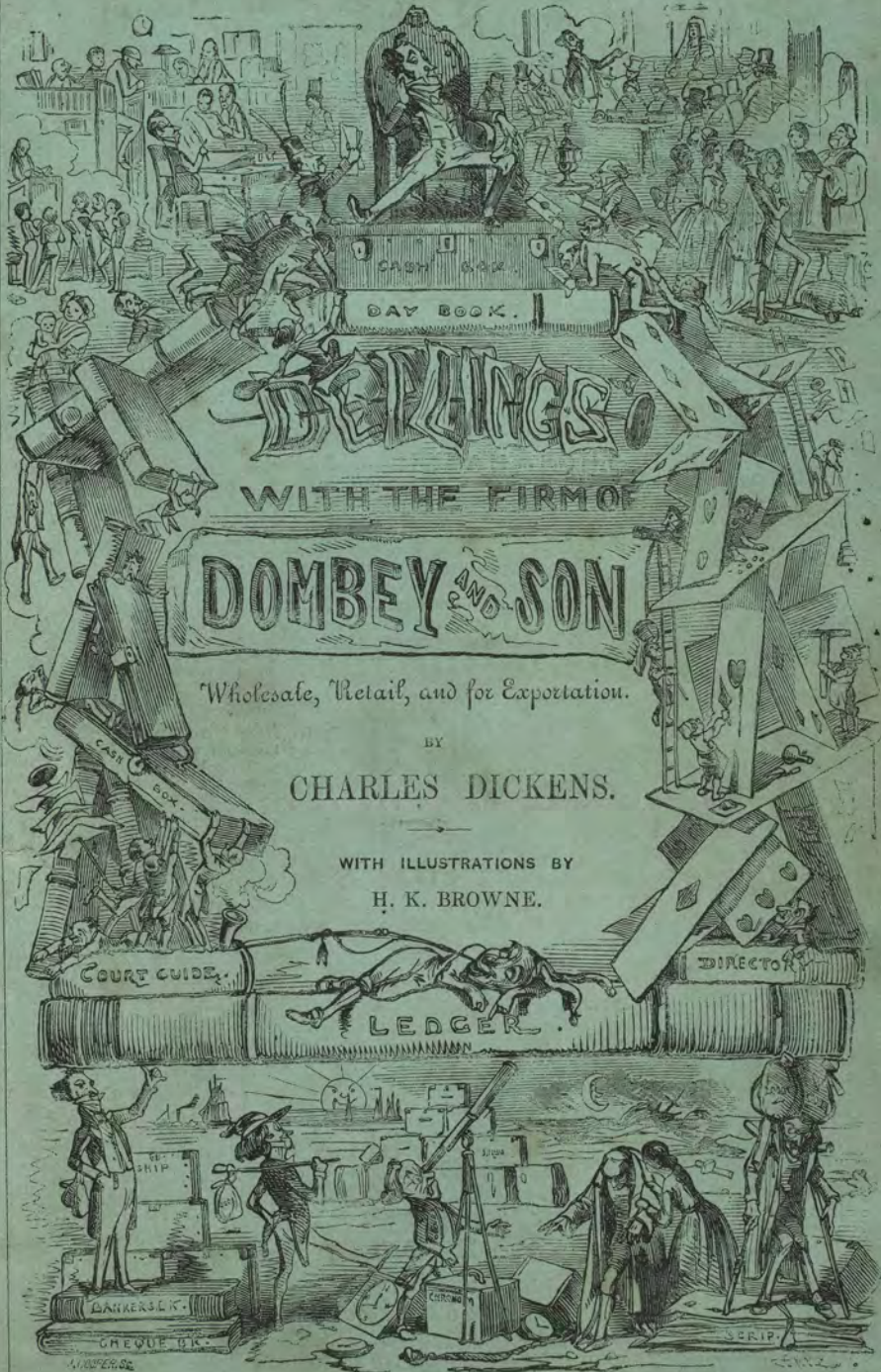


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—It's a long time since we said anything about our Coffee; its rich, soft, excellent flavour has recommended it to the favour of many thousands. But if there should still be any of the Nobility and Gentry who have not already proved it, we would observe to those who know the flavour of real Mocha, or the choicest old Turkey Coffee, that they may procure it in its native fragrance at DAKIN and COMPANY'S, Number One, Saint Paul's-churchyard. The prices are "Eighteen-pence," "Twenty-pence," and "Two Shillings" per pound; that at 18d. is "good;" that at 20d. is "very good;" and the old Turkey, or Mocha Coffee, at 2s., like good old Port Wine, has become "valuable from its age," and will be found mellow in ripeness and richness of flavour. There is no better Coffee, whatever price you may pay.

A LITTLE ADDITION to COMFORT.

—In walking, riding, and hunting, almost every man who wears drawers is bothered to keep them in the right place. The new COMPRIMO BRACE (registered Act 6 & 7 Vict.) supports at once both drawers and trousers. This simple contrivance keeps the drawers well up in their place, which is essential to the well-fitting of the trousers and comfort of the wearer. Prices 2s., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., to 10s. 6d. A great variety at the warehouse of the inventor, HENRY POWELL, 102, NEW BOND-STREET, where can be seen a large assortment of the new registered TEMPLAR CAPS, for sleeping, travelling, or soiree, the immense sale of which is the strongest proof of the comfort they afford to the many thousands who have tested them. Night-caps, 1s. to 4s.; Travelling-caps, 5s. 6d. to 18s. Either sent to any part of the kingdom for post-office orders, with 3d. added to price of each.

Finest German Eau de Cologne, 17s. case of 6 bottles, or 3s. per bottle.

CHUBB'S LOCKS AND FIRE-PROOF SAFES.

—CHUBB'S New Patent Detector Locks give perfect security from false Keys, and also detect any attempt to open them.

They are made of all sizes, and for every purpose, and are strong, secure, simple, and durable.

CHUBB'S Patent Fire-proof Safes and Boxes are the best preservatives of deed, books, plate, &c., from fire and thieves, and are secured by Detector Locks, throwing from two to ten bolts.

Cash Boxes and Japan Deed Boxes, Street Door Latches with very neat Keys.

C. CHUBB and SON, 57, St. Paul's Churchyard, London; and 28, Lord-street, Liverpool.

WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE

TESTIMONIALS.—Messrs. LEA and PERRINS, Proprietors of the WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE, beg to submit the following Testimonials as a guarantee to the Public of the superior qualities of this Sauce, and also to caution purchasers against worthless imitations, by observing their names are affixed to the metallic capsule which secures the cork of each bottle, to imitate which is fraud.

TESTIMONIALS.

Witley Court, Feb. 23, 1846.

Gentlemen,—I have great pleasure and satisfaction in bearing testimony to the rare qualities of your celebrated Worcestershire Sauce, which has long been an accompaniment to the Royal table, and from its peculiar piquancy, combined with exquisite flavour, is now an established favourite. It is often spoken of by families of the highest rank, who have the honour of visiting the Royal residence.

M. MALABET, Chef de Cuisine.

Wyndham Club, Feb. 23, 1846.

Gentlemen,—In compliance with your request, I beg to state that of all other sauces used at this club, Lea and Perrins' seems to be the favourite—a greater proof of its good qualities I cannot offer.—I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

THOS. ROCHE, Steward.

Conservative Club, Feb. 27, 1846.

Gentlemen,—At the request of several members of this club, I introduced your Worcestershire Sauce, and have great pleasure in saying that it has given universal satisfaction.—I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

SAMUEL HALLAM, Steward.

Union Club, Feb. 28, 1846.

Gentlemen,—The members of this club have been for some time using your Worcestershire Sauce, and I beg to state that it is highly approved of by them, has superseded several other sauces formerly in use at this establishment, is much called for, and now become the general favourite.—I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

R. WHEELER, Steward.

The Queen's, Cheltenham, Feb. 28, 1846.

Gentlemen,—I have no hesitation in bearing testimony to the excellent qualities of your Worcestershire Sauce, as the numerous families of the first rank in this kingdom, and from the Continent of Europe, and India, who honour the Queen's by their patronage, enable me to speak confidently of the very general estimation in which it is held by them, and from my own experience of its merits and usefulness, I believe it to be, of its kind, quite unequalled.—I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

S. G. GRIFFITH.

All Saints, Cambridge, March 3, 1846.

The above excellent Sauce has been known to me from its first introduction to the public by the proprietors, Messrs. Lea and Perrins, of Worcester. It was then recommended to my notice by a friend in London, whose knowledge in such matters is at once valuable and conclusive. It has been constantly used in my establishment for several years, and continues to receive the unanimous commendation of families of the highest consideration in the University and county of Cambridge.

EDWARD LITCHFIELD.

Royal Western Hotel, Bristol, Feb. 21, 1846.

Gentlemen,—Your Worcestershire Sauce is used at this hotel, and very much approved, being frequently inquired for in the coffee-room; and I have no hesitation in saying that I consider it one of the best articles of its kind.

ROBERT P. HAMS.

Angel Hotel, Oxford, Feb. 20, 1846.

Gentlemen,—I have much pleasure in stating that your Worcestershire Sauce for steaks, cold meats, and every variety of made dishes, is most invaluable, and I can strongly recommend it as surpassing in its various qualities the great variety of sauces now in use.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant.

S. G. GRIFFITH.

Sold wholesale, retail, and for exportation, by the proprietors, Lea and Perrins, 6, Vere-street, Oxford-street, London, and 68, Broad-street, Worcester; Messrs. Barclay and Sons, Messrs. Cross and Blackwell, London; and generally by the principal dealers in sauces.

NO BREWING UTENSILS RE-
 QUIRED to prepare the finest home-brewed Ale, from the CONCENTRATED EXTRACT OF MALT AND HOPS. Sold in jars at 1s. and 1s. 6d. each; and in bottles at 6s. 6d. and 12s. 6d. each, by the **BRITISH NATIONAL MALT EXTRACT COMPANY**, 7, Nicholas-lane, Lombard-street, and their Agents in Town and Country.

THE ATRAPILATORY, or LI-
 QUID HAIR DYE; the only dye that really answers for all colours, and does not require re-doing, but as the hair grows, as it never fades or acquires that unnatural red or purple tint common to all other dyes. **BOTANIC WATER** and **BEAR'S GREASE**.—When the hair is becoming thin and falling off, the only effectual remedy besides shaving the head, is the use of the two above-named articles, applied alternately—the botanic water to cleanse the roots from scurf, and as a stimulant, and the bear's grease as a nourisher. **THE NEW TOOTH-PICK BRUSH**, thoroughly cleansing between the teeth, when used up and down, and polishing the surface when used cross-ways. The hair warranted never to come out. **THE UNION and TRIPLE HAIR BRUSHES**. **THE DOUBLE ANTI-PRESSURE NAIL BRUSH**. **THE MEDIUM SHAVING BRUSH**. **THE RAILWAY STROP and POWDER**. The above new and elegant articles, in addition to a very extensive assortment of beautiful **PERFUMES**, are the sole **MANUFACTURES and INVENTIONS** of **MESSRS. ROSS AND SONS**, 119 and 120, Bishopsgate-street, London.

GOWLAND'S LOTION, for PURIFYING the SKIN and PRESERVING the COMPLEXION.—The use of **GOWLAND'S LOTION** is speedily followed by the disappearance of every species of eruptive malady, discoloration, &c., and the establishment of a pure surface of the skin, accompanied by the brilliant circulation which constitutes the tint of beauty; whilst, as a refresher, it preserves the most susceptible complexion, and sustains to a protracted period the softness of texture and vivacity peculiar to earlier years. "**ROBERT SHAW**, London," is in white letters on the Government Stamp, without which none is genuine. Price 2s. 9d. and 5s. 6d., quarts 8s. 6d.—Sold by all Perfumers and Medicine Vendors.

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PROOF OVER-COATS and SHOOTING JACKETS.—**W. BERDOE** regrets the necessity for repeating the caution he gave several months since against certain parties, who falsely representing themselves as "travellers" for him, have for a long period been visiting almost every town in the kingdom, selling goods, which, although having attached to them **W. B.'s** name and label (or a very slight variation therefrom), have not been made by him. Almost every post brings letters from persons complaining of having been so defrauded. A careful examination as to the spelling of the name and the number of the house, will save the public from being victimised.—**W. BERDOE**, Tailor and Over-coat Maker, 69, Cornhill (north side), and (shortly at) 96, New Bond-street.

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TION OF THE CHEST,

So injurious in Youth and Persons of all ages, effectually prevented, and gently removed by the occasional use of the **IMPROVED ELASTIC CHEST EXPANDER**, which is light, simple, easily employed, outwardly or invisibly, without any uncomfortable constraint or impediment to exercise. To Young Persons especially it is highly beneficial, immediately producing an evident Improvement in the Figure, and tending greatly to prevent the incursion of Pulmonary diseases; whilst to the Invalid, and those much engaged in sedentary pursuits, such as Reading or Studying, Working, Drawing or Music, it is found to be invaluable, as it opens the Chest and affords a great support to the back. It is made in Silk; and can be forwarded, per post, by **MR. ALFRED BINYON**, No. 40, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London; or full particulars on receipt of a Postage Stamp.



