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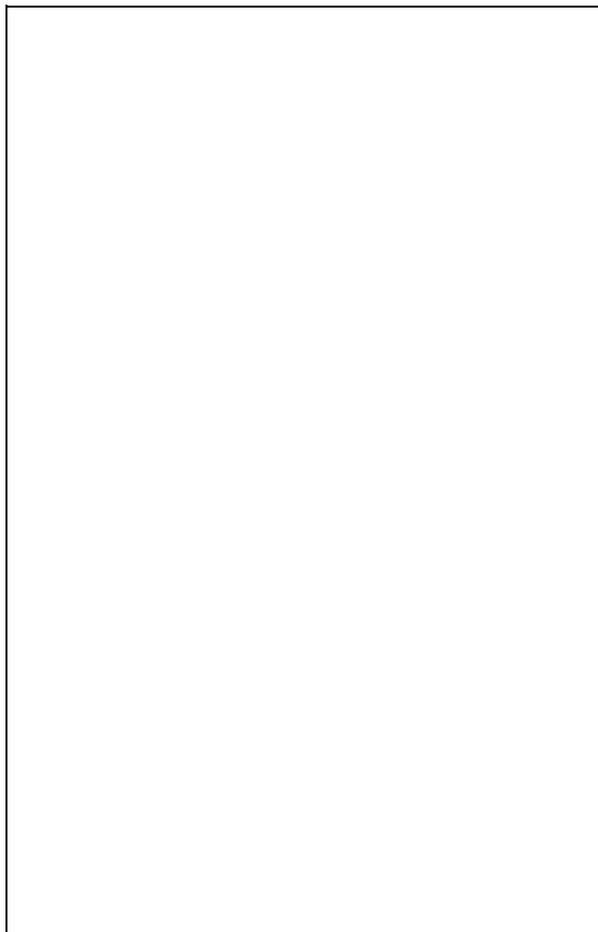
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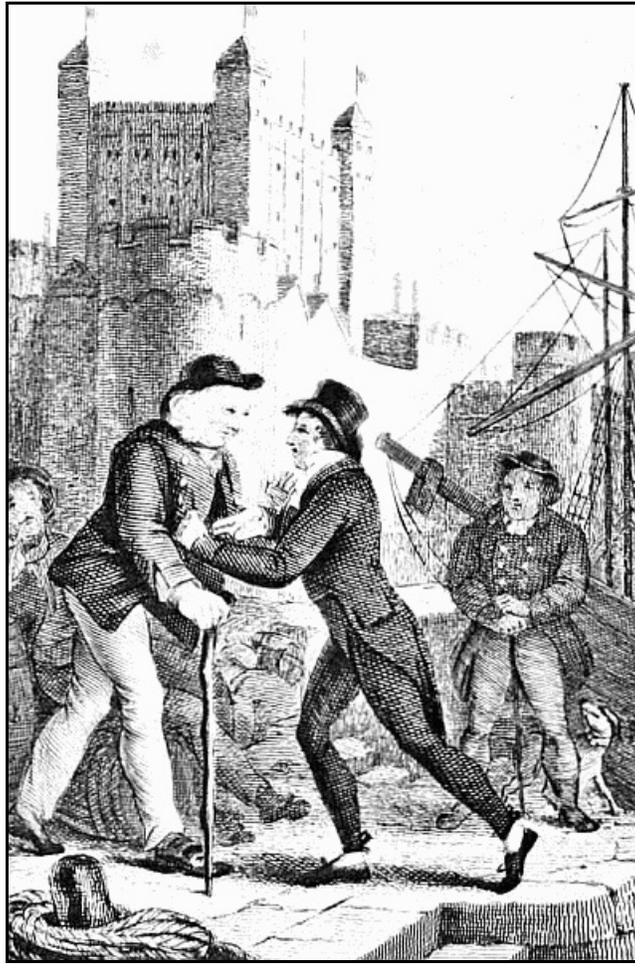
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WILLIAM & HIS UNCLE BEN



"William pushed forward & catching him by the breast of the coat exclaimed—You are Lieutenant Gardiner of the Thetis—pray say you are."

WILLIAM
AND HIS UNCLE BEN
A Tale
Designed for the use of
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Prepared for the Press by

MRS. HOFLAND.

Author of

The Clergyman's Widow. &c. &c.

LONDON,

ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE & CO
25 PATERNOSTER ROW.

WILLIAM

AND

HIS UNCLE BEN.

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BY MRS. HOFLAND,

AUTHOR OF

**THE CLERGYMAN'S WIDOW; YOUNG CRUSOE; BLIND FARMER; BARBADOES
GIRL; MERCHANT'S WIDOW; THE SISTERS; PANORAMA OF EUROPE;
GOOD GRANDMOTHER; YOUNG NORTHERN TRAVELLER; STOLEN BOY;
ALICIA AND HER AUNT; ELIZABETH; THE AFFECTIONATE BROTHERS;
GODMOTHER'S TALES; DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, &C. &C.**

**At length he sicken'd, and the duteous child
Watch'd o'er his sickness and his pains beguil'd,
Who, weak in body and in mind, received
His boy's indulgence, gratified, and grieved.**

CRABBE

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WILLIAM
AND
HIS UNCLE BEN.

CHAPTER I.

WILLIAM DENHAM was a child of not more than four or five years of age, when he first saw the only brother of his mamma, who was addressed by his sisters with the familiar appellation of "Uncle Ben," and had been generally recognised as their "sailor uncle."

When this gentleman, Lieutenant Gardiner, made his first appearance, he was wrapped in an immense rough coat, wore a fur cap on his head, and held in his hand a stick like a bludgeon; so that his appearance, together with a loud commanding tone of voice, and considerable peculiarity of language, rendered him altogether an object likely to inspire terror, rather than pleasure, in the mind of so young a child. William, however, soon saw enough in the manners of his sisters, Elizabeth and Selina, to inspire him with confidence, for they both began instantly to pull off his coat and his cap, to welcome him joyfully, and kiss him fondly; and he observed that his mother even welcomed him with tears of delight, as her only relative, and one whose profession forbade the pleasure of frequent meetings.

All that the young mind of William could retain of this visit from the sailor, impressed his mind with vivid recollection of joy. The whole house seemed inspired by new life, and even the lowest servants pressed forward, proud to wait on the brave man "who had been fighting the French and Spaniards, had received wounds in many battles, escaped death in various ways, had seen every quarter of the globe, and lived with all kinds of people." All the acquaintance of the family crowded around them, for every one loved "Uncle Ben;" but yet he never appeared so happy as when he was alone with the children: and the hours in which he played on the grass-plot, made little fleets to sail on the fish-pond, or sat gravely down between the girls, with William on his lap, to relate his adventures, were the sweetest that any in the party ever had enjoyed.

Although the Lieutenant was apt to mix sea phrases in his conversation, yet he carefully abstained from oaths; and having received an excellent education in early life, his language might be called rather technical than vulgar. To children the novelty was delightful, and William naturally inquired into the meaning of every new term, which the good-natured seaman was never weary of explaining; and he would frequently end by commending him for his acuteness, and exhorting him "to be diligent, and give his mind to learning foreign lingo."

"But what is lingo, Uncle Ben?"

"Why, you little jackanapes, it is language. You have a quick ear and a flexible tongue, and you can read English as if you were scudding under a fair wind; so I hope it won't be long before you begin to palaver French, and then German, Italian, Spanish, and all the rest of 'em."

"That won't do—I must learn Latin first."

"With all my heart, but let the rest follow, that's my fine fellow; get your mind well stored with luggage of that sort, and you may go into the world and face all weathers."

"But we have no land storms like your sea storms, uncle."

"Yes, faith, but you have, my boy; however, you are a great deal too young to know any thing about such matters, and it is to be hoped you will never want a biscuit to shiver; but never forget Uncle Ben's advice—learn languages diligently whilst you are young, and have nothing else to think about. There is never a north-wester can blow knowledge out of your head, roar as it may, my pretty fellow."

When Uncle Ben departed, it was to a service of great danger in the West Indies, and the blessings and tears of the family accompanied their adieus; and to these marks of affection were added their prayers also, for they were not only an amiable but a religious family. Alas! they were soon called from the tender sorrow of affection, to subjects more immediately pressing upon themselves. Mr. Denham, the father of our little hero, was a merchant in extensive business, and he had hitherto brought up his family in affluence; but the same circumstances which subjected dear Uncle Ben to the evils of war was injurious to his business, and eventually deprived him of all his property. He was obliged to part with his beautiful house in the country, his carriage and horses, to retire to a small house with one servant, and become himself an agent for another person.

Whilst these sad changes were taking place, William, as the youngest child, and likely to be the most trouble to his

parents, was sent to the house of his father's eldest brother, who was a country gentleman, exceedingly fond of the sports of the field, and by no means partial to children. The poor little fellow was so dotingly fond of his parents, and had been nourished by them with so much tenderness, that it almost broke his heart to leave them, especially as he had the sense to see that something very bad was the matter, though he could not comprehend what it was, and of course they were extremely sorry to part with him; but as his uncle had invited him, they thought it was their duty to send him, not only for their own convenience, but for his benefit.

Squire Denham, as he was called, lived in a large old-fashioned Hall, in which William thought there were few comforts, although there was some grandeur. He was surprised to find there was no lady in the house, and that three or four greyhounds, and a little black terrier, appeared the most important persons in the establishment. It is true, there was an old housekeeper, who had a huge bunch of keys hanging at her apron-strings, which jingled whenever she moved, and seemed to give notice that somebody of consequence was coming; but still *she* was obliged to give way, on every occasion, to the superior claims of Vixen, Fury, Juno, and Blossom. Every one of these four-footed inhabitants seemed perfectly conscious of their own established rights, and the inferiority of their species who lived only in the kennel; and the opening faculties of the boy here took their first lesson in natural philosophy, though he had no person to give him aid in his observations.

Indeed it was evident that Squire Denham considered a child as a very inferior animal, although that child was his brother's son, and was at present his presumptive heir. He was a man extremely anxious to employ only the best horse-breaker and the best dog-trainer, to be found in the country, let the expense be what it might; but if any person suggested the propriety of sending his nephew to a school, or of procuring him a tutor at home, he generally negatived the proposition thus:—"Why, Sir, I do not see the use of learning for him at all beyond what he's got. I find he can read, so Dixon the housekeeper hears him a chapter or two every day—(Fury, Fury, is that your manners, Miss? leave the hearth this moment)—and then as to writing, they say he has a good notion, which is natural, seeing my brother was a merchant—(Vixen, you slut, hold your tongue—I can't hear myself speak for your confounded noise)—so as to the child—but, *in fact*, I have so much trouble with these creatures, to say nothing of my anxiety about the brown mare, and the carriage-horses, it can *not* be expected I should see after him at all."

The poor busy gentleman proved the truth of his own words; he forgot alike the wants of a brother, to whom a little of his superfluous wealth would have been a great blessing, and of his nephew, to whom the cultivation of the mind at this season was not less necessary. The child was welcome, to be fed by his servants; and if he had been seen in rags, it is probable he would have scolded them for letting him disgrace the house; but as to inquiring after the poor boy's comforts, any more than providing for his acquirements, never entered the mind, or touched the feelings of this gentleman.

William recollected that Uncle Ben was very much in the habit of talking of his ship as if it were an object of affection, and his saying, "*she* did so and so"—"she bore us safely"—"she wore well"—"she weathered the gale," &c. seemed to give a perception of interest that he could not forbear to partake, though conscious that it was inconsistent as applied to an inanimate and unconscious thing. He was aware that his Uncle Denham's partiality for those animals, which could return his love, and possessed a degree of intelligence apparently little inferior to his own, was the more rational; but yet he found he could not love one uncle so well as he had loved the other, nor feel for him the same respect. He knew that "dear Uncle Ben" loved *him* and all his family—that if he were able, he would bestow every blessing upon each of them—and he did not feel sure that his Uncle Denham loved any thing beside his dogs and his horses.

