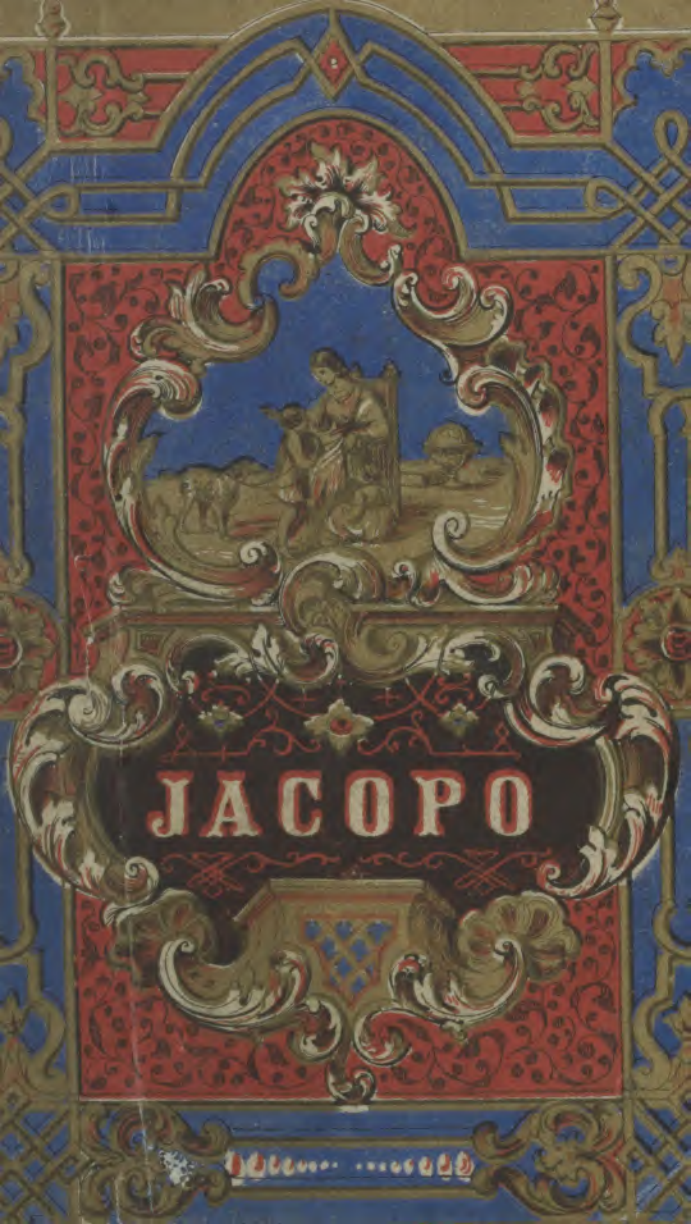
JACOPO

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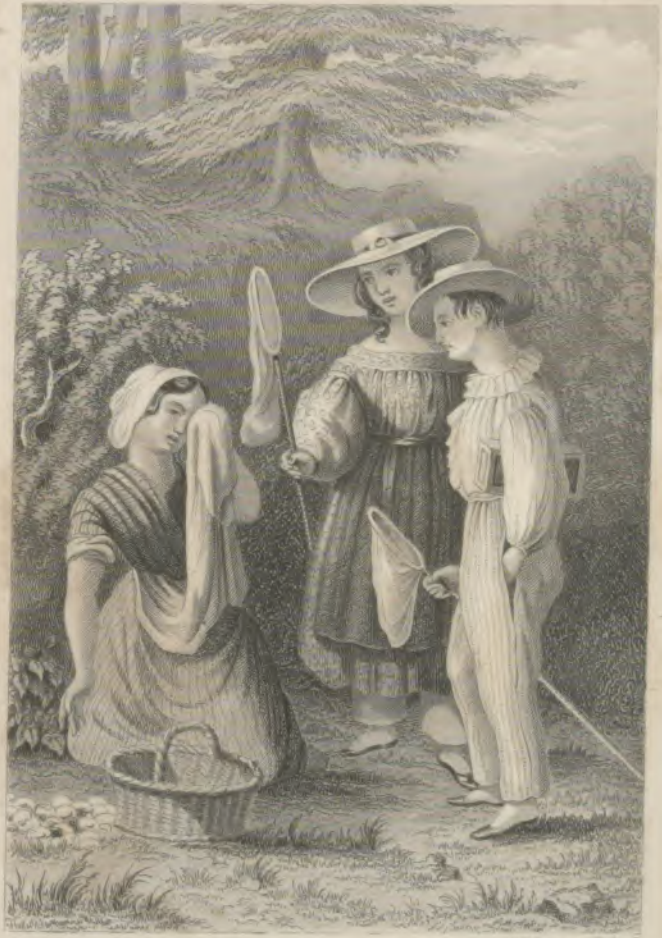

G. Millar sc. Edin.

STORY OF JACOPO

Page 5

JACOPO

AND

OTHER TALES.

EDINBURGH:
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CONTENTS.

JACOPO.

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Two young children, a boy and girl, were amusing themselves one bright summer morning in one of the principal gardens in Ajaccio, the capital of Corsica. They each carried a net with a long handle, used for catching butterflies, and were busily engaged pursuing those beautiful insects.

The little boy, whose name was Napoleon, was the son of Charles Bonaparte and Lætitia Ramolina, and the little girl was his sister Eliza. Both the children directed their steps towards an arbour, formed with the branches of a sweet-scented lilac-tree, that was situated at the farthest extremity of the garden, which was separated from the country only by a hedge. The children, in their eagerness to catch a beau-

tiful butterfly which had just alighted on one of the lilac blossoms, knocked their nets together, and thus prevented the capture of the prize; while the frightened insect instantly took flight, and after making many zig-zags in the air, flew over the hedge, and soon disappeared in the fields.

"Oh, Napoleon! what have you done?"

"I have leapt over the barricade, in order to pursue the butterfly. Follow me!" And pushing aside the brier branches, he took his sister by the hand, and helped her to make her way through the hedge.

Thus at liberty, they immediately ran off in pursuit of the fugitive, and were soon in the open country. Suddenly Eliza uttered a cry of dismay. In her zeal and hurry, she had upset a little peasant girl, who was proceeding to market with a basket of eggs, which now lay scattered and broken on the ground.

"Let us run away!" said Eliza in a whisper to her brother. "She does not know who we are, and mamma will not hear anything about it."

"No, I will not run away," replied Napoleon: "I will remain with that poor little girl. See

how she sobs! We have done the mischief, and we ought to repair it."

Eliza blushed, and held down her head, for she felt the justice of her brother's reproof; and in order to repair her fault as soon as possible, she went up to the little girl, and after speaking to her kindly, and wiping the tears from her eyes, she busied herself with replacing the eggs which remained whole in the basket. But alas! more than the two-thirds were broken.

"Oh dear, what will become of me?" sobbed the poor child; "more than three francs' worth of my eggs are destroyed. What shall I tell mother when I return home? She will be in great distress. The money which I was to have received for the eggs was to buy bread for us all, and to last us three days."

"Come, come, leave off crying; here is some money for your eggs; and if you will follow us, you will get the remainder,' said Napoleon, giving her two small silver pieces which he had in his pocket.

Eliza went up to her brother with a look of importance, and whispered in his ear, "What can you be thinking of, Napoleon? We will certainly be kept on dry bread and water for three days."

"Cannot help that. We broke the girl's eggs, and we must pay them," replied Napoleon.

The nursery-maid's voice was heard at this moment making the woods ring with the names of Napoleon and Eliza.

"Here we are!—here we are!" cried the children in a breath.

"At last!" said the maid. "And I have been seeking you such a length of time! But who is that little girl?" added she, on perceiving the child walking behind Napoleon.

"We broke her eggs," replied the latter, "as we were chasing a butterfly; and I have told her to come with us, that mamma may pay her for the mischief we have done."

Shortly after this, the children, followed by their nurse and the little peasant girl, entered the drawing-room in which the Bonaparte family was then assembled. Madame Lætitia addressing them, said, "Napoleon and Eliza, I had made you a present of a net each, but you must remember that I forbade your going beyond the garden hedge, and you have disobeyed my orders; you must therefore return your nets to me, and you will then have no opportunity of disobeying another time."

"I alone ought to be punished, mamma," said Napoleon, "for I induced Eliza to follow me."

The little girl remained silent; but throwing her arms round her brother's neck, kissed him heartily.

"My dear sister," said the Archdeacon of Ajaccio, who was present at the time, "the first step towards amendment is the acknowledgment of a fault; I therefore intreat you to forgive Napoleon."

"Oh do, dear uncle, ask pardon for me also," said Eliza, "for I have been much more to blame than Napoleon."

"And what great fault have you, then, committed?" said the venerable old man, smiling kindly on the child. "Tell us candidly, and I promise to intercede for you."

Eliza, gaining a little courage from this assurance, began her account of what had passed in a trembling voice. She described the upsetting of the child and her basket of eggs, and how she had wished to hide it from her mother. "I now feel," said she, "that it was very naughty for me to think of concealing the mischief we had done."

"That is right, Eliza: you have owned your fault frankly, and I hope that you will do so for

the future whenever you are to blame; and in order to encourage you in so doing, I will solicit your mother's favour for you, as well as for your brother."

Both children were forgiven.

"I have still a favour to ask you, mamma," said Napoleon. "You allow me half a franc a week as pocket-money; I want you to pay that poor little girl for her broken eggs, who is now waiting anxiously to see how all this will end; and you will keep back my weekly allowance till you have paid yourself."

"Willingly," said Madame Lætitia, at the same time placing a piece of three francs in the child's hand. "Now mind, Napoleon, that you will receive no money for six weeks."

The little girl, overjoyed at this turn of affairs, ran up to Napoleon, and wished him to take back the two silver pieces which he had already given her; but he refused. Madame Lætitia, pleased with so much honesty, questioned the child, and learned from her that she was a fisherman's daughter, that her mother was bed-ridden, and that they inhabited a small hut on the sea-shore, at no great distance from the place where the eggs had been broken.

"Your mother is ill, my child. She most probably has no medical attendance, but I will go and see her."

"Oh, mamma!" said Napoleon, "do let us go at once, and we will lead Charlotte home."

"Willingly," replied his mother. "We will set off immediately."

The children needed not to hear the permission repeated, but ran off in great glee. After a short walk, they came in sight of a large rock, at the foot of which stood a miserable hut; and Charlotte, pointing her finger in that direction, said, "There is our house." On entering the cottage, they saw a little boy of about twelve years of age making a fishing-net; a little girl was seated on the floor eating a crust of bread; and a young infant was sleeping quietly in an old cradle, covered with a tattered quilt.

The two elder children were indeed thinly clad; but on looking more attentively at the old garments which covered them, many a darn and patch was to be seen, proving the poor mother's care and tidiness; and though the sleeping infant's cheeks and arms were pale and thin, its little cap, as well as the bed covering, were clean and neat. The hut contained but a

few indispensable articles of furniture; and on a miserable pallet, in the farthest corner of the room, lay a young though suffering woman, whose thin drawn features spoke but too plainly of misery and want.

Madame Bonaparte was quite overcome; never had she witnessed such a sad scene. After having conversed a short time with the sick woman, she inquired if she had had any medical advice; and on learning that she could not afford to have any, she promised to send a doctor to visit her on the morrow.

Whilst this dialogue was carried on at one end of the room, Napoleon had approached the little boy, who still continued hard at work, and they soon made acquaintance with each other.

"Is that difficult work you are employed on?" inquired Napoleon of the boy.

"No, not difficult; I am accustomed to it, and I need only to be careful."

"You do not get much for it, I suppose?"

"As for that," replied the boy, "I get nothing. I do the work for my father, as it is my duty to do; he has a hard enough struggle to make a living for us all."

"And do you like to work?"

"Oh yes, I am never so happy as when working. I wish I were big enough to be a sailor or some other profession; for then I should be able to help my parents."

"What is your name?" asked Napoleon.

"Jacopo."

"Then, Jacopo, let us be friends. I will sometimes come to see you."

"With all my heart, young Master Napoleon; I will be rejoiced to see you at the sea-side."

From that day Madame Bonaparte and her children were constant visitors at the cottage. Jacopo became an especial favourite of Napoleon, who always contrived to keep part of his pocket-money for his young friend, and was so kind to him, that Jacopo would willingly have sacrificed his life in order to save that of his young benefactor.

This intimacy, however, could not last long, as Napoleon was obliged to leave Ajaccio on attaining his tenth year. Ere he departed, he paid a farewell visit to the fisherman's family, and tears of sorrow were shed on both sides when he took leave of Jacopo. Napoleon possessed a beautiful small ebony box, which he

had always kept with eare, and on which he cut his name with a penknife, and then gave to Jacopo, who smiled through his tears on receiving it, and promised that it should never leave him, but that he would always carry it about with him in his bosom as a keepsake.

So ended the youthful intercourse of Napoleon and Jacopo. When Napoleon left Corsica, he went to a school in France, and everybody knows how he rose and became at last Emperor of France. It is a pity he did not devote his great talents to the arts of peace instead of war! But of his career as a military man, it is not necessary we should speak. What we have to do is to tell a story of love and fidelity—the story of Jacopo and Napoleon.

Towards the end of the year 1805, Napoleon was engaged in his campaign against Austria. The 2d of December had scarcely dawned, when, surrounded by his staff, he waited for the full breaking of the sun through the mist on the field of Austerlitz. Soon the terrible battle be-

gan—a savage strife in which many thousands were slain. In the thickest of the battle, an Austrian soldier advanced within a few paces of Napoleon, levelled his musket at him, and fired. It was a sure aim; but a French soldier had thrown himself between the gun and the Emperor, and fell wounded by the ball which was intended for his commander.

Napoleon witnessed the scene, and gave immediate orders for the removal of the wounded man. As soon as the battle was ended, his first inquiry was concerning the fate of his protector.

His wound was fortunately not mortal. On seeing Napoleon, he seemed to forget all his suffering, and raised his eyes, beaming with delight, to his commander's face. Napoleon for a moment thought he recognised the man's countenance; and on looking at him more attentively, and seeing the shattered pieces of a small ebony box in his hand, he at once recognised Jacopo the fisherman's son. Jacopo's story was soon told. He had enlisted in the French army, wishing at least to serve under his young benefactor, whom he loved above every other earthly thing. The box that Napoleon had given him

as a parting gift had been his constant companion, and had saved his life by turning the ball in its course.

I daresay you are thinking, my dear young friends, that Napoleon did not leave his faithful Jacopo to go unrewarded; and you are right in your conclusions. He placed him in his body-guard, in which he rose rapidly, and he also provided for all his family.

But we do not here lose sight of our friend Jacopo; for at a later period, when misfortunes, the due punishment of over-ambition and other errors, fell on the head of Napoleon, and he was sent to St Helena, he was still followed by the attached Jacopo.

A bark was seen for a long time rowing close to the island, whilst a vessel lay at anchor in the distance. The boat contained Jacopo, who had resolved to do all in his power to save his benefactor; but the English sentinels were so vigilant, that all his efforts were unsuccessful. Jacopo, as a last resource, determined to reside in St Helena, and obtained permission to wait on Napoleon. He attended him during his last illness; was near him at death; and remained in the island till 1840, when he ac-

companied his much-loved master's remains to France.

And if any of you chance to visit the chapel of the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris, you may still see an old man with silver locks watching near the tomb which contains the mortal remains of his beloved Emperor.

That old man, my dear young readers, is JACOPO.

THE CAMELIA.

THE CAMELIA.

"Now, my dears, you may all go into the garden and amuse yourselves. A walk or run will do you much good this cold, though fine morning; so hasten to put on your bonnets. You will only remember, when in the garden, not to enter the greenhouse. I have given John strict orders to keep it shut."