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The principle upon which this Peruke is made is so superior to everything yet produced, that the Manufacturer invites the honour of a visit from the Sceptic and the Connoisseur, that one may be convinced and the other gratified, by inspecting this and other novel and beautiful specimens of the Perruqueian Art, at the establishment of the Sole Inventor, F. BROWNE, 47, FENCHURCH-ST..



F. BROWNE'S INFALLIBLE MODE OF MEASURING THE HEAD.		
Round the head in manner of a fillet, leaving the Ears loose	As dotted 1 to 1.	Inches. Eighths
From the Forehead over to the poll, as deep each way as required	As dotted 2 to 2.	
From one Temple to the other, across the rise or Crown of the head to where the Hair grows	As marked 3 to 3.	

THE CHARGE FOR THIS UNIQUE HEAD OF HAIR ONLY £1 10s.



Brown 4s. 6d. per bottle.
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10s. per doz. large bottles
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exclusive of carriage from London.

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WHICH IS THE BEST FOREIGN BRANDY.

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protected by the Patent Metallic Capsule, the only sure and self-evident safeguard against adulteration, can be obtained throughout the Kingdom at the respective prices above mentioned, or at

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Nos. 247 and 249, REGENT STREET, two doors from Oxford Street.

The Proprietors of the above Establishment beg leave to call the attention of the Nobility and Ladies to its great utility. It has ever been a source of inconvenience and regret, on occasions when Mourning Attire has been required, that its purchasers have at such a time been compelled to the painful necessity of proceeding from shop to shop in search of each distinct article of dress. This may be completely obviated by a visit to the London General Mourning Warehouse, where every description of Paramatta, Alpine, Bombasin, Merino, and Crape, for Mourning Dresses, Gloves, Hosiery, and Haberdashery, can be bought on the most reasonable terms, and where everything necessary for a complete Outfit of Mourning may be had, and made up, if required, by experienced Artistes, with the strictest attention to taste, elegance, and economy. Widows' and Family Mourning is always kept made up, so that Ladies may by a Note, descriptive of Mourning required (either for themselves or household), have it forwarded to them in Town or Country immediately. Silks for slight or Complimentary Mourning, Printed Muslin Dresses, Mousseline de Laines. Barèges, and Evening Dresses, in the greatest variety.

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contain a beautiful assortment of Millinery, Head Dresses, Flowers, Crape and Muslin Collars, Berthes, &c., with every description of Jewellery for Mourning.

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ELTERS WATER

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Miss Fox introduces "the Party"



The Dombey Family.

Part

DONBE

DONBEY sat in the
by the bedside, and
constantly disposed
to it, as if his mind
essential to her life
Donbey was about
and story of his life. The
kindness of his nature
passing. She was not
naturally for what was
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DOMBEY AND SON.

CHAPTER I.

DOMBEY AND SON.

DOMBEY sat in the corner of the darkened room in the great arm-chair by the bedside, and Son lay tucked up warm in a little basket bedstead, carefully disposed on a low settee immediately in front of the fire and close to it, as if his constitution were analogous to that of a muffin, and it was essential to toast him brown while he was very new.

Dombey was about eight-and-forty years of age. Son about eight-and-forty minutes. Dombey was rather bald, rather red, and though a handsome well-made man, too stern and pompous in appearance, to be prepossessing. Son was very bald, and very red, and though (of course) an undeniably fine infant, somewhat crushed and spotty in his general effect, as yet. On the brow of Dombey, Time and his brother Care had set some marks, as on a tree that was to come down in good time—remorseless twins they are for striding through their human forests, notching as they go—while the countenance of Son was crossed and recrossed with a thousand little creases, which the same deceitful Time would take delight in smoothing out and wearing away with the flat part of his scythe, as a preparation of the surface for his deeper operations.

Dombey, exulting in the long-looked-for event, jingled and jingled the heavy gold watch-chain that depended from below his trim blue coat, whereof the buttons sparkled phosphorescently in the feeble rays of the distant fire. Son with his little fists curled up and clenched, seemed, in his feeble way, to be squaring at existence for having come upon him so unexpectedly.

“The house will once again, Mrs. Dombey,” said Mr. Dombey, “be not only in name but in fact Dombey and Son; Dom-bey and Son!”

The words had such a softening influence, that he appended a term of endearment to Mrs. Dombey’s name (though not without some hesitation, as being a man but little used to that form of address): and said, “Mrs. Dombey my—my dear.”

A transient flush of faint surprise overspread the sick lady’s face as she raised her eyes towards him.

"He will be christened Paul, my—Mrs. Dombey—of course."

She feebly echoed, "Of course," or rather expressed it by the motion of her lips, and closed her eyes again.

"His father's name, Mrs. Dombey, and his grandfather's! I wish his grandfather were alive this day!" And again he said "Dom-bey and Son," in exactly the same tone as before.

Those three words conveyed the one idea of Mr. Dombey's life. The earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promise of fair weather; winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre. Common abbreviations took new meanings in his eyes, and had sole reference to them. A. D. had no concern with anno Domini, but stood for anno Dombey—and Son.

He had risen, as his father had before him, in the course of life and death, from Son to Dombey, and for nearly twenty years had been the sole representative of the firm. Of those years he had been married, ten—married, as some said, to a lady with no heart to give him; whose happiness was in the past, and who was content to bind her broken spirit to the dutiful and meek endurance of the present. Such idle talk was little likely to reach the ears of Mr. Dombey, whom it nearly concerned; and probably no one in the world would have received it with such utter incredulity as he, if it had reached him. Dombey and Son had often dealt in hides, but never in hearts. They left that fancy ware to boys and girls, and boarding-schools and books. Mr. Dombey would have reasoned: That a matrimonial alliance with himself *must*, in the nature of things, be gratifying and honourable to any woman of common sense. That the hope of giving birth to a new partner in such a house, could not fail to awaken a glorious and stirring ambition in the breast of the least ambitious of her sex. That Mrs. Dombey had entered on that social contract of matrimony: almost necessarily part of a genteel and wealthy station, even without reference to the perpetuation of family firms: with her eyes fully open to these advantages. That Mrs. Dombey had had daily practical knowledge of his position in society. That Mrs. Dombey had always sat at the head of his table, and done the honours of his house in a remarkably lady-like and becoming manner. That Mrs. Dombey must have been happy. That she couldn't help it.

Or, at all events, with one drawback. Yes. That he would have allowed. With only one; but that one certainly involving much. They had been married ten years, and until this present day on which Mr. Dombey sat jingling and jingling his heavy gold watch-chain in the great arm-chair by the side of the bed, had had no issue.

—To speak of; none worth mentioning. There had been a girl some six years before, and the child, who had stolen into the chamber unobserved, was now crouching timidly, in a corner whence she could see her mother's face. But what was a girl to Dombey and Son! In the capital of the House's name and dignity, such a child was merely a piece of base coin that couldn't be invested—a bad Boy—nothing more.

Mr. Dombey's cup of satisfaction was so full at this moment, however,

that he felt he could afford a drop or two of its contents, even to sprinkle on the dust in the by-path of his little daughter.

So he said, "Florence, you may go and look at your pretty brother, if you like, I dare say. Don't touch him!"

The child glanced keenly at the blue coat and stiff white cravat, which, with a pair of creaking boots and a very loud ticking watch, embodied her idea of a father; but her eyes returned to her mother's face immediately, and she neither moved nor answered.

Next moment, the lady had opened her eyes and seen the child; and the child had run towards her; and, standing on tiptoe, the better to hide her face in her embrace, had clung about her with a desperate affection very much at variance with her years.

"Oh Lord bless me!" said Mr. Dombey, rising testily. "A very ill-advised and feverish proceeding this, I am sure. I had better ask Doctor Peps if he'll have the goodness to step up stairs again perhaps. I'll go down. I'll go down. I needn't beg you," he added, pausing for a moment at the settee before the fire, "to take particular care of this young gentleman, Mrs. —"

"Blockitt, Sir?" suggested the nurse, a simpering piece of faded gentility, who did not presume to state her name as a fact, but merely offered it as a mild suggestion.

"Of this young gentleman, Mrs. Blockitt."

"No Sir, indeed. I remember when Miss Florence was born—"

"Ay, ay, ay," said Mr. Dombey, bending over the basket bedstead, and slightly bending his brows at the same time. "Miss Florence was all very well, but this is another matter. This young gentleman has to accomplish a destiny. A destiny, little fellow!" As he thus apostrophized the infant he raised one of his hands to his lips, and kissed it; then, seeming to fear that the action involved some compromise of his dignity, went, awkwardly enough, away.

Doctor Parker Peps, one of the Court Physicians, and a man of immense reputation for assisting at the increase of great families, was walking up and down the drawing-room with his hands behind him, to the unspeakable admiration of the family Surgeon, who had regularly puffed the case for the last six weeks, among all his patients, friends, and acquaintances, as one to which he was in hourly expectation day and night of being summoned, in conjunction with Doctor Parker Peps.

"Well Sir," said Doctor Parker Peps in a round, deep, sonorous voice, muffled for the occasion, like the knocker; "do you find that your dear lady is at all roused by your visit?"

"Stimulated as it were?" said the family practitioner faintly: bowing at the same time to the Doctor, as much as to say "Excuse my putting in a word, but this is a valuable connexion."

Mr. Dombey was quite discomfited by the question. He had thought so little of the patient, that he was not in a condition to answer it. He said that it would be a satisfaction to him, if Doctor Parker Peps would walk up stairs again.

"Good! We must not disguise from you Sir," said Doctor Parker Peps, "that there is a want of power in Her Grace the Duchess—I beg your pardon; I confound names; I should say, in your amiable lady. That

there is a certain degree of languor, and a general absence of elasticity, which we would rather—not—”

“See,” interposed the family practitioner with another inclination of the head.

“Quite so,” said Doctor Parker Peps, “which we would rather not see. It would appear that the system of Lady Cankaby—excuse me: I should say of Mrs. Dombey: I confuse the names of cases—”

“So very numerous,” murmured the family practitioner—“can’t be expected I’m sure—quite wonderful if otherwise—Doctor Parker Peps’s West End practice—”

“Thank you,” said the Doctor, “quite so. It would appear, I was observing, that the system of our patient has sustained a shock, from which it can only hope to rally by a great and strong—”

“And vigorous,” murmured the family practitioner.

“Quite so,” assented the Doctor—“and vigorous effort. Mr. Pilkins here, who from his position of medical adviser in this family—no one better qualified to fill that position, I am sure.”

“Oh!” murmured the family practitioner. “‘Praise from Sir Hubert Stanley!’”

“You are good enough,” returned Doctor Parker Peps, “to say so. Mr. Pilkins who, from his position, is best acquainted with the patient’s constitution in its normal state (an acquaintance very valuable to us in forming our opinions on these occasions), is of opinion, with me, that Nature must be called upon to make a vigorous effort in this instance; and that if our interesting friend the Countess of Dombey—I beg your pardon; Mrs. Dombey—should not be—”

“Able,” said the family practitioner.

“To make that effort successfully,” said Doctor Parker Peps, “then a crisis might arise, which we should both sincerely deplore.”

With that, they stood for a few seconds looking at the ground. Then, on the motion—made in dumb show—of Doctor Parker Peps, they went up stairs; the family practitioner opening the room door for that distinguished professional, and following him out, with most obsequious politeness.

To record of Mr. Dombey that he was not in his way affected by this intelligence, would be to do him an injustice. He was not a man of whom it could properly be said that he was ever startled, or shocked; but he certainly had a sense within him, that if his wife should sicken and decay, he would be very sorry, and that he would find a something gone from among his plate and furniture, and other household possessions, which was well worth the having, and could not be lost without sincere regret. Though it would be a cool, business-like, gentlemanly, self-possessed regret, no doubt.

His meditations on the subject were soon interrupted, first by the rustling of garments on the staircase, and then by the sudden whisking into the room of a lady rather past the middle age than otherwise, but dressed in a very juvenile manner, particularly as to the tightness of her boddice, who, running up to him with a kind of screw in her face and carriage, expressive of suppressed emotion, flung her arms round his neck, and said, in a choking voice,

“My dear Paul! He’s quite a Dombey!”

“Well, well!” returned her brother—for Mr. Dombey was her brother—“I think he *is* like the family. Don’t agitate yourself, Louisa.”

"It's very foolish of me," said Louisa, sitting down, and taking out her pocket-handkerchief, "but he's—he's such a perfect Dombey! I never saw anything like it in my life!"

"But what is this about Fanny, herself?" said Mr. Dombey. "How is Fanny?"

