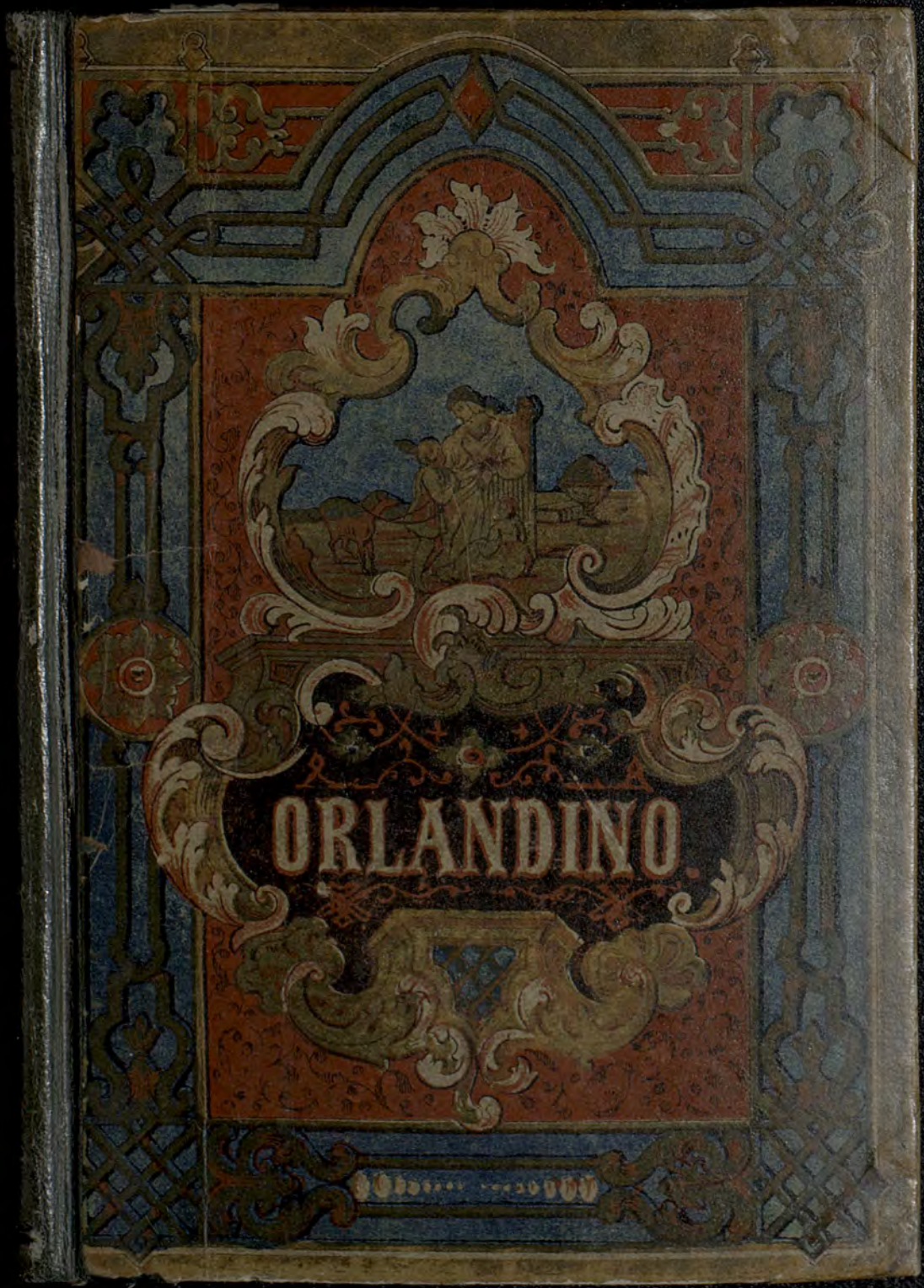
ORLANDINO

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EDGEWORTH, M.
ORLANDINO
1848


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Orlando no New Back Stuff 1940

This is the first story in Orlando
Library for Young People series. A
temperance story. Written for the
benefit of the Irish Poor Relief Fund
and the last story Miss Edgeworth
ever wrote. For full publication
see p 202 - 203

Slade's Bibliography of
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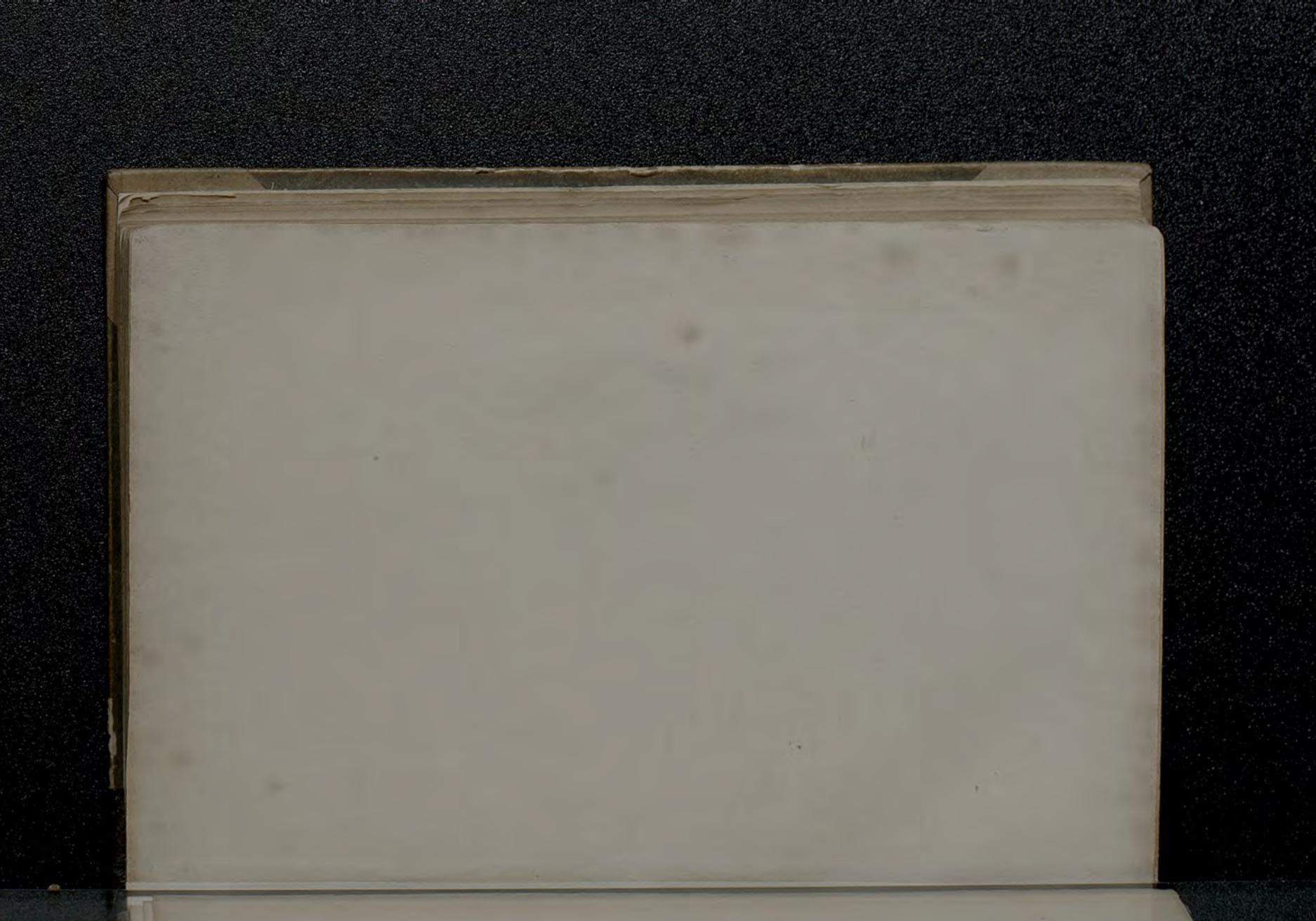
George M. Bartlett
A New Year's Gift
from his
Mamma

CHAMBERS'S

LIBRARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.



ORLANDO

# ORLANDINO.

BY

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.
1848.

# ORLANDINO.

BY

MARIA EDGEWORTH,

AUTHOR OF EARLY LESSONS, &c.

EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.
1848.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY W. AND R. CHAMBERS.

THE present small volume forms the first of a series of works, entitled 'CHAMBERS'S LIBRARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE,' which will consist principally of moral and religious tales likely to influence the conduct and feelings of youth. The present, a story of Self-Denial, has been obligingly written for the series by MISS EDGEWORTH, who, I doubt not, will be again welcomed to the field of juvenile literature.

W. C.

EDINBURGH, *Nov.* 3, 1847.

# ORLANDINO.

"A PUPPET-SHOW—a raree-show!" cried little Bessy, bursting into the breakfast-room where her uncle was reading the newspaper, and where her mother was waiting for the tea-urn. "Oh, mamma! mamma! never mind the tea, or the spoonfuls! Oh come, come—do! mamma, and speak to this man! Will you, dear mamma? Pray, mamma!—Pray!—he is at the hall door."

"The person is gone from the hall door, my dear," said Bessy's sister Amy, entering with a certain degree of composure becoming her advanced time of life; for she might be between ten and eleven: "the person is gone; and he was not a man, but a boy."

"I am sorry he is gone," said Bessy, "whether he was man or boy; but I think he was a

man, only a very little man, for I heard Thomas telling Walter that there was a *showman* at the door; and he gave Thomas a playbill, mamma —a very long playbill—as long as my arm, and longer. Do tell mamma, Amy, for you know all about it."

"I do not know all," said the discreet Amy. "Walter has the playbill, and here he comes."

"And here *it* comes," cried Bessy.

Walter came in, and held high above his head a long printed paper. And he read aloud, in the voice of a town-crier—

"On Monday, the 15th instant, will be performed, at

CASTLETOWN BELLEVUE,

A SUPERB DIVERTISSEMENT.

*Morning Exhibition.*

A Magnificent Double Tent, in form of an Amphitheatre, to be pitched in the park.

*By particular desire,*

O R L A N D I N O,

CHILD OF PROMISE—CHILD OF PERFORMANCE.

Astley Outdone,—ORLANDINO in India—Oriental Scenery—Tiger Hunt—Royal Tiger springing upon Captain Smith —ORLANDINO saves him.

ORLANDINO at Paris—Grand Tournament—
Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, in costume.

---

ORLANDINO in Russia—Meeting of Murat and the Cossacks
—Murat crowned King of the Cossacks
—Attempt to Assassinate Murat
—ORLANDINO saves him.

*Exeunt omnes* to the tune of
'Ou peut on etre mieux qu' au sein de sa famille.'

---

*Interlude.*

Music—God Save the Queen, and other Pieces, with the
wonderful performance of Rule Britannia by the
Self-modulating Melodious Lion's Head.

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*Evening Exhibition.*

Dissolving Views—Fireworks—Burning of Moscow—
Fall of the Kremlin—General Blow-up.

---

ORLANDINO in Ireland—Fairy Castle—Fairy Cap—
Everything set a Dancing—Cups and Dishes Fly about—
Hunchback Released.

FINIS."

"Hunchback released," repeated Bessy; "oh this must be our old Edwin,

'In Britain's isle and Arthur's days,
When midnight fairies danced the maze.'"

"I'd rather have 'Dissolving Views!'" cried Amy.

"Royal tiger springing upon Captain Smith!" cried Bessy.

"Grand tournament!" cried Amy.

"Burning of Moscow!" they both together vehemently exclaimed.

Calmly Walter said, "The double tent, in form of an amphitheatre, must be well worth surely. I should like to see that."

"Mamma, will it be a real tiger?" cried Bessy.

"Oh, mamma, can we go?" said Amy.

"Oh, mamma, mamma!—uncle, uncle!" cried Bessy. "We *can* go! we *shall* go!—on Monday!"

"Morning *and* evening!" said Amy. "It is not only an evening play: all morning there is to be acting. Oh! I hope it will be a fine day!"

"Murat king of the Cossacks superb, I am sure," said Walter. "I know all about it in Scott's Napoleon. I shall like to see all the fine horsemanship, and the throwing of the javelins."

"What is the price of the tickets, Walter?" said his uncle.

Walter threw the playbill from him. "It's impossible," said he. "Tickets seven-and-six-pence—children half-price!"

"Then I go half-price," cried Bessy. "Will you, Amy?"

Amy reddened. "I should not mind being called a child either, but then Walter and mamma" —— She stopped, and a blank silence ensued. Walter looked towards his uncle, but could not see his face—the newspaper was up before it. He looked at his mother; but he would not ask her; he knew she had no money for amusements, she had given so much in the time of distress.

The uncle put aside his newspaper—threw it behind him—took out his pencil. Mamma, who seemed to have an instinctive knowledge of his purpose, handed to him the cover of a letter, and he began to calculate, as it was obvious, and to write down the result. On those figures, thought Walter, our fate depends! And so thought Amy, and so thought Bessy; and not one word was uttered, hardly a breath drawn, while the uncle, with one leg crossed over the other, wrote, and finally summed up the total, and then sat and thought. Walter longed to ask, "What does it come to?" but he made "I dare not" wait upon "I would." It was a conscientious, not a cowardly, "I dare not."

"Twelve miles there, and twelve miles back," said his uncle; "and now that poor Standard

and Strongbow have been sold in these hard times"——

"We must take post-horses," said Walter: "it cannot be:" and he flung away the playbill. "I give it up."

He said it steadily; but though he spoke like a man, he felt like a boy. His uncle went on calculating.

"To Castletown Bellevue, twelve miles, and the gate. Twelve miles there, and twelve back —half-price back to be sure we may allow. But there is no moon, and with that half-cut hill, we could not venture it at night; so we must allow for staying there all night, and then breakfast"——

"But we should not want breakfast," cried Amy and Bessy: "we should never think of breakfast till we got back here. Do not you think so, Walter?"

"Breakfast! who could think of breakfast?" cried Walter.

"Sire! '*Il 'n'y a pas de circonstance ou on ne dejeune pas,*'" said his uncle, laughing. "But, Bessy," said he, turning to her, and asking a question which seemed as far as possible from the present purpose—"Bessy, how many rows

of a garter did you knit one morning before breakfast?"

"A hundred and fifty, uncle!" cried Bessy in an exulting tone.

"And how much did you earn by it?"

"I cannot say that I *earned*—really earned anything by it," said Bessy; "because mamma did not *pay* me as she would have paid a workwoman. She *gave* me more for them than she would have paid for them if she had been buying them in the shop. She gave me a whole half-crown!"

"A whole half-crown!" said her uncle.

"Yes; but then that was because it was for the poor, and to reward me for working for the poor. And Amy made, and I made, nice kettle-holders, and"—— But here their uncle, dreading—and not without reason—an interminable flow of kettle-holders, capes, mittens, and mits; slippers, tidies, and things without a name—interrupted her with, "That is enough, Bessy; you know we should not boast of our good deeds."

"She only answered the question you asked, my dear uncle," said Walter, who could not bear anything like an unjust reproach made to another.

"And you were very hard upon us before, uncle," said Bessy; "you laughed at us for much-ado-about-nothing works, and called them all love's-labour-lost."

"Did I?" said their uncle laughing; "well, that was cruel."

"It was very provoking, uncle; and what was still more provoking, I remember you did not think much of my giving up sweetmeats, and puddings, and everything at second course, to save money for the poor; and mamma paid me for all the sugar and sweet things I gave up; and I had the pence, and whatever my forbearings came to; and then when you saw me counting up what my lumps of sugar came to, and when I saw you smile in that disagreeable way — do you know, uncle, I was ready to cry?"

And, worked up by the recollection, Bessy was ready to cry again; but her uncle smiled, not the disagreeable smile, and she twinkled away her tears, as he said kindly, "My poor little Bessy, I am sorry I vexed you."

Then Bessy, looking anxiously up in his face, said, "Are you *really* sorry, uncle, or do you only say that to comfort me? I am afraid,

uncle, that you still, in the bottom of your heart, think that all we children did or can do for the poor is nothing; and so you despise all our doings, and all our works, and all our little sacrifices."

Now Walter took his uncle's part. "I know my uncle does not despise any of your sacrifices, Bessy, whatever he might have said in joke: I am sure in earnest he did not; for he said to mamma—and she said so too—that however small the sacrifices might be, he liked to see you make them, and go on with them, day after day, because you might then in time do really good and great things. But then my uncle said it would not do to talk of; because once it was praised, it would be spoiled for generosity, and no one was really generous who did it for praise and ostentation."

"We have got very far from the play," said Bessy with a sigh.

"Not so far as you suppose, my dear little girl," said her uncle. "I should like to take you all to this play, if your mother has no objection. I was so much pleased by the very things which you fancied I despised, that I must indulge myself in giving you this amusement. You

need not calculate, Walter, any more; leave all that to me." And as he spoke, he put his purse into Walter's hand, and said, "You shall have the pleasure of managing it all for your mother and sisters, and for me: do not forget me—I must go with you to see the wondrous sight."

"Joy—joy—joy!" cried Bessy, springing upon her uncle; and then, as he held her in his arms, she laid her head upon his shoulder in silent gratitude.

They thought it was all settled, but a small difficulty occurred: they did not know at what hour on Monday the 15th the morning grand exhibition was to commence, and consequently could not say at what hour the post-horses were to be ordered. The playbill, which Walter had so magnanimously flung from him in the hopelessness of affairs, was now found within the fender; and the hour, which had been inserted in writing, was so scorched, as to be illegible. The paper went from hand to hand, and "Perhaps I could," and "Maybe I can," and "Let me have one look." But not one of them could decipher the figures, or decide whether the hour was ten, eleven, or twelve. The bell was rung,

and inquiry was made for the man who brought the playbill.

"Not a man, but a boy, sir," said Thomas; "and he is gone long since. But he had more bills in his hand, and he is gone, I do suppose, to distribute them in the town."

Walter set off to the town in search of the man and the playbills.

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It was market day in this little town. There was a crowd at the door of the post-office; and at the furthest end of the passage, Walter saw an outstretched arm over the people's heads, and the hand which held the playbills was of a more delicate shape and colour than could have belonged to one of the common country folk. The passage was so filled, that Walter could catch only a glimpse of the person; but from that glimpse he was struck with the face. The countenance was remarkably intelligent and expressive, but its changes so rapid and so violent, that he could not decide whether it was bad or good. It fixed his attention, and excited his curiosity; and instead of making his way up

to him, and getting another playbill, he stood aside and listened to what the youth was saying. The voice was agreeable—neither vulgar Irish nor vulgar English—yet not quite English; more like a foreigner; yet not French, though the postmaster designated "this individual" as French, and though some French words were introduced in answering a sort of gentleman farmer, who, pressing the knob of his silver-handled whip against his lips, stood looking at the youth rather earnestly; then asked what countryman he was—what country he came from? The boy said, "*Plait il?*" as if to gain time; and composing his countenance, which changed at the inquiry, and evading the question, "What countryman are you?" he replied to the query, "We come from England, where our company has been exhibiting in various parts of that country—Tunbridge, Brighton, Cheltenham, Bristol—with great success: *succés partout, monsieur.*"

But "monsieur" was not pronounced as a Frenchman would have pronounced it. Silver-whip turned away whistling, took his letters, mounted his horse, which was at the door, and rode off. As he, a big burly man, made

his way out, the full-length figure of his object became visible to Walter; and in the first place he saw that the full length was below the middle size of man—scarcely above that of boys of his own age and height. The young stranger had been standing upon some steps, which had raised his head to an equality with tall men's shoulders; but he was of miniature stature, delicately made, perfectly proportioned, and his motions, as he swayed himself to one side or to the other, offering his handbills, or bowing his acknowledgments, were peculiarly graceful. The postmaster wanted to speak to him, or he to the postmaster; and he stepped down from the stairs upon the floor; and laying the little white hand on the counter which divided the passage from the sanctum of the office, he vaulted over with a perfect agility, alighting, with elastic grace and just *aplomb*, within the forbidden ground, yet at due distance, nicely calculated, from the dignitary, and with such perfect deference in his air and countenance—such easy assurance, such a winning smile—that for the life of him the man in office could not say to him "Impertinence!" the word which he had at his tongue's end.

The self-possession of the boy so surprised and confounded him, that he put his pen behind his ear, and simply stared; at the same time, with habitual caution, he laid hand and arm over the letters sorted on the counter. The youth glanced; and scornfully putting a playbill into the postmaster's hand, he with his taper finger pointed to the last line, in which the prices of seats were marked, and one word he whispered in his ear, which none of the bystanders heard, but all interpreted to be *free of admittance.* And lest there should be any doubt, he, producing from his elegant waistcoat pocket a silver pencil-case, slided out the pencil, and wrote a word of promise "from the Child of Performance," with a nod of assurance doubly sure. Then, taking special care not to disarrange or to approach any of the letters or papers on the table, he placed his hand firm on neutral ground, and vaulted back again. Secure of having engaged at small cost a popular patron, he returned to the distribution of his playbills.

Walter had no doubt that this was Orlandino himself; and he was so busy watching his graceful leaps, and studying his voice and counte-

nance, that in his absence of mind he did not perceive that he barred the entrance into the office, when a gentle touch, and a respectful "By your leave, Master Walter," made him start out of the way. The person for whom he made room was an elderly woman, of a remarkably prepossessing countenance, her dress suiting her age and condition, yet put on with more than common neatness for her class of life in Ireland. Over her head she had a large coloured shawl or kerchief, with cap underneath, which made a straight band in front, over the gray parted hair, on the smooth forehead, and fell in folds over her shoulders, while a snow-white muslin was pinned across her bosom.

She inquired from the postmaster whether, "by the blessing of Heaven, there would be a letter for her from her son in America. The Widow Walsh, sir, I am; if you'd be pleasing to look it out for me. Peter never failed me these five years. And you are sensible, sir, yourself, that you had always the luck to find them blessed letters for me. God bless you, that never disappointed me!"

But this time, though stimulated by the good woman's gratitude, he could not find the ex-

pected letter. "Well, then, I got no right in life nor reason at all to expect it. God bless him anyway. Peter, to a certainty, is not in fault, but the winds or the post that has gone astray; and it will come next time, or in due time, with a *miss-sent* stamped on it, or *too late*, as you noticed once-t to me, sir—you mind?"

The postmaster would not admit that the post could be in fault, though he granted the winds might.

"I'd thank you anyway, sir, to give the second look over them that's sorted there. Would not there be a Walsh amongst them? Maybe underneath that there paper, sir; if you could be considerate just to give a second kind look."

His hands were full of letters, giving them out to impatient applicants, but with his elbow he shoved out of the way "that there paper." Under it appeared several letters—"Winters, and Wallaces, and Walshes"—many Walshes.

"And wouldn't that be the right one there, sir, under your thumb? God for ever bless it! that's Peter's own hand, sir, if you please."

