HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER I.

"Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children, and this is the principle on which I bring up these children. Stick to Facts, sir!"

The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a school-room, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasised his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's square wall of a forehead, which had his eyebrows for its base, while his eyes found commodious cellarage in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide, thin, and hard set. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry, and dictatorial. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie, as if the head had scarcely warehouse-room for the hard facts stored inside. The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders,—nay, his very neckcloth, trained to take him by the throat with an unaccommodating grasp, like a stubborn fact, as it was,—all helped the emphasis.

"In this life, we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts!"

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"Girl number twenty," said Mr. Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger, "I don't know that girl. Who is that girl?"

"Sissy Jupe, sir," explained number twenty, blushing, standing up, and curtseying.

"Sissy is not a name," said Mr. Gradgrind. "Don't call yourself Sissy. Call yourself Cecilia:"

"It's father as calls me Sissy, sir," returned the young girl in a trembling voice, and with another curtsey.

"Then he has no business to do it," said Mr. Gradgrind. "Tell him he mustn't. Cecilia Jupe. Let me see. What is your father?"

"He belongs to the horse-riding, if you please, sir."

Mr. Gradgrind frowned, and waved off the objectionable calling with his hand.

"We don't want to know anything about..."
that, here. You mustn't tell us about that; here. Your father breaks horses, don't he?"

"If you please, sir, when they can get any to break, they do break horses in the ring, sir."

"You mustn't tell us about the ring, here. Very well, then. Describe your father as a horsebreaker. He doctors sick horses, I dare say?"

"Oh yes, sir."

"Very well, then. He is a veterinary surgeon, a farrier and horsebreaker. Give me your definition of a horse."

(Sissy Jupe thrown into the greatest alarm by this demand.)

"Girl number twenty unable to define a horse!" said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. "Girl number possessed of no facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals if ever, boy's definition of a horse. Bitzer, yours."

The square finger, moving here and there, lighted suddenly on Bitzer, perhaps because he chanced to sit in the same ray of sunlight which, darting in at one of the bare windows of the intensely whitewashed room, irradiated the faces of the boys and girls sat on the face of the inclined plane in two compact bodies, divided up the centre by a narrow interval; and Sissy, being at the corner of a row on the sunny side, came in for the beginning of a sunbeam, of which Bitzer, being at the corner of a row on the other side, a few rows in advance, caught the end. But, whereas the girl was so dark-eyed and dark-haired, that she seemed to receive a deeper and more lustrous color from the sun when it shone upon her, the boy was so light-eyed and lighthaired that the self-same rays appeared to draw out of him what little color he ever possessed. His cold eyes would hardly have been eyes, but for the short ends of lashes which, by bringing them into immediate contrast with something paler than themselves, expressed their form. His short-cropped hair might have been a mere continuation of the sandy freckles on his forehead and face. His skin was so unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge, that he looked as though, if he were cut, he would bleed white.

"Bitzer," said Thomas Gradgrind. "Your definition of a horse."

"Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shoe with iron. Age known by marks in mouth." Thus (and much more) Bitzer.

"Now girl number twenty," said Mr. Gradgrind. "You know what a horse is."

She essayed again, and would have blushed deeply, if she could have blushed deeper than she had blushed all this time. Her rapidly blinking at Thomas Gradgrind with both eyes at once, and so catching the light upon his quivering ends of lashes that they looked like the antennae of busy insects, put
time that "No, sir!" was always the right answer to this gentleman, the chorus of No was very strong. Only a few feeble stragglers said Yes; among them Sissy Jupe.

"Girl number twenty," said the gentleman, smiling in the calm strength of knowledge. Sissy answered, and stood up.

"So you would carpet your room—or your husband's room, if you were a grown woman, and had a husband—with representations of flowers, would you?" said the gentleman.

"Why would you?"

"If you please, sir, I am very fond of flowers," returned the girl.

"And that is why you would put tables and chairs upon them, and have people walking over them with heavy boots?"

"It wouldn't hurt them, sir. They wouldn't crush and wither if you please, sir. They would be the pictures of what was very pretty and pleasant, and I would fancy—"

"Ay, ay, and But you mustn't fancy," cried the gentleman, quite elated by coming so happily to his point. "That's it! You are never to fancy."

"You are not, Mary Jupe," Thomas Gradgrind solemnly repeated, "to do anything of that kind."

"Fact, fact, fact!" said the gentleman. And "Fact, fact, fact!" repeated Thomas Gradgrind.

"You are to be in all things regulated and governed," said the gentleman, "by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, and pleasant, and I would fancy—"

"And is that why you would put tables and chairs upon them, and have people walking over them with heavy boots?"

"Not at all, M'Choakumchild. If he had only learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more! He went to work in this preparatory lesson, not unlike Morgiana in the Forty Thieves: looking into all the vessels ranged before him, one after another, to see what they contained. Say, good M'Choakumchild. When from thy boiling store, thou shalt fill each jar brim full by and by, dost thou think that thou wilt always kill outright the robber Fancy lurking within—or sometimes only maim him and distort him!"

CHAPTER III.

MR. GRADGRIND walked homeward from the school, in a state of considerable satisfaction. It was his school, and he intended it to be a model. He intended every child in it to be a model—just as the young Gradgrinds were all models.

There were five young Gradgrinds, and they were models every one. They had been lectured at, from their tenderest years; course, like little hares. Almost as soon as they could run alone, they had been made to run to the lecture-room. The first object with which they had an association, or of which they had a remembrance, was a large black board with a dry Ogre chalking ghastly white figures on it.

Not that they knew, by name or nature, anything about an Ogre. Fact forbid! I only use the word to express a monstrous lecturing castle, with Heaven knows how many heads manipulated into one, taking childhood captive, and dragging it into gloomy statistical dens by the hair.

No little Gradgrind had ever seen a face in the moon; it was up in the moon before it could speak distinctly. No little Gradgrind had ever learnt the silly jingle, Twinkle
He had reached the neutral ground upon the outskirts of the town, which was neither town nor country, and yet was either spoiled, when his ears were invaded by the sound of music. The clashing and banging band attached to the horse-riding establishment which had there set up its rest in a wooden pavilion, was in full play. A flag, floating from the summit of the temple, proclaimed to mankind that it was “Sleary’s Horse-riding” which claimed their sufferages. Sleary himself, a stout modern statue with a money-box at its elbow, in an ecclesiastical niche of early Gothic architecture, took his eyeglass out of his waistcoat to look between him and the young rabble, he was sure to seize the occasion of alluding to his eminently practical friend Gradgrind. This always pleased the eminently practical friend. He knew it to be his due, but his due he did derive.

A very regular feature on the face of the country, Stone Lodge was. Not the least disguise toned down or shaded off that uncompromising fact in the landscape. A great square house, with a heavy portico darkening the principal windows, as its master’s heavy brows overshadowed his eyes. A calculated, cast up, balanced, and proved house. Six windows on this side of the door, six on that side; a total of twelve in this wing, a total of twelve in the other wing; four and twenty carried over to the back. A lawn and garden and an infant avenue, all ruled straight like a botanical account-book. Gas and ventilation, drainage and water-service, all of the primest quality. Iron clamps and girders, fireproof from top to bottom; mechanical lifts for the housemaids, with all their brushes and brooms; everything that heart could desire.

Everything? Well, I suppose so. The little Gradgrinds had cabinets in various departments of science too. They had a little conchological cabinet, and a little metallurgical cabinet, and a little mineralogical cabinet; and the specimens were all arranged and labelled, and the bits of stone and ore looked as though they might have been broken from the parent substances by those tremendously hard instruments their own names; and, to paraphrase the idle legend of Peter Piper, who had never found his way into their nursery, if the greedy little Gradgrinds grasped at more than this, what was it for good gracious goodness sake, that the greedy little Gradgrinds grasped at! Their father walked on in a hopeful and satisfied frame of mind. He was an affectionate father, after his manner; but he would probably have described himself (if he had been put, like Sissy Jupe, upon a definition) as “an eminently practical” father. He had a particular pride in the phrase eminently practical, which was considered to have a special application to him. Whate’er the public meeting held in Coketown, and whate’er the subject of such meeting, some Coketowner was sure to seize the occasion of alluding to his eminently practical friend Gradgrind. This always pleased the eminently practical friend. He knew it to be his due, but his due he did derive.

A space of stunted grass and dry rubbish being between him and the young rabble, he took his eyeglass out of his waistcoat to look for any child he knew by name, and might order off. Phenomenon almost incredible though distinctly seen, what did he then be-
hold but his own metallurgical Louisa peeping with all her might through a hole in a deal board, and his own mathematical Thomas absolving himself on the ground to catch a hoof of the graceful equestrian Tyrolean flower 

Dumb with amazement, Mr. Gradgrind crossed to the spot where his family was thus disgraced, laid his hand upon each erring child, and said:  

"Louisa! Thomas!"

Both rose, red and disinconcerct. But, Louisa looked at her father with more boldness than Thomas did. Indeed, Thomas did not look at him, but gave himself up to be taken home like a machine.

"In the name of wonder, idleness, and folly!" said Mr. Gradgrind, leading each away by a hand; "what do you here?"

"Wanted to see what it was like," returned Louisa shortly.

"What it was like?"

"Yes, father."

There was an air of jaded sullenness in them both, and particularly in the girl: yet, struggling through the dissatisfaction of her face, there was a light with nothing to rest upon, a fire with nothing to burn, a starved imagination keeping life in itself somehow, which brightened its expression. Not with the brightness natural to cheerful youth, but with uncertain, eager, doubtful flashes, which had something painful in them, analogous to the changes on a blind face groping its way.

She was a child now, of fifteen or sixteen; but at no distant day would seem to become a woman all at once. Her father thought so as he looked at her. She was pretty. "Would it not be well to hear it. It makes Thomas no better, and it makes you worse, Louisa."

"I asked him to come."

"I am sorry to hear it. I am very sorry for before he looked at her she had again cast down her eyes!"

"What," he repeated presently, "would Mr. Bounderby say?"

"What would Mr. Bounderby say? As if Mr. Bounderby had been Mrs. Grundy.

ORANGES AND LEMONS.

As we listen to the street-child, crying "fine Saint Michael's, four a-penny!" how many of us have bestowed a single thought upon the many interests involved, the many energies brought into action, in the production and transport of these fruits from the south to our cold, dull countries of the north! How few of us have any conception of the vast tracts of land required to rear these pleasant products of the soil; of the hands employed in the culture; of the beautiful ships, of the noble steam-vessels engaged in transporting them from foreign lands to these shores; of the railway-trains employed at certain seasons, to whisk the cooling cargoes from Southampton to London, while their consumers are sleeping in their beds; of the large piles of massive warehouses required to store, to sample, and to sell them by auction; of the mean squalor and desolation of the great retail orange-mart in Duke's Place; of the thousands of men, women, and children who draw a subsistence from their sale in the streets, in steamboats, at fairs, in theatres, or wherever people congregate. It may be well to know something of all this, and to learn how important a part is thus played in a densely peopled country, by articles apparently so insignificant as oranges and lemons, and moreover, how it is that this fruit, coming to our cold, dull countries of the north from foreign lands at great cost, is sold in our streets at a cheaper rate than our own apples and pears.

The reader will scarcely need to be told that the trade in oranges is of much greater extent than that in lemons. In London alone it has been computed that there are annually sold not fewer than one hundred millions of the former fruit and twenty millions of the latter: about one-fourth of the oranges being disposed of in the streets and theatres. This street business in fruit is a trade of some antiquity, dating back beyond the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and growing until at the present time there cannot be less than seven thousand
"I hadn't a shoe to my foot. As to a stocking, I didn't know such a thing by name. I passed the day in a ditch, and the night in a pigsty. That's the way I spent my tenth birthday. Not that a ditch was new to me, for I was born in a ditch."

Mrs. Gradgrind, a little, thin, white, pink-eyed bundle of shawls, of surpassing feebleness, mental and bodily; who was always taking physic without any effect, and who, whenever she showed a symptom of coming to life, was invariably stunned by some weighty piece of fact tumbling on her; Mrs. Gradgrind hoped it was a dry ditch.

"No! As wet as a sop. A foot of water in it," said Mr. Bounderby.

"Enough to give a baby cold," Mrs. Gradgrind considered.

"Cold! I was born with inflammation of the lungs, and of everything else, I believe, that was capable of inflammation," returned Mr. Bounderby. "For years, ma'am, I was one of the most miserable little wretches ever seen. I was so sickly, that I was always moaning and groaning. I was so ragged and dirty, that you wouldn't have touched me with a pair of tongs."

Mrs. Gradgrind faintly looked at the tongs, as the most appropriate thing her imbecility could think of doing.

"How I fought through it, I don't know," said Bounderby. "I was determined, I suppose. I have been a determined character in later life, and I suppose I was then. Here I am, Mrs. Gradgrind, anyhow, and nobody to thank for my being here but myself."

Mrs. Gradgrind meekly and weakly hoped that his mother—"My mother? Bolted, ma'am!" said Bounderby. Mrs. Gradgrind, stunned as usual, collapsed and gave it up.

"My mother left me to my grandmother," said Bounderby; "and, according to the best of my remembrance, my grandmother was the wickedest and the worst old woman that ever lived. If I got a little pair of shoes by any chance, she would take 'em off and sell 'em for drink. Why, I have known that grandmother of mine lie in her bed and drink her four-teen glasses of liquor before breakfast!"

Mrs. Gradgrind, weakly smiling, and giving
no other sign of vitality, looked (as she always did) like an indifferently executed transparency of a small female figure, without enough light behind it.

"She kept a chandler's shop," pursued Bounderby, "and kept me in an egg-box. That was the sort of way he fancied; an old egg-box. As soon as I was big enough to run away, of course I ran away. Then I became a young vagabond; and instead of one old woman knocking me about and starving me, everybody of all ages knocked me about and starved me. They were right; they had no business to do anything else. I was a nuisance, an incumbrance, and a pest. I know that very well." His pride in having at any time of his life achieved such a great social distinction as to be a nuisance, an incumbrance, and a pest, was only to be satisfied by three somnorous repetitions of the boast.

"I was to pull through it I suppose, Mrs. Gradgrind. Whether I was to do it or not, ma'am, I did it. I pulled through it, though nobody threw me out a rope. Vagabond, errand-boy, vagabond, labourer, porter, clerk, chief manager, small partner, Josiah Bounderby of Coketown. Those are the antecedents, and the culmination. Josiah Bounderby of Coketown learnt his letters from the outsides of the shops, Mrs. Gradgrind, and was first able to tell the time upon a dial-plate, from studying the steeple clock of St. Giles's Church, London, under the direction of a drunken cripple, who was a convicted thief and an innominate. Tell Josiah Bounderby of Coketown, of your district schools, and your model schools, and your training schools, and your whole kettle-of-fish of schools; and Josiah Bounderby of Coketown tells you plainly, all right, all correct—he hadn't such advantages—but let us have hand-himself, solid-fisted people—the education that made him, what he has done for everybody, he knows well—such and such his education was, however, and you may force him to swallow boiling fat, but you shall never force him to suppress the facts of his life.

Being heated when he arrived at this climax, Josiah Bounderby of Coketown stopped. He stopped just as his eminently practical friend, still accompanied by the two young culprits, entered the room. His eminently practical friend, on seeing him, stopped also, and gave Louisa a reproachful look that (as you know) to the education of the reason made him "Behold your Bounderby!"

"Well!" blustered Mr. Bounderby, "what's the matter? What is young Thomas in the dumps about?"

He spoke of young Thomas, but he looked at Louisa.

"We were peeping at the circus," muttered Louisa haughtily, without lifting up her eyes, "and father caught us."

"And mother, Mrs. Gradgrind?" said her husband in a lofty manner, "I should as soon have expected to find my children reading poetry."

"Dear me," whimpered Mrs. Gradgrind. "How can you, Louisa and Thomas! I wonder at you. I declare you're enough to make one regret ever having had a family at all. I have a great mind to say I wish I hadn't. Then what would you have done, I should like to know?"

Mr. Gradgrind did not seem favourably impressed by these cogent remarks. He frowned impatiently.

"As if, with my head in its present throbbing state, you couldn't go and look at the shells and minerals and things provided for you, instead of circuses!" said Mrs. Gradgrind. "You know, as well as I do, no young people have circus masters, or keep circuses in cabinets, or attend lectures about circuses. What can you possibly want to know of circuses then! I am sure you have enough to do, if that's what you want. With my head in its present state, I couldn't remember the mere names of half the facts you have got to attend to."

"That's the reason!" pouted Louisa. "Don't tell me that's the reason, because it can be nothing of the sort," said Mrs. Gradgrind. "Go and be somethingological directly."

Mrs. Gradgrind was not a scientific character, and usually dismissed her children to their studies with this general injunction to choose their pursuit.

In truth, Mrs. Gradgrind's stock of facts in general was woefully defective, but Mr. Gradgrind in raising her to her high matrimonial position had been influenced by two reasons. Firstly, she was most satisfactory as a question of figures; and, secondly, she had "no nonsense" about her. By nonsense he meant fancy; and truly it is probable she was as free from any alley of that nature, as any human being not arrived at the perfection of an absolute idiot, ever was.

"Bounderby," said Mr. Gradgrind, drawing a chair to the fireside, "you are always so interested in my young people—particularly in Louisa—that I make no apology for saying to you, I am very much vexed by this discove..."
with interest at a parcel of vagabonds," returned Bounderby. "When I was a vagabond myself, nobody looked with any interest at me; I know that."

Then comes the question," said the eminent practical father, with his eyes on the fire,"in what has this vulgarity its rise?"

"I'll tell you in what. In idle imagination."

"I hope not," said the eminently practical; "I confess, however, that the misgiving has crossed me on my way home."

"In idle imagination, Gradgrind," repeated Bounderby. "A very bad thing for anybody, but a cursed bad thing for a girl like Louisa. I should ask Mrs. Gradgrind's pardon for strong expressions, but that she knows very well I am not a refined character. Whoever expects refinement in me will be disappointed. I hadn't a refined bringing up."

"Whether," said Mr. Gradgrind, pondering with his hands in his pockets, and his cavernous eyes on the fire,"whether any instructor or servant can have suggested anything? Whether Louisa or Thomas can have been reading anything? Whether, in spite of all precautions, any idle story-book can have got into the house? Because, in minds that have been practically formed by rule and line, from the cradle upwards, this is so curious, so incomprehensible."

"Stop a bit!" cried Bounderby, who all this time had been standing, as before, on the hearth, bursting at the very furniture of the room with explosive humility. "You have one of those strollers' children in the school."

"Cecilia Jupe, by name," said Mr. Gradgrind, with something of a stricken look at his friend.

"No, now, stop a bit!" cried Bounderby again.

"How did she come there?"

"Why, the fact is, I saw the girl myself for the first time, only just now. She specially applied here at the house to be admitted, as expressing a man who had been far too busily employed in making himself, to acquire any fashion of wearing his hat — and with his hands in his pockets sauntered out into the hall. "I never wear gloves," it was his custom to say. "I didn't climb up the ladder in them. Shouldn't be so high up, if I had."

Being left to saunter in the hall a minute or two while Mr. Gradgrind went upstairs for the address, he opened the door, the opening of the children's study and looked into that serene floor-clothed apartment, which, notwithstanding its bookcases and its cabinets and its variety of learned and philosophical appliances, had much of the genial aspect of a room devoted to hair-cutting. Louisa languidly leaned upon the window looking out, without looking at anything, while young Thomas stood sniffing revengefully at the fire. Adam Smith and Malthus, two younger Gradgrinds, were out at lecture in custody; and little Jane, after manufacturing a good deal of moist pipe-clay on her face with slate-pencil and tears, had fallen asleep over vulgar fractions."

"It's all right now, Louisa; it's all right, young Thomas," said Mr. Bounderby; "you won't do so any more. I'll answer for it's being all over with father. Well, Louisa, that's worth a kiss, isn't it?"

"You can take one, Mr. Bounderby," returned Louisa, when she had coldly paused, and slowly walked across the room, and ungraciously raised her cheek towards him, with her face turned away.

"Always my pet; an't you, Louisa?" said Mr. Bounderby. "Good bye, Louisa!"

He went his way, but she stood on the same spot, rubbing the cheek he had kissed, with her handkerchief, until it was burning red. She was still doing this, five minutes afterwards.

"What are you about, Loo?" her brother sulkily remonstrated. "You'll rub a hole in your face!"

"You may cut the piece out with your penknife if you like, Tom. I wouldn't cry!"

CHAPTER V.

COKE-TOWN, to which Messrs. Bounderby and Gradgrind now walked, was a triumph of fact; it had no greater taint of fancy in it than Mrs. Gradgrind herself. Let us strike
the key-note, Coketown, before pursuing our

tune.

It was a town of red brick, or of brick that
would have been red if the smoke and ashes
had allowed it; but, as matters stood it was a
town of unnatural red and black like the
painted face of a savage. It was a town of
machinery and tall chimneys, out of which
interminable serpents of smoke trailed them-
selves for ever and ever, and never got
uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and
a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye,
apart from building full of windows
where there was a rattling and a trembling
all day long, and where the piston of the
steam-engine worked monotonously up and
down, like the head of an elephant in a state
of melancholy madness. It contained several
large streets all very like one another, and
many small streets still more like one another,
inhabited by people equally like one another,
who all went in and out at the same hours, with
the same sound upon the same pavements, to
do the same work, and to whom every day
was the same as yesterday and to-morrow,
and every year the counterpart of the last and
the next.

These attributes of Coketown were in the
main inseparable from the work by which it
was sustained; against them were to be set
off, comfort of life which people found in their way all
over the world, and elegancies of life which
made we will not ask how much of the fine
lady, who could scarcely bear to hear the place
mentioned. The rest of its features were
voluntary, and they were these.

You saw nothing in Coketown but what
was severely workful. If the members of a
religious persuasion built a chapel there—
as the members of eighteen religious per-
suasions had done—they made it a pious
warehouse, of red brick, with sometimes (but
this only in highly ornamented examples) a
bell in a birdcage on the top of it. The
solitary exception was the New Church; a
stuccoed edifice with a square steeple over
the door, terminating in four short
pinnacles like florid wooden legs. All
the public inscriptions in the town were
painted alike, in severe characters of black
and white. The jail might have been the
infirmary, the infirmary might have been the
jail, the town-hall might have been either, on occasion, furnish more tabular state-
ments, showing that when they didn't
get drunk, they took opium. Then, came the
chemist and druggist, with other tabular
statements, outdoing all the pre-
experienced chaplain of the jail, with more
indignantly petitioning for acts of parliament
that should make these people religious by
main force. Then, came the Teetotal Society,
who complained that these same people
would get drunk, and showed in tabular statements
that they did get drunk, and proved at tea
parties, in the presence of A. B., aged twenty-
four next birthday, and committed for eighteen
months' solitary, had himself said (not that
he had ever shown himself particularly
worthy of belief) his ruin began, as he
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of melancholy madness. It contained several
large streets all very like one another, and
many small streets still more like one another,
inhabited by people equally like one another,
who all went in and out at the same hours, with
the same sound upon the same pavements, to
do the same work, and to whom every day
was the same as yesterday and to-morrow,
and every year the counterpart of the last and
the next.