"My dear Paul," returned Louisa, "it's nothing whatever. Take my word, it's nothing whatever. There is exhaustion, certainly, but nothing like what I underwent myself, either with George or Frederick. An effort is necessary. That's all. If dear Fanny were a Dombey!—But I dare say she'll make it; I have no doubt she'll make it. Knowing it to be required of her, as a duty, of course she'll make it. My dear Paul, it's very weak and silly of me, I know, to be so trembly and shakey from head to foot; but I am so very queer that I must ask you for a glass of wine and a morsel of that cake. I thought I should have fallen out of the staircase window as I came down from seeing dear Fanny, and that tiddy ickle sing." These last words originated in a sudden vivid reminiscence of the baby.

They were succeeded by a gentle tap at the door.

"Mrs. Chick," said a very bland female voice outside, "how are you now, my dear friend?"

"My dear Paul," said Louisa in a low voice, as she rose from her seat, "it's Miss Tox. The kindest creature! I never could have got here without her! Miss Tox, my brother Mr. Dombey. Paul my dear, my very particular friend Miss Tox."

The lady thus specially presented, was a long lean figure, wearing such a faded air that she seemed not to have been made in what linen-drapers call "fast colours" originally, and to have, by little and little, washed out. But for this she might have been described as the very pink of general propitiation and politeness. From a long habit of listening admiringly to everything that was said in her presence, and looking at the speakers as if she were mentally engaged in taking off impressions of their images upon her soul, never to part with the same but with life, her head had quite settled on one side. Her hands had contracted a spasmodic habit of raising themselves of their own accord as in involuntary admiration. Her eyes were liable to a similar affection. She had the softest voice that ever was heard; and her nose, stupendously aquiline, had a little knob in the very centre or key-stone of the bridge, whence it tended downwards towards her face, as in an invincible determination never to turn up at anything.

Miss Tox's dress, though perfectly genteel and good, had a certain character of angularity and scantiness. She was accustomed to wear odd weedy little flowers in her bonnets and caps. Strange grasses were sometimes perceived in her hair; and it was observed by the curious, of all her collars, frills, tuckers, wristbands, and other gossamer articles—indeed of everything she wore which had two ends to it intended to unite—that the two ends were never on good terms, and wouldn't quite meet without a struggle. She had furry articles for winter wear, as tippetts, boas, and muffs, which stood up on end in a rampant manner, and were not at all sleek. She was much given to the carrying about of small bags with snaps to them, that went off like little pistols when they were shut up; and when

full-dressed, she wore round her neck the barrenest of locketts, representing a fishey old eye, with no approach to speculation in it. These and other appearances of a similar nature, had served to propagate the opinion, that Miss Tox was a lady of what is called a limited independence, which she turned to the best account. Possibly her mincing gait encouraged the belief, and suggested that her clipping a step of ordinary compass into two or three, originated in her habit of making the most of everything.

"I am sure," said Miss Tox, with a prodigious curtsey, "that to have the honour of being presented to Mr. Dombey is a distinction which I have long sought, but very little expected at the present moment. My dear Mrs. Chick—may I say Louisa!"

Mrs. Chick took Miss Tox's hand in hers, rested the foot of her wine-glass upon it, repressed a tear, and said in a low voice "Bless you!"

"My dear Louisa then," said Miss Tox, "my sweet friend, how are you now?"

"Better," Mrs. Chick returned. "Take some wine. You have been almost as anxious as I have been, and must want it, I am sure."

Mr. Dombey of course officiated.

"Miss Tox, Paul," pursued Mrs. Chick, still retaining her hand, "knowing how much I have been interested in the anticipation of the event of to-day, has been working at a little gift for Fanny, which I promised to present. It is only a pincushion for the toilette table, Paul, but I do say, and will say, and must say, that Miss Tox has very prettily adapted the sentiment to the occasion. I call 'Welcome little Dombey' Poetry, myself."

"Is that the device?" inquired her brother.

"That is the device," returned Louisa.

"But do me the justice to remember, my dear Louisa," said Miss Tox in a tone of low and earnest entreaty, "that nothing but the—I have some difficulty in expressing myself—the dubiousness of the result would have induced me to take so great a liberty: 'Welcome, Master Dombey,' would have been much more congenial to my feelings, as I am sure you know. But the uncertainty attendant on angelic strangers, will, I hope, excuse what must otherwise appear an unwarrantable familiarity." Miss Tox made a graceful bend as she spoke, in favour of Mr. Dombey, which that gentleman graciously acknowledged. Even the sort of recognition of Dombey and Son, conveyed in the foregoing conversation, was so palatable to him, that his sister, Mrs. Chick—though he affected to consider her a weak good-natured person—had perhaps more influence over him than anybody else.

"Well!" said Mrs. Chick, with a sweet smile, "after this, I forgive Fanny everything!"

It was a declaration in a Christian spirit, and Mrs. Chick felt that it did her good. Not that she had anything particular to forgive in her sister-in-law, nor indeed anything at all, except her having married her brother—in itself a species of audacity—and her having, in the course of events, given birth to a girl instead of a boy: which as Mrs. Chick had frequently observed, was not quite what she had expected of her, and was not a pleasant return for all the attention and distinction she had met with.

Mr. Dombey being hastily summoned out of the room at this moment,

the two ladies were left alone together. Miss Tox immediately became spasmodic.

"I knew you would admire my brother. I told you so beforehand, my dear," said Louisa.

Miss Tox's hands and eyes expressed how much.

"And as to his property, my dear!"

"Ah!" said Miss Tox, with deep feeling.

"Im—mense!"

"But his deportment, my dear Louisa!" said Miss Tox. "His presence! His dignity! No portrait that I have ever seen of any one has been half so replete with those qualities. Something so stately, you know: so uncompromising: so very wide across the chest: so upright! A pecuniary Duke of York, my love, and nothing short of it!" said Miss Tox. "That's what I should designate him."

"Why my dear Paul!" exclaimed his sister, as he returned, "you look quite pale! There's nothing the matter?"

"I am sorry to say, Louisa, that they tell me that Fanny—"

"Now my dear Paul," returned his sister rising, "don't believe it. If you have any reliance on my experience, Paul, you may rest assured that there is nothing wanting but an effort on Fanny's part. And that effort," she continued, taking off her bonnet, and adjusting her cap and gloves, in a business-like manner, "she must be encouraged, and really, if necessary, urged to make. Now my dear Paul, come up stairs with me."

Mr. Dombey, who, besides being generally influenced by his sister for the reason already mentioned, had really faith in her as an experienced and bustling matron, acquiesced; and followed her, at once, to the sick chamber.

The lady lay upon her bed as he had left her, clasping her little daughter to her breast. The child clung close about her, with the same intensity as before, and never raised her head, or moved her soft cheek from her mother's face, or looked on those who stood around, or spoke, or moved, or shed a tear.

"Restless without the little girl," the Doctor whispered Mr. Dombey. "We found it best to have her in again."

There was such a solemn stillness round the bed; and the two medical attendants seemed to look on the impassive form with so much compassion and so little hope, that Mrs. Chick was for the moment diverted from her purpose. But presently summoning courage, and what she called presence of mind, she sat down by the bedside, and said in the low precise tone of one who endeavours to awaken a sleeper:

"Fanny! Fanny!"

There was no sound in answer but the loud ticking of Mr. Dombey's watch and Doctor Parker Peps's watch, which seemed in the silence to be running a race.

"Fanny, my dear," said Mrs. Chick, with assumed lightness, "here's Mr. Dombey come to see you. Won't you speak to him? They want to lay your little boy—the baby, Fanny, you know; you have hardly seen him yet, I think—in bed; but they can't till you rouse yourself a little. Don't you think it's time you roused yourself a little? Eh?"

She bent her ear to the bed, and listened: at the same time looking round at the bystanders, and holding up her finger.

"Eh?" she repeated, "what was it you said Fanny? I didn't hear you."

No word or sound in answer. Mr. Dombey's watch and Dr. Parker Peps's watch seemed to be racing faster.

"Now, really Fanny my dear," said the sister-in-law, altering her position, and speaking less confidently, and more earnestly, in spite of herself, "I shall have to be quite cross with you, if you don't rouse yourself. It's necessary for you to make an effort, and perhaps a very great and painful effort which you are not disposed to make; but this is a world of effort you know, Fanny, and we must never yield, when so much depends upon us. Come! Try! I must really scold you if you don't!"

The race in the ensuing pause was fierce and furious. The watches seemed to jostle, and to trip each other up.

"Fanny!" said Louisa, glancing round, with a gathering alarm. "Only look at me. Only open your eyes to show me that you hear and understand me; will you? Good Heaven, gentlemen, what is to be done!"

The two medical attendants exchanged a look across the bed; and the Physician, stooping down, whispered in the child's ear. Not having understood the purport of his whisper, the little creature turned her perfectly colourless face, and deep dark eyes towards him; but without loosening her hold in the least.

The whisper was repeated.

"Mama!" said the child.

The little voice, familiar and dearly loved, awakened some show of consciousness, even at that ebb. For a moment, the closed eye-lids trembled, and the nostril quivered, and the faintest shadow of a smile was seen.

"Mama!" cried the child sobbing aloud. "Oh dear Mama! oh dear Mama!"

The Doctor gently brushed the scattered ringlets of the child, aside from the face and mouth of the mother. Alas how calm they lay there; how little breath there was to stir them!

Thus, clinging fast to that slight spar within her arms, the mother drifted out upon the dark and unknown sea that rolls round all the world.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH TIMELY PROVISION IS MADE FOR AN EMERGENCY THAT WILL SOMETIMES ARISE IN THE BEST REGULATED FAMILIES.

"I SHALL never cease to congratulate myself," said Mrs. Chick, "on having said, when I little thought what was in store for us,—really as if I was inspired by something,—that I forgave poor dear Fanny everything. Whatever happens, that must always be a comfort to me!"

Mrs. Chick made this impressive observation in the drawing-room, after having descended thither from the inspection of the Mantua-Makers upstairs, who were busy on the family mourning. She delivered it for the behoof of Mr. Chick, who was a stout bald gentleman, with a very large face, and his hands continually in his pockets, and who had a tendency in

his nature to whistle and hum tunes, which, sensible of the indecorum of such sounds in a house of grief, he was at some pains to repress at present.

"Don't you over-exert yourself, Loo," said Mr. Chick, "or you'll be laid up with spasms, I see. Right tol loor rul! Bless my soul, I forgot! We're here one day and gone the next!"

Mrs. Chick contented herself with a glance of reproof, and then proceeded with the thread of her discourse.

"I am sure," she said, "I hope this heart-rending occurrence will be a warning to all of us, to accustom ourselves to rouse ourselves and to make efforts in time where they're required of us. There's a moral in everything, if we would only avail ourselves of it. It will be our own faults if we lose sight of this one."

Mr. Chick invaded the grave silence which ensued on this remark with the singularly inappropriate air of 'A cobbler there was;' and checking himself, in some confusion, observed, that it was undoubtedly our own faults if we didn't improve such melancholy occasions as the present.

"Which might be better improved, I should think, Mr. C.," retorted his helpmate, after a short pause, "than by the introduction, either of the college hornpipe, or the equally unmeaning and unfeeling remark of rump-te-iddity, bow-wow-wow!"—which Mr. Chick had indeed indulged in, under his breath, and which Mrs. Chick repeated in a tone of withering scorn.

"Merely habit, my dear," pleaded Mr. Chick.

"Nonsense! Habit!" returned his wife. "If you're a rational being, don't make such ridiculous excuses. Habit! If I was to get a habit (as you call it) of walking on the ceiling, like the flies, I should hear enough of it, I dare say."

It appeared so probable that such a habit might be attended with some degree of notoriety, that Mr. Chick didn't venture to dispute the position.

"How's the Baby, Loo?" asked Mr. Chick: to change the subject.

"What Baby do you mean?" answered Mrs. Chick. "I am sure the morning I have had, with that dining-room down stairs one mass of babies, no one in their senses would believe."

"One mass of babies!" repeated Mr. Chick, staring with an alarmed expression about him.

"It would have occurred to most men," said Mrs. Chick, "that poor dear Fanny being no more, it becomes necessary to provide a Nurse."

"Oh! Ah!" said Mr. Chick. "Toor-rul—such is life, I mean. I hope you are suited, my dear."

"Indeed I am not," said Mrs. Chick; "nor likely to be, so far as I can see. Meanwhile, of course, the child is—"

"Going to the very Deuce," said Mr. Chick, thoughtfully, "to be sure."

Admonished, however, that he had committed himself, by the indignation expressed in Mrs. Chick's countenance at the idea of a Dombey going there; and thinking to atone for his misconduct by a bright suggestion, he added:

"Couldn't something temporary be done with a teapot?"

If he had meant to bring the subject prematurely to a close, he could not have done it more effectually. After looking at him for some moments in silent resignation, Mrs. Chick walked majestically to the window and peeped through the blind, attracted by the sound of wheels. Mr. Chick,

finding that his destiny was, for the time, against him, said no more, and walked off. But it was not always thus with Mr. Chick. He was often in the ascendant himself, and at those times punished Louisa roundly. In their matrimonial bickerings they were, upon the whole, a well-matched, fairly-balanced, give-and-take couple. It would have been, generally speaking, very difficult to have betted on the winner. Often when Mr. Chick seemed beaten, he would suddenly make a start, turn the tables, clatter them about the ears of Mrs. Chick, and carry all before him. Being liable himself to similar unlooked-for checks from Mrs. Chick, their little contests usually possessed a character of uncertainty that was very animating.