The postmaster, as in duty bound, looked carefully at the direction, that he might not

make a mistake among the Walshes; and he asked the good woman, whom he did not appear to recognise so well as she knew him, if she was the Widow Walsh of Carrolinan.

"Of Corlinan that is, sir—the Widow Walsh. I am and have been wife or widow, me and mine, these hundred years, I'll swear. Lend me my letter, and no more about it."

She had had patience; and she had spirit now that the stock of patience which had been given to her was out; and the public sympathised with the mother's impatience—and even in a remote country post-office the public eye and voice have power.

"Och give the gintlewoman her letter"—"Och give the craythur her own letter, when it must be plainly hers"—had the desired effect. The postmaster relinquished the letter, at the same time murmuring that not one of those who interfered knew the Widow Walsh of Corlinan from Abraham. He hoped she was the right woman.

Walter, who knew her, as he had seen her paying rent to his uncle, came forward and satisfied the scrupulous postmaster that she was the right woman; and she thanked him, and

drew the letter from her bosom, into which, at the first possession, she had deposited it, and tearing it open, said, "Would you read it for me, Master Walter? You was always good. Read my last from Peter."

He took the letter and the mother to the foot of the stairs apart, where he could read it, he thought, so as to be heard only by her.

"It is easy reading Peter's writing then; for he got schooling, thanks be to Heaven, early," the mother said, as she seated herself, prepared for the happiness of hearing.

"Where would he be now, Master Walter? Does he be in the same good place he got waiter at the grand hotel, Philadelphia? See, will you, sir?" Walter read—

"UNITED STATES HOTEL, PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR MOTHER,

Enclosed you will find a bill of exchange for £5, 5s. 2d. Write immediately on receipt of this, and say what time you can set out; and depend on punctual further remittance for passage, &c.

"The news from Ireland is of the worst character. I would not have you live another day, if that could be avoided, in my much-beloved but miserable country. I must be brief to perform a promise I made my wife, to ask you *all* to come to live with us the balance of your days. This request comes from one who will take no excuse, accept no refusal. You

will like her and family. The little children are almost crazed at the idea of seeing you, also myself and wife. It is with the greatest feelings of gratitude for the advantages afforded me in my youth I now address you. But I must be brief. I don't intend you to enter the house of a stranger. You will, from first to last, live with me. When you are under my own eyes, I can tell what you want, and see you don't want it long. There is no getting out of coming.

"Dear Mother, and sister Ellen, you will not deny me and my companion the boon of once more beholding you, dear mother, with my own eyes, and you, dearly beloved sister. I know you will have no objection to coming under my humble roof and protection to complete our happiness. Come, and we hope we will make you comfortable completely. The children are all talking of what walks they will take you. My wife, and all the wife's family, join in love to you. Make my respects to * * * * &c. I shall never forget those who have befriended you as long as I live. Do not on any account disappoint me. Write directly; and whenever you do, please direct to Peter Walsh, United States Hotel, Philadelphia, U. S.

Believe me to be your most affectionate
and devoted Son,
PETER WALSH."*

This letter so engrossed Walter whilst he was reading it, that he had never looked up except at the mother, and had not seen any one else, or attended to anything that passed in

* This is a genuine letter; literally copied from an Irish emigrant's letter to his mother (received April 1847).

the office. By the time he had finished, the passage was cleared; there remained none but the postmaster, who was settling the papers in the pigeon-holes of his letter-press, and the young stranger, who was standing at the end of the counter near them: he stood like a statue —motionless; his eyes closed, tears gathered on the long eyelashes, and one had rolled down and stood upon the cheek. Some playbills hung from his hand: it was evident that he was unconscious almost of anything around him. Walter ran to the postmaster and asked for a glass of water.

"What ails him?" said the mother, still engrossed in her son's letter. But having folded that, and placed it in her bosom, she turned to the young stranger, took the hand that was next to her, and began chafing the wrist *to bring him to;* and observing the dead white of that hand, she said, "Gintleman's son; looks like—not older than my Peter, poor lad; but worn sadly for his young years. Take the water, sir. Wait, dear Master Walter, then, till I sprinkle the forehead. Fine hair. But what signifies!"

The cold water reviving him, he opened his eyes, and quickly coming to his recollection,

seemed instantly to feel a sense of shame. A blush came over his marble face, and regaining his powers of speech, he thanked the mother, and Walter, and the postmaster all in a breath, and stood up, saying he was quite well now. He was subject to such seizures. Recovered from whatever had been the matter with him, he took up his bundle of playbills and walked out of the office.

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Then Walter, bethinking himself of the business on which he came, followed hastily as the youth quitted the house, caught him just in time to ask at what hour the entertainment was to commence on Monday the 15th, and told how the figures had been destroyed in their playbill, and requested to have another. Of course this request was willingly complied with; and in the playbill now produced the figures were very distinct—"twelve o'clock precisely." The figures and the writing, of which there was a good deal interlined, were beautiful, and Orlandino was proud to say they were all his own; and the composition too was his. In the art of puffing,

young as he was, he was esteemed by the manager and his company as an adept; and he was delighted to see how Walter's imagination had been excited by his performance. They walked together down the village street, Walter more and more interested and curious about this youth: he at every step displaying new talents, and much desire to please, and more to be admired. He found that Walter's eagerness to know the hour of commencement arose from his wish to be present at the putting up of the tent in the park. Then he talked of tent-poles and tent-pins or pegs in such a way as to persuade Walter that he understood tent-pitching and tent-striking better than any one living; and, moreover, gave him assurance that if he could but canter his pony over early enough in the morning, so as to be at Castletown Bellevue by six, or half after six, on Monday morning, he should witness the whole operation. Moreover, since Master Walter had such a mechanical turn, such a taste for ingenious contrivance, he would show him how the great amphitheatre was made of two theatres hinged together, and opening into a great semicircle, so as to close at pleasure into an oval or oblong form, according to the

most ancient classical models. This he said with an air of no small pretension. Walter was delighted with the idea of seeing this tent put up, and excessively struck with the ingenuity and intelligence of his new companion, in spite of his conceited manner. They reached the cross-roads—one the mail-coach road, and one to Walter's home—he asked Orlandino to come up to the house, as his mother could then settle about their places for the performance, and his uncle would be so much interested in the ingenious contrivances for the double theatre. But as he spoke, he saw the young man's face clouding over. The frank, assured, and easy manner changed; he looked confused; he spoke hesitatingly. He was "much honoured, sensible of the advantage, the patronage to the *Company* in general, and to himself in particular; but he was so circumstanced, so pressed: he was, in fact, waiting for the coach to go to Castletown Bellevue," he said. "The manager," he added, "is a very strict man; I must keep time with him; in short, sir, I could not have the honour at this present of going up to *the big house.*"

This expression, uttered in a strong Irish brogue, startled Walter; it was in such complete

contrast to the former affected half-foreign, half-English tone, and in such contradiction to the assertion of their company having only just arrived in Ireland; and he said with a smile, "You cannot be quite a stranger in this country? Either you must have been now a good while here, or you must have been in Ireland before, to have caught that tone so completely."

Orlandino coloured up to the eyes; but he stopped suddenly, and turned aside, either to hide his confusion, or from real good-nature to assist a poor little girl who was trying to lift a great basketful of nicely-washed caps and muslins up the steps of the house they were passing. He took it from her with rather a theatrical grace, and Walter rang the door-bell; and as he did so, he recognised the poor girl as a protégée of his sisters. They had taught her to knit, and his mother had given work to her. They called her poor Mary; but he had never heard her other name. He had not seen her for some time, and now she looked thin and weak. The basket, though not very heavy, had almost slipped from her hands; and the pile of beautifully clear-starched muslins were all but in the mud. She trembled, and looked gaunt

with hunger. A maid-servant, a great *brungel*,* opened the door, and bade her hand up the basket, as she was ordered on no account to let her in, as the mistress and the ladies within were in dread of the fever now rife near at hand. She might wait, and the basket would be given out with the fine things for next week: and the bill for this week paid, if there was a possibility.

Walter and Orlandino stood to see what the event would be as to the possibility. *Brungel* returned with the bill, but no money. "Not convenient; must call next week, when these things would be done," and she shoved out the basket with a pile of muslins to be clear-starched. "There, take it, and be off with you; and not too much starch, mind; and not an atom, not a particle at all of blue in it for your life!"

So saying, she threw the unpaid bill on the muslins, and shut the door. The poor child sat down on the steps and hid her face in her apron. She said nothing but "My mother!"

Walter's money had long been hot in his hand. He doubted no longer, but darted across the

* *Brungel*—a coarse, stout girl.

street to the relief shop, threw his shilling on the counter — "Stirabout—Indian meal—meal rice—what have you? A loaf of bread! Anything!"

"Here, sir—just baked," answered the ready boy. "And stirabout, sir, India meal and rice, just boiled. And what'll I put it into? But I see, then, no bowl, sir. But I'll manage—I'll get it."

And so saying, the boy ran into the inner room—to the mistress's tea things—seized upon a slop-basin and sugar-bowl—"They'll be back before night-tea. I'll be to the fore, and have them in unknownst; and you, Master Walter, dear, if they'd be missed, answering for all."

Master Walter answered for all; and the boy helped to carry all "across street."

"Bravissimo! young gentleman!" exclaimed Orlandino. "Famously, Master Walter; you done it with the speed of light in no time."

With the speed of instinct, Walter came to the conclusion that, as he had before suspected, Mr Orlandino was Irish: these characteristic expressions, this sympathetic flattery, could be only from an Irishman. But Orlandino did not see his smile. Intent on his own vanity, he

snatched from the boy's hand the loaf, drew a French bread-knife from his breast, and began to cut away, without seeming to be in the least conscious of impropriety in thus dealing with the bread which was not his own, and not having the least idea that he might be thought officious; taking it for granted, in the good-nature of his conceit, that Walter would be pleased to see him do and give; and delighted with his own grace, he handed, on the knife's point, a slice of the smoking-hot fresh bread to the poor girl, saying, "Capital—the best ever I smelt. Take it, dear!"

Mary did not stretch out her hand, though she looked ravenously at the bread one instant, then turned aside, and drew back.

Walter took the slice of bread from the point of the knife, and would have rescued the loaf from Orlandino, but he held it fast in his grasp; and Walter, breaking a piece off, tasted it, and said it was too fresh. "You will like it better, Mary, by and by; will not you?"

"A deal, sir;" and she whispered, "I could not touch it before them beggars."

The words reached Orlandino's quick ears, and his quick eyes caught a group of beggar boys

who had gathered at the corner, and who that instant called out, "Blessings on yees, Master Walter, that has it—please your honour that never forgets."

Orlandino struck his knife into the loaf, and slice after slice he stepped forward with to the boys, bestowing a kick with every slice, and then bidding them all "be off, and be seen no more on their peril."

As flies flapped off, they all dispersed, to return, peril or no peril, the first opportunity, to be as troublesome as before. But for the present the little vagabonds were scared, and Mary swallowed in peace. While she ate, the good-natured impertinent seized upon her basketful of muslins.

"Never fear, child!" cried he in answer to her look of alarm—"never you fear! But see how I'll manage; for how would you carry those crockerywares and the basket, and they full, and you but two hands? Leave it all to me, and you just eat easy on. I'm just going to settle it for her, Master Walter. Steady now, there!" said he to the basket, as he planted it on the road before the door. He seemed to have half a mind to take off his coat, but contented

himself with turning up the sleeves; and continued, as he worked, in the abundance of his self-satisfaction—

"I am famous for packing, you must know. packer and gauger to the company."

Then scientifically and mechanically he placed the bowls in the centre, well separated by rolls of handkerchiefs, and well surrounded by soft muslins on every side—rolling and winding, convoluting and evoluting, talking and looking all the time in the most conceited manner, but actually doing the business admirably.

"See there now, Master Walter; you are a judge! intelligent beyond all! My principles of packing *par excellence*, all comprised in one word—and that word now I'll reveal to you, for you are worthy of it. My *mot d'enigme*—my one word is—elasticity! Do you take me? You do! Grave as you are—solid—cube root, as I calculate—worth extracting. You understand me? Natures differ—nature's all——There now!—the best-packed basket ever witnessed! go to the world's end and back again it would without stirring."

Walter could not help laughing at this strange mixture of sense and nonsense, activity and

inordinate vanity. He had looked on with proud humility, with the half-pitying, half-contemptuous eyes with which pride looks down on vanity, whether from man to man, or from boy to boy; but he was puzzled, fairly puzzled, by this young stranger. He was evidently very clever, and certainly very good-natured; he appeared, too, to have had some education; but was he true?—was he honest? His pretence of English accent, his scraps of French, with his brogue and vulgar Irish expressions breaking through, and his confused, evasive answers as to his country, were suspicious. Whether Orlandino read any such suspicion in his countenance, or whether he was really afraid of being late, he interrupted Walter's cogitations with, "But the coach! All this time it must have passed. I've missed my place. What shall I do?"

"The coach is it, please your honour?" cried one from among the ragamuffin swarm which had now resettled at their corner. Above their heads came one taller and smarter-looking than the rest, and his was the voice. His peeled stick, his tight-buttoned jacket over shirtless breast, his bare knees and dangling strings, his shoeless feet, his rabbit-skin cap, his ready air—

all proclaimed him an errand-boy by profession, always ready to "run to Cork to serve your honour," for love *and* sixpence; while the set of his cap, and the arch expression of his comical face, equally proclaimed him to be "a bit of a rogue," and worthy of his name—"'Cute Paddy, the bould gossoon." Putting himself forward, "Is it the coach, please your honour?" said he: "then I seen it overturned an hour ago and better at the bad step by Crookenaslattery, where the engineer's public works is begun, and not ended, but all in a hole and a slush; and the wheel off, and the forge three miles off; and the coach wouldn't be up these two hours anyway."

"Thank you," said Orlandino coldly; and turning from the gossoon, he spread his fine bandana handkerchief over the girl's basket. But the gossoon was not so easily disposed of. He made another step forward, and a long step, which brought him close to Orlandino—"Long life to your honour—your English honour's honour—a gintleman that never forgets the poor; give the poor boy something!"

"If I am not mistaken, my good lad," replied the young actor, at once assuming a reserved

look, and speaking in his high English tone—"if I am not mistaken, I gave you all something already this morning, and not many minutes ago."

"Is it me, your honour? Sorrow a hap'orth of your honour's change did I get: it was on them others behind me you bestowed it, sir."

"Very well, then," said his English honour, stiff and cold—"very well, then, go to them, and they will, I suppose, make what you call in Ireland a divide, and give you a share."

"A divide! Would it be of the kick or of the loaf, please your honour? The kick you bestowed from yourself, or the lump from the poor girl's loaf that you gave away for Master Walter? Is it the bread or the kick they'll divide; or was there any change given among yees?" continued Paddy, affecting to turn round to the grinning crowd, and then half-whispered, "Sixpence! and I'm dumb!"

But the young actor thought he could brave the "bould gossoon," and answered haughtily, "I have nothing for you; I have no sixpences."

"True for you!" cried Paddy; "but you'll find one. Try again; your honour would be apt to find it at the bottom of your pocket."

Orlandino repeated, "I have nothing." But Paddy, confident in his tried powers of alternate bullying and flattering, went on, "Then there's many a gintleman that says he has not sixpence, has mints all the time at command: going the world incog—travelling, and strolling, and acting only for fun."

The actor changed colour. And Paddy, stretching over, added, "Never trimble, man; not a word of it from me will they hear—I'm no informer—only give me the sixpence, dear!"

Not a sixpence, but half-a-crown—a splendid half-crown, new and bright—was now chucked to Paddy; while "crowns of glory!" came from the corner, and "success to his honour wherever he'd go."

And success to myself, thought Paddy, as he ran off with his admiring mob behind.

"To the whisky shop no doubt," said Orlandino, still cold English, and smiling superior down. But Walter looked grave, and said he was sorry to see a good half-crown thrown away.

"What's half-a-crown?" cried the other grandly.

"Half-a-crown is something," said Walter;

"at least when I have earned it, I think something of it, and would rather give it to do some good."

"One gives without calculating," said Orlandino affectedly, "when one's generous."

"Or when one is flattered," said Walter smiling; "or threatened, or both together."

Orlandino reddened, and passing over the "threatened," declared he detested flattery; and answering the incredulity of Walter's look, and surprised to find in such a quiet-looking lad, not so old as himself, so nice an observer, he hastily repeated, "I detest all flattery. You do not think I was taken in by that vulgar fellow's flummery. I declare now, sir, if you will believe me, I have a natural antipathy for that 'oil of fools,' as some one calls flattery; in fact I could never bear it."

"Never!" said Walter, persisting in his look of incredulity.

"Never!" repeated Orlandino; "except, perhaps, when delicately perfumed — on a benefit night, when wafted from quality fans; but this gross, rancid stuff, from such *spalpeens!*"——

"*Spalpeens!*" repeated Walter, while Orlandino rubbed his hand over his face to hide his

confusion at having uttered so palpable an Irishism; and Mary, taking advantage of his letting go her basket, which she had been endeavouring to get from his grasp, now took possession of it, and prepared to raise it upon her head; but in doing so, it touched his shoulder, and he turned—"Stay, child; I'll put it up for you." He took hold of it; but as he raised it, a twig in one side of it caught in her thick hair, and drew out a lock of it—a long, wavy lock of beautiful auburn hair it was. Orlandino fixed his eyes on it with more of earnestness than of admiration: his look expressed surprise, curiosity, anxiety. His conceit, his affectation, his acting, all were gone at once.—Here was nature; natural real feeling; deep, intense feeling.—He carefully, tenderly disentangled the girl's hair; touching it respectfully, and as it were religiously. Walter, who watched him with astonishment, perceived that his hands trembled, and that his fingers were again becoming that deadly white he had seen them at the post-office, when he almost swooned.

"Thank you, sir," cried he, as Walter put his hand to his shoulder as if to support him—"thank you, sir. I don't know what's come

over me—I'm not quite well: I'm often seized this way. It's over now. Thank you, sir; and thank you too," said he to Mary, whose pitying look well-nigh overcame him again. But struggling to collect himself, he said confusedly, "What was it? What happened?—Oh I know;" and touching Mary's head, he said kindly—

"Is your mother's hair this colour?"

"No, sir; my mother's hair is quite gray."

He drew back; and leaning against the wall, he murmured to himself, "Bring their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

Walter had no doubt that this young man had run away from his parents to go upon the stage, and had disgraced them and himself, and, as the gossoon had intimated, was now afraid of being found out. But he could hardly think that this poor girl, Mary, could be anyway related to him—she looked so forlorn, and so poverty-stricken.

"What is your mother's name, child?" said Orlandino.

"Smith, sir," was the answer.

"Smith! that is no name at all," said he rather angrily.

"It is my mother's, sir," said the child.

"Do not be angry with her because her name is Smith," said Walter; "she can't help that."

"I am not in the least angry." But in a dissatisfied tone he repeated, "Smith — and where does your mother live?"

The girl hesitated, and looked up the road: "We live in a cabin at the end of the *bohreen**— off that road."

"I will carry the basket there for you," cried Orlandino suddenly.

"No, thank you, sir," said the girl; "it's too much trouble for you."

"No trouble in life," said he.

"I had rather you did not, sir. My mother does not like strangers coming to her. She is very ill, sir, and weak, and a little thing startles her."

"Let her carry it herself," said Walter.

Orlandino repeated the word "strangers" in a low voice with much emotion; and again taking out his fine handkerchief, which Mary had returned to him, he spread it over the muslins, and let Mary go. But looking after her, repeated in a dissatisfied tone, "Smith — her name is Smith."

* *Bohreen*—a very narrow lane leading off a main road.

"That seems to be a great offence," said Walter.

"I knew a man of the name, who was of this country—that silver-handled whip we met at the post-office—a steward, if I recollect rightly, to ——. I wonder"——

Walter was more and more puzzled, and more and more interested in this extraordinary lad, whose quick changing manner, and the mystery that seemed to hang over him, excited his imagination as well as his curiosity. He was not what is usually called a romantic youth; but when his imagination did unfold its wings, its flight was high and wide; and now it flew high from the gossoon's suggestion. "He might be—he certainly was a gentleman's son. A gentleman's son in disguise. A gentleman's son on the stage for a frolic. A gentleman's, a nobleman's perhaps." With the Red Book Walter was not very familiar; but he was sure his mother or his uncle would find it all out in a minute. They were now within a few yards of his home: they had walked on together.

"This is our gate. You are in no hurry now, Orlandino, or whatever you please to call yourself: the coach will not pass for some time now.

Could not you come up to the house? I want my uncle to be acquainted with you."

"Thank you kindly, sir," answered Orlandino hastily, in his warm Irish accent and Irish idiom; and then recollecting himself, he added formally, and in his feigned tone, "You do me too much honour; but as the time for the coach passing is now uncertain, I must remain on this mail-coach road for fear I should miss it. But could not you, Master Walter, walk on a bit further with me till we meet the coach?"

Walter hesitated; when Orlandino, assuming a frankness of manner, as if willing to be only an actor, re-urged his request, adding, "The tent—the amphitheatre, sir; I have not half explained how it is managed. I will explain everything to you."

This promise, unlimited as it appeared, and calculated to raise great expectations, brought down Walter's flight of fancy at once, and he saw in his companion now only an ingenious lad, who understood the mechanism of an itinerant show; not the hero of a romance, but a player, acting low life above stairs. He wished him "good-morning;" and in consideration of his mortified look, held out his hand. Orlandino

took it, and intreated him to grant him a few minutes more; he wanted so much to tell him, to consult him. "You are so wise, so good; you could give me such good advice."

"But my uncle could give you really good advice; he is so sensible, and knows the world; he is the person to give you the best advice."

Orlandino looked disappointed. He seemed on the point of explaining everything; and then afraid—his countenance showed the vacillation of his mind. At last he said, "I cannot; I could not, sir, lay myself open to your uncle. You would understand me, you are so nearly my own age; and though you could not fall into my errors, yet you would hear me with indulgence."

"As to indulgence," interrupted Walter, "my mother is the person for that; and she would keep your secret so safe; but she would have nothing to do with you unless you told her—— You understand me?"

"Perfectly; and all you have told me is just what I expected from—from yourself, and from the lady your mother. I should be most grateful for her indulgence, and for your most respectable uncle's advice. I will throw myself upon their mercy."

Walter ran off instantly, so quickly, that Orlandino had not time to make some limitation of powers; but the only words which reached Walter as he ran were, "Your mother *only*, sir, I beg."

Taking two steps at a time, Walter went up to his mother's dressing-room. He had looked for his uncle in the study—not there. He had looked into the drawing-room—empty. As he opened the dressing-room door, Amy and Bessy both ran to him, both repeating at once different bits of Parnell's Fairy Tale. Amy began with—

> "The country lent the sweet perfumes,
> The sea the pearl, the sky the plumes,
> The town its silken store."