Such were the words addressed one day by Mrs Charlton, the mistress of a ladies' boarding-school near London, to a number of young misses who were under her charge. Mrs Charlton, who was assisted by her daughter Fanny in this useful occupation, was a kind and indulgent teacher; but she was also precise in her rules, and maintained a proper system of discipline. Her pupils sometimes thought she

was harsh; but what they called severity was only a due regard to order, and the formation of good habits among the inmates of her establishment. On the present occasion, she was anxious, as she had been for some time, to prevent the young ladies from entering the greenhouse, and disturbing the plants; not alone on account of the season, but from a wish to preserve a camelia, which, in spite of the weather, had produced a blossom which promised to be a great beauty. Its pure white petals were streaked and tinged with a delicate pink hue, and its form was perfect. This lovely flower was also watched with great interest by Mrs Charlton's daughter Fanny, as it was to be hers on the evening of a party given by her aunt in honour of her eighteenth birthday. There having been lately a great scarcity of camelias, this pretty and solitary flower was reckoned to be of the greater value, and its progress towards maturity was regarded with daily hopes and fears. For its greater security, John the gardener had been instructed to lock the door of the greenhouse every day after he had watered the plants.

The liberty to have a run round the garden—

a charming spot for out-door amusements—gave much pleasure to the young ladies: all hastened to equip themselves in their bonnets, and soon they were scattered over the grounds. Our attention is drawn to two among the number—Amelia Harris and Louisa Selwyn.

"Oh, Louisa, do look," said Amelia; "the greenhouse is not locked! Let us go in and take a view of the plants. It is a long time since we were in the greenhouse, and I daresay there is something very pretty in it, although it has been a bad season for flowers."

"Don't you think it would be wrong to go in," answered Louisa, "when Mrs Charlton has been so particular about keeping the door closed, and our not meddling with the plants?"

"Pooh! What harm can our entering the greenhouse do?" said Amelia. "You are always so scrupulous about things; as for me, I never think till it is all over. See, all the rest of the girls are at the other end of the garden playing, and no one will observe us; so come in."

And so saying, Amelia absolutely dragged Louisa after her, and gently closed the door Louisa was very much frightened at this breach of duty. She remembered the injunctions not

to enter the greenhouse, and here she was made to participate in the disobedience of her giddy companion. She made an attempt to reach the door; but Amelia seized her hand, and forcibly detained her, as she wished her to be in the fault as well as herself, if they were found out.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Amelia; "do look at that lovely camelia! I have never seen one so perfectly formed. How charming it would look in my dark hair! How I wish it were mine! I declare I have a great mind to"——

"Surely," said Louisa, quite shocked with the exclamation—"surely you would not dare to"—— She was going to say *steal*, which would have been the proper word, but she said *take*—"You are not going to take Fanny Charlton's favourite camelia?"

"Why, I don't know, Miss Precision. Mamma is very kind to the Charltons, and is always sending them presents of some kind or another; so I cannot exactly see why I should not have this camelia as a sort of return for these gifts."

This was an excessively mean view of matters, independently of being a very dishonest

one; but young ladies with ill-regulated dispositions sometimes do and say very strange things. The bold way in which Miss Harris attempted to justify her threatened theft, threw her more conscientious companion into a tremor of consternation.

"Do let me go—do let me go!" she exclaimed. "I will not, and dare not, sanction this robbery;" and shaking herself free of Amelia, she rushed into the open air.

"Stop, child, what are you afraid of?" cried Amelia, running after and catching hold of her. "You must not go till you promise not to say a word of our being in the greenhouse. Come, just say the word."

Louisa's mind had now been so confused, that, without well knowing the error she was committing, she gave the required promise. She committed herself to a course of deceit!

"Very well; remember you have promised," said Amelia; adding to herself, "Now I am safe!"

Louisa walked slowly down the walk which led to the house, trying to balance the amount of wrong she had committed in entering the greenhouse against Mrs Charlton's express commands.

"I cannot think that I have, after all, done anything very naughty, for I did not enter of my own accord, but by force. I hope, at all events, there will be no inquiries on the subject."

While flattering herself with this notion, Louisa looked back towards the greenhouse, near which she had left her companion, when lo! to her amazement, she beheld Amelia coming out with the camelia in her hand!

"Now, *what* shall I do?" thought she in agony. "I have promised not to tell that we were in the greenhouse; and when the camelia is missed, and inquired about, what am I to say? Ah, how cruel it was of Amelia to make me give that odious promise; and how thoughtless it was of me to give it!"

In the hall Louisa met Mrs Charlton, who was bustling about in her household duties.

"Why, my dear, you have come in very soon. Don't you wish to play in the grounds a little longer?"

"No, ma'am, thank you," replied Louisa. "I don't feel inclined for playing or walking this afternoon."

"Are you fatigued?"

"Yes."

Louisa felt herself blush as she uttered this falsehood—the natural consequence of the line of policy she felt herself constrained to pursue. Much to her relief, the subject was dropped, and she retired to her room to ponder on her unfortunate promise.

That day at dinner the conversation happened to turn on flowers.

"Have you seen the camelia to-day, mamma?" said Fanny Charlton. "It looks lovelier than ever. How it will be admired at my aunt's on Saturday evening!"

"No, dear, I have not been in the garden to-day, but I intend to go after dinner."

Louisa glanced at Amelia; but the latter was examining her plate so intently, that her thoughts could not be divined.

After dinner, Mrs Charlton put on her garden bonnet, and sallied out to view her plants. Of course her first thought was of the camelia, and accordingly to the greenhouse she went. Without heeding the other plants, she proceeded at

once to the tree of the camelia; but no camelia was to be seen! "Ah! age brings bad sight," said the lady to herself, smiling a little sadly at not being able to see the flower without the aid of her spectacles. These she took out of her pocket, and having carefully rubbed them, and adjusted them on her nose, she again looked about for the camelia. Again she was disappointed.

"Is it possible that the camelia, the flower we have all been rearing with such care, can be gone? This is the most surprising thing I have seen for a long time. What *can* have become of it? Surely none of the girls can have dared to pluck it? I must inquire of the gardener if he was careful about having the door closed. By the by," thought she, turning her head on one side, and contracting her eyelids, "the door was not locked when I came in. How can that have escaped me before? I must go immediately and ask John about it."

A few minutes brought Mrs Charlton to that part of the garden where the gardener was still working.

"John," said she, "did you lock the door of the greenhouse to-day?"

"The greenhouse door!" replied John, pausing with one foot on his spade, and with his hand pushing up his hat. "Now that you speak of it, ma'am, I declare I forgot till this moment that I did not lock it when I came out this morning. But I hope no harm's done?"

"Indeed, John, but there is," answered Mrs Charlton gravely. "The camelia is gone!"

"Ma'am, not possible! I saw it not many hours since."

"Not only possible, but certain. Come along with me, and I will show you."

John, in a state of trepidation, left his spade and followed his mistress.

"And so it is, ma'am; clean away! Oh dear, oh dear, how terribly careless I have been!" exclaimed the poor man in deep distress of mind on seeing the plant without the lovely flower, whose opening buds he had watched with tender attention. "Oh, ma'am, pray forgive me; yet I cannot forgive myself. I am quite stupified. What shall I do? I can only ask forgiveness. I have been with you many years, and this is my first offence. But I have saved a little money—thanks to your liberal payment, ma'am—and I will buy another camelia for the young lady. I

know I shall be able to get one in Covent Garden market, if there is one within twenty miles of town."

"No, John, I cannot permit you to make this sacrifice," said his mistress. "I forgive you freely, yet I am sorry that I should have been obliged to find fault. Only be more careful in future as to orders; meanwhile, what we have to do is to discover who has been in the greenhouse. Go, make what inquiries you can; I will do the same."

John's feelings were touched with this generosity and mark of confidence, and he winked hard to prevent a tear from falling over his rough cheek. "There are few like her!" said he aloud, as Mrs Charlton disappeared on entering her dwelling. The expression came warm from the heart.

"Fanny, come here a minute," said Mrs Charlton, popping her head into the study, where the girls were busily preparing their lessons for the next day.

Louisa's heart beat in spite of herself. A presentiment came over her that Fanny was called out to discuss the question of the lost camelia. She waited, therefore, in dreadful anxiety for what was to follow. At last Mrs Charlton came in along with her daughter, and both looked as if something serious pressed on their mind.

"Young ladies," said Mrs Charlton, "I have come to speak to you on a very important subject. Be so good as lay down your books for a few minutes, till I have some conversation with you."

All looked surprised, though Amelia and Louisa had no difficulty in knowing what the conversation was to be about.

"You were all in the garden to-day," continued their venerable instructress: "were you not?"

"Yes, ma'am," was the universal answer.

"Very good. Now tell me were any of you in the greenhouse?"

"Oh no, ma'am," was readily answered by all but two.

"Stand up, young ladies! Arrange yourselves in a circle."

They obeyed; and as the circle was forming,

Amelia cast an imploring look at Louisa, hurriedly muttering, as she passed her, "Stand by me!"

"No," replied Louisa, "I shall not."

"Thank you, Miss Selwyn; you will repent what you have just said."

"I care not—I am innocent."

"Quite true, but remember your promise."

"I do," replied the other firmly.

"Silence, young ladies," said Mrs Charlton in a deep tone of voice, and immediately commenced her investigation.

"I begin with you, Miss Smith. Were you in the greenhouse to-day?"

"No, ma'am."

"Did you see any one near it?"

"No, ma'am."

"Very well, that will do."

Mrs Charlton went round the circle, asking the same questions of each, and receiving from all the same replies, till she came to Amelia.

"Miss Harris," said she, "did you see any one near the greenhouse?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Who?"

"Miss Louisa Selwyn!"

Every eye turned on poor Louisa, who felt stunned with the accusation. All the misery of her situation came upon her, and deeply did she now repent her rash promise—a promise which precluded her from not only convicting her false friend, but from defending herself from a hideous accusation.

"Miss Selwyn," said Mrs Charlton in a serious and reproachful tone, "were you so naughty as to disobey my orders? I hope it is a mistake."

"Pray, my dear Mrs Charlton, don't ask me," replied Louisa beseechingly; "for I cannot tell you!"

"No wonder you are ashamed to confess before all your companions, you naughty little girl! How greatly have I been deceived in you! Retire to your room, miss; and you do not leave it till you confess the whole truth."

Without a word of remonstrance, and with a heavy heart, Louisa quitted the apartment; and we need hardly say that on gaining her own room she burst into tears, and wept most bitterly.

"Oh my dear, dear mamma!" she exclaimed, "how can I clear myself to you? That rash

and foolish promise—how I repent of it! But I could not know that Amelia would be so wicked as to say such a thing. Only to think that to-morrow papa will come to take me home for the Easter holidays; and he will be told that his child has been disobedient, and is believed to have stolen the beautiful camelia!"

In a short time Mrs Charlton came up to her, and reasoned so kindly, and touched Louisa's heart so forcibly, that she would have given worlds to have thrown her arms around her, and told her everything; a conviction, however, that her promise bound her to silence, caused her to restrain her disclosures, and to be the victim of suspicions odious to her feelings. The old lady left her with a thorough belief that she was guilty of abstracting the camelia, and a benevolent wish that she might confess all and be forgiven.

Fanny Charlton, a young lady with feelings matured beyond her years, lamented as much as her mother that Louisa Selwyn was charged with so grievous an offence, not only against discipline, but morals; at the same time, however, she considered there was some kind of mystery

in the whole affair, and trusted that all would finally be cleared up. Many of the girls also had strong doubts of Louisa's guilt, the more so, from knowing that Amelia was tricky and somewhat unscrupulous as to the means of gratifying her desires. But these doubts they kept to themselves, and only said it was "a very shocking thing." To compensate Fanny's loss, they all made a subscription the day they left for the Easter holidays, in order to present her with a charming bouquet, in the centre of which was a camelia almost as fine as that which had been lost.

Next day, Louisa and Amelia left school with their respective papas. They were both miserable, but from very different causes. Louisa's conscience was calm and pure as ever; her only fear was, that her parents would be distressed on learning what had happened. Amelia, on the contrary, laboured under a weight of misery, and in vain tried to shake herself clear of the

infamy of her conduct. In spite of all the sophistry she could muster up, she felt that she had broken two of the commandments—she had stolen, and borne false witness against her neighbour. That neighbour was suffering for her transgressions. Tricky and clever as Amelia was, she could not rid herself of unpleasant reflections; and she was, besides, in constant terror of being found out. What a penalty to pay for a paltry gratification! Truth! who would not worship at thy shrine?

On arriving at home, Amelia became so involved with family details, that she almost forgot to think of this unfortunate affair; and heedless of what might ensue, and only thinking of making an impression by her appearance, she decked herself with the stolen camelia. The flower—all beauty, and an emblem of purity—was made to set off her glossy raven locks. Pity that they were the locks of—a thief!

At the evening party at which this exhibition took place, Amelia was vastly admired, and so was her camelia.

"My dear," said her mother, "where did you get that fine camelia that is stuck in your hair? I hear many ladies talking of it."

"It was given me by Mrs Charlton, mamma," said Amelia in a low voice.

"Indeed; how very kind of her. I am going to see Mrs Charlton to-morrow, and will thank her for it."

"Going to see Mrs Charlton, mamma, did you say?"

"Yes, I am going on particular business. I was engaged yesterday, and could not come to fetch you home."

Amelia became faint with terror, and was obliged to lean on a chair for support. Her mother noticed it, and insisted on taking her out of the room. When they had reached another apartment, Amelia could contain her oppressed feelings no longer. She burst into a flood of tears, and said, as well as her sobs would allow her, "Mamma, you will hate me if I tell you all; but I can keep it no longer. I stole the camelia!"

"Stole it! Child, you are certainly frantic: it cannot be!"

"Yes, yes, mamma, it is too true. I took the camelia from Mrs Charlton's greenhouse; and worse than that, if possible, I have given another the blame of it."

Mrs Harris was horrified, and listened with extreme pain till the disclosure of the whole circumstances was made. When the melancholy tale was told, she cast on her now repentant and humiliated daughter a look of pity, and left the room to consult with her husband on the case.

The distress of both parents may be imagined. They agreed that the best mode of punishment would be to take Amelia back to school, and leave her to pass the holidays there. Accordingly, on the morrow, Mr and Mrs Harris carried their child to the school which she had recently quitted.

"We have brought you a young penitent, Mrs Charlton, and must leave her to your care."

"What has my young friend been guilty of?"

"That unfortunate camelia"——

"You must be under some mistake," said Mrs Charlton; "for we have at this moment in the house Mr and Mrs Selwyn with their daughter from the same cause. Poor girl! she obstinately persists in refusing to exculpate herself."

"All quite true, Mrs Charlton. If you will allow me, I shall make the mystery plain," replied Mr Harris. And he explained the affair as it had taken place. "Now," said he in conclusion, "show me the young lady who has suffered so unmeritedly from my daughter's conduct."

Mrs Charlton led the way to an adjoining parlour, where an affecting interview took place between the parties.

"I am deeply grieved, Miss Selwyn," said Mr Harris, "that you should have endured such contumely from the noble, though perhaps mistaken motive, of keeping a forced promise unbroken. It must be a consolation to your parents here to know that they have a daughter who so thoroughly respects the truth."

Amelia was left alone at school to reflect on her conduct; and let us hope that the practical lesson she had been taught was not lost. As for Louisa, she returned home with her parents, her feeling of joy being only dashed with regret for the pain now endured by her late companion. A festival was given on her return, to which many of her young friends, including Fanny Charlton, were invited.

That evening, in the midst of the gay scene, Louisa's father took occasion to place in her hair a fine camelia, procured at a considerable expense.

"Thus," said he, "my love, I decorate you with a token of my approval: it is nothing, however, in comparison with that higher reward which is due to CONSCIENTIOUSNESS!"

THE LITTLE ERRAND-BOY.

THE LITTLE ERRAND-BOY.

A SHORT way from the free city of Frankfort-on-the-Maine, there dwelt, a number of years ago, the family of a poor agriculturist. Herman Schultz, as this person was called, procured a scanty living by farming a few acres of land, and selling their produce in the market of the neighbouring city.

The first scene in our story opens in the cottage of this humble and industrious agriculturist; and the circumstances we have to relate were somewhat sorrowful, yet such as must inevitably take place in the families of the poor.