These attributes of Coketown were in the
main inseparable from the work by which it
was sustained; against them were to be set
off, comfort of life which people found in their way all
over the world, and elegancies of life which
made we will not ask how much of the fine
lady, who could scarcely bear to hear the place
mentioned. The rest of its features were
voluntary, and they were these.

You saw nothing in Coketown but what
was severely workful. If the members of a
religious persuasion built a chapel there—
as the members of eighteen religious per-
suasions had done—they made it a pious
warehouse, of red brick, with sometimes (but
this only in highly ornamented examples) a
bell in a birdcage on the top of it. The
solitary exception was the New Church; a
stuccoed edifice with a square steeple over
the door, terminating in four short
pinnacles like florid wooden legs. All
the public inscriptions in the town were
painted alike, in severe characters of black
and white. The jail might have been the
infirmary, the infirmary might have been the
jail, the town-hall might have been either, on occasion, furnish more tabular state-
ments, showing that when they didn't
get drunk, they took opium. Then, came the
chemist and druggist, with other tabular
statements, outdoing all the pre-
experienced chaplain of the jail, with more
indignantly petitioning for acts of parliament
that should make these people religious by
main force. Then, came the Teetotal Society,
who complained that these same people
would get drunk, and showed in tabular statements
that they did get drunk, and proved at tea
parties, in the presence of A. B., aged twenty-
four next birthday, and committed for eighteen
months' solitary, had himself said (not that
he had ever shown himself particularly
worthy of belief) his ruin began, as he
would have been a tip-top moral
self for ever and ever, and never got
uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and
a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye,
apart from building full of windows
where there was a rattling and a trembling
all day long, and where the piston of the
steam-engine worked monotonously up and
down, like the head of an elephant in a state
of melancholy madness. It contained several
large streets all very like one another, and
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do the same work, and to whom every day
was the same as yesterday and to-morrow,
and every year the counterpart of the last and
the next.
of meat, and yet were eternally dissatisfied
and unmanageable. In short it was the moral
of the old nursery fable:

There was an old woman, and what do you think?
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink;
Vicuts and drink were the whole of her diet,
And yet this old woman would never be quiet.

Is it possible, I wonder, that there was any
analogy between the case of the Coketown population
and the case of the little Gradgrinds? Surely, none of us in our sober
senses and acquainted with figures, are to be
told at this time of day that one of the
foremost elements in the existence of the
Coketown working people had been for
scores of years deliberately set at naught;
That there was any fancy in them demanding
to be brought into healthy existence
instead of struggling on in convulsions;
That exactly in the ratio as they worked long
and monotonously, they were growing great within
them for some physical relaxation—some relaxation,
couraging good humour and good spirits,
and giving them a Vent—some recognised holiday,
though it were but for an honest dance
to a stirring band of music—some occasional
light pie in which even M’Choakumchild had
been known to partake; and would be satisfied aright,
or must and would inevitably go wrong, until the laws of the Creation were
repealed?

“This man lives at Pod’s End, and I don’t quite know Pod’s End,” said Mr. Gradgrind.

“Which is it, Bounderby?”

Mr. Bounderby knew it was somewhere
down town, but knew no more respecting it.
So they stopped for a moment, looking
about.

Almost as they did so, there came running
round the corner of the street, at a quick
pace and with a frightened look, a girl whom
Mind speed and a little anticipating a stoppage
on the pavement, that he brought himself up
against Mr. Gradgrind’s waistcoat, and re-
bounded into the road.

“What do you mean, boy?” said Mr. Gradgrind.

“What are you doing? How dare you
dash against—everybody—in this manner!”

Bitzer picked up his cap, which the con-
cussion had knocked off, and backing, and
knuckling his forehead, pleaded that it was
an accident.

“Was this boy running after you, Jupe?”
asked Mr. Gradgrind.

“Yes, sir,” said the girl reluctantly.

“No, I wasn’t, sir!” cried Bitzer. “Not
till she ran away from me. But the horse-
riders never mind what they say, sir; they’re
famous for it. You know the horse-
riders are famous for never minding what they say,”
addressing Sissy. “It’s as well known in the
town as—please, sir, as the multiplication
table isn’t known to the horse-riders.” Bitzer
tried Mr. Bounderby with this.

“He frightened me so,” said the girl, “with
his cruel faces!”

“Oh!” said Bitzer. “Oh! Ain’t you one of
the rest! Ain’t you a horse-rider! I never
looked at her, sir. I asked her if she would
know how to define a horse to-morrow, and
I ran after her, sir, that she might know
how to answer when she was asked. You
wouldn’t have thought of saying such mischief
if you hadn’t been a horse-rider!”

“Her calling seems to be pretty well known
among ‘em,” observed Mr. Bounderby. “You’d
have had the whole school peeping in a row,
in a week.”

“Truly, I think so,” returned his friend.

“Bitzer, turn you about and take yourself
home. Jupe, stay here a moment. Let me hear
of your running in this manner any more,
boy, and you will hear of me through the
master of the school. You understand what
I mean. Go along.”

The boy stopped in his rapid blinking,
knuckled his forehead again, glanced at Sissy,
turned about, and retreated.

“Now, girl,” said Mr. Gradgrind, “take
this gentleman and me to your father’s; we
are going there. What have you got in that
bottle you are carrying?”

“Gin,” said Mr. Bounderby.

“Dear, no sir! It’s the nine oils.”

“Gin,” said Mr. Bounderby.

“Dear, no sir! It’s the nine oils.”

“Gin,” said Mr. Bounderby.

“The nine oils, sir. To rub father with.”

Then, said Mr. Bounderby, with a loud,
short laugh, “what the devil do you rub your
father with nine oils for?”

“It’s what our people always use, sir;
when they get any hurts in the ring,” replied
the girl, looking over her shoulder, to assure
herself that her pursuer was gone. “They
bruise themselves very bad sometimes.”

“Serve ‘em right,” said Mr. Bounderby,

“for being idle.” She glanced up at his face,
with mingled astonishment and dread.

“By George!” said Mr. Bounderby, “when
I was four or five years younger than you, I
had worse bruises upon me than ten oils,
twenty oils, forty oils, would have rubbed off.
I didn’t get ‘em by posture-making, but by
being banged about. There was no rope-
dancing for me; I danced on the bare ground,
and was larruped with the rope.”

Mr. Gradgrind, though hard enough, was
by no means so rough a man as Mr. Boun-
derby. His character was not unkind, all
things considered: it might have been a very kind one indeed if he had only made some round mistake in the arithmetic that balanced it, years ago. He said, in what he meant for a re-assuring tone, as they turned down a narrow road, "And this is Pod's End; is it, Jupp?"

"This is it, sir, and—if you wouldn't mind, sir—this is the house."

She stopped, at twilight, at the door of a mean little public house, with dim red lights in it. As haggard and as shabby, as if, for want of custom, it had itself taken to drinking, and had gone the way all drunkards go, and was very near the end of it.

"It's only crossing the bar, sir, and up the stairs, if you wouldn't mind, and waiting there for a moment till I get a candle. If you should hear a dog, sir, it's only Merrylegs, and he only barks."

"Merrylegs and nine oils, eh!" said Mr. Bounderby, entering last with his metallic laugh. "Pretty well this, for a self-made man?"

GOBLIN LIFE.

A FEW MORE PAGES MAY BE DEVOTED TO RECALLING SOME OF THE MANY SHAPES TAKEN BY THOSE SUPERSTITIONS WHICH OCCUPIED SO PROMINENT A PLACE AMONG THE HOUSEHOLD WORDS OF OUR FOREFATHERS. IT IS WELL FOR US TO THINK OF THE TIMES OF HOUSEHOLD WORDS NOW PAST AND GONE.

The other day we discussed only the spirits of the elements, and found how the belief in these lights. Afterwards the room was whitened, and to hasten the drying, a brasier was put into it. The servants went to bed, and five of them were dead next morning.

Philip Camerarius wrote thus of signs of death: "Some princes are warned by a roaring of lions, or a strange howling of dogs, a nightly thumping or stamping about their castles, or the untimely striking of their clocks. In monasteries, it happens not unfrequently that the seats of monks or nuns, who are about to die, are occupied by shadows without heads. I know a noble family that has the surest token of death by the occurrence of a landslip in their neighbourhood. Whoever may be disposed to shudder at the reading of such things may judge of the dread excited by the commonest occurrences, when rich and poor alike were taught thus to interpret them in solemn earnest.

Lavater wrote, near the end of the sixteenth century, that when a town councillor or other public person was about to die, a local report, or other token of death, proceeded from the seat in hall or church habitually occupied by him. In monasteries he wrote that monks had heard their coffins being ordered for them exactly as they were really ordered not many days after, and he said, when any one is about to die in the villages, the people hear, in the dusk of evening or at night, a sound of spades in the churchyard, and it is precisely the same sound, stroke for stroke, that will be made next day by the sextons. After citing other tokens of the same kind, he added: "Executioners are
HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER VI.

THE name of the public house was the Pegasus's Arms. The Pegasus's legs might have been more to the purpose; but, underneath the winged horse upon the sign-board, the Pegasus's Arms was inscribed in Roman letters. Beneath that inscription again, in a flowing scroll, the painter had touched off the lines:

Good malt makes good beer,
Walk in, and they'll draw it here,
Good wine makes good brandy.
Give us a call, and you'll find it handy.

Framed and glazed upon the wall behind the dingy little bar, was another Pegasus—a theatrical one—with real gauze let in for his wings, golden stars stuck on all over him, and his ethereal harness made of red silk.

As it had grown too dusky without, to see the sign, and as it had not grown light enough that was manifest to eye or ear in the Pegasus's Arms.

They heard the doors of rooms above, opening and shutting as Sissy went from one to another in quest of her father; and presently they heard voices expressing surprise. She came bounding down again in a great hurry, opened a battered and mangy old hair-trunk, found it empty, and looked round with her hands clasped and her face full of terror.

"Father must have gone down to the Booth, sir. I don't know why he should go there, but he must be there; I'll bring him in a minute!" She was gone directly, without her bonnet; with her long, dark, childish hair streaming behind her.

"What does she mean!" said Mr. Gradgrind. "Back in a minute? It's more than a mile off."

Before Mr. Bounderby could reply, a young man appeared at the door, and introducing himself with the words, "By your leaves, gentlemen!" walked in with his hands in his pockets. His face, close-shaven, thin, and sallow, was shaded by a great quantity of dark hair brushed into a roll all round his head, and parted up the centre. His legs were very robust, but shorter than legs of good proportions should have been. His chest and back were as much too broad, as his legs were too short. He was dressed in a Newmarket coat and tight-fitting trousers; wore a shawl round his neck; smelt of lamp-oil, straw, orange-peel, horses' provender, and sawdust; and looked a most remarkable sort of Centaur, compounded of the stable and the play-house. Where the one began, and the other ended, nobody could have told with any precision.

This gentleman was mentioned in the bills of the day as Mr. E. W. B. Childers, so justly celebrated for his daring vaulting act as the Wild Huntsman of the North American Prairies; in which popular performance, a diminutive boy with an old face, who now accompanied him, assisted as his infant son: being carried upside down over his father's shoulder, by one foot, and held by the crown of his head, heels upwards, in the palm of his father's hand, according to the violent paternal manner in which wild huntsmen may be observed to fondle their offspring. Made up with curls, wreaths, wings, white blinath, and carmine,
Mr. E. W. B. Childers answered. "It was you, I believe, that were wishing to see Jupe?"

"It was," said Mr. Gradgrind. "His daughter has gone to fetch him, but I can't wait; therefore, if you please, I will leave a message for him with you."

"You see, my friend," Mr. Bounderby put in, "we are the kind of people who know the value of time, and you are the kind of people who don't know the value of time."

"I have not," retorted Mr. Childers, after surveying him from head to foot, "the honor of knowing you;—but if you mean that you can make more money of your time than I can of mine, I should judge from your appearance, that you are about right."

"And when you have made it, you can keep it too, I should think," said Cupid.

"Kidderminster, stow that!" said Mr. Childers. (Master Kidderminster was Cupid's mortal name).

"What does he come here chekking us for, then?" cried Master Kidderminster, showing a very irascible temperament. "If you want to check us, pay your ochre at the doors and take it out."

"Kidderminster," said Mr. Childers, raising his voice, "stow that!—Sir," to Mr. Gradgrind, "I was addressing myself to you. You may or you may not be aware (for perhaps you have not been much in the audience), that Jupe has missed his tip very often, lately."

"Has—what has he missed?" asked Mr. Gradgrind, glancing at the potent Bounderby for assistance.

"Missed his tip."

"Offered at the Garters four times last night, and never done 'em once," said Master Kidderminster. "Missed his tip at the banners, too, and was loose in his ponging."

"Didn't do what he ought to do. Was short in his leaps and bad in his tumbling," Mr. Childers interpreted.

"Oh!" said Mr. Gradgrind, "that is tip, is it?" "In a general way that's missing his tip," Mr. E. W. B. Childers answered.

"Nine-oils, Merrylegs, missing tips, garters, banners, and Ponging, eh!" ejaculated Bounderby with his laugh of laughs. "Queer sort of company too, for a man who has raised himself."

"I'll cover yourself, then," retorted Cupid.

"Oh Lord! If you've raised yourself so high as all that comes to, let yourself down a bit."

"This is a very obtrusive lad!" said Mr. Gradgrind, turning, and knitting his brows on him.

"We've had a young gentleman to meet you, if we had known you were coming," retorted Master Kidderminster, nothing abashed. "It's a pity you don't have a beard, speaking, being so particular. You're on the Tight-Jeff, ain't you?"

"What does this unmannery boy mean," asked Mr. Gradgrind, eyeing him in a sort of desperation, "by Tight-Jeff?"

"There! Get out, get out!" said Mr. Childers, thrusting his young friend from the room, rather in the prairie manner. "By Tight-Jeff or Slack-Jeff, it don't much signify; it's only tight-rope and slack rope. You were going to give me a message for Jupe?"

"Yes, I was."

"Then," continued Mr. Childers, quickly, "my opinion is, he will never receive it. Do you know much of him?"

"I never saw the man in my life."

"I doubt if you ever will see him now. It's pretty plain to me, he is off."

"Do you mean that he has deserted his daughter?"

"Ay! I mean," said Mr. Childers, with a nod, "that he has cut. He was gone this very night, he was goosed the night before last, he was goosed to-day. He has lately got in the way of being always goosed, and he can't stand it."

"Why, has he been—so very much—Goosed!" asked Mr. Gradgrind, forcing the word out of himself, with great solemnity and reluctance.

"His joints are turning stiff, and he is getting used up," said Childers. He has his points as a Cackler still, but he can't get a living out of them."

"A Cackler!" Bounderby repeated. "Here we go again!"

"A speaker, if the gentleman likes it better," said Mr. E. W. B. Childers, superciliously throwing the interpretation over his shoulder, and accompanying it with a shake of his long hair—which all shook at once. "Now, it's a remarkable fact, sir, that it cut that man deeper, to know that his daughter knew of his being goosed, than to go through with it."

"Good!" interrupted Mr. Bounderby. "This is good, Gradgrind! A man so fond of his daughter, that he runs away from her! This is devilish good! Ha! ha! Now, I'll tell you what, young man. I haven't always occupied my present station of life. I know what these things are. You may be astonished to hear it, but my mother ran away from me."

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"Very well," said Bounderby. "I was born in a ditch, and my mother ran away from me. Do I excuse her for it? No. Have I ever excused her for it? Not I. What do I call her for it? I call her probably the very worst woman that ever lived in a gentleman, except my drunken grandmother. There's no family pride about me, there's no imaginative sentimental humbug about me. I call a spade a spade; and I call the mother of Josiah Bounderby of Coketown, without any fear or
any favour, what I should call her if she had been the mother of Dick Jones of Wapping. So, with this man. He is a runaway rogue and a rascal, that's what he is, in English."

"It's all the same to me what he is or what he is not, whether in English or whether in French," retorted Mr. E. W. B. Childers, facing about. "I am telling your friend what's the fact; if you don't like to hear it, you can avail yourself of the open air. You give it mouth enough, you do; but give it mouth in your own building at least," remonstrated E. W. B. with stern irony. "Don't give it mouth in this building, till you're called upon. You have got some building of your own, I dare say, now!"

"Ah! Perhaps so," replied Mr. Bounderby, rattling his money and laughing.

"Then give it mouth in your own building, will you, if you please?" said Childers. "Because this isn't a strong building, and too much of you might bring it down!"

Eyeing Mr. Bounderby from head to foot again, you turned from him as from a man finally disposed of, to Mr. Gradgrind.

"Jup sent his daughter out on an errand not an hour ago, and then was seen to slip out himself, with his hat over his eyes and a bundle tied up in a handkerchief under his arm. She will never believe it of him; but he has cut away and left her."

"Pray," said Mr. Gradgrind, "why will she never believe it of him?"

"Because those two were one. Because they were never asunder. Because, up to this time, he seemed to dote upon her," said Childers, taking a step or two to look into the empty trunk. Both Mr. Childers and Master Kidderminster walked in a curious manner; with their legs wider apart than the general run of men, and with a very knowing assumption of being stiff in the knees. This walk was common to all the male members of Sleary's company, and was understood to express, that they were always half cracked—and then considered her provided for. If you should happen to have looked in to-night, for the purpose of telling him that you were going to do her any little service," said Mr. Childers, stroking his face again, and repeating his look, "it would be very fortunate and well timed; very fortunate and well timed."

"On the contrary," returned Mr. Gradgrind. "I came to tell him that her connexions made her not an object for the school, and that she must not attend any more. Still, if her father really has left her, without any connivance on her part—Bounderby, let me have a word with you."

Upon this, Mr. Childers politely betook himself, with his equestrian walk, to the landing outside the door, and there stood stroking his face and softly whistling. While, from Mr. Gradgrind, he heard in his own building, the various members of Sleary's company gradually gathered together from the upper regions, where they were quartered, and, from standing about, talking in low voices to one another and to Mr. Childers, gradually insinuated themselves and him into the room. There were two or three handsome young women among them, with their two or three husbands, and their two or three mothers, and their eight or nine little children, who did the fairy business when required. The father of one of the families was in the habit of balancing the father of another of the families on the top of a great pole; the father of a third family often made a pyramid of both those fathers, with Master Kidderminster for the apex, and himself for the base; all the fathers could dance upon rolling casks, stand upon bottles, catch knives and..."
hands, twirl hand-basins, ride upon anything, jump over everything, and stick at nothing. All the mothers could (and did) dance, upon the slack wire and the tight rope, and perform rapid action bare-backed steeds; none of them were at all particular in respect of showing their legs; and one of them, alone in a Greek chariot, drove six in hand into every town they came to. They all assumed to be mighty rash and knowing, they were not very tidy in their private dresses, they were not at all orderly in their domestic arrangements, and the combined literature of the whole company would have produced but a poor letter on any subject. Yet there was a remarkable gentleness and childishness about these people, a special insatiability for any kind of sharp practice, and an unflinching readiness to help and pity one another, deserving, often of as much respect, and always of as much generous construction, as the every-day virtues of any class of people in the world.

Last of all appeared Mr. Sleary: a stout man as already mentioned, with one fixed eye and one loose eye, a voice (if it can be called so) like the efforts of a broken old pair of bellows, a flabby surface, and a muddled head which was never sober and never drunk.

"Thquire!" said Mr. Sleary, who was troubled with asthma, and whose breath came far too thick and heavy for the letter s, "Your servant! Thither is a bad piteous of bithith, thith ith. You've heard of my Clown and thith dog being suppothed to have murrithed?"

Headaddress Mr. Gradgrind, who answered "Yes."

"Well Thquire," he returned, taking off his hat, and rubbing the lining with his pocket-handkerchief, which he kept inside it for the purpose, "Ith it your intentionth to do anything for the poor girl, Thquire?"

"I shall have something to propose to her when she comes back," said Mr. Gradgrind.

"I'm glad to hear it, Thquire. Not that I want to thay nothing, Thquire, while you wait. Thbl it be Therry?" said Mr. Sleary, with hospitable ease.

"Nothing for me, I thank you," said Mr. Gradgrind.

"Don't thy nothing, Thquire. What doth your friend thay? If you have'nt took your feed yet, have a glath of bitterth."

Here his daughter Josephine—a pretty fair-haired girl of eighteen, who had been tied on a horse at two years old, and had made a will at twelve, which she always carried about with her, expressive of her dying desire to be drawn to the grave by the two piebald ponies—cried. "Father, hush! she has come back!" Then came Sissy Jupe, running into the room as she had run out of it. And when she saw them all assembled, and saw their looks, and saw no father there, she broke into a most deplorable cry, and took refuge on the bosom of the most accomplished tight-rope lady (herself in the family way), who knelt down on the floor to nurse her, and to weep over her.

"Ith an infernal thame, upon my thoul it ith," said Sleary.

"O my dear father, my good kind father, where are you gone? You are gone to try to do me some good, I know! You are gone away for my sake, I am sure. And how miserable and helpless you will be without me, poor, poor father, until you come back!"

It was so pathetic to hear her saying many things of this kind, with her face turned upward, and her shadow cast out as if she were trying to stop his departing shadow and embrace it, that no one spoke a word until Mr. Bounderby (growing impatient) took the case in hand.

"Now, good people all," said he, "this is wanton waste of time. Let the girl understand the fact. Let her take it from me, if you like, who have been run away from myself. Here, what's your name? Your father has abscended—deserted you—and you mustn't expect to see him again as long as you live."

They cared so little for plain Fact, these people, and were in that advanced state of degeneracy on the subject, that instead of being impressed by the speaker's strong common sense, they took it in extraordinary dudgeon. The men muttered "Shame!" and the women "Brute!" and Sleary, in some haste, communicated the following hint, apart to Mr. Bounderby.

"I tell you what, Thquire. To thpeak plain to you, my opinion ith that you cut it thort, and drop it. They're a very good natur'd people, my people, but they're accustomed to be quick in their movement; and if you don't act upon my advitve, I'm damned if I don't believe they'll pit you out o' winder."

Mr. Bounderby being restrained by this mild suggestion, Mr. Gradgrind found an opening for his eminently practical exposition of the subject.

"It is of no moment," said he, "whether this person is to be expected back at any time, or the contrary. He is gone away, and there is no present expectation of his return. That, I believe, is agreed on all hands."

"Thath agreed, Thquire. Thick to that!"

From Sleary.