Happily for William, the rector of his uncle's parish was a very amiable man; he had a large family of children, and in order to give his boys a better education than he could otherwise have afforded, he took six young gentlemen as boarders, to educate with them. William always watched these little boys as they came from church with such pensive but affectionate looks, that they soon made an acquaintance with the little lonely boy, and invited him to the playground. As Mr. Summerton soon found that the child was ignorant, yet ingenuous and well disposed, by degrees he brought him into the school-room, and gave him lessons with the youngest children, until he was advanced to the second class. From this time he was completely altered and wonderfully improved; for as he was fully occupied either with learning or play, with preparing tasks, or contriving how to meet his companions, he had no time for useless regrets; and though he loved every branch of his family as well as ever, he did not injure himself by pining after them.

"If I can learn a little Latin, how my mother will be delighted!"—"when my father knows I am in fractions, how pleased he will be!"—thought the boy; and then he redoubled his exertions; and whenever he thought of Uncle Ben, which he

often did, he never failed to be rendered doubly solicitous to ensure some portion of the knowledge he had so earnestly recommended.

Thus passed about three years of his life, when the anxieties of maternal affection could no longer be repressed, and his parents, with many thanks to his uncle, entreated that he might be sent to his present home, which was done accordingly. William wept when he bade adieu to Mr. Summerton and his young friends, and observed too truly to his reverend instructor—"That he should never get so good a master again;" but he kissed his uncle, and thanked him, without emotion.

William found his parents now residing in a very small house in the heart of the city, with only the occasional use of a servant, and surrounded by circumstances which bespoke their situation entirely different to what it had been when he was a little boy, and as unlike to the old Hall he had left as possible. For a short time the poor boy found himself exceedingly annoyed by the change, and not only grieved but angry, that his father, the brother of that gentleman whom he considered so important a person, should be subjected to such narrow doings, for he did not understand the nature of that change to which his father had been subjected. In a very little time this wore off, for there was so much tenderness and love in the family, so much heartfelt affection in the parents, and such ready obedience in the children, that past sorrow only appeared to have increased present happiness. To this it may be added, that William, in the caresses he received, felt himself a person of more importance than he had ever experienced before; there was a small room and a little table—no plate, no servants, no wine; but then, there were no dogs to be helped, while he was waiting in quiet hunger, as one of inferior import.

Then he could also hear and talk of Uncle Ben, with those whose feelings resembled his own; and although he learnt that he had not visited England during his own absence, yet that he remembered *him* with the utmost affection, and had assisted his family to the utmost of his power.

At this period Mr. Denham was struggling to educate and support his family from a very slender income, for as he had paid his creditors every farthing he had in the world, and his brother had declined to advance him any money, all he now did in his business was on a very contracted scale. It was the particular object of Mrs. Denham to give her children the education of gentlewomen, in order that they might be governesses in the families of noblemen, if they should be obliged to maintain themselves, or if portioned by their uncle, they might fill a genteel station in life with propriety.

In order therefore that a little money might go far, Elizabeth, the eldest sister, took lessons in music, which she afterwards taught, as well as she could, to Selina, who was indulged with a language-master on the same principle. To this sister William looked as the instructor who could most benefit him; for the advice of Uncle Ben rose more strongly than ever to his mind, when he witnessed Selina's attainments; and he determined to turn all that he had gained from Mr. Summerton to the best account, as forming the ground-work of that superstructure he desired to raise.

CHAPTER II.

MR. DENHAM was so much employed in his little counting-house, that he could not often inspect the improvements of his son, but he never failed to encourage him to proceed.—"Alas, my poor boy!" he would say, "you will have to work your own way in the world, and the sooner you inure yourself to exertion, the better. Besides, at your time of life, the memory is not loaded with other things, and the organs are pliant and flexible; a man may learn a foreign language at any time of life, but it is only in early youth that he can attain a good pronunciation of it."

Under this management William made himself master of French, and a good deal of Italian; and so much was Selina's master pleased with his application, that he frequently gave him instructions, and lent him books; and there appeared every prospect, from the industry and improvement of all the family, to think they would surmount all their difficulties, when unhappily, from over exertion, poor Mr. Denham took a fever, and became extremely ill.

The disorder, as to its severity, soon gave way to the skill and good nursing of his excellent wife and her affectionate family, but it left behind it extreme weakness, a troublesome cough, and many alarming symptoms. William frequently wished that his father could go down to his uncle's house, in which he was born, and where good air, good wine, and many good things necessary for an invalid, might be had in abundance. For some time Mr. Denham yielded to the wish, wrote to his brother, and talked a good deal on the subject.

When an answer arrived from the Squire, which was not till many anxious days were passed, it was one which chilled the warm hearts of the family. It began indeed by saying—"That Mr. Denham would be glad to see his brother, but he was afraid the Hall would be a bad place for an invalid, as the housekeeper was too old to see after things, the butler was an awkward fellow, and the maids good for nothing; besides, the dogs were very troublesome to sick people, Vixen especially, and she never went out of the parlour."

There was no inclosure offered to pay the expense of the doctor, or the journey; and the poor sufferer was just observing "that he would give it up," when the medical man entered, and confirmed his decision, assuring him, "that it would be highly imprudent to go northward, as it was certain that it would be much better to go to France than Yorkshire."

It so happened, that at the very time the affectionate family were all consulting with each other "what was to be done?" the long absent dear Uncle Ben suddenly arrived from Spithead, where his ship lay at anchor to refit. He was, in the first moments of his arrival, exceedingly affected with the appearance of all around him; for although he knew all that had happened, and had used his utmost means to relieve it, yet he could not see his sister worn down with suffering, her excellent husband in such a state of weakness, and their lovely young family so much in want of assistance, without feeling the change severely. He rallied his spirits, however, as soon as he could, and began to inquire after their present prospects.

When he had heard the late fiat of the doctor, he protested that they should all go over to France immediately—"Ay, every one of them."

William had been exceedingly afraid, that if this scheme of his father's journey was put in practice, he should have been sent to the Hall; so that when his uncle uttered the last words, he pressed up to him smilingly, and taking hold of his collar, drew close to his breast.

"You want to go with father, don't you, my fine fellow?"

"Indeed I do, my dear uncle."

"So you shall, my boy, and, what is more, treat him into the bargain. In this here pocket lies my prize-money, every shilling of which I swore should go for your schooling. Now if you are man enough to scramble for learning without it, all I have to say is this—do what you will with it, my hearty."

William threw his arms gratefully round his dear uncle's neck, then suddenly turned to a beloved father still dearer, and placed the pocket-book in his hand.

"My dear brother Ben, I cannot think of taking this."

"Then you are no brother of mine," said the sailor, sternly, as he shook off the big round tear that coursed down his sun-

burnt cheeks.

The girls crowded round their uncle to thank him, their mother blessed him, and when the first emotions had subsided, all became busy and happy; and as Mr. Denham's business had been inevitably suspended during his illness, there was now no impediment to their setting out; and of course, in a little time they had crossed the Channel, and found themselves in a country where all was new and astonishing.

The surprise and pleasure our young party now experienced, was damped by bidding farewell to their uncle, who was now setting out on a long, and, as they feared, a dangerous voyage, since it was one of discovery. He earnestly recommended them to proceed to Paris, and take a lodging in the vicinity, where, he observed, they might live cheaply, improve themselves in the language, and all recover their health, for it appeared that all were injured, from the anxiety they naturally felt.

"And Betsey, my girl," he added, turning to his sister, "when your purse runs low, write to this person in London," giving her a card; "I will order with him, as far as a couple of hundreds go; for although prize-money and promotion are over, I think I can venture to promise as much as that in the worst of times. Your husband is a worthy soul, and shall want for nothing, whilst I have a shilling in my locker, or can stand on my limbs to earn one."

Every one of the family was moved to tears, and the poor boy was quite overwhelmed; he clung around him, crying—"Uncle, dear uncle, take me with you—make me a sailor like yourself."

"You! no, no, my brave boy, I will leave you as my representative—as the comforter, and in time the supporter of your family.—There, there—don't make a fool of your uncle, my precious child—don't make me cry any more."

The worthy man, after once more clasping his nephew to his bosom, now fled, not daring to trust his feelings further. Poor William watched him till the last glimpse of the vessel had disappeared, when he returned so overwhelmed with grief, that his mother almost wished for him, that he had departed with that excellent uncle, who would have been to him indeed the tenderest of conductors.

CHAPTER III.

WILLIAM might have indulged his sorrow for the loss of his generous and considerate uncle much longer, if he had not *also* been a generous and considerate boy, capable of controlling his feelings at the command of his duties. He soon perceived, that although his sick father was a little relieved by the change of air and scene, yet that he was still in a drooping state; and as time hung heavy on his hands since he had no employment, he was the more apt to become languid and anxious; so that what he gained by the climate, he lost from care and solicitude about his family.

To alleviate this misfortune, his wife put on the most cheerful air she could assume, and the girls endeavoured to employ and amuse his mind, by playing or reading to him; while William, with equal kindness of intention, endeavoured to lead him into attention to his own studies—a plan that was attended with considerable success. Mr. Denham was a good linguist, had travelled much before he was married, and was a man of considerable reading; and when he was engaged in relating his past observations to his family circle, or in explaining some grammatical nicety to his promising boy, he could forget his past misfortunes and his present complaints, and for a short time at least appear well and happy.

As all the English then resident in Paris and its neighbourhood were proverbially extravagant, and their residence had made the place much more expensive than our humble friends expected to find it, they soon felt it a duty to exchange the lodgings they had taken at Passy, for some of a more humble description. Mr. Denham judged it wise to go into the city, as a place where it was possible that he might prosecute some business, or procure some employment; and from William being so busy with languages, Mr. Denham was led to think of giving instruction in the English tongue, and the German, to which he was fully competent.

This scheme answered extremely well in one respect—it introduced them to several very respectable French families, from whom they received great kindness, and whose conversation improved them in the pronunciation of French. They desired to avoid society with their own countrymen at this time, because they did not wish to expose their poverty, and from them they could not expect assistance in procuring pupils.

William was very much pleased with the fine sights he saw in Paris, for a very little money in some cases, and in others for none at all; and in frequenting the Louvre, he soon acquired not only the purest accent, from listening to the conversation of artists and men of taste, who, like himself, were admiring the pictures, but also much knowledge. He was always so modest, yet so intelligent, that every person who saw him had pleasure in giving him information; and as all Frenchmen are naturally communicative, it might be truly said that poor William found in their society that living library, which supplied to him those books he was not now in a situation to procure.

Mr. Denham passed his first winter in Paris tolerably; but the second happening to be rather severe, he could not help thinking that he should have been better in London. The staircases admitted such a current of air, the windows and doors were so ill made, when compared to those of England, and fuel was so very dear, that many times did they all wish themselves back again; but the remembrance of the great expense it would be to settle again in London, and the hope that something would be done in the spring, prevented them from making the attempt.

Mr. Denham, conscious that his brother Gardiner's kind boon must now be drawing to an end, went out to give lessons, before the weather was by any means so mild as it ought to have been for one so delicate; in consequence of which he got a severe cold, and became utterly unable to prosecute his employment any further. William, thinking that, young as he was, yet he was equal to finishing the course of lessons his father had begun, after a great struggle with his modest fears, at length ventured to offer himself; and although rejected in several instances, had the happiness to be received in two respectable families, to his great satisfaction.

One of these families was that of the Countess de Canillac, who was the mother of two little girls, whom she was desirous of rendering good English scholars, because she had relations of that country. She had consented to receive the son of their late master, on the supposition that he was a young man; but when she saw William, who was scarcely fourteen, and though a tall, yet very slight boy, with all the simplicity of his years marked on his countenance, she absolutely started, and told him she feared her volatile girls would never take lessons with due gravity from a person so nearly their own age.—"You should have sent your eldest brother," said she, "my pretty boy."