"Come hither, my boy," said Herman one morning to his son Fritz; "I wish to speak to you."

Fritz, a boy of fourteen years of age, obeyed

the summons. Laying down the spade with which he was going to proceed to his labour, he followed his father, and sat down with him in a small room, the window of which was at the time overhung with a clustering vine.

"Now, Fritz," said Herman with some emotion, "the time is come for our parting of which I have often told you. Were you and your brothers and sisters to continue living here, the ground would soon be quite unable to maintain us. It does not yield more than will support our small family with difficulty, and it is the duty of families in our circumstances to separate —the younger members, as they grow up, pushing off into the world, and earning a subsistence honourably. Already your elder brother has left us, and found good employment in Frankfort. Your turn is next. I am now going to launch you in quest of fortune; or rather, I should say, I am going to place you in the hands of a good Providence, who will never desert those who do not desert themselves."

"Dear father," said Fritz at this pause in the paternal address, "I am ready in this, as in everything else, to be guided by your advice. I desire nothing better than to work; I will go

anywhere, and do anything in my power, for a living. I know I should only be a burden if I remained."

"You are a good boy, Fritz. I knew you would not hesitate to take this important step. Listen to what I am going to say. I have been thinking for some time as to where you should go, and have come to the resolution that you should visit Heidelberg—a university town, you know, in the Grand Duchy of Baden. I cannot exactly say what profession you should there betake yourself to when you arrive; but I will give you a letter to an old friend, a carpenter in the place, who will advise, and perhaps help you. Take these ten florins that I have been a long time collecting, kreutzer by kreutzer; they will be sufficient for your journey and support, until you obtain some profitable employment. Never forget, my dear Fritz, the advice you have received from your mother and myself, and the pious examples we have endeavoured to set before you. You will meet with many temptations in your way, but avoid yielding to them; and should an evil thought disturb your mind, hasten to banish it by an earnest and pious supplication. God will never

abandon those who put their trust in Him: they may have to struggle with difficulties for a time, but that will be only a time of trial, after which they will receive the reward of their virtue. Diligently attend to your religious duties, and do not neglect the perusal of works likely to improve your mind. When your mother and I were married, the early years of our union was a time of severe trial—work often failed; and when you were all young, we were frequently without a morsel of bread. My heart used to sink within me; and when I looked at you poor little creatures, with garments that could scarcely secure you from the cold, I was almost in despair. My troubles appeared the more heavy when I thought of the comforts of my rich neighbour, whose fields were yearly covered with abundant crops, while, notwithstanding my utmost efforts, I could scarcely make sufficient to support you. In vain I endeavoured to improve our condition by doing task-work: I rose at break of day, and returned home late at night, but still my earning was too small to prevent our often suffering from want. At that time evil thoughts would sometimes take possession of my mind; but by reflecting on what was my line of duty, and by raising

my heart to my Creator, peace was restored to my mind, and I returned to my work with renewed courage. I have never acted otherwise since I have had the care of a family, and God has blessed my submission to His will. Go, my son, never forget my precepts, and happiness will be yours."

Scarcely able to speak, yet full of manly fortitude, Fritz retired for a few minutes to make some small preparations for his journey; and when ready for the road, he returned to the room, to take leave of his mother and his younger brothers and sisters. The poor mother was unable to take leave of her son: she pressed him for a long time to her heart, and then impressing one last kiss upon his forehead, she rushed from the room. His young sisters and brothers then took an affectionate leave of Fritz, and followed their mother to the garden.

When left alone with his father, Fritz fell on his knees and asked his blessing. "Father," said he, "I feel a voice within which tells me that God will not forsake me, and that our family will yet be united again under the same roof, and enjoy a happiness far greater than

they have ever yet experienced. Never, oh, my father, shall your last words be effaced from my memory; God shall be ever present to my thoughts, and I will never deviate a step from the path you have pointed out to me."

Schultz placed his hands on the head of his son, and blessed him with a solemnity that proved his deep conviction of the efficacy of the paternal blessing.

"My child," said he to Fritz as he raised him, "you will set off this very morning. Take this bag, which contains sufficient provisions for your journey; take also this stick, and let us hasten from the house—there is no need of prolonging the grief and anxiety of your mother."

The father and son set off together. They crossed the Maine, and walked on in earnest conversation as far as the stone pillar which marks the boundary of the territory of Frankfort. Here, on the road to Heidelberg, Schultz bade an affectionate farewell to his son, and returned homeward.

When poor Fritz found himself left quite alone, he sat down under a tree and shed a torrent of tears. It was not that he had any fears for the future, for at his age care is un-

known, and the dreams of youth are gilded by hope; but he regretted leaving the paternal roof, and his kind mother, whose tenderness for him had been unbounded; he regretted his respected father, whose virtues excited the veneration of the whole village; and he also regretted leaving his young brothers and sisters, the playfellows of his youth. When tears had in some degree relieved the oppression of his heart, he remembered the necessity for being courageous, and taking up his wallet, recommenced his journey. When it became dark, he went into a farmer's and asked permission to sleep in the barn, which was granted; then commending himself to the care of the Almighty, he banished useless regrets, and slept soundly till morning.

Scarcely had the sun risen above the horizon, when every one was stirring about the farm where Fritz had passed the night; so, fearing that he might be considered an intruder, he rose; and after taking leave of the farmer and

his family, and thanking them for their hospitality, he proceeded on his journey.

Towards the middle of the day he arrived at Bekebach; and seating himself near a brook shaded by willows, he opened his bag of provisions, and spread out his dinner on the grass. It consisted of brown bread, cheese, and onions. He had hardly commenced his repast, when he was interrupted by the approach of a stranger. He was a young man of about twenty years of age, wearing his hair and beard long, and gaily humming a waltz. On his head he wore a little flat cap, and on his back he carried a knapsack.

When the traveller reached the brook, he sat down near Fritz; and taking a little cup from his pocket, he filled it from the stream, and drank till he had quenched his thirst; then turning towards our young emigrant, he wished him a good-morning, and inquired what road he was travelling.

"Sir," replied Fritz, "I am on my way to Heidelberg."

"To Heidelberg!" said the traveller. "I have just left it. Are you going to the university?"

"No, sir; my family are too poor to allow me to study: I am going there in the hope of finding some employment."

"It is fortunate that I met you; for I know something of that place, and may be able to give you some assistance. If you take my advice, you will place yourself at the gate of the university, and wait there for any messages the students may give you. You are young, active, and appear to be intelligent, and I will answer for it that you will not be there a week before you will find sufficient employment for your support."

Fritz thanked the student for his advice, and went on with his meal; the latter seemed to cast a longing look at the dark but wholesome-looking bread and rich cheese on which the little man was regaling.

"You have a good appetite, my lad," said the student.

"Yes, sir; that is nothing extraordinary at my age, and especially after travelling since daybreak. But are you not hungry too? You will have to walk for at least three good hours before you come to a village, and it is a tiresome road."

"It is not my appetite that fails, but the state of my purse obliges me to economise. We students are seldom burdened with much money, and when we have to go from one university to another, it is often difficult to make the journey; but we find charitable persons on the way, who lodge us gratuitously, and then, by patience and perseverance, we are able to finish our studies, and get into some situation."

"May I ask you, sir," said Fritz, "to share my dinner with me? I have no other way of making any acknowledgment for the good advice you have given me."

"Indeed, my friend, you make the offer with such hearty good-will, that I cannot resist your kindness." So saying, the student laid down his knapsack, and seating himself beside Fritz, soon made it apparent that he stood in much need of the repast.

While the two youths were thus engaged, the student related his adventures, and Fritz was moved with compassion at hearing that the poor young man had still thirty leagues to travel without a single kreutzer. He then divided his bread in two shares, and skilfully slipped two florins into that intended for his

companion; he also divided the cheese, and then requested the poor traveller to accept that little provision, which would enable him to go on a few leagues without having recourse to public charity.

Wilhelm, as the student was called, looked at Fritz for some moments, then tenderly pressing his hand, he replied, "I accept, my friend, what you so generously offer me; and should God spare my life, and ever permit fortune to favour me, I will not forget the kindness you have shown me." Fritz assured him that he felt happy in being able to do any service for one of his fellow-creatures. The youths then took an affectionate leave of each other, and the student assured Fritz that he would remember him.

Our hero finished his journey safely; and having reached Heidelberg, he inquired the way to his father's friend the carpenter, to whom he delivered his letter.

Poor Fritz met with a very cold reception. After a few general remarks, the carpenter said that he could do nothing for him, and that it would be quite impossible for him even to lodge him, as his house was small; but

that, nevertheless, if he would pay him three florins a month, he would contrive to give him a little place to sleep in. Fritz being unable to comply with these terms, the carpenter rose, saying he had business elsewhere; that he much regretted it was not in his power to accommodate him, as it was with difficulty he could support his own family. "But, my lad," said he, as he ended, "there are abundance of inns in this town, where you will be well taken care of; and by inquiring among the tradesmen whether they want apprentices, I have no doubt but you will be able to get a situation before long." So saying, he took his hat and left the house, desiring Fritz to follow him.

On reaching the street, the carpenter took his leave, and was out of sight before Fritz had time to ask the least advice as to his future proceedings. When he found himself left quite alone, he looked about him almost in despair: the reception he had met with depressed his spirits, for in his father's old friend he had expected to

find a kind protector, who would have guided his steps in a strange town; instead of which, he had been repulsed with the utmost coldness.

As the evening was approaching, he inquired the way to the university, hoping to find in its vicinity some cheap inn, where he could lodge for the night. Having selected one of very humble appearance, he stood surveying it for some time, like many inexperienced travellers, before he ventured to enter: at length he opened the door.

"What do you want?" inquired a woman in a sharp voice: "there is nothing here for beggars or strollers."

"Madame," humbly replied poor Fritz, "I am not come to ask alms, but to know whether I can have a supper and a bed."

"Well and good! come in till I look at you. Have you any money?"

"Yes, madame."

"Show it. I know there are a great many of you young vagabonds, who leave your own homes, and come to be supported by the poor inhabitants of the towns. To believe your own stories, you are all young saints; but I would not trust any of you."

Fritz inwardly regretted that he had come to this house, and he would gladly have left it if he could; but he knew not where to go, and feared that he might fall into even worse hands than those of this old woman; so he determined to remain and satisfy his wants, without appearing to take offence. He drew from his pocket a small leathern purse, out of which he took a few florins, and showed them to the landlady.

Again she muttered forth, "Well and good!"

Poor Fritz felt quite confused, and sat down at the end of a table without saying a word, but longing to be able to quit the house. The landlady resumed her work, without taking any more notice of him. After waiting for about an hour, he rose and civilly asked her for his supper. She then got up, and placed before him some cold ham, bread, and a glass of beer. Fritz ate heartily, for he was exceedingly hungry; and when he had finished, he begged to be shown his room.

"A room indeed!" said the hostess in a sharp tone. "You are well accustomed to rooms and to sleep upon feathers! Try if you can sleep upon straw. Gretchen," said she to a servant girl who was at work near her, "take this boy

to the stable, and give him a bundle of clean straw."

Fritz made no reply, but followed the servant. When they had reached the stable, Gretchen looked at him with compassion. "My poor boy!" said she, "you are unfortunate in coming to this house; my mistress is as avaricious as she is ill-tempered, and I am sure she will make you pay dear for your miserable supper and bed. If you will put confidence in me, and tell me what brought you here, I may be able to assist you, for I know this town well, having lived in it since I was born."

Fritz looked attentively at the speaker before he answered. She was a young girl of about fifteen, in whose countenance gentleness and kindness were strongly portrayed; he therefore felt no hesitation in telling her the object of his journey, and the hopes he entertained of success, by following the advice of the travelling student.

"The young man was right in advising you to take your stand at the gate of the university, to take messages for the students. You are neat in your person, and well-mannered, and I have no doubt you will succeed well; but in the meantime, you should endeavour to live at the

least possible expense, and I advise you to leave this house to-morrow. When I am going to market, I will show you to my mother's; she is a poor spinner, and you can live with her and my brother by contributing a little to the expense of housekeeping."

Fritz thanked his benefactress, who wished him a good-night, and retired. As soon as she was gone, Fritz sat down upon the straw, and revolved in his mind all the events of the day. He who had left his father's house with so much hope, now saw his golden dreams disappear before the sad reality. The uneasiness of his mind would have kept him from sleep, had not fatigue prevailed over his melancholy thoughts. He was awoke in the morning by feeling his arm gently shaken; and on opening his eyes, he saw the servant girl who had spoken to him the evening before.

"Wait for me," said she, "at the end of this street as soon as you leave the house; it will not be long before I go out; and I would not wish my mistress to know where you are going."

Fritz rose immediately, and went into the house, where he found the old woman already occupied with her spinning-wheel.

"Idleness is the parent of every vice," were the first words which greeted him in answer to his morning salutation. "Here have I been up these two hours; but young folks, whom daylight should never find in bed, are the last to set about their business."

"Madame," replied Fritz gently, though not without feeling some degree of vexation, "after having walked for several days under the heat of the sun, a little rest may be allowed."

"Hold your tongue, sir, and do not stand arguing with me!" continued the hostess. "Do you think that I have arrived at my time of life without knowing the right and the wrong of everything? and I know that idleness leads to the gallows."

"Will you be kind enough, madame," said Fritz, "to tell me how much I am in your debt? I am leaving the house."

The old woman stopped her wheel; and after calculating for some time upon her fingers, she told him two florins.

At these words Fritz was dismayed: he had already given two florins to the student, and this would leave him but six, nor did he know how long he might be without employment. These

thoughts ran through his mind with the rapidity of lightning. He would have hazarded a few words in defence of his purse, for the poor supper which had been given him was scarcely worth ten kreutzers; but the old woman stopped him with ill-natured abuse: so, having paid her what she demanded, he threw his empty wallet on his shoulder, and hastened from the house. When he reached the end of the street, he recollected the directions of Gretchen, and seating himself on a post, he waited patiently till she set out for the market.

Gretchen did not keep him long in suspense; she joined her protégé in about a quarter of an hour; and after leading him through several streets, she stopped at a small house of rather mean appearance. In a room on the ground-floor a poor old woman sat spinning; she was weak and infirm from age, but her countenance expressed the utmost benevolence and kindness.

Gretchen embraced her, and presented Fritz.

"Mother," said she, "I bring you a good lad, who has come to our town in search of employment, and who had the misfortune to spend his first night in the house of Madame Rasp; that sorry miser has made him pay two florins for his supper and bed last night. You will, I am sure, allow him to remain here for what will pay his own expenses, that he may not fall into the hands of rogues, who would cheat him out of all he has."

"God will bless you for your kindness, my dear Gretchen; you did right to bring the lad here, and we will do him every service in our power. My son," said she, addressing Fritz, "you are welcome; come and sit near me, that we may have some talk about your affairs; and do you, my dear Gretchen, return home to your mistress, lest your long absence may displease her."

The girl again embraced her mother, and after taking a friendly leave of Fritz, she departed.

Madame Herz then began to make some inquiries of her young guest respecting his family and prospects, to which he replied with a candour and simplicity that greatly pleased the good woman, and she assured him that he should be treated as a son. "You shall sleep," said she,

"with my own boy Joseph, who works all day with a tailor, and you shall share our frugal meals."

"Madame," said Fritz, "since I have been so fortunate as to meet with so kind a friend at the time that I thought myself forsaken by all the world, I shall feel for you the same tenderness and respect that I do for my own mother." As he said this, he turned away his head, that he might wipe away the tears that started involuntarily into his eyes. "I will follow your directions, and obey you in everything."

"May God bless you, my son, and give you strength to keep your good resolutions! With industry, economy, and a reliance on Providence, man can never be miserable in this world. Avoid those people who are always running after vain amusements and frivolous pursuits—such companions will only lead you to idleness, and in time corrupt your heart: on the contrary, seek the society of those who live in the practice of virtue; by associating with such, we take the best means of improving ourselves. Should you succeed in getting employment from the students at the university, you may be often charged with commissions

which you ought not to execute: do nothing at which your conscience recoils." Fritz thanked Madame Herz for her good advice, and promised to follow it.