Bessy at the same time going on—

> "Withouten hands the dishes fly,
> The glasses with a wish come nigh,
> And with a wish retire."

"Retire! retire, then!" said Walter, "and let me say something to my mother, something of consequence."

"But tell us," cried Bessy, catching hold of his coat, and hanging upon his rear; "tell us what hour the play is to begin on Monday?"

"And tell us," cried Amy, "what kept you away so long, Walter? And tell us"——

"I tell you I want to speak to my mother." And taking Bessy gently by the hand, he put her out of the room, and Amy followed.

His mother was very much interested by his account of Orlandino. She thought he must be very clever, and notwithstanding his exuberant vanity, very good-natured, as his conduct to poor Mary proved. As to his history and his mystery, she said she hated mysteries; but since the poor young man really wished to consult Walter, she saw no objection. She had perfect confidence in her son; and whether Orlandino turned out to be a gentleman in disguise, or merely a low-born fellow, and good actor, she had no fears for Walter being in his company; and she thought his wishing for advice a good sign, and a proof of his being something better than a mere strolling player.

She consented to Walter's returning to him; and if he found he could do any good by it, to his bringing him to the house to consult his uncle.

Walter, overjoyed, ran off directly to rejoin Orlandino.

When Walter returned to the spot where he had left Orlandino, he was not there; nor up the road, nor down the road was he. Concluding that he must have gone into the village, Walter went thither in search of him. He observed one of the beggar boys running on with all his might, scuffling before him to that house which he knew was the whisky shop; and thence, in another instant, issued Orlandino. It was evident that the little scout had been sent to watch, and to give notice. This increased his own sense of doubt and mystery; but to his further surprise, and actually to his dismay, as Orlandino walked towards him, he saw that he did not come quite in a straight line; there was an unsteadiness in the gait; and when he approached nearer, it was evident from his eyes, and confirmed by his breath, that he had been —could it be? Walter could hardly believe it— "drinking!"

The gossoon came out after him, and passing close to Walter, said, "Only his *morning*, Master Walter; do not be mad with him, if you please, sir."

Walter bade him be silent; and then looking fixedly at Orlandino, he turned disgusted away, intending to leave him at once for ever; when the unhappy young man, making a great effort over himself, recovered his faculties, steadiness of appearance, and suavity of manner sufficiently to speak and to plead to the purpose, and in good-set terms misquoting—"'My *misery*, but not my will, offends.' I declare to you, Master Walter, you cannot be half so disgusted with me as I am with myself. But it is only *mornings* that I do take, upon my honour."

"Honour!"

"I have some honour, then; and to tell you the whole truth"—— He paused.

"Do tell it, then," cried Walter; "and tell it plainly at once."

"The truth is, I ran away from school; and then I fell in with this strolling company of players, and this manager, and he enticed me with fair promises, and great promises; and he is as great a cheat as ever was created, and I as poor and miserable a young dupe now as ever you saw. And, moreover, with a weight upon my conscience."

He looked so unhappy, and seemed so con-

trite, that Walter again was interested; and, moreover, was again curious to know what weight was upon his conscience, and he repeated the words, "Weight upon your conscience do you say?"

"On my conscience, and on my heart. I was born and bred a gentleman; *that* I can certify to you, sir. I am the son of an officer, and he married my mother, though she was but a poor girl: an officer of good family—on a visit he was in this country, for my mother's misfortune, sir; for he left her, and deserted her, and would not own to the marriage; and left her to struggle through with poverty and shame. The poverty she was used to, but the shame she was not used to," continued he passionately. "She was not born to it: she came of honest people: she was not used to it—and she would not put up with it: only she did, till my father died, and owned to the marriage; and his brother acknowledged it, and acknowledged me as his lawful nephew, and sent me to a good school, and there"——

He stopped: his thoughts seemed all disordered: he walked on in silence.

"Well," said Walter, "I thought you wanted

to consult me about something: if you do not, I had better go home."

"Oh, I do, I do—oh, stay, sir—I *do* want to consult you: I am only collecting my thoughts. It's what I want to ask your advice. Shall I penetrate this mystery?"

"What mystery? Speak plainly; do!"

"Why, sir, then—about that girl: I want to settle with myself. Would she be anything to me? and whether her mother—I cannot believe it—only the colour of her hair, that I never saw on any other head, that particular, undeniable auburn. I declare it to you now, when the suspicion first crossed me that it must be my sister in that condition, and my mother worse, I was ready to drop. You *seen* it—you saw it yourself, sir?"

Walter had seen this; and sure of this being true, he listened with attention.

"Thank you now, Master Walter, for giving me a candid hearing, spite of my misdemeanour. But, on the other hand, then, said I to myself, as I became more collected, and recovered sense, she can hardly be my sister; and though her name is Mary, there are many Marys; and when I parted her, that was not the colour of hair:

nothing like it; nor she promising to be like that girl, nor as *likely* at all. But then the child—my little sister—was but five years old; so I could not reason nor *argufy* any more upon that, sir."

"I wish you would not then," said Walter; "but tell me what you want with me?"

"I want you to give me your opinion, that were a stander-by, that sees more than the player proverbially, whether you think there would be anything in it?"

"How can I possibly tell?" said Walter.

"But you might have an opinion—a surmise sure, Master Walter. You could notice whether she looked guilty or conscious when I fixed her. She coloured up—not a doubt—when I stared."

"Modest girls usually colour when they are stared at," said Walter. "As to her looking conscious, or guilty, I cannot understand what you mean. Guilty of what?—guilty of being your sister! Nonsense! Either you are trifling with me, or you do not know what you are saying."

"Neither, then, Master Walter. I know what I am saying now too well. I was in all the agonies of doubt was it my mother or not that

was reduced to that distress, in that hovel in the bohreen she talked of. I feared it was, and I hoped it was not. Oh, just let me tell you, sir, how it was with me."

"Make haste, then, and tell me, and do not waste any more time," said Walter. He spoke abruptly, yet he was moved with compassion, as Orlandino saw.

"I ask your pardon, sir; but such a comfort—one meets it so seldom—to get some sympathy from one kind enough to listen to the most unfortunate"——

The word unfortunate, and the sigh with which it was uttered, calmed Walter's impatience, and propitiated his further attention; for though blunt and rough of speech, he had a very tender heart.

"Then, sir, I was in twenty minds, and did not know which. 'Hope and fear alternate seized me,' as the poet says."

"Do not tell me what the poet says."

"I will not then, sir; but it's truth, in spite of its being poetry. And not only alternate seized me, but both at once. Hope's the greatest blessing in life. When I'm happy, I hope everything; and then—— Now, Master Walter, there

are ways of reasoning my imagination has with me which you've no conception of"——

He stopped suddenly at a half-open gate, leading to a narrow lane. "The bohreen she talked of! We are come to the very spot!" exclaimed he.

Walter reminded Orlandino that Mary had requested that he would not follow her home; she had told him that her mother was in such delicate health, that she could not bear to see strangers.

"But if I should prove not to be a stranger?" argued Orlandino.

"That might be so much the worse," said Walter, "coming suddenly, if she is so sickly as the girl said."

"But when she would never recognise me, no danger; and she never would know me again at first sight—so grown I am, so altered every way, so different. But I would know her; the mother can't be so changed but the son would know her at any time anywhere. I must see her, sir; I must see if she is there or not. See now, Master Walter, I have it. You will have the kindness to step in, and say for us that you came with me to ask for my bandana—to re-

claim my silk pocket-handkerchief I left by mistake on the top of her basket."

"But you did *not* leave it by mistake," said Walter. "You left it on purpose; you put it over her basket a second time: after she had taken it off, you put it on again when she did not perceive what you were doing. I see now why you did that. I fancied that it was from good-nature; but now I see it was to be used as an excuse."

"Excuse me now, Master Walter; you wrong me. The first time I meant to give it to her; I protest to you that was pure good-nature now: I had no other idea. It degenerated into policy afterwards. But I never devised it as an excuse till the spur of the occasion came upon me now; and I had no better apology for a call, upon my honour. Now, Master Walter, not a word of lie, upon my conscience!"

"Listen! Hear that sound!"

It was the sound of a carriage at a distance on the road—mail-coach road. Instantly Orlandino pushed open the gate, which Walter had let go: he made his way into the lane, and ran on.

"You will be too late for the coach," cried Walter. "It is coming—it is coming!"

"I don't care—I don't care! I cannot help it; I must be satisfied," cried Orlandino, running on.

Walter followed, calling after him to stop. The mail-coach came in view—came up to the gate just as Walter reached him. As the coachman's head appeared over the hedge, Orlandino stooped, and hid himself behind a bush till the coach had quite passed, when he stood up, and looked after it till it turned the corner of the road, and disappeared—standing silent and motionless till the sound of the wheels died away, when he suddenly exclaimed, "I have set my life upon the cast, and I will stand the chance!"

And he ran on towards the cabin till he was at the door. He tried it: it was fastened. He took up a large stone; Walter caught his arm—"You would not break open the door surely? It would be very wrong."

"Don't talk to me of wrong or right!" cried Orlandino, freeing his arm: "I am beyond your reasoning now—I will, and I MUST!"

His voice was raised to the utmost pitch. A form appeared at the window within; his voice ceased—the form disappeared—and in a whisper

he said, "I will stay here, sir, if you will go in and take the curtain, or whatever it is, from that window, or leave the door the least bit open, that I might just hear the sound, if it is her voice."

He leaned against the clay buttress which propped the front of the house, and hid his face. Walter heard the bolt withdrawn; he lifted the latch of the door, and walked into the house, leaving the door open. But as he did so, such a quantity of smoke came from the chimney, that no person or thing could be distinguished. The little girl closed the door behind him, and he heard a voice say, "Kindly welcome, Master Walter;" and another calling to him to come in out of the "smoke, and sit down by the fire, that would burn up immediately."

He made his way, cleaving with both arms through the dense choking atmosphere; and as he reached the fireplace, he began to distinguish objects by the light of the dim flame; and he perceived that there were two people in the room—a girl, Mary, standing; and a woman, indistinctly visible sitting in the chimney-corner. Mary ran and opened the window, to

let out the smoke, and then set a *creepy** for Master Walter, telling her sick mother that here was Miss Bessy's brother come to see her —no stranger, so she need not be alarmed, nor disturb herself. The poor woman, nevertheless, made an effort to rise, though Walter besought her not; while in a faint tremulous voice she poured forth blessings on Miss Amy and Miss Bessy, and all the family. The smoke by degrees rolled away; and Orlandino, who had left the door on its being again shut and fastened, came round to the window. He was completely concealed from view, and he hoped to be able, unseen, to see into the room. But though he put forward his head as far as he dared, and strained his eyes to the utmost, not the least glimpse could he get of the person in the corner. It was a woman's voice, though what manner of woman, he could not discern. But he too plainly saw the desolation of the house she lived in: the floor in holes, the roof half unthatched, the walls blackened with smoke, and stained with damp; no furniture, except what he could see of the end of a

* *Creepy*—small stool.

wretched bed, a stool, and a sort of dresser, on which was a ragged blanket and two smoothing-irons, with a flat stone for them to rest on, and two washing-tubs; an unfinished stocking, with the knitting-pins in it, lay on the stool. But there was a sort of order and cleanliness, and much of industry and carefulness, even in this extreme of penury, which made it the more shocking from the contrast of the habits with the condition of those who lived there.

"And I have brought her to this!" thought Orlandino, as he looked round conscience-stricken, yet still doubtful—"If this is my mother?"—still doubtful, and still wishing to doubt; when a word distinctly reached him. It was her voice—it was hers! The girl at this instant caught sight of him, as he involuntarily at that sound stretched further in. She threw up her arms, and would have screamed; but stopping herself, stepped aside out of her mother's sight, and Walter, perceiving how it was, whispered something to her; and instead of closing the window, she went to her ironing-table, and took from beneath the blanket the silk handkerchief which had

been spread over her basket, and which she had ironed and neatly folded; she brought it to the window, making her way so as not to be noticed by her mother, who was engaged speaking or listening; and put the bandana into his hands with a look of thanks, but without saying anything; only giving a nod, as if understanding that he had asked permission to stand there without being noticed, and signifying that leave was granted.

For some minutes he could make out only from the questions and answers that Walter was trying to learn why this poor sick woman, or the girl, had never let his mother know of her illness, or of her distress.

"Loath to be troublesome," was the first answer. Then she said that she was a stranger —both she and her girl strangers, in these parts. She had lived always, till within the last few months, up in the mountains in a bettermost way; and when turned out, and forced to take shelter in any spot at all she could find to put her head and the child's into, she came to this miserable place, and kept herself to herself as much as she could—for, truth to own, she had a spice of pride born in her that lasted through

all—though she would rather not mention her name, for a reason she had.

Walter respected her reason, and repeated his regret that his mother had not known what distress she was in.

"Oh, then, I would not have been in this distress at all, but for an accident. I was well off once, though I was not well used by one that was a gentleman, though he did not treat me so; but it is bad to be speaking ill of the dead—and he is dead, and dead long ago—and all the comfort I had was the boy—for she was but a baby then. Then when I went through all I did, and got to the brother, and got acknowledged, and all; and my beautiful boy made so much of, and sent back with me dressed like a gentleman, as he was, and put to a gentleman's school—and well he got on there, so he did, sir; and the prizes he got, and the books he'd be having of a Saturday evening when he'd come home—it was nigh hand the school I was living then, and bad for my poor Johnny I believe it was—— What is it?" said she, interrupting herself, as she observed both Walter's and her daughter's eyes turn towards the window.

"Pray go on," said Walter.

"I could not tell you all I gone through. Deserted I was everyway: the father to leave me when *she* was just born"—pointing to Mary —"and never owning her nor myself; and then my boy—running home he would be for ever, though a great scholar he was, but a bit of a scamp—an unlucky boy he was, and ever and always in one scrape or another; and a great flogging he got—too great it was for a big boy like him—so he fairly ran off one day entirely, and took with him all the money he got, and the watch that was his father's, which the brother gave him; and mad angry then the brother was, after all he done; and with me too, saying it was all my fault that spoiled the boy: and maybe it was true; but he gave me up then from that out, and stopped paying the rent for me, and never had a penny or heard a sentence from him from that day to this. The unlucky boy that brought it all on me was off to America; and that same was excusable too, for he went with one that was of decent people, and got consent: neighbours they were then, when I lived beyond, sir, in the mountains in Corlinan."

She started and stopped, for at this instant

she thought she heard the word "Corlinan" repeated. And so she did; but supposing it only fancy, or the echo, she went on. "New York it was they were bound for; and young Walsh"——

"Peter Walsh!" exclaimed Walter with another uncontrollable glance at the window.

"Yes, sir—Peter Walsh—young Peter," replied the widow. "There was an old Peter, and there do be many Walshes beyond there; but of all, young Peter proved himself the best; and writes over continually, and did write the minute he'd land, and said he parted company with my boy in Liverpool, and that he was going with another captain to Philadelphia, or Tennessee, or the Canadas—the Lord he knows which or where! But no account ever reached me of him, after all the inquiries I made, and writing letters till I was sick: and some of them went safe, I'm confident; for they went through Mr Millar—the kindest gentleman as ever lived in that particular—forwarding poor Irish letters, twelve a month, so he does, and did these twenty years—the Lord above for ever bless him! And it's unknown all the good he caused, all the money them poor creatures send home from

their banishment! Mary, dear, what was it you heard at the post-office? How much?"

"Four hundred thousand pounds, mother, come over in letters from our own in America."

"Think of that!" cried the poor woman. "Glory be to God! though I never got a penny of it! What a heart's-warming to hear of that same, though cold enough it comes upon me, that never got a sentence from my boy!"

She paused, and the beating of a heart at the window might have been heard.

"A *bad* son, then, I will not call him," continued she; "for once he was good—no better nor fonder when he was a child ever was or could be of the mother that doted on him—so she did; and the joy and pride of my heart he was—and never heard a sentence of him good nor bad these eight long years now come Whitsuntide that he left me. It can't be, and he alive: so he can't be alive."

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"Mary, dear! don't cry. Better, sure, the boy was dead, and gone, and good, than living,

and the bad son. Blessings on him, dead or alive!"

A sudden noise, as of a heavy push against the door, or of a fall.

"What noise was that?" cried the mother. "Hush! didn't you hear? Then it must be the wind, I conclude, Master Walter."

All the seriousness of Master Walter's sympathy could not prevent a smile at this hasty jump to a conclusion. She, seeing the smile—for however illogical, she was not unobserving—said, with an answering smile half sad, half sweet—

"It's what you're laughing at me, Master Walter; and you're welcome, dear! for I'm sensible its superstitious I'm growing about noises and everything. Sick and weak I am, and gray I'm grown, sir. All in one week, then, sir, every hair I had turned white—the week he deserted me."

She hid her face in her hands, and rocked backwards and forwards. Voices were heard at the door—not by the mother, she was absorbed in her own feelings. Walter and the girl looked at each other—it was not the voice they expected.—It ceased.—Walter thought he heard

Orlandino's tones low in reply, but not a word could be distinguished. Then the sounds receding, died away. Mary recovered her colour—Walter took breath. The mother continued rocking herself backwards and forwards, her face still covered by her hands, and the tears trickling down. Walter longed to give her some hope, but he dared not, without better grounds. His interest was so great in this poor woman, that, as he was wont when he felt strongly, he spoke harshly.

"Good-by!" said he abruptly; "good-morning to you, Mrs Smith, if that's your name."

"It is not my name, then, sir," said she—"and I'd rather be excused telling my husband's name"—she paused—"for it was altogether a private transaction; and when he left me so ungratefully, I never spoke nor betrayed him till he died. And when he died without righting me, I went to the brother; and though he did me justice, he did not like me to be blazoning it abroad I was his sister-in-law. I could see that, even when he was doing for me, he never took to me kindly; and after, when he withdrew all his countenance and protection, and let me be turned out of my house by not

paying for me. Then came the scarcity, and then I'd be dead long ago but for the young ladies that"——

"Good-morning," repeated Walter, and left the house.

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Walter expected to have found Orlandino at the door; but he was not there; and as Walter looked round, he saw only the *gossoon* running across the bog. After walking a few steps farther up the lane, he perceived Orlandino leaning against a tree. He did not move till Walter came quite close to him and touched his arm; then he started. It was no theatric start, but a real wakening from deep and painful reverie. After staring at Walter, as if trying to collect himself, he spoke, but in so hurried and confused a manner, as to be hardly intelligible.

"The gossoon! Ay—true—I heard something—he told me. In short, it has altered all my plans, all my determination!"

"What plans?—what determination?" said Walter.

Orlandino looked bewildered, and replied incoherently—"Till that moment I was not clear —I was not sure it was her voice; till the glimpse I caught of her.—That wasted creature!—that was my mother; and that hovel she was in—and it all my doing!" he groaned.

"Your letters were all lost, I suppose?" said Walter.

"No, sir, they were not lost; I never wrote one line!"

Walter turned away with disgust.

"Oh stay, Master Walter; hear me; do not give me up without a hearing. I am not a hardened sinner yet indeed!" He spoke with the greatest emotion—the tears were in his eyes. —"Oh do not give me up!"

Walter was moved, but he tried to speak with composure.

"I do not give you up; but what can I do for you? I wish to serve you; but till I know the facts, I cannot but condemn you as most unfeeling to your poor mother."

"Oh, then, it was not from want of feeling.— I would tell you all, sir, if you would listen; but that I am ashamed, and greatly afraid you will never understand me."

"There is no difficulty in understanding plain facts; tell me the facts, and I will listen as long as you please."

Orlandino thanked him, wiped his forehead, and Walter compassionately added—"Take your own time; you know we have plenty of time—nothing to hurry you. The coach is gone, and you have determined to stay."

"No, sir, I beg your pardon for contradicting you; but the coach is not gone—that is what the gossoon ran over to tell me. It broke down at the post-office door—the axle-tree come in two—cannot go on yet this hour or two—but will go on to-day: and I must be off; I have come to the determination not to stay."

Walter stopped short, and looked at him with astonishment. "What can have changed your mind? Recollect you said 'the die is cast.'"

"I know I said so, sir. But now I must make another cast, and stand another hazard," said Orlandino.

"Was all that mere acting then?" said Walter indignantly.

"Not at all, not a bit, I can certify it to you, sir; it was all earnest truth and reality. I was determined *then* to stay, on the chance even

that I might find my mother, and free myself from the manager."

"Does the manager know you have a mother living here?"

"Not a sentence of it, sir. If he did, never would he have let me come one step. Only granted me leave, under the impression that I should be the best person, as I always was, to distribute playbills, and beat up for recruits, as we say; that is, insure him a full house. Had he got the least whisper of a mother alive, and here, he would never have suffered me to come; he would have been in dread that I should cut and run. But I thought my mother was living where I left her, in Carrolinan; and there I always pictured her to myself—as comfortable a place as ever you saw—plenty of everything. She had a great allowance from—from my father's brother, as I reckoned; and would be laying it all by, I thought, and would have a mint of money; and would settle with the manager, and all be right, and all my debts paid. That was one thought; and then that she was so rich, there was the other thought. All those eight years, struggling in and out of difficulties, I scorned to beg from her that I deserted; but

hoped always to come back some time a grand gentleman, and find her sitting there in the garden full of flowers she was so proud of. But, then, when I came, what did I see? Oh, sir, to see her in that hovel—in that extremity of wretchedness—and all my doing! And her gray hair! it felled me down, sir, to the earth: I thought I'd die at her door"——

He stopped, and then went on abruptly—"The boy ran up, and that startled me to myself; and the minute I got sense, it struck me that the manager would be down on me; and what good could I do my mother if I stayed? Only bringing my troubles upon her: and troubles enough I have of my own." He stopped again, then resumed—"If I was once free from that tyrant I sold myself to! 'Twas he led me on, so he did, with all his praises and applauses; and I was made so much of at first! Then the excitement of the stage—you would not know what it was till you tried it, sir—to have the whole house clapping one and *encoring* one—handkerchiefs waving, feet thundering admiration! I tried it, and I was wild with it. I danced, and I rode, and I acted. It was with all my heart and soul I did it at

the first; ay, with all my heart, and soul, and body too. But my body wore out, and I could not do it; and soon after the body, and all against the grain it went! My spirit was gone, and then I was forced! Oh the difference of acting for my own free-will and pleasure, from doing it '*By particular desire!*' If you could know how sick I am of the sound, how I detest the very look of the words in the playbills! Then I being worn out, and the manager compelling me to that exertion beyond nature, I took to stimulants to keep me up. And in his power I am still. '*You must go back to him!*' the gossoon said to me. Ay, *must, must*—for that gossoon might betray me, after all I bribed him to silence," continued he, speaking aloud to himself.