"Well then. I, who came here to inform the father of the poor girl, Jupe, that she could not be received at the school any more,
in consequence of there being practical ob-
jections, into which I need not enter, to the
reception there of the children of persons so
employed, am prepared in these altered cir-
cumstances to make a proposal. I am willing
to take charge of you, Jupe, and to educate
you, and provide for you. The only condition
(over and above your good behaviour) I make
is, that you decide now, at once, whether to
accompany me or remain here. Also, that if
you accompany me now, it is understood that
you communicate no more with any of your
friends, who are here present. These observ-
ations comprise the whole of the case."

"At the thame time," said Sieary, "I
muth put in my word, Thquire, tho' that both
niches of the banner may be equally theen.

If you like, Thetithia, to be prentit, you
know the natur of the work and you know
your companionth, Emma Gordon, in whothe
lap you're a lyn' at prethent, would be a
mother to you, and Jotliphine would be a
thitther to you. I don't pretend to be of the
angel breed myself, and I don't thay but
when father comes back," cried the girl,
"You may be quite at ease," said Mr. Grad-
grind. "I say no more.

The last words had a visible effect upon her.
She stopped in her wild crying, a little de-
Association, freezing, and drew a long breath
together, that plainly

The latter part of this speech was addressed
to Mr. Gradgrind, who received it with a grave
inclusion of his head, and then remarked.

The only observation I will make to you
Jupe, in the way of influencing your decision,
is, that it is highly desirable to have a sound
practical education, and that even your father
himself (from what I understand) appears,
on your behalf, to have known and felt that
much."

The women sadly bestirred themselves to
get the clothes together—it was soon done,
for they were not many—and to pack them
in a basket which had often travelled with
them. Sissy sat all the time, upon the ground,
still sobbing and covering her eyes. Mr.
Gradgrind and his friend Bounderby stood
near the door, ready to take her away. Mr.
Sieary stood in the middle of the room,
with the male members of the company about him,
and who moodily withdrew. Mr. Sieary was
assumed the professional attitude when they
found themselves near Sieary), and give her a
parting kiss—Master Kidderminster excepted,
and who moodily withdrew. Mr. Sieary
was reserved until the last. Opening his arms
wide he took her by both her hands, and would
have sprung her up and down, after the riding-
master manner of congratulating young ladies
on their dismounting from a rapid act; but
there was no rebound in Sissy, and she only
stood before him crying.

"Good bye, my dear!" said Sieary, "You'll
make your fortune, I hope, and none of our
poor folkth will ever trouble you, I'll pound it.

The basket packed in silence, they brought
her bonnet to her, and smoothed her disor-
dered hair, and put it on. Then they pressed
about her, and bent over her in very natural
attitudes, kissing and embracing her; and
brought the children to take leave of her;
and were a tender-hearted, simple, foolish set
of women altogether.

"Now, Jupe," said Mr. Gradgrind. "If
you are quite determined, come!"

But she had to take her farewell of the male
part of the company yet, and every one of
them had to unfold his arms (for they all
assumed the professional attitude when they
found themselves near Sieary), and give her a
parting kiss—Master Kidderminster excepted,
in whose young nature there was an original
flavour of the misanthrope, who was also
known to have harboured matrimonial views,
and who moodily withdrew. Mr. Sieary
was reserved until the last. Opening his arms
wide he took her by both her hands, and would
have sprung her up and down, after the riding-
master manner of congratulating young ladies
on their dismounting from a rapid act; but
there was no rebound in Sissy, and she only
stood before him crying.

"Good bye, my dear!" said Sieary, "You'll
make your fortune, I hope, and none of our
poor folkth will ever trouble you, I'll pound it.

With that, he regarded her attentively with
his fixed eye, surveyed his company with the
loose one, kissed her, shook his head, and
handed her to Mr. Gradgrind as to a horse.

"There the ith, Thquire," he said, sweeping

no power of keeping you against his will, and
he would have no difficulty, at any time, in
finding Mr. Thomas Gradgrind of Coketown.
I am well known."

"Well known," assented Mr. Sieary, rolling
his loose eye. "You're one of the thort,
Thquire, that keepth a prethious thight of
money out of the houthe. But never mind that
at prethent."

There was another silence; and then she
exclaimed, sobbing with her hands before her
face, "Oh give me my clothes, give me
clothes, and let me go away before I break
my heart!"

"Be sure you know your own mind, Jupe,"
Mr. Gradgrind cautioned her; "I say no more.

But what I thay, Thquire, ith, that good

then her father hadn't taken hith dog with
him; it's a ill-conwenienth to have the dog
out of the blith. But on thecond though th,
he wouldn't have performed without hith
mother, tho' ith ath broad ath ith long! "

The former turned to Mr. Gradgrind, who received it with a grave
inclusion of his head, and then remarked.

"Thleary. Thath my name, Thquire. Not
atoomed of it. Known all over Engiland,
and awway paythe ith way."

"Thleary. Thath my name, Thquire. Not
atoomed of it. Known all over Engiland,
and awway paythe ith way.

"Must find out Mr. Sieary, who would then
let him know where you went. I should have
the clothes, and let me go away before I break
my heart!"

"You're one of the thort,
Thquire, that keepth a prethious thight of
money out of the houthe. But never mind that
at prethent."

There was another silence; and then she
exclaimed, sobbing with her hands before her
face, "Oh give me my clothes, give me
clothes, and let me go away before I break
my heart!"

"Be sure you know your own mind, Jupe,"
Mr. Gradgrind cautioned her; "I say no more.
her with a professional glance as if she were being adjusted in her seat, "and the'll do you just thete. Good by Cestilia!" "Good by Cecilia!" "Good by Sisay!"

"God bless you dear!" in a variety of voices from all the room.

But the riding-master eye had observed the bottle of the nine oils in her bosom, and he now interposed with "Leave the bottle, my dear; it large to carry; it will be of no use to you now. Give it to me!"

"No, no!" she said, in another burst of tears. "Oh no! Pray let me keep it for father till he comes back! He will want it, when he comes back. He had never thought of going away, when he sent me for it. I must keep it for him, if you please!"

"No be it, my dear. (You thee how it ith, Thquire?) Farewell, Thetheilia! My laith worth to you ith thith. Thick to the ternuth of your engagement, be obedient to the Thquire, and forget uth. But if, when you're grown up and married and well off, you come upon any horthe-riding ever, don't be like the rest with it, give it a Etehpeak if you can, and think you might do wurth. People muthth be amuthed, Thquire, thomehow," continued Sleary, rendered more pursy than ever, by so much talking; "they can't be alwayth a working, nor yet they can't be alwayth a learning. Make the behth of uth: not the wurthth. I've got my living out of the horthe-riding all my life, I know; I con-thith that I lay down the philothophy of the thoundation when I thay to you, Thquire, make the behth of uth: not the wurthth!"

The Sleary philosophy was propounded as they went down stairs; and the fixed eye of Philosophy—and its rolling eye, too—soon lost the three figures and the basket in the darkness of the street.

OUT IN THE DESERT.

There is no word which suggests more vague and horrible ideas than the Desert. We are prone, rather from the impressions left by classical writers and poets than from exact geographical study, to imagine it as a sea of sand, now stretching in level uniformity on every side to a circular horizon, now raised towards by idling on the way. When the beds of valleys or in almost imperceptible hollows in the plain were expanses covered by a growth of dwarf plants with more weed than leaf, or even by sparse thickets of rather lively green. Then the camels stretched down their long necks, now to one side, now to the other; not absolutely stopping but pausing to snatch mouthfuls, which they munched as they went. If they were denied the privilege, say the Bedouins, they would soon be exhausted and unable to places, though small, and in this way only can we account for the fact, that as far as history or tradition takes us back, we hear of caravan routes crossing it in every direction, with regular stations and places of rendezvous. There are difficulties and dangers to be overcome certainly; but imagination is a great coward, and requires to be comforted by science. Wonderful was the story of the Simoom; but, although a recent traveller persuaded himself that he saw water boil beneath its Influence, two-thirds of what we hear of it may be ranked with the marvels of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

Yet there is something fascinating in the way in which the Orientals tell of the perils of desert-travelling, especially when we know that however those perils may have been exaggerated, they have a real existence after all, that lives have been lost, that whole caravans have truly "foundered" in a sea of sand, and that every difficult trajectory is strewed with bones, not always of camels. Although, therefore, after some time spent in the Libyan waste, I had begun to look upon it as a very comfortable sort of place indeed—the chances of dying by thirst or heat, or frays with robbers, not always suggesting themselves—yet, when I left a well announced as the last for four days, a slight feeling of awe seemed not inappropriate. Silence prevailed in the caravan for a time—all my companions being in the same mood of mind.

There are several sorts of caravans or Kafulas. Ours was composed simply of travellers; and it is worth while saying a word or two of its economy, in order that readers accustomed to a rather more expeditious mode of proceeding may be enabled to realise the slowness of our progress. We had with us nine camels to carry baggage, provisions, and water for nine men; whilst for "equestrian" purposes we had six animals which we rather vulgarly designated Jerusalem ponies. The four travellers walked or rode as they chose; their two servants generally walked; whilst the escort of three Bedouins shuffled along in their slippers or climbed up and sat between the water-skins or on the tent-gear. Our average rate of progress was two miles and a half per hour; for whatever was gained by pushing forward at a more rapid rate, was sure to be lost afterwards by idling on the way. When the country was absolutely arid we went steadily on in a compact body; but occasionally in the beds of valleys or in almost imperceptible hollows in the plain were expanses covered by a growth of dwarf plants with more weed than leaf, or even by sparse thickets of rather lively green. Then the camels stretched down their long necks, now to one side, now to the other; not absolutely stopping but pausing to snatch mouthfuls, which they munched as they went. If they were denied the privilege, say the Bedouins, they would soon be exhausted and unable to
MR. BOUNDERBY being a bachelor, an elderly lady presided over his establishment, in consideration of a certain annual stipend. Mrs. Sparsit was this lady's name; and she was a prominent figure in attendance on Mr. Bouncerby's car, as it rolled along in triumph with the Bully of humility inside.

For, Mrs. Sparsit had not only seen different days, but was highly connected. She had a great aunt living in these very times called Lady Scadgers. Mr. Sparsit, deceased, of whom she was the relict, had been by the mother's side what Mrs. Sparsit still called "a Powler." Strangers of limited information and dull apprehension were sometimes observed not to know what a Powler was, and even to appear uncertain whether it might be a business, or a political party, or a profession of faith. The better class of minds, however, did not need to be informed that the Powlers were an ancient stock, who could trace themselves so exceedingly far back that it was not surprising if they sometimes lost themselves—which I they had rather frequently done, as respected horse-flesh, blind-hookey, Hebrew monetary transactions, and the Insolvent Debtors Court.

The late Mr. Sparsit, being by the mother's side a Powler, married this lady, being by the father's side a Scadgers. Lady Scadgers; and, partly to spite her ladyship, and partly to maintain herself, went out at a salary. And here she was now, in her elderly days, with the Coriolanian style of nose and the dense black eyebrows which had captivated Sparsit, making Mr. Bounderby's tea as he took his breakfast.

If Bounderby had been a Conqueror, and Mrs. Sparsit a captive Princess whom he took about as a feature in his state-processions, he could not have made a greater flourish with her than he habitually did. Just as it belonged to his boastfulness to depreciate his own extraction, so it belonged to it to exalt Mrs. Sparsit's. In the measure that he would not allow his own youth to have been attended by a single favourable circumstance, he brightened Mrs. Sparsit's juvenile career with every possible advantage, and showered wagon-loads of early roses all over that lady's path. "And yet, sir," he would say, "how does it turn out after all? Why here she is at a hundred a year (I give her a hundred, which she is pleased to term handsome), keeping the house of Josiah Bounderby of Coke-town!"

Nay, he made this foil of his so very widely known, that third parties took it up, and handled it on some occasions with considerable briskness. It was one of the most exasperating attributes of Bounderby, that he not only sang his own praises but stimulated other men to sing them. There was a moral infection of claptrap in him. Strangers, modest enough elsewhere, started up at dinners in Coketown, and boasted, in quite a rampant way, of Bounderby. They made him out to be the Royal arms, the Union-Jack, Magna Charta, John Bull, Habeas Corpus, the Bill of Rights, An Englishman's house is his castle, Church and State, and God save the Queen, all put together. And as often (and it was very often) as an orator of this kind brought into his peroration,

"Princes and Lords may flourish or may fade, A breath can make them, as a breath has made:"

—it was, for certain, more or less understood among the company that he had heard of Mrs. Sparsit.

"Mr. Bounderby," said Mrs. Sparsit, "you are unusually slow, sir, with your breakfast this morning."
"Why, ma'am," he returned, "I am thinking about Tom Gradgrind's whim;" "Tom Gradgrind's whim," said Mrs. Sparsit, "or a bluff independent manner of speaking—as if somebody were always endeavouring to bribe him with immense sums to say Thomas, and he wouldn't; "Tom Gradgrind's whim, ma'am, of bringing up the tumbling girl."

"The girl is now waiting to know," said Mrs. Sparsit, "whether she is to go straight to the school, or up to the Lodge."

"She must wait, ma'am," answered Bounderby, "till I know myself. We shall have Tom Gradgrind down here presently, I suppose, if he should wish her to remain here a day or two longer, of course she can, ma'am." I told the course she can if you wish it, Mr. Bounderby."

"I told him I would give her a shake-down here, last night, in order that he might sleep on it before he decided to let her have any association with Louisa."

"Indeed, Mr. Bounderby? Very thoughtful of you!"

"Mrs. Sparsit's Corolianian nose underwent a slight expansion of the nostrils, and her black eyebrows contracted as she took a sip of tea."

"It's tolerably clear to me," said Bounderby, "that the little puss can get small good out of such companionship."

"Are you speaking of young Miss Gradgrind, Mr. Bounderby?"

"Yes, ma'am, I am speaking of Louisa."

"Your observation being limited to 'little puss,'" said Mrs. Sparsit, "and there being two little girls in question, I did not know which might be indicated by that expression."

"I was,' repeated Mr. Bounderby. "Louisa, Louisa."

"You are quite another father to Louisa, sir," Mrs. Sparsit took a little more tea; and, as she bent her again contracted eyebrows over her steaming cup, rather looked as if her classical countenance were invoking the infernal gods."

"If you had said I was another father to Tom—young Tom, I mean, not my friend Tom Gradgrind—you might have been nearer the mark. I am going to take young Tom into my office. Going to have him under my wing, ma'am."

"Indeed? Rather young for that, is he not, sir?" Mrs. Sparsit's "sir," in addressing Mr. Bounderby, was a word of ceremony, rather exacting consideration for herself in the use, than honouring him.

"I'm not going to take him at once; he is to finish his educational cramming before them," said Bounderby. "By the Lord Harry, he'll have enough of it, first and last! He'd open his eyes, that boy would, if he knew how empty of learning my young maw was, at his time of life." Which, by the by, he probably did know, for he had heard of it often enough. "But it's extraordinary the difficulty I have on scores of such subjects, in speaking to any one on equal terms. Here, for example, I have been speaking to you this morning about Tumblers. Why, what do you know about tumblers? At the time when, to have been a tumbler in the mud of the streets, would have been a godsend to me, a prize in the lottery to me, you were at the Italian Opera. You were coming out of the Italian Opera, ma'am, in white satin and jewels, a blaze of splendor, when I hadn't a penny to buy a link to light you."

"I certainly, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, with a dignity serenely mournful, "was familiar with the Italian Opera at a very early age."

"Egad, ma'am, so was I," said Bounderby, "with decent resignation, "it is not necessary that you should do anything of that kind. I hope I have learnt how to accommodate myself to the changes of life. If I have acquired an interest in hearing of your instructive experiences, and can scarcely hear enough of them, I claim no merit for that, since I believe it is a general sentiment."

"Well, ma'am," said her patron, "perhaps some people may be pleased to say that they do like to hear, in his own unpolished way, what Josiah Bounderby of Coketown has gone through. But you must confess that you were born in the lap of luxury, yourself. Come, ma'am, you know you were born in the lap of luxury."

"I do not, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit with a shake of her head, "deny it."

"Mr. Bounderby was obliged to get up from table, and stand with his back to the fire, looking at her; she was such an enhancement of his merits.

"And you were in crack society. Devilish high society," he said, warming his legs.

"It is true, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, with an affectation of humility the very opposite of his, and therefore in no danger of justifying it. You were in the tiptop fashion, and all the rest of it," said Mr. Bounderby.

"Yes, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, with a kind of social widowhood upon her. "It is unquestionably true."

Mr. Bounderby, bending himself at the knees, bowed low, and added in his great satisfaction, and laughed aloud. Mr. and Miss Gradgrind being then announced, he received the former with a shake of the hand, and the latter with a kiss.

"Can Jupe be sent here, Bounderby?" asked Mr. Gradgrind.
Certainly. So Jupe was sent there. On coming in, she curtseyed to Mr. Bounderby, and to his friend Mr. Gradgrind, and also to Louisa; but in her confusion unluckily omitted Mrs. Sparsit. Observing this, the illustrious Bounderby had the following remarks to make:

"Now, I tell you what, my girl. The name of that lady by the teapot, is Mrs. Sparsit. That lady acts as mistress of this house, and she is a highly connected lady. Consequently, if ever you come again into any room in this house, you will make a short stay in it, if you don't behave towards that lady in your most respectful manner. Now, I don't care a button what you do to me, because I don't affect to be anybody. So far from having high connections, I have no connections at all, and I come of the scum of the earth. But towards that lady, I do care what you do; and you shall do what is deferential and respectful, or you shall not come here."

"I hope, Bounderby," said Mr. Gradgrind, in an inquisitive voice, "that this was merely an oversight."

"My friend Tom Gradgrind suggests, Mrs. Sparsit," said Bounderby, "that this was merely an oversight. Very likely. However, as you are aware, ma'am, I don't allow of even oversights towards you."

"You are very good indeed, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, shaking her head with her State humility. "It is not worth speaking of."

Sissy, who all this time had been faintly observing herself with tears in her eyes, was now waved over by the master of the house to Mr. Gradgrind. She stood, looking intently at him, and Louisa stood coldly by, with her eyes upon the ground, while he proceeded thus:

"Jupe, I have made up my mind to take you into my house; and, when you are not in attendance at the school, to employ you to expressly understand that the whole of that subject is past, and is not to be referred to any more. From this time you begin your history. You are, at present, ignorant, I know."

"Yes, sir, very," she answered, curtseying.

"I shall have the satisfaction of causing you to be strictly educated; and you will be a living proof to all who come into communication with you, of the advantages of the training you will receive. You will be reclaimed and formed. You have been in the habit, now, of reading to your father, and those people I found you among, I dare say?" said Mr. Gradgrind, beckoning her nearer to him before he said so, and dropping his voice.

"Only to father and Merrylegs, sir. At least I mean to father, when Merrylegs was always there."

"Never mind Merrylegs, Jupe," said Mr. Gradgrind, with a passing frown. "I don't ask about him. I understand you to have been in the habit of reading to your father?"

"O yes, sir, thousands of times. They were the happiest—O, of all the happy times we had together, sir!"

It was only now, when her grief broke out, that Louisa looked at her.

"And what," asked Mr. Gradgrind, in a still lower voice, "did you read to your father, Jupe?"


"There!" said Mr. Gradgrind, "that is enough. Never breathe a word of such destructive nonsense any more. Bounderby, this is a case for rigid training, and I shall observe it with interest."

"Well," returned Mr. Bounderby, "I have given you my opinion already, and I shouldn't do as you do. But, very well, very well. Since you are bent upon it, very well!"

So, Mr. Gradgrind and his daughter took Cecilia Jupe off with them to Stone Lodge, and on the way Louisa never spoke one word, good or bad. And Mr. Bounderby went about his daily pursuits. And Mrs. Sparsit got behind her eyebrows and meditated in the gloom of that retreat, all the morning.

CHAPTER VIII

Let us strike the key note again, before pursuing the tune.

When she was half a dozen years younger, Louisa had been overheard to begin a conversation with her brother one day, by saying "Tom, I wonder"—upon which Mr. Gradgrind, who was the person overhearing, stepped forth into the light, and said, "Louisa, never wonder!"

Herein lay the spring of the mechanical art and mystery of educating the reason without stooping to the cultivation of the sentiments and affections. Never wonder. By means of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, settle everything somehow, and never wonder. Bring to me, says M'Choakumchild, yonder baby just able to walk, and I will engage that it shall never wonder.

Now, besides very many babies just able to walk, there happened to be in Coketown a considerable population of babies who had been walking against time towards the infinite world, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years and more. These portentous infants being alarming creatures to stalk about in any human society, the eighteen denominations incessantly scratched one another's faces and pulled one another's hair; by way of agreeing on the steps to be taken for their improvement—which they never did; a surprising circumstance, when the happy adaptation of the means to the end is considered. Still, although they differed in every other particular, concealable and inconceivable (especially inconceivable), they were
pretty well united on the point that these unlucky infants were never to wonder. Body number one, said they must take everything on trust. Body number two, said they must take everything on political economy. Body number three, wrote leaden little books for them, showing how the good grown-up baby invariably got to the Savings Bank, and the bad grown-up baby invariably got transported. Body number four, under dreary pretences of being droll (when it was very melancholy indeed), made the shallowest pretences of concealing pitfalls of knowledge, into which it was the duty of these babies to be smuggled and inveigled. But, all the bodies agreed that they were never to wonder.

There was a library in Coke town, to which general access was easy. Mr. Gradgrind greatly tormented his mind about what the people read in this library: a point whereon little rivers of tabular statements periodically flowed into the howling ocean of tabular statements, which no diver ever got to any depth in and came up sane. It was a distressing circumstance, but a melancholy fact, that these readers persisted in wondering. They wondered about human nature, human passions, human hopes and fears, the struggles, triumphs and defeats, the cares and joys and sorrows, the lives and deaths, of common men and women. They sometimes, after fifteen hours' work, sat down to read mere fables about men and women, Prig, why, it stands to reason, I must be a common man and woman. They some­

*As to me,* said Tom, tumbling his hair about and seeing something, and hearing something, "I get as much pleasure as one, and I should like to kick like one."

"Not me, I hope, Tom?"

"No, Loo; I wouldn't hurt you. I made an exception of you at first. I don't know what this—fully old—audaciously old—body number four, said they must take everything, and the other two, said what I am. I am as obstinate as one, I am more stupid than one, I get as much pleasure as one, and I should like to kick like one."

"Why, of course I do. What's the use of talking about it?" returned Tom, chafing his face on his coat-sleeve as if to mortify his flesh, and have it in unison with his spirit.

"Because, Tom," said his sister, after silence watching the sparks awhile, "as I get older, and nearer growing up, I often sit wonder­ing here, and think how unfortunate it is for me that I can't reconcile you to something better than I am able to. I don't know what other girls know. I can't play to you, or sing to you. I can't talk to you as to lighten your mind, for I never see any amusing books that it would be a pleasure or a relief to you to talk about, when you are tired."