The good woman then gave him his breakfast, and sent him to one of her neighbours, who pointed out to him the best means of succeeding in the new employment he wished to undertake. The first day was spent in these preliminary measures; and when Fritz returned in the evening, he found Madame Herz and her son together; the latter welcomed his young companion with all the warmth and cordiality of his age. After supper, Madame Herz gave Fritz a little more advice, and sent him to rest, that he might be up early, and ready for the next day's business.

The next morning, Joseph and his neighbour accompanied Fritz to the university; and after strongly recommending him to the porter at the lodge, the two friends left him, and returned to pursue their own labours.

That day opened to the view of our young

messenger such scenes as he had never before witnessed. The students were passing and repassing, talking and smoking; those who entered the halls were quickly replaced by new-comers, who came to attend at other lessons. The conversation of one set was grave and serious, that of another light and frivolous; others, again, quarrelled and shouted, and their discussions often threatened to take a hostile character. In the midst of this perpetually-moving crowd, poor Fritz seemed quite lost: he had taken his stand in a corner of the court, and, excepting an occasional glance of curiosity thrown at him by some of the saunterers, he remained quite unnoticed. Evening came at length; the noise ceased; and Fritz returned to Madame Herz without having obtained a single kreutzer.

The next day he went back to his post, and after a week passed in this way, exposed to every variation of the weather, the poor boy had not made half a florin.

When he returned to his dwelling every evening, he used to feel almost ashamed to open the door, for the first words of Madame Herz, in answer to his salutation, were, "Well, my son,

has your day been prosperous?" A melancholy no was the constant reply of our poor little errand-boy, and the word would almost expire on his lips. "Well, cheer up, my son," the excellent woman would reply; "Rome was not built in a day. You must be known before you can obtain much employment. When those who have already intrusted you with their commissions are satisfied that you are honest and punctual, they will employ you again. Trust in God, my dear Fritz, and pray to Him to assist you in gaining an honest livelihood. When young people are industrious, they seldom fail, sooner or later, to meet with those who will both employ and esteem them."

The consolations of this good woman were a great comfort to poor Fritz, and he tried to show his gratitude for the generous kindness with which she treated him, by paying her every attention in his power. On Sundays he attended her to church, and in the evenings he would accompany her in a little walk, or read from some work of an improving kind; for, though Madame Herz belonged to the humble class of poor workwomen, she possessed a rectitude of principle, and a soundness of judgment, that

enabled her to give the best instruction to her children.

When the hour of rest came, Fritz retired to his room with his heart lightened, and fell asleep in the hope of a happy to-morrow.

A month had now passed without our young messenger having gained sufficient to remunerate his kind hostess for the expenses she had incurred on his account, when one morning, as he was on his way to his accustomed place, he found at no great distance from the college a small, thick-looking packet lying on the ground, as if dropped by a passenger. He picked it up, and seeing that it was a pocket-book, he opened it, in the hope of being able to discover the owner; but on examination, he found that it contained nothing but a parcel of family papers, without any indication as to who was the owner.

Fritz put the book in his pocket, determining to wait till he could see his good hostess, and consult her about the best means of discovering the person who had lost it. That day proved more fortunate than any of the preceding ones: the students who had employed Fritz, and had remarked his intelligence, steadiness, and punc-

tuality, intrusted him with many little commissions; unfortunately, money was often scarce among them, and Fritz had many competitors, who were active and vigilant, long accustomed to the trade, and watchful to take advantage of the best opportunities of turning their knowledge to account. As to our little friend, who was modest even to timidity, and waited until his services were called for, not presuming to offer himself, lest he might be considered forward or importunate, he let slip many opportunities of augmenting his daily earnings. He was, besides, only employed by those students who were particular in their choice of regular and punctual messengers, the greater number of them making no choice at all, but giving their commissions to the first that came. On this day he had gone some errands to a considerable distance, and had carried several parcels to different parts of the town, when, at the end of his day's work, he found he had a florin and a half in his pocket. Never before had he been able to earn such a sum; and as he returned home to Madame Herz, it could scarcely be said he ran, he almost flew, his feet barely touching the ground. He entered the house quite out of breath, and embraced the

good old woman in such a flurry, that she was quite alarmed.

"My dear Fritz, what has happened to you?" she inquired. "What has put you into such a state of agitation?"

"Wait a while, dear mother," replied Fritz, as he wiped the drops of perspiration from his forehead, and threw himself on a seat quite exhausted.

"Take a drink, my boy, and refresh yourself," said Madame Herz, presenting him with a glass of beer; "and when you are rested, you can tell me all the adventures of the day."

As soon as Fritz had recovered his breath, he told Madame Herz that he had that day earned a florin and a half: he then drew his money from his pocket, and gave it to his hostess, as he was always in the habit of doing.

"I congratulate you, my dear boy," said Madame Herz; "and I trust that this is only the beginning of your prosperity."

"Oh, I hope so!" replied Fritz. "Until this day, I could hardly ever make more than fifteen kreutzers, and now I have made ninety; thanks be to God for having looked upon me, and blessed my perseverance!"

"That's right, my child," replied Madame Herz; "never forget to thank God for every benefit you receive. He is the source of all good, and if He occasionally sends us affliction, it is to remind us of our frailty. Too much prosperity makes man proud; and without a depth of piety, which only few possess, those who are loaded with the gifts of fortune soon forget to whom they are indebted for them all: they give themselves up to vanity, and, in the giddiness of their minds, they lose sight of the salvation of their souls—the only object worthy the solicitude of a Christian—and by degrees vice prevails over virtue."

"Here, dear mother," said Fritz, presenting the pocket-book; "see what I found this morning: I thought it better to bring it home and consult you on the best means of discovering the owner, before I did anything about it myself."

"From the contents of this pocket-book," said Madame Herz, "it evidently belongs to a person of fortune; the papers are valuable, and involve considerable family interests; the owner must be in a state of great anxiety at its loss."

"How can we return it to him?" inquired Fritz eagerly.

"We must wait a few days, my boy: the person to whom it belongs will certainly advertise it, and then you shall restore it to him. I trust that, as you are in much need of a friend, the owner will take an interest in you, and reward you for your honesty."

It was then agreed that they would wait a few days before they took any steps towards returning the pocket-book.

In the afternoon of the second day, Fritz perceived a great stir among the students, and soon after he heard the town-crier read the following proclamation with a loud voice:—"The rector of the university desires to make known to the inhabitants of Heidelberg and its vicinity, that he has, within the last two days, lost a pocket-book, containing papers of great importance. A reward of a hundred florins will be given to whoever returns it to the owner."

On hearing this notice, Fritz was on the point of immediately asking to speak to the rector; but he recollected the advice of Madame Herz, and waited patiently till the evening to announce to his hostess that he had discovered to whom the pocket-book belonged.

"My son," she replied, "it is, I am sure, for-

tunate for you that it belongs to Monsieur Bergmann: he is a most generous and benevolent man, and you may with confidence rely upon his friendship and protection. To-morrow," she continued, "you shall accompany me to the rector. I will go with you, as you are young and inexperienced, and might not know how to answer properly all the questions he may ask you; and his grave countenance, and the splendour of his apartments, may intimidate you."

Fritz scarcely closed his eyes that night, and the next morning he was up at daybreak, washing, combing, brushing his clothes, polishing his shoes, and doing everything in his power to make his appearance as respectable as possible. For the first time, he perceived that his waistcoat (till then considered very good) was threadbare; that his hat was shabby, and ill-shaped; and a little feeling of vanity at that moment arose to disturb the peace of his young and inexperienced mind.

Madame Herz, who had put on her holiday clothes, did not fail to remark the dissatisfied countenance of Fritz when he looked at a patch on his coat, or discovered any defect in his dress.

"Fritz, my poor Fritz!" said she, shaking her

head, "I know your thoughts: you are ashamed to appear in your humble garments before one of the greatest men in the town; you blush for the state of those clothes which you have honestly earned by the sweat of your young brow. Would you prefer having a coat of fine cloth, a beaver hat, and shoes with buckles or ribbons, that you had gained by less honourable means? Repress then, oh, my son, those feelings of pride which ill befit your station: your dress is comfortable, and although it is coarse, it is better suited for work than if it were made of finer material. Neatness and cleanliness are all that can be expected from poor people; let it be your chief care to preserve the purity and integrity of your mind, and do not trouble yourself about the quality of the cloth that covers you."

For some moments Fritz remained silent; notwithstanding the remonstrances of his kind hostess, he still appeared unconvinced; at length he looked up, and affectionately taking her hand, he said—"You are right, dear mother; I have allowed feelings of pride to get the better of my reason, feelings which I know I ought to repress."

As the time for admittance to the rector now drew near, they set off for the university.

On entering the court, Madame Herz requested to see the rector, as she had something of importance to communicate. She was accordingly admitted, and shown, with Fritz, to the apartments of M. Bergmann. He was a man of about fifty years of age, of middle height, and of a grave but most benevolent countenance. When Madame Herz entered, he was seated in a large arm-chair looking over some papers which lay before him. He rose at her approach, and made her take a seat near him, and also her young companion; he then requested to know the object of her visit.

"Sir," she replied, "I came to return you the pocket-book that you lost."

"Oh, madame!" exclaimed M. Bergmann, as he eagerly took the book from her hand, "how greatly indebted I am for the service you have done me! You can have no idea of the importance it is to me, for it contains papers which are indispensable to my being able to gain a lawsuit, which has been going on for several years; and had they not fallen into honest hands, I

might have been deprived of one-half of my property."

"Sir," replied Madame Herz, "the pocket-book was found by this lad, who is an errand-boy belonging to the court; and as he lives with me, I have taken the liberty of coming with him, that I might recommend him to your notice:" she then, in a few words, related the history of Fritz.

"My boy," said the rector, "your conduct deserves to be rewarded, and I will befriend you in any way that will contribute to your welfare. Tell me what I can do for you?"

"Sir," replied Fritz modestly, "the pleasure of having obliged you is the only recompense I require."

"No, my young friend," said M. Bergmann, "I will not accept a benefit from you without acknowledging it; but perhaps I may find out what would suit you? We have servants in the university, whose business is to arrange the rooms for the public lectures: they are present during the lectures, to see that the professors have everything they want. Such a place is at present vacant, and I will get it for you if you would like it: the wages are fifteen florins

a month, and you will be clothed at the expense of the university."

Fritz was so overcome with astonishment, that he was unable to utter a word. Madame Herz, observing his emotion, warmly thanked M. Bergmann for his kind offer, which she gratefully accepted for her adopted son; and when Fritz had in some degree recovered his senses, he joined her in expressing his gratitude.

"But that is not all," continued M. Bergmann; "you shall come here to-morrow, and be attached to the Greek chair. But in the meantime I must discharge my debt: here," said he, presenting him with a roll of silver—"here are the hundred florins which I promised to the person who returned my pocket-book."

"Sir," said Fritz, "allow me to decline accepting this mark of your generosity; you have already done quite enough for me, without adding a gift of such magnitude." Madame Herz joined Fritz in refusing to accept it; but M. Bergmann positively insisted on his taking it, and promised that he would never lose sight of him if he diligently fulfilled the duties of his office.

Madame Herz and her young companion then

took leave of the rector with hearts filled with joy and gratitude; the good old woman seemed almost to have recovered the strength of her youth. When they reached home, they fell into each other's arms and wept for joy.

"Oh, my dear mother," said Fritz, "now that I am going to earn fifteen florins a month, you shall suffer no more privations, and you shall no longer be obliged to toil all day at your wheel, to gain a few miserable kreutzers."

"No, no, my child," replied the worthy woman, "I cannot permit that sacrifice: the money shall be your own, for you will earn it by your own labour, and I would be sorry indeed to deprive you of any part of it."

"But what would have become of me if you had said, why should I add to my privations by taking in this stranger, whom I know nothing about? No, my dear mother, I hope to be a good and dutiful son."

"That, I am sure, you will always be," said Madame Herz; "and as this is the last day you will spend with us, I must have a little family party this evening, to congratulate you on your good fortune."

"That will be very pleasant," replied Fritz;

"and I should be glad to have the whole family here to rejoice with me."

Some time after, Fritz arose, took his hat, and went out, leaving Madame Herz rather astonished at his sudden departure. He returned in about an hour, bringing with him a large parcel, which he put down in a corner of the room.

"What is that?" inquired Madame Herz.

"Only a parcel I got to leave at a house in town," replied he, smiling.

"Then you ought to take care it does not get soiled," resumed Madame Herz. "Take it into your own room, and put it on the table."

At dinner-time Fritz brought out the parcel, and presented Madame Herz and Gretchen each with a handsome piece of stuff for gowns, and to Joseph a new hat, which he had long been wishing for.

Madame Herz felt disposed to be angry, but she was unable to resist the earnest intreaties of Fritz.

"My dear mother," said he after dinner, "I must give you the fifty florins that remain. I have kept twenty-five to send to my father, to whom I have not yet written, as I could not bear to send my family bad news."

On the following day, Fritz presented himself to the porter of the university, who conducted him to the steward; this latter functionary invested him with the dress belonging to his office, and gave him directions for the fulfilment of its duties.

The first week he felt rather awkward in his new clothes, and was afraid of being ridiculed by the students, who were always ready to laugh at every mistake. However, being naturally smart and intelligent, he soon became quite expert at his business.

But Fritz was not a boy who could listen day after day to instruction, in which his ardent mind anxiously desired to participate, without making some effort to understand what he heard. He was charmed with the fine and harmonious sound of the Greek tongue, and considered those happy who had the advantage of becoming acquainted with it. One day, as he was arranging the hall after the departure of the students, he found an old Greek grammar, which had been thrown

aside: he examined it well, and thought that, with the aid of the exercises at the end of the book, he would be able to initiate himself into the knowledge of the language. From that day, he spent every leisure moment in studying his grammar, and at the end of a month, he had made considerable progress. Having formed a taste for study, he worked hard to improve himself, and appropriated a part of his wages to the purchase of such books as he required. He paid the greatest attention to the lectures; and although the duties of his office sometimes obliged him to leave his place, yet he took advantage of every spare moment to write what he recollected of them. His fellow-servants, who spent their leisure in smoking, drinking, or card-playing, used to laugh at him, and call him *the scribbler*. But Fritz bore their sarcasms patiently, without in the slightest degree relaxing his efforts to improve himself; indeed he studied so hard, and often to so late an hour, that Madame Herz became uneasy lest his health might be injured by it. Nevertheless, amidst all his occupation, he never forgot his kind benefactress; he paid her every attention in his power, and provided her with many little comforts. In return, the good

woman loved him as a son; and Gretchen, the pretty Gretchen! regarded him as a brother.

M. Ringer, the professor to whom Fritz was attached, felt much displeased at seeing him devote so much of his time to study. He was a man of a jealous, suspicious disposition; and though he could not have feared that Fritz would ever become a rival, yet he was annoyed at seeing a servant of the house, a person of low birth, presuming to raise himself to an equality with those who were destined for the learned professions, and to walk in the higher ranks of life. Every time that he discovered him at his books he scolded him severely, and threatened to complain of him to M. Bergmann. Fritz always answered civilly, and the mildness of his replies only irritated M. Ringer still more, for all he wanted was a plausible pretext to get rid of him.

Fritz often complained to Madame Herz of the severity and injustice with which he was treated.

"My son," the good woman would reply, "have patience; the professor is harsh towards you, I allow, but your gentleness will disarm his anger, for which he can have no cause, unless it be a mean jealousy."

"Every hour in the day," said poor Fritz, "I am exposed to fresh abuse."

"Patience, my boy; submit yourself to a yoke from which you cannot rid yourself; perhaps you may be delivered from the tyranny of Monsieur Ringer sooner than you think."

"Oh, never, mother. I know that I shall be obliged to ask Monsieur Bergmann to change my situation. Monsieur Ringer has occupied that chair for the last ten years, and will do so as long as he lives."

"If he continues to ill-treat you, God will punish him."