"I have no brother, madam," said William; "but I have a sister four years older than myself, and she is very good and very clever."

"Well, send your sister—I shall prefer her undoubtedly to you."

This introduction to the gentle and well-instructed Elizabeth, proved of permanent advantage to her and to her family, for the Countess was a woman of sense and discernment, of amiable manners and benevolent heart. The more she saw of Elizabeth, the more she was pleased with her; and in a short time she made her the offer of becoming governess to her little girls—a situation which was gratefully accepted.

The other family where William entered as a teacher, was that of Monsieur Dwyer, a wealthy merchant, who had taken lessons for his improvement in the English language as a commercial man. He had no hesitation in accepting William as a master, because he thought a boy who addressed him in such pure French, could hardly fail to be master of his mother tongue. The consequence of this intercourse produced William a steady friend; and although the lessons did not last long, they were paid for liberally; and Monsieur Dwyer always insisted that he should frequently call at his house, and apply to him as a friend on any emergency.

Alas! the time came very soon when this afflicted family wanted a *friend*, in the fullest sense of the word. Mr. Denham's complaint became decidedly severe, and, in fact, incurable, although it did not appear so to himself and family; and as he experienced great relief when the weather was warm, and much oppression and weakness when it was cold, they all concluded very naturally, that if he could remove to Italy, or even Nice, he would soon recover his health, and be quite restored.

Every person who has attended the sick in any lingering disease, well knows that when any prevalent idea takes possession of their minds, it haunts them with an harassing and feverish effect, alike injurious to their own health, and distressing to all around them. This is particularly the case when, like poor Mr. Denham, they are persons who have been active in life, and who are anxious to benefit those they love. Day after day, and night after night, did this worthy father sigh for the power of removing, under the full persuasion that he should soon be perfectly well; and as soon as fine weather really appeared, his impatience became excessive.

Mrs. Denham was not less anxious on the subject than himself, and she had left no means untried to accomplish an event she deemed so important to them all. With the fullest attention to all the cravings of her dear husband's fastidious appetite, she had yet abridged herself and her family as much as it was possible; yet her means for their future subsistence were so much reduced, as to forbid all power of entering on a long expensive journey. She had drawn from the person in England, one hundred and twenty pounds only, of the two hundred Lieutenant Gardiner permitted her to demand; and when on the present emergency she asked for the remainder, it was refused, and the refusal accompanied by the afflicting intelligence, "that the last time her brother was heard of, he had been left ill of the yellow fever in the West India Islands, and as it was most probable that he was dead, no more money could be advanced on his account."

Very bitter were the tears shed by every member of the family when this sad news was read; but it only rendered them the more anxious to preserve that dear father who remained to them, and whom every succeeding day, now the weather was settled, made more sanguine. Poor William was anxious to the utmost degree to obtain pupils, as his only means of assistance to the family; but as there were now abundance of teachers, he had little chance. Elizabeth was the only one who could offer even a little money, but her salary was wholly at the service of her parents; and when the Countess, her kind patroness, learnt their desire to travel, she kindly insisted that their youngest daughter should become her guest during their absence.

"And I can live on nothing, dear mother," said William, when the arrangements were making, "and I can travel on foot."

"We shall soon hear from your uncle Denham, my love," replied the mother; "and then we can set off with comfort; we have no occasion to be in a hurry, as the weather is delightful now."

With anxious eyes did the whole family look out for that letter, on which they taught themselves to believe that all their future happiness depended; it was their consolation to believe, that as it was now neither the season for field sports, nor agricultural labours, his answer would be forwarded much sooner than usual.

The letter came at last, but, alas! it was unaccompanied by any enclosure, and contained only these words:

"DEAR BROTHER,

"It was always against my mind that you went into foreign parts, where I will never believe either sun or air can be

better than Old England; therefore as to encouraging you to proceed further, it is what I never shall do. I hope you will come home soon, so that if you die, you may be buried like a Christian—'tis what we must all come to—my Vixen died last winter, and Fury is almost gone, so is my housekeeper. I have had the gout in both legs myself. So, with love to the children, I am, &c. &c."

Little did the writer of this letter, in the calm apathy which wealth and ease are so apt to create, imagine the sorrow it inspired, the hopes it quenched, the deep anguish it awakened. The invalid felt as if a death-blow were given, not only to his health and his wishes, but even his affections; and the children were loud in their complaints and revilings.

Mrs. Denham struggled with herself and with them, endeavouring to repress the sorrow she felt, and to pray against the anger arising in her bosom. She observed—"That this letter must teach them all to look more to God and less to man, for what they needed;" and said, "she did not doubt before winter arrived, some friend would arise, more kind than him they had vainly solicited. Yet, my dear children," added she, "we must not indulge sentiments of reproach towards your uncle; he is a man who has seen little of the world, and in his ignorance of it, thinks that there is nothing good out of his own circle; that which he denies to your father he would deny to himself; it is not so much his fault as his misfortune, that his ideas are so narrow, and his conduct so illiberal."

CHAPTER IV.

THE affectionate children were silenced by their mother's observations, but in their hearts they could not fail to think their uncle unworthy of being the brother of their beloved father. That father, under the temporary relief afforded by the weather, made many efforts for assisting his family, and Selina endeavoured to procure a similar situation to that of her sister; but she was a very beautiful girl, with fair complexion and light hair, which, by making her look younger than she really was, had the effect of preventing her from being trusted with children as a governess. In this situation she worked at embroidering gauze, and William made himself useful in drawing the patterns, for there was no possible way in which he could be of service to his family, that he hesitated to employ himself.

One evening, about the middle of May, Monsieur Dwyer looked in upon them, and said to William—"My little friend, I have made an engagement for you with one of your countrymen. Mr. Johnson is come from England, for the purpose of purchasing various commodities, and has desired me to procure him an interpreter, for he does not understand a word of our language, and I have recommended you as doing so thoroughly."

"You are very kind, Sir, to speak so well of me; but pray what is it you wish me to do?"

"You are to translate faithfully what each party says to the other in the way of bargain, and take especial care that the stranger is not taken in. I would advise you to take minutes of what passes, as they may be of use to you on a future occasion, and the affair will serve to give you general ideas of business. You must go with me to his hotel, for he can do nothing without you, as you must be aware."

William hastened to make himself as decent as the present scanty state of his wardrobe admitted, his mother and sister promising that they would sit up all night to alter some clothes of his father's, in order to render his appearance more respectable, before he walked out with a well-dressed Englishman.

The poor boy, after affectionately kissing them all, set out, delighted with the idea that he should be useful to a countryman, and perhaps be rendered so to the dear father and family he so ardently desired to serve.

The business in which Mr. Johnson engaged William necessarily took him the whole day, in going from place to place where those purchases were to be made his concerns demanded. In consequence, he could only run over in the evenings, just to look in upon the family, and inquire how his father was.

Although he was generally tired with walking so much, yet he was in excellent spirits, from the consciousness that he had been doing his best; and as he now lived with Mr. Johnson, who was very kind to him, Mrs. Denham thought he looked a great deal better; and when he was gone, she could not forbear to wish "that her poor boy could live a little longer at the table of his new friend."

Mr. Johnson's business was done in something more than a fortnight, for the utmost diligence had been used. He was exceedingly pleased with the address, activity, and industry, of William, to whom he had made several little presents during his abode with him; and when they parted, he presented him with a five-pound English bank-bill, in payment for his services.

All William's earnings put together had never amounted to so much as this, and when he carried it home, he was not a little proud and happy, for he well knew it was now become a great sum in their impoverished state; and he felt the value of money the more, because he had been grieved with the idea that his poor father had given up his best clothes, to make him appear decent in the eyes of their countryman. As Mr. Johnson set out early in the morning, William had the pleasure of presenting this gift to his father before he had risen.

All the family were thankful for this supply, and warmly congratulated the happy boy on the circumstance; but Mrs. Denham advised, that before the bill was changed, he should wait on his good friend Mr. Dwyer, to thank him, and shew him how handsomely his friend had behaved to him, adding—"Such conduct is a positive duty; in the first place, to the gentleman who assisted you, and it is also likely to make him your friend on another occasion, by proving that you fulfilled his wishes by meriting his recommendation."

To William this was a very pleasant errand, and he was fortunate in finding Mr. Dwyer disengaged, and glad to see him.

"Well! Johnson kept you at his hotel, and paid you properly—that is all very well on his part; but what have you

received from the various tradesmen with whom he has laid out his money, my good fellow?" said the gentleman.

"Nothing, Sir—I could not expect money from them; I merely interpreted their words, and took care Mr. Johnson should understand the difference of money, and the worth of every thing."

"Then you know not any of the sums he paid?"

"Oh yes, sir, I know every one of them, to a single sous, for I took down notes of every transaction always before I went to bed. You know you said I had better do it—here is my book."

Monsieur Dwyer looked in the book, which, although of shabby exterior, contained regular neatly-written memorandums of all Mr. Johnson's purchases and payments. As he turned over the leaves, he exclaimed frequently—"This will do—this will do," and rising, put on his hat, and left the house with William.

"Now, my little interpreter, I will explain to you my reason for these inquiries. By the laws of the land, you are entitled to a certain commission upon all the money laid out by the person you introduced to these tradesmen, so you and I must set out and call upon every one of them, whilst the matter is fresh, and before Mr. Johnson has left the country. So large a sum has been spent, that your allowance will become something considerable."

"But, my dear Sir, will it be a fair thing for me to claim it? After they have given up their goods at a regular price, can it be right to ask them to give money to another person?"

"Undoubtedly, my good conscientious boy, it is quite right; for every one of these persons know the law on this subject, and calculated their profits accordingly. There is not one who would not be very glad to pay it, and secure in you a person who may bring them another customer like Johnson. Perhaps not one would be generous or just enough to run after you with the money, but none of them can refuse it."

Accompanied by such a respectable asserter of his rights, they were not often disputed; and as they proceeded from place to place, William saw with astonishment and delight that Mr. Dwyer's purse swelled largely with his property; and as that benevolent man became only the more interested the farther he proceeded, he allowed himself no rest till he had collected even the last franc that was due, when he went home with the wearied but happy William to his family, who were very uneasy at an absence for which they could not account.

When Mr. Dwyer entered with him, it immediately struck the anxious mother that her poor boy had had the misfortune to lose his bank bill, and that he had spent the day in useless inquiries after it; and she was led to make this conclusion the sooner, from his paleness, and something wild and mysterious in his looks. How great was her surprise, when flying past her and his sister, he clasped his father round the neck, and bursting into tears from excess of joy, exclaimed—"Oh, papa, dear, *dear* papa! you shall go to Italy—you shall have new clothes—every thing—yes, *every* thing!"

Overcome by his emotions, William was obliged to sit down in silence; but Mr. Dwyer hastily called the little family round him, and explaining the case, counted out as much money, as, together with the five-pound bill, actually amounted to seventy-three pounds English money.—"This," said he, "is the honest earnings of a boy of fourteen, and is probably as much as his education has cost you. Take it, my good friends, as the precious boon of an invaluable child."

Who shall describe the feelings of the parents? the more than joy with which they welcomed a relief, received so unexpectedly and singularly, as to seem the immediate gift of Heaven? and how sweet was the reflection, that their poor boy, so far from labouring under the deficiencies so generally entailed upon poverty, was as rich in knowledge as in virtue!

If children knew how much is in their power, seldom would they suffer idleness and disobedience to inflict those wounds under which so many parents daily suffer. If they knew how delightful were the sensations of William, tired and hungry as he was on this eventful night, although they might never be called upon to share his anxieties or his exertions, they would be anxious to participate in his pleasures; they would be aware, that to read approbation in the eyes of a fond father and tender mother—to receive the praises and thanks of a beloved sister, can confer the sweetest satisfaction, the purest joy of which the heart is capable.^[1]

^[1]The incident here given is literally true in all its circumstances, and the author relates it under the persuasion that the excellent young man who so early in life commenced that honourable course of conduct, will excuse her doing it, not only as affording an example of great value, but as offering information which may be useful to persons in Paris similarly circumstanced.