"Well, no more do I. I am as bad as you in that respect; and I am a Mule too, which you're not. If father was determined to make me either a Prig or a Mule, and I am not a Prig, why, it stands to reason, I must be a Mule. And so I am," said Tom, desperately."

"It's a great pity," said Louisa, after another pause, and speaking thoughtfully out of her dark corner; "it's a great pity, Tom. It's very unfortunate for both of us."

"Oh! You," said Tom; "you are a girl, Loo, and a girl comes out of it better than a boy could. I can't make anything in you. You are the only pleasure I have—you can breathe even this place—and you can always lead me as you like."

"You are a dear brother, Tom; and while you think I can do such things, I don't so much mind knowing better. Though I do know better, Tom, and am very sorry for it."

She came and kissed him, and went back into her corner again.

"I wish I could collect all the Facts we hear so much about," said Tom, spitefully setting his teeth, "and all the Figures, and all the people who found them out; and I wish I could put a thousand barrels of gunpowder under them, and blow them all up together! However, when I go to live with old Bound­erby, I'll have my revenge."

"Your revenge, Tom?"

"I mean, I'll enjoy myself a little, and go about and see something, and hear something. I'll recompense myself for the way in which I have been brought up."

"But don't disappoint yourself beforehand, Tom. Mr. Bounderby thinks as father thinks, and is a great deal rougher, and not half so kind."

"I am sick of my life, Loo. I hate it altogether, and I hate everybody except you," said the unnatural young Thomas Gradgrind in the hair-cutting chamber at twilight.

"You don't hate Sissy, Tom."

"I hate to be obliged to call her Jupe. And she hates me," said Tom moodily.

"No she does not, Tom, I am sure."

"She must," said Tom. "She must just hate and detest the whole set-out of us. They'll bother her head off, I think, before they have done with her. Already she's getting as pale as wax, and as heavy as—I am."

Young Thomas expressed these sentiments, sitting astride of a chair before the fire, with his arms on the back, and his sulky face on his arms. His sister sat in the darker corner by the fireside, now looking at him, now looking at the bright sparks as they dropped upon the hearth.

As to me," said Tom, tumbthing his hair all manner of ways with his sulky hands, "I am a Donkey, that's what I am. I am as obstinate as one, I am more stupid than one, I get as much pleasure as one, and I should like to kick like one."

"I am as bad as you in that respect; and I am a Mule too, which you're not. If father was determined to make me either a Prig or a Mule, and I am not a Prig, why, it stands to reason, I must be a Mule. And so I am," said Tom, desperately."

"It's a great pity," said Louisa, after another pause, and speaking thoughtfully out of her dark corner; "it's a great pity, Tom. It's very unfortunate for both of us."

"Oh! You," said Tom; "you are a girl, Loo, and a girl comes out of it better than a boy could. I can't make anything in you. You are the only pleasure I have—you can breathe even this place—and you can always lead me as you like."

"You are a dear brother, Tom; and while you think I can do such things, I don't so much mind knowing better. Though I do know better, Tom, and am very sorry for it."

She came and kissed him, and went back into her corner again.

"I wish I could collect all the Facts we hear so much about," said Tom, spitefully setting his teeth, "and all the Figures, and all the people who found them out; and I wish I could put a thousand barrels of gunpowder under them, and blow them all up together! However, when I go to live with old Bound­erby, I'll have my revenge."

"Your revenge, Tom?"

"I mean, I'll enjoy myself a little, and go about and see something, and hear something. I'll recompense myself for the way in which I have been brought up."

"But don't disappoint yourself beforehand, Tom. Mr. Bounderby thinks as father thinks, and is a great deal rougher, and not half so kind."
"Oh!" said Tom, laughing; "I don't mind that. I shall very well know how to manage and smooth the old Bouncerby!"

"Their shadows were defined upon the wall, but those of the high presses in the room were all blended together on the wall and on the ceiling, as if the brother and sister were overhung by a dark cavern. Or, a fanciful imagination—if such treason could have been there—might have made it out to be the shadow of their subject, and of its lowering association with their future.

"What is your great mode of smoothing and managing, Tom? Is it a secret?"

"Oh!" said Tom, "if it is a secret, it's not far off. It's you. You are his little pet, you are his favourite; he'll do anything for you. When he says to me what I don't like, I shall say to him, 'My sister Loo will be hurt and disappointed, Mr. Bouncerby. She always used to tell me she was sure you would be easier with me than this.' That'll bring him about, or nothing will."

After waiting for some answering remark, and getting none, Tom giddily relapsed into the present time, and twined himself yawning round and about the rails of his chair, and rumpled his head more and more, until he suddenly looked up, and asked:

"Have you gone to sleep, Loo?"

"No, Tom. I am looking at the fire."

"You seem to find more to look at in it than ever I could find," said Tom. "Another of the advantages, I suppose, of being a girl."

"Tom," enquired his sister, slowly, and in a curious tone, as if she were reading what she asked, in the fire, and it were not quite plainly written there, "do you look forward with any satisfaction to this change to Mr. Bouncerby's?"

"Why, there's one thing to be said of it," returned Tom, pushing his chair from him, and standing up; "it will be getting away from home."

"There is one thing to be said of it," Louisa repeated in her former curious tone; "it will be getting away from home. Yes."

"But not what I shall be very unwilling, both to leave you, Loo, and to leave you here. But I must go, you know, whether I like it or not; and I had better go where I can take with me some advantage of your influence, than where I should lose it altogether. Don't you see it?"

"Yes, Tom."

The answer was so long in coming, though there was no indecision in it, that Tom went and leaned on the back of her chair, to contemplate the fire which so engrossed her, from her point of view, and see what he could make of it.

"Except that it is a fire," said Tom, "it looks to me as stupid and blank as everything else looks. What do you see in it? Not a clue?

"I don't see anything in it, Tom, particularly. But since I have been looking at it, I have been wondering about you and me, grown up."

"Wondering again!" said Tom.

"I have such unmanageable thoughts," returned his sister, "that they will wonder."

"Then I beg of you, Louisa," said Mrs. Gradgrind, who had opened the door without being heard, "to do nothing of that description, for goodness sake you insconsiderate girl, or I shall never hear the last of it from your father. And Thomas, it is really shameful, with your poor head continually wearing me out, that a boy brought up as you have been, and whose education has cost what yours has, should be found encouraging his sister to wonder, when he knows his father has expressly said that she is not to do it."

Louisa denied Tom's participation in the offence; but her mother stopped her with the conclusive answer, "Louisa, don't tell me, in my state of health; for unless you had been encouraged, it is morally and physically impossible that you could have done it."

"I was encouraged by nothing, mother, but by looking at the red sparks dropping out of the fire, and whitening and dying. It made me think, after all, how short my life would be, and how little I could hope to do in it."

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Gradgrind, rendered almost energetic. "Nonsense! Don't stand there and tell me such stuff, Louisa, to my face, when you know very well that if it was ever to reach your father's ears I should never hear the last of it. After all the trouble that has been taken with you! After the lectures you have attended, and the experiments you have seen! After I have heard you myself, when the whole of my right side has been benumbed, going on with your master about combustion, and calcination, and calorification, and I may say every kind of ation that could drive a poor invalid distracted, to hear you talking in this absurd way about sparks and ashes! I wish," whimpered Mrs. Gradgrind, taking a chair, and discharging her strongest point before succumbing under these mere shadows of facts, "yes, I really do wish that I had never had a family, and then you would have known what it was to do without me!"

**WIRE-DRAWING.**

WIRE was not always made by drawing. In early days metal-workers were wont to beat out their metal into thin plates or leaves, to cut the plates into narrow strips, and to round these strips by a hammer and a file until they assumed the form of wire. In the description of the sacralot garments prepared for Aaron, it is stated that the makers of the ephod, "did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work." In the regions of fable, Vulcan is declared to have forged a net of delicate wirework to entrap Venus and Mars; and if that most
HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER IX.

Sissy Jupe had not an easy time of it, between Mr. M'Choakumchild and Mrs. Gradgrind, and was not without strong impulses, in the first months of her probation, to run away. It hailed facts all day long so very hard, and life in general was opened to her as such a closely-ruled cyphering-book, that assuredly she would have run away, but for only one restraint.

It is lamentable to think of; but this restraint was the result of no arithmetical process, was self-imposed in defiance of all calculation, and went dead against any table of probabilities that any Actuary would have drawn up from the premises. The girl believed that her father had not deserted her; she lived in the hope that he would come back, and in the faith that he would be made the happier by her remaining where she was.

The wretched ignorance with which Jupe clung to this consolation, rejecting the superior comfort of knowing, on a sound arithmetical basis, that her father was an unnatural vagabond, filled Mr. Gradgrind with pity. Yet, what was to be done? M'Choakumchild reported that she had a very dense head for figures; that, once possessed with a general idea of the globe, she took the smallest conceivable interest in its exact measurements; that she was extremely slow in the acquisition of dates, unless some pitiful incident happened to be connected therewith; that she would burst into tears on being required (by the mental process) immediately to name the cost of two hundred and forty-seven muslin caps at fourteenpence halfpenny; that she was as low down, in the school, as low could be; that after eight weeks of induction into the elements of Political Economy, she had only yesterday been set right by a prattler three feet high, for returning to the question, "What is the first principle of this science?" the absurd answer, "To do unto others as I would that they should do unto me."

Mr. Gradgrind observed, shaking his head, that all this was very bad; but this restraint was the result of no arithmetical process, was self-imposed in defiance of all calculation, and went dead against any table of probabilities that any Actuary would have drawn up from the premises. The girl believed that her father had not deserted her; she lived in the hope that he would come back, and in the faith that he would be made the happier by her remaining where she was.

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"National, I think it must have been," observed Louisa.

"Yes, it was.—But isn't it the same?" she timidly asked.

"You had better say, National, as he said so," returned Louisa, with her dry reserve.

"National Prosperity. And he said, Now, this schoolroom is a Nation. And in this nation, there are fifty millions of money. Isn't this a prosperous nation? Girl number twenty, isn't this a prosperous nation, and ain't you in a thriving state?"

"What did you say?" asked Louisa.

"Miss Louisa, I said I didn't know. I thought I couldn't know whether it was a prosperous nation or not, and whether I was in a thriving state or not, unless I knew who had got the money, and whether any of it was mine. But that had nothing to do with it. It was not in the figures at all," said Sissy, wiping her eyes.

"That was a great mistake of yours," observed Louisa.

"Yes, Miss Louisa, I know it was, now. Then Mr. M'Choakumchild said he would try me again. And he said, this schoolroom is an immense town, and in it there are a million inhabitants, and only five-and-twenty are starved to death in the streets, in the course of a year. What is your remark on that proportion? And my remark was—for I couldn't think of a better one—that I thought it must be just as hard upon those who were starved, whether the others were a million, or a million million. And that was wrong, too."

"Of course it was."

"Then Mr. M'Choakumchild said he would try me once more. And he said, Here are the stutterings—"

"Statistics," said Louisa.

"Yes. But they would be another of my mistakes—of accidents upon the sea. And I find (Mr. M'Choakumchild said) that in a given time a hundred thousand persons went to sea on long voyages, and only five hundred of them were drowned or burnt to death. What is the percentage? And I said, Miss; here Sissy fairly sobbed as confessing with extreme contrition to her greatest error; "I said it was nothing."

"Nothing, Sissy?"

"Nothing, Miss—to the relations and friends of the people who were killed. I shall never learn," said Sissy. "And the worst of all is, that although my poor father wished me so much to learn, and although I am so anxious to learn because he wished me to, I am afraid I don't like it."

Louisa stood looking at the pretty modest head, as it drooped abashed before her, until it was raised again to glance at her face. Then she asked:

"Did your father know so much himself, that he wished you to be well taught too, Sissy?"
I want you to come into the drawing-room. Father has brought old Bounderby home, and moment, Tom dear.

"And your father was always kind? To the last?" asked Louisa; contravening the great principle, and wondering very much.

"Always, always!" returned Sissy, clasping her hands. "Kinder and kinder than I can tell. He was angry only one night, and that was not to me, but Merrylegs. Merrylegs;" she whispered the awful fact; "is his performing dog."

"Why was he angry with the dog?" Louisa demanded.

"Father, soon after they came home from performing, told Merrylegs to jump up on the backs of the two chairs and stand across them—not that I was interested. He looked at father, and didn't do it at once. Everything of father's had gone wrong that night, and he hadn't pleased the public at all. He cried out that the very dog knew he was failing, and had no compassion on him. Then he beat the dog, and I was frightened, and said, 'Father, father! Pray don't hurt the creature who is so fond of you! O Heaven forgive you, father, stop!' And he stopped, and the dog was bloody, and father lay down crying on the floor with the dog in his arms, and the dog licked his face."

Louisa saw that she was sobbing; and going to her, kissed her, took her hand, and sat down beside her.

"Finish by telling me how your father left you, Sissy. Now that I have asked you so much, tell me the end. The blame, if there is any blame, is mine; not yours."

"Dear Miss Louisa," said Sissy, covering her eyes and sobbing yet; "I came home from the school that afternoon, and found poor father just come home too, from the booth. And he sat rocking himself over the fire, as if he was in pain. And I said, 'Have you hurt yourself, father?' (as he did sometimes, like they all did), and he said, 'A little, my darling.' And when I came to stoop down and look up at his face, I saw that he was crying. The more I spoke to him, the more he hid his face; and at first he shook all over, and said nothing but 'My darling!' and 'My love!'"

Here Tom came lounging in, and stared at the two with a coolness not particularly savouring of interest in anything but himself, and not much of that at present.

"I am asking Sissy a few questions, Tom," observed his sister. "You have no occasion to go away; but don't interrupt us for a moment, Tom dear."

"Oh! very well!" returned Tom. "Only father has brought old Bounderby home, and I want you to come into the drawing-room, because if you come, there's a good chance of old Bounderby's asking me to dinner; and if you don't, there's none."

"I'll come directly."

"I'll wait for you," said Tom, "to make sure."

Sissy resumed in a lower voice. "At last poor father said that he had given no satisfaction again, and never did give any satisfaction now, and that he was a shame and disgrace, and I should have done better without him all along. I said all the affectionate things to him that came into my heart, and presently he was quiet and sat down by him, and told him all about the school and everything that had been said and done there. When I had no more left to tell, he put his arms round my neck, and kissed me a great many times. Then he asked me to fetch some of the stuff he used, for the little hurt he had had, and to get it at the best place, which was at the other end of town from there; and then, after kissing me again, he let me go."

"Father dear, shall I take Merrylegs?"

Father shook his head and said, 'No, Sissy; no; take nothing that's known to be mine, my darling; and I left him sitting by the fire. Then the thoughts that must come upon him, poor poor father! of going away to try something for my sake; for, when I came back, he was gone."

"I say! Look sharp for old Bounderby, Loo!" Tom remonstrated.

"There's no more to tell, Miss Louisa. I keep the nine oils ready for him, and I know he will come back. Every letter that I see in Mr. Gradgrind's hand takes my breath away and blinds my eyes, for I think it comes from father, or from Mr. Sleary about father. Mr. Sleary promised to write as soon as ever father should be heard of, and I trust to him to keep his word."

"Do look sharp for old Bounderby, Loo!" said Tom, with an impatient whistle. "He'll be off, if you don't look sharp!"

After this, whenever Sissy dropped a curtsey to Mr. Gradgrind in the presence of his family, and said in a faltering way, "I beg your pardon, sir, for being troublesome—but have you had any letter yet about me?"

Louisa would suspend the occupation of the moment, whatever it was, and look for the reply as earnestly as Sissy did. And when Mr. Gradgrind regularly answered, "No, Jupe, nothing of the sort," the trembling of Sissy's lip would be repeated in Louisa's face, and her eyes would follow Sissy with compassion to the door. Mr. Gradgrind usually improved these occasions by remarking, when she was gone, that if Jupe had been properly trained from an early age she would have demonstrated to herself on sound principles the baselessness of these fantastic hopes. Yet it did seem (though not to him, for he
"the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts to the fact.

called Old Stephen, in a kind of rough homage in addition to his own. He had known, to use possessed of the same somebody else's thorns and he had become possessed of his roses, and he had become somehow to have been.

life. It is said that every life has its roses and thorns; there seemed, however, to have been a misadventure or mistake in Stephen's case, whereby somebody else had become possessed of his roses, and he had become possessed of the same somebody else's thorns in addition to his own. He had known, to use his words, a peck of trouble. He was usually called Old Stephen, in a kind of rough homage to the fact.

A rather stooping man, with a knitted brow, a pondering expression of face, and a hard-looking head sufficiently capacious, on which his iron-grey hair lay long and thin, Old Stephen might have passed for a particularly intelligent man in his condition. Yet he was not. He took no place among those remarkable "Hands," who, piecing together their broken intervals of leisure through many years, had mastered difficult sciences, and acquired a knowledge of most unlikely things. He held no station among the Hands who could make speeches and carry on debates. Thousands of his comppeers could talk much better than he, at any time.

He was a good power-loom weaver, and a man of perfect integrity. What more he was, or what else he had in him, if anything, let him show for himself.

The lights in the great factories, which looked, when they were illuminated, like fairy palaces—or the travellers by express-train said so—were all extinguished; and the bells had rung for knocking off for the night, and had ceased again; and the Hands, men and women, boy and girl, were clattering home. Old Stephen was standing in the street, with the odd sensation upon him which the stoppage of the machinery always produced—the sensation of its having worked and stopped in his own head.

"Yet I don't see Rachel, still!" said he.

It was a wet night, and many groups of young women passed him, with their shawls drawn over their bare heads and held close under their chins to keep the rain out. He knew Rachel well, for a glance at any one of these groups was sufficient to show him that she was not there. At last, there were no more to come; and then he turned away, saying in a tone of disappointment, "Why, then, I ha' missed her!"

But, he had not gone the length of three streets, when he saw another of the shawled figures in advance of him, at which he looked so keenly that perhaps its mere shadow indistinctly reflected on the wet pavement—if he could have seen it without the figure itself moving along from lamp to lamp, brightening and fading as it went—would have been enough to tell him who was there. Making his pace at once much quicker and much softer, he darted on until he was very near this figure, then fell into his former walk, and called " Rachel!"

She turned, being then in the brightness of a lamp; and raising her hood a little, showed a quiet oval face, dark and rather delicate, irradiated by a pair of very gentle eyes, and further set off by the perfect order of her shining black hair. It was not a face in its first bloom; she was a woman five and thirty years of age.

"Ah, lad! 'Tis thou?" when she had said this, with a smile which would have been quite expressed, though nothing of her had been seen but her pleasant eyes, she replaced her hood again, and they went on together.

CHAPTER X.

I ENTERTAIN a weak idea that the English people are as hard-worked as any people upon whom the sun shines. I acknowledge to this ridiculous idiosyncrasy, as a reason why I would give them a little more play.

In the hardest working part of Coketown—in the innermost fortifications of that ugly citadel, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling, and pressing one another to death; in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of
"I thought thou wast aline, Rachael?"
"No."
"Early t'night, lass?"
"Times I'm a little early, Stephen; 'times a little late. I'm never to be counted on, going home."
"No, Stephen."

He looked at her with some disappointment in his face, but with a respectful and patient conviction that she must be right in whatever she did. The expression was not lost upon her; she laid her hand lightly on his arm a moment, as if to thank him for it.

"We are such true friends, lad, and such old friends, and getting to be such old folk, now."<br>"No, Rachael, thou'rt as young as ever thou wast."

"One of us would be puzzled how to get old, Stephen, without 't'other getting so too, both being alive," she answered, laughing; "but, any ways, we're such old friends, that 'twould be a sin and a pity. 'Tis better not to walk too much together. Times, yes! 'Twould be hard, indeed, if 'twas not to be at all," she said, with a cheerfulness she sought to communicate to him.

"'Tis better, anyways, Rachael,"
"Try to think not; and 'twill seem better."

"I've tried a long time, and 'ta'nt got better. But thou'rt right; 't'might make folk talk, even of thee. Thou hast been that to me, Rachael, through so many year; thou hast done me so much good, and heartened me in that cheerfulness way; so thy word is a law to me. Ah lass, and a bright good law! Better than some real ones."

"Never fret about them, Stephen," she answered quickly, and not without an anxious glance at his face. "Let the laws be."

"'Tis a muddle, and that's all."
"Always a muddle?" said Rachael, with another gentle touch upon his arm, as if to recall him out of the thoughtfulness, in which he was biting the long ends of his loose neckerchief as he walked along. The touch had its instantaneous effect. He let them fall, turned a smiling face upon her, and said, as he broke into a good-humoured laugh, "Ay, Rachael, lass, awius a muddle. That's where I stick. I come to the muddle many times and ages, and I never get beyond it."

They had walked some distance, and were near their own homes. The woman's was the first reached. It was in one of the many small streets for which the favourite undertaker (who turned a handsome sum out of the one poor ghastly pomp of the neighbourhood) kept a black ladder, in order that those who had done their daily grooping up and down the narrow stairs might slide out of this working world by the windows. She stopped at the corner, and putting her hand in his, wished him good night.

"Good night, dear lass; good night!"

She went, with her next figure and her sober womanly step, down the dark street, and he stood looking after her until she turned into one of the small houses. There was not a flutter of her coarse shawl, perhaps, but had its interest in this man's eyes; not a tone of her voice but had its echo in his innermost heart.

When she was lost to his view, he pursued his homeward way, glancing up sometimes at the sky, where the clouds were sailing fast and wildly. But, they were broken now, and the rain had ceased, and the moon shone—looking down the high chimneys of Coketown on the deep furnaces below, and casting Titanic shadows of the steam engines at rest, upon the walls where they were lodged. The man seemed to have brightened with the night, as he went on.

His home, in such another street as the first, saving that it was narrower, was over a little shop. How it came to pass that any people found it worth their while to sell or buy the wretched little toys, mixed up in its window with cheap newspapers and pork (there was a leg to be raffled for to-morrow night), matters not here. He took his end of candle from a shelf, lighted it at another end of candle on the counter, without disturbing the mistress of the shop who was asleep in her little room, and went up stairs into his lodging.

It was a room, not unacquainted with the black ladder under various tenants; but as neat, at present, as such a room could be. A few books and writings were on an old bureau in a corner, the furniture was decent and sufficient, and, though the atmosphere was tainted, the room was clean.

Going to the hearth to set the candle down upon, a round three-legged table standing there, he stumbled against something. As he recoiled, looking down at it, it raised itself up into the form of a woman in a raffled nightcap. He turned into one of the small houses, not noticing how its head was not turned to him. As he turned, looking down at it, it raised itself up into the form of a woman in a sitting posture by steadying herself with one grimed hand on the floor, while the other was so purposeless in trying to push away her tangled hair from her face, that it only blinded her the more with the dirt upon it. A creature so foul to look at, in her tatters, stains, and splashes, but so much fouler than that in her moral infamy, that it was a shameful thing even to see her.

