized slumberer, who reads a sealed letter laid on his epigastrium, sees through millstones and men's bodies, and renders oraculous responses to any question that may be proposed him, even though it be upon subjects of which, while awake, he is entirely ignorant.

In fine, granting all these things to be true (and who shall dare to doubt them), why should it not be granted

that an individual should possess the power of transferring his spirit from body to body at will—a power but little more extraordinary (if indeed it be more extraordinary) than the other faculties which are admitted to have actual existence? To me it seems that the thing is natural enough, though still, I grant, extremely wonderful. Many persons are thought to possess the ventriloquial, and even the magnetic power, without being conscious of the endowment, accident having been in all cases the cause of their being made acquainted with its existence. In the same way, it is not improbable that other persons besides myself may possess the faculty of reanimating dead bodies, without suspecting it; for I can scarce believe the faculty should be confined entirely to myself.

CHAPTER IV. Being the last chapter of all.

I never could succeed in convincing my brother−in−law of the truth of my relation—or rather— for I have always thought his incredulity was assumed for the purpose mentioned—I never could overcome his opposition to the design I formed of writing and committing it to the press. For this reason I ceased talking of it more, and even affected to believe the foolish story he had told me of my having conceived my adventures in a mere fit of delirium. This I did not so much out of compliment to him, as from a desire to have him believe I would let nothing divert me from thebusiness of my farm, which, indeed, I immediately addressed myself to in such good earnest as secured his hearty approval and zealous congratulations.

In secret, however, and in the intervals of toil, I employed myself recording my adventures, while their impression was still strong on my memory; and now, having happily brought them to a conclusion, I commit them to the world, confident that, if they surprise nobody else, they will cause some astonishment to my brother Alderwood.

It is now some time since I have been deprived of his and my sister's company at Watermelon Hill, they having retired to their own farm as soon as my brother was well convinced I was capable of managing my own affairs. My only society now consists of honest Jim Jumble, his wife Dinah, and my sister's oldest son, Sheppard Lee Alderwood (for he was named after me), a lad of fourteen years, but uncommonly shrewd and sensible, for whom I have contracted a strong affection, and to whom, if I should die unmarried, as is quite probable, I design bequeathing my little patrimony.

Jim Jumble is as independent and saucy as ever, but I can bear with his humours, he is so faithful, industrious, and, as I may add, so happy to see his master once more prospering in the world. He and Dinah are singing all day long.

My estate is small, and it may be that it will never increase. I am, however, content with it; and content is the secret of all enjoyment. I am not ashamed to labour in my fields. On the contrary, I have learned to be grateful to Providence that it ordained me to a lot of toil, wherein I find the truest source of health, self−approbation, and happiness. My only trouble is an occasional stiffness and sluggishness of joints and muscles, which Jim Jumble tells me is "all owing to my being naturally a lazy man," but which I myself suppose was caused by my remaining so long a mummy.

To counterbalance this evil, however, I find in myself an astonishing hardiness of constitution, particularly in resisting quinsies, catarrhs, and defluxions on the breast, to which I was formerly very liable; and this immunity I know not how to account for, unless by supposing that my body was hardened by the process of mummifying, and that it still continues to be water−proof.

At all events—be my body what it may, hardy or frail, stiff or supple, I am satisfied with it, and shall never again seek to exchange it for another.

THE END.