CHAPTER V.

As the hope, that Italy would be indeed restorative to him, had long been the prevalent idea in Mr. Denham's mind, the family now thankfully accepted the offer made by the kind Countess, of placing Selina under her care, and reducing their expenses to the lowest scale, prepared to set out, so as to secure the invalid a mild climate during the winter months of the following season.

The observation and acuteness of William were now continually called upon, as he alone understood anything of the Italian language of the three persons travelling; and from the absence of his sisters, he was also called upon to assist his mother, in many cares for the invalid, which Selina generally supplied.

The pleasure of travelling is very great to the young, and William enjoyed it exceedingly, for he was full of hopes respecting its effect on his beloved father, and naturally glad that he had been the happy medium of procuring the advantage, although his natural modesty and humility seemed increased by that very circumstance. The curious old towns they passed through in France amused him very much, and also the manner of the country people in their contrast to those of the Parisians; but when they arrived at the Alps, the stupendous Alps, all that he had seen before seemed to vanish from his mind, so completely did those mighty mountains astonish and delight him.

The passage over these awful barriers of nature being now rendered comparatively easy, it was found that poor Mr. Denham did not suffer much from the ascent, and that he could enter into the enthusiastic admiration of his son, whilst recalling those great events of history connected with them, or those sublime and unequalled views the descent disclosed at every step. The tremendous precipices, the loud cataracts, the deep forests of pine, the excavations and bridges, all by turns awoke astonishment and awe; and when they drew near Piedmont, and beheld the fine plains of classic Italy before their sight, the father and son alike exulted in all they saw, and predicted health and happiness as the crown and reward of their exertions.

Alas! poor Mrs. Denham, though she smiled to see them smile, could not dare to indulge their hopes; her husband's disorder was long and deeply seated—it had originated in mental anxiety, and that anxiety still existed, though it was for the present alleviated, and she could entertain no rational prospects of relief. The belief that she was doing her duty, and her humble trust that her Heavenly Father would support her under the trials it might be his will to inflict, alone enabled her to preserve equanimity, and continue her unceasing vigilance with cheerfulness and patience.

They journeyed on till they arrived at Florence, where, as a place of extraordinary beauty and reputed cheapness, they thought it desirable to remain; and when arrived there, as being the place where the Italian language is spoken with the utmost purity, William began to take great pains in his pronunciation. He had never received any instructions but from his sister, who had lessons in London, and had improved herself and him in Paris; but of course he still had much to learn, as all foreigners have when they mix with the natives.

To render himself as good an Italian as he was a Frenchman was his determination, and he soon carried this into effect, as he was already well prepared, and found it much the easier task. His father had taught him German during his long confinement, and sometimes spoke it to him now, but he was at this time much disgusted with its harsh and guttural sounds; nevertheless he promised to return to it by-and-by, observing justly, that the more he could gain, the better, of a knowledge of languages, seeing that he had little chance of pursuing any regular profession.

The first letters they received from Paris were very satisfactory, as it appeared that Selina had been taken by an English woman of quality, as companion to her daughter—a circumstance which was grateful to her father, who was particularly solicitous on her account, as she was very young and attractive.

The winter came, or rather *stole* upon them almost unperceived, and yet poor Mr. Denham evidently declined fast. He was now fully sensible that he should not long survive; but far from exhibiting any symptoms of disappointment or of a murmuring spirit, he was resigned to the dispensation, and thankful to God for every hour of ease, and every comfort which he was permitted to enjoy. It was for the sake of his dear family alone that he had been so solicitous to try the air of Italy as a last resource; but when he found that it was in vain, it became then his great object to reconcile his own mind, and that of his beloved wife, to that parting it was the will of God to inflict on them.

"My dear Elizabeth," he would say, "let us be thankful to our merciful God for those blessings he has bestowed upon us, and which have so often turned our days of sorrow into joy. Our children have all been good, steady, and affectionate—

they have been to us treasures exceeding those of silver and gold, for which we can never be sufficiently thankful. In leaving you even to the care of this poor boy, young as he is, I feel assured that you will find a protector such as few widowed mothers are blessed with."

"If my poor brother Ben were alive," Mrs. Denham would say; but she could proceed no farther, for the recollection of her loss in *him* always overcame her; and her affliction was at this time the greater, because some part of it was concealed even from that dear partner, with whom for twenty years every thought of her heart had been divided.

Poor Mr. Denham was now so weak, that he kept his bed, and his appetite was so bad for a long time past, that his affectionate wife could scarcely procure him any thing he could eat; of course the little stock of money, large as it had been when considered as her son's earnings, was nearly at a close, and her anxious, affectionate heart kept this affliction entirely to herself, lest it should add to the sufferings of her husband, or alarm poor William.

Happily they received a little assistance from their daughters, a few days before this worthy and attached couple were separated by death; so that poor Mrs. Denham had the consolation of knowing, that whatever might be her own future fate, her beloved husband had never known want. Mr. Denham had for a long time expected this awful, but to him most blessed change; his mind had been weaned from all things below, save his dear family; and by a lively and well-grounded faith in the divine promises, he was enabled to resign them also into the hands of their Almighty Father.

William could not forbear to weep over the remains of his dear father, when he remembered with what different hopes they had set out into a country where they were strangers and heretics in the eyes of all around them, and where they were not permitted even to lay the beloved corpse in consecrated ground. But he nevertheless tried to subdue his sorrow for his dear mother's sake, and to support her under this affliction. He recalled to her mind whatever could have a tendency to comfort them both, and received from her the consolatory assurance—"That his obedience, industry, and good temper, during the long period of his father's sickness, had been a source of happiness which had sustained her in every sinking and suffering hour;" to which she added—"And you will now, I trust, my love, see that your mother can exert herself in some way, to procure her own subsistence and yours. My awful task is finished—my labour as a wife and a nurse concluded; and when my strength is a little restored, and my spirits composed, since I am in the prime of life, I can surely do something."

William looked on her thin wasted form, which now bent as if with age, and her cheek pallid from want and care, and his heart ached with the idea, that one so weak, so elegant, even now should be doomed to any kind of labour. Oh! how did he wish that he were a man, and could engage even in the most toilsome occupation, for a mother so excellent and so beloved!

The mother and son were however compelled to think on the immediate task before them; and counting their little stock of money, they prepared, in the best way they were able, to commit the precious dust to the ground, and managed it with all the economy and propriety observable in all their conduct.

They had for some time lived in cheap lodgings in the environs of the city; but the arrangement of this painful business compelled William to go several times to the house of a carpenter in the city, who behaving very civilly to him, it struck William he might not be a bad person to consult with on the subject of removing back to Paris in the *cheapest* manner, for they had now so very little money, that it became a great object to husband it with extreme care.

When William entered the carpenter's workshop, he received him with marks of extraordinary pleasure, saying—"He was the very person he wished for, as there was an English milord in the city, who wanted a travelling companion with him through part of Germany and Italy; and," added the man, "as I am certain you speak the best Italian I ever heard from a foreigner, and I heard you talk French with your mother, it struck me you would be a suitable person."

"Alas!" said William, "though I understand German, it would be presumption in me to say I could speak it. Besides, I cannot leave my dear mother—that is impossible. Yet I could like to see this gentleman, if he is my countryman, exceedingly."

The carpenter was not slow in bringing one of the gentleman's servants to William, who on hearing his native tongue, was ready to cry with joy, and lost no time in taking him to his master, who had the appearance of a country gentleman, and reminded the poor boy of his rich uncle.

"And so, my good lad, you *parley vous* all these confounded languages they tell me? and that you have lost your father,

and are left in a poor plight? more the pity."

"I speak French and Italian, Sir, as a native, but I have only an imperfect knowledge of German; nevertheless, I should not hesitate to travel in that country, for I should do my utmost to improve my knowledge, and where it was defective, rely upon my French tongue."

"Well then, I will tell you my case—I set out to travel all over the Continent, on the assurance that an English tongue might go all the world over. This I soon found to be false, so I first got one interpreter, and then another, and have been cheated, and bamboozled, every league of the way; but as I hate to give up a thing I have set my heart upon, I mean to go through the most of Germany, and if you will go round with me, I will set you down safely at Paris, where I suppose you wish to go, and give you fifty pounds for your services. I hope you are an honest English boy, in which case you will save me that sum, I doubt not, in my expenses."

William held up his head a little proudly, as he said—"You *shall* find me honest and attentive, Sir;" but in the next moment his head sunk and his voice faltered, as he added—"but then what can I do with my dear mother?"

"Oh! go and tell your mother about it by all means—she has a right to be consulted certainly."

Poor William almost flew back to his humble home, and in great perturbation related this offer, which in their situation was evidently not one to be refused, yet certainly of a very distressing nature to a newly-made widow in a sickly state.

"If," said Mrs. Denham, "I could get to England from hence, I should be very glad to know, my dear William, that you were provided for so comfortably. I am extremely anxious to be in my native country, in order to inquire after my brother; and although I have no relations, yet I have friends who would receive me, and assist me in my plans for future life. Perhaps I can remain here till my dear girls remit me the means of removing?"

"Oh, no, no! I cannot bring myself to leave you amongst people who cannot understand you. I wish you to go to England certainly, and see after dear Uncle Ben—I will see what I can do in procuring you the power of getting there."

Away went William back again to Mr. Luton, the English gentleman, whom he found in the gateway of the hotel, and who smiled to see him, as if he were glad of his return. "Dear Sir, I will go with you for *half* the money, if you will only be so good as to give it to me *now*; but I cannot go with you at all, if I have not the means of forwarding my dear mother immediately to England."

"Well, but suppose I take you at your word, give you twenty-five pounds now, and next winter set you down in Paris by yourself, without a shilling, would you not be in a pretty condition, you improvident young rogue?"

"Oh no; I have two sisters in Paris, each in the service of good families, who would help me, and so would Monsieur Dwyer, and Monsieur Galignani, and our good doctor, and many other people."

"Monsieur Dwyer was my banker during my stay in Paris—you must be the very boy he told me of—the little interpreter?"

This point being soon cleared to Mr. Luton's satisfaction, he did not hesitate to present William with thirty pounds for his mother's accommodation; and even interested himself much in procuring her an escort to Leghorn, with an English family now leaving Florence, and whom she accompanied all the way to England, greatly to her own comfort, and the joy of that affectionate child, from whom she parted under such extraordinary circumstances.

CHAPTER VI.

WILLIAM now considered himself fairly launched on the wide ocean of life, and after his mother was gone, he felt the bereavement extremely painful, and his tears flowed as they had done on the grave of his father. This emotion he however indulged only in private, for he considered that Mr. Luton had trusted him generously, and had a right not only to his active services, but to that cheerfulness of aspect and manners which would conduce to the pleasure of his journey. He knew that he never could forget his beloved parents for an hour, and he was certain that their kind instructions long treasured in his memory, had never been so valuable as now, and must henceforth be the guide of his conduct; but he was likewise aware, that the immediate duties now calling on his attention, were those of a servant and friend to Mr. Luton, who was his employer and governor.

In a short time they set out for Rome, and William examined, with ceaseless attention and delight, the proud remains of the "Eternal City," so long the mistress of the world. Mr. Luton, though a plain man, and, as we have seen, unacquainted with modern languages, was yet a man of extensive reading and prodigious memory, owing to which undoubtedly arose his desire to travel rather late in life. Delighted with the accuracy of William in translating the information of their guides to the different objects of curiosity, he in turn most kindly imparted to him much historical knowledge of great interest and importance.