After these conversations, Fritz returned to his post with renewed strength; and he went on cheerfully with his duties till some new persecution again called forth his grief. But notwithstanding all the tyranny of M. Ringer, he continued to pursue his studies: months rolled on, and the progress Fritz made was quite astonishing.

One day as M. Ringer was explaining a very difficult Greek passage to his pupils—either through mistake, or that his thoughts were otherwise engaged — he gave an explanation which was manifestly erroneous.

Fritz approached him respectfully, and said in a low voice, "Sir, you made a mistake; the passage you have just read has such a meaning." M. Ringer darted a look of fury at him, then addressing himself to the students, he exclaimed, "There, gentlemen," pointing ironically to Fritz, "there is my successor; I will leave it to him to finish the lecture!" So saying, he forced Fritz into the chair, placed the book before him, and went away, leaving him in his place. Shouts of laughter burst from every corner of the hall, and poor Fritz was assailed with sarcasms and jokes without number. He turned pale and red alternately, and was distressed at the imprudent zeal which had put him into so painful a position. Nevertheless, deeply irritated by the behaviour of the students—who hooted him without knowing for what, and who acted in that way only because they thought that science and learning could not dwell under a humble garb—he raised his head, and taking the book, calmly

requested the class to grant him their attention. He then read the passage which had been so ill interpreted by the professor with a clearness and distinctness that astonished the auditors; he explained it, and commented on it with so much modesty, that applauses now took the place of jeers and laughter.

Without appearing in the least proud of his victory, he left the chair, and went to seek M. Ringer, whom he found in a furious passion. He begged his pardon for having interrupted him, and expressed his regret for having displeased him.

"Impudent wretch!" exclaimed the professor, "it well becomes you to make an apology after having so grossly insulted me."

"I confess, Monsieur Ringer, that an imprudent zeal caused me to interrupt you, and I regret it sincerely."

"Such an offence is unpardonable!" exclaimed M. Ringer, foaming with rage. "To insult me in the presence of my pupils!—to raise your voice in a place where I alone am to be heard! No, it is one of those things which cannot be passed over."

"You might say so, sir, if I had intentionally

offended you: but was it not yourself who placed me in the chair, exposed to all the sarcasms of the students? Were it not for the publicity you gave the affair, it would have been supposed that I spoke to you on business."

"Don't try to justify yourself, you young serpent! Monsieur Bergmann shall know all, and I will have you turned out of the university in disgrace."

M. Ringer immediately left the room, and Fritz hastened to finish his business, and return home to relate to Madame Herz all that had occurred. She gently reproved him for having mentioned a fault in the professor, which might have passed unnoticed; but she could not help rejoicing at the progress made by Fritz. She loved and admired her adopted son; and the affectionate attentions he showed her, merited the love of that excellent woman.

The day after this scene had taken place, M. Bergmann sent for Fritz. The usually kind and benevolent countenance of the rector wore a severe expression.

"Come here, sir, and tell me how you dared to disturb the order of the university, by rudely interrupting the professor in the middle of his lecture?"

"Sir," said Fritz with modest firmness, "I gave him no offence; I only spoke a few words to him in a low voice."

"What you say is false! the offence you committed is talked of everywhere; and Monsieur Ringer is so incensed, that he leaves me no alternative but to accept his resignation or to dismiss you."

"Would you dismiss me, sir, for so trifling a fault?"

"To fail in the respect due to a professor is not a trifling fault."

"Perhaps, sir, Monsieur Ringer"——

"Hold your tongue," interrupted the rector; "I know it was all your fault, and is unpardonable. This is the return you make for all the benefits that have been heaped upon you! This is your gratitude for bringing you out of your humble sphere, and giving you a situation that would enable you to live respectably! You have only yourself to blame for compelling me to do what gives me much pain."

"What, sir! am I to be sacrificed to an unjust resentment?"

"There is no injustice in it," returned the rector. "Respect and subordination must be maintained."

Fritz begged and implored; but it was all in vain.

"Sir," said the poor lad, when he saw that supplication was useless, "since I must leave this house, in which I had hoped to pass my life, I submit to my fate; but you will yet find that I have been grossly calumniated, and that I am not guilty of the conduct that has been imputed to me. I have now only one favour to ask, which is, that I may be sometimes allowed to come and pay my respects to you. It is to you that I am indebted for what I am, and I will never forget what you have done for me." Saying this, he approached M. Bergmann respectfully, kissed his hand, and retired.

He then returned to Madame Herz, and told her all that had passed.

"Patience and resignation, my son," said the poor woman. "God has permitted you to become the victim of a malicious report, but He will not leave you long so; your innocence will yet be

proved, and you will be triumphantly restored: in the meantime, you can remain here."

"Oh never, mother, shall I enter the university again! If you had only seen the determined manner of Monsieur Bergmann, you would be convinced that the door of that house is closed against me for ever."

"Patience and resignation is my motto," replied Madame Herz. "Continue your studies, as you have now no other employment, and let time pass on and malice cool."

In spite of the grief which afflicted the heart of poor Fritz, he set himself vigorously to study, and continued to make rapid progress.

About a fortnight after Fritz had left the university, Joseph returned home one evening earlier than usual, with a countenance expressive of some inward satisfaction. "The triumph of the wicked is short," said he as he entered; "God is just, and the wicked are punished."

"What is that you say?" inquired his mother.

"I say that God is just, and has punished the

wicked Monsieur Ringer. This morning, while he was lecturing, he was seized with apoplexy, and fell down from his chair."

"Oh how dreadful!" exclaimed Fritz.

"On the contrary," replied Joseph, "it is a great mercy; for that man was your bitterest enemy. It is he who has so long tormented you, and at last got you turned out of the university."

"No matter," replied the generous Fritz, "I forget all his injuries towards me, and can only think of his misfortune, for which I am sincerely sorry."

"That's right, my son," said Madame Herz; "we must forgive those that trespass against us. The forgiveness of injuries is the noblest revenge. I am ashamed of you, Joseph—you argue like a child; and in the ardour of your friendship for Fritz, you rejoice at the misfortune which has befallen a fellow-creature, because you think he injured him. That is not right, my son; we must return good for evil, but never evil for evil." Their conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a servant from the university, who came to say that M. Ringer desired to see Fritz without delay.

Fritz accompanied the servant immediately, and was shown up into the invalid's chamber: the doctor was standing at the foot of his bed, and M. Bergmann sitting beside him. As soon as he perceived Fritz, he beckoned him to approach: then taking his hand, he pressed it affectionately, and endeavouring to collect his strength, he said to M. Bergmann—"You see before you a young man of great merit and of high promise: I have long subjected him to the severest trials; and to put a finishing stroke to my cruelty, I had him dismissed from the university. Death is now approaching, and I cannot bear to leave this world with such a load of sin upon my conscience; for to gratify my hatred, I basely calumniated him, in order to effect his ruin. The last cause of provocation is only a proof of his talents and industry; he will himself relate the circumstances, which are too long for me; I now wish to do him the justice he deserves, by recommending him to your favour."

"Fritz," said he, "can you forgive the ill-treatment I have given you?"

"Forgive you, sir!" replied Fritz, bursting into tears; "I have never felt the least resentment towards you. I trust you will live; and

should Monsieur Bergmann have the kindness to restore me to my place, you shall find that I will be no less submissive to you than ever."

"Generous young man!" said the invalid, "your wishes are vain; the hand of death is heavy upon me, and before this day is closed, I shall have paid the debt of nature. I am anxious that you should forget all my injustice," said he, presenting him with a sealed paper. "Open this when I am no more, and fulfil my last wishes." He then again extended his hand to Fritz, and smiling most affectionately at him, he murmured the word "forgive!" and expired. M. Bergmann, who had remained a silent spectator of this affecting scene, then rose, and embracing Fritz, he told him that he must also try to repair the injustice he had done him, and desired him to come to him the next day.

Fritz returned home much depressed by the afflicting scene he had just witnessed. He related to Madame Herz all the particulars, and showed her the paper which had been given him by M.

Ringer. As that gentleman was now dead, he broke the seal, and a moment afterwards sunk pale and trembling on a chair.

Madame Herz took the paper, and read as follows:—

"Being desirous of making reparation, as far as it lies in my power, for the injustice with which I have treated Master Fritz Schultz, and the prejudice I have raised against him, I nominate and appoint him my sole heir. Having no near relations, and no person having any claim upon me, I do no injustice to any one, and I repair, as far as I am able, an injury which lies heavy on my conscience."

"Well, my dear boy," said Madame Herz, "you see that the Lord has permitted the heart of the man who injured you to be softened; it is in acknowledgment of the injuries he did you that he has left you what he possessed. Accept this bequest, then, my son; it is due to your patience and your generosity."

"Dear mother," replied Fritz, "I cannot but rejoice at my good fortune, since it will enable me to improve your condition and that of my family."

In order to calm the agitation of his mind

after all the emotions of the day, Fritz went out to take a walk, and as he was passing near the college, he felt himself touched on the shoulder, and turning round, he recognised the student he had met at the brook of Bekebach. He was warmly embraced by him, and Wilhelm informed Fritz that he had been appointed by the rector to succeed M. Ringer, the deceased professor.

Fritz congratulated his friend on his appointment, and asked him to accompany him in his walk, and they then related to each other all that had occurred to them since they had met. Wilhelm was glad to hear that Fritz had been successful in his first efforts, and promised to assist him to the utmost of his power.

The next day he accompanied Fritz to M. Bergmann, who, having heard what had taken place on the occasion of M. Ringer's anger being so much excited, complimented his protégé on his discretion and forbearance, and told him that he would take on himself the expense of his education.

"I must do my part," said he, "towards repairing the injustice of which I was involuntarily guilty. Henceforth you shall have rooms in the

college, and remain till you are sufficiently advanced to take your degree as doctor, and be admitted to a professorship."

A week after this, Fritz took leave of the excellent Madame Herz, and established himself in the university. What joy to our studious young man, to have free access to the valuable library bequeathed to him by M. Ringer!

Our little errand-boy was now a scholar, and the change from poverty to comfort and respectability had been brought about, as has been seen, by no remarkable event. Everything had gone on quite naturally. An act of honesty had led to promotion; but this promotion would have been of little use, if Fritz had not, by extraordinary diligence in learning, made himself worthy of still greater encouragement. Such, then, was the manner in which the celebrated Schultz of Heidelberg rose to eminence. Beginning as an errand-boy, he ended as a professor—an ornament to the university in which he had originally been a humble assistant.

It need hardly be stated that Fritz ever retained the strongest friendship for the good Wilhelm, who had powerfully assisted him in his studies, and was in a great measure the

cause of his success. Often, in their hours of recreation, Wilhelm would remind him of their dinner at Bekebach, and the two florins. As soon as Fritz was comfortably established, he brought his parents and brothers and sisters to Heidelberg; and some time after, he married Gretchen, the daughter of his protectress, whom he insisted should live in no other house but his. He was beloved throughout the whole country for his kindness of heart and nobleness of mind.

GARRY OWEN.

GARRY OWEN.*

"A FINE morning for snipe-shooting this, Master Gerald!" said Patrick Carroll, an Irish gamekeeper, to his young companion, his master's son, who was manfully stepping along beside him on the frozen surface of a deep snow.

"A fine morning certainly, Carroll; but I have not seen a single snipe yet," said Master Gerald.

"But if we have any luck, we wont be long so," replied the gamekeeper; "barring the long snow might have starved off the birds entirely. But if there's one left in it anyway, we'll have him, dear, as sure as life."

"There's one!" cried Gerald.

* This story was contributed by Miss EDGEWORTH, a number of years ago, to a collection of pieces for young people, and has been obligingly furnished by her for the present series.

Pop—and—miss.

"Husht now! whisht! 'Twas the talking! Not a word now, or ye give the birds warning."

They walked on for some time without speaking. Gerald

> "Gazed idly on the silence of the snows.
> ——— One idiot face of white
> Is over all."

Not another snipe was to be seen; and the gamekeeper, thinking that his young master was fretting inwardly, began to comfort him with a little flattery.

"Then, Master Gerald, my dear, when you come to carry the gun your own self, it's a fine shot you'll be, I'll engage—as fine a shot as any in the three counties, as his honour your father (blessings on him!) was afore you. Just such another as yourself then. I remember him the first season's shooting ever he got—I saw his first shot, sure!"

"He was older at that time than I am now: was not he?" said Gerald.

"Not to look at."

"I hope soon my mother will have no objection to my carrying the gun myself."

"Objections! Why should she? Tut. The next bird we meet, good or bad, you shall have a shot at him yourself, master."

A ray of joy came across Gerald's face, but it passed away. "No," said he, "I promised mamma I would not take the gun in my own hands."

"Then it's I must lay it over your shoulder, and hold it for you while you pop."

A bird was seen. The gamekeeper placed the gun against Gerald's shoulder, and pointed to where he should aim. It was a great temptation — but Gerald had given a promise. He stepped aside, drawing his shoulder from under the gun.

"No, Carroll," repeated he firmly, and it was as much as he could say; "I will not fire, for I yesterday promised my mother I would not."

"Then you are a noble young gentleman to be true to your mother, anyway; and I'm sure, by the same token, you'll not tell on me, that was only wanting to please you, and did not understand rightly, or I'd sooner have cut my head off than have gone again anything the mistress would say—in regard to you more than all. It would be as much as my life's worth if

you were to tell on me, Master Gerald; but I know you are too good."

"Never fear," said Gerald; "I am no tell-tale. But I'm getting terribly hungry. Turn down to that cottage, and maybe we shall find a hot potato."

"True for you. It is time they should be boiling or boiled; and no doubt it is here we shall find 'em ready and welcome, for it is Mrs Crofton's place, and a very snug place it is, and right good people they are. The mother nursed some of the big house formerly—that is kind-hearted old Mistress Molly I mean."

Their steps being noiseless on the snow, they reached the cottage without being heard by any one within. Peeping in at the house door, Gerald saw that there was only kind-hearted Molly herself in the kitchen. Her back was towards them, and she was stooping down covering up a dish that was on the hearth before a clear turf fire. Gerald, putting his finger on his lips, and making a sign to the

gamekeeper to remain still at the door, went in on tiptoe softly, and snatching up from the dresser her silk handkerchief, he went close behind her without her perceiving him, quickly threw the handkerchief over her eyes, and in a feigned gruff brogue asked her to tell who he was.

"Ah, *hushlamacree!* you darling rogue, I know who ye are well enough; and glad myself is you're come—long I've been looking for you."

She pulled off the bandage as she spoke. "Oh, Master Gerald, dear! and is it you? I ask your pardon then. Sure I'm glad to see you, Master Gerald."

It was plain, nevertheless, that he was not the person she expected to see. "But who was your darling rogue that you were looking for, Molly?"

"Oh, not your honour, dear, anyway — sure I could not make so free — but Georgy, the gran'child, the unlucky boy that did not get his breakfast yet: that's what I was covering up for him."

"And suppose I was to beg one of his hot potatoes?"

"Welcome as life, dear!" said she, uncover-

ing them; "and shame take me that didn't think of offering them! But my ould stupid head was just astray. Sit ye down, Master Gerald, by the fire this raw morning, till I fetch you the salt, and a bit o' butter, and a drop o' the new milk. And who would that be? Somebody at the door without? Oh, Mr Carroll the gamekeeper, is it you? But wont you step in, and get an air of the fire, and take something too? I should have a bottle somewhere."

In Molly's hospitality there was a degree of hurry and confusion, and not her usual hearty gladness to see her friends. Gerald asked what was the matter, and why her head was astray.

"It's after the boy George my head is," she answered; "that unlucky slip of a boy—though it's no fault of his, but of them that left the stable door open after he had shut it last night. I don't know who it was, but weary on them! for this morning George missed one of them sheep of his father's that he got in charge, and was at my bedside by peep o' day telling me about it, afore I was right awake. In great fear he was that this sheep, straying out in the deep snow, might be lost; and that his father, when he'd find it out, would be mad with him.