"Betray what?" said Walter. "What is it that fellow knows about you that puts you in his power? About what did you bribe him to silence?"

"What, indeed! A slave everyway, a slave to that blackguard rascal I am. I said I'd tell you all. I will, sir. At the last town we were at, that boy was there, peeping about, and longing to see the play; and I treated him; I was

always treating every one. I got him free entrance: he saw me in my glory!—and then in my disgrace! Oh how I was applauded that night!—and I was so excited! so over-exerted myself! Exhausted I was when the curtain fell, as I often was; and then, as I often did, I went with some of my comrades, and treated them too, as usual. And a fine supper we had at the inn; and we sat it out, and the whisky punch, and everything—I cannot tell you how it was at the end—but Paddy the gossoon was there at the inn door, and I was in a fit, and he ran for the doctor; and when he got me out of it, he pronounced I'd be a dead man if I had it again. He said it was—I'll tell you the truth—he said it was—'*delirium tremens!*'"

"Sit down upon this bank," said Walter.

"Thank you, sir; thank you kindly, sir," said Orlandino in a tone that showed how humbled he felt.

Touched to the heart—for he had a heart that could be touched—Walter looked with the deepest compassion upon the unfortunate young man.

"That was what happened me; and directly I got my senses again, I was afraid it would take

wind; and the disgrace! and the manager to know of it! and that officious gossoon hovering about me, and hearing the doctor: so then I bribed him to silence; and now I am in his power!"

There was a pause.————

"What do you mean to do?" said Walter.

"Go back to my yoke, and slave on! What else can I do?" replied Orlandino.

"My uncle could help you out, I am sure," said Walter.

"What could anybody do for me? How could I pay all the debts I have, even if I could get off from the manager. There are all my own debts. No, no; I am lost everyway."

"Nobody is lost who has resolution," said Walter. "Only resolve"——

"I understand you, sir. Often and often I did resolve; but I could not keep to it: it is all in vain. It is easy for those that are born steady, and that have not the temptation! Oh if I could keep out of it, and get steady, and get rid of my tyrant, and out of his clutches, and out of this vagabond life! For my mother I'd work to the bone, till I'd get her comfortable again."

"Do—do. You can; you will," cried Walter;

all the deep-buried enthusiasm of his nature taking fire at this spark of virtuous hope in the poor abject wretch before him. "Never despair while you have your mother to work for: never doubt: you will surely do well. Come, come with me; it will not take long: you have time enough now. Come home with me. Tell my uncle."

"I could not tell your uncle," said Orlandino, drawing back.

"You have told me," said Walter.

"True; but I saw your kind heart, Master Walter, the first minute in the post-office when you read out Peter Walsh's letter. I could tell you anything."

"Let me tell my uncle then; and when he sees you—— Come with me."

"I should wish to make myself fit to be seen first, Master Walter," said the actor, looking at his dress.

"My uncle will not care a straw for your dress, I assure you. But if you like it, you can go to the inn and make what dressing you choose; and then follow me up to the house; by that time I shall have told your story to my uncle."

Orlandino thanked him; and leaving him at the inn to make the alterations he deemed essential to his appearance, Walter went homewards; but as he went, he had some misgivings. —As he came up the avenue, he saw his little sisters at work in their gardens, and he turned into another path, afraid of their springing upon him with questions which he could not answer. He felt very doubtful as to what his uncle would say, or how he would take his story. He was afraid that his uncle would call Orlandino a scamp, and a strolling player, and would never believe that there was any good in him, or that any good could be made of him. However, straight to his uncle Walter resolutely went.

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"So, my dear young Quixote nephew, you have the notion that you can reform a scamp, and a scamp older than yourself by you do not know how many years; and a practised actor, and a strolling player!—Orlandino!—a young gentleman in disguise?"

"Not in disguise, uncle, any longer. Orlan-

dino has thrown off all disguise with me," said Walter, steadily standing against his uncle's raillery.

"My dear Walter," said his uncle, "you really are—

'In wit a man, simplicity a child.'

But go on—go on, my dear boy—my dear dupe."

"Uncle, I am not a dupe," replied Walter, speaking very gravely, and with dignity. "I am not a dupe, sir."

"How do you know that?" said his uncle. "A dupe must always be a dupe without knowing it. There may be a philosopher without knowing it. '*Le Philosophe sans le sçavoir*,' I think, is the title of the French play your mother was reading to us the other night."

"Uncle, I wish you would not talk now of plays," said Walter.

"Because you want to talk of players, eh? Well, say on; I will give you precedence. Youngest counsel open the case; only make out your case: I am all attention."

Walter, more embarrassed by his uncle's bending-forward-air of profound attention than he had been by his raillery, hesitated.

"I had no intention of making out a case—

I know nothing of junior counsel or precedency. I know only you are a very good judge: I hope you will be merciful."

"Mercy in a judge," replied his uncle, "is not always a proof of goodness or of wisdom. Sometimes what is called mercy is cruelty, and ought to be twice cursed."

"Oh do not go to twice cursed before you have even once heard! Hear my story, dear uncle."

"Well, let us hear it. Tell me all about this Orlandito, or whatever his ridiculous name is? Out with it!"

Walter plunged into the midst of things at once, and told the whole of Orlandino's story with all the courage of truth. Without glossings or skippings, he got through the whole in a wonderfully short time. From the beginning of the deserted mother and gentleman father, and the acknowledging uncle, and the good school, and the running away from it, he went on to his strolling life, and his over-excitement, and over-exertions, and his taking to stimulants, and his *mornings*, and to the last excess that had brought with it the dread punishment which Walter almost feared to name: he did name it,

however—for he saw he had fairly interested his uncle, who said—

"That offence has borne its own punishment: it is not to be punished a second time by man. But for the future, if your Orlandino really wants to get out of his Merry-Andrew line, and to reform, and be a support and a comfort to his mother, tell him that before I take any trouble about him, before I see him even, he must enter into a solemn engagement against drinking."

Orlandino had arrived, and was in the next room. Walter went to him. He had at first thought of making him take the PLEDGE; but he found that Orlandino was a Protestant. He told him what his uncle had said. That his attempting to assist him, or consenting even to see him, was solely on condition of this solemn promise.

"On that condition only will I interest myself in his concerns."

These words made a deep impression upon Orlandino (or, as we should now call him, since he has laid disguise aside—Orlando. It is time to reveal his real name. John Orlando was his baptismal name: his surname More. The fine name Orlando, as we have been informed, came

from the paternal grandmother's side, connected with some noble family). These particulars, though here all crammed into a parenthesis, were of great consequence in the eyes of our young scamp himself, though he had run away from his family, disgraced that family as far as in him lay, and had for years given up all claim to their assistance, all promise of receiving or prospect of doing honour to it. And even now, when the possibility of regaining his place in society was presented to him, he could scarcely believe in it. The probability appeared to him so small, so distant, considering all he knew of his own habits and of his debts, that he stood hesitating whether he could, would, or should—for the chance of what might be effected by Walter's friendship, or by his uncle's interest in his concerns—make the sacrifice of the only *indulgence* left him: so he called his "besetting sin." And further, he doubted whether he could abide by the sacrifice, and not incur deeper sin and shame. Walter, seeing his dubious look, respected what he thought arose from the awful idea of entering into solemn engagement, doubtful of being able to be faithful to his vow.

"I would not for the world, Orlando, urge you to make a promise that you could not adhere to. I like you the better, I esteem you the more, for taking time to consider."

Walter thought perhaps a little better of Orlando at this moment than he deserved; but still there was in him conscientious feeling, and Walter's good opinion increased the good disposition. If some worldly interest mixed with his higher motives, yet his chief wish was to return to his mother: the hope, however remote that hope might be, of being able at some time to cheer and support her, made him feel almost capable of the renunciation of his darling vice. He said that he thought he could make a vow of temperance, but not of total abstinence. Walter reported this to his uncle. His uncle insisted upon a promise of total abstinence. Nothing less would break the habit. "Tell him nothing else will do. Tell him that Father Mathew tried and found that nothing less will do. Tell him that Dr Johnson tried it, and said to one who was hesitating about giving up wine, 'Drink water, sir, and you are sure of yourself. If you drink wine, you never know how far it may carry you. I drink water. I now no more

think of drinking wine than a horse does. The wine upon the table is no more for me than for the dog that is under it.'"

Orlando's vanity was flattered by being treated as one who knew something about Dr Johnson; but to do him justice, the thoughts of what was right, and his wish to serve his mother, were really his prevailing motives; and he now made the required promise in the most solemn manner.

Here we must pause, before we go to the chapter of debts or lighter matters.

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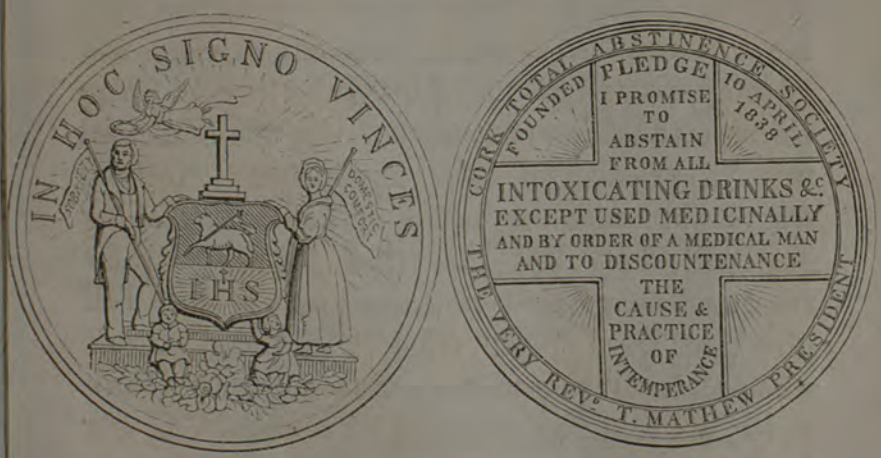


Father Mathew's PLEDGE having been alluded to, I here give a fac-simile of the medal which has in Ireland obtained this appellation. This medal has been given by Father Mathew to multi-

tudes in every part of Ireland, generally after a short exhortation, remarkable for perfect simplicity, for the absence of all attempt at eloquence, the forbearance from all that could touch the imagination, or rouse the passions, excite enthusiasm, or even produce what is called SENSATION. His words were simple and forcible as truth itself. When hundreds of thousands stood around him, listening to what he said, on his first address to the people in Dublin his expressions were calm, unimpassioned, and modest, as if he had not effected one of the mightiest revolutions for good that ever has been accomplished in the annals of the world.

It has been prophesied by those incredulous of good—it has been feared by those most hopeful—that this reformation cannot be lasting. It has lasted, however, above NINE years; and though instances of broken vows, of recurring intemperance, and of the declining influence of the pledge, are reported to have occurred, yet whatever may be the frailties of individuals, this great consoling fact remains—the vice of intemperance has lost its impudent grace, that jovial *permit* of conviviality which in this country it formerly enjoyed, and in which it revelled to the destruction of health, domestic happiness, and social order. Now, intemperance is no longer tolerated in good society. In the middle classes it is shamed and discountenanced; and even among the lowest grades of the people in Ireland it is looked upon as a brutal and *unfashionable* vice. This conquest at once over the sensual propensities and vicious habits of a nation is unparalleled in the history of human nature. This mighty moral reform, this vast step gained in civilisation for this whole country, has been effected by the energy, zeal, and perseverance of one private individual, without the aid of legislation, without appeal to force, without disturbance, danger, or injury to any human being. Since the time of the Crusades, never has one single voice awakened such moral energies; never was the call of one man so universally, so promptly, so long obeyed. Never, since the world began, were countless multitudes so influenced and so successfully directed by one mind to one peaceful purpose. Never were nobler ends by nobler means attained.

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTH TOWN, *September* 1847.

"Lighter matters!" did you say for this chapter? Lighter matter!—*the chapter of debts!*

Yes; of less consequence even bad debts than bad habits; more difficult to break off bad habits than to pay off bad debts; more fatal those, than overwhelming these, to all happiness, character, and virtue. And now, that it may be trusted that this young man's worst of habits is for ever conquered, we may go on with some hope to the reformation of other faults, and the reparation of other follies.

"My uncle" saw the mixture of folly and sense, of good and bad, in Orlando; but he generally hoped the best, and now particularly, when he marked the strong feeling of affection for his mother, his remorse for having deserted her, and his awe and reverence for an oath. He had always admired the expression in the Vicar of Wakefield's sermon to the poor prisoners in the jail—"that there is no mind in which there is not one spark of good left, which may be blown, if kindly, gently blown, to a flame." And

"my uncle," notwithstanding his grave and rather austere appearance, was just the person who could and who would manage to do this in the most dexterous, the most delicate, the kindest manner.

Orlando was in much embarrassment, and under great depression, when he first appeared before him with the list of his debts in his hand; but scarcely had his eyes met that benign, though grave look, than his hopes rose —his hopes of himself, and his resolution to be perfectly candid, to throw himself completely on the mercy of him who, as he saw, had mercy. His early education, and his early mixture with the world in different ranks, had given him, young as he was, a quick perception of manners, and penetration into character; he had what might seem an instinct not only for the true gentleman, but for the kind-hearted man. This quick perception was followed by sudden hope and confidence; passing, as he always did, from one extreme to the other—from self-abasement to self-exaltation — he, at the mere idea of his own candour in the list he had made out of his debts, and of the effect this candour would

have on his merciful judge, felt at once at ease and in spirits.

Walter was in astonishment at the rapid change in Orlando's countenance and whole appearance: in a few instants the sudden transformation almost of figure, as he passed from the dispirited state, the disabling spell of conscious shame, to the free and accepted look, and the assurance of one on perfectly good terms with himself. There he sat at ease; his arm thrown over the back of his chair, his legs crossed, stretched out comfortably, and his eyes reposing upon the face which was looking over the long list of debts.

"He is certainly less afraid of my uncle than he was of me," said Walter to himself. And answering Walter's look of surprise, Orlando whispered—

"Yes, I see at once into your uncle—hard, dark shell the nut has, but it is not a gall-nut; and I can see, through a little opening, the white nice kernel within."

Walter was provoked with this unbecoming levity, so in contrast with his uncle's gravity, and with his own anxiety. While the uncle ran over that long list, pausing, and putting

his finger upon treats, and suppers, and spirits, Orlando braved the slow unmoving finger without changing colour; he only half sighed and half apologised.

"Shocking that time, sir, I confess!—riotous living I own. I am ashamed to look back to those times—only comfort is—perfectly past—preter-pluperfectly. For the future no fear—since my promise is given!"

"Impudent enough," thought my uncle: his finger passed on to another count, and he said—

"Folly indeed here is—but of the generous kind—going security for—Jack—Who?"

"Jack Clinton, sir — sad pickle he is; but I could not help it. He was my friend at the time, as I thought, and he would have been cashiered and lost if I had not stepped in. So you know, sir, I could not but do it. I had not ten pounds in the world at the time, if I had been pounded in a mortar; all I could do for him was to go security."

"The worst thing you could do, sir."

"The best for him, sir," replied Orlando; "got him out of the scrape; and I paid the piper afterwards when it was very inconvenient

to me.—Pinched me terribly! and I had to borrow, and never paid"——

"Do you mean that he never paid you, or that you never paid what you borrowed?"

"Both, sir; *I* could not do otherwise, though he could (Jack, I mean), if he had not indulged in a new coat, and some other superfluities. But my next act of folly"—— [He rose to speak to it, and went forward to the table.] "'Tis what you have your finger upon now, sir; that twenty pounds I lent Tom Sacheverel—canting fellow!—who swore upon his conscience he would pay with interest and all at Michaelmas; and he told me his mother was dying, which I found out afterwards was a lie. But I was flush of money at the time. I could not hear of the woman's dying that way, and the money idle in my pocket. I shelled it out. You would have done the same, Master Walter. Happy for you, you never were in the way to be taken in by reprobates—hypocrites I mean; for not the worst of reprobates would fleece a generous friend, you know, sir."

"I wish, sir, you had half as much good sense as you have fine sentiment," said my uncle with

sternness, yet mitigated by a look of sympathy with the generous sentiment.

"Well, sir, sense, with your help, will come in time, I trust," said Orlando with an impudent smile, yet with real *internal* modesty.

"I hope so, sir. But pray what is this next word in your list, at the head of this column?"

Walter looked, but did not speak. Orlando looked, and spoke out with all his usual flippancy.

"*Baby-kites*, sir, we called them: I called them baby-kites, because they were such little things—not like the great kites men of business fly: and those were all for fines to the manager. And I do assure you, sir, he was scandalously strict, gripping at fines for every little thing. Missing rehearsals, five minutes late at the theatre, losing one's part-book, and so on; or not taking off one's hat, as if one had been on board the royal navy, and he master and commander himself. I never took off my hat to him—never touched it. Let him fine me never so, I never would, gentleman-born as I was. To my equals and my superiors I hope I shall never be wanting, especially to the latter."

And as he spoke, down Orlando bowed to the ground, with a grace that Topham Beauclerc

might have envied! The corners of my uncle's mouth gave way; but he kept his eyes steadfastly on the list.

"A long list this, sir, particularly these kites.—Bad practice, bad expedients."

"No doubt, sir; but to such paltry expedients I trust I shall never more be driven." He spoke this with feeling. But the next moment, while my uncle added up the total of the kites, Orlando turned lightly to Walter, and began to repeat an epigram which he could not quite recollect.

"I can't make it out exactly; but it was a clever thing of Plunket's — a couplet he wrote or spoke upon kites: the sense was, that in England the boys' kites are raised by the wind, while in Ireland kites *raise the wind*—'We find'—I know is the rhyme."

My uncle gravely wrote the sum due for *baby-kites*, and placed the total in black distinctness before Orlando's eyes. He reddened, and turned away, saying, "I see, sir—I'd rather not see! It is really in vain to look at it; you know I cannot possibly help it now. Besides, you may think worse of some other things that are coming."

My uncle looked on to the next articles with curiosity; and saw them with indignation—

"Rings, studs, shirt-pins.—Vanity! foppery! nonsense! But what is this?"—and his brow darkened as he looked. "What is all this, sir?—Tortoise-shell comb studded with pearls—gold earrings—bracelet. Who were these for?"

"The manager's daughter, sir."

"Manager's daughter! I'll have nothing to do with it. I will not undertake such concerns."

"Oh, it's not *that*, sir, at all," cried Orlando. "The manager's daughter is 'as ugly as sin, and as crooked as an ipseand,' as Sir Pertinax Macsycophant in the play says."

"I do not want Sir Pertinax Macsycophant's sayings, sir: I want the plain facts. Did you get all these things without ever paying for them?"

"I have not paid yet to be sure—— But, Master Walter, do speak for me, and do not let your uncle ride away upon a notion on the contrary side, that I never meant to pay. I declare I am as honest as any man in debt ever was—honester, too! for I have seen something of this world, and pretty well know how gentlemen, when they get into debt, and are hard pressed,

go on with Sheridan's 'No faith with creditors.'"

"Insufferable arrogance! ridiculous conceit!" exclaimed Walter's uncle, looking to Walter as if reproaching him for having introduced Orlando. "Vulgar folly of imitating a great man's faults, and fancying yourself thereupon a great man; aping the infirmities of genius, and conceiving yourself a genius."

"Alexander the Great and his wry neck you are thinking of, sir, I conceive," said Orlando.

"Mr Orlando More, I am not to be trifled with in this manner," said my uncle. "I cannot give up any more of my time to no purpose. My nephew's interest in your concerns will, I hope, cease with mine. He cannot think any more than I do, that whatever literature, or talent, or feeling you may have, can make amends for this total want of good sense, and good manners, and proper, I will not say grateful, feeling. Good morning to you, sir."

He looked towards the door. Walter understood his look, but did not move, only sighed, and looked, not remonstratingly, yet very sorrowful. Orlando was astounded; he moved a few steps towards the door; but suddenly

stopped when he was to pass before the indignant uncle.

"I am unpardonable, sir! But *do* pardon me. I am not ungrateful. Heaven bless you, sir, for not calling me ungrateful! It is from the feeling too much I am seeming not to feel any way. 'Twas laughing on the rack I was! If I did not laugh, I must cry—which would be despicable in a man! So what *can* I do now? Anything that man could do or suffer, only show me—I'd do anything, suffer anything in life, for my mother!"

My uncle blew his nose. Walter took up the list of debts.

"I will call you, Orlando, when we have settled anything. Just go into the next room for a moment—will you?"

"I will, Master Walter; but first let me hope that your uncle may overlook my ill manners."

"Come, Mr More," said my uncle, "shake hands, and learn to use your learning more discreetly another time."

Orlando showed his discretion by a silent bow, and left the room.

"The total is not so bad after all," said Walter, covering it with his hand as he spoke.

"Foolish boy!" said his uncle; "show it to me."

Walter withdrew his hand.

"Not a very large sum in itself, but immense for one who has nothing."

"I think I can pay it for him," said Walter.

"You! Where are you to find the money, Walter?"

"I know a way, uncle, if you will consent to it. If you will allow me to change my mind as to the yachting party this summer; you were so kind to promise me funds for it next month. Now what was to have been given to me for that—if you and my mother would allow me, I could give to pay off these debts, and free this poor young man, and set him up right in life again."

His uncle was so much surprised, that he did not immediately answer. Well as he knew the generous temper of his nephew, he did not think that he could have proposed to make what to him was he knew the greatest possible sacrifice. To every young person the first step into the world is most eagerly looked for. Youth pants for the first fresh air of freedom. Well as they may love their home, the Arviragus

spirit is common to every young and ardent mind. Walter, under a cold exterior, had within him a strong fire of ambition. His uncle, aware of this, and of the eager gratitude with which he had thanked him for managing this yachting trip to the Ionian isles; how constantly he had talked of his voyage, and of seeing Greece; of the happy time he should have with his cousin, Captain Cecil, in the Zephyr; and of the figure which such a trip would enable him to make at Oxford when he went there. And now calmly, and without the slightest emotion, could he resign this darling object?

"Have you considered what you are giving up? And do you really, seriously propose to do this, my dear Walter?" said his uncle.

"Yes, my dear uncle, I propose it, in earnest to be sure, as I do propose it, if you and my mother will consent and approve."

"I am in amazement," said his uncle, leaning back in his arm-chair, and both his hands stretched out on the arms of his chair.

"What amazes you so very much, uncle?"

"I am amazed at your thinking of making such a very great sacrifice."

"Why, sir, if you consider, it is not so very

great. It is no matter of duty: it was only a party of pleasure, and only put off perhaps; or, if lost, it was a mere fancy. I had set my heart upon it to be sure. But *setting one's heart* one way is all nonsense when one can do so much more good another way."

"But, my dear Walter, are you sure of the good you can do?"