Miss Tox had arrived on the wheels just now alluded to, and came running into the room in a breathless condition.

"My dear Louisa," said Miss Tox, "is the vacancy still unsupplied?"

"You good soul, yes," said Mrs. Chick.

"Then, my dear Louisa," returned Miss Tox, "I hope and believe—but in one moment, my dear, I'll introduce the party."

Running down stairs again as fast as she had run up, Miss Tox got the party out of the hackney coach, and soon returned with it under convoy.

It then appeared that she had used the word, not in its legal or business acceptance, when it merely expresses an individual, but as a noun of multitude, or signifying many: for Miss Tox escorted a plump rosy-cheeked wholesome apple-faced young woman, with an infant in her arms; a younger woman not so plump, but apple-faced also, who led a plump and apple-faced child in each hand; another plump and also apple-faced boy who walked by himself; and finally, a plump and apple-faced man, who carried in his arms another plump and apple-faced boy, whom he stood down on the floor, and admonished, in a husky whisper, to "kitch hold of his brother Johnny."

"My dear Louisa," said Miss Tox, "knowing your great anxiety, and wishing to relieve it, I posted off myself to the Queen Charlotte's Royal Married Females, which you had forgot, and put the question, Was there anybody there that they thought would suit? No, they said there was not. When they gave me that answer, I do assure you, my dear, I was almost driven to despair on your account. But it did so happen, that one of the Royal Married Females, hearing the inquiry, reminded the matron of another who had gone to her own home, and who, she said, would in all likelihood be most satisfactory. The moment I heard this, and had it corroborated by the matron—excellent references and unimpeachable character—I got the address, my dear, and posted off again."

"Like the dear good Tox, you are!" said Louisa.

"Not at all," returned Miss Tox. "Don't say so. Arriving at the house (the cleanest place, my dear! You might eat your dinner off the floor), I found the whole family sitting at table; and feeling that no account of them could be half so comfortable to you and Mr. Dombey as the sight of them all together, I brought them all away. "This gentleman," said Miss Tox, pointing out the apple-faced man, "is the father. Will you have the goodness to come a little forward, Sir?"

The apple-faced man having sheepishly complied with this request, stood chuckling and grinning in a front row.

"This is his wife, of course," said Miss Tox, singling out the young woman with the baby. "How do you do, Polly?"

"I'm pretty well, I thank you, Ma'am," said Polly.

By way of bringing her out dexterously, Miss Tox had made the inquiry as in condescension to an old acquaintance whom she hadn't seen for a fortnight or so.

"I'm glad to hear it," said Miss Tox. "The other young woman is her unmarried sister who lives with them, and would take care of her children. Her name's Jemima. How do you do, Jemima?"

"I'm pretty well, I thank you, Ma'am," returned Jemima.

"I'm very glad indeed to hear it," said Miss Tox. "I hope you'll keep so. Five children. Youngest six weeks. The fine little boy with the blister on his nose is the eldest. The blister, I believe," said Miss Tox, looking round upon the family, "is not constitutional, but accidental?"

The apple-faced man was understood to growl, "Flat iron."

"I beg your pardon, Sir," said Miss Tox, "did you?—"

"Flat iron," he repeated.

"Oh yes," said Miss Tox. "Yes! quite true. I forgot. The little creature, in his mother's absence, smelt a warm flat iron. You're quite right, Sir. You were going to have the goodness to inform me, when we arrived at the door, that you were by trade, a—"

"Stoker," said the man.

"A choker!" said Miss Tox, quite aghast.

"Stoker," said the man. "Steam engine."

"Oh-h! Yes!" returned Miss Tox, looking thoughtfully at him, and seeming still to have but a very imperfect understanding of his meaning.

"And how do you like it, Sir?"

"Which, Mum?" said the man.

"That," replied Miss Tox. "Your trade."

"Oh! Pretty well, Mum. The ashes sometimes gets in here;" touching his chest; "and makes a man speak gruff, as at the present time. But it is ashes, Mum, not crustiness."

Miss Tox seemed to be so little enlightened by this reply, as to find a difficulty in pursuing the subject. But Mrs. Chick relieved her, by entering into a close private examination of Polly, her children, her marriage certificate, testimonials, and so forth. Polly coming out unscathed from this ordeal, Mrs. Chick withdrew with her report to her brother's room, and as an emphatic comment on it, and corroboration of it, carried the two rosiest little Toodles with her. Toodle being the family name of the apple-faced family.

Mr. Dombey had remained in his own apartment since the death of his wife, absorbed in visions of the youth, education, and destination of his baby son. Something lay at the bottom of his cool heart, colder and heavier than its ordinary load; but it was more a sense of the child's loss than his own, awakening within him an almost angry sorrow. That the life and progress on which he built such hopes, should be endangered in the outset by so mean a want; that Dombey and Son should be tottering for a nurse, was a sore humiliation. And yet in his pride and jealousy, he viewed with so much bitterness the thought of being dependent for the

very first step towards the accomplishment of his soul's desire, on a hired serving-woman who would be to the child, for the time, all that even *his* alliance could have made his own wife, that in every new rejection of a candidate he felt a secret pleasure. The time had now come, however, when he could no longer be divided between these two sets of feelings. The less so, as there seemed to be no flaw in the title of Polly Toodle after his sister had set it forth, with many commendations on the indefatigable friendship of Miss Tox.

"These children look healthy," said Mr. Dombey. "But to think of their some day claiming a sort of relationship to Paul! Take them away, Louisa! Let me see this woman and her husband."

Mrs. Chick bore off the tender pair of Toodles, and presently returned with that tougher couple whose presence her brother had commanded.

"My good woman," said Mr. Dombey turning round in his easy chair, as one piece, and not as a man with limbs and joints, "I understand you are poor, and wish to earn money by nursing the little boy, my son, who has been so prematurely deprived of what can never be replaced. I have no objection to your adding to the comforts of your family by that means. So far as I can tell, you seem to be a deserving object. But I must impose one or two conditions on you, before you enter my house in that capacity. While you are here, I must stipulate that you are always known as—say as Richards—an ordinary name, and convenient. Have you any objection to be known as Richards? You had better consult your husband."

As the husband did nothing but chuckle and grin, and continually draw his right hand across his mouth, moistening the palm, Mrs. Toodle, after nudging him twice or thrice in vain, dropped a curtsey and replied "that perhaps if she was to be called out of her name, it would be considered in the wages."

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Dombey. "I desire to make it a question of wages, altogether. Now Richards, if you nurse my bereaved child, I wish you to remember this always. You will receive a liberal stipend in return for the discharge of certain duties, in the performance of which, I wish you to see as little of your family as possible. When those duties cease to be required and rendered, and the stipend ceases to be paid, there is an end of all relations between us. Do you understand me?"

Mrs. Toodle seemed doubtful about it; and as to Toodle himself, he had evidently no doubt whatever, that he was all abroad.

"You have children of your own," said Mr. Dombey. "It is not at all in this bargain that you need become attached to my child, or that my child need become attached to you. I don't expect or desire anything of the kind. Quite the reverse. When you go away from here, you will have concluded what is a mere matter of bargain and sale, hiring and letting: and will stay away. The child will cease to remember you; and you will cease, if you please, to remember the child."

Mrs. Toodle, with a little more color in her cheeks than she had had before, said "she hoped she knew her place."

"I hope you do, Richards," said Mr. Dombey. "I have no doubt you know it very well. Indeed it is so plain and obvious that it could hardly be otherwise. Louisa, my dear, arrange with Richards about money, and

let her have it when and how she pleases. Mr. what 's-your-name, a word with you, if you please!"

Thus arrested on the threshold as he was following his wife out of the room, Toodle returned and confronted Mr. Dombey alone. He was a strong, loose, round-shouldered, shuffling, shaggy fellow, on whom his clothes sat negligently: with a good deal of hair and whisker, deepened in its natural tint, perhaps by smoke and coal-dust: hard knotty hands: and a square forehead, as coarse in grain as the bark of an oak. A thorough contrast in all respects, to Mr. Dombey, who was one of those close-shaved close-cut monied gentlemen who are glossy and crisp like new bank notes, and who seem to be artificially braced and tightened as by the stimulating action of golden shower-baths.

"You have a son I believe?" said Mr. Dombey.

"Four on 'em Sir. Four hims and a her. All alive!"

"Why, it's as much as you can afford to keep them!" said Mr. Dombey.

"I couldn't hardly afford but one thing in the world less, Sir."

"What is that?"

"To lose 'em Sir."

"Can you read?" asked Mr. Dombey.

"Why, not partick'ler Sir."

"Write?"

"With chalk, Sir?"

"With anything?"

"I could make shift to chalk a little bit, I think, if I was put to it," said Toodle after some reflection.

"And yet," said Mr. Dombey, "you are two or three and thirty I suppose?"

"Thereabouts, I suppose Sir," answered Toodle, after more reflection.

"Then why don't you learn?" asked Mr. Dombey.

"So I'm a going to Sir. One of my little boys is a going to learn me, when he 's old enough, and been to school himself."

"Well!" said Mr. Dombey, after looking at him attentively, and with no great favour, as he stood gazing round the room (principally round the ceiling) and still drawing his hand across and across his mouth. "You heard what I said to your wife just now?"

"Polly heerd it," said Toodle, jerking his hat over his shoulder in the direction of the door, with an air of perfect confidence in his better half.

"It 's all right."

"As you appear to leave everything to her," said Mr. Dombey, frustrated in his intention of impressing his views still more distinctly on the husband, as the stronger character, "I suppose it is of no use my saying anything to you."

"Not a bit," said Toodle. "Polly heerd it. *She's* awake Sir."

"I won't detain you any longer then," returned Mr. Dombey disappointed. "Where have you worked all your life?"

"Mostly underground Sir, 'till I got married. I come to the level then. I'm a going on one of these here railroads when they comes into full play."

As the last straw breaks the laden camel's back, this piece of underground information crushed the sinking spirits of Mr. Dombey. He

motioned his child's foster-father to the door, who departed by no means unwillingly: and then turning the key, paced up and down the room in solitary wretchedness. For all his starched, impenetrable dignity and composure, he wiped blinding tears from his eyes as he did so; and often said, with an emotion of which he would not, for the world, have had a witness, "Poor little fellow!"

It may have been characteristic of Mr. Dombey's pride, that he pitied himself through the child. Not poor me. Not poor widower, confiding by constraint in the wife of an ignorant Hind who has been working 'mostly underground' all his life, and yet at whose door Death has never knocked, and at whose poor table four sons daily sit—but poor little fellow!

Those words being on his lips, it occurred to him—and it is an instance of the strong attraction with which his hopes and fears and all his thoughts were tending to one centre—that a great temptation was being placed in this woman's way. Her infant was a boy too. Now, would it be possible for her to change them?

Though he was soon satisfied that he had dismissed the idea as romantic and unlikely—though possible, there was no denying—he could not help pursuing it so far as to entertain within himself a picture of what his condition would be, if he should discover such an imposture when he was grown old. Whether a man so situated, would be able to pluck away the result of so many years of usage, confidence, and belief, from the impostor, and endow a stranger with it?

As his unusual emotion subsided, these misgivings gradually melted away, though so much of their shadow remained behind, that he was constant in his resolution to look closely after Richards himself, without appearing to do so. Being now in an easier frame of mind, he regarded the woman's station as rather an advantageous circumstance than otherwise, by placing, in itself, a broad distance between her and the child, and rendering their separation easy and natural.

Meanwhile terms were ratified and agreed upon between Mrs. Chick and Richards, with the assistance of Miss Tox; and Richards being with much ceremony invested with the Dombey baby, as if it were an Order, resigned her own, with many tears and kisses, to Jemima. Glasses of wine were then produced, to sustain the drooping spirits of the family.

"You'll take a glass yourself, Sir, won't you?" said Miss Tox, as Toodle appeared.

"Thankee, Mum," said Toodle, "since you *are* suppressing."

"And you're very glad to leave your dear good wife in such a comfortable home, aint you, Sir?" said Miss Tox, nodding and winking at him stealthily.

"No, Mum," said Toodle. "Here's wishing of her back agin."

Polly cried more than ever at this. So Mrs. Chick, who had her matronly apprehensions that this indulgence in grief might be prejudicial to the little Dombey ("acid, indeed," she whispered Miss Tox), hastened to the rescue.

"Your little child will thrive charmingly with your sister Jemima, Richards," said Mrs. Chick; "and you have only to make an effort—this is a world of effort, you know, Richards—to be very happy indeed. You have been already measured for your mourning, haven't you, Richards?"

"Ye—yes, ma'am," sobbed Polly.