"Heaven's mercy, woman!" he cried, falling farther off from the figure. "Hast thou come back again!"

Such a woman! A disabled, drunken creature, barely able to preserve the sitting posture by steadying herself with one grimed hand on the floor, while the other was so purposeless in trying to push away her tangled hair from her face, that it only blinded her the more with the dirt upon it. A creature so foul to look at, in her tatters, stains, and splashes, but so much fouler than that in her moral infamy, that it was a shameful thing even to see her.

After an impatient oath or two, and some stupid clawing of herself with the hand not necessary to her support, she got her hair...
away from her eyes sufficiently to obtain a

sight of him. Then she sat swaying her body
to and fro, and making gestures with her
unnerved arm, which seemed intended as the
accompaniment to a fit of laughter, though
her face was stolid and drowsy.

"Eigh lad! What, yo' there?" Some
hoarse sounds meant for this, came mockingly
out of her at last; and her head dropped
forward on her breast.

"Back again?" she screeched, after some
minutes, as if he had that moment said it.
"Yes! And back a-ern. Back a-ern ever and
ever so often. Back? Yes, back. Why not?"

Roused by the unmeaning violence with
which she cried it out, she scrambled up, and
stood supporting herself with her shoulders
against the wall; dangling in one hand by the
string, a dung-hill-fragment of a bonnet, and
trying to look scornfully at him.

"I'll sell thee off again, and I'll sell thee
off again, and I'll sell thee off a score of
times!" she cried, with something between a
furious menace and an effort at a defiant
dance. "Come away from th' bed!" He was
sitting on the side of it, with his face hidden
in his hands. "Come away from t'. Tis
mine, and I've a right to't!"

As she staggered to it, he avoided her with
a shudder, and passed—his lace still hidden—

his hands. "'Tis mine, and I've a right to it!"

It may be as well, just now, to "take
stock" in respect to our photographic
and stereoscopic knowledge: to see how
far the photograph and the stereoscope,
and stereoscopic knowledge: to see how
much has been accomplished in the, production of
photographs and in the use of them in their artistic appli-
cations. The principles involved in the processes and
apparatus, with an account of explanatory
details, occupied two papers in former
volumes. The present article may be con-
sidered in some sense supplementary to
those. Let us first say a little concerning these
beautiful arts in their artistic applica-
tions.

How astonishing that the sun's light
should be made to engrave a steel plate!
We know that electricity can do something
of this kind, on copper if not on steel; but
really it seems even yet more marvellous and
beautiful that such deeds can be achieved by
the agency of light. Attempts have been
made, during many years, to complete the
photographic process by engraving the plate
impressed with the image; that is, by causing
the photographic image to engrave itself, by
chemical aid alone, without requiring it to
be touched in any way by the hand of
artist or engraver. It was a bold thing to

hope, but seemingly not too bold; for just
about a year ago Mr. Talbot announced that
he had actually succeeded in the attempt. To
understand the mode of proceeding, it may
be necessary to bear in mind that Mr. Talbot
gives the name of positive etching to an
etching of such a kind that the impressions
struck off from it represent the objects pos-
tively, or as they are in nature. Well, then;
the objects most successfully engraved are
said to be such as can be placed in contact
with the metallic plate—the leaf of a fern,
the light, feathery flowers of a grass, a piece
of lace, and so forth. Objects which cast a
broad and uniform shadow, such as the
opaque leaf of a fern or other plant, produce
an etching, which, when printed off, delineates
the original in a manner something between
an aquatint engraving and an Indian ink
drawing. Even a photograph on paper can
be made to engrave itself on steel. The
minute chemistry of the matter we need say
nothing about; but the processes are some-
what as follow:—A salt of potash is dissolved
in its acid, and is spread over the
steel plate; it is dried by artificial
warmth; the selected object is laid on the
prepared plate, and is pressed down
close to it by a piece of plate glass; the
sun's rays are allowed to act through the
glass upon the object and upon the steel
plate. The part of the steel plate covered
by the object is protected from the action
of the solar rays, and remains yellow and
unaltered; but those portions which are
not covered by the object become to some
extent chemically acted upon, and
assume a brownish hue. The glass and the
object being removed, the plate is steeped
in water, by which most of the unchanged
layer or film of potash and isinglass is
washed off, leaving the metallic steel more
nearly exposed than in the other parts.
Another chemical solution, prepared from
platinum, then has the effect of etching the
plate in those exposed parts. Mr. Talbot
describes the etching as being so complete
that it appears almost as if the shadow of the
object had itself corroded the metal. If
a veil of black crape be laid upon the metal
plate, every thread of it becomes engraved or
etched with wonderful precision and dis-
distinctness; and if two thicknesses of the crape
are placed upon the metal, obliquely to each
other, the resulting engraving offers us con-
fusion, but with the help of a lens the lines
belonging to each of the folds can be disinguished from those of the other. An anae-
logous process was discovered by some
French photographers; and there can
hardly be a doubt that, great results will be
produced by and by, in the production of
engraved copies by these means.

Mighty Sol, portrait painter and artist in
general, seems to be pretty nearly indifferent
to the material on which he works, provided
HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XI.

The Fairy palaces, burst out into illumination, before pale morning, showed the monstrous serpents of smoke trailing themselves over Coketown. A clattering of clogs upon the pavement; a rapid ringing of bells; and all the melancholy-mad elephants, polished and oiled up for the day's monotony, were at their heavy exercise again.

Stephen bent over his loom, quiet, watchful, and steady. A special contrast, as every man was in the forest of looms where Stephen worked, to the crashing, smashing, tearing piece of mechanism at which he laboured.

Never fear, good people of an anxious turn of mind, that Art will consign Nature to oblivion. Set anywhere, side by side, the work of GOD and the work of man; and the former, even though it be a troop of Hands of very small account, will gain in solemn dignity from the comparison.

Four hundred and more Hands in this Mill; Two hundred and fifty horse Steam Power. It is known, to the force of a single pound weight, what the engine will do; but, not all the calculators of the National Debt can tell me the capacity for good or evil, for love or hatred, for patriotism or discontent, for the decomposition of virtue into vice, or the reverse, at any single moment in the soul of one of these its quiet servants, with the composed faces and the regulated actions. There is no mystery in it; there is an unfathomable mystery in the meanest of them, for ever.—Supposing we were to reserve our arithmetic for material objects, and to govern these awful unknown quantities by other means!

The day grew strong, and showed itself outside, even against the flaming lights within. The lights were turned out, and the work went on. The rain fell, and the Smoke-serpents, submissive to the curse of all that tribe, trailed themselves upon the earth. In the waste-yard outside, the steam from the escape-pipe, the litter of barrels and old iron, the shining heaps of coals, the ashes everywhere, were shrouded in a veil of mist and rain.

The work went on, until the noon-bell rang. More clattering upon the pavements. The looms, and wheels, and Hands, all out of gear for an hour.

Stephen came out of the hot mill into the damp wind and the cold wet streets, haggard and worn. He turned from his own class and his own quarter, taking nothing but a little bread as he walked along, towards the hill on which his principal employer lived, in a red house with black outside shutters, green inside blinds, a black street door, up two white steps, BOUNDERBY (in letters very like himself) upon a brazen plate, and a round brazen door-handle underneath it like a brazen full-stop.

Mr. Bounderby was at his lunch. So Stephen had expected. Would his servant say that one of the Hands begged leave to speak to him? Message in return, requiring name of such Hand. Stephen Blackpool. There was nothing troublesome against Stephen Blackpool; yes, he might come in.

Stephen Blackpool in the parlour. Mr. Bounderby (whom he just knew by sight), at lunch on chop and sherry. Mrs. Sparsit netting at the fireside, in a sidesaddle attitude, with one foot in a cotton stirrup. It was a part, at once of Mrs. Sparsit's dignity and service, not to lunch. She supervised the meal officially, but implied that in her own stately person she considered lunch a weakness.

"Now, Stephen," said Mr. Bounderby, "what's the matter with you?"

Stephen made a bow. Not a servile one—these Hands will never do that! Lord bless you, sir, you'll never catch them at that, if they have been with you twenty years!—and, abstracting toilet for Mrs. Sparsit, tucked his neckerchief ends into his waistcoat.

"Now, you know," said Mr. Bounderby, taking some sherry, "we have never had any difficulty with you, and you have never been one of the unreasonable ones. You don't expect to be set up in a coach and six, and to be fed on turtle-soup and venison, with a gold spoon, as a good many of 'em do;" Mr. Bounderby always represented this to be the sole, immediate, and direct object of any Hand who was not entirely satisfied; "and therefore I know already that you have not come here to make a complaint. Now, you know, I am certain of that, beforehand."
"No, sir, sure I ha' not coom for nowt o' th' kind."

Mr. Bounderby seemed agreeably surprised, notwithstanding his previous strong conviction. "Very well," he returned. "You're a steady Hand, and I was not mistaken. Now, let me hear what it's all about. As it's not that, let me hear what it is.

"What have you got to say? Out with it, lad!"

Stephen happened to glance towards Mrs. Sparsit. "I can go, Mr. Bounderby, if you wish it," said that self-sacrificing lady, making a feint of taking her foot out of the stirrup.

Mr. Bounderby stayed her, by holding a mouthful of chop in suspension before swallowing it, and putting out his left hand. Then, withdrawing his hand and swallowing his mouthful of chop, he said to Stephen: "Now, you know, this good lady is a born lady, a high lady. You are not to suppose because she keeps my house for me, that she hasn't been very high up the tree—ah, up at the top of the tree! Now, if you have got anything to say that can't be said before a born lady, this lady will leave the room. If what you have got to say, can be said before a born lady, this lady will stay where she is."

"Sir, I hope I never had nowt to say, not fitten for a born lady to hear, sin' I were born myser'," was the reply, accompanied with a slight flush. "Very well," said Mr. Bounderby, pushing away his plate, and leaning back. "Fire away!"

"I ha' coom," Stephen began, raising his eyes from the floor, after a moment's consideration, "to ask yo'or advice. I needn't overmuch. I was married on a East' Monday nineteen year sin', long and dree. She were a younglass—pretty snow—wi' good accounts of hersen'. Well! She went bad—soon. Not along of me. Gonnows 1 were not a unkind husband to her."

"I have heard all this before," said Mr. Bounderby. "Sir, I was acquainted with all this, you know," said Mr. Bounderby, "except the last clause, long ago. It's a bad job; that's what it is. You had better have been satisfied as you were, and not have got married. However, it's too late to say that."

"Was it an unequal marriage, sir, in point of years?" asked Mrs. Sparsit.

"You hear what this lady asks. Was it an unequal marriage in point of years, this unlucky job of yours?" said Mr. Bounderby. "Not e'en so. I were one-and-twenty myser', of years."

"Indeed, sir?" said Mrs. Sparsit to her Chief, with great placidity. "I inferred, from its being so miserable a marriage, that it was probably an unequal one in point of years."

"You hear what this lady asks. Was it an unequal marriage in point of years, this unlucky job of yours?" asked Mrs. Sparsit.

Mr. Bounderby looked very hard at the good lady in a sidelong way that had an odd sheepishness about it. He fortified himself with a little more sherry.

"Well? Why don't you go on?" he then asked, turning rather irritably on Stephen Blackpool.

"I ha' coom to ask yo', sir, how I am to be ridden o' this woman," said Stephen. "I infered a yet deeper gravity into the mixed expression of his attentive face. Mrs. Sparsit uttered a gentle ejaculation, as having received a moral shock.

"What do you mean?" said Bounderby, getting up to lean his back against the chim-
"I mun' be ridden o' her. I cannot bear't no more. I ha' lived under't so long, for that I ha' had the pitty and the comforting words o' th' best lass living or dead. Haply, but for her, I should ha' gone hortering mad."

"He wishes to be free, to marry the female of whom he speaks, I fear, sir," observed Mrs. Sparsit in an under-tone, and much dejected by the immorality of the people. "I do. The lady says what's right. I do. I were a coming to't. I ha' read i' th' papers that great fok (fair faw 'em a')! I wishes I were a coming to't. I ha' read i' th' papers, every 'Sizes; every Sessions — and you read too—I know it!—with dismay—what are you talking about?

"Now, a' God's name," said Stephen Blackpool, "show me the law to help me!"

"There's a sanctity in this relation of life," resumed Mr. Bounderby, "and—and—it must be kept up.

"No no, dunnot say that, sir. 'Tain't kep' up that way. Not that way. 'Tis kep' down that way. I'm a weaver, I were in a fact'ry when a chilt, but I ha' gotten een to see 'w'l and eern to hear 'w'l. I read in th' papers, every 'Sizes, every Sessions—and you read too—I know it!—with dismay—how th' impossibility o' ever getting unchained from one another, at any price, on any terms, brings blood upon this land, and brings many common married fok (agen I say, women fur o'ner than men) to battle, murder, and sudden death. Let us ha' this, right understood. Mine's a grievous case, an' I want—if yo will be so good—I' know the law that helps me."

"Now, I'll tell you what!" said Mr. Bounderby, putting his hands in his pockets.

"There is such a law. Stephen, subsiding into his quiet manner, and never wandering in his attention, gave a nod.

"But it's not for you at all. It costs money. It costs a mint of money."

"How much might that be? Stephen calmly asked.

"Why, you've got to do to Doctors' Commons with a suit, and you'd have to do to a court of Common Law with a suit, and you'd have to do to the House of Lords with a suit, and you'd have to get an Act of Parliament to enable you to marry again, and it would cost you (if it was a case of very plain-sailing), I suppose from a thousand to fifteen hundred pound," said Mr. Bounderby. "Perhaps twice the money."

"There's no other law?"

"Certainly not."

"Why then, sir," said Stephen, turning white, and motioning with that right hand of his, as if he gave everything to the four winds, "'Tis a muddle. 'Tis just a muddle a' together, an' the sooner I am dead, the better."

(Mrs. Sparsit again dejected by the impiety of the people.)

"Pooh, pooh! Don't you talk nonsense, my good fellow," said Mr. Bounderby, "about things you don't understand; and don't you call the Institutions of your country a muddle, or you'll get yourself into a real muddle one of these fine mornings. The Institutions of your country are not your piece-work, and the only thing you have got to do, is, to mind your piece-work. You didn't take your wife for fast and for loose; but for better for worse. If she has turned out worse—why, all we have got to say is, she might have turned out better."

"'Tis a muddle," said Stephen, shaking his head as he moved to the door. "'Tis a' a muddle!"

"Now, I'll tell you what!" Mr. Bounderby resumed, as a valedictory address. "With what I shall call your unhallowed opinions, you have been quite shocking this lady: who, as I have already told you is a born lady, and who, as I have not already told you, has had her own marriage misfortunes to the tune of tens of thousands of pounds—tens of Thousand-Pounds! (he repeated it with great relish). "Now, you have always been a steady Hand hitherto; but my opinion is, and so I tell you plainly, that you are turning into the wrong road. You have been listening to some mischievous stranger or other—they're always about—and the best thing you can do is, to come out of that. Now, you understand;" here his countenance expressed marvellous acuteness; "I can see as far into a grindstone as another man; farther than a
CHAPTER XII.

Old Stephen descended the two white steps, shutting the black door with the brazen doorplate, by the aid of the brazen full-stop, to which he gave a parting polish with the sleeve of his coat, observing that his hot hand clouded it. He crossed the street with his eyes bent upon the ground, and thus was walking sorrowfully away, when he felt a touch upon his arm.

It was not the touch he needed most at such a moment—the touch that could calm the wild waters of his soul, as the uplifted hand of the sublimest love and patience could abate the raging of the sea—yet it was a woman's hand too. It was an old woman, tall and shapely still, though withered by Time, on whose face and hands was the imprimatur of rare occurrence. Remarking this at a moment—having stopped and turned, she was very cleanly and plainly dressed, her hands in the midst of a prodigious noise, had order, by dint of long working with eyes and ears. She was very cleanly and plainly dressed, her hands were unused; all bespoke an old woman, newly come from a journey. The flutter of her manner, in the unwonted noise of the streets; the spare shawl, carried unfolded on her arm; the heavy umbrella, and little basket; the loose long-fingered gloves, to which her hands were unused; all bespoke an old woman from the country, in her plain holiday clothes, come into Coketown on an expedition of rare occurrence. Remarking this at a glance, with the quick observation of his class, Stephen Blackpool bent his attentive face—his face, which, like the faces of many of his order, by dint of long working with eyes and hands in the midst of a prodigious noise, had acquired the concentrated look with which we are familiar in the countenances of the deaf—acquired the concentrated look with which we, with the quick observation of his class, had distinguished him, shading his head with obstinate cunning. "By the Lord Harry, I do!"

With a very different shake of the head and a deep sigh, Stephen said, "Thank you, sir, I wish you good day." So, he left Mr. Bounderby swaying at his own portrait on the wall, as if he were going to explode himself into it; and Mrs. Sparsit still strolling on with her foot in her stirrup, looking quite cast down by the popular vices.

"I believe I see you come out of that gentleman's house?" asked Mr. Bounderby, shaking his head with obstinate cunning. "By the Lord Harry, I do!"

"And healthy?" said the old woman, "as the fresh wind?"

"Yes," returned Stephen. "He were et'n and drinking—as large and as loud as a Hummbee."

"Thank you!" said the old woman with infinite content. "Thank you!"

He certainly never had seen this old woman before. Yet there was a vague remembrance in his mind, as if he had more than once dreamed of some old woman like her. She walked along at his side, and, gently accommodating himself to her humour, he said, "Coketown was a busy place, was it not? To which she answered, "Eight to ten to Dready busy!" Then he said, she came from the country, he saw? To which she answered in the affirmative.

"By Parliamentary, this morning. I came forty mile by Parliamentary this morning, and I'm going back the same forty mile this afternoon. I walked nine mile to the station this morning, and if I find nobody on the road to give me a lift, I shall walk the nine mile back to night. That's pretty well, sir, at my age!" said the chatty old woman, her eyes brightening with exultation.

"Deed 'tis. Don't 't too often, missus."

"No, no. Once a year," she answered, shaking her head. "I spend my savings so, once every year. I come, regular, to tramp about the streets, and see the gentlemen."

"Only to see 'em?" returned Stephen.

"That's enough for me," she replied, with great earnestness and interest of manner.

"I ask no more! I have been standing about on this side of the way to Dready, that gentleman," turning her head back towards Mr. Bounderby's again, "come out. But, he's late this year, and I have not seen him. You came out, instead. Now, if I am obliged to go back without a glimpse of him—I only want a glimpse—well! I have seen you, and you have seen him, and I must make that do." Saying this, she looked at Stephen as if to fix his features in her mind, and her eyes were not so bright as they had been.

With a large allowance for difference of tastes, and with all submission to the patricians of Coketown, this seemed so extraordinary a source of interest to take so much trouble about, that it perplexed him. But they were passing the church now, and, as his eye caught the clock, he quickened his pace.

He was going to his work? the old woman said, quickening her pace, too, quite easily. Yes, time was nearly out. On his telling her where he worked, the old woman became a more singular old woman than before.

the idea crossed Stephen that he had seen this old woman before, and had not quite liked her.

"O yes," he returned, observing her more attentively, "he were all that."

"And healthy?" said the old woman, "as the fresh wind?"

"Yes," returned Stephen. "He were et'n and drinking—as large and as loud as a Hummbee."

"Thank you!" said the old woman with infinite content. "Thank you!"

He certainly never had seen this old woman before. Yet there was a vague remembrance in his mind, as if he had more than once dreamed of some old woman like her. She walked along at his side, and, gently accommodating himself to her humour, he said, "Coketown was a busy place, was it not? To which she answered, "Eight to ten to Dready busy!" Then he said, she came from the country, he saw? To which she answered in the affirmative.

"By Parliamentary, this morning. I came forty mile by Parliamentary this morning, and I'm going back the same forty mile this afternoon. I walked nine mile to the station this morning, and if I find nobody on the road to give me a lift, I shall walk the nine mile back to night. That's pretty well, sir, at my age!" said the chatty old woman, her eyes brightening with exultation.

"Deed 'tis. Don't 't too often, missus."

"No, no. Once a year," she answered, shaking her head. "I spend my savings so, once every year. I come, regular, to tramp about the streets, and see the gentlemen."

"Only to see 'em?" returned Stephen.

"That's enough for me," she replied, with great earnestness and interest of manner.

"I ask no more! I have been standing about on this side of the way to Dready, that gentleman," turning her head back towards Mr. Bounderby's again, "come out. But, he's late this year, and I have not seen him. You came out, instead. Now, if I am obliged to go back without a glimpse of him—I only want a glimpse—well! I have seen you, and you have seen him, and I must make that do." Saying this, she looked at Stephen as if to fix his features in her mind, and her eyes were not so bright as they had been.

With a large allowance for difference of tastes, and with all submission to the patricians of Coketown, this seemed so extraordinary a source of interest to take so much trouble about, that it perplexed him. But they were passing the church now, and, as his eye caught the clock, he quickened his pace.

He was going to his work? the old woman said, quickening her pace, too, quite easily. Yes, time was nearly out. On his telling her where he worked, the old woman became a more singular old woman than before.
"An't you happy?" she asked him.

"Why—there's—amost nobody but has their troubles, missus." He answered evasively, because the old woman appeared to take it for granted that he would be very happy indeed, and he had not the heart to disappoint her. He knew that there was trouble enough in the world; and if the old woman had lived so long, and could count upon his having so little, why so much the better for her, and none the worse for him.

"Ay, ay! You have your troubles at home, you mean?" she said.

"Times. Just now and then," he answered slightly.

"But, working under such a gentleman, they don't follow you to the Factory?"

No, no; they didn't follow him there, said Stephen. All correct there. Everything accordant there. (He did not go so far as to say, for her pleasure, that there was a sort of Divine Right there; but, I have heard claims almost as magnificent of late years.)

They were now in the black bye-road near the place, and the Hands were crowding in. The bell was ringing, and the Serpent was a Serpent of many coils, and the Elephant was getting ready. The strange old woman was delighted with the very bell. It was the beautifullest bell she had ever heard, she said, and sounded grand!

She asked him, when he stopped good-naturedly to shake hands with her before going in, how long he had worked there?

"A dozen year," he told her.

"I must kiss the hand," said she, "that has worked in this fine factory for a dozen year!" And she lifted it, though he would have prevented her, and put it to her lips. What harmony, besides her age and her simplicity, surrounded her, he did not know, but even in this fantastic action there was something which it seemed as if nobody else could have made as serious, or done with such a natural and touching air.

He had been at his loom full half an hour, thinking about this old woman, when, having occasion to move round the loom for its adjustment, he glanced through a window which was in his corner, and saw her still looking up at the pile of buildings, lost in admiration. Headless of the smoke and mud and wet, and of her two long journeys, she was gazing at it, as if the heavy thrum that issued from its many stories were proud music to her.