"Nobody is *sure* that they can do good till they really do it," said Walter; "nor quite sure till it is done. One cannot know till one tries. Will you give me leave to try, sir?"

"Give me leave to consider, sir"——

"Yes; I wish you would consider, uncle. If you think it not wrong in me to use the money you would have given for my expedition in the Zephyr for paying this young man's debts, I shall think nothing of my own disappointment. I shall only have more time, and I will work the harder to prepare myself for Oxford; that is all."

"But why should you throw away so much money for a tight-rope dancer, a strolling player?" said his uncle.

"I hope it will not be throwing away the money, uncle," replied Walter. "It is surely

worth trying the experiment, and giving the power to this unfortunate young man to redeem his character, and to support his poor mother; to save her life, we may say, and make her happy and comfortable for the rest of her days. Oh, my dear uncle, if you had seen her misery as I did! I would have given anything! But I had nothing of my own to give; I could only give up this little amusement; and amply repaid I shall feel if I can put Orlando in a way to save his mother."

"Let us ask *your* mother what she thinks of it," said his uncle.

"Do, uncle!" cried Walter eagerly. "I know that my mother will like to have me at home, instead of in the Mediterranean; and she will feel for that poor woman, and think of her happiness in having her son again; she will consider any sum well spent to help a repentant poor wretch just at the turn of life: to take him off the rack of remorse, oh, my mother will consent I am sure!"

"Well, come and ask her," said his uncle; "and do not keep your repentant sinner on the rack any longer."

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While Walter pleaded Orlando's cause to his indulgent mother, she thought more of her son's kind-heartedness and generous feelings than of Orlando's debts and misdemeanours. She thought that nothing could be more natural to a good mind at Walter's age than the wish to save this young man, in whom there was so much talent and so much affectionate feeling. But hers was not that sort of foolish indulgence which yields blindly to the first impulse either of sympathy or of maternal approbation. She was very much pleased by her son's proposal of giving up one of his own most ardent wishes to pay Orlando's debts, and to restore him to his deserted dying parent; but she saw that it was essential to effecting this object, and to secure Walter from making a useless sacrifice, that there should be a time of probation fixed upon, and that the promise to pay should be only conditional. She was even more cautious and strict than Walter's uncle might have been. He had named six months; she advised a full year of trial, as the youth was evidently of a

changeable temper. Even to test his adherence to the solemn promise he had already made, she was of opinion that this was requisite.

Amy and Bessy, after listening with eager interest both to Orlando's history and to their brother's proposal, were of divided judgments as to the term of probation. To Bessy, six months appeared an unconscionably long trial, almost interminable; she represented, and not without some show of sense, as her uncle allowed, that Orlando's poor mother might die in the meantime, and there would be an end of the matter for him. Amy, on the other hand, maintained that even if the poor mother should not hold out, which she nevertheless hoped, and was almost sure, with *their care*, she would, yet it would not be Walter's fault to have made this trial; but, on the contrary, if they did not make this condition, Orlando was so changeable, as mamma said, that he might turn out *bad* after all, and be the death of his mother at last, and Walter would have made his generous sacrifice for nothing.

In consequence of these arguments, it was at last ruled, without even little Bessy's dissentient voice, that a full twelvemonth from

this day — this day of his pledge — should be Orlando's term of probation. "My uncle," who had means of information—having correspondence all over Ireland where this company intended to exhibit for many ensuing months—undertook to have watchful eyes kept upon him, and there was no reason to doubt that constant and correct accounts of his conduct would he obtained.

"Then Orlando *is* to go by the coach this evening to his tyrant manager—is he, or is he not?" asked Amy, who was always exact as to the matter of fact and of business.

"To be sure he must," replied her uncle. "It is his duty. He is engaged so to do. He has been very wrong in the delay he has already made, and will suffer for it. The sooner he puts himself right the better."

Walter could not deny that "it was Orlando's duty, and must be done, to be sure, at whatever expense." A servant came into the room and told him that one wanted to speak with him.—It was Orlando.—He said he was to start in half an hour. He had set his watch by the coachman's, and looked at it sorrowfully as he spoke. Walter spoke directly to the point of duty.

"To be sure"—Orlando faintly and doubtingly said, as if his thoughts were absent.

Walter hastened to tell him the plan for relieving him from all his embarrassments, and the conditions on which his uncle and his mother would give him their consent. "And I hope, Orlando," said he—— It was quite unnecessary for him to add another word, for that "hope" was turned into certainty by the instant change to joy and gratitude in Orlando's countenance. He fell on his knees, lifting up his hands and eyes to Heaven. Not a word was heard, but Walter understood the fervent blessing implored. But when Orlando rose from his knees, that radiant expression of joy and gratitude was gone, and in its stead a pale, embarrassed look, and his eyes could not meet Walter's.

"What can be the matter?" said Walter. "Are you afraid of yourself?—afraid that you shall not be able to fulfil the conditions? Have more confidence in yourself. You can, if you will"——

"I can, and I will in future," said Orlando. "But—now, since I saw you—something has occurred."

"Impossible! You cannot have broken your engagement?" cried Walter, absolutely starting back from him.

"You cannot think so ill of me," replied Orlando.

"No, I did not believe," said Walter. "I thought, as I said, it was impossible. But then what else can be now the matter?"

Orlando did not immediately answer, but took from his waistcoat pocket two notes, on which his eyes fixed for some moments; then looking up at Walter, as if he wished to show them to him, but could not bring himself to do so, Walter held out his hand to receive them.

"I cannot, yet I must—yes, I must—must be so mean, so detestably mean!—and after all you have done for me! Oh to what meanness one is brought by money distress—how low! I could never have believed it of myself, though I have seen it so in others, and despised them coming to borrow or beg from me; and now I am doing it myself—and must"——

He put the notes—the bills, for each note contained a bill—into Walter's hand with desperate anger or contempt of himself as he did so. Then, while Walter was reading them, he

forced himself to explain that they had been just now delivered to him, or, as it seemed, *served upon him* by an attorney, who was one of the passengers in the coach, and who had watched his opportunity. He had duplicates of the bills, which he was commissioned to show to the manager so soon as he should arrive at Castletown-Bellevue. One of the bills was from the apothecary, who had been called in at the last town the company were at during that terrible seizure, and physician's fees were charged. The other was from the hotel-keeper for the supper, the treat he had given to his revelling, his roisterous companions, as he now called them; who had used him abominably, as first they had agreed to club. "Then," continued Orlando, "Jack Clinton—the very personification of shabbiness Jack Clinton, pretending to be so generous, off-hand, and so forth—offered to pay half if I would pay the other half of *the damages*, or toss up for the whole. And when it came to the toss up, he cheated, as Soden saw, and left it all on me, who could tell nothing about it more than Nebuchadnezzar at the time. More shame for me!—thousand shames for me!—a gentleman born,

and partly bred—to come to such a pass! And so now I am come to—— What shall I do?—What *can* I do? Can you lend me?—No, I will not say *lend*. Heaven knows when I can ever repay—— And to ask you to *give* more after all you have done—oh!"

That "oh!" was a real groan of remorse. "Hush!" said Walter; "I am considering what can be done. The two bills together come to seven guineas. I should not like to ask my uncle..... I have but two guineas left of my pocket-money this quarter; that will go but a little way"——

"And would rob you of your last penny!"

"Only promise me that you will not borrow from anybody else," said Walter, "and I will try what I can do."

Orlando promised.

"Then wait for my return," said Walter. "I cannot be certain that I shall succeed, but I think I see a way; and 'wherever there is a will there is a way,' you know; and if a good will, a good way." So saying, he ran off.

Yet with all the good will that could be, the way Walter took was difficult and painful to him, though it was, nevertheless, a good

way. He stood in his mother's dressing-room before he well knew that he was there, and placed himself full in front of his two sisters, his hands behind his back, and firmly standing, yet most anxiously, timidly looking at them, from one to the other, without speaking. Amy was winding a skein of silk from her silk-winders; the rollers dropped as she looked at him, the ball remaining in her hand. Bessy was pouring out water for the dog, which he was fast lapping; but the water ceased to pour; and she, jug in hand, and Amy, ball in hand, stood, as it were, turned into little statues, gorgoned by Walter's look. They had not even the power to say "What is the matter?" or "Do speak!" Walter spoke, and said—

"My dear sisters, I am come to ask a great favour from you—a great sacrifice!"

"A great favour! Oh what, Walter? I hope we can do it," cried Bessy.

"A great sacrifice! Nothing can be a great sacrifice if it is for you. What is it?" said Amy.

"To give up for me the pleasure of going to the play," said Walter.

——————— There was a blank look

of amazement and dismay. But after a pause of a moment, Amy answered—"If that is all, that is easy enough for you, Walter, if you ask it."

"Yes; but why?" said Bessy. "So odd for you, Walter, who were so eager about it, and took so much pains to get that great pleasure for us, should now come to ask us to give it up for you?"

"It is strange—odd as you say, Bessy, my dear; but I will explain to you as well as I can," said Walter.

But it was not easy to make her comprehend how their giving up going to the play would be of any use to Orlando; for she naturally said—

"If he wants money, as you say he does, Walter, to pay some debt, then surely the money that we shall pay him for our *places* at the play—I mean for our *tickets*, or whatever you call them—would just do the business, and we should have the pleasure into the bargain of seeing the play. Nay, Walter, I am not foolish now, am I?"

"Not at all—very sensible—and quite right so far as you know, my dear Bessy. Only one

thing you do not know—that the money which we should pay for our places would not go to Orlando, not one farthing of it, but all to another actor of the name of Jack Clinton, whose benefit night it is."

"Benefit night?" said Bessy—and thick darkness came upon her.—She gave up understanding about benefit nights, and kindly, if not wisely, satisfied herself, as Amy advised, with knowing that "Walter must know best."

Walter did not further attempt explanation: he was in haste to report progress to his uncle and his mother; and as he left the room, Bessy took up her jug again, and continued to pour water out for the dog, patting him for his patience.

"It is a great sacrifice, Amy, that is the truth," said she. "I so longed to see Orlandino and the royal tiger!"

"Not more—you *could* not long more, Bessy, than I did to see 'Fairy Cap,' and to hear the wonderful tune in the lion's musical head. But it is for Walter! and you know Walter has to give up a great great deal himself. He has to give up Murat king of Naples! and the Cossacks! and that grand double theatre about which he was so particularly curious."

"Very true," said Bessy. There was not another sigh.

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Walter, meanwhile, with his uncle's consent, added the five sovereigns destined for the expedition to Castletown-Bellevue with his own two, and put the purse into Orlando's hand without saying a word. Orlando felt it as he ought; and the less he said, the better was Walter satisfied —the more hopes he had that the feelings not wasted in words would strengthen good resolution. Thus they parted. Orlando had put his engagement in writing while the negotiation for the supplies had been going on: and when Walter gave this paper, regularly signed, to his mother, she looked at him with her hope-the-best smile, that delightful encouragement to good, and locked up the engagement in a drawer of her ivory cabinet "till this day next year."

"And now it is to be hoped, my dear Walter," said his uncle, "that your young"——

"Don't say *scamp*, uncle," interrupted Walter.

"Well, your young 'Child of Promise,'" con-

tinued his uncle, "will in due time turn into the 'Child of Performance.'"

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The playbill announcement circulated

ORLANDINO at home with the Royal Tiger—
ORLANDINO abroad with the King of the Cossacks—
ORLANDINO at Paris—
ORLANDINO at Moscow in Flames—
ORLANDINO in Ireland—
"Sweet gem of the Ocean!" &c.

Nothing was to be heard of for fifteen days and nights successively but "Orlandino the Child of Promise eclipsed;" "the Child of Performance indeed," was repeated by all who had been, and by all who were about to go, to the grand amphitheatre at Castletown-Bellevue, to see this wonderfully fine exhibition.

Walter, Amy, and Bessy every day heard of it from all their mother's and uncle's acquaintances, and from all their own young friends; and great was the wonder, and incessant the questions, "Why they did not go? Or how upon earth they could possibly refrain from going to this delightful exhibition! and when

such things so seldom come in our way in this country place?"—It was concluded by some that mamma did not like the expense, or could not well go, as she had no horses. A rich good-natured lady, who had an old roomy coach, offered "to take charge of all the family, bag and baggage," to Castletown-Bellevue, for the last night this season of the performance, if they could coax uncle to give them tickets to see "Orlandino," which, if they missed, they would, as she said, "regret all their lives."

It was a great trial; but Amy and Bessy, hand in hand, stood it admirably. To the questions, "Why? Or how upon earth?" they simply answered that they had a very good reason for not going to this play, or a reason that they thought was good enough, though they did not choose to tell what it was. And they thanked the good old lady; but assured her that mamma and their uncle would have given them leave to go, and tickets too, if they had chosen to go.

"Very odd!" the old lady said; and she, and all the younger ones, with hands uplifted, marvelled much, and went away to marvel more at their next gossipping rendezvous. This was

of little consequence to Amy or Bessy, and of none to Walter, who never cared what was said of him when he knew he was doing what was right.

The old lady's coachful passed by their gate that night, and young heads looked up at their windows, wondering or pitying as they passed; and when all who were going to the play had passed, then Amy and Bessy had at home an entertainment as good, and which they enjoyed in unreproved pleasure free, with self-approving pleasure happy. They went to a play too; and had, perhaps, as much enjoyment in hearing a play well read, as any could have in seeing one well acted. Their mother and their uncle read remarkably well; and every night, during the fifteen representations of Orlandino, read a play to them, by particular desire; and each night, by turns, each chose their play. Amy had, instead of "Fairy Cap," the pretty little fairy entertainment of "Cinderella."*

And "my uncle" made Walter laugh with the farce of "Chrononhotonthologos," and the

* By Lady Theresa L——, for private representation.

indignation of that great general at being offered cold pork for supper—

——"Shall Chrononhotonthologos
Be fed on swine flesh, and at second-hand?"

While Walter mimicked the solemn intonation of this remonstrance, Bessy as successfully practised the female attendant's mode of announcing to royalty that tea is ready—

"The water bubbles, and the tea-cups skip
In eager haste to kiss your royal lip."

She was almost as happy as if she had been seeing "the glasses with a wish come nigh, and with a wish retire."

"But how very extraordinary it is—almost magical," said Amy, "that we can really believe we see before our eyes what we don't see!—and that we can believe the persons and everything before us to be quite different from what they really are! When Walter speaks in that odd, bombastical way, I never think of him as being really my brother Walter; he seems as if, for that minute, he was Chrononhotonthologos. And when mamma spoke as 'Queen of the Rose,' or as 'The Blind Woman

of Spa,' she really made me feel as if the very people were then speaking to me."

"That is exactly what I mean, Amy," cried Bessy, "when I say that hearing mamma read a play is as good as going to a play."

Walter, looking very thoughtful, allowed that, as Amy said, It is strange that one *can* so believe or conceive that things and people are so different from what they really are—things and people who are actually before our eyes. "But a greater wonder, the greatest wonder of all," said he, taking up the book from which his mother had been reading—"the greatest wonder of all is, that these little black marks," pointing to the printed letters and words, "can tell mamma what to say, and how to make us believe, and think, and feel! Is not this most wonderful? This is real magic!"

"Most wonderful!" said Amy. Bessy stood with lips apart—not to say mouth open.—Then, half yawning, said—

"We may go to bed now, the play is over. Good-night, Walter. Thank you for Aldiboronte-Fosco-Forneo. Come away, Amy; it is eleven o'clock."

"Eleven! Can it be eleven?" said Amy.

"Striking—yes. But what noise is that? Do I not hear a carriage?" cried Bessy.

"Yes—and it is stopping here."

It was the old lady's coach; she had returned from the play before the evening entertainment was over, and she stopped at this gate, that her footman might deliver a note with which he had been charged for Mr Walter.

"It must be from Orlando."

And so it was. All gathered round Walter to learn what the note could be about. Even my uncle turned back, bedchamber candle in hand; and Bessy now wide awake, though it had struck eleven o'clock, found out that it was "not so shockingly late." The note, however, contained nothing that gratified public curiosity, though it seemed to satisfy the person to whom it was addressed. It was simply to inform Walter that "in consequence of a sudden turn of humour in the manager, the company had *marching orders*, and were to leave Castletown-Bellevue by flight of *night next morning*." The particular object of the note was to beg the favour of Walter to procure for him an introduction to a certain Dr Calton, a Scotch gentleman, and a man of science, who was now residing at one

of the towns to which the company were going. Orlando had a great ambition to be made known to Dr Calton. The perfect simplicity of a few grateful words with which the letter concluded touched Walter very much.

Somebody has said that he who is ungrateful has no other vice; meaning, we suppose, that all others are nothing in comparison. We wish it could with equal justice be said that those who are most grateful have every other virtue. But, as my uncle observed, this amiable feeling of gratitude is often found in persons of high sensibility with all the virtues of impulse, but destitute of the firmness of principle essential to good character. However, in this young man it now seemed that principle joined with gratitude; and therefore there were the best hopes of him.

It chanced that Walter's mother had been this evening reading an account of the very extraordinary influence which gratitude has had over many poor wretches supposed to be incapable of reformation—offenders confined in prison. The person stating this fact concludes with saying,*

* "Hill's Report," presented to Committee on Criminal Law appointed by the Law Amendment Society.

"The reluctance the prisoners felt to grieve their benefactor by ill conduct, may appear scarcely a motive of sufficient strength to resist much temptation; but in fact it was found to be. It is difficult for us to conceive or to measure the effect produced on the heart of a poor creature who has gained for the first time a friend commanding respect by his character and social position, and by his benevolence awakening feelings long dormant of affection and gratitude."

Walter stayed to hear this read, and so did his uncle—a circumstance almost unprecedented, the clock having struck eleven at least twenty minutes since, and his bedchamber candle bearing a black wick of an inch long, in sign of having been thus long lighted.

We have omitted to mention the greatest pleasure these young people enjoyed, the fittest reward for their generosity—the pleasure of telling the poor mother that her son lived. Bessy undertook the telling, and Amy the assurances that the son's never having written to his mother for the ten years he had been away, was from anything but unkindness; and Walter took upon himself the convincing her that he would return

some time, well and well-doing. And their young hearts beat with all the exquisite joy of gratified benevolence, as they watched the brightening countenance of the poor woman, from the first faint colour that tinged her pale cheeks, to the radiance of joy that expanded her countenance, and danced in her eyes. With that undoubting trust so peculiarly Irish, she never hesitated in her belief, never questioned the fact or the reasons for her son's not writing, nor expressed a doubt as to why he did not appear at once. She was clear that he was alive and well: he could not but be, when the young ladies brought her the news. "Heaven above bless them, that brought her the good news, as they always did!"

Their benevolence was not satisfied by merely bringing good news. Amy and Bessy exerted themselves so effectually with their little hands and heads, and instructed Mary so well in all the mysteries of knitting, and netting, and needlework, that she was soon able to earn enough to be out of want and out of misery.

But Walter was not quite happy. He had not heard from Orlando. His name appeared in the papers, and his successful appearances

were mentioned, and his "engagements," but not a word from himself! My uncle smiled sarcastically, and sighed regretfully—smiled at the fulfilment of his desponding prophecies, and sighed at the sacrifices that had been made, as he feared, in vain; and at last he was heard to murmur behind the newspaper the words, "Ungrateful scamp."

Walter had his own misgivings; but he never breathed a syllable of them. He heard his mother give a deep sigh, which he interpreted into "Poor Walter has lost his trip to Greece, and all for nothing." He could hardly help sighing himself; but he did not.

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At last one morning a thick and many-headed letter appeared on the breakfast-table, directed to Walter; and Walter reddened as he exclaimed, "From Orlando!"

My uncle murmured—"Begging for assistance! In some new scrape, I suppose." Nobody thought proper to hear this surmise; Walter, with an air of dignified reserve, read his

letter to himself; and then, with a suppressed smile, hoped his mother and his uncle would let him read it out: his uncle looked at the number of pages: Walter braved the look, and read on.

By way of motto, at the top of the first page, were these lines of Prior's:—

> "Dear Thomas, didst thou never pop
> Thy head into a tinman's shop?
> There, Thomas, didst thou never see—
> 'Tis but by way of simile—
> A squirrel spend his little rage
> In jumping round a rolling cage?
> But up or down, turn wood or wire,
> It never gets two inches higher."

The letter began with—

"Popping my head into a tinman's shop one day, my dear Master Walter, I saw a squirrel—Prior's very identical one it seemed—and the reality of the simile I felt was myself. Round and round for ever the same thing, and never two, nor one inch higher in the world; and with all the applause, and the clappings, and encores, and triumphs—and my triumphs, I may say, have been splendid!—but in spite of them all, never one penny the richer. And it has only been by never 'treating,' or 'being treated,' I have kept out of debt and difficulty. I have done it, however, though tempted enough, as you may believe: never have I paltered even in thought with

my PROMISE. But I would not be the squirrel for ever. I went into a circulating library one morning, and looking over the books on the counter, I opened in Prescott's Conquest of Mexico upon the Mexican wonder and admiration of the Spanish horses; and the thought struck me—one's genius is certainly more alive at some moments than at others—the thought struck me that it would do for a stage spectacle — horse, and foot, and show, and altogether: so horse and foot I went to work at it. The Mexicans with their bows and their arrows, and feathers and flowers, contrasting with the European steel corslets, and matchlocks, and morions, I saw would be effective. And I knew I could do Cortes myself, fine style; and by great luck we had the very thing for it. We have a chestnut—like 'Motilla,' the famous horse that Cortes rode, with *one* white foot—a great thing, it seems, this one white foot; and the white star on the forehead was easily painted; and in spite of Jack Clinton, who wanted to put me out of conceit with my plan, and said Montezuma was an old affair on the stage, and '*Rococo*' now. I knew I could put a new face on him; and I knew that Jack could never ride the chestnut, it regularly threw him; and when he saw how well the piece would go off, he condescended to play Montezuma himself, and sit upon the wall and weep. But the worst stumblingblock we had was the young Mexican prince's name. The manager could not pronounce it, and the prompter could not read it—to be sure IXTLILXOCHITL was a puzzler. So we new-*christened* him on the spot: and then, Master Walter, you would sympathise with me in the triumph

of my art: there is a triumph in difficulty vanquished that none but the vanquisher can know.

"The conflagration of the bird-house was to be a grand display; but how to make the birds fly out and scream, and flap their wings, and not be burned—there was a problem! But I solved it. I remembered the Icarus man in Bewick, with his strings and his wedge of mounting birds: and I made mine balloon-fashion, plumped out with whalebone, and far-spread wings, hollowed and *air-vesicled*, and spiral springs 'somehow;' and they rose, and flapped, and flew, and pierced the palpable obscure of night, and, by the aid of ventriloquism, were heard in the far distance with receding screams sublime."

"Bravo!" cried my uncle, bursting out into laughter.