From Rome they went to Tivoli, a place so beautiful, that the pencil alone can give any idea of its wildness, magnificence, and sweetness; they then departed for Naples, where the expansive bay, the mountain Vesuvius, and, above all, the remains of Pompeii, a city dug from beneath the ground, attracted and delighted William. He thought he could have staid at Naples for ever, there was so much to see and to admire; but Mr. Luton was on the whole anxious to return to England, and therefore determined on getting forward with his travels, according to the route he had prescribed.

Skirting the Apennines, and feeling but little fear of banditti, in due time they arrived at Venice, which, as a city built on piles in the sea, and having water for streets, and boats for coaches, was striking and amusing to William; but he did not consider it so beautiful as many other places, and was not sorry when they quitted it. He was exceedingly desirous now that they should be settled for some time, so as to enable him to hear of the safe arrival of his dear mother; but Mr. Luton, though very much pleased with a place on his arrival, soon became tired of it, and he was particularly averse to remaining long in any part of Italy. He was very much given to descanting on the subject of the people's vices, and their degeneracy since the days of the old Romans, and frequently spoke of the pleasure he should have in finding himself amongst the honest Germans; but it was a matter of doubt whether he would stop even amongst them, long enough to receive a letter from England in exchange to his own.

William did not on that account neglect to inform his mother of his own health, and his movements; and when they were setting out for the Tyrol, Mr. Luton observed that he was writing a long letter to her.—"Leave a little corner of that letter for me," said he to William; "I will give your mother a line in it myself."

William felt a modest hope that Mr. Luton would tell his mother that he had found her son useful; and on receiving the open letter again, he could not forbear to cast his eye over the words he had written there. With feelings of the most lively gratitude he perceived that it was an order on his banker to pay Mrs. Denham ten pounds, which was certainly the most decisive proof of his approbation, and the kindest way of relieving the boy's anxiety he could contrive.—"Dear Sir," exclaimed he, "this is indeed a very precious line!"

"I have now had your services so long a time, as to justify my paying you thus. Your conduct has fully justified me in doing that which most people would consider foolish. You could not suppose that I should be so mean as to accept your offer of taking thirty pounds instead of fifty pounds?"

"No, Sir, I know you much too well to suspect you of taking advantage of my poverty: but you have supplied me with clothes, have equipped me better than ever I was in my life, and therefore I could neither expect nor desire more money from you; but I thank you for it most sincerely, as an act of generous consideration."

"Pooh, pooh! it is your wages, boy, and very fairly earned—there is no generosity in it."

Mr. Luton was truly a charitable man, but he had a great objection to any thing that looked like ostentation in giving; and he was moreover a very exact man in all his accounts; and even where he was most liberal, he insisted on all matters of business being calculated to a farthing. He would dispute every article of a poor inn-keeper's bill, and compel him to

reduce it to that which he knew to be fair and equitable, and after he had paid it, make him a handsome present, always telling William to explain to him that "honesty was the best policy."

Such a person was a very valuable guide to a youth who was entering on life: he confirmed those good principles implanted by William's parents, and confirmed him in those habits of vigilance and exactness which had been so valuable to him in the affair of the commission-money in France. Every expense in Italy was duly registered by him—every pound Mr. Luton expended passed through his hands; and he constantly calculated for it in the English money terms to that gentleman, by which means he obtained a singular facility in reckoning, which was the more remarkable, on account of the smallness of several Italian coins. His employer never failed to remark how much he had saved him in every place they came to; yet he left few places without having spent so much in charity, as to give aid to the suffering and indigent most liberally.

They now reached the pastoral country of the Tyrolese, and appeared for a time almost in Paradise, when they contrasted the apparent ease and plenty in which the rural inhabitants lived, with the filth and wretchedness of the lower orders, even in the most splendid cities of Italy. Mr. Luton declared "it was exactly like the agricultural districts of England, and that for the first time he could fancy himself in his own country." Sometimes he said—"This is Sussex;" at others, the undulating hills would make him exclaim—"Now we are in Devonshire;" and when they met a shepherd driving his flock, or a husbandman with his team, he was ready to address them, and question them respecting their cattle or their corn.

But William was not quite so happy in one respect as he had hitherto been, and for the first time the change of language, which every day now increased, taught him the necessity of recommencing that strict attention to sounds, and that recurrence to former lessons, which he had practised with such good effect when he first arrived in Italy with his invalid father, a year before. He was well aware, that it was not in travelling through the provinces that he could get a proper pronounciation of the German language, much less in passing through the boundaries of two countries, for there a barbarous mixture is always spoken; but he felt himself called on, upon the whole, to begin a system of vigilance—to remember "that the time of trial was now come as to his utility to Mr. Luton, and the time of advantage to himself also," as affording him an opportunity of securing a knowledge of German.

In due time they arrived at Vienna, to which, as the grand emporium of the German Empire, Mr. Luton proposed devoting more time than he had hitherto allowed for the survey of a single place. William was glad of this, and certainly not sorry when that gentleman found several noblemen and gentlemen of England there, to whom he gave much time and attention. Whenever Mr. Luton joined a party, William shut himself in his room an hour or two, reading over his old lessons; and having thus prepared himself, he then walked out, in order to fall into casual conversation with the inhabitants of the house, or others. Modest and retiring as he was by nature, and different as he found the grave, dull Germans to the sprightly, loquacious French, he yet determined to persist in this plan, being well aware that it was the only one by which he could benefit himself essentially in a short period.

"I am afraid," said he to himself, "that I shall be a little troublesome to some of these smoking gentlemen, and there is no doubt but they will laugh at my blunders, without taking the trouble to reform them; but it is my duty to submit to these things; I have a task to perform, and must not stand upon trifles."

But William was so civil in his approaches, so thankful for correction, and so quick in adapting any improvement suggested—he was so careful to avoid giving offence, even when his ears were most annoyed by strange and disagreeable sounds, and so willing to praise all that appeared excellent, that every person he addressed soon had a pleasure in speaking with him; and he was particularly well received by some officers, who had travelled much, spoke good French, and could therefore readily inform him wherein he was wrong in pronounciation, or deficient in the idiom of the language; nor did they refuse to instruct him as to the peculiarities of the provinces he would pass through, in pursuing their intended route to the northern circles.

CHAPTER VII.

OWING to the perpetual engagements of Mr. Luton with his English friends, William saw less of Vienna than any other place they visited; but this he had little cause to regret, as he had obtained a pretty general idea of it; and departed much more able to prosecute his journey, than he had dared to expect he should be at the time when they arrived there.

They now visited every place best worth seeing, but did not make any decisive halt till they arrived at Dresden, where every thing worthy of notice in that beautiful city underwent full examination. Every day increased the facility of William; and so little was his employer inconvenienced, that he protested William understood German as well as French, all being alike to him. From Dresden they went to Berlin; but in this place they had very little pleasure, although it was interesting as the scene of the great Frederick's dominion, for William here perceived that his kind patron was exceedingly unwell, notwithstanding he insisted upon it that he was not so; and his English servant concurred in William's opinion.

During the whole time of William's residence with Mr. Luton in Italy, he had been remarkably abstemious in his living, and frequently observed, that "he hated the cookery, and despised the wines;" but it appeared that in Vienna he had indulged himself too much, when in company with persons of similar tastes to his own; in consequence, a slow lingering fever had hung about him during the whole of his tour through Germany, but it did not reach its height till, after leaving Berlin, they arrived at the miserable town of New Stettin, on the Willem, in Pomerania.

At a wretched inn in this dirty town, Mr. Luton confessed "that he was either tired to death by the long bad stage he had just passed, or else exceedingly ill;" but he warned William against sending for any medical men, "as he was determined to have nothing to do with any of them."

The poor boy was exceedingly distressed, but he consulted the servant as to the original cause of the complaint, and then began to turn over in his mind all that he had heard his mother say on such subjects, and observed—"John says there are some pills in your portmanteau, Sir—let me entreat you to take them."

"So I will—they were made in London."

"And will you also put your feet in warm water, and take a basin of gruel?"

"I would take it if I could get it; but who could make a basin of gruel in this vile place? the very thoughts of eating any thing in this house turns me sick—don't mention it again."

"I will make it for you myself—I am by no means, I trust, a bad cook to a sick man. My poor father said I made excellent chocolate; and I think I could manage to make a bread pudding, as my mother used to do, and I hope you will try it."

"Do what you will," said the invalid, languidly.

William gave him the pills and the gruel, he applied the water, and put the patient to bed, taking his station beside him; but he soon found that the case was beyond his care, that there was even a restlessness approaching to delirium, and that his pulse was far more quick than he ever remembered that of his still-lamented father to have been.

In the middle of the night William procured a physician; he explained to him the peculiarity of the patient's temper, and inquired if he would be so good as to humour it, promising him a suitable reward.

This gentleman therefore entered as a guest in the same inn, and perceiving that immediate bleeding was necessary, determined on cupping him; and as the mind of the patient wandered much, he did not find it difficult to place him in the proper position for the operation. Poor William was excessively shocked with the idea of subjecting his beloved friend to this painful process, and he ardently wished that he could have borne it for him; he also feared that the poor man never would forgive him for consenting to it; but yet he was well aware that no time was to be lost, that it was his duty to act for one who could not act for himself; therefore he contrived to introduce a surgeon also, and to assist his endeavours. To his great satisfaction, a considerable quantity of blood was extracted, without any inconvenience after the first start and groan, by which the invalid indicated that he was in pain; and he was soon so much relieved, that all the good effects followed which William desired to see; gentle perspiration, free breathing, and finally, composed sleep, succeeded, the relief for which nature craved.

The physician having witnessed the effect of this operation, withdrew, after prescribing certain medicines, which for the present appeared unnecessary, as the invalid was in a sound sleep, which continued till morning.

When Mr. Luton awoke, he was composed in his mind, and sensible of William's care; but he complained of an unpleasant sensation in his back, saying, "it was a trifle to that he had in his head the night before." William now prevailed on him to take the medicines, and the effect they had, together with the bleeding, soon removed his complaint, although he was necessarily left very weak, which was relieved by the unceasing attention and good nursing of William.

"Well, my good fellow," said Mr. Luton, "you have proved yourself a capital doctor and nurse, I must say. My heirs owe you a grudge, but I hope they will never pay it."

"Don't say so, sir; I know you have several nephews, and I doubt not if they knew of your late escape, they would be thankful for it."

"What, I suppose you have an uncle you love yourself then? is that the case?"

"I have, I hope, two uncles, one of whom I love very, *very* dearly, but, alas! he is an officer in the navy. The other, sir, is a country gentleman, a very rich man, and of whose death I should be sorry to hear, for I hope he will live to repent of his unkindness to my poor father, his brother."

Mr. Luton appeared to be many minutes much struck, and his lips moved, though he did not speak; at length he said, in a very tender tone—"What is there most desirable to you, William, that I can do for you?"

"That you would forgive me for procuring a physician, who caused a surgeon to cup you, which saved your life, when you were delirious."

"Ha, ha, ha! well, I will forgive him, and also pay him, for I conclude that is necessary; but what shall I do for you? how shall I give you satisfaction?"

"Dear sir, you have many great friends, inquire in all ways for my Uncle Ben—he *was* Lieutenant Gardiner of the *Thetis*, but we have heard that he was left sick in the West Indies, and we know not whether he lives or not—perhaps——"

Poor William could not bear the idea thus awakened, and he stopped to wipe away his tears. Mr. Luton took the opportunity of assuring him, that he would do his utmost to inquire out the present situation of Mr. Gardiner, and if possible to assist him.—"I am sure," said he, "that your uncle is worthy of assistance for his own sake; but I shall also render it to him as a return to you, not only for most affectionate care, but for the lesson you have unwittingly given me, which will, I hope, render me a better uncle, and therefore a happier one, than I have ever been before. You have taught me that *love* can only be awakened by *love*—that riches may command attention, but that it is only kindness which ensures affection."

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN, Mr. Luton left Stettin, he visited Marienburgh, which, as a very ancient place, where the Knights Templars once presided in all their glory, and where they have left a magnificent palace, now in ruins, attracted William exceedingly.