She was gone by and by, and the day went after her, and the lights sprang up again, and the Express whirled in full sight of the Fairy Palace over the arches near; little felt amid the jarring of the machinery, and scarcely heard above its crash and rattle. Long before then, his thoughts had gone back to the dreary room above the little shop, and to the shameful figure heavy on the bed, but heavier on his heart.

Machinery slackened; throbbing feebly like a fainting pulse; stopped. The bell again; the glare of light and heat dispelled; the factories, looming heavy in the black wet night; their tall chimneys rising up into the air like competing Towers of Babel.

He had spoken to Rachael only last night, it was true, and had walked with her a little way; but he had his new misfortune on him, in which no one else could give him a moment's relief, and, for the sake of it, and because he knew himself to want that softening of his anger which no voice but hers could effect, he felt he might so far disregard what she had said as to wait for her again. He waited, but she had eluded him. She was gone. On no other night in the year, could he so ill have spared her patient face.

O! Better to have no home in which to lay his head, than to have a home and dread to go to it, through such a cause. He ate and drank, for he was exhausted—but, he little knew or cared what; and he wandered about in the chill rain, thinking and thinking, and brooding and brooding.

No word of a new marriage had ever passed between them; but Rachael had taken great pity on him years ago, and to her alone he had opened his closed heart all this time, on the subject of his miseries; and he knew very well that if he were free to ask her, she would take him. He thought of the home he might at that moment have been seeking with pleasure and pride; of the different man he might have been that night; of the lightness then in his now heavy-laden breast; of the then restored honor, self-respect, and tranquillity, now all torn to pieces. He thought of the waste of the best part of his life, of the change it made in his character for the worse every way, of the dreadful nature of his existence, bound hand and foot to a dead woman, and tormented by a demon in her shape. He thought of Rachael, how young when they were first brought together in these circumstances, how mature now, how soon to grow old. He thought of the number of girls and women she had seen marry, how many homes with children in them she had seen grow up around her, how she had contentedly pursued her own lone quiet path—for him—and how he had sometimes seen a shade of melancholy on her blessed face, that smote him with remorse and despair. He set the picture of her up, beside the infamous image of last night; and thought, Could it be, that the whole earthly course of one so gentle, good, and self-denying, was subjugate to such a wretch as that?

Filled with these thoughts—so filled that he had an unwholesome sense of growing larger, of being placed in some new and diseased relation towards the objects among
which he passed, of seeing the iris round every misty light turn red—he went home for shelter.

TROOPS AND JOBS IN MALTA.

At anchor in the harbour of Valetta! Awake in my berth, missing the usual lullaby, the roaring of the waves, and thumping of the engine, I heard the rain as it came pattering down on the deck. There was clear sky in the morning and a brilliant sun. The harbour was aster; Coldstream and Grenadier Guards crowded the windows of the houses, and the veranda of the Lazaretto, the decks of the troop-ships recently arrived, were red, black, and white with soldiers, in every state of dress and undress; gay boats were at work, dancing about upon the surf between the ships and ships, carrying to land soldiers, who stepped out in full parade dress, boat-load after boat-load, from among the motley crowds of their companions. There was much cheering and laughter floating fitfully about. I meant to make myself at home in Malta for at least a fortnight, and was very much displeased to do so. It was then Sunday morning, in March, and I said to myself, if may remain put on my boots and go ashore to breakfast.

Let the geographer describe Valetta; to do that is not my task. I went up the Strada St. Lucia to look for the Imperial Hotel—a caravanserai beloved by midshipmen, and therefore mediated a visit to a gentleman unattached. Thither, accordingly, I went, and there had breakfast in the coffee-room, with half-a-dozen guardsmen and sea-captains. All were possessed by a most eager curiosity for news; and, as our vessel brought none of importance, there was great disappointment. Nobody knew when the Russians were to be attacked. That being settled, all joined in a general assault upon the trenchers of eggs, fowls, ham, and legs of mutton, served in London style, at London prices. The Imperial Hotel might, for anything that I saw foreign about it, be the Cock of Fleet Street.

I made haste out, therefore, into the streets, and soon saw that it was not England when I got into the bustle of the Strada Reale. The whole pavement, and portions of the road as well, were occupied with people; the inhabitants of Valetta and of the surrounding villages were there in Sunday dress, going to mass, coming from mass, or killing the time between one mass and another; walking about, standing about, leaning against walls or closed shop shutters, very many of them busily engaged—women especially—in looking at and talking about, the blue-coated, red-coated, and gold-laced strangers; priests walked to and fro like kings, pacing the crowds before them as they went, and as indignant at the tokens which surrounded them of a crusade in favour of the infidels, as the old knights of Malta would themselves have been, if they could have broken through the mosaic floors of the churches in which they lie, and have come out to see what was afloat under the sun. The female population of the town and neighbourhood had turned out, to a woman, for a good Sunday inspection of the newly-arrived troops. Maltese ladies of rank generally dress in ordinary European style, only with more decided preference for warm and sombre colours. Natives belonging to the middle and the lower classes commonly adhere to the old island costume, wearing black dresses, white collars, and large black shawls, gathered into a great many folds at one side, and drawn so far over the head, as to throw the face into shadow. The old women are quite interesting for their ugliness, the young ones for their beauty, and for exposing the English forces to considerable peril; many of our soldiers will, I fear, leave Malta vanquished men.

I have fairly fulfilled my design of spending fourteen days in Malta, and at the end of them I now set down my notes of Maltese experience, and of the talk that I have heard commonly among the people. I am not describing Malta. I did find the nights extremely cold and damp; and, granting it to be true as everybody said, that there was no necessity for such exposure, I did not think it a wrong thing that any of our soldiers should be sleeping under canvas. They will have plenty of unavoidable hardships to endure, time enough hereafter for roughing it. Why not let them be well lodged, if good lodging exist? The fear of famine is now over. An advance in the prices soon allured to Malta, fowls and vegetables from Sicily, and beef from Tunis. Some fragments of the beef from Tunis are, I believe, to this hour clinging between my teeth. It was good wholesome beef, and there was plenty of it, but its prime joints had the texture of the toughest gristle. The soldiers in Malta must take what provisions they can get; but as to lodging accommodation, people want to know why the demand does not produce a sufficient supply. The material, it is said, exists. On a former occasion, when a concentration of troops took place at Malta, house-room was
HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CANDLE faintly burned in the window, to which the black ladder had often been raised for the sliding away of all that was most precious in this world to a striving wife and a brood of hungry babies; and Stephen added to his other thoughts the stern reflection, that of all the casualties of this existence upon earth, not one was dealt out with so unequal a hand as Death. The inequality of Birth was nothing to it. For, say that the child of a King and the child of a Weaver were born to-night in the same moment, what was that disparity, to the death of any human creature who was serviceable to, or beloved by, another, while this abandoned woman lived on!

From the outside of his home he gloomily passed to the inside, with suspended breath and with a slow footstep. He went up to his door, opened it, and so into the room. Quiet and peace were there. Rachael was there, sitting by the bed.

She turned her head, and the light of her face shone in upon the midnight of his mind. She sat by the bed, watching and tending his wife. That is to say, he saw that some one lay there, and he knew too well it must be she; but Rachael's hands had put a curtain up, so that she was screened from his eyes. Her disgraceful garments were removed, and some of Rachael's were in the room. Everything was in its place and order as he had seemed to be about the neck of the self-made rascal, always kept it, the little fire was newly outcast. She dressed them now, still without trimmed, and the hearth was freshly swept, showing her. She steeped a piece of linen in it, and looked at nothing besides. While looking at it, it was shut out from his view by the softened tears that filled his eyes; but, not before he had seen how earnestly she looked at him, and how her own eyes were filled too.

She turned again towards the bed, and satisfying herself that all was quiet there, spoke in a low, calm, cheerful voice.

"I am glad you have come at last, Stephen. You are very late."

"I ha' been walking up an' down."

"I thought so. But 'tis too bad a night for that. The rain falls very heavy, and the wind has risen."

The wind? True. It was blowing hard. Hark to the thundering in the chimney, and the surging noise! To have been out in such a wind, and not to have known it was blowing!

"I have been here once before, to-day, Stephen. Landlady came round for me at dinner-time. There was some one here that needed looking to, she said. And 'deed she was right. All wandering and lost, Stephen. Wounded too, and bruised."

He slowly moved to a chair and sat down, drooping his head before her.

"I came to do what little I could, Stephen; first, for that she worked with me when we were girls both, and for that you courted her and married her when I was her friend—"

He laid his furrowed forehead on his hand, with a low groan.

"And next, for that I know your heart, and am right sure and certain that 'tis far too merciful to let her die, or even so much as suffer, for want of aid. Thou knowest who said, 'Let him who is without sin among you, cast the first stone at her!' There have been plenty to do that. Thou art not the man to cast the last stone, Stephen, when she is brought so low."

"O Rachael, Rachael!"

"Thou hast been a cruel sufferer, Heaven reward thee!" she said, in compassionate accents. "I am thy poor friend, with all my heart and mind."

The wounds of which she had spoken, seemed to be about the neck of the self-made outcast. She dressed them now, still without showing her. She steeped a piece of linen in a basin, into which she poured some liquid from a bottle, and laid it with a gentle hand upon the sore. The three-legged table had been drawn close to the bedside, and on it there were two bottles. This was one.

"I will stay here, Stephen," said Rachael, quietly resuming her seat, "till the bells go Three. 'Tis to be done again at three, and then she may be left till morning."
"But thy rest agen to-morrow's work, my dear."

"I slept sound, last night. I can wake many nights, when I am put to it. 'Tis thou who art in need of rest—so white and tired. Try to sleep in the chair there, while I watch. Thou hast no sleep last night, I can well believe. To-morrow's work is far harder for thee than for me."

He heard the thundering and surging out of doors, and it seemed to him as if his late angry mood were going about trying to get at him. She had cast it out; she would keep it out; he trusted to her to defend him from himself.

"She don't know me, Stephen; she just drowsily mutters and stares. I have spoken to her times and again, but she don't notice! 'Tis as well so. When she comes to her right mind once more, I shall have done what I can, and she never the wiser."

"How long, Rachael, is't looked for, that she'll be so?"

"Doctor said she would happily come to her mind to-morrow."

"His eyes again fell on the bottle, and a tremble passed over him, causing him to shiver in every limb. She thought he was chilled with the wet. "No," he said; "it was not that. He had had a fright."

"A fright?"

"Ay, ay! coming in. When 1 were walking. When I were thinking. When I—"

"I seized him again; and he stood up, holding by the mantel-shelf, as he pressed his dank cold hair down with a hand that shook as if it were palsied."

"Stephen!"

She was coming to him, but he stretched out his arm to stop her.

"No! Don't please; don't! Let me see thee setten by the bed. Let me see thee n' so good, and so forgiving. Let me see thee as I see thee when I coom in. I can never see thee better than so. Never, never, never!"

He had a violent fit of trembling, and then sunk into his chair. After a time he constrained himself, resting with an elbow on one knee, and his head upon that hand, could look towards Rachael. Seen across the dim candle with his moistened eyes, she looked as if she had a glory shining round her head. He could have believed she had. He did believe it, as the noise without shook the window, rattled at the door below, and went about the house clamouring and lamenting.

"When she gets better, Stephen, 'tis to be hoped she'll leave thee to thyself again, and do thee no more hurt. Anyways we will hope so now. And now I shall keep silence, for I want thee to sleep."

"Tell her he is, more to please her than to rest his weary head; but, by slow degrees as he listened to the great noise of the wind, he ceased to hear it, or it changed into the working of his loom, or even into the voices of the day (his own included) saying what had been really said. Even this imperfect consciousness faded away at last, and he dreamed a long, troubled dream.

He thought that he, and some one on whom his heart had long been set—but she was not Rachael, and that surprised him, even in the midst of his imaginary happiness—stood in the church being married. While the ceremony was performing, and while he recognized among the witnesses some whom he knew to be living, and many whom he knew to be dead, darkness came upon, succeeded by the shining of a tremendous light. It broke from one line in the table of commandments at the altar, and illuminated the building with the words. They were sounded through the church too, as if there were voices in the fiery letters. Upon this, the whole appearance before him and around him changed, and nothing was left as it had been, but himself and the clergyman. They stood in the daylight before a crowd so vast, that if all the people in the world could have been brought together into one space, they could not have looked, he thought, more numerous; and they all abhorred him, and there was not one pitying or friendly eye among the millions that were fastened on his face. He stood on a raised stage, under his own loom; and, looking up at the shape the loom took, and hearing the burial service distinctly read, he knew that he was there to suffer death. In an instant he stood on fell below him, and he was gone.

Out of what mystery he came back to his usual life, and to places that he knew, he was unable to consider; but, he was back in those places by some means, and with this condemnation upon him, that he was never, in this world or the next, through all the unimaginable ages of eternity, to look on Eachael's face or world or the next, through all the unimaginable ages of eternity, to look on Rachael's face or hear her voice. Wandering to and fro, incessingly, without hope, and in search of he knew not what (he only knew that he was doomed to seek it), he was the subject of a nameless, horrible dread, a mortal fear of one particular shape which everything took. Whatever he looked at, grew into that some pitying or friendly eye among the millions that were fastened on his face. He stood on a raised stage, under his own loom; and, looking up at the shape the loom took, and hearing the burial service distinctly read, he knew that he was there to suffer death. In an instant he stood on fell below him, and he was gone.

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Of the object of his miserable existence was to prevent its recognition by any one among the various people he encountered. Hopeless labor! If he led them out of rooms where it was, if he shut up drawers and closets where it stood, if he shut up doors, and it seemed to him as if his late change passed over him, causing him to shiver in every limb. She thought he was chilled with the wet. "No," he said; "it was not that. He had had a fright."

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He thought that he, and some one on whom his heart had long been set—but she was not Rachael, and that surprised him, even in the midst of his imaginary happiness—stood in the church being married. While the ceremony was performing, and while he recognized among the witnesses some whom he knew to be living, and many whom he knew to be dead, darkness came upon, succeeded by the shining of a tremendous light. It broke from one line in the table of commandments at the altar, and illuminated the building with the words. They were sounded through the church too, as if there were voices in the fiery letters. Upon this, the whole appearance before him and around him changed, and nothing was left as it had been, but himself and the clergyman. They stood in the daylight before a crowd so vast, that if all the people in the world could have been brought together into one space, they could not have looked, he thought, more numerous; and they all abhorred him, and there was not one pitying or friendly eye among the millions that were fastened on his face. He stood on a raised stage, under his own loom; and, looking up at the shape the loom took, and hearing the burial service distinctly read, he knew that he was there to suffer death. In an instant he stood on fell below him, and he was gone.

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Out of what mystery he came back to his usual life, and to places that he knew, he was unable to consider; but, he was back in those places by some means, and with this condemnation upon him, that he was never, in this world or the next, through all the unimaginable ages of eternity, to look on Eachael's face or world or the next, through all the unimaginable ages of eternity, to look on Rachael's face or hear her voice. Wandering to and fro, incessingly, without hope, and in search of he knew not what (he only knew that he was doomed to seek it), he was the subject of a nameless, horrible dread, a mortal fear of one particular shape which everything took. Whatever he looked at, grew into that some pitying or friendly eye among the millions that were fastened on his face. He stood on a raised stage, under his own loom; and, looking up at the shape the loom took, and hearing the burial service distinctly read, he knew that he was there to suffer death. In an instant he stood on fell below him, and he was gone.

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The wind was blowing again, the rain was beating on the house-tops, and the larger spaces thronged by, which he had strayed over, tractored to the four walls of his room. Saving that the fire had died out, it was as his eyes had closed upon it. Rachael seemed to have
felled into a doze, in the chair by the bed. 

She sat wrapped in her shawl, perfectly still. 

The table stood in the same place, close by the bedside, and on it, in its real proportions and appearance, was the shape so often repeated.

He thought he saw the curtain move. He looked again, and he was sure it moved. He saw a hand come forth, and grope about a little. Then the curtain moved more perceptibly, and the woman in the bed put it back, and sat up.

With her woful eyes, so haggard and wild, so heavy and large, she looked all round the room, and passed the corner where he slept in his chair. Her eyes returned to that corner, and she put her hand over them as a shade, while she looked into it. Again they went all round the room, scarcely heeding Rachael if at all, and returned to that corner. He thought, as she once more shaded them—no such looking at him, as looking for him with a brutal instinct that he was there—the no single trace was left in those debauched features, or in the mind that went along with them, of the woman he had married eighteen years before. But that he had seen her come to this by inches, he never could have believed her to be the same.

All this time, as if a spell were on him, he was motionless and powerless, except to watch her.

Stupidly dozing, or communing with her incapable self about nothing, she sat for a little while with her hands at her ears, and her head resting on them. Presently, she resumed her staring round the room. And now, for the first time, her eyes stopped at the table with the bottles on it.

Straightway she turned her eyes back to his corner, with the defiance of last night, and, moving very cautiously and softly, stretched out her greedy hand. She drew a mug into the bed, and sat for a while considering which of the two bottles she should choose. Finally, she laid her insensate grasp upon the bottle that had swift and certain death in it, and, before his eyes, pulled out the cork with her teeth.

Dream or reality, he had no voice, nor had he power to stir. If this be real, and her allotted time be not yet come, wake, Rachael, wake!

She thought of that, too. She looked at Rachael, and very slowly, very cautiously, poured out the contents. The draught was at her lips. A moment and she would be past all help, let the whole world wake and come about her with its utmost power. But, in that moment Rachael started up with a suppressed cry. The creature struggled, struck her, seized her by the hair; but Rachael had the upper hand.

Stephen broke out of his chair. "Rachael, am I wakin' or dreamin' this dreadfull night?"
more. He caught them in his unoccupied hand, and holding them, and still clasping the border of her shawl, said, hurriedly:

"But I see thee, Rachael, setten by the bed. I ha' seen thee a' this night. In my troubless sleep I ha' known thee still to be there. Evermore I will see thee there. I nevermore will see her or think o' her, but thou shalt be beside her. I nevermore will say or think o' anything that angers me, but thou, so much better than me, shalt be by th' side o'nt. And so I will try t' look t' th' time, and so I will try t' trust t' th' time, when thou and me at last shall walk together far awa', beyond the deep gulf, in th' country where thy little sister is."

He kissed the border of her shawl again, and let her go. She bade him good night in a broken voice, and went out into the street.

The wind blew from the quarter where the day would soon appear, and still blew strongly. It had cleared the sky before it, and the rain had spent itself or travelled elsewhere, and the stars were bright. He stood bare-headed in the road, watching her quick disappearance. As the shining stars were to the heavy candle in the window, so was Rachael, in the rugged fancy of this man, to the common experiences of his life.

CHAPTER XIV.

Time went on in Coke town like its own machinery: so much material wrought up, so much fuel consumed, so many powers worn out, so much money made. But, less inexorable than iron, steel, and brass, it brought its varying seasons even into that wilderness of smoke and brick, and made the only stand of the whole wilderness, and of the place, and made its own gulf, in th' country where thy little sister is.

"Louisa is becoming," said Mr. Gradgrind, "almost a young woman."

Time, with its innumerable horse-power, worked away, not minding what anybody said, and presently turned out young Thomas a foot taller than when his father had last seen him, or observed him.

"Thomas is becoming," said Mr. Gradgrind, "almost a young man."

Time passed Thomas on in the mill, while his father was thinking about it, and there he stood in a long tail-coat and a stiff shirt-collar.

"Really," said Mr. Gradgrind, "the period has arrived when Thomas ought to go to Bounderby."

Time, sticking to him, passed him on into Bounderby's Bank, made him an inmate of Bounderby's house, necessitated the purchase of his first razor, and exercised him diligently in his calculations relative to number one.

The same great manufacturer, always with an immense variety of work on hand, in every stage of development, passed Sissy onward in his mill, and worked her up into a very pretty article indeed.

"I fear, Jupe," said Mr. Gradgrind, "that your continuance at the school any longer, would be useless."

"I am afraid it would, sir," Sissy answered with that sentiment of deference which he had so often heard from Miss Louisa that you still preserve that sentiment.

"I cannot disguise from you, Jupe," said Mr. Gradgrind, knitting his brow, "that the result of your probation there has disappointed me; has greatly disappointed me. You have not acquired, under Mr. and Mrs. M'Choakumchild, anything like that amount of exact knowledge which I looked for. You are extremely deficient in your facts. Your acquaintance with figures is very limited. You are altogether backward, and below the mark."

"I am sorry, sir," she returned; "but I know it is quite true. Yet I have tried hard, sir."

"Yes," said Mr. Gradgrind, "yes, I believe you have tried hard; I have observed you, and I can find no fault in that respect."

"Thank you, sir. I have thought sometimes;" Sissy very timid here; "that perhaps I tried to learn too much, and that if I had asked to be allowed to try a little less, I might have—"

"No, Jupe, no," said Mr. Gradgrind, shaking his head in his profoundest and most evidently practical way. "No. The course you pursued, you pursued according to the system—the system—and there is no more to be said about it. I can only suppose that the circumstances of your early life were too unfavourable to the development of your reasoning powers, and that we began too late. Still, as I have said already, I am disappointed."

"I wish I could have made a better acknowledgment, sir, of your kindness to a poor forlorn girl who had no claim upon you, and of your protection of her."

"Don't shed tears," said Mr. Gradgrind. "Don't shed tears. I don't complain of you. You are an affectionate, earnest, good young woman, and—and we must make that do."

"Thank you, sir, very much," said Sissy, with a grateful curtsey.

"You are useful to Mrs. Gradgrind, and (in a generally pervading way) you are serviceable in the family also; so I understand from Miss Louisa, and, indeed, so I have observed myself. I therefore hope," said Mr. Gradgrind, "that you can make yourself happy in those relations."

"I should have nothing to wish, sir, if—"

"I understand you," said Mr. Gradgrind; "you still refer to your father. I have heard from Miss Louisa that you still preserve that bottle. Well! If your training in the science of arriving at exact results had been more successful, you would have been wiser on that point. I will say no more."

He really liked Sissy too well to have a contempt for her; otherwise he held her calculating powers in such very slight estimation, that he must have fallen upon that conclusion. Somehow or other, he had be-
come possessed by an idea that there was something in this girl which could hardly be set forth in a tabular form. Her capacity of definition might be easily stated at a very low figure, her mathematical knowledge at nothing; yet he was not sure that if he had been required, for example, to tick her off into columns in a parliamentary return, he would have quite known how to divide her.

In some stages of his manufacture of the human fabric, the processes of Time are very rapid. Young Thomas and Sissy being both at such a stage of their working up, these changes were effected in a year or two; while Mr. Gradgrind himself seemed stationary in his course, and underwent no alteration.