"Bravo! you may well say, uncle," cried Walter in a triumphant voice, regardless of the insulting laugh. "Look here!" and he laid before his uncle a bank post-bill for twenty pounds.

"The piece had such a run, sir, Orlando tells me, that the manager was obliged to pay him for it; and he sends the money, he says, just as he received it, to me, to repay myself what I lent him, and to give the rest to his mother."

My uncle blew his nose; Amy and Bessy clapped their hands; and their mother smiled

fondly, as she looked round upon their happy faces. Walter went on—

"You may pardon any little vanity and conceit in the letter, when he acts so well and so handsomely. He has paid this debt—never thought of changing the note, or spending one farthing of it upon nonsense for himself, but sent it the moment he had it, to repay me and support his mother. Even you, uncle, may trust him now for the future?"

My uncle did not say that he would or would not. He only answered, "We shall see."

We need hardly add that the whole twenty pounds was given to, or laid out for, Orlando's mother; who, more comfortable than she had been for years, exclaimed—and it was the truth —"Now I think more of its being my poor boy's bounty to me, than of all it done for me."

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"Hurrah!—he is made!—he is settled!" cried Walter as he entered the breakfast-room one morning; and then trying to compose his countenance, and endeavouring to recover his

usual quietness of manner, he interrupted himself in his speech, and added calmly, "I have heard from Orlando, uncle; and I think, sir, you have a letter from Dr Calton that will tell you something you will be glad to see."

"The first thing I shall be glad to see is my breakfast," said his uncle, removing from his plate a large packet which lay upon it. "And considering that this is an unopened letter," continued he, looking at the unbroken seals, "you seem to have a wonderful knowledge of its contents, Master Walter."

Walter coloured, and sat down.

"Dr Calton must have had a great deal to pay for such a thick letter," said his mother. "It looks like one of the Castle packets of former times."

"Yes, in the days of official privilege," said his uncle, "before Rowland Hill and post-office reform were on earth, when a mysterious name at one corner not only speeded the soft intercourse from soul to soul, but from body to body, wafted — for the reverend the dean, and the honourable the colonel — uniforms, spurs, and boots, or parchment deed or travelling portmanteau. And for ladies, right honourable and

others — laces, cambrics, muslins, and whole bales of Irish poplins, patriotic."

Walter, secure in his own news, could afford to listen and to smile. He was, however, remarkably zealous in cutting ham for his uncle, and in forwarding his teacup with the least possible delay; and he could not avoid some nervous glances at the newspaper, as it lay temptingly unfolded so near his uncle's hand. Amy and Bessy looked at it too. "He will read the newspaper first," thought they. "Perhaps he will? — No he will not."

My uncle took up the newspaper — they sighed: he put it down again out of the way of his elbow — they took breath. He took another piece of toast — it was eaten — it is done—his plate is pushed away—the packet is taken up—the seals are broken—it is opened.

"It is from Dr Calton," said their uncle calmly, and deliberately he read out as follows :—

"My dear Sir—

"I must say that when I first read the letter of introduction you gave to Mr Orlando More, I recollected what Franklin says, and what is, I think you will acknowledge, only too applicable generally to recommen-

dations *from* and *for* your countrymen—'You give letters of introduction and recommendation with too much facility to persons of whose real character you know nothing, and sometimes at the request of others of whom you know as little. Frequently, if a man is good for nothing, and burdensome to his friends, they are glad to get rid of him, and for that purpose scruple not to recommend him to those whom they wish to recommend him to others.'

"This, I confess, was what I considered your letter to be when I first read it—a recommendation of some strolling vagabond that you did not know what to do with; but I met the young man without knowing him, or knowing him to be your protégé. I had heard so many reports of the ingenious contrivances of the newly-arrived theatre, that I went in the evening to see the play 'Montezuma;' and after it was over, I went behind the scenes, and was pleased at the enthusiastic thanks of the actor who performed Cortes to the ventriloquist for the admirable manner in which he had executed his part; and then I discovered that this young man was not only the chief character, but was himself the composer of the piece. I expressed my admiration of the manner in which he had worked up his materials, and pointed out one passage which had struck me particularly, both in the composition and in the recitation—a sort of justification of himself from Cortes to Montezuma—rather a nice point; and he took my commendations of his authorship in so gentlemanlike and modest a manner, that I went on to his skill as a mechanic, and he showed me, with genuine delight in my real value for them, all his

very ingenious contrivances. While he was explaining to me the manner in which a *detent* fell and released the drop curtain, there was a little by-play—an aside going on—which he was not aware that I perceived. Some of his comrades came up, and whispered eager requests to him to join some jollification supper that was preparing, and at each refusal renewed their applications as eagerly, and were as steadily refused—all in whispers, not meant for the company to hear; but I could understand that there was some grudge in their minds for former refusals, and at last one of them—he who had acted Montezuma in the play—turned off, saying—

'Well, it is better not to come at all, than to sit by playing sober spy, as you did last time.'

"I could see that my companion reddened, and looked much annoyed. I took no notice, but went on with the contrivance of the *detent*, and the house of birds, and the difficulty of attaining in an artificial bird the combination of strength with lightness in a natural one; and finding my young man more eager to learn than to display, I asked him to come and sup with me, adding, that I feared a cold shoulder of mutton would be but a poor exchange for the champagne banquet he had refused. He accepted with delight; and when he came, he brought with him your letter, saying that he had discovered me to be the person to whom it was addressed, and expressed his gratification at my having distinguished him even before he had presented his introduction. Then he, with much feeling, related to me all your nephew's generous kindness to him. I was so much pleased with his gratitude, and so much struck by his ingenuity and his eagerness

for scientific knowledge, that I took him with me to see the Great Telescope. It was a beautiful starry night; and Orlando more than justified all that you or your nephew said of him, by the sense, feeling, and enthusiasm he showed on beholding for the first time this great triumph of human invention, revealing the grand sight of the heavens, the grandest spectacle in nature which can be beheld by man.

——————"We parted with, I believe, a mutual desire to see more of each other. He went across the fields to his lodgings, and I returned to mine; but just before I was preparing to go to bed, I threw open the shutters to look out again upon the beautiful night. All was still; clouds had come over the moon, and it was very dark. Far off beyond the fields, through which Mr More was to pass, was one light. I knew that it came from the tents of the players. I was trying whether, the eye becoming habituated to the darkness, I could make out the shape of the tents, or the outline of the encampment, when suddenly, where I had seen only a faint flickering gleam, there darted up a bright blaze—a pointed, dazzling burst of light, clear against the sky; and then, as I looked, it deepened to a red and lurid glow. 'Fire! fire!—the tents on fire!'—and down I ran, roused the people of the house, and went as fast as I could to the spot.—A crowd was already collected—already all was in confusion—the tents, the theatre, the whole was in a blaze. 'Are the actors safe?' was my first inquiry.—'All—all safe! they all rushed out on the first alarm. All safe but the horses sure!' As the man spoke, I saw Orlando bursting through the smoke, dragging after him

one of the horses, and driving the rest before him. I had despatched some men to a pond at the other end of the meadow where the tents were pitched, to bring all the water they could. It was nearly dry, and before they could return, there gushed forth from the centre tent—from the amphitheatre itself—such a cloud of mingled smoke and flame, and such a stench of burning feathers, that all involuntarily started back. The watermen arrived. The sudden dash of wet mud checked the fury of the fire.

'We can save something now!' exclaimed Orlando, and he ran into the theatre.—I followed.—He endeavoured to tear down the ranges of seats before the flames caught the wood-work. I had before admired his contrivance for making them fast, and yet movable, by iron rods which could readily be drawn out.

'Stop, stop!' cried I; 'the iron will burn you!' I spoke too late—his hand was scorched; but with ready presence of mind he tore the asbestos screen from its frame, and flinging a piece to me, and another to one of the men, he wrapped the rest round his hands, and tore out the rods. But before three rows of benches were unloosed, the smothered flames broke out afresh from every part of the theatre. The last tent was on fire: the men fled. I tried to drag Orlando away with me. 'One moment,' cried he, and forced his way to what had been the green-room. He came running out, holding up a small tin box. 'The manager's, and worth saving, I'm sure,' cried he. The crowd gradually retreated from the blazing theatre. The whole was now one mass of flame. The watermen gave up. We all stood still for

a moment and gazed, when suddenly, in the very midst of that fiery glow, a human form appeared. A wild shriek, and it sank. 'It's Jack! it's Jack Clinton!' cried Orlando, rushing at once into the very fury of the flames. Luckily a fresh supply of water had just arrived. It was thrown on the spot where he entered. In a few seconds he reappeared, staggering under his load—his hair on fire, his face blackened with smoke. He seemed to move in flames. He reached me as he sank senseless under the weight and suffocation. A bucketful of water poured upon them quenched the smoke and sparks which clung about them. At the sudden shock Jack Clinton opened his eyes, recognised Orlando, and exclaimed, 'You!—is it you saving me?' Orlando had his senses again in a moment; and he, and the people, and all of us, made every possible exertion, by every or any means, to extinguish the fire. It was hopeless. Furious but short was its rage, and all that could be burned was utterly consumed. We could do no more; so leaving the military and police to guard the place, I had Clinton carried to the hospital; and I supported Orlando, who was hardly able to walk, to my lodgings. He told me that just as he was crossing the last field between the town and the tents, he saw that which was called the dressing-room, and where his comrades were holding their revel, all at once lighted up from within, like some great lantern. Before he could think what it meant, the flames burst through the canvas; out rushed the revellers, shouting, screaming, reeling, and roaring; all ran like madmen towards the town. As they ran past, Orlando recollected the horses, picketed in a shed behind. He

reached them before the flames had caught the wood, and had just rescued them when I came up. The revellers had, it was plain, in their drunken orgies, set fire to their tent; and Jack, he concluded, had, when the others rushed out, sunk down in a state of intoxication, and been only recalled to life on the very point of losing it, when he gave that scream of agony which brought Orlando to his aid. I asked what had become of the manager. He had gone on a visit in the neighbourhood some miles distant, and would know nothing of his misfortune till his return in the morning. When we reached my lodgings, I perceived that Orlando was terribly burned, his hands and his face especially.

"I have done all that I could for him, and I trust that he will not be materially injured. His unhappy comrade is recovering. In the morning, when the manager returned, his rage was alternately tragic and comic: his losses were really tragic, but the inconsistencies of his fury were irresistibly comic. He accused everybody and everything of being the cause of his misfortune. He hated the place; he had never wished to come there; he had always wished to go to the north. He hated the people. —Bad people!—He said he was sure they had a special spite against him. He was certain that it was some low fellows about the town who were refused admittance who set the theatre on fire—it was some of the vagabond fellows from the bogs—it was one of the stable-boys at the inn, to revenge the horses not being kept there—it was one of his own horse-boys, because he had been flogged. Then suddenly turning upon Orlando, 'It was you, Mr Orlando More—it was you! You burned the

theatre *on me*, because I praised the ventriloquist. You did—you know you did. No—you burned it because Jack Clinton laughed at you! *You* burned it—you did! You burned it out of spite to me, because I—I—I—— Everything I had upon earth burned to pieces! My dresses, my scenes, my double theatre, my'—— He burst into tears; Orlando put into his hands the box he had saved.

"The poor man stared up at him with a puzzled expression of doubt and admiration as he clutched the money-box with rapacious joy. I told him that to Mr Orlando More he owed not only the safety of his money, but of his beautiful horses, all of which would have been burned but for his presence of mind. Quite subdued, the manager turned to him and said, 'Mr More, our engagement is at an end: my theatre and its properties are destroyed—but the horses are saved. You have saved them. Will you take the command of them, and be my partner?'

"I could see that Orlando was for a moment tempted by this offer of being Master of the Horse, possessor of these noble animals; but after a moment's hesitation, he refused it decidedly. The manager went on to expatiate upon what might be done 'in the way of a new Circus,' and how they might get engagements in Dublin and everywhere. Mr More still declined, but held out his hand—the sight of which, bound and bandaged, seemed to touch the poor man's heart.—'Thank you for your offers, sir; let us part friends at all events.' They shook hands, and Mr More returned home with me.

"I have written this long history to you, my dear sir,

to show you how well your protégé has, by his presence of mind, courage, generosity, and, I may add, discretion, justified your recommendation.

"I am in want of a secretary and assistant; I have offered the situation to Mr More. He says it would be the height of his ambition. Do you and your nephew think it would suit him? Let me have your answer as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

ADAM CALTON."

"Is it not glorious?" said Walter: "Orlando to be Dr Calton's secretary and assistant! The very thing in the world I should have wished for him! Here is what he says to me about it and about everything. Uncle, it is not very long:"—

"DEAR MR WALTER—

"Excuse my left-handed writing. My right has been burned; but owing to your friend Dr Calton's skill and care, it will not signify. But what do I not owe to him and to you? You first made me feel that I might be something better—that I might do more than strut and fret my hour upon a strolling stage. You first made me feel that I might be not the mere Child of Promise, but the Man of Performance—of something more than the performance of a Harlequin or a Merry-Andrew. To you and your good uncle I owe my introduction to one who has, in the few hours I have known him, put more ideas into my head than I ever had in all my life

before.—When he came into the green-room, and examined and admired all our contrivances, and when I heard his observations, then first I felt what real science is, and at what a distance from real knowledge was a poor mechanical jobber like myself. He took me to see the Great Telescope; and when I beheld the vast tube, in all its ponderous length, moved with inaudible ease and facility, and surely directed to its point—and when I beheld through it the vast orb of the moon, and its extinct and unextinct volcanos, a sense of the sublime came over me, such as I had never before experienced, and by which I was at once touched and proud, I own, to feel myself capable. I can attempt only to speak to you of my sensations—thoughts I had none adequate to the occasion; such multitudes of new wonders were pointed out to me—nebulæ, clouds of new worlds in clusters, and interminable distant regions of discoverable glories!—My imagination shrank from its own insufficiency to reach to that conception—a sense of awe and reverence, a feeling of the devotional sublime possessed me afterwards as I returned home, slowly walking through the silent fields. Suddenly I heard the sounds of boisterous revelry from our tents, which struck me with disgust and horror. Horror indeed!—by their drunken carelessness they set fire to the tents. * * *

"Nothing left but the bare iron poles and framework! I went this morning to look at the blank scene of desolation.—There I stood alone, and looked around upon the black skeleton of that amphitheatre which I had so few hours before seen so gay, so splendid, so admired! Those arabesque panels! that delicate tracery! some scat-

tered fragments had escaped the capricious flames, and hung in broken and discoloured scraps, and here and there a half-burnt rag! How mean!—how paltry!—all that I had looked upon as so superb. A few remaining letters of Victoria's name still stood out in the centre panel; and a broken cast of Britannia caught my eye. This figure had been a favourite of mine: it was really a beautiful cast; I had made desperate efforts to save it from the fire, but in vain—it now lay shattered and neglected in the ruins. I laid my hand on the head of one of her attendant lions. Instantly there burst forth a loud peal of music—'Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!' I burst into tears at this triumphant sound in such sad circumstances! so different from those in which I had so often gloried in hearing it in the crowded house—hands, and hearts, and voices accompanying it in the pomp and pride of swell! It was but a stage trick, however, you know, after all. The musical clock was concealed in the lion's head, and I had unconsciously touched the signal spring. I am not ashamed to tell you of the great emotion I felt at seeing this desolation in the scene of my former triumphs; for, after all, I consider this fire as the most fortunate circumstance of my life. My engagement with the manager is at an end, and Dr Calton has been pleased to say that he will try me as his secretary and assistant. I could wish for no greater happiness upon earth; I shall be able to support my mother in ease and comfort all the days of her life, and I shall be myself with one of the ablest and most benevolent of men; and always learning, always acquiring new knowledge, and always engaged in pursuits the most

ennobling and delightful.—You will, I am sure, be as much rejoiced for me as I am for myself.—'Upon trial' only, of course, the doctor takes me at present; but I will not disappoint him—I will not disappoint YOU. You that have saved me: you have done more for me, as Dr Calton says, by your strong character than even by all your generosity—more, I am sure, than any mere money could do! I hope I shall not be too late for to-day's post.

Abruptly, but gratefully yours,

ORLANDO MORE."

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Quick rise the hopes! rapid flies the imagination, of childhood and of youth!—Already were Amy and Bessy seeing visions, and planning schemes for Orlando's future life, and most especially settling the how and the where of his meeting with his mother and sister. Whether they would tell, or whether they would not tell Mary all that had come to pass, was the immediate question. They should or should not tell her, Amy said, "just as their mother advised." Their mother commended Amy's discreet reference to her, and advised that they should wait till they were quite sure of Dr Calton's determination; and, above all, till they should know

Orlando's own wishes. He might wish to be the person to tell all this to his mother himself; and he might like to choose his own time for telling it.—"Stay a bit," their uncle's favourite maxim, was not much relished by the young ones: yet in this instance, supported by their mother's quiet reasoning, they could not but admit that it would be best, certainly, to wait for the answers to the letters. It was only to be hoped that these answers would certainly come by return of post.

And so they did. And satisfactory they were in the main—perfectly satisfactory to Walter's uncle and mother was Dr Calton's reply; but Bessy did not quite understand all the *ifs* and *buts;* she was too impatient, too eager; and even Amy the impartial thought that when Walter had passed his word for anybody, there needed not to be so much, so very much caution, and so many little particulars put in writing, about what "he could only promise," and what "Orlando must *not* expect," and so forth: especially about payment — salary — remuneration — or whatever words he put it in, Amy thought that Dr Calton had better not have said a word about it.

Walter, to whom she whispered these her thoughts, was of opinion that it was much better to be quite plain in explicitly stating all things at first; "then people would not misunderstand and dispute afterwards, and perhaps quarrel about them at last."

"Oh yes, very right to *say* it all, but not to write it," replied Amy.

"Why not write it?" said Walter.

"So like bargaining," said Amy.

"Well, and it is bargaining; so why should it not be like bargaining?"

"But gentlemen never bargain, do they?" said Amy.

"Don't they?" said Walter. "Did you never hear of gentlemen bargaining?"

"About buying horses—yes."

"And letting land, and a hundred things," said Walter. "I have been by in the study when my uncle was letting land, and I remember he always said, 'Put it in writing—what is written remains;' and the farmer answered, 'True, your honour—fast bind, fast find.'"

Still Amy thought that it was disagreeable in Dr Calton to be so particular, as if he suspected Orlando, and as if he still thought that

he required *to be bound over*, as they say, to his good behaviour. Walter was inclined a little, on this point, to feel with Amy, yet he thought, as a sage, with Dr Calton: he was sensible that one who had been living in such company, and who had really been so changeable and imprudent as Orlandino had been, could not be depended upon at once, and unreservedly, unconditionally. It was right and good for him that he should feel this. Dr Calton engaged him for the remainder of this year of probation, in which he might have means and opportunity of fulfilling his promise of good conduct and steady perseverance. It was in this hope that Walter had made, and was making for him, such a sacrifice of his own amusement and pleasure.

For these months—in which Orlando, untrained as he was in all which, as secretary and assistant lecturer, he could be of any real use—Dr Calton allowed him a salary more as an encouragement than as remuneration. It was only a very small sum, and the doctor specified exactly what he should require from him; what hours of the day he should call upon him, and expect that he should be at his bidding, to write or assist him in anyway desired; and what

hours he would have to himself. Several hours of the day and night were left to him for reading and improving himself; or for writing, as he proposed, for the booksellers, translations, or whatever he could to earn money for his poor mother. This kind consideration for his main object, for the real mainspring now of his existence, the wish nearest his heart, touched Orlando beyond all the rest, as his letter to Walter showed; and Amy was now quite satisfied with the exactness of Dr Calton's specification.

But Bessy's attention had flitted far away. She saw in Walter's hand a letter directed to Orlando's mother, and a note to Mary. But it was not for her to see. Walter put it in his breast coat-pocket immediately. It was the first letter that Orlando had ever written to his mother. It was not to be seen by anybody but herself: Walter was requested to deliver it, which he did as soon as possible. He put the letter and the note into their hands without a word—and was gone.

No one ever saw the letter to the mother—not even Mary. Her mother never spoke of it, but read it over and over again; the first

time trembling so, that she could hardly hold the paper. With one deep sigh when she had finished, but without shedding a tear, she read it again and again, and her hand steadied, and at last a shower of tears came to her relief; and then she folded up the letter and put it into her bosom, where she "would keep it ever."

Orlando's note to Mary contained one pound, and a promise to send her "*the same*" every month, independently of what he might, as he hoped, be able to have always ready for his mother. He requested that Mary would apply the one pound monthly to her own use, in hiring a country girl-of-all-work, who should do all the too hard and heavy labour which she had now to undergo, and who might thus leave her some time for her own profit and improvement. It was a small sum, but it would be more than sufficient for the purpose intended. And Mary consulted the young ladies as to how she should lay out what would fall to her own share in the best manner for herself *and* her mother.

It was very useful to Amy and Bessy to be thus called upon to advise, as it obliged them to calculate and to consider exactly how to pro-

portion means to the proposed end. They saw by what small and slow degrees things desired can be obtained or must be effected in real life; and they perceived how, in vulgar version, "Many a little makes a mickle"—how many tiny possibilities must be accumulated, like grains of sand, to make up a whole!

Mary was now able to go to an excellent school for some hours every day, when she could be spared from her home duties. Her schooling was not gratis; she paid a small stipend from her brother's supply, which prevented her from feeling quite dependent upon charity; and she was thus instructed in all which her mother's fallen fortunes had prevented her hitherto from having time or opportunity to learn; and thus gradually she was prepared for any change in their circumstances which might take place.

It is scarcely necessary to say how happy all these combined little efforts of his sisters, and the great kindness of his indulgent and approving mother, made Walter. He constantly gave Orlando the pleasure of hearing how things were going on at home; and Orlando, on his part, wrote him a regular journal, showing how daily and hourly kind Dr Calton continued to be.

This good friend allowed him the use of his own collection of scientific books; and as he subscribed to an excellent circulating library in Dublin—(Webbe's)—Orlando had the advantage of as many amusing and instructive books as he could devour. Devour he really did with insatiable appetite, growing by what it fed upon. "My uncle" began to be somewhat afraid that he would swallow down too voraciously without chewing, and that there would be an indigestion of knowledge, perhaps a surfeit. He read over, with apprehension, the bill of fare which Orlando furnished in one of his letters. But his apprehensions were allayed by some observations and counsel from the prudent and experienced Dr Calton, who warned and restrained Orlando's omnivorous appetite, and made him temperate in his mental food. The doctor exacted from his pupil rather severe application to the elementary works, which were necessary to ground him in the knowledge essential to an assistant lecturer; and he was satisfied and pleased, as he wrote to Walter and his uncle, with the temper, docility, and *steadiness* with which his protégé submitted to restrictions and adhered to his duty. "*Steadiness!*"—Wal-

ter put his finger triumphantly upon that word as he showed it to his uncle in the doctor's letter; underlined, too, by one not given to underlining upon every slight occasion.