"And it 'll fit beautifully, I know," said Mrs. Chick, "for the same young person has made me many dresses. The very best materials, too!"

"Lor, you 'll be so smart," said Miss Tox, "that your husband won't know you; will you, Sir?"

"I should know her," said Toodle, gruffly, "anyhows and anywhere."

Toodle was evidently not to be bought over.

"As to living, Richards, you know," pursued Mrs. Chick, "why, the very best of everything will be at your disposal. You will order your little dinner every day; and anything you take a fancy to, I'm sure will be as readily provided as if you were a Lady."

"Yes, to be sure!" said Miss Tox, keeping up the ball with great sympathy. "And as to porter!—quite unlimited, will it not, Louisa?"

"Oh, certainly!" returned Mrs. Chick in the same tone. "With a little abstinence, you know, my dear, in point of vegetables."

"And pickles, perhaps," suggested Miss Tox.

"With such exceptions," said Louisa, "she 'll consult her choice entirely, and be under no restraint at all, my love."

"And then, of course, you know," said Miss Tox, "however fond she is of her own dear little child—and I'm sure, Louisa, *you* don't blame her for being fond of it?"

"Oh no!" cried Mrs. Chick benignantly.

"Still," resumed Miss Tox, "she naturally must be interested in her young charge, and must consider it a privilege to see a little cherub closely connected with the superior classes, gradually unfolding itself from day to day at one common fountain. Is it not so, Louisa?"

"Most undoubtedly!" said Mrs. Chick. "You see, my love, she's already quite contented and comfortable, and means to say good-bye to her sister Jemima and her little pets, and her good honest husband, with a light heart and a smile, don't she, my dear?"

"Oh yes!" cried Miss Tox. "To be sure she does!"

Notwithstanding which, however, poor Polly embraced them all round in great distress, and finally ran away to avoid any more particular leave-taking between herself and the children. But the stratagem hardly succeeded as well as it deserved; for the smallest boy but one divining her intent, immediately began swarming up stairs after her—if that word of doubtful etymology be admissible—on his arms and legs; while the eldest (known in the family by the name of Biler, in remembrance of the steam engine) beat a demoniacal tattoo with his boots, expressive of grief; in which he was joined by the rest of the family.

A quantity of oranges and halfpence, thrust indiscriminately on each young Toodle, checked the first violence of their regret, and the family were speedily transported to their own home, by means of the hackney-coach kept in waiting for that purpose. The children under the guardianship of Jemima, blocked up the window, and dropped out oranges and halfpence all the way along. Mr. Toodle himself preferred to ride behind among the spikes, as being the mode of conveyance to which he was best accustomed.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH MR. DOMBEY, AS A MAN AND A FATHER, IS SEEN AT THE HEAD OF THE HOME-DEPARTMENT.

THE funeral of the deceased lady having been "performed," to the entire satisfaction of the undertaker, as well as of the neighbourhood at large, which is generally disposed to be captious on such a point, and is prone to take offence at any omissions or short-comings in the ceremonies, the various members of Mr. Dombey's household subsided into their several places in the domestic system. That small world, like the great one out of doors, had the capacity of easily forgetting its dead; and when the cook had said she was a quiet-tempered lady, and the house-keeper had said it was the common lot, and the butler had said who'd have thought it, and the housemaid had said she couldn't hardly believe it, and the footman had said it seemed exactly like a dream, they had quite worn the subject out, and began to think their mourning was wearing rusty too.

On Richards, who was established up-stairs in a state of honourable captivity, the dawn of her new life seemed to break cold and grey. Mr. Dombey's house was a large one, on the shady side of a tall, dark, dreadfully genteel street in the region between Portland-place and Bryanstone-square. It was a corner house, with great wide areas containing cellars frowned upon by barred windows, and leered at by crooked-eyed doors leading to dustbins. It was a house of dismal state, with a circular back to it, containing a whole suit of drawing-rooms looking upon a gravelled yard, where two gaunt trees, with blackened trunks and branches, rattled rather than rustled, their leaves were so smoke-dried. The summer sun was never on the street, but in the morning about breakfast time, when it came with the water-carts and the old clothes-men, and the people with geraniums, and the umbrella mender, and the man who trilled the little bell of the Dutch clock as he went along. It was soon gone again to return no more that day; and the bands of music and the straggling Punch's shows going after it, left it a prey to the most dismal of organs, and white mice; with now and then a porcupine, to vary the entertainments; until the butlers whose families were dining over, began to stand at the house doors in the twilight, and the lamp-lighter made his nightly failure in attempting to brighten up the street with gas.

It was as blank a house inside as outside. When the funeral was over, Mr. Dombey ordered the furniture to be covered up—perhaps to preserve it for the son with whom his plans were all associated—and the rooms to be ungarnished, saving such as he retained for himself on the ground floor. Accordingly, mysterious shapes were made of tables and chairs, heaped together in the middle of rooms, and covered over with great winding-sheets. Bell-handles, window-blinds, and looking-glasses, being papered up in journals, daily and weekly, obtruded fragmentary accounts of deaths and dreadful murders. Every chandelier or lustre, muffled in holland, looked like a monstrous tear depending from the ceiling's eye. Odours,

as from vaults and damp places, came out of the chimneys. The dead and buried lady was awful in a picture-frame of ghastly bandages. Every gust of wind that rose, brought eddying round the corner from the neighbouring mews, some fragments of the straw that had been strewn before the house when she was ill, mildewed remains of which were still cleaving to the neighbourhood: and these, being always drawn by some invisible attraction to the threshold of the dirty house to let immediately opposite, addressed a dismal eloquence to Mr. Dombey's windows.

The apartments which Mr. Dombey reserved for his own inhabiting, were attainable from the hall, and consisted of a sitting-room; a library, which was in fact a dressing-room, so that the smell of hot-pressed paper, vellum, morocco, and Russia leather, contended in it with the smell of divers pairs of boots; and a kind of conservatory or little glass breakfast-room beyond, commanding a prospect of the trees before mentioned, and, generally speaking, of a few prowling cats. These three rooms opened upon one another. In the morning, when Mr. Dombey was at his breakfast in one or other of the two first mentioned of them, as well as in the afternoon when he came home to dinner, a bell was rung for Richards to repair to this glass chamber, and there walk to and fro with her young charge. From the glimpses she caught of Mr. Dombey at these times, sitting in the dark distance, looking out towards the infant from among the dark heavy furniture—the house had been inhabited for years by his father, and in many of its appointments was old-fashioned and grim—she began to entertain ideas of him in his solitary state, as if he were a lone prisoner in a cell, or a strange apparition that was not to be accosted or understood.

Little Paul Dombey's foster-mother had led this life herself, and had carried little Paul through it for some weeks; and had returned up stairs one day from a melancholy saunter through the dreary rooms of state (she never went out without Mrs. Chick, who called on fine mornings, usually accompanied by Miss Tox, to take her and Baby for an airing—or in other words, to march them gravely up and down the pavement, like a walking funeral); when, as she was sitting in her own room, the door was slowly and quietly opened, and a dark-eyed little girl looked in.

"It's Miss Florence come home from her aunt's, no doubt," thought Richards, who had never seen the child before. "Hope I see you well Miss."

"Is that my brother?" asked the child, pointing to the Baby.

"Yes my pretty," answered Richards. "Come and kiss him."

But the child, instead of advancing, looked her earnestly in the face, and said:

"What have you done with my Mama?"

"Lord bless the little creter!" cried Richards, "what a sad question! I done? Nothing Miss."

"What have *they* done with my Mama?" inquired the child.

"I never saw such a melting thing in all my life!" said Richards, who naturally substituted for this child one of her own, inquiring for herself in like circumstances. "Come nearer here my dear Miss! Don't be afraid of me."

"I am not afraid of you," said the child, drawing nearer. "But I want to know what they have done with my Mama."

"My darling," said Richards, "you wear that pretty black frock in remembrance of your Mama."

"I can remember my Mama," returned the child, with tears springing to her eyes, "in any frock."

"But people put on black, to remember people when they're gone."

"Where gone?" asked the child.

"Come and sit down by me," said Richards, "and I'll tell you a story."

With a quick perception that it was intended to relate to what she had asked, little Florence laid aside the bonnet she had held in her hand until now, and sat down on a stool at the Nurse's feet, looking up into her face.

"Once upon a time," said Richards, "there was a lady—a very good lady, and her little daughter dearly loved her."

"A very good lady and her little daughter dearly loved her," repeated the child.

"Who, when God thought it right that it should be so, was taken ill and died."

The child shuddered.

"Died, never to be seen again by any one on earth, and was buried in the ground where the trees grow."

"The cold ground," said the child shuddering again.

"No! The warm ground," returned Polly, seizing her advantage, "where the ugly little seeds turn into beautiful flowers, and into grass, and corn, and I don't know what all besides. Where good people turn into bright angels, and fly away to Heaven!"

The child, who had drooped her head, raised it again, and sat looking at her intently.

"So; let me see," said Polly, not a little flurried between this earnest scrutiny, her desire to comfort the child, her sudden success, and her very slight confidence in her own powers. "So, when this lady died, wherever they took her, or wherever they put her, she went to God! and she prayed to Him, this lady did," said Polly, affecting herself beyond measure; being heartily in earnest, "to teach her little daughter to be sure of that in her heart: and to know that she was happy there and loved her still: and to hope and try—Oh all her life—to meet her there one day, never, never, never to part any more."

"It was my Mama!" exclaimed the child, springing up, and clasping her round the neck.

"And the child's heart," said Polly, drawing her to her breast: "the little daughter's heart, was so full of the truth of this, that even when she heard it from a strange nurse that couldn't tell it right, but was a poor mother herself, and that was all, she found a comfort in it—didn't feel so lonely—sobbed and cried upon her bosom—took kindly to the baby lying in her lap—and—there, there, there!" said Polly, smoothing the child's curls and dropping tears upon them. "There, poor dear!"

"Oh well Miss Floy! And won't your Pa be angry neither!" cried a quick voice at the door, proceeding from a short, brown, womanly girl of fourteen, with a little snub nose, and black eyes like jet beads. "When it was 'tickerlerly given out that you wasn't to go and worrit the wet nurse."

"She don't worry me," was the surprised rejoinder of Polly. "I am very fond of children."

"Oh! but begging your pardon, Mrs. Richards, that don't matter you know," returned the black-eyed girl, who was so desperately sharp and biting that she seemed to make one's eyes water. "I may be very fond of pennywinkles Mrs. Richards, but it don't follow that I'm to have 'em for tea."

"Well, it don't matter," said Polly.

"Oh, thank'e Mrs. Richards, don't it!" returned the sharp girl. "Remembering, however, if you'll be so good, that Miss Floy's under my charge, and Master Paul's under your'n."

"But still we needn't quarrel," said Polly.

"Oh no, Mrs. Richards," rejoined Spitfire. "Not at all, I don't wish it, we needn't stand upon that footing, Miss Floy being a permanency, Master Paul a temporary." Spitfire made use of none but comma pauses; shooting out whatever she had to say in one sentence, and in one breath, if possible.

"Miss Florence has just come home, hasn't she?" asked Polly.

"Yes, Mrs. Richards, just come home, and here, Miss Floy, before you've been in the house a quarter of an hour, you go a smearing your wet face against the expensive mourning that Mrs. Richards is a wearing for your Ma!" With this remonstrance, young Spitfire, whose real name was Susan Nipper, detached the child from her new friend by a wrench—as if she were a tooth. But she seemed to do it, more in the excessively sharp exercise of her official functions, than with any deliberate unkindness.

"She'll be quite happy, now she has come home again," said Polly, nodding to her with an encouraging smile upon her wholesome face, "and will be so pleased to see her dear Papa to-night."

"Lork, Mrs. Richards!" cried Miss Nipper, taking up her words with a jerk. "Don't. See her dear Papa indeed! I should like to see her do it!"

"Won't she then?" asked Polly.

"Lork, Mrs. Richards, no, her Pa's a deal too wrapped up in somebody else, and before there was a somebody else to be wrapped up in she never was a favorite, girls are thrown away in this house, Mrs. Richards, I assure you."

The child looked quickly from one nurse to the other, as if she understood and felt what was said.

"You surprise me!" cried Polly. "Hasn't Mr. Dombey seen her since—"

"No," interrupted Susan Nipper. "Not once since, and he hadn't hardly set his eyes upon her before that for months and months, and I don't think he'd have known her for his own child if he had met her in the streets, or would know her for his own child if he was to meet her in the streets to-morrow, Mrs. Richards, as to *me*," said Spitfire, with a giggle, "I doubt if he's awear of my existence."

"Pretty dear!" said Richards; meaning, not Miss Nipper, but the little Florence.

"Oh! there's a Tartar within a hundred miles of where we're now in

conversation, I can tell you, Mrs. Richards, present company always excepted too," said Susan Nipper; "wish you good morning, Mrs. Richards, now Miss Floy, you come along with me, and don't go hanging back like a naughty wicked child that judgments is no example to, don't!"