Except one, which was apart from his necessary progress through the mill. Time hustled him into a little noisy and rather dirty machinery, in a byre corner, and made him Member of Parliament for Coketown: nothing respected members for once weights and measures, one of the representatives of the multiplication table, one of the dear honorable gentlemen, dumb honorable gentlemen, blind honorable gentlemen, lame honorable gentlemen, dead honorable gentlemen, to every other consideration. Else wherefore live we in a Christian land, eighteen hundred and odd years after our Master? Wherefore do gentlemen, dead honorable gentlemen, blind honorable gentlemen, dumb honorable gentlemen, to every other consideration. Else were to make up your mind to I know what, you might be so much oftener together—mightn't we? It would do me a great deal of good if you were. Always together, almost—mightn't we?

She answered with the old, quick, searching scrutiny. He could make nothing of her look, yet he was not sure that if he had been required, for example, to tick her off into columns in a parliamentary return, he would have quite known how to divide her.

"That's well," said Mr. Gradgrind. So, he kissed her and went away; and Louisa returned to the serene apartment of the haircutting character, and leaning her elbow on her hand, looked again at the short-lived sparks that so soon subsided into ashes.

"Are you there, Loo?" said her brother, looking in at the door. He was quite a young gentleman of pleasure now, and not quite a prepossessing one.

"Dear Tom," she answered, rising and embracing him, "how long it is since you have been to see me!"

"Why, I have been otherwise engaged, Loo, in the evenings; and in the daytime old Bounderby has been keeping me at it rather. But I touch him up with you, when he comes it too strong, and so we preserve an understanding. I say! Has father said anything particular to you, to-day or yesterday, Loo?"

"No, Tom. But he told me to-night that he wished to do so in the morning—"

"Ah! That's what I mean," said Tom. "Do you know where he is to-night?"—with a very deep expression.

"No."

"Then I'll tell you. He's with old Bounderby. They are having a regular confab together, up at the Bank. Why at the Bank, do you think? Well, I'll tell you again. To keep Mrs. Sparsit's ears as far off as possible, I expect."

With her hand upon her brother's shoulder, Louisa still stood looking at the fire. Her brother glanced at her face with greater interest than usual, and, encircling her waist with his arm, drew her coaxingly to him.

"You are very fond of me, aren't you, Loo?"

"Indeed I am, Tom, though you do let such long intervals go by without coming to see me."

"Well, sister of mine," said Tom, "when you say that, you are near my thoughts. We might be so much oftener together—mightn't we. Always together, almost—mightn't we? It would do me a great deal of good if you were to make up your mind to I know what, Loo. It would be a splendid thing for me. It would be uncommonly jolly!"

"Your hands are rather cold, Louisa. Are you not well?"

"Quite well, father, as I usually am, or usually have been."
the distance lurid. She stood there, looking steadfastly towards them, and listening to his departing steps. They retreated quickly, as glad to get away from Stone Lodge; and she stood there yet, when he was gone and all was quiet. It seemed as if, first in her own fire within the house, and then in the fiery haze without, she tried to discover what kind of wool Old Time, that greatest and longest-established Spinner of all, would weave from the threads he had already spun into a woman. But, his factory is a secret place, his work is noiseless, and his Hands are mute.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE NUNS OF MINSK.

The Czar has still some partisans left in England: not many, certainly; but some, both influential and sincere, who believe in the generosity of his protection, and the truth of his religious zeal; who accept his version of the history of the war, and see him only as the conscientious defender of his Church, regarding his occupation of the Principalities as the simple demand for tolerance towards his co-religionists, and the slaughter at Sinope as the energetic expression of his philanthropy. We would convert these men—many of whom are worth converting—and prove to them what religion and toleration mean with the Czar. We will tell them a story of some nuns at Minsk; a story which was denied by the Russian minister at Rome, with Russian veracity; but which both public and private documents in our possession establish and confirm.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century—for it is well to go back to the origin of things,—a large body in the Greek Church separated itself from the orthodox or State establishment; and, under the name of the Uniate, or United Greek Church, entered into communion with Rome, placing itself under the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, in opposition to that of the Patriarch, and afterwards of the Sovereign. This schism struck the deepest root in Lithuania, and modern Poland; and, since the partition of the empire, has had powerful political influence, in keeping up the feeling of Polish nationality; the Uniate Church and national fidelity being held as synonymous; while the Polish adherent to the Russo-Greek, or orthodox Church was generally assumed to be an apostate to his faith, and a traitor to his country. It was therefore a matter of great importance to the Czar to destroy this schismatic branch, and the usual machinery of threats, bribes, and cajolery was put in motion. Laws were passed, which forbade the hearing of mass, excepting on Sundays and great festivals; which forbade the teaching of the Catholic religion to the children of Catholic parents; which prescribed the sermons that were to be preached, and the catechisms that were to be used in Catholic churches; and which allowed of no theological explanations of theological differences; which, later, dispersed the Catholic priests with violence, shut up their churches, and refused all spiritual consolations to their flocks; which, communicated as schismatic, all Catholic children not baptised according to the rules of the established church within four and twenty hours after their birth, and which offered entire pardon and indemnity to any Catholic convicted of any crime whatsoever—murder, robbery, no matter what—who recanted, and became orthodox. So much vigorous legislation was not without its effect. In the spring of eighteen hundred and thirty-nine, the whole of the Episcopal body of the Uniate signed the act of recantation, petitioning the Emperor graciously to re-admit them into the bosom of the orthodox Church, and asking pardon, both of him and of God, for their long blindness and obstinacy.

Amongst these petitioners, the Bishop Siemassko distinguished himself as particularly ardent in his professions of orthodoxy; a proof of his zeal—or as its reward—he undertook the task of converting the Basilian nuns of Minsk, with whom is our present story, and of whom he had been "bishop and shepherd." He began his mission with moderation, even with kindness, calling on them affectionately, as their pastor, to renounce the communion of Rome, and the acts of St. Basil; but, as their refusals were more vehement than he had looked for, his behaviour suddenly changed; and one Friday, as the nuns were going to prayers, Siemassko, accompanied by Uszakoff the civil governor of Minsk and a troop of soldiers, burst open the convent gates, to offer them their final choice between honours with the orthodox religion, and constancy to their communion with forced labour in Siberia. The nuns despaired of their threats as they had rejected his bribes. The reverend mother, Makrena Mirazyslawski, answered generally in the name of all, and Siemassko then ordered them, angrily, to prepare instantly for a march. With difficulty they obtained permission to offer up a few prayers before their departure. They flung themselves before the Host, the renegade prelate cursing them as they prayed. Thirty-five knelt on the church flags; but, when they rose up to go, one was found dead, Rosalie Lenszeka. Her heart had broken between fear and grief.

They were marched through the town; the orphan children, of whom they had forty-seven in the convent, following them with tears and lamentations, and many of the inhabitants crowding round them, weeping too; for, according to various depictions, these nuns of St. Basil were much beloved. Their kindness and benevolence to the poor and the afflicted was a matter
`Familiar in their Mouths as HOUSEHOLD WORDS.'—Shakespeare.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.
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HARD TIMES.
BY CHARLES DICKENS.—

CHAPTER XV.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Gradgrind did not take after Blue Beard, his room was quite a Blue chamber in its abundance of blue books. Whatever they could prove (which is usually anything you like), they proved there, in an army constantly strengthening by the arrival of new recruits. In that charmed apartment, the most complicated social questions were cast up, got into exact totals, and finally settled—if those concerned could only have been brought to know it. As if an astronomical observatory should be made without any windows, and the astronomer within should arrange the starry universe solely by pen, ink and paper, so Mr. Gradgrind, in his Observatory (and there are many like it), had no need to cast an eye upon the teeming myriads of human beings around him, but could settle all their destinies on a slate, and wipe out all their tears with one dirty little bit of sponge.

To this Observatory, then: a stern room with a deadly-statistical clock in it, which measured every second with a beat like a rap upon a coffin-lid: Louisa repaired on the appointed morning. The window looked towards Coketown; and when she sat down near her father's table, she saw the high chimneys and the long tracks of smoke looming in the heavy distance gloomily.

"My dear Louisa," said her father, "I prepared you last night to give me your serious attention in the conversation we are now going to have together. You have been so well trained, and you do, I am happy to say, so much justice to the education you have received, that I have perfect confidence in your good sense. You are not impulsive, you are not romantic, you are accustomed to view everything from the strong dispassionate ground of reason and calculation. From that ground alone, I know you will view and consider what I am going to communicate."

He waited, as if he would have been glad that she said something. But, she said never a word.

"Louisa my dear, you are the subject of a proposal of marriage that has been made to me."

Again he waited, and again she answered not one word. This so far surprised him, as to induce him gently to repeat, "a proposal of marriage, my dear." To which, she returned without any visible emotion whatever:

"I hear you, father. I am attending, I assure you."

"Well!" said Mr. Gradgrind, breaking into a smile, after being for the moment at a loss, "you are even more dispassionate than I expected, Louisa. Or, perhaps you are not unprepared for the announcement I have it in charge to make!"

"I cannot say that, father, until I hear it. Prepared or unprepared, I wish to hear it all from you. I wish to hear you state it to me, father."

Strange to relate, Mr. Gradgrind was not so collected at this moment as his daughter was. He took a paper-knife in his hand, turned it over, laid it down, took it up again, and even then had to look along the blade of it, considering how to go on.

"What you say, my dear Louisa, is perfectly reasonable. I have undertaken then to let you know that—that Mr. Bounderby has informed me that he has long watched your progress with particular interest and pleasure, and has long hoped that the time might ultimately arrive when he should offer you his hand in marriage. That time, to which he has so long, and certainly with great constancy, looked forward, is now come. Mr. Bounderby has made his proposal of marriage to me, and has entreated me to make it known to you, and to express his hope that you will take it into your favourable consideration."

Silence between them. The deadly-statistical clock very hollow. The distant smoke very black and heavy.

"Father," said Louisa, "do you think I love Mr. Bounderby?"

Mr. Gradgrind was extremely discomfited by this unexpected question. "Well, my child," he returned, "I—really—cannot take upon myself to say."

"Father," pursued Louisa in exactly the same voice as before, "do you ask me to love Mr. Bounderby?"

"My dear Louisa, no. No. I task nothing."
"Father," she still pursued, "does Mr. Bounderby ask me to love him?"

"Really, my dear," said Mr. Gradgrind, "it is difficult to answer your question."

"Difficult to answer it, Yes or No, father?"

"Certainly, my dear. Because, " here was something to demonstrate, and it set him up again; "because the reply depends so materially, Louisa, on the sense in which we use the expression. Now, Mr. Bounderby does not do you the injustice, and does not do himself the injustice, of pretending to any thing fanciful, fantastic, or (I am using synonymous terms) sentimental. Mr. Bounderby would have seen you grow up under his eyes, to very little purpose, if he could so far forget what is due to your good sense, not to say to his, as to address you from any such ground. Therefore, perhaps, the expression itself—"I merely suggest this to you, my dear—may be a little misplaced."

"What would you advise me to use in its stead, father?"

"Why, my dear Louisa," said Mr. Gradgrind, completely recovered by this time, "I would advise you (since you ask me) to consider this question, as you have been accustomed to consider every other question, simply as one of tangible Fact. The ignorant and the giddy may embarrass such subjects with irrelevant fancies, and other absurdities that have no existence, properly viewed—really no existence—but it is no compliment to you to say, that you know better. Now, what are the Facts of this case? You are, we will say in round numbers, twenty years of age; Mr. Bounderby is, we will say in round numbers, fifty. There is some disparity in your respective years, but in your means and positions there is none; on the contrary, there is a great suitability. Then the question arises, Is this one disparity sufficient to operate as a bar to such a marriage? In considering this question, it is not unimportant to take into account the statistics of marriage, so far as they have yet been obtained, in England and Wales. I find, on reference to the figures, that a large proportion of these marriages are contracted between parties of very unequal ages, and that the elder of these contracting parties is, in rather more than three-fourths of these instances, the bridegroom. It is remarkable as showing the wide prevalence of this law, that among the natives of the British possessions in India, also in a considerable part of China, and among the Calkmucks of Tartary, the best means of computation yet furnished us by travellers, yield similar results. The disparity I have mentioned, therefore, almost ceases to be disparity, and (virtually) all but disappears."

"What do you recommend, father?" asked Louisa, her reserved composure not in the least affected by these gratifying results, "that I should substitute for the term I used just now? For the misplaced expression?"

"Louisa," returned her father, "it appears to me that nothing can be plainer. Confining yourself rigidly to Fact, the question of Fact you state to yourself is: Does Mr. Bounderby ask me to marry him? Yes, he does. The sole remaining question then is: Shall I marry him? I think nothing can be plainer than that."

"Shall I marry him?" repeated Louisa, with great deliberation.

"Precisely. And it is satisfactory to me, as your father, my dear Louisa, to know that you do not come to the consideration of that question with the previous habits of mind, and habits of life, that belong to many young women."

"No, father," she returned, "I do not."

"I now leave you to judge for yourself," said Mr. Gradgrind. "I have stated the ease, as such cases are usually stated among practical minds; I have stated it, as the case of your mother and myself was stated in its time. The rest, my dear Louisa, is for you to decide."

From the beginning, she had sat looking at him fixedly. As he now leaned back in his chair, and bent his deep-set eyes upon her in his turn, perhaps he might have seen one wavering moment in her, when she was impelled to throw herself upon his breast, and give him the pent-up confidences of her heart. But, to see it, he must have overleaped at a bound the artificial barriers he had for many years been erecting, between himself and all those subtle essences of humanity which will elude the utmost cunning of algebra until the last trumpet ever to be sounded shall blow even algebra to wreck. The barriers were too many and too high for such a leap. He did not see it. With his unbending, utilitarian, matter-of-fact face, he hardened her again; and the moment shot away into the plumbless depths of the past, to mingle with all the lost opportunities that are drowned there. Removing her eyes from him, she sat so long looking silently towards the town, that he said, at length: "Are you consulting the chimney of the Coketown works, Louisa?"

"There seems to be nothing there, but languid and monotonous smoke. Yet when the night comes, Fire bursts out, father!" she answered, turning quickly.

"Of course I know that, Louisa. I do not see the application of the remark." To do him justice he did not, at all.

She passed it away with a slight motion of her hand, and concentrating her attention upon him again, said, "Father, I have often thought that life is very short."—This was so distinctly one of his subjects that he interposed: "It is short, no doubt, my dear. Still, the average duration of human life is proved to have increased of late years. The calculations of various life assurance and annuity offices, among other figures which cannot go wrong, have established the fact."

"I speak of my own life, father."
“O indeed? Still,” said Mr. Gradgrind, “I need not point out to you, Louisa, that it is governed by the laws which govern lives in the aggregate.”

“While it lasts, I would wish to do the little I can, and the little I am fit for. What does it matter?”

Mr. Gradgrind seemed rather at a loss to understand the last four words; replying, “How, matter? What, matter, my dear?”

“Mr. Bounderby,” she went on in a steady, straight way, without regarding this, “asks me to marry him. The question I have to ask myself is, shall I marry him? That is so, father, is it not? You have told me so, father. Have you not?”

“Certainly, my dear.”

“Let it be so. Since Mr. Bounderby likes to take me thus, I am satisfied to accept his proposal. Tell him, father, as soon as you please, that this was my answer. Repeat it, word for word, if you can, because I should wish him to know what I said.”

“It is quite right, my dear,” assented her eminently practical father, “to be exact. I will observe your very proper request. Have you any wish, in reference to the period of your marriage, my child?”

“None, father. What does it matter!”

Mr. Gradgrind had drawn his chair a little nearer to her, and taken her hand. But, her repetition of these words seemed to strike with some little discord on his ear. He paused to look at her, and, still holding her hand, said:

“Louisa, I have not considered it essential to ask you one question, because the possibility implied in it appeared to me to be too remote. But, perhaps I ought to do so. You have never entertained in secret any other proposal?”

“Father,” she returned, almost scornfully, “what other proposal can have been made to me? Whom have I seen? Where have I been? What are my heart’s experiences?”

“My dear Louisa,” returned Mr. Gradgrind, re-assured and satisfied, “you correct me justly. I merely wished to discharge my duty.”

“What do I know, father,” said Louisa in her quiet manner, “of tastes and fancies; of aspirations and affections; of all that part of my nature in which such light things might have been nourished! What escape have I had from problems that could be demonstrated, and realities that could be grasped?” As she said it, she unconsciously closed her hand, as if upon a solid object, and slowly opened it as though she were releasing dust or ash.

“My dear,” assented her eminently practical parent, “quite true, quite true.”

“Why, father,” she pursued, “what a strange question to ask me? The baby-preference that even I have heard of as common among children, has never had its innocent resting-place in my breast. You have been so careful of me, that I never had a child’s heart. You have trained me so well, that I never dreamed a child’s dream. You have dealt so wisely with me, father, from my cradle to this hour, that I never had a child’s belief or a child’s fear.”

Mr. Gradgrind was quite moved by his success, and by this testimony to it. “My dear Louisa,” said he, “you abundantly repay my care. Kiss me, my dear girl.”

So, his daughter kissed him. Detaining her in his embrace, he said, “I may assure you now, my favourite child, that I am made happy by the sound decision at which you have arrived. Mr. Bounderby is a very remarkable man; and what little disparity can be said to exist between you—if any—is more than counterbalanced by the tone your mind has acquired. It has always been my object so to educate you, as that you might, while still in your early youth, be (if I may so express myself) almost any age. Kiss me once more, Louisa; now, let us go and find your mother.”

Accordingly, they went down to the drawing-room, where the esteemed lady with no nonsense about her was recumbent as usual, while Sissy worked beside her. She gave some feeble signs of returning animation when they entered, and presently the faint transparency was presented in a sitting attitude.

“My dear Louisa,” said her husband, who had waited for the achievement of this feat with some impatience, “allow me to present to you Mrs. Bounderby.”

“Oh!” said Mrs. Gradgrind, “so you have settled it! Well, I am sure I hope your health may be good, Louisa; for if your head begins to split as soon as you are married, which was the case with mine, I cannot consider that you are to be envied, though I have no doubt you think you are, as all girls do. However, I give you joy, my dear—and I hope you may now turn all your logical studies to good account, I am sure I do! I must give you a kiss of congratulation, Louisa; but don’t touch my right shoulder, for there’s something running down it all day long. And now you see,” whimpred Mrs. Gradgrind, adjusting her shawls after the affectionate ceremony, “I shall be worrying myself, morning, noon, and night, to know what I am to call him!”

“My dear Louisa,” said he, “you abundantly repay my care. Kiss me, my dear girl.”

Whatever I am to call him, Mr. Gradgrind, when he is married to Louisa! I must call him something. It’s impossible,” said Mrs. Gradgrind, with a mingled sense of politeness and injury, “to be constantly addressing him, and never giving him a name. I cannot call him Josiah, for the name is unsupportable to me. You yourself wouldn’t hear of Joe, you very well know. Am I to call my own son-in-law, Mister? Not, I believe, unless the time has arrived when, as an
invalid, I am to be trampled upon by my relations. Then, what am I to call him!"

Nobody present having any suggestion to offer in the remarkable emergency, Mrs. Gradgrind departed this life for the time being, after delivering the following codicil to her remarks already executed:

"As to the wedding, all I ask, Louisa, is,—and I ask it with a flattering in my chest, which actually extends to the soles of my feet,—that it may take place soon. Otherwise, I know it is one of those subjects I shall never hear the last of."

When Mr. Gradgrind had presented Mrs. Bounderby, Sissy had suddenly turned her head, and looked, in pity, in sorrow, in doubt, in a multitude of emotions, towards Louisa. Louisa had known it, and seen it, without looking at her. From that moment she was impassive, proud, and cold,—held Sissy at a distance,—changed to her altogether.

**CHAPTER XVII.**

Mr. Bounderby's first disquietude, on hearing of his happiness, was occasioned by the necessity of imparting it to Mrs. Sparsit. He could not make up his mind how to do that, or what the consequences of the step might be. Whether she should instantly depart; bag and baggage, to Lady Scadgers, or would positively refuse to budge from the premises; whether she would be plaintive or abusive, tearful or tearing; whether she would break her heart, or break the looking-glass; Mr. Bounderby could not at all foresee. However, as it must be done, he had no choice but to do it; so, after attempting several letters, and failing in them all, he resolved to do it by word of mouth.

On his way home, on the evening he set aside for this momentous purpose, he took the precaution of stepping into a chemist's shop and buying a bottle of the very strongest smelling-salts. "By George!" said Mr. Bounderby, "if she takes it in the fainting way, I'll have the skin off her nose, at all events!" But, in spite of being thus forearmed, he entered his own house with anything but a courageous air; and appeared, before the object of his misgivings, like a dog who was conscious of coming direct from the pantry.

"Good evening, Mr. Bounderby!"

"Good evening, ma'am, good evening." He drew up his chair, and Mrs. Sparsit drew back hers, as who should say, "Your fireside, sir. I freely admit it. It is for you to occupy it all, if you think proper."

"Don't go to the North Pole, ma'am!" said Mr. Bounderby.

"Thank you, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, and returned, though short of her former position.

Mr. Bounderby sat looking at her, as, with the points of a stiff, sharp pair of scissors, she picked out holes for some inscrutable ornamental purpose, in a piece of cambric. An operation which, taken in connexion with the brawny eyebrows and the Roman nose, suggested with some liveliness the idea of a hawk engaged upon the eyes of a tough little bird. She was so stedfastly occupied, that many minutes elapsed before she looked up from her work; when she did so, Mr. Bounderby bespoke her attention with a hitch of his head.

"Mrs. Sparsit ma'am," said Mr. Bounderby, putting his hands in his pockets, and assuring himself with his right hand that the cork of the little bottle was ready for use, "I have no occasion to say to you, that you are not only a lady born and bred, but a devilish sensible woman."

"Sir," returned the lady, "this is indeed not the first time that you have honored me with similar expressions of your good opinion."

"Mrs. Sparsit ma'am," said Mr. Bounderby, "I am going to astonish you."

"Yes, sir!" returned Mrs. Sparsit, interrogatively, and in the most tranquil manner possible. She generally wore mittens, and she now laid down her work, and smoothed those mittens.

"I am going, ma'am," said Bounderby, "to marry Tom Gradgrind's daughter."

"Yes, sir!" returned Mrs. Sparsit. "I hope you may be happy, Mr. Bounderby. Oh, indeed I hope you may be happy, sir!" And she said it with such great condescension, as well as with such great compassion for him, that Bounderby,—far more disconcerted than if she had thrown her work-box at the mirror, or swooned on the hearth-rug,—corked up the smelling-salts tight in his pocket, and thought, "Now con-founded this woman, who could have ever guessed that she would take it in this way!"

"I wish with all my heart, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, in a highly superior manner; some-what I engaged upon the eyes of a tough little bird.