As surely as hope feeds love, gratitude nourishes, increases, and excites generosity to fresh activity. Walter formed new schemes for Orlando's and his mother's happiness; and his sisters thought all he proposed charming, if they had but the means to carry his plan into effect.

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No less a scheme was Walter's than to re-establish the mother in the comfortable home in which she formerly lived at Carrolinan before she had been ejected by her husband's elder brother in his wrath. The house had been let of late years to a sort of half-gentleman, or quarter-gentleman, or whatever fraction of a broken gentleman he might be. This *individual* had at first setting out spent a great deal of his ready cash upon the premises, turning a good comfortable farm-house into what he chose to

call his hunting or his shooting lodge; it had all been done in a careless, squandering way, at double the cost it needed. In due course he ceased to pay rent, because he required to be remunerated for his improvements and additions. The agent refused to make allowance for additions which he did not think improvements, and which nobody had asked the tenant to make. But all that concerns us in the business is, that the half-quarter gentleman being wholly ruined, decamped one morning before sunrise, having packed upon his cars all the furniture or movables that he had time or means to carry off. There was a great arrear of rent, and nothing to answer for it; and it was at a time of year when nobody would think of taking house or land, especially in the condition in which the premises were left. The under-agent was much perplexed and alarmed, this broken gentleman being a connexion of his own, and, moreover, having been recommended by him, and accepted by his employer upon his sole recommendation, if not on his absolute security. To let the house again as soon as possible to some substantial tenant, who might be able and willing to pay part of the arrears as a *fine*, as

it is called, at coming in, was the only resource which *the Sub* had to save himself with his employer. He looked about him privately for a substantial tenant, without daring publicly to advertise. He had some hopes that a remarkably good-natured woman, who had no adverse interest to his, as she was about to leave the country, might contrive to find him a tenant. The good-natured person in whom the Sub's fainting hopes centered was the happy mother, Mrs Walsh, who received that memorable day at the post-office the delightful letter from her son which Walter read to her. She and her family were now on the eve of their departure for Philadelphia; and it was after her having settled to her own willing loss, and to the agent's roguish satisfaction, all rent accounts, and taken receipt in full, that he urged her to unsay the word she had given to the man, who had all but a lease, with the agent's consent, of their surrendered house and farm.

"Do not you let that house of yours, but make him come over to me and propose for the lodge, and fine down the rent handsomely, and I'll give it him a bargain."

This bargain could not be: Mrs Walsh, with

all her good-nature, would never oblige one at the expense of another. She, however, seeing the agent's despair, and that he was really in what her American Peter would call a *fix*, bethought herself of mentioning the matter to Walter. She had heard that he and his sisters, and his uncle and mother, took an interest about the poor Widow More. Walter had made some inquiries from Mrs Walsh about her, and about the way and cause of her having been turned out of this house; and it occurred to her that he had a wish to get her back again: so she took the opportunity of going to pay her farewell thanks and respects to Master Walter and all the family, who had ever been so good to her, and to whom her Peter had charged her to present his cordial duty and gratitude. So she, nicely kerchiefed and shawled, and with her bright affectionate countenance, went up to the house to speak to him; and she took the liberty to mention in a whisper to Master Walter how matters stood, "and how Carrolinan Cottage was circumstanced, and the sub-agent in a mind to let it for next to nothing, if he could get something by it." She had no need to say anything touching

the widow or Mary, as before half a word was uttered, the idea had suggested itself to Walter. He thanked her; he shook hands with her; he wished her a good journey, a good voyage, all manner of happiness; scarcely sensible that he was speeding rather too much the parting guest, as he opened the door for her, in his own haste to make his way to his uncle's study to open the case to him.

His uncle turned as he came into the room, and said, with a look of sarcastic benevolence, "Now, Master Walter, here you come with some premeditated folly in your face."

Walter declared that, on the contrary, what he was going to say was eminently wise; and he repeated what he had heard from the Widow Walsh, and how he thought he could turn it to advantage for the Widow More; and his uncle heard, and his mother listened, and they agreed that it could do no harm to go to Carrolinan and look at the house, and send to the agent to meet them, and try to make—what Amy so much despised—"a good bargain" for the house, as Orlando would now be well able to pay any reasonable rent for it. And whatever repairs and furnishing Walter and his sisters could

themselves provide for the widow, they might execute as soon as they pleased—if the house could be had. Walter would gladly have set off that instant; but it was too late: they were, however, to go next day.

One of the finest days that ever was seen—carriage, open carriage at the door—and in he jumped, having first hoisted in Bessy and Amy, who were to be of the party—as well they deserved, from their long kindness to Mary, and their present, and their ever-ready sympathy with their brother, and with all his generous fancies: fancies or wishes, no matter which; still good—good! and happy—happy! The carriage rolled on. There are days when every place looks well, especially to young eyes, and every new place particularly; and Carrolinan was a new place to them. They never had seen it: only knew it was in the *mountains somewhere*, and were surprised when they came to—"nothing so very wild"—a good enough road, however, up hill and down hill, and through a pretty glen.

"With a river!" cried Bessy.

"A rivulet!" said Amy.

"A wood!" cried Bessy.

"Trees!" said Amy.

"Nothing very extraordinary," said sober Walter—keeping himself to himself. "I wonder what the house will be?"

It was not a thatched cottage, to Amy's and Bessy's unspeakable disappointment.

"I told you, girls, Mrs Walsh said it had been turned into a lodge," said Walter.

"Lodge!" said Bessy; "not half so pretty as a cottage."

"It is neither one thing nor the other," said Amy.

"That great cut stone portico—or whatever you call it—is frightful," said Bessy; "stuck on where I expected a woodbine porch; and staring great panes in those windows in front, instead of the pretty latticed windows above."

"Here we are," cried Walter, jumping out before the carriage had stopped, and handing out his mother and sisters. They were in the house before the poor woman left in care of it could well open the door. And up stairs, and down stairs, and into every hole and corner the young folk flew; Bessy admiring or deploring, and Amy planning or despairing, and Walter

looking at everything with the eye of a man of business.

*This*, and *that*, he observed, were too fine for a cottage, and if sold, would bring in something for the widow. And though so many panes of glass were broken in the new sashes, still the glass would more than do for the latticed window-frames, which were found under oats in the garret. Walter looked to everything; and his mother smiled and approved of all his suggestions, and his sisters more than agreed, admired, and applauded. Then to the garden—if garden it could be called—they ran. Nettles throughout! — Pigs had been — and one yet grunted there! Walter kicked him out, bidding him go to his sty; which was unjust, and, besides, impossible; for the pig had no sty to go into.

"But it does not signify," cried Walter; "we can build a sty in the corner."

In the corner there stood, or there leaned, the very woodbine porch of which Bessy had a *beau ideal*. It had been transplanted from the front of the house to the back of the garden, and there had formed something which looked like an arbour at first view, but which, on near

approach, and on entrance, could only be called a *tabagie*—in plain English, a smoking place, a beer-drinking place. Marks of the tankard or the punch-bowl, and of the wine or the whisky glasses, were over the dirtiest of dirty tables—and broken pipes and strewed cigars told the rest.

Amy, who was nice of smell, could not enter the *tabagie;* but Bessy encountered it, and running round the crooked table, pronounced that Walter could make it straight by two new legs—could plane the top, as he had planed the top of a table last week for her; and that the whole trellis and arbour could be—as Amy wished and Walter hoped—safely transplanted in all its honeysuckle beauty to its original place, and be again a pretty porch to the hall-door. And to the hall-door Bessy repaired to see it, with the prophetic eye of taste—in childhood most happily clear-sighted.

They were all standing before the hall-door, considering how that "horror of the heavy, out-of-place cut-stone portico" could be most speedily removed, also what could be got for cut-stone Walter was calculating, when his uncle, who had gone into the village, came back with the

agent, who had at his button-hole a paper, and in hand pen and inkhorn.

He requested the lady's presence in the parlour, or wherever she pleased, just to put her name to the agreement, which now wanted only her signature. She gave it—not without reading, as Walter wisely observed. His uncle said that all was settled to his satisfaction. The agent was fully empowered by the head landlord to let the house and land; and in the agreement there was a special clause permitting the underletting to whoever they thought proper—they of course answering for the rent. The agent had been most eager to conclude the business on the spot, as ready money, or a draft at sight for the fine, that would clear off the heaviest part of the arrear, was offered and paid; and he was cleared from the scrape which otherwise he must have been in with his *principal.*

While Walter's mother was reading, and signing, and sealing, and his uncle explaining, Walter looked at the agent, and recognised in him *Silver-whip*—the man he had met at the post-office—ages ago—who had so stared at Orlandino! The agent had no recollection of having ever seen Walter before, and it never occurred

to him that he could have any connection with Orlando. Nor did he seem to know anything about the widow or Mary. Not the least notion had he that the house was taken with a view to their reinstalment. His idea, if he had any, was, that the lady and gentleman meant to make a compliment of it to Master Walter, and that they intended to *fix it* for a hunting, shooting, or fishing lodge for him. Accordingly, he went on puffing it as "incomparable," and giving him joy of the capital bargain it was. Possession was given — possession taken; and Bessy was amused by the ceremony of the key, and the twig, and bit of thatch given and received. The carriage was at the door, and in they were, and off they bowled.

A delightful evening!—and everything was delicious! Though they had had no dinner, they had plenty of sandwiches in the carriage; and everybody knows how much better sandwiches in the carriage are than dinner on the table. While they were eating from mamma's bountiful basket and lap, with cambric handkerchief outspread, uncle sat back in the corner, and began to talk business with Walter.

"Pray, Walter, have you the least idea who

our head landlord is? What think you of his being Orlando's uncle?"

"Orlando's uncle!"—Walter was alarmed—afraid that the landlord, who had ejected the widow, would be angry, and object to her coming back again. But then no one could prevent her being brought back again, as the agreement was signed and sealed, and there was the special permission to underlet. This agreement must be adhered to.

Walter still had his fears, though he said, or endeavoured to say, "No matter." But "No matter" stuck in his throat till his kind uncle relieved him by—"Very true, Walter." And something more he added, which excited Bessy's curiosity, and raised Amy's hopes, that there would be no difficulties whatever, and that this head landlord might turn out not to be so very cruel a man after all. "Hear both sides," her uncle's favourite maxim, was now particularly well-timed. He told them what he had heard while he was away from them in the village of Carrolinan. He had there met with a medical gentleman who was visiting a sick family in one of the cabins.

This gentleman—Dr Clifford—was Mr More

of More-Court's family physician; had known him for years; knew all the circumstances of his life, and all the changes of his humours; old More he described to be a good-natured, and what you may call good-hearted man, though passionate, and self-willed, and fond of power, and piquing himself particularly upon his right to rule as head of the house. He had been very fond of his only brother, Orlando's father, who was some years younger than himself, and of whom he had considered himself as the guardian. He had been very much displeased by his brother's marrying under age, without his consent, and a woman of low rank, and *no birth;* but still more he was offended, and most naturally and justly, by their keeping the marriage a secret from him. Consequently, he never would see the wife nor acknowledge the marriage — that is to say, countenance it—for he did admit that it was a regular marriage. His brother lived but a few years afterwards. At his death, More senior's heart was softened, but not sufficiently to induce him to receive or even to see the widow. However, he made her immediately a handsome allowance for the education of her son as a gentleman; and

when he afterwards heard of the boy's progress, and of his distinguishing himself at school, he was pleased and proud of his nephew. The more was he disappointed, and, as Dr Clifford described, enraged, by his running away from school just when he was hoping that he would be in time an honour to his name. Above all, incensed he was against the mother, believing that she had spoiled the boy, and that by her foolish fondness she was the cause of his ruin. It was under this impression—and you cannot much wonder at it—that he in anger withdrew the annuity he had granted for the boy's education. But in his first fury he went further: he ordered that the widow—the mother—should be turned out of her house, and ejected from his land. He not only would never let her come into his sight while he lived, but he swore she should remain no longer on his estate. Dr Clifford was with him at the time when the news was brought to him by the agent, and when, in his paroxysm of rage and gout, he issued the fatal order—"Eject her—eject her! Eject her instantly!" It is the curse of Irish landlords as of English kings—the curse of all who are in power—to have about

them some who serve them too promptly—"slaves that take humours for a warrant"—and More's agent was one of these. "Had he but shook his head, or made a pause," or "turned an eye of doubt" upon the landlord's face, the widow and the orphan would have been saved. But the agent wanted the farm for a friend of his own, and his wife had some grudge against the widow. The order was executed instantly—the notice to quit served that hour. This is the truth, as told by Dr Clifford, whose truth cannot be doubted. But he was also witness to the uncle's remorse. The doctor was standing by his patient's gouty chair, feeling his pulse, when the agent brought him word that his orders had been executed, and that the widow and her daughter were gone.

"Gone!"—the pulse fluttered and stopped—then beat with furious velocity.—"Gone! How? Where? Why?" The agent coolly answered that she took herself off at the first warning. She fled in her fright, or her pride, or her ignorance, he said: the foolish woman did not know the law allowed her six months, so took herself off bag and baggage—nobody knew how, and

nobody knew where; and "so best," the hard-hearted agent said.

Mr More shrunk with a double pang of gout and conscience. Clenching his hand, he bade the agent begone, and never mention the widow's name to him again at his peril.

From this remorse even my uncle augured well. And hoping the best, the young people set to work at their repairs and improvements. Very happy they were, portioning out their parts in this labour of love. At all events not "Love's labour lost," for it was all for dear Walter—so to each their voluntary tasks. Their mother promised to supply them with good common household stuff, enough for all their purposes, if they could calculate exactly how much they wanted; and she would help in the cutting out, provided she was not to be asked above a million of questions as to the rest. Amy undertook the pinning and putting together, and engaged to refer to her mother only a dozen times a day. Walter, in the midst of this "sempstress-talk," was dead silent; but he took his turn, and had his share when it came to the carpentry. Besides tables and chairs innumerable to be mended, there was the cuckoo clock to be made to cuckoo, and to

be made to go. It was at this moment without a pendulum.

While thus they laid out their difficult works, they were all happy in the thought that they could be really useful, and triumph over all difficulties. But Rome was not built in a day, and we must not expect that Carrolinan Lodge can in a day be transmuted or *transmogrified* into Carrolinan Cottage. There must be time.

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Time and Industry,

> "The mighty two
> That bring our wishes nearer to our view,"

brought in due time to view the accomplishment of Amy's and Bessy's and Walter's wishes. The fitting and furnishing of Carrolinan Cottage was accomplished. Carrolinan *Cottage—Lodge* no more—a cottage being a home more suitable and more comfortable for the destined occupier. Not without pains and care had this change been completely effected. In truth nothing ever is well done without more difficulty and more care than we are at first aware is neces-

sary. Amy's mismeasurement of the bed furniture cost them a whole day's work, and the patched resource of an added valance. And Bessy's lack of half a breadth more in the window curtains gave them, it may be feared, at last rather a *skimpy* appearance. Walter's troubles with the clock, difficulties of wheels with broken teeth, and centres worn out, were trying to the clock-mender's temper, and required not only his utmost skill, but utmost patience; and then all the rattling doors and the windows! The work seemed endless, the difficulties insuperable. Yet they were all conquered at last; and curtains would draw and undraw—and the doors did open, and the windows did shut — and the cuckoo clock did cuckoo—and the broken knocker was sold to the tinker for twopence-halfpenny or thereabouts. The stone-pedimented portico was gone to the agent's own house gratis — the *tabagie* table was planed, and had now its proper complement of legs—and there was the woodbined porch, reinstated with the flaunting eglantine, flaunting and flourishing as well as ever. By the by, Bessy acknowledged that she had never till this day known what eglantine meant. She

always thought it was honeysuckle, and lo! it is sweetbrier.

"How people may live and learn, even at my age!" said Bessy.

The garden was divided into beds—nice pincushions, and hearts, and crescent-shaped beds—for Mary's flowers. She was not allowed many flowers, because there must be a kitchen garden, with all things useful. A few sweet peas, and one red rose, and one white rose, Amy persuaded Walter to let her *just* put down; and they took root, and were never the worse for being transplanted at the wrong season. Everything lives in a wonderful way in young people's gardens, or in young gardens freshly dug and fondly watered.

Enough about all this. When is the widow to come and to be installed? Oh, no instalment. Walter and "my uncle" objected to *instalment*, word or deed. There must not be any *fuss*, they said. Amy looked a little disappointed; for though she was not in the least of an ostentatious disposition, she had a little romance in her imagination. There was a print which had "touched her infant thought." A print in the "Peruvian Letters" of Zelie—the lovely

Zelie being presented by Deterville the Generous with a charming newly-furnished house and garden; and there were the peasant girls doing homage, strewing flowers, and holding up the basket full of fruit to her graceful bending. It was a little too French altogether! And Amy was ashamed when Walter laughed at it and at her. She put the book out of sight, and her fancy out of mind.

A jaunting car was hired to carry the widow and Mary to their new-old home. And Amy, and Bessy, and mamma, and Walter, set out in the pony carriage very early, that they might be in time to see that all was right, and to give the keys, and possession.

"My uncle" had something particular to do at home, we suppose, as he could not be persuaded to be of this party, though they assured him there should be no *scene:* still, he said, he would rather hear it all from them when they came back, than go to see it himself.

They arrived at Carrolinan Cottage—really a cottage now! "And here is the jaunting car coming up the hill—and the widow and Mary!" cried Bessy. "Oh, look at them, Walter! How delighted they are!"

"I must go in and try the bell," said Walter, ever intent upon the business to be done. "Will you try the house-bell, and I will come back and answer if it rings rightly? Now pray no *fuss*." Bessy and Amy were mute, and as humbly and simply passive as possible; while all they had done was being seen. It need only be said that the widow was happy beyond expression, and beyond expression happily grateful. "Heaven bless them!" said the widow; and "Heaven bless them!" said Mary. The blessing of the widow and orphan was deep, but not loud; and was felt, though scarce audibly uttered.

Meanwhile Walter was perplexed with fear of keys not turning in locks when it should come to the push; but on trial, and at push-and-try, and try!—try again a second time, all did turn; even the old and rusty, and the newly-filed, at the first trial turned—all right.

"All is right, then, and we had better clear off, and leave Mary and mother to settle themselves their own way."

Off Walter ran, put his mother and sisters into the carriage, jumped in after them, and off they drove; but just as they passed the gate, they were stopped by Dr Clifford, who had seen

the carriage as he was going on his charitable rounds, and who now came to congratulate the young people on having accomplished their good purpose. He assured Walter and his mother of the truth of all he had represented at their last meeting; but also added hopes, from what he had since ventured to say to his gouty, humorsome patient, that all would end agreeably. He had thrown in cooling remedies, sweeteners of the blood, and anti-malevolent specifics, in the timely administration of which he had, in the whole course of his practice, been eminently successful. And what a peculiarly happy line of practice is this!—blessed and blessing beyond all that ambition or money can obtain or can enjoy!

Walter, as Dr Clifford walked beside the carriage, unthinking of himself, looked at him affectionately and respectfully; and the good doctor felt encouraged to ask a question.—"Has anything been heard of the widow's son, of whom no news reached this country for so many years?"

Walter rejoiced in being able to answer satisfactorily. He told of Orlando's return, and of his present situation, and of all their well-

founded hopes for her future. The good doctor's heart was rejoiced, and his countenance lit up with benevolent sympathy. He had known Orlando when he was quite a child. He had seen that he was a remarkably clever child—a little, not a little conceited; but conceit drops off, or is rubbed off jostling through life; and several little traits of Orlando had come to his knowledge when he was attending boys in the measles at the school to which he had been sent, traits of an ardent and generous disposition.

We forbear to record them, though they delighted Walter: showing the same disposition in the boy which now appeared in the young man. "And how well worth saving was such a youth, and how well worth restoring to his place in society; and, above all, how well worth making such a one respectable and happy!" exclaimed Dr Clifford, who, with his hand on the carriage door, walked on, he did not know how far, talking of all this, till the sun setting reminded him of an appointment he had in a cabin hard by. Walter shook hands with him most affectionately at parting, and promised that whenever Orlando might come to the country, he should

hear of him, and see him, and have the pleasure of finding, as he trusted he should, how well his own judgment had prognosticated.

At a good rate on the carriage rolled, and at a surprising rate the young ones chattered. What they could find to say continually, even mamma could not conceive. Orlandino or Orlando was, to be sure, an inexhaustible subject; but they passed from this to all manner of nonsense. From grave to gay, from sense to nonsense, there is in childhood and in youth an easy and quick transition, and often the most sensible become the most nonsensical.

"Oh, Walter!—oh, Amy! Look at that goat with the gray beard and that long train of straw caught in his tail!" cried Bessy.

"And oh, mamma! dear mamma! Look! To the left look quick."

And quick she looked, but saw nothing, yet heard peals of laughter. The heart's laugh it was, unextinguishable as the laughter of the gods, and to the mother's ear most pleasant.

"Youth at the prow, and pleasure at the helm!"

Can you?—can anybody imagine anything more delightful than a yachting party? Smooth water! soft breeze! streamers flying! music playing! ladies on the bank waving congratulations! and a glorious day! Can you conceive anything more delightful?

Yes; something more delightful Walter enjoyed this day, when all his hopes were fulfilled, when all his benevolent wishes were accomplished, and he saw Orlando restored to his mother—saw him in her arms!

But he was too attentive to the feelings of those he obliged, too sincerely sympathising, to intrude on their first meeting; he gave only one look, stayed only one moment. He would not disturb them, even by their sense of gratitude to him and his whole family. He threw upon the table a paper he had received by this morning's post, then jumped on his pony, and away he cantered to Dr Clifford's, to fulfil his promise of giving him the earliest notice of Orlando's arrival.

The paper laid on the table was the list of debts—all paid—a receipt in full given, and Orlando was at perfect liberty. The year of probation having come to an end, Dr Calton had written to Walter and his uncle to give his full testimony in favour of his protégé and of theirs. *Protégé*, indeed, he would no longer call him; he now considered him as one standing on his independent merits and well-earned character.

Dr Calton, remembering the half promise he had made to accompany Orlando on his return to his native place and to his friend Walter, arrived as soon as possible after the comfortable assurance that their beds were ready, and that "there was room, and room enough for them." An assurance that should always be waited for; as the cautious Scotchman remarked, "However certain you may be of a welcome to your mind, it is well always to make assurance doubly sure, and to be informed by the lady of the house that there is a possibility of room for your body."

The moment they arrived—if we may believe Bessy's assertion—she knew from the very first sound of Dr Calton's voice that he was as fond

of Orlando now as if he was his son; she knew it from the way in which he spoke as he got out of the carriage, putting the purse into his hand, saying, "You will look to everything."