In spite of being thus adjured, and in spite also of some hauling on the part of Susan Nipper, tending towards the dislocation of her right shoulder, little Florence broke away, and kissed her new friend, affectionately.

"Good bye!" said the child. "God bless you! I shall come to see you again soon, and you'll come to see me? Susan will let us. Won't you, Susan?"

Spitfire seemed to be in the main a good-natured little body, although a disciple of that school of trainers of the young idea which holds that childhood, like money, must be shaken and rattled and jostled about a good deal to keep it bright. For, being thus appealed to with some endearing gestures and caresses, she folded her small arms and shook her head, and conveyed a relenting expression into her very-wide-open black eyes.

"It ain't right of you to ask it, Miss Floy, for you know I can't refuse you, but Mrs. Richards and me will see what can be done, if Mrs. Richards likes, I may wish, you see, to take a voyage to Chaney, Mrs. Richards, but I mayn't know how to leave the London Docks."

Richards assented to the proposition.

"This house ain't so exactly ringing with merry-making," said Miss Nipper, "that one need be lonelier than one must be. Your Toxes and your Chickses may draw out my two front double teeth, Mrs. Richards, but that's no reason why I need offer 'em the whole set."

This proposition was also assented to by Richards, as an obvious one.

"So I'm agreeable, I'm sure," said Susan Nipper, "to live friendly, Mrs. Richards, while Master Paul continues a permanency, if the means can be planned out without going openly against orders, but goodness gracious ME, Miss Floy, you haven't got your things off yet, you naughty child, you haven't, come along!"

With these words, Susan Nipper, in a transport of coercion, made a charge at her young ward, and swept her out of the room.

The child, in her grief and neglect, was so gentle, so quiet, and uncomplaining; was possessed of so much affection that no one seemed to care to have, and so much sorrowful intelligence that no one seemed to mind or think about the wounding of; that Polly's heart was sore when she was left alone again. In the simple passage that had taken place between herself and the motherless little girl, her own motherly heart had been touched no less than the child's; and she felt, as the child did, that there was something of confidence and interest between them from that moment.

Notwithstanding Mr. Toodle's great reliance on Polly, she was perhaps in point of artificial accomplishments very little his superior. But she was a good plain sample of a nature that is ever, in the mass, better, truer, higher, nobler, quicker to feel, and much more constant to retain, all tenderness and pity, self-denial and devotion, than the nature of men. And perhaps, unlearned as she was, she could have brought a dawning knowledge home to Mr. Dombey at that early day, which would not then have struck him in the end like lightning.

But this is from the purpose. Polly only thought, at that time, of im-

proving on her successful propitiation of Miss Nipper, and devising some means of having little Florence beside her, lawfully, and without rebellion. An opening happened to present itself that very night.

She had been rung down into the glass room as usual, and had walked about and about it a long time, with the baby in her arms, when, to her great surprise and dismay, Mr. Dombey came out, suddenly, and stopped before her.

"Good evening, Richards."

Just the same austere, stiff gentleman, as he had appeared to her on that first day. Such a hard-looking gentleman, that she involuntarily dropped her eyes and her curtsey at the same time.

"How is Master Paul, Richards?"

"Quite thriving, Sir, and well."

"He looks so," said Mr. Dombey, glancing with great interest at the tiny face she uncovered for his observation, and yet affecting to be half careless of it. "They give you everything you want, I hope?"

"Oh yes, thank you Sir."

She suddenly appended such an obvious hesitation to this reply, however, that Mr. Dombey, who had turned away, stopped, and turned round again, inquiringly.

"I believe nothing is so good for making children lively and cheerful Sir, as seeing other children playing about 'em," observed Polly, taking courage.

"I think I mentioned to you, Richards, when you came here," said Mr. Dombey, with a frown, "that I wished you to see as little of your family as possible. You can continue your walk if you please."

With that, he disappeared into his inner room; and Polly had the satisfaction of feeling that he had thoroughly misunderstood her object, and that she had fallen into disgrace without the least advancement of her purpose.

Next night, she found him walking about the conservatory when she came down. As she stopped at the door, checked by this unusual sight, and uncertain whether to advance or retreat, he called her in.

"If you really think that sort of society is good for the child," he said sharply, as if there had been no interval since she proposed it, "where 's Miss Florence?"

"Nothing could be better than Miss Florence Sir," said Polly eagerly, "but I understood from her little maid that they were not to—"

Mr. Dombey rang the bell, and walked till it was answered.

"Tell them always to let Miss Florence be with Richards when she chooses, and go out with her, and so forth. Tell them to let the children be together, when Richards wishes it."

The iron was now hot, and Richards striking on it boldly—it was a good cause and she was bold in it, though instinctively afraid of Mr. Dombey—requested that Miss Florence might be sent down then and there, to make friends with her little brother.

She feigned to be dandling the child as the servant retired on this errand, but she thought she saw that Mr. Dombey's colour changed; that the expression of his face quite altered; that he turned, hurriedly, as if to gainsay what he had said, or she had said, or both, and was only deterred by very shame.

And she was right. The last time he had seen his slighted child, there had been that in the sad embrace between her and her dying mother, which was at once a revelation and a reproach to him. Let him be absorbed as he would in the Son on whom he built such high hopes, he could not forget that closing scene. He could not forget that he had had no part in it. That, at the bottom of its clear depths of tenderness and truth, lay those two figures clasped in each other's arms, while he stood on the bank above them, looking down a mere spectator—not a sharer with them—quite shut out.

Unable to exclude these things from his remembrance, or to keep his mind free from such imperfect shapes of the meaning with which they were fraught, as were able to make themselves visible to him through the mist of his pride, his previous feeling of indifference towards little Florence changed into an uneasiness of an extraordinary kind. He almost felt as if she watched and distrusted him. As if she held the clue to something secret in his breast, of the nature of which he was hardly informed himself. As if she had an innate knowledge of one jarring and discordant string within him, and her very breath could sound it.

His feeling about the child had been negative from her birth. He had never conceived an aversion to her; it had not been worth his while or in his humour. She had never been a positively disagreeable object to him. But now he was ill at ease about her. She troubled his peace. He would have preferred to put her idea aside altogether, if he had known how. Perhaps—who shall decide on such mysteries!—he was afraid that he might come to hate her.

When little Florence timidly presented herself, Mr. Dombey stopped in his pacing up and down and looked towards her. Had he looked with greater interest and with a father's eye, he might have read in her keen glance the impulses and fears that made her waver; the passionate desire to run clinging to him, crying, as she hid her face in his embrace, "Oh father, try to love me! there's no one else!" the dread of a repulse; the fear of being too bold, and of offending him; the pitiable need in which she stood of some assurance and encouragement; and how her overcharged young heart was wandering to find some natural resting-place, for its sorrow and affection.

But he saw nothing of this. He saw her pause irresolutely at the door and look towards him; and he saw no more.

"Come in," he said, "come in: what is the child afraid of?"

She came in; and after glancing round her for a moment with an uncertain air, stood pressing her small hands hard together, close within the door.

"Come here, Florence," said her father, coldly. "Do you know who I am?"

"Yes Papa."

"Have you nothing to say to me?"

The tears that stood in her eyes as she raised them quickly to his face, were frozen by the expression it wore. She looked down again, and put out her trembling hand.

Mr. Dombey took it loosely in his own, and stood looking down upon her for a moment as if he knew as little as the child, what to say or do.

"There! Be a good girl," he said, patting her on the head, and regarding her as it were by stealth with a disturbed and doubtful look. "Go to Richards! Go!"

His little daughter hesitated for another instant as though she would have clung about him still, or had some lingering hope that he might raise her in his arms and kiss her. She looked up in his face once more. He thought how like her expression was then, to what it had been when she looked round at the Doctor—that night—and instinctively dropped her hand and turned away.

It was not difficult to perceive that Florence was at a great disadvantage in her father's presence. It was not only a constraint upon the child's mind, but even upon the natural grace and freedom of her actions. Still, Polly persevered with all the better heart for seeing this; and, judging of Mr. Dombey by herself, had great confidence in the mute appeal of poor little Florence's mourning dress. "It's hard indeed," thought Polly, "if he takes only to one little motherless child, when he has another, and that a girl, before his eyes."

So, Polly kept her before his eyes, as long as she could, and managed so well with little Paul, as to make it very plain that he was all the livelier for his sister's company. When it was time to withdraw up stairs again, she would have sent Florence into the inner room to say good-night to her father, but the child was timid and drew back; and when she urged her again, said, spreading her hands before her eyes, as if to shut out her own unworthiness, "Oh no no! He don't want me. He don't want me!"

The little altercation between them had attracted the notice of Mr. Dombey, who inquired from the table where he was sitting at his wine, what the matter was.

"Miss Florence was afraid of interrupting, Sir, if she came in to say good-night," said Richards.

"It doesn't matter," returned Mr. Dombey. "You can let her come and go without regarding me."

The child shrunk as she listened—and was gone, before her humble friend looked round again.

However, Polly triumphed not a little in the success of her well-intentioned scheme, and in the address with which she had brought it to bear: whereof she made a full disclosure to Spitfire when she was once more safely entrenched up stairs. Miss Nipper received that proof of her confidence, as well as the prospect of their free association for the future, rather coldly, and was anything but enthusiastic in her demonstrations of joy.

"I thought you would have been pleased," said Polly.

"Oh yes Mrs. Richards, I'm very well pleased, thank you," returned Susan, who had suddenly become so very upright that she seemed to have put an additional bone in her stays.

"You don't show it," said Polly.

"Oh! Being only a permanency I couldn't be expected to show it like a temporary," said Susan Nipper. "Temporaries carries it all before 'em here, I find, but though there's a excellent party-wall between this house and the next, I mayn't exactly like to go to it, Mrs. Richards, notwithstanding!"

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH SOME MORE FIRST APPEARANCES ARE MADE ON THE STAGE OF THESE ADVENTURES.

THOUGH the offices of Dombey and Son were within the liberties of the city of London, and within hearing of Bow Bells, when their clashing voices were not drowned by the uproar in the streets, yet were there hints of adventurous and romantic story to be observed in some of the adjacent objects. Gog and Magog held their state within ten minutes' walk; the Royal Exchange was close at hand; the Bank of England with its vaults of gold and silver "down among the dead men" underground, was their magnificent neighbour. Just round the corner stood the rich East India House, teeming with suggestions of precious stuffs and stones, tigers, elephants, howdahs, hookahs, umbrellas, palm trees, palanquins, and gorgeous princes of a brown complexion sitting on carpets with their slippers very much turned up at the toes. Anywhere in the immediate vicinity there might be seen pictures of ships speeding away full sail to all parts of the world; outfitting warehouses ready to pack off anybody anywhere, fully equipped in half an hour; and little timber midshipmen in obsolete naval uniforms, eternally employed outside the shopdoors of nautical instrument-makers in taking observations of the hackney coaches.

Sole master and proprietor of one of these effigies—of that which might be called, familiarly, the woodenest—of that which thrust itself out above the pavement, right leg foremost, with a suavity the least endurable, and had the shoe buckles and flapped waistcoat the least reconcilable to human reason, and bore at its right eye the most offensively disproportionate piece of machinery—sole master and proprietor of that midshipman, and proud of him too, an elderly gentleman in a Welsh wig had paid house-rent, taxes, rates, and dues, for more years than many a full-grown midshipman of flesh and blood has numbered in his life; and midshipmen who have attained a pretty green old age, have not been wanting in the English navy.

The stock in trade of this old gentleman comprised chronometers, barometers, telescopes, compasses, charts, maps, sextants, quadrants, and specimens of every kind of instrument used in the working of a ship's course, or the keeping of a ship's reckoning, or the prosecuting of a ship's discoveries. Objects in brass and glass were in his drawers and on his shelves, which none but the initiated could have found the top of, or guessed the use of, or having once examined, could have ever got back again into their mahogany nests without assistance. Everything was jammed into the tightest cases, fitted into the narrowest corners, fenced up behind the most impertinent cushions, and screwed into the acutest angles, to prevent its philosophical composure from being disturbed by the rolling of the sea. Such extraordinary precautions were taken in every instance to save room, and keep the thing compact; and so much practical navigation was fitted, and cushioned, and screwed, into every box (whether the box was a mere

slab, as some were, or something between a cocked hat and a star-fish, as others were, and those quite mild and modest boxes as compared with others); that the shop itself, partaking of the general infection, seemed almost to become a snug, sea-going, ship-shape concern, wanting only good sea-room, in the event of an unexpected launch, to work its way securely, to any desert island in the world.

Many minor incidents in the household life of the Ships' Instrument maker who was proud of his little midshipman, assisted and bore out this fancy. His acquaintance lying chiefly among ship-chandlers and so forth, he had always plenty of the veritable ships' biscuit on his table. It was familiar with dried meats and tongues, possessing an extraordinary flavour of rope yarn. Pickles were produced upon it, in great wholesale jars, with "dealer in all kinds of Ships' Provisions" on the label; spirits were set forth in case bottles with no throats. Old prints of ships with alphabetical references to their various mysteries, hung in frames upon the walls; the Tartar Frigate under weigh, was on the plates; outlandish shells, seaweeds, and mosses, decorated the chimney-piece; the little wainscotted back parlour was lighted by a skylight, like a cabin.