"This place is very grand," said he to Mr. Luton; "pray tell me something of its former inhabitants."

"At the time of the Crusades, a number of noblemen and gentlemen devoted themselves, their retainers, and their possessions, to the express service of those expeditions. They vowed to recover the Temple of the Holy Sepulchre from the Saracens, and thence received the honour of knighthood. They were in consequence called Knights Templars; but when settled here, their common appellation was Teutonic Knights. They were governed by a Grand Master, and lived in community, as monks, they having taken vows against marriage. During the time of the early wars they were of very great use, as redoubtable warriors, but they were, for the most part, ferocious, and often dissolute; so that when they were expelled from Asia, and returned to Europe, I believe the Pope of that time did not know very well what to do with them."

"Had he taken them into his own service, it would have made him a great deal too powerful," said William.

"True, but he was afraid of finding them his masters, and therefore planted the main body at a considerable distance, on this spot, where he gave them the land, on condition of their converting the inhabitants, very few of whom were then converted to Christianity. A branch of this body had the Island of Malta given to them, and enjoyed it till within a few years, as Knights of Malta; others were distributed in various countries, and a considerable number in England. All that part of London occupied now as inns of courts, where our lawyers reside, called the Temple, belonged to them; and one of the finest churches in London was built by them."

"I have been in it, Sir," said William, eagerly; "and remember my dear papa shewing me five knights in armour lying on their tombs; but I thought he called them Knights of Jerusalem."

"Probably, for this term distinguished those who had actually fought there from their successors, who had not enjoyed that honour. There was also a branch of the order called Knights Hospitallers. They had establishments at Temple-Brough, near Conisburgh Castle, in Yorkshire—Temple-Bruer, in Lincolnshire—Temple-Chelsin, Hertfordshire—Temple-Ewell, Kent, and some other places."

"Temple-Newsom, I dare say, was one of them; for I remember being told what an ancient place it was, when I went through it to see my uncle."

"You are right, my boy; it was one of their most extensive manors; also remarkable as the birthplace of Lord Darnley, the worthless but unfortunate husband of Mary Queen of Scotland."

"I remember her sad history perfectly, dear Sir.—Pray what became of these Templars? did the Reformation sweep them away?"

"No, they were put down by the same power which had raised them. The church in every country became jealous of their power; their lives were, in many cases, profligate, and afforded just reasons for calling them to account; but in many cases they were treated with harshness, injustice, and even cruelty; and the whole order abolished in a very despotic and tyrannical manner."

From Marienburgh our travellers proceeded to Holland and the Netherlands, a journey which afforded the greatest pleasure to William; for though he could not be partial to Dutchmen, on account of the stupidity of their looks, their imperturbable gravity, and their insatiate love of money, yet he admired their industry, cleanliness, and the many specimens of art afforded by their busy cities. He was, however, not a little delighted to proceed once more for Paris, where he hoped for the pleasure of finding his sisters, and learning from them the situation of his dear mother, for whom he was anxious to the greatest degree.

They took up their abode late at night on their arrival, at the Rue de Vivian; and early the next morning William proceeded to the house of the kind Countess, where he had the satisfaction of being folded in the arms of his eldest sister, who was delighted to see how much he was grown, and every way improved, during the period of his long absence. She informed him that their mother was in good health a week or two before; and his sister Selina now in England, and so

situated as greatly to contribute to the comfort of their widowed parent, to whom she gave half her salary.

"Alas! that is more than I can do for her," said William; "for I have nothing to take, and of course nothing to give; but I must endeavour to get to England, and perhaps she will put me into some employment in a London counting-house."

"I will give you money for that purpose, though I have but little," said Elizabeth; "for I am myself on the point of visiting dear England once more, and have expended my little all in making preparations for the journey."

"Oh, how happy, how *very* happy shall we all be together once more!" said William, forgetting, in the joy of a young heart, that they were not so situated as to form a family circle, and that his mother was not mistress of a home in which she could receive him. He knew only at this moment that he should be delighted to see her, and that she would be equally happy to see him. His heart also bounded towards Selina, who was only a year older than himself, and who had been his playfellow, and his consoler in many a sorrowful hour.

It was under the full influence of these tender and joyful emotions that William re-entered the inn, and with all the ingenuousness natural to him, related the information he had gathered respecting his family, and the hopes he entertained of soon being restored to them. He felt surprised to see that Mr. Luton looked uncommonly grave, and received his information in a manner that was anything rather than congratulatory.

"The great question in your case, my young friend, seems to be, whether you shall go to England, where I am well aware your good mother finds it difficult to subsist, however kind her daughters may be, by which means you will increase her difficulties, and add to her uneasiness, since she will find you yet too young to gain a competence by teaching, or by entering a merchant's counting-house, or whether you will ensure her ease and comparative affluence, by restraining your own desires, and exerting your general talents and industry in an honourable and lucrative situation.

"Surely, Sir, in such a case I should not hesitate to follow the path of duty, and sacrifice the desire I have to see her, ardent as it is; but how can I get such a situation?"

"I have procured it for you; it was the hope of doing so which brought me to Paris, and whilst you ran to see your sister, I drove to the hotel of Sir Amherst Ingham, who, at my recommendation, accepts you as his secretary during the two ensuing years, in which he will reside in Vienna."

"Vienna! oh, 'tis a long, long way!"

"You have been much farther; and pray what difference would it make, if you were fixed here, with being there, since in neither case could you see your mother?"

"True, Sir, but still I cannot help feeling a dislike to retrace my steps—to tear myself from the sweet hopes I have so long indulged. From the pleasure I have this morning experienced in seeing one dear relation, my heart is drawn more fondly towards the rest."

As William spoke, tears, in despite of his efforts to restrain them, fell from his eyes; and though he struggled to exert all the *man* within him, the tender loving heart of the *boy* revolted, and he said to himself, again and again—"I *must* go to my mother—I *must* see dear Selina—I *must* behold my own country."

Mr. Luton saw the struggle of his heart was severe, and he left the room, as if to give orders to his servant, but soon after he was seen by William to leave the house; and he now felt a momentary fear, lest he should report to Sir Amherst his unwillingness to accompany him. He threw himself upon his knees, and in broken accents besought his Almighty Father to strengthen his resolution, and guide him in the path of duty; and although he could not forbear to weep abundantly, yet he arose composed, and felt as if the trial was almost past.

When Mr. Luton entered the room again, he found William looking pale, and with red eyes, but his countenance was calm, and he looked in the face of his patron with thankful looks.

"Well, Mr. Denham, what do you say now?"

"That I will gratefully accept the situation, and endeavour to perform the duties attached to it, so as to satisfy the gentleman, and justify your recommendation to him, my dear Sir."

"Bravo, my boy! that is spoken like yourself. Having conquered without the immediate temptation of money before your

eyes, it is pleasant to me to inform you, that you will have one hundred pounds the first year, and two the second; and as your salary will be paid half-yearly, and can be paid as conveniently in England as Vienna, you will have the satisfaction of providing for your mother in the most commodious manner."

"I see all your goodness, Sir, in this arrangement—I see what a great deal I have to thank God for, in thus enabling me to fulfil my father's hopes, and relieve my mother's wants. Ah, dear Uncle Ben, how much do I owe to your good advice! for it is certain if I had not taken it, I never could have got so much money."

"If you had not been an extraordinary linguist, it is certain you could have had no such chance, for you are yet only fifteen. When I next see you, William, you will have a beard on your chin, a little more flesh on your tall thin carcass, and a little more bronze on your red and white face; and then I shall be able to offer you as an acquisition to the first mercantile house in England—of course in the world."

"That will indeed be a valuable situation, my dear Sir; but in your cares for me, pray do not forget that my first great wish is concerning my Uncle Ben."

"I know it—I know it all. I never break a promise, especially when it goes to pay a debt. Speaking on that subject, here are the ten pounds I owe *you*, and here are twenty pounds, which I consider myself indebted to your mother."

"My mother, Sir!"

"Yes, your mother; I owe her that for having educated her son so well, that during nearly twelve whole months, I have never had occasion to repress one act of impertinence, one sally of temper in you. This *disposition* you owe to your mother; and though it would not do without your *knowledge*, depend upon it the knowledge would not have done without it."

This conversation ended by William's being introduced to Sir Amherst Ingham, who was a different man to Mr. Luton, as being cold and stately, whereas the former was warm-hearted, but odd and abrupt. On the present occasion the Baronet was gracious; and although William felt a little fearful of the new duties of his station, he acquitted himself well, as possessing simple but graceful manners, and was told to enter on his new home the following morning.

Another visit to Elizabeth revealed the trial of the morning—this unlooked-for good fortune, and yet the unavoidable regrets with which it was accompanied. The present in money from Mr. Luton for Mrs. Denham, and many little matters, the gifts of that gentleman, were hastily thrown together for her acceptance, and William felt as if his own heart were in the bundle; but he tore himself from Elizabeth with more magnanimity than he could muster when he was called upon to part from Mr. Luton, whom he never imagined that he had loved so well as at the moment of parting, for then his sorrow was indeed severe.

CHAPTER IX.

Sir Amherst and his young secretary arrived in due time at Vienna, where the latter soon became acquainted with the cares expected from him, which were those of addressing letters in three different languages, and of translating others; to this was added, notes of the general expenditure of his principal, and attention to the expenses of a large establishment.

Our young friend had never lived in any household conducted on the same extensive and luxurious scale with that of which he was now a distinguished member; and when he found himself sitting at the magnificent table with the proud German barons, or even princes, who were the guests of the baronet, he could not help considering his elevation as extraordinary; but he never forgot that it was temporary, and that the situation he must fill in future life, although highly respectable, must be of a very different description.—"And surely," he would say to himself, "it will be quite as agreeable; the splendour around me is rather dazzling than delightful, for I have here no intercourse of heart or of mind. I have neither my own dear family, who love me, nor my good Mr. Luton, who instructed me by his conversation."

Leaving William to his reflections and his duties, which he scrupulously fulfilled, we will follow that gentleman to his native country, which many of our readers will think we have lost sight of for a very long period.

When Sir Amherst Ingham and his *protegé* had left Paris, Mr. Luton lost no time in procuring a passport, and was soon on his way to Calais, from whence he was no long time in being conveyed to his own native island. Staffordshire being the place where his paternal mansion lay, he lost no time in repairing thither, where his affairs, long left to the care of servants, demanded his presence; but when he had seen his neighbours, inspected his accounts, and received his tenantry, to the great surprise of them all, he resolved to go and spend a month in London.

Some people said—"The Squire had got into a habit of roving, and never would settle again;" others—"That he found the house lonely, and was going to bring a wife;" but he knew himself that he was going to fulfil that promise in sincerity, and with activity, which he had made to the poor boy, now thrown at so great a distance, as to his good uncle.

His first care was to find Mrs. Denham herself, in order that he might satisfy her mind as to the situation of her son, and indulge himself and her by praising him, and relating the many proofs of his good disposition and abilities, which he had witnessed and experienced.

Mrs. Denham was now in a neat lodging in the Hampstead Road, but he found that she had suffered much on her arrival in England, from those changes which death had made in the circle of her friends during her absence. She had written to her brother-in-law on her arrival, informing him of the death of her late husband; in reply to which he had sent her a ten-pound note, and an assurance, "that leaving England had been the death of his brother." After this, she had endeavoured to procure the means of life, by teaching music in a boarding-school, but was compelled by sickness to give it up—"At which time," she said, "the arrival of your first kind present relieved me from poverty of the most distressing nature, my good Sir."

"But you have never heard of your brother, the lieutenant, madam?"

"I have heard of him, but by no means satisfactorily. From inquiring at the Navy Pay-Office, I learnt that he recovered from the yellow fever, and having lost the power of proceeding on the voyage of discovery, which he left us in the hope of prosecuting, he came to England. When arrived here, it breaks my heart to say, that he was arrested, and thrown into prison, for the debt which he had permitted me to contract with an old friend and school-fellow of his, to whom in past days he had done the most essential service. How long he suffered this confinement I know not; but from what I can learn, he compromised the matter, by giving this man the power of receiving his half-pay, so that he must be somewhere in a state of great poverty; but the person in question either does not know, or will not inform me, where he is."