'Then don't be bothering me, child,' said I, 'and I dreaming. Take yourself out, and look for the sheep, can't ye?' Bad luck to myself that said that cross word out o' my sleep! for straight the boy went out in the first gray light o' the morning, and never has been in since, good or bad. There's the two bowls of stir-about I made for him got as hard and colder than the stones: I was fain to throw them out to the chickens both. And now I have boiled these potatoes for him. But what I'm in dread of," continued Molly, after a pause, and as if afraid to speak her whole thoughts—"what I am most in dread of is them snow-drifts there below, in case George might have come across one of them. You mind, Master Gerald, the boy that once was lost entirely?—and the snow so deep on the ground now."

She sighed.

Gerald swallowed hastily the bit of hot potato he had in his mouth, and asked which road the boy had taken.

"Across the Curragh path," she believed, "and down by the *bohreen*" (the lane).

Gerald, beckoning to the gamekeeper, ran out immediately, bidding Molly keep up her spirits,

and keep the potatoes hot for her boy, whom he hoped soon to bring back to her, with perhaps the lost sheep into the bargain.

Thousands of blessings she poured upon Gerald and Mr Carroll; and from her door she shouted after them to beg they would "Bid George never to mind the sheep, but come home only with himself. Tell him I'll make it up out o' my calves to the father. I'd sell the cow —I'd sell the dresser—anything—all, tell him, if he'll but come home to me safe again, *acushla!*"

Gerald and the gamekeeper, no longer thinking of snipes, took the way over the Curragh as well as they could make it out, for path there was none on that unbeaten snow. The surface was still hard enough in many places; but during the last hour it had begun to thaw, and some of the drifts were softened. They looked for the boy's footsteps, and saw traces for some distance, but then lost sight of them when they came to a lane leading to the village. In this

lane horses, and cars, and many footsteps had been. They stood still and listened, for the sportsman thought he heard a shout. Gerald had the sense to think of firing off the gun, which the gamekeeper, by his order, immediately did, to give notice of where they were. Afterwards they heard the voice certainly, they thought, and followed the direction of the sound. Presently they saw a black spot on the snow at a distance: it was, as they guessed, a boy's hat: and making up towards it, they saw the boy running to meet them barefooted, barelegged, barebreasted, coat and waistcoat off, with as little as could be on, and that little as wet as possible, his face and head as red as fire, perspiring all over. He gasped, and could not speak; but catching hold of Gerald's arm, and pointing in the direction from whence he came, pulled him on.

"Your sheep, I suppose?" said Gerald.

"Ay, in the snow," said the gamekeeper—"that can't get out. Is that it, Georgy? Speak now."

"My sheep—och!" said the boy. "An' I wish to my life it was only that same!"

"What then! Can't you speak, you born natural?" said the impatient gamekeeper.

"Come on, come on! I can't be staying to tell you," said the boy, trotting on before them in one even fast trot, with which Gerald's run and Carroll's strides could scarcely keep pace.

"Manners, then, you running dripping-pan!" cried Carroll. "Can't you stop and turn, and tell Master Gerald about it? Oh, if I could reach you!"——

Gerald, without questioning more, ran on till the boy stopped and spoke—

"See here, master," said he, pointing to a place where he had been digging in the snow: "below here is a cabin of some kind, and a living cratur in it: I heard the cry. Stoop down yourselves here, at the top of the bank, and through the hole here you may catch the sound of the moaning. I was walking on the hard snow, sir, on the top of the ditch here, as I know by the trees on the hedge, thinking of nothing at all but my sheep, and prodding about with my shovel, which by great luck I had with me, on account of the sheep, when I started to see

smoke coming up a yard from me; and when I went up close to the hole, that proved a chimney, and darkening it over, I suppose, by looking down to see whether I could see anything that was in it, whoever was within knew by the stopping of the light that I was there above, for there was a great cry raised to me, 'for God's sake to help!' So I gave up all thought of my sheep, and fell to work to get out the poor cratur, and I have been at it ever since: but see, the door can't be got open yet, nor wont for a long while. See, sir, how it is."

Where the boy had been digging in the snow, part of a thatched roof was visible. It seemed to belong to a hut or shed made in a deep ditch, or quarry hole, by the side of a hill. Gerald called loudly, as he leaned over the opening at the top, and was answered by a feeble voice, which he thought was that of a woman. He stood still to consider what should be done first. The gamekeeper, unable to think, went on talking and wondering who the woman could be. Gerald saw that, as there was but one shovel, but one person could work at a time in clearing away the snow; and as the man was the strongest, he yielded the shovel to him, but directed him

not to go on where the boy had been working, because he saw that it would take a long time to clear away the snow to the bottom, and to open space enough in the hard snow-drift, so that the house door could be got open, and that it would be easier and quicker to clear the snow from part of the roof, and pull off the thatch. He bade Carroll shovel away as fast as he could, while he considered what he should do with the woman if he got her out. He must have some means of carrying her out of the cold directly, to where she could have assistance and food. The nearest house which was within reach was Mrs Crofton's. He bade George go home to his grandmother, and send his father, or any man he could find about the house, with a hand-barrow, and dry straw, and a blanket. If the handbarrow could not be had directly, the men should bring a door, which George knew could be readily taken off its hinges. The sending George home he saw, too, was necessary for him, for he was almost exhausted: he could walk, but could scarcely have used his arms any more. George was very unwilling to go; but Gerald told him that, by so doing, he would do the best for the poor people he had worked so hard to

save—the only chance it would give of saving them. The boy gave up to these reasons; and Gerald wrote with a pencil on the back of a letter a few lines to his mother, to tell what had happened, and to beg she would send directions and assistance (the good housekeeper herself if she could) to Mrs Crofton's cottage, to be ready, and wait till he should come. Off went George, putting the pencil note in the crown of his hat, the only dry spot about him.

The corner of the roof being soon cleared of snow, Gerald helped to tear away the thatch, and soon got open a hole in the roof, through which they could see down into the house. Gerald saw the haggard face and skeleton figure of the woman. She was kneeling just under them, looking up, her hands uplifted towards them: something in her arms pressed close to her: it was her infant, but it made no cry; nor did she speak or utter any sound. Her other children were on the ground before her—one stretched out face downwards, motionless; the

other, with its arms clasped round its mother as she knelt, its head leaning against her: it never looked up. Gerald tore the hole open larger; and bidding Carroll tell him the moment any one from Crofton's was in sight, jumped down into this den of misery—of famine. The woman's eyes turned to the child on the floor—a boy, her eldest—who was dead. The girl, kneeling, never moved till her mother lifted up her head, and Gerald saw her starved face. Her eyes blinked and closed from the light. She showed no emotion at sight of Gerald; but in the woman's wild stare at him there was a sort of agony of hope. He recollected, what he had till this moment forgotten, that he had had the day before, when he went out, a biscuit in his pocket. He felt, and found some fragments; he moistened a bit in his mouth, and then put the least morsel possible into the mouth of the girl; and then gave a bit to the woman, who instantly put a crumb of it between the infant's lips, and then she looked ravenously for more. Luckily he had very little more left. Gerald had heard that famished persons must be allowed food only with great caution; but he did not know how very small a quantity the stomach can

bear, and how extremely dangerous it is to yield to the cravings of the appetite. When he saw the magical revival produced by this little, he regretted that he had no more, especially when the mother looked upon him with ravenous eagerness. He emptied his pockets, and she snatched the least crumb, and crammed it into her baby's mouth. Well for her and her children it was that he had no more. Some of the snow from the roof hung down; she stretched out her hand for it with anxiety, and when he reached it for her, swallowed as much as he would let her: but he was afraid, and stopped her: she submitted, without speaking.

Carroll gave the signal agreed upon, that he saw somebody coming. Gerald had bade Carroll not call loudly to him, lest the suddenness of the certainty of her deliverance might be too much for her all at once. When he moved from her, though only a pace or two, to hear what was said from the opening in the roof, she caught hold of his coat, and held it clenched fast, as if in dread of his leaving her. He assured her that he would not desert her; that he was only going to see how best to get her out of this horrible place. His words seemed

scarcely to reach her understanding; but she loosened her grasp, as if resigned. He stood upon the only piece of furniture in the house—an old stool—and could then hear Carroll tell him, in a low voice, that two men were coming across the field from the road, either with a handbarrow or something of the kind. It proved to be the very door which Gerald had desired should be sent if nothing else was at hand. "And a good thought it was," said the men; "for the handbarrow had been lent to some person, and could not have been had unless we were to have waited an hour." There was plenty of straw and a blanket; moreover a bed—a chaff bed: all he required, good Molly had sent, with her blessing for the sending home her boy; and a bed should be ready and warm for the poor woman, whoever she was. She would not let George go back with the men, which he wanted to do.

While all this was saying, Gerald had lifted the kneeling girl from the floor. She was as helpless and cumbersome to lift as a child asleep. He purposed to stand upon the stool, to give her out of his arms to Carroll, who was waiting to take her; but as he sprang upon the

stool, one of the legs gave way, and down he came with the child. An exclamation—the first she had uttered—burst from the mother, and she sprang forward. Gerald fell back against the wall, and held the child safe: it was a mercy that he did not fall upon it. He next took off the silk handkerchief that was round his neck, and having tied it to his pocket-handkerchief, he passed them under the arms of the child. Then calling to Carroll, he bade him let down to him one end of his leathern belt, and to hold fast the other. After fastening the end of the belt to the handkerchiefs, he called to Carroll again to draw up gently; and, guiding the child's body up as high as he could reach, it was thus drawn out safely. The woman had a tattered blanket hanging over part of her; but she could not be wrapped in it: it was all rags, and would not hold. Gerald had the blanket old Molly had sent put down to him, and wrapping the woman in it with Carroll's help, he having now jumped down into the hut, fastened the belt round her, and one of the men above drew her up with her infant in her arms. They laid her upon the bed, and found she had fainted. She looked so ghastly, that Gerald

thought she was dead. He took her infant from her powerless arm, and thought it was gone too: it seemed to have no weight; but the fresh air made it utter a sort of cry, and the mother opened her eyes, and came back from her fainting fit. Gerald laid her infant in her arms again, and she felt that he placed her girl beside her, and she gave him a look which he could never forget: but the expression of feeling and sense was gone in a moment. He wrapped the blanket round her and the children, and she lay motionless in a sort of stupor as they lifted the board from the ground and moved on. He had little hope that she or the children could live till they reached the cottage. He had never seen anything like such a sight before; but Carroll had, and he kept up his hopes with the prophecy, often repeated as they went along, that the woman would, as he'd see, do very well, and the childer would *come to*, all but the poor boy, who was gone quite. It lay at her feet, wrapped in the poor mother's rag of a blanket, so as to be concealed from sight. Gerald had been unwilling to remove the corpse at first, thinking it might shock the mother fatally to see it when she returned to

sense. But the men would not let him leave it, telling him that when she came to her sense, it would be the first thing she would ask for, and that it would shock her most that it should *not be waked* properly.

They reached the cottage, where, to Gerald's great joy, he found that his mother had sent the housekeeper, and all that could be wanted. Molly, dear good Molly, had the bed ready warm to put *her* into, and hot flannels for the *childer*, and warm drink, but to be given only in teaspoonfuls. "Mind," as the housekeeper said—"mind that for your life! And now, Master Gerald, my heart's life," continued she, "rest yourself. Oh dear! oh dear! what a way he is in! my *own* child. Oh dear! oh dear! he ought to be in his own bed—and has not ate one bit the day, barring the potatoes here."

Molly followed Gerald about, while he helped in all the arrangements that were making in bringing in his charge, and carrying them to the inner room; and whenever she could find an opportunity, popped a bit of something into his mouth, which, to oblige her, he swallowed, though he did not well know what it was. All being now done by him in which he could be

useful, he prepared to go home, the housekeeper and Molly urging that his own family must be anxious to see him. Away he went, but not before he asked for George, to rejoice with him in their success. George was in his bed fast asleep; it would be a sin, his grandmother said, to waken him, and it would do better next morning, for he was tired out of his sense, stupid-tired! "He is never very 'cute, my poor Georgy, but as kind a heart as can be, asleep or awake."

It was dusk in the evening before Gerald reached home. Candles were lighted at Castle Gerald, as he saw through the windows. As he approached, the lights flitted from the drawing-room windows along the corridor, as he went up the avenue, and the hall-door opened before he reached it. Cecilia, his dear little sister, ran down the steps to meet him, and his father and mother were in the hall. The comfortable, happy appearance of everything at home, being in sudden contrast with all he had just seen and

felt, struck him forcibly. The common dinner seemed to him uncommonly good; everything a luxury. Cecilia could not help laughing; he seemed to wonder, as if he were in a dream—and so in truth he felt. They wisely let him eat and rest before they asked him any questions. Even Cecilia refrained, though her eyes, as plainly as they could speak, and very plainly that was, spoke her curiosity, or rather her sympathy. His after-dinner story, however, was provokingly short—quite an unvarnished tale, and not unfolded regularly, but opened in the middle, and finished abruptly with, "That's all." Whether it was that he did not like to make much of what he had done himself, to make little *i* the hero of his tale, or whether he was, as old Molly said of George, *stupid-tired*, he certainly was in an unusual hurry to take his mother's advice that night, and go to bed early. After thanking God that the woman was saved, he threw himself into his bed, thinking that he *would* be asleep the very instant his head should be on the pillow. But in vain he snugged himself up; he found that the going to sleep did not depend on his will. Whenever he closed his eyes, the images of the starved

woman and her dead and living child were before him, the whole scene going on over and over again, but more and more confusedly, till at last, after the hundredth turning to the other side, he lay still, and by the time his mother came to look at him, before she went to bed, he was sound asleep—so fast, that the light of her lamp, even when she no longer shaded it by her hand, never made his eyelid shrink or eyelash twinkle.

The next morning he awakened as fresh and lively as ever, and jumped up to see what sort of a day it was. Pouring rain!—all the snow gone or going—impossible to reach the cottage before breakfast. But the housekeeper had brought word late last night, after he was asleep, that the woman and her children were likely to do well. The gamekeeper (bless his old bones for it!) was up, and at Mrs Crofton's by the flight of night, and his report at breakfast-time said that "the woman was wonderful—for so great a skeleton—a perfect 'atomy—a very shadow of a cratur—such as never was seen afore alive on God's earth. The childer, too, no weight: if you'd take 'em in your arms, it would frighten you to hold 'em — so unnatural-like, as if

they had been changed by the fairies. Howsomdever, the housekeeper says they'll come to, and get weighty enough in time, ma'am, and that all will live, no doubt, if they don't get food too plenty; I mean if old Molly (Mrs Crofton, I ax her pardon) wouldn't be in too great a hurry to feed 'em up—and if the mother, who is cautious enough not to infringe against the orders she got, as far as her own fasting is concerned, would not, as I dread, be too tender in regard to the childer—the baby more especially."

Gerald's report in the middle of the day was good. He could not, however, see the poor woman, she and her children being in bed. It was settled that they should all walk to the cottage next morning; but the next morning and the next day, rain—rain—rain! How provoking! Yet such things will be in Ireland. Little Cecilia stood at the window, saying, "Rain, rain, go to Spain;" yet not till the fourth day did it go, and then the ground was so wet; even on the gravel walks before the window there were such puddles of yellow water, that it was vain for Cecilia to hope she could reach the cottage. But the next day was dry;

a frost came, not a bitter frost, but a fine sunshiny day; and before the ground was softened by the sun, they accomplished their walk.

Everything is for the best—that's certain—even the rain. These three days' delay had given time for much to pass which it was well should be over. The dead child was buried; the living had now some appearance of life; the horrible ghastliness was gone; the livid purple was now only deadly pale. Cecilia thought it very shocking still, but nothing to what it was, Gerald said. He was quite astonished at the difference; he should not have known the woman to be the same, except by her skeleton hands and arms. But she was now clean, decently clothed, a great handkerchief of Molly's pinned so as to cover her wasted form, and a smile on those lips that he thought never could smile again. But they smiled on him, and then she burst into tears—the first she had shed—and a great relief they were to her, for she could not cry when the boy was buried—not a tear.