Here he lived too, in skipper-like state, all alone with his nephew Walter: a boy of fourteen who looked quite enough like a midshipman, to carry out the prevailing idea. But there it ended, for Solomon Gills himself (more generally called old Sol) was far from having a maritime appearance. To say nothing of his Welsh wig, which was as plain and stubborn a Welsh wig as ever was worn, and in which he looked like anything but a Rover, he was a slow, quiet-spoken, thoughtful old fellow, with eyes as red as if they had been small suns looking at you through a fog; and a newly awakened manner, such as he might have acquired by having stared for three or four days successively, through every optical instrument in his shop, and suddenly come back to the world again, to find it green. The only change ever known in his outward man, was from a complete suit of coffee-color cut very square, and ornamented with glaring buttons, to the same suit of coffee-color minus the inexpressibles, which were then of a pale nankeen. He wore a very precise shirt-frill, and carried a pair of first-rate spectacles on his forehead, and a tremendous chronometer in his fob, rather than doubt which precious possession, he would have believed in a conspiracy against it on the part of all the clocks and watches in the city, and even of the very Sun itself. Such as he was, such he had been in the shop and parlor behind the little midshipman, for years upon years: going regularly aloft to bed every night in a howling garret remote from the lodgers, where, when gentlemen of England who lived below at ease had little or no idea of the state of the weather, it often blew great guns.

It is half-past five o'clock, and an autumn afternoon, when the reader and Solomon Gills become acquainted. Solomon Gills is in the act of seeing what time it is by the unimpeachable chronometer. The usual daily clearance has been making in the city for an hour or more; and the human tide is still rolling westward. 'The streets have thinned,' as Mr. Gills says, 'very much.' It threatens to be wet to-night. All the weather glasses in the shop are in low spirits, and the rain already shines upon the cocked hat of the wooden midshipman.

"Where's Walter, I wonder!" said Solomon Gills, after he had carefully

put up the chronometer again. "Here's dinner been ready, half an hour, and no Walter!"

Turning round upon his stool behind the counter, Mr. Gills looked out among the instruments in the window, to see if his nephew might be crossing the road. No. He was not among the bobbing umbrellas, and he certainly was not the newspaper boy in the oilskin cap who was slowly working his way along the piece of brass outside, writing his name over Mr. Gills's name with his forefinger.

"If I didn't know he was too fond of me to make a run of it, and go and enter himself aboard ship against my wishes, I should begin to be fidgetty," said Mr. Gills, tapping two or three weather glasses with his knuckles. "I really should. All in the Downs, eh? Lots of moisture! Well! it's wanted."

"I believe," said Mr. Gills, blowing the dust off the glass top of a compass case, "that you don't point more direct and due to the back parlour than the boy's inclination does after all. And the parlour couldn't bear straighter either. Due north. Not the twentieth part of a point either way."

"Halloa uncle Sol!"

"Halloa my boy!" cried the Instrument Maker, turning briskly round. "What! you are here, are you!"

A cheerful looking, merry boy, fresh with running home in the rain; fair-faced, bright-eyed, and curly-haired.

"Well uncle, how have you got on without me all day! Is dinner ready? I'm so hungry."

"As to getting on," said Solomon good-naturedly, "it would be odd if I couldn't get on without a young dog like you a great deal better than with you. As to dinner being ready, it's been ready this half-hour and waiting for you. As to being hungry, I am!"

"Come along then, uncle!" cried the boy. "Hurrah for the admiral!"

"Confound the admiral!" returned Solomon Gills. "You mean the Lord Mayor."

"No I don't!" cried the boy. "Hurrah for the admiral. Hurrah for the admiral! For—ward!"

At this word of command, the Welsh wig and its wearer were borne without resistance into the back parlour, as at the head of a boarding party of five hundred men; and uncle Sol and his nephew were speedily engaged on a fried sole with a prospect of steak to follow.

"The Lord Mayor, Wally," said Solomon, "for ever! No more admirals. The Lord Mayor's *your* admiral."

"Oh, is he though!" said the boy, shaking his head. "Why, the Sword Bearer's better than him. He draws *his* sword sometimes."

"And a pretty figure he cuts with it for his pains," returned the uncle. "Listen to me Wally, listen to me. Look on the mantel-shelf."

"Why who has cocked my silver mug up there, on a nail!" exclaimed the boy.

"I have," said his Uncle. "No more mugs now. We must begin to drink out of glasses to-day, Walter. We are men of business. We belong to the city. We started in life this morning."

"Well, Uncle," said the boy, "I'll drink out of anything you like, so

long as I can drink to you. Here's to you, Uncle Sol, and Hurrah for the—"

"Lord Mayor," interrupted the old man.

"For the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Common Council, and Livery," said the boy. "Long life to 'em!"

The Uncle nodded his head with great satisfaction. "And now," he said, "let's hear something about the Firm."

"Oh! there's not much to be told about the Firm, Uncle," said the boy, plying his knife and fork. "It's a precious dark set of offices, and in the room where I sit, there's a high fender, and an iron safe, and some cards about ships that are going to sail, and an almanack, and some desks and stools, and an inkbottle, and some books, and some boxes, and a lot of cobwebs, and in one of 'em, just over my head, a shrivelled-up blue-bottle that looks as if it had hung there ever so long."

"Nothing else?" said the uncle.

"No, nothing else, except an old bird-cage (I wonder how *that* ever came there!) and a coal-scuttle."

"No bankers' books, or cheque books, or bills, or such tokens of wealth rolling in from day to day?" said old Sol, looking wistfully at his nephew out of the fog that always seemed to hang about him, and laying an unctuous emphasis upon the words.

"Oh yes, plenty of that I suppose," returned his nephew carelessly; "but all that sort of thing's in Mr. Carker's room, or Mr. Morfin's, or Mr. Dombey's."

"Has Mr. Dombey been there to-day?" inquired the uncle.

"Oh yes! In and out all day."

"He didn't take any notice of you, I suppose?"

"Yes he did. He walked up to my seat,—I wish he wasn't so solemn and stiff, Uncle—and said 'Oh! you are the son of Mr. Gills the Ships' Instrument Maker.' 'Nephew Sir,' I said. 'I said nephew, boy,' said he. But I could take my oath he said Son, uncle."

"You're mistaken I dare say. It's no matter."

"No, it's no matter, but he needn't have been so sharp, I thought. There was no harm in it though he did say Son. Then he told me that you had spoken to him about me, and that he had found me employment in the House accordingly, and that I was expected to be attentive and punctual, and then he went away. I thought he didn't seem to like me much."

"You mean, I suppose," observed the Instrument Maker, "that you didn't seem to like him much?"

"Well, Uncle," returned the boy, laughing. "Perhaps so; I never thought of that."

Solomon looked a little graver as he finished his dinner, and glanced from time to time at the boy's bright face. When dinner was done, and the cloth was cleared away (the entertainment had been brought from a neighbouring eating-house), he lighted a candle, and went down below into a little cellar, while his nephew, standing on the mouldy staircase, dutifully held the light. After a moment's groping here and there, he presently returned with a very ancient-looking bottle, covered with dust and dirt.

"Why, Uncle Sol!" said the boy, "what are you about! that's the wonderful Madeira!—there's only one more bottle!"

Uncle Sol nodded his head, implying that he knew very well what he was about; and having drawn the cork in solemn silence, filled two glasses and set the bottle and a third clean glass on the table.

"You shall drink the other bottle Wally," he said, "when you have come to good fortune; when you are a thriving, respected, happy man; when the start in life you have made to-day shall have brought you, as I pray Heaven it may!—to a smooth part of the course you have to run, my child. My love to you!"

Some of the fog that hung about old Sol seemed to have got into his throat; for he spoke huskily. His hand shook too, as he clinked his glass against his nephew's. But having once got the wine to his lips, he tossed it off like a man, and smacked them afterwards.

"Dear Uncle," said the boy, affecting to make light of it, while the tears stood in his eyes, "for the honour you have done me, et cetera, et cetera. I shall now beg to propose Mr. Solomon Gills with three times three and one cheer more. Hurrah! and you'll return thanks, uncle, when we drink the last bottle together; won't you?"

They clinked their glasses again; and Walter, who was hoarding his wine, took a sip of it, and held the glass up to his eye with as critical an air as he could possibly assume.

His Uncle sat looking at him for some time in silence. When their eyes at last met, he began at once to pursue the theme that had occupied his thoughts, aloud, as if he had been speaking all the time.

"You see Walter," he said, "in truth this business is merely a habit with me. I am so accustomed to the habit that I could hardly live if I relinquished it: but there's nothing doing, nothing doing. When that uniform was worn," pointing out towards the little midshipman, "then indeed, fortunes were to be made, and were made. But competition, competition—new invention, new invention—alteration, alteration—the world's gone past me. I hardly know where I am myself; much less where my customers are."

"Never mind 'em Uncle!"

"Since you came home from weekly boarding-school at Peckham, for instance—and that's ten days," said Solomon, "I don't remember more than one person that has come into the shop."

"Two Uncle, don't you recollect? There was the man who came to ask for change for a sovereign—"

"That's the one," said Solomon.

"Why Uncle! don't you call the woman anybody, who came to ask the way to Mile-End Turnpike?"

"Oh! it's true," said Solomon, "I forgot her. Two persons."

"To be sure, they didn't buy anything," cried the boy.

"No. They didn't buy anything," said Solomon, quietly.

"Nor want anything," cried the boy.

"No. If they had, they'd have gone to another shop," said Solomon, in the same tone.

"But there were two of 'em Uncle," cried the boy, as if that were a great triumph. "You said only one."

"Well, Wally," resumed the old man, after a short pause: "not being like the Savages who came on Robinson Crusoe's Island, we can't live on

a man who asks for change for a sovereign, and a woman who inquires the way to Mile-End Turnpike. As I said just now, the world has gone past me. I don't blame it; but I no longer understand it. Tradesmen are not the same as they used to be, apprentices are not the same, business is not the same, business commodities are not the same. Seven-eighths of my stock is old-fashioned. I am an old-fashioned man in an old-fashioned shop, in a street that is not the same as I remember it. I have fallen behind the time, and am too old to catch it again. Even the noise it makes a long way ahead, confuses me."

Walter was going to speak, but his Uncle held up his hand.

"Therefore Wally—therefore it is that I am anxious you should be early in the busy world, and on the world's track. I am only the ghost of this business—its substance vanished long ago; and when I die, its ghost will be laid. As it is clearly no inheritance for you then, I have thought it best to use for your advantage, almost the only fragment of the old connexion that stands by me, through long habit. Some people suppose me to be wealthy. I wish for your sake, they were right. But whatever I leave behind me, or whatever I can give you, you in such a house as Dombey's are in the road to use well and make the most of. Be diligent, try to like it my dear boy, work for a steady independence, and be happy!"

"I'll do everything I can, Uncle, to deserve your affection. Indeed I will," said the boy, earnestly.

"I know it," said Solomon. "I am sure of it," and he applied himself to a second glass of the old Madeira, with increased relish. "As to the Sea," he pursued, "that's well enough in fiction, Wally, but it won't do in fact: it won't do at all. It's natural enough that you should think about it, associating it with all these familiar things; but it won't do, it won't do."

Solomon Gills rubbed his hands with an air of stealthy enjoyment, as he talked of the sea, though; and looked on the seafaring objects about him with inexpressible complacency.

"Think of this wine for instance," said old Sol, "which has been to the East Indies and back, I'm not able to say how often, and has been once round the world. Think of the pitch-dark nights, the roaring winds, and rolling seas:"

"The thunder, lightning, rain, hail, storm of all kinds," said the boy.

"To be sure," said Solomon,—"that this wine has passed through. Think what a straining and creaking of timbers and masts: what a whistling and howling of the gale through ropes and rigging:"

"What a clambering aloft of men, vying with each other who shall lie out first upon the yards to furl the icy sails, while the ship rolls and pitches, like mad!" cried his nephew.

"Exactly so," said Solomon: "has gone on, over the old cask that held this wine. Why, when the Charming Sally went down in the—"

"In the Baltic Sea, in the dead of night; five-and-twenty minutes past twelve when the captain's watch stopped in his pocket; he lying dead against the main-mast—on the fourteenth of February, seventeen forty-nine!" cried Walter, with great animation.

"Ay, to be sure!" cried old Sol, "quite right! Then, there were five

hundred casks of such wine aboard; and all hands (except the first mate, first lieutenant, two seamen, and a lady, in a leaky boat) going to work to stave the casks, got drunk and died drunk, singing 'Rule Britannia,' when she settled and went down, and ending with one awful scream in chorus."