"He is an unfeeling rascal!" exclaimed Mr. Luton; "but it is some consolation to know that your brother still lives; if he is in the country, I will find him, and help him."

"Ah, Sir, were he literally in the *country*, we should soon find him, I doubt not; but in London, many a wretched being is hidden in want and obscurity past finding out. Perhaps my poor Ben, worn out in the very prime of his days by sorrow, want, and those evils entailed upon him by his profession, is at this moment dying in some miserable garret, without one friend to speak a kind word to him—one hand to minister to his necessities."

Poor Mrs. Denham wept at the sad picture her imagination had conjured up, and which it was certain there was but too much reason to think was true. Mr. Luton did all he could to comfort her; but he was unable to find the object of his search; and after much ineffectual trouble, he returned to the country, satisfied with leaving the widow happy in the company of her two daughters, and for the present provided in the way her moderate wishes required.

Mr. Luton was the uncle of two families of nephews and nieces, for whom he had never appeared to have much affection; but when he returned to his own house at the present period, he was accompanied by a fine youth, about the age of William, and a young woman of Selina's years, to whom he paid the kindest attentions. He was beginning, for the first time, to cultivate that family affection which his acquaintance with the Denham family, and especially William, had taught him to consider an indispensable ingredient in the cup of happiness.

Time passed. Mrs. Denham had now the satisfaction of corresponding with her son, and of receiving from him, at the end of two successive half-years, the sum of fifty pounds, which, together with the kindness of her daughters, enabled her to maintain herself, without recurring to those exertions for which her delicate state of health unfitted her. When she had resided about eighteen months in her present abode, she had the satisfaction of learning that a gentleman of wealth and respectability paid his addresses to her eldest daughter.

This gentleman, Mr. Fairford, did not, of course, expect to find that a young woman in a dependent situation was possessed of fortune, nor did he require any; but having learnt, from the good countess, with whom she had resided so many years, that her parents were excellent persons, he wished to be introduced to her mother, in order to learn every particular of a family into which he was desirous of entering; and he was the more anxious on this point, because the name of Denham was not only now dear, but had been formerly familiar to him.

In consequence, Mr. Fairford waited upon Mrs. Denham, who received him with that openness of manner, yet dignity of deportment, which told him she did not seek to disguise her situation, yet should expect the respect due to a parent. She gave Mr. Fairford to understand, that she had indeed nothing to give her daughter, but that she should after her marriage expect to receive nothing from her.—"My daughter has been to me amiable, liberal, and considerate," said she; "when she marries, her duties will be drawn to other objects, and she will, I doubt not, be as good a wife to you, as she has been a child to me. Her virtue is her only dowry, but I doubt not it will ensure you felicity."

"But surely, dear madam, you will accept from me the attentions of a son. I once knew a sweet little boy of your name, who took lessons occasionally at my school in Yorkshire; he was, I understood, a very distant relation to Mr. Denham, of Denham Hall."

"That boy was my son, the brother's son of Mr. Denham, and of course his heir in the eye of the law. Mr. Denham, my husband, was unfortunate in business, but his character was spotless, and at this moment his creditors are my best friends."

Mr. Fairford was delighted with this explanation, which from motives of delicacy, he had never sought to obtain from Elizabeth. It appeared that his late father's estates were contiguous to those of Mr. Denham, and when his marriage took place, he carried his bride to the house of his widowed mother, who resided at the family mansion in that neighbourhood.

As all the country went to see the bride, who was very elegant as well as amiable, and whose long residence in France had rendered her an object of curiosity, Mr. Denham went among the rest. On finding out who she was, in the first place he affected to be angry, that she had not informed him of the change she was going to make in her situation; but on recollecting that he had never taken the least notice of her in his life, nor given her any reason to consider it was her duty, he turned the matter off with a laugh, and kissed her with great affection, being in fact proud of her.

As Mrs. Fairford happened to have a great resemblance to her uncle, the matter was so much talked of in the country, that he became exceedingly ashamed of his past negligence, towards a family so nearly related, and who, in the representative here sent into the neighbourhood, appeared so highly meritorious. He was by no means considered a covetous man, but he was a careless and selfish man; he had lived in the possession of a handsome income all his life, and he knew not what want of any kind was; and when he sent a *trifling* remittance, it arose frequently from his happening to have no more about him, and being too indolent to apply to his banker. A ridiculous prejudice against travelling had been the cause of the cruel letter he had sent on that subject; and it never entered his mind, that in doing it he had condemned his only brother to want in a foreign country, and under the pressure of lingering sickness, and

eventual death.

As he now insisted on the young couple visiting him before they returned to town, he could not forbear to make many inquiries as to the fate of Elizabeth's father; and when the tender daughter told him, with floods of tears, the sufferings of her early life, and the trials of her parents, he was excited to the most bitter repentance, and wept himself, to the astonishment of all his family.

"But where is William? where is the poor boy that has done so much, when I was doing so little?—surely he is not dead also."

"Oh no! he is now, at seventeen, the confidential secretary of Sir Amherst Ingham, at Vienna."

"The newspapers say the baronet is coming home—will the dear fellow come with him, think you, Elizabeth? I want to see him excessively."

"If he should have a similar situation offered him, he will not; for he will consider it his duty to accept it, and thereby provide for my mother, as he had done; but I know his heart is in England, and that in particular he wishes to be here, that he may, if possible, find his uncle, for whom he is in perpetual anxiety."

"In perpetual anxiety about *me*! why should he trouble himself so foolishly? few men at my age enjoy better health, and my property thrives as I could wish."

"It is not *you*, Sir, of whom I speak—it is our mother's brother, Lieutenant Gardiner—that dear, excellent uncle, who devoted all the money procured by a life of hardship to removing my poor father and his family to France—who even borrowed money, on which we subsisted a long time, for which we learn that he was some time in prison, and is now repaying by the sacrifice of his income. Ah! well may William, and all of us, be anxious respecting one who literally fed us with his own bread, and who perhaps, at this very moment, is lying in want and sickness, without a friend to cheer him, or money to minister to his wants."

As Elizabeth spoke the last words, she became extremely agitated, and it required all the kindness of both her husband and her uncle to soothe her spirits. The latter could only satisfy himself, by assuring her, over and over—"That when William came back, he would immediately enable him to support both his mother and his uncle;" but yet it might be gathered, that he expected, in return, to be considered the *more important* of the two uncles, forgetting the lessons of repentance, and the good resolutions, awakened by the preceding conversation.

When Mr. and Mrs. Fairford were gone, the Squire, and his servants also, were very lonely. The worthy and lively pair had both raised the spirits, and improved the views, of all around them—the former hospitalities and charities of the Hall had been renewed, and the owner was sensible of the pleasure of being beloved, and useful to those around him. He became fond of talking with the good clergyman to whom his nephew had been so much indebted in early life, and particularly proud of descanting on William's knowledge of the languages, and the use he had made of it, although the circumstance brought forward his own carelessness on the subject of his nephew's education. He was in these conversations compelled to remember, that whilst he had "lived at ease in his possessions," ate and drank of the best, filled his coffers with gold, his barns with corn, his stables with pampered steeds, and his kennels with expensive dogs, that his blameless and unfortunate brother, with his young and innocent family, had been either suffering in poverty, or relieved by a man, as much his superior in virtue, as his inferior in wealth.

The uneasy sensations produced in Mr. Denham's mind, added to the real affection with which his niece inspired him, determined him at length to set out for London, where he had never been since the time when he settled his brother in business. He said, "it would divert his mind and make home sweeter when he came back;" but his real reason was to make amends to his sister-in-law, so far as he was able, for his coldness and neglect in days which, alas! could never be recalled.

When Mr. Denham arrived in London, at the house of Mr. Fairford, he was glad to find his sister-in-law and her youngest daughter there, especially as they were both well dressed, and looking happy, for he could never figure them in his own mind in their past misery, without suffering severely from the contemplation; and it would have been impossible for him to construe a look of sorrow into any thing but a look of reproach. Mrs. Denham was a sensible, acute, as well as good woman; and as she knew that all retrospection was painful, and could do no good now, she wisely avoided it, by which means she awakened his sincere gratitude, and enabled him soon to become as cheerful and happy as the rest of

the party, who were now daily looking out for the darling William, whose years of probation had expired, and who had received from the Baronet he had now served somewhat more than the time stipulated, most decisive proofs of approbation, and a generous reward.

CHAPTER X.

It struck Mr. Denham, that the best way in which he could manifest his good will to his late brother's family, and secure the esteem of Mr. Fairford, and others connected with him, would be by presenting an annuity of a hundred per annum to the widow, and presenting the daughters with fifteen hundred pounds a-piece. These generous gifts were accordingly received with all due acknowledgment by the several parties; and the donor rejoiced exceedingly that he had by this action secured the approbation of William on his arrival.

Though our beloved wanderer was yet a very young man, his uncle, who was now getting an old one, could not forbear to feel much of that sensation which might be called awe of him; and in proportion as he found himself happy with the rest of the family, so he became anxious to get over the first interview with that child who had been a kind of father to his own parents, when he who should have been their father had forsaken them.

Mr. Denham, on his arrival in town, had felt a kind of fear that he should be pressed upon to relieve beggars; but he now began to indulge fears of a different description; and hearing many high-sounding German names mentioned in contact with that of poor William, he was ready to conclude that his nephew might give himself airs of grandeur, and since he had not been taught to look up to him with gratitude, might look down upon him with disgust.

At this time Mrs. Denham had the pleasure to receive a visit from Mr. Luton, who soon became acquainted with her brother-in-law, to whom he gladly offered the hand of friendship, because he understood that he now merited it. We must however confess, that there was a little revenge lurking in this gentleman's heart towards the rich uncle of his beloved *protégé*; for when they had become very intimate, and found that their situations in life so much resembled each other, as greatly to cement their friendship, Mr. Luton would bring out such speeches as the following:—

"Yes, Sir, as you say, we country gentlemen do the most good on our own estates; but I shall never repent travelling, for the little *pale ragged* boy I met with at Florence did more for me than all my acres, for he taught me that I had a heart Sir. It is through him that I am now at the head of a fine and flourishing family. Come down to Luton Priory, Mr. Denham, and I will shew you such a fair girl, and such a clever young fellow, my nephew and niece."

The pride of our Yorkshire Squire was always wounded by these allusions; but still he felt only the more anxious to outshine his new friend in his own way; but one day, when Mr. Luton entered suddenly, followed by a tall young man, of a remarkably open, intelligent countenance, whom he concluded to be his nephew, Mr. Denham said inwardly—"Ay, he may well boast—I *never* saw so fine a lad as that in *all* my life."

But just as this thought passed his mind, the youth in question darted forward, and threw himself on the neck of Mrs. Denham, who started with astonishment, and tremblingly cried—"Who can this be?"

"Your own William, my dear, *dear* mother—the son you have so long expected, and who is so delighted to see you."

The young man could not proceed, for his heart was full almost to suffocation, but he kissed his mother again and again; and at length, as if afraid that he should lose the blessing so long, so fondly desired, he threw himself on the carpet beside her, and putting his head on her lap, looked in her face as he was wont to do in the days of infancy, and secured her to himself.

Mothers, who have been for nearly four long years parted from such sons as William, at that period of life when they pass from boyhood to manhood, will conceive the surprise, the speechless, tearful delight, with which Mrs. Denham gazed on her only, her excellent son. They will imagine how she recalled the features of the father in his face, and how she rejoiced to see the plant once reared in obscurity and sorrow, become a flourishing tree, calculated for the protection and shelter of her declining days.