Bessy's instant deduction from this, that the doctor was "as fond of Orlando as if he was his own son," might be somewhat hasty and exaggerated; but still there was a little more truth in this than in many *takings-for-granted.*

Orlando had conducted himself with such perfect truth and steadiness, that Dr Calton considered him not only as his secretary, a secretary with a ready pen, and an assistant with a clever head, but as a young friend with a most affectionate and grateful heart, on whom he could rely entirely. Of Orlando's grateful disposition he wisely judged, not by expressions towards himself, but by his manner of speaking of Walter, and by his constant endeavours to do credit to his recommendation. He had therefore determined to ask him to return with him to Scotland, and to offer him a permanent employment and establishment as his assistant.

All these thoughts and views were in due

course communicated by Dr Calton to Walter and to his uncle, after he had been with them a few days. Walter was delighted; it was the very thing he had wished, but hardly hoped; and, to complete his satisfaction, his uncle thought well of the plan. The mature prudence of the Scotch philosopher he saw would be well adapted and useful to guide the hand-over-head impetuosity of this Irish youth. The sort of domestic partnership proposed would be equally advantageous to senior and junior—to the sleeping and to the waking partners. In the intellectual department, also, there would be compensating qualities, constantly keeping all going well.

"Like a compensating pendulum!" said Walter, in his high spirits hazarding an allusion.

"Compensating pendulum!" Bessy repeated.

"*Gridiron pendulum!*" said Walter, which did not make the matter clearer to Bessy; but she could not expect to have it explained at this moment.

Dr Calton went on, and summed up what he had to say with, "I approve of him *altogether*."

"*Altogether*"—a word of which Dr Calton

was as fond as was his countryman Dr Smith, who, in his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," repeats it about a hundred times.

"*Altogether*," repeated Dr Calton, "I like your Orlando so well, that altogether, my dear Walter, I cannot like to return him to you. Of proper remuneration, and all that, we can talk presently; but as to the possibility—feasibility—and expediency of this my plan," said the doctor, pausing between each word emphatically—possibility—feasibility—and expediency—for he thought he saw doubt, perplexity, and discomfiture in some of their faces. Not in Walter's: his countenance was expanded with full satisfaction, radiant with joy; and he exclaimed—

"Oh, the greatest possible happiness for Orlando!"

"But not for his mother, I apprehend," said Walter's mother.

"And not for Mary," said Amy and Bessy.

"And not for his poor uncle perhaps," said my uncle.

"His rich uncle does not want him—does not care or know anything about him," said Walter.

"Does not yet know anything about him, Walter; but when he does know, he may perhaps care about him."

"Perhaps," said Walter.

"Not only '*perhaps*,' but most likely, Walter," said his uncle, "from the account you heard given of him by Dr Clifford."

"But even so?" said Walter deliberatively.

"And would not you of all things wish that his uncle should be reconciled to him, and to his mother, and to Mary?" said Amy.

"And would not you wish that he should go to live with his uncle at More-Court, if he asked him?" cried Bessy.

"Reconciled? Yes, Amy.—Live with him at More-Court? No, no, Bessy!"

Bessy's eyes opened wide.—"More-Court! It is a grand place, is it not?"

"I do not know—I do not care," said Walter.

"What *can* you mean, Walter?" said Amy.

"I know, uncle, what he means," said Bessy. "I know, and mamma knows, what Walter means—that he could not leave his mother to live with his uncle, even if he asked him ever so much, or if More-Court be ever so grand a place."

"But," said Amy, "his mother, and Mary, and all might be reconciled with that odd, angry, good-natured old man, and they might all go and live at More-Court all together."

"Not very probable," said her uncle. "I should say impossible."

But young feet fearlessly trample upon impossibilities; and not only fearlessly, but triumphantly.

"Oh, my dear uncle, only believe it, and you will see it will come true; and it will end delightfully! like a fairy tale, with—'So they all lived happily all the rest of their days!'"

"Easily said, and a fit end for a fairy tale, my dear Bessy," said her mother; "but not so easily done in real life."

"Besides, I do not like the idea of Orlando's going crawling to that rich uncle for his fortune," said Walter.

"But he need not '*crawl*,'" said Amy. "And if he goes to his uncle, it need not be for his riches."

"It need not. But it would look very like it, considering the time of his going"——. They were interrupted by a servant coming

into the room with a card for Dr Calton — a card of invitation from Dr Clifford, as secretary to a society of benevolent medical men, and well-informed gentlemen of the county, who had held a meeting every month, during the year of famine, for the relief of the poor; and who now continued their meetings for the discussion of many subjects that were useful and necessary for the restoration of industry and order, after the panic and confusion incident on a state of extraordinary distress. In a note accompanying the card, Dr Clifford apologised for thus addressing him, being personally a stranger to Dr Calton, but said that he was well acquainted with his published writings, and had lately seen a manuscript "Essay" of his on the very subject which their committee were now discussing: "Whether it would be prudent, if it were in our power, to re-establish the potato as the national food of Ireland;" and taking a more enlarged view of the subject—inquiring, "What should be deemed the indispensable, and what the essential, conditions of the staple food of a country?"

Bessy and Amy withdrew their little heads while this was being read.—It was "too diffi-

cult" for them; but their attention was recalled by hearing Orlando's name. Dr Clifford wished that Mr Orlando More should accompany Dr Calton to this meeting. The wish was complied with. Dr Calton took Orlando with him to the meeting; and there he appeared to great advantage, neither too forward nor too backward. Those who did not know his story, never suspected that he had been in any line of life different from that in which he now appeared. Those who were in the secret—as some then present, who had seen him act at Castletown-Bellevue, must have been—gave him the more credit for the perfect propriety of his engaging, unaffected, unassuming manners. He was talked of afterwards, and his story told by the initiated to the uninitiated; and as Dr Clifford had foreseen and expected when he sent the invitation, all this worked round from dinner-table to dinner-table, and from tea-table to tea-table, and from parlour to kitchen, till it reached the lower regions of More-Court, and mounted up again to the old gentleman's own chamber. He inquired into the circumstances from Dr Clifford: found that the reports were true—that it was his own nephew!

"Let me see him! let me see him instantly!" he cried in the imperious impatience of a wealthy invalid. "Let me see him instantly, or I shall break my heart! I MUST see my nephew! He *is* my nephew—he is my brother's own son. I acknowledged the marriage before—I acknowledge it now.—I must, and will see my brother's son; but I never will see the widow—I never will receive her—never will be reconciled to her—never shall she enter my door!—But my nephew, my nephew Orlando!"

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Orlando was sent for. He came, and the old man wept at sight of him—he was so like the brother he had loved and lost.

Orlando was not prepared for so tender a meeting. His uncle's acknowledging the marriage, and receiving him so very kindly as his dear brother's son, his own dear nephew, touched Orlando's heart. With overflowing emotion he was pouring forth his own "and his mother's

unbounded gratitude," when the old gentleman stopped him, and exclaimed—

"Your mother, sir! I have nothing to do with your mother. I wont see her—I wont receive her! I said so before—I say so again—I never, never will be reconciled to your mother! I will provide for her—I will give her a handsome allowance—but upon condition that she never comes near me, that she never interferes with you, and that she gives you up to me completely. You shall be my son—you shall live with me: you know how much I have in my power: I shall make you my heir!"

As he spoke, he fixed his eyes on Orlando; but something in the changed expression of his countenance so irritated the old man, that he started up in his chair, exclaiming—

"My HEIR! Do you hear? But upon this express condition, that you give up your mother! You, I say, I acknowledge; your mother I never will let into my house! You, I say, are to come and live with me; but as for your mother, let me never hear another word from you about her!"

"Then, sir," said Orlando, "you never shall hear another word about her from me.—I thank

you, uncle, for your kindness, and all your generous offers to me; but I cannot give up my mother!"

"Then, sir, you give me up, and my protection, and my fortune, and everything; so good-morning to you. My heir I would have made you—heir of More-Court! You would live with me here in this fine house, in this grand place—here, as my son, my adopted son—my heir! Go to your friends, 'young headstrong;' go to your friends Dr Calton and Master Walter, and see what they will advise—see if they will advise you to give up More-Court!"

"They will never advise me to give up my mother, sir. I repeat, uncle, how grateful I am to you for your kindness to myself; I can only regret that you will not extend it to my mother."

"I will not—I will not!—I gave you your choice—your mother or More-Court!—You choose your mother, and by your choice you must abide, Master John Orlando More: I will never call you nephew again!"

His nephew withdrew; and when he told of this interview, and repeated this conversation to his friends, he had their full approbation. And

Walter's triumphant delight, and his warm sympathy in Orlando's fond, tried, and consistent affection for his mother, made his heart beat with delightful emotion—such as the selfish can never know—such as the spoilt children of fortune can never enjoy—nor ever with their utmost wealth and power command.

Nevertheless, Bessy and Amy, though they admired Walter's enthusiasm, and "were sure Orlando did very right," were ready to cry at this finale to their romance; and they still hoped—and believed—and were almost certain—that old Mr More would relent at last, and be reconciled to the mother, and adopt the son.

And perhaps at last he did. But in the meanwhile, it was settled that Orlando should go to Scotland with Dr Calton, and be with him during those months of the year when he could be most useful to him, and that all the rest of his time should be spent with his mother.

This plan has been steadily adhered to, and makes all the parties as happy as possible. Walter the happiest of all, in seeing the happiness of which he has been the principal cause. A rare example—a striking instance of what

can be done by generosity of conduct and steadiness of purpose, what can be effected by a noble character even at his early age. A fellow-creature saved! — a youth of superior talents redeemed from disgrace, misery, and vice: and redeemed to be an honour and a blessing to his family.

THE END.

# CHAMBERS'S

# LIBRARY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

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EDITED BY WILLIAM CHAMBERS.

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My Dear Boys and Girls,

My brother and I have often been asked to publish some small books for your special instruction and amusement; but for a number of years, we have had so many other things to do, that we have never yet been able to comply with the request. We now intend, however, to issue a few books of this kind. The subjects of some of the volumes will be of an instructive nature; one, at least, will be poetry; but the greater number will consist of moral and religious tales, written for your entertainment and benefit. The first which appears will be a story by Miss Edgeworth, a lady who has written many tales for youth, and who has kindly assisted in the present undertaking. Mrs Hall and some other ladies have also promised to write for these books; and from the French of Madame Guizot, Eugenie Foa, and others, will be procured some interesting new translations. It may be agreeable to your parents to know, that the subjects will be designed to influence the conduct and feelings, and that the general aim will be to make you better and happier.

You will probably be anxious to know what is to be the

appearance of these books. It is to be something different from that of children's books generally. I remember, when a boy, being much pleased with a variety of little volumes published by 'the good MR NEWBERY, at the corner of St Paul's Churchyard.' I intend to revive MR NEWBERY'S style of publication. His books were not thin soft covered things, but real volumes with hard boards, brilliantly ornamented with figures in colour and gold. These are the sort of books which I am going to prepare; only they will be much more beautiful; and each will be illustrated with a frontispiece. It is proposed to publish only a small number; one to come out every month till all are issued. The price of each will be a shilling. The first book will appear towards the end of December, so as to be adapted for a Christmas and New-Year's gift. Perhaps your papa or mamma may present you with a copy, and also order a volume to be afterwards sent home every month; by this means a row of elegant little books, at a small expense, will be procured for the nursery library.

W. C.

EDINBURGH, *October* 15, 1847.

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PUBLISHED BY W. & R. CHAMBERS, EDINBURGH;

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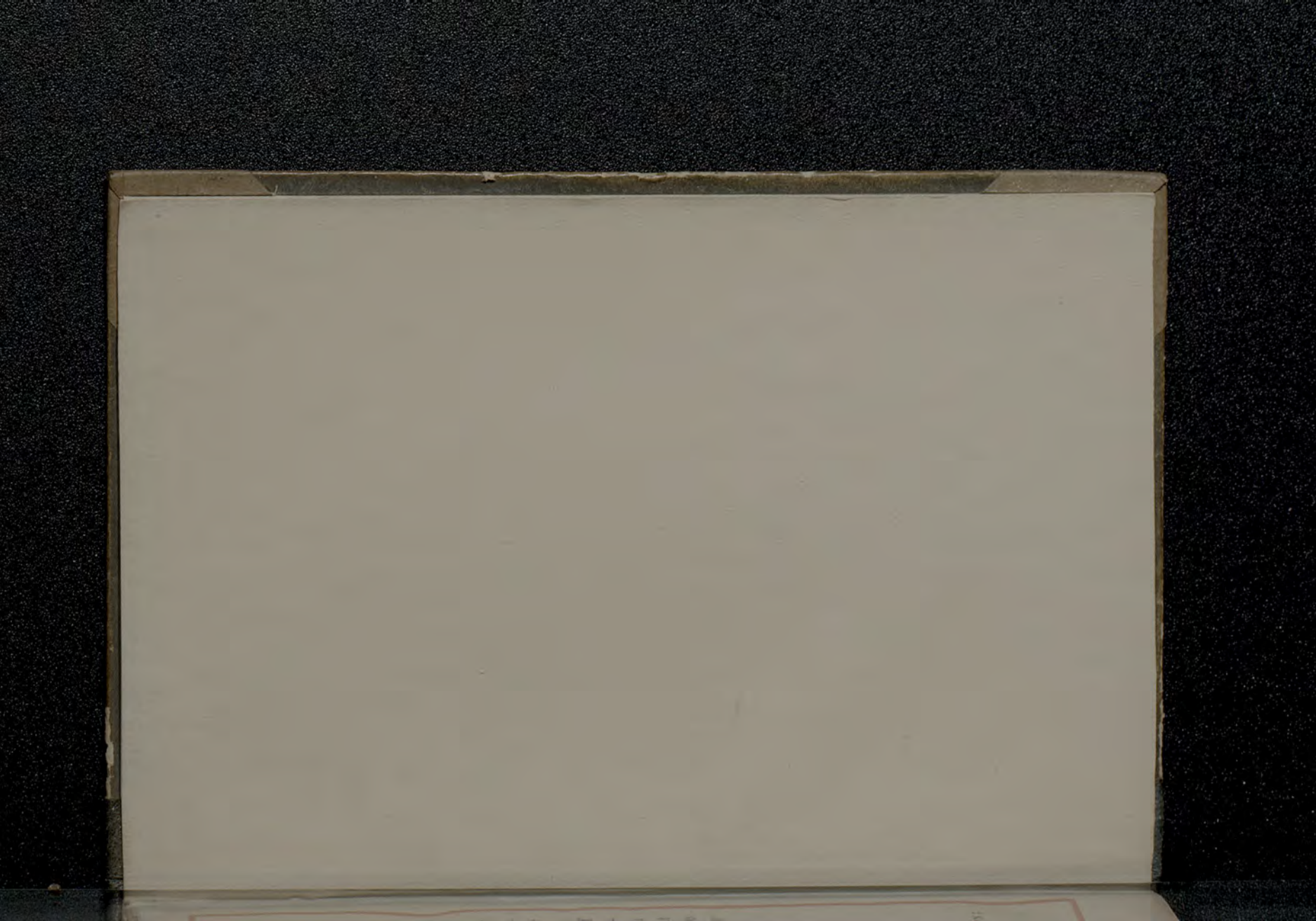

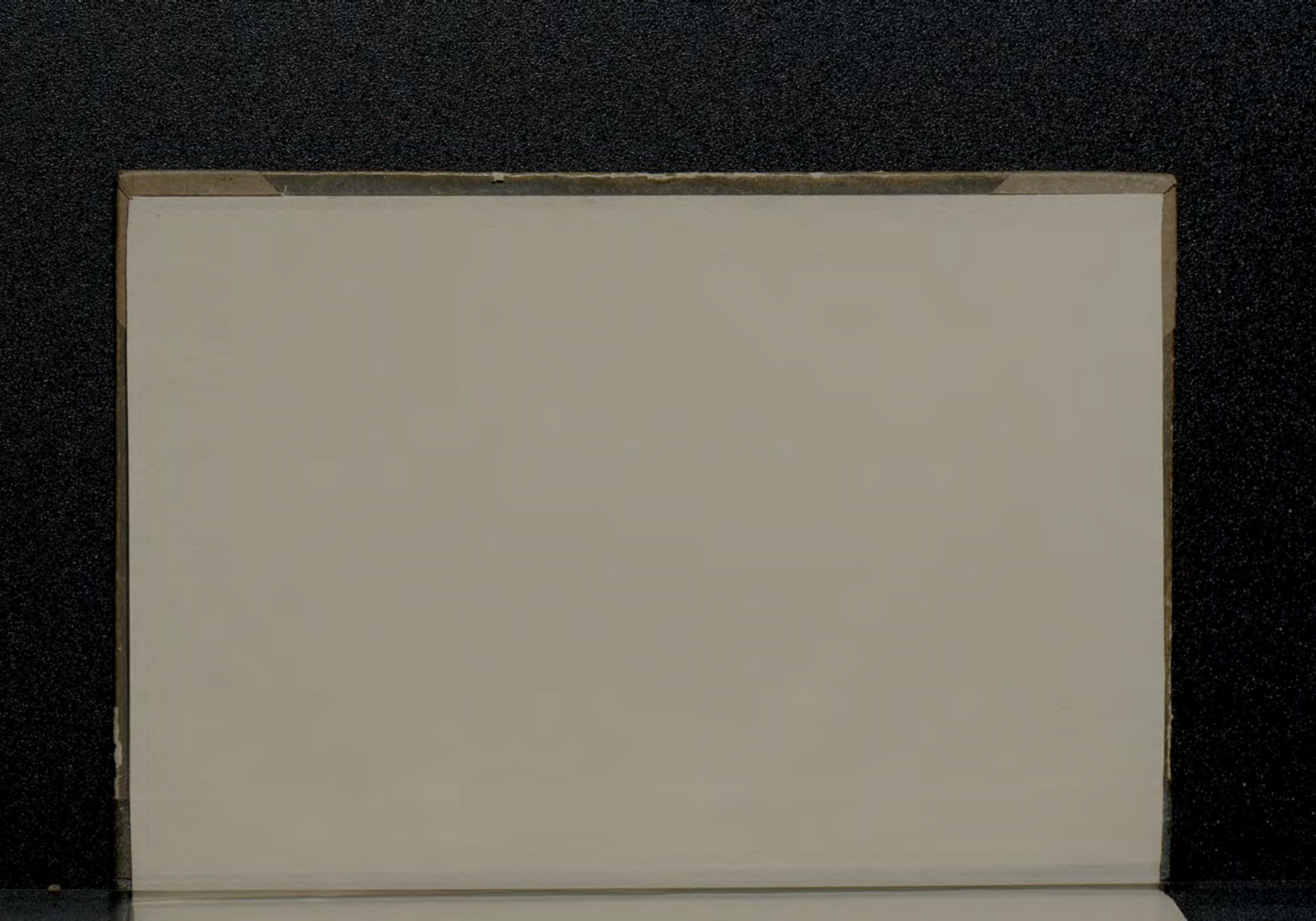

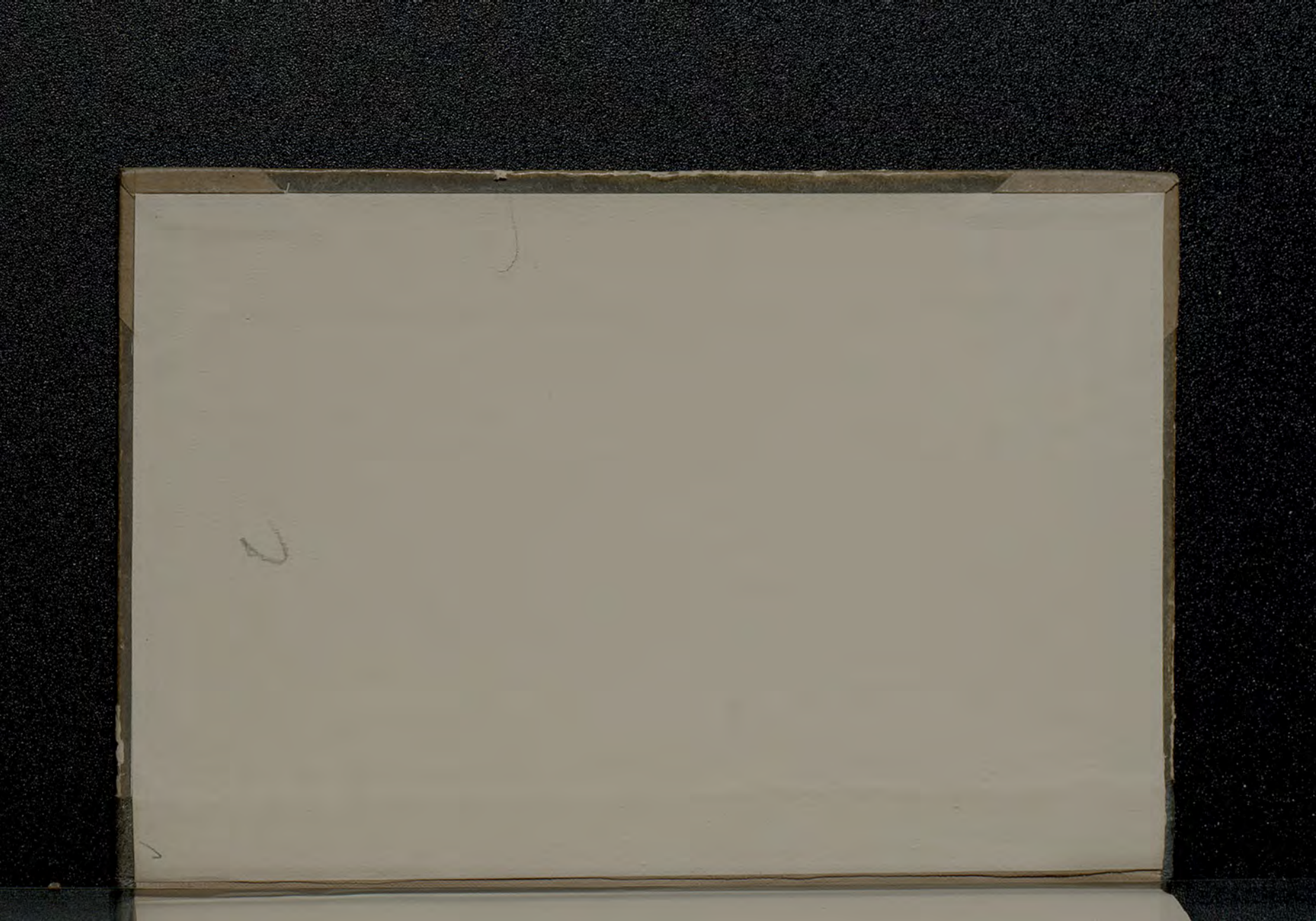

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