"But when the George the Second drove ashore, Uncle, on the coast of Cornwall, in a dismal gale, two hours before daybreak, on the fourth of March, 'seventy-one, she had near two hundred horses aboard; and the horses breaking loose down below, early in the gale, and tearing to and fro, and trampling each other to death, made such noises, and set up such human cries, that the crew believing the ship to be full of devils, some of the best men, losing heart and head, went overboard in despair, and only two were left alive, at last, to tell the tale."

"And when," said old Sol, "when the Polyphemus—"

"Private West India Trader, burden three hundred and fifty tons, Captain, John Brown of Deptford. Owners, Wiggs and Co.," cried Walter.

"The same," said Sol; "when she took fire, four days' sail with a fair wind out of Jamaica Harbour, in the night,—"

"There were two brothers on board," interposed his nephew, speaking very fast and loud, "and there not being room for both of them in the only boat that wasn't swamped, neither of them would consent to go, until the elder took the younger by the waist, and flung him in. And then the younger, rising in the boat, cried out, 'Dear Edward, think of your promised wife at home. I'm only a boy. No one waits at home for me. Leap down into my place!' and flung himself into the sea!"

The kindling eye and heightened colour of the boy, who had risen from his seat in the earnestness of what he said and felt, seemed to remind old Sol of something he had forgotten, or that his encircling mist had hitherto shut out. Instead of proceeding with any more anecdotes, as he had evidently intended but a moment before, he gave a short dry cough, and said, "Well! suppose we change the subject."

The truth was, that the simple-minded uncle in his secret attraction towards the marvellous and adventurous—of which he was, in some sort, a distant relation, by his trade—had greatly encouraged the same attraction in the nephew; and that everything that had ever been put before the boy to deter him from a life of adventure, had had the usual unaccountable effect of sharpening his taste for it. This is invariable. It would seem as if there never was a book written, or a story told, expressly with the object of keeping boys on shore, which did not lure and charm them to the ocean, as a matter of course.

But an addition to the little party now made its appearance, in the shape of a gentleman in a wide suit of blue, with a hook instead of a hand attached to his right wrist; very bushy black eyebrows; and a thick stick in his left hand, covered all over (like his nose) with knobs. He wore a loose black silk handkerchief round his neck, and such a very large coarse shirt collar, that it looked like a small sail. He was evidently the person for whom the spare wine-glass was intended, and evidently knew it; for having taken off his rough outer coat, and hung up, on a particular peg behind the door, such a hard glazed hat as a sympathetic person's head might ache at the sight of, and which left a red rim round his own forehead as if he had been wearing a tight basin, he brought a chair to where the clean

glass was, and sat himself down behind it. He was usually addressed as Captain, this visitor; and had been a pilot, or a skipper, or a privateersman, or all three perhaps; and was a very salt-looking man indeed.

His face, remarkable for a brown solidity, brightened as he shook hands with uncle and nephew; but he seemed to be of a laconic disposition, and merely said:

"How goes it?"

"All well," said Mr. Gills, pushing the bottle towards him.

He took it up, and having surveyed and smelt it, said with extraordinary expression:

"*The?*"

"*The,*" returned the Instrument Maker.

Upon that he whistled as he filled his glass, and seemed to think they were making holiday indeed.

"Wal'r!" he said, arranging his hair (which was thin) with his hook, and then pointing it at the Instrument Maker, "Look at him! Love! Honour! And Obey! Overhaul your catechism till you find that passage, and when found turn the leaf down. Success, my boy!"

He was so perfectly satisfied both with his quotation and his reference to it, that he could not help repeating the words again in a low voice, and saying he had forgotten 'em these forty year.

"But I never wanted two or three words in my life that I didn't know where to lay my hand upon 'em, Gills," he observed. "It comes of not wasting language as some do."

The reflection perhaps reminded him that he had better, like young Norval's father, "increase his store." At any rate he became silent, and remained so, until old Sol went out into the shop to light it up, when he turned to Walter, and said, without any introductory remark:

"I suppose he could make a clock if he tried?"

"I shouldn't wonder, Captain Cuttle," returned the boy.

"And it would go!" said Captain Cuttle, making a species of serpent in the air with his hook. "Lord, how that clock would go!"

For a moment or two he seemed quite lost in contemplating the pace of this ideal timepiece, and sat looking at the boy as if his face were the dial.

"But he's chockfull of science," he observed, waving his hook towards the stock-in-trade. "Look 'ye here! Here's a collection of 'em. Earth, air, or water. It's all one. Only say where you'll have it. Up in a balloon? There you are. Down in a bell? There you are. D'ye want to put the North Star in a pair of scales and weigh it? He'll do it for you."

It may be gathered from these remarks that Captain Cuttle's reverence for the stock of instruments was profound, and that his philosophy knew little or no distinction between trading in it and inventing it.

"Ah!" he said, with a sigh, "it's a fine thing to understand 'em. And yet it's a fine thing not to understand 'em. I hardly know which is best. It's so comfortable to sit here and feel that you might be weighed, measured, magnified, electrified, polarized, played the very devil with: and never know how."

Nothing short of the wonderful Madeira, combined with the occasion

(which rendered it desirable to improve and expand Walter's mind), could have ever loosened his tongue to the extent of giving utterance to this prodigious oration. He seemed quite amazed himself at the manner in which it opened up to view the sources of the taciturn delight he had had in eating Sunday dinners in that parlour for ten years. Becoming a sadder and a wiser man, he mused and held his peace.

"Come!" cried the subject of his admiration, returning. "Before you have your glass of grog, Ned, we must finish the bottle."

"Stand by!" said Ned, filling his glass. "Give the boy some more."

"No more, thank'e, Uncle!"

"Yes, yes," said Sol, "a little more. We'll finish the bottle, to the House, Ned—Walter's house. Why it may be his house one of these days, in part. Who knows? Sir Richard Whittington married his master's daughter."

"Turn again Whittington, Lord Mayor of London, and when you are old you will never depart from it," interposed the Captain. "Wal'r! Overhaul the book, my lad."

"And although Mr. Dombey hasn't a daughter," Sol began.

"Yes, yes, he has, uncle," said the boy, reddening and laughing.

"Has he?" cried the old man. "Indeed I think he has too."

"Oh! I know he has," said the boy. "Some of 'em were talking about it in the office to-day. And they do say, Uncle and Captain Cuttle," lowering his voice, "that he's taken a dislike to her, and that she's left, unnoticed, among the servants, and that his mind's so set all the while upon having his son in the House, that although he's only a baby now, he is going to have balances struck oftener than formerly, and the books kept closer than they used to be, and has even been seen (when he thought he wasn't) walking in the Docks, looking at his ships and property and all that, as if he was exulting like, over what he and his son will possess together. That's what they say. Of course, *I* don't know."

"He knows all about her already, you see," said the Instrument Maker.

"Nonsense, uncle," cried the boy, still reddening and laughing, boy-like. "How can I help hearing what they tell me?"

"The Son's a little in our way, at present, I'm afraid, Ned," said the old man, humouring the joke.

"Very much," said the Captain.

"Nevertheless, we'll drink him," pursued Sol. "So, here's to Dombey and Son."

"Oh, very well, uncle," cried the boy, merrily. "Since you have introduced the mention of her, and have connected me with her, and have said that I know all about her, I shall make bold to amend the toast. So here's to Dombey—and Son—and Daughter!"

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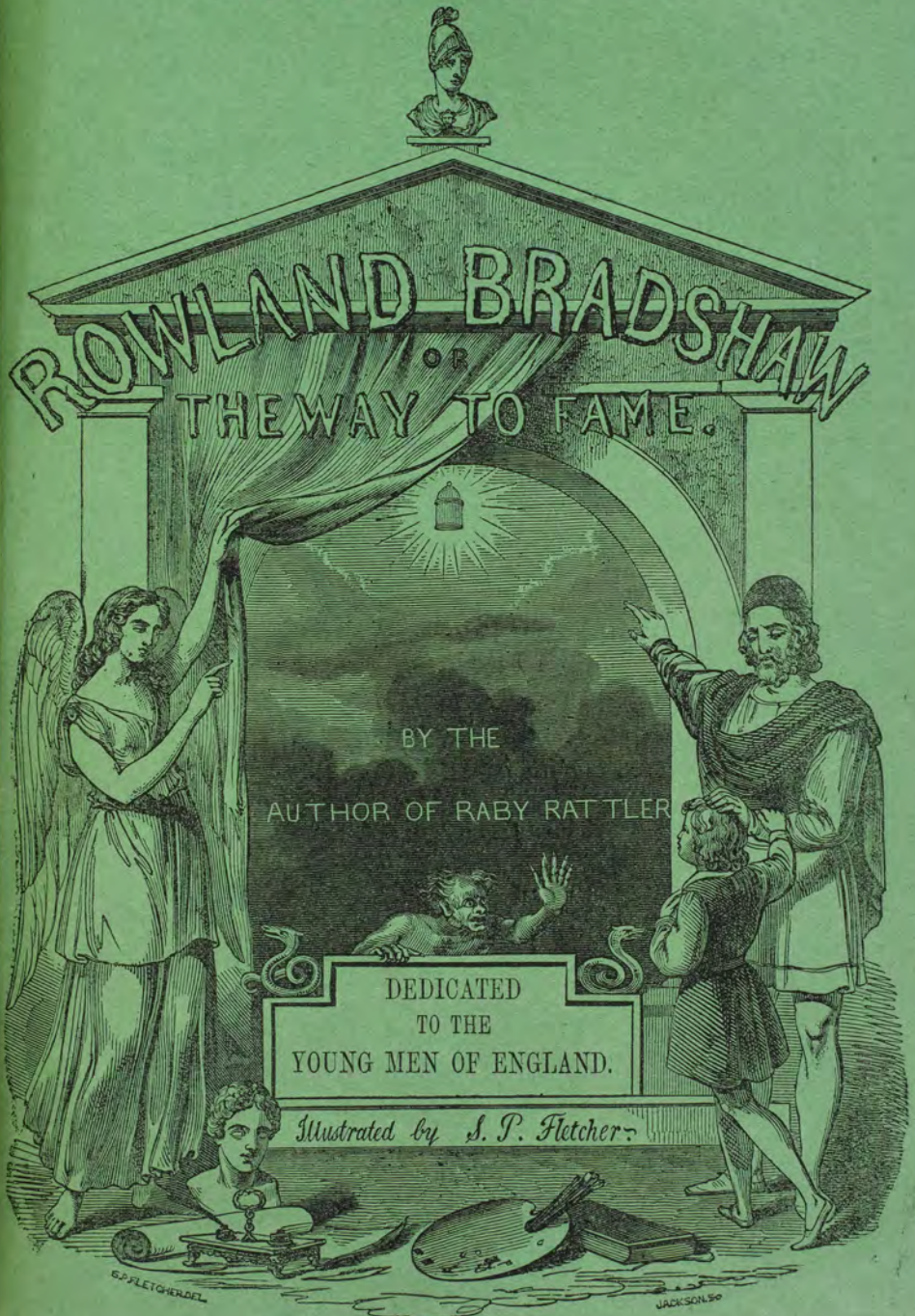
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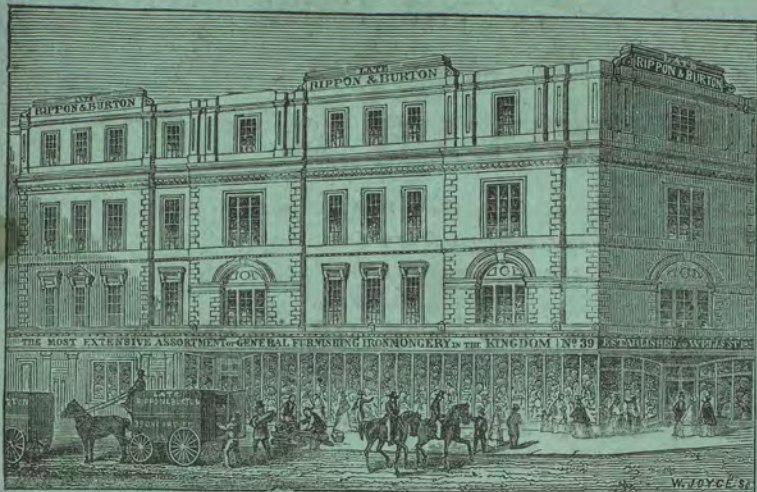
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"Many" there are in this important line of business; but, alas! "few" have kept pace with their public engagements in trade.

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have been "many" years before the public, and "many" a favour has been showered upon them. "Many" elegancies adorn the costumes of MOSES and SON, and "many" advances in the attainment of superior fashion have been made. "Many" savings may also be realised in the purchase of MOSES and SON's attire, which wears "many," "many" months longer than that of any other House. "Many" pages might be written in the recommendation of

### **MOSES & SON'S ESTABLISHMENT,**

but "few" words will suffice to secure "many" favours from "many" of the public. For "many" past obligations E. MOSES and SON would tender "many" thanks to their "many" supporters, and they trust that they may still be supported in trade not by the "few," but

**"THE MANY."**