Selina, informed of a stranger's arrival, rushed into the room, and was soon folded in a long embrace; nor was Elizabeth and her husband many steps behind—there was an universal tumult of joy and admiration; had the traveller come home laden with wealth, or aggrandized by conquest, he could not have been received with warmer welcomes.

At length Mr. Luton, whose eyes had long been fixed upon the old gentleman, in whose countenance he read much strong emotion, interposed to say—"Come, come, William, don't let the women eat you—pay your respects to your uncle, who has just claims to them."

"My uncle! have you then found him—But this gentleman cannot be my own dear Uncle Ben?"

"He certainly is not," said Mr. Luton, "but it is nevertheless an uncle, 'who was *lost* and is *found*'—an uncle whom your mother and sisters will tell you is their friend, and yours also, William."

At such a moment, and with such an assurance, had there been any remembrance of an old grudge left in the young traveller's heart, it would have been banished; but, in truth, all that he was capable of feeling was long since gone, and he grasped the hand of his uncle, and felt himself held to his bosom with feelings of the purest satisfaction.

"But," said he, turning to his mother, with a mournful accent, "have you not yet learnt any further tidings of Uncle Ben?"

"Alas! not any," was the general answer; "we believe he lives, but we know not where."

"I will seek him, and, as I trust, find him, even in this mighty beehive; and I call you all to witness, that I will allow myself no single pleasure (in the common acceptance of the word) until I have fulfilled this duty."

"It is a rash resolve," said Mr. Luton; "for I have myself searched the neighbourhood of the Docks and Wapping most accurately, but in vain."

"And I have had all the parishes in the neighbourhood where he was born thoroughly looked into; and I should think when a sailor had done with his profession, his native place would be his only haven," observed the Squire.

"But," said young Denham, "my Uncle Ben is not now a sailor, alas! but a necessitous man, earning his own bread, and one who knows he could not so earn it in his native place, without stooping below his rank as an officer; neither of these places are at all likely to be his haunt. I shall seek for him, either as a teacher in a boarding-school, or a writer for an attorney; for as he was always master of a beautiful hand, and could write with great dispatch, I see no way in which he would be so likely to exert himself."

Every one was struck with the probability that this conclusion was just, and William lost no opportunity to act upon it; he frequented the avenues to the Inns of Court, haunted the alleys about Chancery Lane, and took many a long scrutinising walk in the purlieu of the Temple, but all was in vain. For some time his uncle, who was delighted with his company, gladly partook his toils, and flattered himself, from day to day, that he should prove as good a huntsman of this new game, as he had formerly been of hares and foxes; but as no scent was obtained, and the young leader declared himself at fault, he became very desirous of giving up the chase, and going into the country, where he was impatient to exhibit his nephew, and declare him his heir.

William received every indication of his favour with thankfulness, but he could not be prevailed upon to remove from London, so long as any possible means remained untried for recovering his Uncle Ben; but he earnestly wished his mother and Selina to go down, as he thought the air would be beneficial to them, and the introductions offered to his family serviceable. To him who had been parted from them so long and so far, a journey into Yorkshire appeared a mere trifle, of course.

One day William received a line from his late friend, Sir Amherst Ingham, desiring him to meet a former friend of both, from Germany, who was expected to land at the Tower Stairs, and whom he desired him to conduct to his house.

Mr. Denham had long been tired of that which he denominated "seeking a needle in a pottle of hay," but he thought he should like much to see a German baron with a name as long as a parish register, and therefore he proposed accompanying his nephew, whom he would take in his carriage. This being very agreeable to William, they proceeded to the place in question, but had not the satisfaction of finding the nobleman they expected, as he had not arrived by the vessel.

In order that they might learn when the next packet might be expected they adjourned to an office on the wharf, where were great numbers of persons going in and out, and considerable confusion. This was increased by a rough but honest Jack Tar, who hailed a person he met in the doorway with hearty good will.—"God bless your honour! I'm glad to see you with all my soul! I thought as you'd been in Davy's Locker years ago, by reason of that there yallar fever. But you're hearty now. I hopes, spite of your rigging, which ben't new tackle, I see."

"I am better, my hearty, this day, than I have been for five years past; and as I am going over to see the Mounsheers, rigging won't signify, for they love shabbiness as well as their mother's milk, you may remember, Jem."

As these words were uttered, the voice struck the ear, and thrilled through the heart of William, and he eagerly pressed forward to look at the speaker. He was a man of tall, thin form, which bent, as if by years, and his hair was perfectly white; but in speaking he displayed a set of beautiful teeth, and the fire of his eye was undiminished by time.—"Surely those teeth, the roundness of that chin, greatly resembled those of his own mother?—it might, it must be Mr. Gardiner, for it was now *five* years since he had been heard of. It was in that period of seclusion and poverty those locks had turned grey, and that manly form had learned to bend under the pressure of premature age."

Every moment increased the interest the stranger excited; and in his eager haste to seize a prize so long, so ardently desired, William pushed forward, and catching him by the breast of the coat, exclaimed—"You are Lieutenant Gardiner of the *Thetis*—pray say you are?"

"I'm not the man to deny my name, young gentleman; but as to seizing me in this way, I don't understand it. I am as willing to fight for my king and country as ever I was, so you've no need to haul me to that; and as I don't owe a sixpence in the world, to man, woman, or child, and have this day got my half-pay clear again, why I sha'n't stand any humbug on *that* account; so hands off, if you please, my fair-weather spark."

But William still kept his hold, and contrived to lead him out of the press a little way on to the wharf, when he said, in all the trepidation of extreme solicitude—"You had a nephew, Sir, of whom you were very fond, the son of your only sister."

"Well, Sir, and have I not still such a nephew? is he not yet in France? I know that my sister is a widow; but surely she has not lost her son? I am on the very point of embarking to seek them all in France."

"Hurra! I have found him! this is indeed my own, my unparalleled Uncle Ben.—Come here, dear Sir, and behold my benefactor, my father's friend."

"What are you after, young man? speak plainly—who are you? do not trifle with a man that has suffered as I have done."

"I am William Denham—like *you*, I have been some years estranged from my family, but not like you, in poverty and obscurity; no, dear uncle, young as I am, I have made friends and gained money, through your advice entirely, and therefore you will not refuse to make me happy by accepting it."

The good sailor gasped for breath in the excess of his joy. His face, alternately pale and flushed, bespoke his inward agitation; and it was with difficulty he at length uttered an inquiry after his sister.

"She is well, and so are my sweet sisters, and we only want you to render our happiness complete; we have all sought you—ah! you little *know* how we have sought you."

"I have lived for five long years in Gray's Inn Lane, and subsisted by copying deeds. The bad lawyers doubled my original debt by their cursed chicanery, but the good ones had pity on my hard case, and enabled me to earn my bread. But who, William, is the gentleman coming towards us?"

"My father's brother. His carriage is here, and he will take us to the house of Elizabeth, who is well married, and whose husband will rejoice to see you."

"Hold, my boy!—I am in a threadbare coat and a napless hat, have little flesh on my bones, and little money in my purse, but I am not quite sure that I can *condescend* to sail in the same wake with that cold-hearted Jew, Squire Denham."

"Dear Uncle Ben, I had the same feelings as you have when I landed; but we must all forget and forgive. I am sure my uncle repents his unkindness, and therefore—"

"But how do you know he is sincere?"

"Because he has given my dear mother an annuity of a hundred a-year, and my sisters each fifteen hundred pounds; and before he had seen me, declared me his heir."

"That is enough—I will give him my hand. When a man of my description gives money, 'tis quite a natural affair, ye see; but when a hard man like him gives up the stuff, 'tis like water from the rock, and proves his heart to be smitten by the same Great Power we read of in the Bible."

At this moment Mr. Denham (who had stood at a considerable distance, conscious how much stronger were the claims of Uncle Ben to the gratitude of William, than any arising from his lingering kindness) advanced. The lieutenant sprang forward, with as much hilarity as his evident infirmities admitted, and grasped his offered hand with cordiality; he had never seen him before, but the resemblance he had to his late brother affected the warm-hearted sailor exceedingly; the big drops gathered in his eyes, and coursed down his cheek; but he shook them off as well as he could, saying only—"Your brother was a very honest man—a man I loved to my soul, Sir; and you put me in mind of him, that's all. Our young nephew too has a great likeness to you, d'ye see, about his eyes."

Mr. Denham felt this in two ways; it forcibly reminded him of his own deficient affection and generosity, yet flattered his wish to resemble those who, in despite of poverty and misfortune, could awaken such strong affection; he was glad the lieutenant was found, because it rendered William happy, and he was sensible that if he accompanied him to Denham Hall, his presence would be honourable to himself, as a proof that he did not think his past errors unworthy the forgiveness of a noble nature.

We will not attempt to describe the meeting of that affectionate brother and sister, so long and painfully divided; nor will we pain the hearts of our young readers, by detailing the sickness and poverty which had afflicted the worthy sailor. It is enough to say, that all the family were alike eager to obliterate the past from his memory, and provide for the comforts of the future; but it was William's happy fortune to be more immediately the instrument of good to him; for in consequence of his representation, Sir Amherst Ingham obtained him promotion, and thus restored him to the profession he loved, and bestowed the rank he so well deserved to possess.

We conclude with desiring our young readers to remark, that although the gratitude of William was excited from many causes, it was yet called foremost by the bent given to his youthful industry, in acquiring those languages, which afterwards were so usefully and honourably employed to the relief of his parents and his own support, and which to the end of his life will furnish him the means of life, if all other fortune should fail.

We take leave of this family party at Denham Hall, where they have completely displaced the four-footed favourites, and rendered the master of the mansion a new being, since although his health is indifferent, his temper is cheerful, his manners friendly, and his general charities abundant.

Mr. Luton, the old friend of William, is there also, together with his beloved nephew and niece, so that a happier company of people have seldom been assembled; and the circle is likely to receive Mr. Dwyer also, whom William most gratefully invited.

Captain Gardiner and Mr. Luton are alike proud of that young man, whom they each assisted in the day of distress; and it is thought that they are glad to see the attentions he pays the niece of the latter, who is a lovely and amiable girl. Whatever may be the predilections of William, it is certain that he now, as before, places his duty in a more prominent place than his inclinations; and as he gave up a visit to his mother when it was the first wish of his heart, so does he now project another removal on the same principle. Fully persuaded that if his uncle Denham would spend the ensuing winter at Nice, it would greatly benefit his health, he loses no opportunity to persuade him to do it. So much are the prejudices of our Yorkshire Squire subdued, that although he could not forgive his sick brother for seeking a milder climate, we think it very probable he will commit the same conduct himself, and perhaps lay his bones in a foreign country.

Should this course be taken, it is certain that he will be happy in an attentive nurse and excellent interpreter, in his beloved nephew William, who looks forward to enjoying a pleasant voyage with the gallant Captain Gardiner, who has recovered his good looks, replaced his rigging, increased his stowage, and with the exception of his grey locks, recovered his appearance when we first introduced him to our readers, as "dear Uncle Ben."

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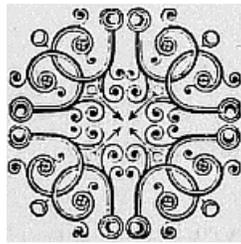
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Transcriber's Note

The following apparent printers errors have been changed.

Page 29 'representative' to 'representative'
(leave you as my representative)

Page 56 missing word 'in' added.
(to participate in his pleasures)

Page 58 'expences' to 'expenses'
(reduce their expenses)

Page 63 'langaages' to 'languages'
(knowledge of languages)

Page 73 'yon' to 'you'
(leave you amongst people)

Page 78 'staid' to 'stayed'
(he could have stayed at Naples)

Page 83 'expence' to 'expense'
(Every expense in Italy)

Page 111 'iiguist' to 'linguist'
(an extraordinary linguist)

Page 121 'pfeffession' to 'profession'
(by his profession)

[End of *William and his Uncle Ben* by Mrs. Hofland]