Gerald looked about for the other child—the girl; she was behind him. Though she had been quite insensible, as he thought, to all that had happened, she now seemed perfectly to recognise him. When her mother drew her forward, she remained willingly fixed close beside him, and stood staring up with grateful, loving eyes. She smelled his coat; the mother reproved her, but Cecilia said, "Let her alone;" and the child, heeding neither of them, proceeded to smell his hand, took it, and kissed it again and again. Then turning to the mother, said, "Mammy, that's the hand—the good hand!"

Then she pointed to a piece of biscuit which lay upon the table, and her mother said, "The child recollects, sir, the bit you put into her mouth. She could eat that biscuit all day long, I believe, if we would let her."

"And it is hard to deny her," said Molly, putting a piece within her reach. She devoured it eagerly, yet seemed as if she had half a mind to take the last bit from her mouth and put it into the baby's.

Gerald turned to shake hands with George, who now came in, and inquired if he had heard any news of his lost sheep.

"Answer, George, dear!" said Molly to the boy, who was a little bashful, or, as she expressed it, "a little daunted before the ladies. But speak out Georgy, love, can't ye, so as to be heard, and not with that voice of a mouse. You can speak out well enough when you please."

The snow-woman observed that she knew better than anybody how well he could speak out. "I never in my born days heard a voice so pleasant as his'n sounded to me the first time I heard it, when he answered to my call for help."

George smiled through his blush; and then answering Master Gerald, thanked him kindly, and said that he had heard of his sheep; he had got him, and he was dead—frozen dead under the snow—standing not half a perch from where they had been shovelling. When the thaw came, there he was found quite ready; so he brought him home, and skinned him. There was his skin hanging up to the fore on the stable wall. And his father was very good too, and was not mad with him at all at all, but quite considerate, and did not give him a stroke nor a word; and so he (George) had promised

to make up the *differ*, by not rising out of his father's hands the price of the new *shuit* which he was to get at Easter for herding the other sheep and cattle through the winter. "There's the bargain I made with him, and all's well as afore."

Cecilia, who was listening, did not at first understand this bargain; but when the *new shuit* was explained to mean a new suit of clothes, and making up *the differ*, making up the difference to the father between the value of the lost live sheep and his remaining skin, Cecilia thought it was rather a hard bargain for George; but he was quite satisfied.

Molly whispered, "Never heed, miss; the father will not be so hard upon him as he thinks. But," added she aloud, "why should not he, miss, be at the loss of his own carelessness? Not but what, barring the giddiness, he's as good a natur'd lad as ever lived, only not overburdened with sense. Kind gran'mother for him!" concluded she, half laughing at herself, half at him. Then drawing Gerald aside, she changed her tone, and with a serious look, in a mysterious whisper, said, "You were right, dear, from first to last, concerning the poor

cratur's dead child; she did not want to have it *waked* at all, for she is not that way—not an Irishwoman at all—an Englishwoman all over, as I knew by her speech the first word ever I heard her speak in her own nat'ral tongue when she came to her voice. But hush't! there she is telling her own story to the master and mistress."

"Yes, madam, I bees an Englishwoman, though so low now and untidy-like: it's a shame to think of it: a Manchester woman, ma'am; and my people was once in a bettermost sort of way, but sore pinched latterly." She sighed and paused.

"I married an Irishman, madam," continued she, and sighed again.

"I hope he gave you no reason to sigh?" said Gerald's father.

"Ah no, sir, never!" answered the Englishwoman with a faint smile. "Brian Dermody is a good man, and was always a koind husband to me, as far and as long as ever he could, I will

say that; but my friends misliked him—no help for it. He is a soldier, sir—of the 45th. So I followed my husband's fortins, as nat'ral, through the world, till he was ordered to Ireland. Then he brought the children over, and settled us down there at Bogafin, in a little shop with his mother, a widow. She was very koind too. But no need to tire you with telling all. She married again, ma'am, a man young enough to be her son. A nice man he was to look at too; a gentleman's servant he had been. Then they set up in a public-house. Then the whisky, ma'am, that they bees all so fond of; he took to drinking it in the morning even, ma'am; and that was bad, to my thinking."

"Ay, indeed!" said Molly, with a groan of sympathy. "Oh the whisky!—if men could keep from it!"

"And if women could!" said Mr Crofton in a low voice.

The Englishwoman looked up at him, and then looked down, refraining from assent to his smile.

"My mother-in-law," continued she, "was very koind to me all along, as far as she could. But one thing she could not do; that was, to

pay me back the money of husband's and mine that I lent her. I thought this odd of her, and hard. But then I did not know the ways of the country in regard to never paying debts."

"Sure it's not the ways of all Ireland, my dear," said Molly; "and it's only them that has not that can't pay—how can they?"

"I don't know; it is not for me to say," said the Englishwoman reservedly; "I am a stranger. But I thought if they could not pay me, they need not have kept a jaunting car."

"Is it a jaunting car?" cried Molly. She pushed from her the chair on which she was leaning. "Jaunting car bodies!—and not to pay you! I give them up entirely. Ill used you were, my poor Mrs Dermody!—and a shame! —and you a stranger! But them were Connaught people. I ask your pardon—finish your story."

"It is finished, ma'am. They were ruined, and all sold; and I could not stay with my children to be a burden. I wrote to husband, and he wrote me word to make my way to Dublin if I could, to a cousin of his in Pill Lane—here's the direction; and that if he can get leave from his colonel, who is a good gentle-

man, he will be over to settle me somewhere, to get my bread honest in a little shop or some way. I am used to work and hardship, so I don't mind. Brian was very koind in his letter, and sent me all he had—a pound, ma'am—and I set out on my journey on foot, with the three children. The people on the road were very koind and hospitable indeed; I have nothing to say against the Irish for that; they are more hospitabler a deal than in England, though not always so honest. Stranger as I was, I got on very well till I came to the little village here hard by, where my poor boy that is gone first fell sick of the measles. His sickness, and the 'pot'ecary stuff and all, and the lodging and living, ran me very low. But I paid all, every farthing, and let none know how poor I was; for I was ashamed, you know, ma'am, or I am sure they would have helped me, for they are a koind people, I will say that for them, and ought so to do, I am sure. Well, I pawned some of my things, my cloak even, and my silk bonnet, to pay honest; and as I could not do no otherwise, I left them in pawn, and with the little money I raised, I set out forwards on my road to Dublin again, so soon as I thought my

boy was able to travel. I reckoned too much upon his strength. We had got but a few miles from the village when he drooped, and could not get on; and I was unwilling and ashamed to turn back, having so little to pay for lodgings. I saw a kind of hut, or shed, by the side of a hill. There was nobody in it. It was empty of everything but some straw and a few turf, the remains of a fire. I thought there would be no harm in taking shelter in it for my children and myself for the night. The people never came back to whom it belonged, and the next day my poor boy was worse; he had a fever this time. Then the snow came on. We had some little store of provisions that had been made up for us on the journey to Dublin, else we must have perished when we were snowed up. I am sure the people in the village never knowed that we were in that hut, or they would have come to help us, for they bees very koind people. There must have been a day and a night that passed, I think, of which I know nothing. It was all a dream. When I got up from my illness, I found my boy dead, and the others with famished looks. Then I had to see them faint with hunger."

The poor woman had told her story without any attempt to make it pathetic, and thus far without apparent emotion or change of voice; but when she came to this part, and spoke of her children, her voice changed and failed: she could only add, looking at Gerald, "You know the rest, master; Heaven bless you!"

All she had told was true, as was proved upon inquiry at Geraldtown of the people at whose house she had lodged, and those to whom she had paid bills, and with whom she had pawned her clothes. Her friends at Manchester were written to by Gerald's father; their answer confirmed her account of herself and of her husband.

Gerald and Cecilia rejoiced in having her exactness in truth thus proved; not that they had ever doubted it, but the housekeeper had been imposed upon by some travelling people lately, and they were glad that she saw that their *snow-woman* was not a beggar or impostor. Impostor, indeed, she could not be, poor creature, as to the main parts of her story —her being buried alive in the snow, and nearly famished. Everything they saw of her during the time she stayed at Crofton's cottage in-

creased the interest they felt for her: she was so grateful, so little encroaching, so industrious; as soon as ever she was able—in fact, before she was well able—she set about doing needlework for Mrs Crofton. But Molly, as she told Gerald, would not take her work from her without payment.

"I only shammed taking the work from her for nothing, dear, not to vex her; but I counted up what she earned unknownst to her. And see what I did (opening a chest)! I got all her little *duds* back out of pawn; the black silk bonnet and all; which (added Molly, laughing), to the best of my opinion is, next to her children and husband, perhaps what she is the fondest of in this life. Well, and even so, so much the greater the 'cratur's honesty, you know, that did not begrudge to give it off her head to pay her dues to the last farthing. By the same token, she is as welcome as light to stay here with us till she is quite stout, and as long as she pleases, her and hers, if it were a twelvemonth."

This permission was no trifling kindness; for the house was so small, that Mrs Crofton, who loved to have it neat too, was much inconve-

nienced by her guests: she gave up her own bed and room to them, and slept in the kitchen. Molly was a true Irish hospitable soul, who would never count up, or tell, or hear tell, of what she gave or lost. She would not accept of any payment for her lodgers from Gerald's father or mother, or remuneration in any form. Whatever was sent from the Castle, was scrupulously set apart for the use of the snow-woman and her children, or kept for them till it spoiled. Many times the woman, afraid of being a burden, said she was well enough — quite well enough to be stirring.

One day, after they had heard the poor woman declare that she was well able to go, Cecilia, as she was walking home, said to her brother, "Gerald, how very sorry that poor woman must be to get *quite* well! I remember I was very sorry to get quite well after my measles, because I knew that I should not have mamma and everybody waiting upon me, and caring for me so very very much. But then

how dreadfully more your snow-woman must feel this, when all the wonder of her being buried alive is over—when we have no more questions to ask, and no more walking every day to see her, and no more pitying, and no more biscuits, and broth, and tea, and all manner of good things; and she must leave her warm bed, and Molly's comfortable house, and be turned out, as Molly says, into the cold wide world; and her children, one of them to be carried all the way, and the other to go barefoot! Gerald, at least I may give her a pair of my old shoes?"

"But that will do little good," said Gerald sighing; and he seldom sighed.

"I wish I could do more," said Cecilia; "but I have nothing. Oh how I wish I could do something, mamma!"

"You can make some warm clothes for the children, as you proposed yesterday, and I will give you flannel, and whatever you want, Cecilia."

"Thank you, mamma; and you will cut them out, and I will work all day without stirring, mamma, or ever looking up till I have done. But even then it will be so very little compared with all she wants."

Cecilia now sighed more deeply than Gerald had sighed before.

"Gerald," she resumed, "I wish I was a fairy, even for one day—a good fairy, I mean."

"Good of course: you could not be bad, Cecilia. Well, what would you do in that one day? I am curious to know whether it is the same thing that I am thinking of."

"No," said Cecilia, "it cannot be; because I am thinking, my dear, of so many different things. But, in the first place, I would wave my wand, and in a minute have a nice house raised, like Molly's, for the snow-woman."

"The very thing! I knew it!" cried Gerald. "Oh, Cecilia, if it could be!"

"There are no fairies left now in the world," said Cecilia mournfully; "that's all nonsense indeed."

"But I can tell you, Cecilia, there is still in the world what can do almost all that the fairies could do formerly, at least as to building houses, only not so quick quite—money."

"I guessed it before you came to the word; but what signifies that, I have no money—have you?"

"Some; but very little," said Gerald, feel-

ing in his pocket—"too little; only pocket-money. Oh I wish, how I wish, Cecilia, I had as much money as papa has, or mamma!" added he, stopping till they who were walking behind them came within hearing; and repeating his wish, added, "Then I could do so much good."

"And if you had as much money as we have," said his mother smiling, "you would want more to be able to do all the good you desire."

His father asked him to tell him what good in particular he thought he could do: and as they walked on, Gerald stated that, in particular, he would build or buy a house ready built "for the snow-woman."

"And furnished!" interposed Cecilia.

"No; leave out the furniture for the present," said Gerald: "we cannot do everything, I know, papa, at once. But seriously, papa, you have built houses for many of the tenants, and you have houses, cottages—one cottage at least even now—to give to whoever you please, or whoever pleases you."

"Not exactly to whoever I please, or to whoever pleases me, but to those whom I think most deserving, and to those whom justice calls

upon me to prefer. I have claims upon me from good old tenants, or their families, for every house I have to give or to let: how, then, can I give to a stranger, who has no claims upon me, merely to please myself or you?"

"But she has the claim of being very wretched," said Gerald.

"And she has been buried in the snow," said Cecilia.

"And has been recovered," said her father.

"There's the worst of it," said Cecilia; "for now she is recovered, she must go. We cannot help it, if we were to talk about it ever so much. But, mamma, though papa says people have never money enough to do all the good they wish, I think you have; for I remember about that cottage you built last year, you said, I recollect perfectly hearing you say the words, 'I know the way I can manage to have money enough to do it.' What did you mean, mamma? As you were not a fairy, how did you manage?"

Her mother smiled, but did not answer.

"I will tell you," said her father, "the way in which she managed, and the only way in which people, let them have ever such large fortunes, can manage to be sure of having money

enough to do what they wish most—she denied herself something that she would have liked to buy, but that she could do without. She very much wished, at the time you speak of, Cecilia, to have bought a harp, on which she knew that I should have liked to hear her play."

"I remember that too," cried Cecilia. "I remember the harp was brought for her to look at, and she liked it exceedingly; and then, after all, she sent it away, and would not buy it, and I wondered."

"She could not have bought the harp and have built the cottage; so she denied herself the harp that year, and she made her old woman, as you call her, happy for life."

"How very good!" said Cecilia.

Gerald fell into a profound silence, which lasted all the remainder of their walk home, till they reached the lodge at the entrance, when, opening the gate, he let his mother and sister pass, but arrested his father in his passage: "Father, I have something to say to you; will you *walk behind?*"

"Son, I am ready to listen to you, and I will do anything in my power to oblige you, but you must explain to me how I am to walk behind."

"Oh, papa, you know what I mean: let mamma and Cecilia walk on, so as to be out of hearing, and we can follow behind. What I am thinking of, papa, is Garry Owen: you were so kind as to promise to buy him for me."

"Yes, as a reward which you deserved for your perseverance last year."

"Thank you, papa; but suppose, instead of Garry Owen—in short, suppose, papa, I were to give up Garry Owen."

"To give up Garry Owen!" exclaimed his father, starting back with surprise.

"I am not sure, papa, that I can bring myself to do it yet—I am only considering; therefore, pray, do not tell Cecilia or mamma. I want first to settle my own mind. If I were to give up Garry Owen, would you allow me to have the money which you would have paid for him, and let me do what I please with it?"

"Undoubtedly. But since you consult me, I strongly recommend it to you not to give up Garry Owen for any other horse or pony."

"For any other horse, certainly not; for I like him better than any other that I ever saw or heard of—the beautiful creature!" cried Gerald enthusiastically. "But if I could give him up,

father, as mamma gave up the harp, would the price of him build a cottage for the snow-woman? And would you do it for me?"

His father's countenance brightened delightfully as Gerald spoke. "Would I do it for you, my son?" said he. But checking himself, he added in a composed voice, "I would, Gerald. But are you sure that you would wish this to be done? that is the first point to be settled. Remember, that for this year to come I certainly shall not buy for you any other horse, if you give up Garry Owen for this purpose. You must understand this clearly, and be prepared to abide by all the consequences of your own determination."

"Oh certainly, sir; I understand all that perfectly; I know it must be Garry Owen or the snow-woman: I never thought of anything else: it would be cheating you or cheating myself. But I have not come to my determination yet; remember that, father, and do not say that I go back—you understand?"

"I understand you, Gerald, as well as you understand me; so we need say no more about it till you have settled your mind."

Which he was called upon to do sooner than

he expected. Before he had considered all the pros and cons, before he had screwed his courage to the sticking place, he was summoned to the fight; and well might his father fear that he would not come off victor of himself.

"Oh, Gerald!" cried Cecilia, running back to meet him, "Garry Owen is come!—Garry Owen is come! That horse-dealer man has brought him for you—yes, Garry Owen! I assure you I saw him in the back lawn: they are all looking at him—mamma too! Come, come! Run, run!"

In the back lawn was a group of people—the groom, the helper, the gossoon, the coachman, and, distinguished above the rest, the saddler, with a new saddle on his back, and a side-saddle and bridle, and bits glittering and hanging about him in most admired disorder. The group opened on Gerald's approach, and full in the midst, on a rising ground, with the light of the setting sun upon him, stood Garry Owen, his present master, the horse-dealer, beside him, holding his bridle as he curved his neck proudly.

Garry Owen was of a bright bay, with black mane, tail, and legs.

"Such a pretty colour!" said Cecilia; "and such a fine flowing tail! Oh what a whisk he gave it!"

"A remarkably pretty head," said Gerald. "Is not it, father?"

"And how gently he puts it down to let mamma stroke it!" said Cecilia. "Dear, nice little creature, I may pat him—may not I?"

"You may, miss; he is as gentle as the lamb, see, and as powerful as the lion," said the horse-dealer. "But it's the spirit that's in him will please Master Gerald above all."

"Yes, I do like a horse that has some spirit," cried Gerald, vaulting upon his back.

"Then there it is! just suited! for it's he that has spirit enough for you, and you that has the spirit for him, Master Gerald! See how he sits him!"

"Without a saddle or a ha'porth!" said the saddler.

"What need, with such a seat on a horse as Master Gerald has got, and such command?"

"Let him go," said Gerald.

"Take care," said Cecilia.

"Never fear, miss," said the horse-dealer; and off Gerald went in a fine canter.

"No fear of Master Gerald. See, see, see! See there now!" continued the master of the horse triumphantly, as Gerald, who really rode extremely well for a boy of his age, cantered, trotted, walked alternately, and showed all Garry Owen's paces to the best advantage. Suddenly a halloo was heard; huntsmen in red jackets appeared galloping across the adjoining field, returning from the hunt; Garry Owen and Gerald leaped the ditch instantly.

"Oh—oh!" cried Cecilia; "is the horse running away with him?"

"Not at all, miss — no fear — for Master Gerald has none. See there, how he goes! Oh prince o' ponies! Oh king of glory! See, up he is now with the red jackets—dash at all—over he goes—the finest leaper in the three counties—clears all before him, see!—there's a leap! And now, miss, see how he is bringing him back now to us, fair and *aisy*, see!—trotting him up as if nothing at all: then I declare it's a sight to see!"

Gerald came up and sat, as Garry Owen stood still in the midst of them, patting the pony,

delighted with him much, and with himself not more, but certainly not a little.

"Then he's the finest rider ever I see of his years," cried the horse-dealer in an ecstasy.

"The finest young gentleman rider that ever I see in all Ireland, without comparison, I say," pronounced the saddler, shutting one eye and looking up at him with the other, with an indescribably odd, doubtful smile. In this man's countenance there was a mixed or quickly-varying expression—demure, jocose, sarcastic, openly flattering, covertly laughing at the flattery, if not at the flattered; his face was one instant for the person he spoke to, the next for the bystanders. Aware at this moment who were standing by, he kept it as steady as he could. The horse-dealer, in eager earnest intent on his object, continued in his ecstatic tone.

"By the laws! then I'd sooner bestow Garry Owen on Master Gerald than sell him at any price to any other."

As Master Gerald's father smiled somewhat incredulous, perhaps a little scornfully, the horse-dealer instantly softened his assertion, by adding — "I should not say bestow — a poor man like me could not go to bestow—but I'd

sooner sell him at any price to Master Gerald —so I would, and not a word of lie—than to any mortal living in the three counties, or three kingdoms entirely; and raison, for it's Master Gerald that would do Garry Owen most justice, and would show him off best: the fine horse should get the fine rider, and 'tis undeniable the young gentleman is that same anyhow."

"Kind father for him," said the gamekeeper; "and the very moral of the master, Master Gerald is. The very sit of the father when first I seen him on a horse. Then may he be like him in all!"

"And 'specially in having a good horse always under him," said the horse-dealer. "Who would have a right to the *raal* good horse but the raal good gentleman born?"

"Which the family is, and was from father to son time out of mind, as all the world knows and says as well as myself," added the saddler. "Father and son seldom comes a better."

Gerald's father, who had been for some time pacing up and down impatiently during this flow of flattery, had been more than once tempted to interrupt it. Disgusted and vexed as he was, and afraid that his son would be duped and swayed from his good purpose, he could hardly refrain from interference. But he said to himself, "My son must meet with flatterers: he should learn early to detect and resist flattery. I will leave him to himself."

"Father, are you gone?—are you going?" cried Gerald. "I want to consult you. Will you not help me with your judgment?"

"You know my opinion of the horse, my dear Gerald," said his father; "as to the rest, I must leave you to yourself. The money is ready for you."

As he spoke, he took Cecilia by the hand to lead her away, but she looked as if she had a great mind to see more of Garry Owen.

"Pray, papa, let me stay," said Cecilia, "with mamma; mamma will walk up and down."

Her father let go her hand and walked away.

"Maybe Miss Cecilia could ride this pony too?" said the groom respectfully to Gerald.

"To be sure," said the horse-dealer; "put her up, and you'll see how considerate Garry Owen will walk with the young lady."

Cecilia, mounted on Garry Owen, was led twice round the back lawn, Gerald delighting in her delight.

"And the young lady is a great soldier too!" said the horse-dealer.

"I did not feel the least bit afraid," said she as she jumped down; and patting Garry Owen now with fearless loud resounding pat, she pronounced him the gentlest of dear little creatures; and "Oh how glad I am," continued she, "that you are to belong to Brother Gerald! Many, many, many a pleasant ride I shall have upon you, Garry Owen. Shall not I, Gerald?"

Gerald smiled: I cannot resist this, thought he: I must have Garry Owen.

"The only thing I don't like about him is his name, Gerald. I wish, when you have him, you would call him by some prettier name than Garry Owen. Call him Fairy, Good Fairy."

"Or talking of fairies and fairy horses, if you had a mind to an odd Irish name, Miss

Cecilia," said the gamekeeper, "you might call him Boliaunbuie, which is the Irish name for the yellow rag weed that they call 'the fairies' horses,' because the fairies ride on them time immemorial."

While the gamekeeper was making out some fitness in this conceit, which struck his own fancy, but nobody else's perhaps, the housekeeper came out to give to her mistress some message, in which the name of the snow-woman (a name which had been adopted below stairs as well as above) was often repeated.

"What! Do you say that she is going to-morrow?" inquired Gerald.

"No, sir; but the day after she has fixed, and will come up here to take leave and thank all the family to-morrow. A grateful creature, ma'am, and not encroaching she is, as ever breathed; not expecting, and expecting, like the rest, or too many of them. I've promised to buy from her some of the little worsted mittens and gloves she has been knitting, to put a few pence in her poor pocket."

This speech brought back all Gerald's thoughts from Garry Owen to the poor woman. He turned his back on the pony, took Cecilia aside,

abruptly opened the matter to her, and asked if she could be contented if he should give up Garry Owen.

It was a sudden change. "Oh, could there be no other way?"

"None."

"Well, dear Gerald, do it then. Oh never mind me! I am only sorry for your not having the beautiful pony: but then it will be so good of you. Yes—yes—do it, Gerald; do it."

The generous cagerness with which Cecilia urged him acted directly against her purpose, for he felt particularly sorry to give up what would be such a pleasure to her. With uncertain steps and slow he walked back again to those who waited his decision, and who stood wondering what he could be deliberating about. His speech, as well as his walk, betrayed signs of his inward agitation. It would not bear reporting: the honourable gentleman was scarcely audible—but those round Garry Owen gathered from what reached their ears that, "In short, he

did not know—he was not quite sure—he was not determined—or he was determined not to purchase Garry Owen, unless he should change his mind."

The auditors looked upon one another in unfeigned astonishment, and for half a minute silence ensued. The master of the horse then said in a low voice, in Irish, to the saddler, "What can be the cause? The father said he had the money for him."

The saddler, in a low voice, gnawing a bit of a leather strap, without turning head or eyes as he spoke, replied, "It's the housekeeper—something she put into the ear was the cause of the change."

"Just as your honour *plaises*, Master Gerald, sir," said the horse-dealer, stroking Garry's nose. "Whichever way you think proper, Master Gerald," said he, in a tone in which real anger struggled, and struggled in vain, with habitual servility and professional art, all care for his monied interest forgotten in his sense of the insult which he conceived aimed at his horse. He continued, as he turned to depart, "I thank my stars, then, Garry Owen, and I can defy the world, and all the slanderers, backbiters, and

whisperers in it, whosomdever they be, man, woman, or child."

Cecilia looked half frightened, Gerald wholly bewildered.

"I don't understand you," said he.

"Why, then, master, I ax your pardon. But I think it is aisy understanding *me*. It's plain some person or persons have whispered, through another perhaps"—glancing towards the spot where Gerald's mother was sitting drawing the group—"something, myself can't guess what, against me or Garry Owen. A sounder horse never stepped nor breathed, I could take my affidavit; but I will not demean myself; I should not be suspected; I don't deserve it from your honour; so I only wish, Master Gerald, you may find a better horse for yourself, if you can get one in all Ireland, let alone England."

He turned Garry Owen to lead him down the hill as he spoke. Gerald, feeling for the man, and pleased with his feeling for the reputation of his horse and for his own suspected honour, now stood in his way to stop him, and assured him that nothing had been said to him by any human being to the disadvantage of Garry Owen or of himself.

But prepossessed with the belief, as is but too common in Ireland, and often too just, that some one had been belying him, the indignant horse-dealer went on in the same tone; but seeming afraid of failing in respect to young master, he addressed his appeal to the groom.

"Just-put-the-case-the-case-was-your-own!" Nine words which he uttered with such volubility, that they sounded like one, and that one some magical adjuration. "Just-put-the-case-the-case-was-your-own, would not ye have some feeling? Then, if by the blessing of luck I had been born a gentleman, and a great young gentleman, like Master Gerald, why, in his place, I'd give up an informer as soon and sooner than look at him, whosomdever he was, or whosomdever she was, for it was a she I'm confident, from a hint I got from a friend."

"Tut, tut, man!" interposed the saddler. "Now, Dan Conolly, you're out o' raison entirely, and you are not listening to Master Gerald."

"Then I am listening to his honour—only I know it is only to screen the housekeeper, who is a favourite, and was never my friend, the young gentleman spakes — and I'm jealous of that."

This was more incomprehensible than all the rest to Cecilia and Gerald. While they looked at each other in amazement, a few words were whispered in Irish by the cunning saddler to the enraged horse-dealer, which brought him to reason, or to whatever portion of reason he ever had.

The words were—"I must have mistaken, maybe he'll come round again, and be for the horse."

"Why, then, Master Gerald, sir, I crave your pardon," said the horse-dealer in a penitent tone. "If I forgot myself, and was too free, then I was too hot and out of raison. I'm sensible I'm subject to it. When a gentleman, especially one of this family that I've such a respect for, and then, above all, when your honour, Master Gerald, would turn to suspect me—as I suspected you was suspecting me of going to tell you a lie, or misleading of you any way, about a horse of all things. But I mistook your honour—I humbly crave your honour's pardon, Master Gerald."

Gerald willingly granted his pardon, and liked him all the better for his warmth.

"About Garry Owen, above all, I had no occasion to be puffing him off," continued the master of the horse, turning to him proudly. "Then the truth is, it was only to oblige you, Master Gerald, and his honour your father, who was always my friend, as I ought to remember, and do—it was only on that account, and my promise, that I brought Garry here *the* day, to make you the first offer at the price I first said. I wont be talking ungenteel, it does not become me, but I'd only wish your honour to know, without my mentioning it, that I could get more from many another."

"I am glad to hear that," said Gerald; "that relieves me from one difficulty — about you, Conolly."

"Oh, make no difficulty in life, my dear young gentleman, on account of me. If you have made up your mind to be off, and to give up Garry Owen, dear sir, it's done and done," said the knowing and polite horse-dealer; "and 'tis I in this case will be obligated to you, for I have two honourable chaps in my eye this minute, both eager as ever you see to snap him

up before I'd get home, or well out o' the great gate below; and to whichsomdever of the two I'd give the preference, he would come down on the spot with whatsomdever I'd name, ready money, and five guineas luck-penny to boot."

"Very well, then," said Gerald, "you had better"—— But the words stuck in his throat.

"Is it Jonah Crommie, the rich grazier's son, that's one of your chaps, Dan Conolly?" asked the saddler.

The horse-dealer nodded.

"Murder, man!" cried the saddler, "would you let him have Garry Owen? The likes of him—the squireen! the spalpeen! the mushroom! That puts me in mind of the miller, his father, riding formerly betwix' two big sacks to the market, himself the biggest sack. Faugh! the son of the likes to be master of Garry Owen!"

"They ought not to look so high, them graziers and middlemen, I admit," said the horse-dealer. "The half gentlemen might be content to be half mounted—but when there's the money."

"Best not for him to be laying it out on Garry Owen," said the saddler; "for even sup-

pose Garry would not throw him, and break his neck at the first going off, I'll tell you what would happen, Jonah Crommie would ruin Garry Owen's mouth for him in a week, and make him no better than a garron. Did anybody ever see Jonah Crommie riding a horse? It's this way he does it," lugging at the bridle with the hand, and the two legs out. "It is with three stirrups he rides."

All joined in the laugh—groom, coachman, helper, gossoon, and all. Garry Owen's master then protested Jonah Crommie should never ride him. But the other offer for Garry was "unexceptionable—undeniable."

"It is from Sir Essex Bligh, the member. Sir Essex wants an extraordinary fine pony for his eldest son and heir, young Sir Harry that will be; and he rides like an angel too! and what's more, like a gentleman, as he is too. Accordingly, Monday morning, next hunt-day, the young baronet that will be is to be introduced to the hunt, and could not be better than on Garry Owen here."

The whole hunt in full spirit was before Gerald's eyes, and young Sir Harry on "Garry Owen in glory." But Gerald's was not a mean

mind, to be governed by the base motives of jealousy and envy. Those who tried these incentives did not know him. He now decidedly stepped forward, and patting the horse, said, "Good-by, Garry Owen; since I cannot have you, I am glad you will have a gentleman for your master, who will use you well, and do you justice. Farewell for ever, Garry Owen." He put something satisfactory into the horse-dealer's hand, adding, "I am sorry I have given you so much trouble. I don't want the saddle."

Then turning suddenly away, Garry Owen was led off; and Gerald and Cecilia hastened to their mother, who, in much surprise, inquired what had happened.

"You will be better pleased, mamma, than if Gerald had a hundred Garry Owens," cried Cecilia.

At that moment their father threw open his study window and looked out, well pleased indeed, as he saw how the affair had ended. He came out and shook Gerald by the hand with affectionate pleasure and paternal pride.

"Safe out of the hands of your flatterers, my boy; welcome to your friends! I am glad, my

dear son, to see that you have self-command sufficient to adhere to a generous intention, and to do the good which you purpose."

Gerald's father put a purse containing the promised price of Garry Owen into his hand, and offered to assist him in any way he might desire in executing his plan for the snow-woman. After some happy consultations, it was settled that it would be best, instead of building a new house for her, which could not be immediately ready, to rent one that was already finished, dry, and furnished, and in which they could set her up in a little shop in the village. Whatever was wanting to carry this plan into execution, Gerald's father and mother supplied. They advised that Gerald should *give* only a part of the sum he had intended, and *lend* the other part to the poor woman, to be returned by small payments at fixed periods, so that it would make a fund, that might be again lent and repaid, "and thus be continually useful to her, or to some one else in distress."

"Gerald," said his father, "you may hereafter have the disposal of a considerable property, therefore I am glad, even in these your boyish days, to have any opportunity of turning

your mind to consider how you can be most useful to your tenantry. I have no doubt, from your generous disposition, that you will be kind to them; but I feel particular satisfaction in seeing that you early begin to practise that self-denial which is in all situations essential to real generosity."

THE END.

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