"Well, ma'am," returned Bounderby, with some resentment in his tone: which was clearly lowered, though in spite of himself, "I am obliged to you. I hope I shall be."

"Do you, sir?" said Mrs. Sparsit, with great affability. "But naturally you do; of course you do."

A very awkward pause on Mr. Bounderby's part succeeded. Mrs. Sparsit sedately resumed her work, and occasionally gave a small cough, which sounded like the cough of conscious strength and forbearance.

"Well, ma'am," resumed Bounderby, "under these circumstances, I imagine it would not be agreeable to a character like yours to remain here, though you would be very welcome here!"

"Oh dear no, sir, I could on no account think of that!" Mrs. Sparsit shook her head, still in her highly superior manner, and a little changed the small cough—coughing.
now, as if the spirit of prophecy rose within her, but had better be coughed down.

"However, ma'am," said Bounderby, "there are apartments at the Bank, where a born and bred lad, as keeper of the place, would be rather a catch than otherwise; and if the same terms—"

"I beg your pardon, sir. You were so good as to promise that you would always substitute the phrase, annual compliment."

"Well, ma'am, annual compliment. If the same annual compliment would be acceptable there, why, I see nothing to part us unless you do."

"Sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, "the proposal is like yourself, and if the position I should assume at the Bank is one that I could occupy without descending lower in the social scale—"

"Of course it is," said Bounderby. "If it was not, ma'am, you don't suppose that I should offer it to a lady who has moved in the society you have moved in. Not that I care for such society, you know! But you do."

"Mr. Bounderby, you are very considerate, sir."

"You will have your own private apartments, and you will have your coals and your candles and all the rest of it, and you will have your maid to attend upon you, and you will have your light porter to protect you, and you will be what I take the liberty of considering precious comfortable," said Bounderby.

"Sir," rejoined Mrs. Sparsit, "say no more. In yielding up my trust here, I shall not be freed from the necessity of eating the bread of dependence:"

She might have said the sweetbread, for that delicate article in a savoury brown sauce was her favourite dish; and all the rest of it, and you will have your light porter to protect you, and you will be what I take the liberty of considering precious comfortable," said Bounderby.

"Sir," rejoined Mrs. Sparsit. "The proposal is like yourself, and if the position I should assume at the Bank is one that I could occupy without descending lower in the social scale—"

"Of course it is," said Bounderby. "If it was not, ma'am, you don't suppose that I should offer it to a lady who has moved in the society you have moved in. Not that I care for such society, you know! But you do."

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"So, I hope you like my feeling independent; and, on all occasions during the period of betrothal, took a manufacturing aspect. Dresses were made, jewellery was made, cakes and gloves were made, settlements were made, and an extensive assortment of facts did appropriate honor to the contract. The business was all Fact, from first to last. The Hours did not go through any of those rosy performances, which foolish poets have ascribed to them at such times; neither did the clocks go any faster, or any slower, than at other seasons. The deadly-statistical record in the Gradgrind observatory knocked every second on the head as it was born, and buried it with his accustomed regularity.

So the day came, as all other days come to people who will only stick to reason; and when it came, there were married in the church of the florid wooden legs — that popular order of architecture—Josiah Bounderby Esquire of Coketown, to Louisa eldest daughter of Thomas Gradgrind Esquire of Stone Lodge, M.P. for that borough. And when they were united in holy matrimony, they went home to breakfast at Stone Lodge aforesaid.

There was an improving party assembled on the auspicious occasion, who knew what everything they had to eat and drink was made of, and how it was imported or exported, and in what quantities, and in what bottoms, whether native or foreign, and all about it. The bridesmaids, down to little Jane Gradgrind, were, in an intellectual point of view, fit helpmates for the calculating boy; and there was no nonsense about any of the company.

After breakfast, the bridegroom addressed them in the following terms.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am Josiah Bounderby of Coketown. Since you have done my wife and myself the honour of the business of our healths and happiness, I suppose I must acknowledge the same; though, as you all know me, and know what I am, and what my extraction was, you won't expect a speech from a man who, when he sees a Post, says 'that's a Post,' and is not to be troubled with a Post a Pump, or a Pump a Post, or either of them a Toothpick. If you want a speech this morning, my friend and father-in-law, Tom Gradgrind, is a Member of Parliament, and you know where to get it. I am not your man. However, if I feel a little independent when I look around this table to-day, and reflect how little I thought of marrying Tom Gradgrind's daughter when I was a ragged street-boy, who never washed his face unless he went home to breakfast at Stone Lodge as an accepted wooer. Love was made on these occasions in the form of bracelets; and, on all occasions during the period of betrothal, took a manufacturing aspect.
be so. I have watched her bringing-up, and I believe she is worthy of me. At the same time, not to deceive you—I believe I am worthy of her. So, I thank you, on both our parts, for the goodwill you have shown towards us; and the best wish I can give the unmarried part of the present company, is this: I hope every bachelor may find as good a wife as I have found. And I hope every spinster may find as good a husband as my wife has found."

Shortly after which oration, as they were going on a nuptial trip to Lyons, in order that Mr. Bounderby might take the opportunity of seeing how the Hands got on in those parts, and whether they, too, required to be fed with gold spoons; the happy pair departed for the railroad. The bride, in passing down stairs, dressed for her journey, found Tom waiting for her—flushed, either with his feelings or the vinous part of the breakfast.

“What a game girl you are, to be such a first-rate sister, Loo!” whispered Tom.

She clung to him, as she should have clung to some far better nature that day, and was a little shaken in her reserved composure for the first time.

“Oh, Bounderby’s quite ready,” said Tom. “Time’s up. Good bye! I shall be on the lookout for you, when you come back. I say, my dear Loo! Ain’t it uncommonly jolly now!”

THE CANKERED ROSE OF TIVOLI.

Allandale and other places are in this country celebrated for their roses. Who has not heard of a rose with violet eyes or a lily breast, or teeth of pearl, or even taper fingers? In musical botany such flowers are frequently described; there is no doubt about them. I speak here of a rose belonging to a sister art, a rose belonging to the botany of painters. This flower has a sickly odour strongly impregnated with the fumes of wine, is of a dark brown colour, tall, and has a coarse bold handsomeness of feature. It is not a lovely woman, but an ugly man: at least a man morally ugly—Philip Roos—who, being a German or a Dutchman, settled at Tivoli, and, naturalised among the people of the sunny south, had his name converted into soft Italian, and was and is commonly known as the Rose of Tivoli. A century or two ago he was a cheery fellow, and he still lives in his pictures.

The Dutchmen claim him, and may have him if they like; so at least I should say if I were a German; for it is so much a worse thing to be a bad man than it is a good thing to be a good animal painter, that I should like better to repudiate than claim a share in the Roos blood. If he were Dutch by race he was a German by birth, for he was born at Frankfort-on-Maine in the year fifteen hundred and sixty-five. Because his life is a story I propose to tell it, and without de-
A SUNNY midsummer day. There was such a thing sometimes, even in Coketown.

Seen from a distance in such weather, Coketown lay shrouded in a haze of its own, which appeared impervious to the sun's rays. You only knew the town was there, because you knew there could have been no such sulky blotch upon the prospect without a town. A blur of soot and smoke, now confusedly tending this way, now that way, now aspiring to the vault of heaven, now murkily creeping along the earth, as the wind rose and fell, or changed its quarter; a dense formless jumble, with sheets of cross light in it, that showed nothing but masses of darkness:—Coketown in the distance was suggestive of itself, though not a brick of it could be seen.

The wonder was, it was there at all. It had been ruined so often, that it was amazing how it had borne so many shocks. Surely there never was such fragile china-ware as that of which the millers of Coketown were made. Handle them never so lightly, and they fell to pieces with such ease that you might suspect them of having been flawed before. They were ruined, when they were required to send labouring children to school; they were ruined, when inspectors were appointed to look into their works; they were ruined, when such inspectors considered it doubtful whether they were quite justified in chopping people up with their machinery; they were utterly undone, when it was hinted that perhaps they need not always make quite so much smoke. Besides Mr. Bounderby's gold spoon which was generally received in Coketown, another prevalent fiction was very popular there. It took the form of a threat. Whenever a Coketowner felt he was ill-used— that is to say, whenever he was not left entirely alone, and it was proposed to hold him accountable for the consequences of any of his acts—he was sure to come out with the awful menace, that he would "sooner pitch his property into the Atlantic yet," but on the contrary, had been kind enough to take mighty good care of it. So there it was, in the haze yonder; and it increased and multiplied.

The streets were hot and dusty on the summer day, and the sun was so bright that it even shone through the heavy vapour drooping over Coketown, and could not be looked at steadily. Stokers emerged from low underground doorways into factory yards, and sat on steps, and posts, and palings, wiping their swarthy visages, and contemplating coals. The whole town seemed to be frying in oil. There was a stifling smell of hot oil everywhere. The steam-engines shone with it, the dresses of the Hands were soiled with it, the mills throughout their many stories oozed and trickled it. The atmosphere of those Fairy palaces was like the breath of the simoom; and their inhabitants, wasting with heat, toiled languidly in the desert. But no temperature made the melancholy mad elephants more mad or more sane. Their wearisome heads went up and down at the same rate, in hot weather and cold, wet weather and dry, fair weather and foul. The measured motion of their shadows on the walls, was the substitute Coketown had to show for the shadows of rustling woods; while, for the summer hum of insects, it could offer, all the year round, from the dawn of Monday to the night of Saturday, the whirr of shafts and wheels.

Drowsily they whirred all through this sunny day, making the passenger more sleepy and more hot as he passed the humming walls of the mills. Sun-blinds, and sprinklings of water, a little cooled the main streets and the shops; but the mills, and the courts and alleys, baked at a fierce heat. Down upon the river that was black and thick with dye, some Coketown boys who were at large—a rare sight there—rowed a crazy boat, which made a spumous track upon the water as it jogged along, while every dip of an oar stirred up vile smells. But the sun itself, however beneficent generally, was less kind to Coketown than hard frost, and rarely looked intently into any of its closer regions without engendering more death than life.
So does the eye of Heaven itself become an evil eye, when incapable or sordid hands are interposed between it and the things it looks upon to bless.

Mrs. Sparsit sat in her afternoon apartment at the Bank, on the shadier side of the frying street. Office-hours were over; and at that period of the day, in warm weather, she usually embellished with her genteel presence, a managerial board-room over the public office. Her own private sitting-room was a story higher, at the window of which post of observation she was ready, every morning, to greet Mr. Bounderby as he came across the road, with the sympathising recognition appropriate to a Victim. He had been married now, a year; and Mrs. Sparsit had never released him from her determined pity a moment.

The Bank offered no violence to the wholesome monotony of the town. It was another red brick house, with black outside shutters, green inside blinds, a black street door up two white steps, and a brazen door handle full stop. It was a size larger than Mr. Bounderby's house, as other houses were from a size to half-a-dozen sizes smaller; in all other particulars, it was strictly according to pattern.

Mrs. Sparsit was conscious that by coming in the evening-tide among the desks and writing implements, she shed a feminine, not to say aristocratic, grace upon the office. Seated, with her needlework or netting apparatus, at the window, she had a self-laudatory sense of correcting, by her lady-like deportment, the rude business aspect of the place. With this impression of her interesting character upon her, Mrs. Sparsit considered herself, in some sort, the Bank Fairy. The townsmen who, in their passing and re-passing, saw her there, regarded her as the Bank Dragon, keeping watch over the treasures of the mine.

What those treasures were, Mrs. Sparsit knew as little as they did. Gold and silver coin, precious paper, secrets, that if divulged would bring vague destruction upon vague persons (generally, however, people whom she disliked), were the chief items in her ideal catalogue thereof. For the rest, she knew that after office-hours, she reigned supreme over all the office furniture, and over a locked-up iron room with three locks, against the door of which strong chamber the light porter laid his head every night, on a trundle bed that disappeared at cockcrow. Further, she was lady paramount over certain vaults in the basement, sharply spiked off from communication with the predatory world; and over the relics of the current day's work, consisting of blots of ink, worn-out pens, fragments of wafers, and scraps of paper torn so small, that nothing interesting could ever be deciphered on them when Mrs. Sparsit tried. Lastly, she was guardian over a little armory of cutlasses and carbines, arrayed in vengeful order above one of the official chimney-pieces; and over that respectable tradition never to be separated from a place of business claiming to be wealthy—a row of fire-buckets—vessels calculated to be of no physical utility on any occasion, but observed to exercise a fine moral influence, almost equal to bullion, on most beholders.

A deaf serving-woman and the light porter completed Mrs. Sparsit's empire. The deaf serving-woman was rumoured to be wealthy; and a saying had for years gone about among the lower orders of Coketown, that she would be murdered some night when the Bank was shut, for the sake of her money. It was generally considered, indeed, that she had been due some time, and ought to have fallen long ago; but she had kept her life, and her situation, with an ill-conditioned tenacity that occasioned much offence and disappointment.

Mrs. Sparsit's tea was just set for her on a pert little table, with its tripod of legs in an attitude, which she insinuated after office-hours, was a pose to much longer standing; as light as in the days when he Blinkingly defined a horse, for girl number twenty.

"All is shut up, Bitzer?" said Mrs. Sparsit.

"All is shut up, ma'am.

"And what," said Mrs. Sparsit, pouring out her tea, "is the news of the day! Anything?"

"Well, ma'am, I can't say that I have heard anything particular. Our people are a bad lot, ma'am; but that is no news, unfortunately."

"What are the restless wretches doing now?" asked Mrs. Sparsit.

"Merely going on in the old way, ma'am. Uniting, and leaguing, and engaging to stand by one another."

"It is much to be regretted," said Mrs. Sparsit, making her nose more Roman and her eyebrows more Coriolanian in the strength of her security, "that the united masters allow of any such class combinations."

"Yes, ma'am," said Bitzer.

"Being united themselves, they ought one and all to set their faces against employing any man who is united with any other man," said Mrs. Sparsit.

"They have done that, ma'am," returned Bitzer; "but—it rather fell through, ma'am."

"I do not pretend to understand these things," said Mrs. Sparsit, with dignity, "my lot having been originally cast in a widely different sphere; and Mr. Sparsit, as a Powler, being also quite out of the pale of any such dimensions. I only know that these people must be conquered, and that it's high time it was done, once for all.

"Yes, ma'am," returned Bitzer, with a
As this was his usual hour for having a little confidential chat with Mrs. Sparsit, and as he had already caught her eye and seen that she was going to ask him something, he made a pretense of arranging the rulers, inkstands, and so forth, while that lady went on with her tea, glancing through the open window down into the street.

"Has it been a busy day, Bitzer?" asked Mrs. Sparsit.

"Not a very busy day, my lady. About an average day." He now and then slid into my lady, instead of ma'am, as an involuntary acknowledgment of Mrs. Sparsit's personal dignity and claims to reverence.

"The clerks," said Mrs. Sparsit, carefully brushing an imperceptible crumb of bread and butter from her left-hand mitten, "are trustworthy, punctual, and industrious, of course!"

"Yes, ma'am, pretty fair, ma'am. With the usual exception."

He held the respectable office of general spy and informer in the establishment, for which volunteer service he received a present at Christmas, over and above his weekly wage. He had grown into an extremely clear-headed, cautious, prudent young man, who was safe to rise in the world. His mind was so exactly regulated, that he had no affections or passions. All his proceedings were the result of the nicest and coldest calculation; and it was not without cause that Mrs. Sparsit habitually observed of him, that he was a young man of the steadiest principle she had ever known. Having satisfied himself, on his father's death, that his mother had a right of settlement in Coketown, this excellent young economist had asserted that right for her with such a steadfast adherence to the principle of the case, that she had been shut up in the workhouse ever since. It must be admitted that he allowed her half a pound of tea a year, which was weak in him; first, because all gifts have an inevitable tendency to pauperise the recipient, and secondly, because his only reasonable transaction in that commodity would have been to buy it for as little as he could possibly give, and sell it for as much as he could possibly get; it having been clearly ascertained by philosophers that in this is comprised the whole duty of man—not a part of man's duty, but the whole.

"Pretty fair, ma'am. With the usual exception, ma'am," repeated Bitzer.

"Ah—h!" said Mrs. Sparsit, shaking her head over her tea-cup, and taking a long gulp.

"Mr. Thomas, ma'am, I doubt Mr. Thomas very much, ma'am, I don't like his ways at all."

"Bitzer," said Mrs. Sparsit, in a very impressive manner, "do you recollect my having said anything to you respecting names?"

"I beg your pardon, ma'am. It's quite true that you did object to names being used, and they're always best avoided."

"Please to remember that I have a charge here," said Mrs. Sparsit, with her air of state. "I hold a trust here, Bitzer, under Mr. Bounderby. However improbable both Mr. Bounderby and myself might have deemed it years ago, that he would ever become my patron, making me an annual compliment, I cannot but regard him in that light. From Mr. Bounderby I have received every acknowledgment of my social station, and every recognition of my family descent, that I could possibly expect. More, far more. Therefore, to my patron I will be scrupulously true. And I do not consider, I will not consider, I cannot consider," said Mrs. Sparsit, with a most extensive stock on hand of honor and morality, "that I should be scrupulously true, if I allowed names to be mentioned under this roof, that are unfortunately—most unfortunately—no doubt of that—connected with his."

Bitzer knuckled his forehead again, and again begged pardon.

"No, Bitzer," continued Mrs. Sparsit, "say an individual, and I will hear you; say Mr. Thomas, and you must excuse me."

"With the usual exception, ma'am," said Bitzer, trying back, "of an individual."

"Ah—h!" Mrs. Sparsit repeated the ejaculation, the shake of the head over her tea-cup, and the long gulp, as taking up the conversation again at the point where it had been interrupted.

"An individual, ma'am," said Bitzer, "has never been what he ought to have been, since he first came into the place. He is a dissipated, extravagant idler. He is not worth his salt, ma'am. He wouldn't get it either, if he hadn't a friend and relation at court, ma'am!"

"Ah—h!" said Mrs. Sparsit, with another melancholy shake of her head.

"I only hope, ma'am," pursued Bitzer, "that his friend and relation may not supply him with the means of carrying on. Otherwise, ma'am, we know out of whose pocket that money comes."

"Ah—h!" sighed Mrs. Sparsit again, with another melancholy shake of her head.

"He is to be pitied, ma'am. The last party I have alluded to, is to be pitied, ma'am," said Bitzer.

"Yes, Bitzer," said Mrs. Sparsit. "I have always pitied the delusion, always."

"As to an individual, ma'am," said Bitzer, drooping his voice and drawing nearer, "he is as improvident as any of the people in this town. And you know what their improvidence is, ma'am. No one could wish to know it better than a lady of your eminence does."

"They would do well," returned Mrs. Sparsit, "to take example by you, Bitzer."

"Thank you, ma'am. But, since you do refer to me, now look at me, ma'am. I have
put by a little, ma'am, already. That gratuity which I receive at Christmas, ma'am: I never touch it. I don't even go the length of my wages, though they're not high, ma'am. Why can't they do as I have done, ma'am? What one person can do, another can do.

This again, was among the fictions of Coke-town. Any capitalist there, who had made sixty thousand pounds out of sixpence, always professed to wonder why the sixty thousand nearest Hands didn't each make sixty thousand pounds out of sixpence, and more or less reproached them every one for not accomplishing the least feat. What I did, you can do. Why don't you go and do it?

"As to their wanting recreations, ma'am," said Bitzer, "'tis stuff and nonsense. I don't want recreations. I never did, and I never shall; I don't like 'em. As to their combing together; there are many of them, I have no doubt, that by watching and informing upon one another could earn a triffe now and then, whether in money or good will, and improve their livelihood. Then, why don't they improve it, ma'am? It's the first consideration of a rational creature, and it's what they pretend to want."

"Pretend indeed!" said Mrs. Sparsit.

"I am sure we are constantly hearing, ma'am, till it becomes quite nauseous, concerning their wives and families," said Bitzer. "Why look at me, ma'am! I don't want a wife and family. Why should they?"

"Because they are improvident," said Mrs. Sparsit.

"Yes, ma'am," returned Bitzer, "that's where it is. If they were more provident, and less perverse, ma'am, what would they do? They would say, 'While my hat covers my family,' or, 'while my bonnet covers my family'—as the case might be, ma'am—'I have only one to feed, and that's the person I most like to feed.'"

"To be sure," assented Mrs. Sparsit, eating muffin.

"Thank you, ma'am," said Bitzer, knocking his forehead again, in return for the favour of Mrs. Sparsit's improving conversatio. "Would you wish a little more hot water, ma'am, or is there anything else that I could fetch you?"

"Nothing just now, Bitzer."

"Thank you, ma'am. I shouldn't wish to disturb you at your meals, ma'am, particularly tea, knowing your partiality for it," said Bitzer, crossing a little to look over into the street from where he stood; "but there's a gentleman been looking up here for a minute or so, ma'am, and he has come across as if he was going to knock. That's his knock, ma'am, no doubt."

He stepped to the window; and looking out, and drawing in his head again, confirmed himself with, "Yes, ma'am. Would you wish the gentleman to be shown in, ma'am?"

"I don't know who it can be," said Mrs. Sparsit, wiping her mouth and arranging her mitterns.

"A stranger, ma'am, evidently."

"What a stranger can want at the Bank at this time of the evening, unless he comes upon some business for which he is too late, I don't know," said Mrs. Sparsit; "but I hold a charge in this establishment from Mr. Bounderby, and I will never shrink from it. If to see him is any part of the duty I have accepted, I will see him. Use your own discretion, Bitzer."

Here the visitor, all unconscious of Mrs. Sparsit's magnanimous words, repeated his knock so loudly that the light porter hastened down to open the door; while Mrs. Sparsit took the precaution of concealing her little table, with all its appliances upon it, in a cupboard, and then decamped up stairs that she might appear, if needful, with the greater dignity.

"If you please, ma'am, the gentleman would wish to see you," said Bitzer, with his light eye at Mrs. Sparsit's keyhole. So, Mrs. Sparsit, who had improved the interval by touching up her cap, took her classical features down stairs again, and entered the board room in the manner of a Roman matron going outside the city walls to treat with an invading general.

The visitor having strolled to the window, and being then engaged in looking carelessly out, was as unmoved by this impressive entry as man could possibly be. He stood whistling to himself with all imaginable coolness, with his hat still on, and a certain air of exhaustion upon him, in part arising from excessive summer, and in part from excessive gentility. For, it was to be seen with half an eye that he was a thorough gentleman, made to the model of the time; weary of everything, and putting no more faith in anything than Lucifer.

"I believe, sir," quoth Mrs. Sparsit, "you wished to see me."

"I beg your pardon," he said, turning and removing his hat; "pray excuse me."

"Humph!" thought Mrs. Sparsit, as she made a stately bend. "Five and thirty, good-looking, good-looking, good figure, good teeth, good voice, good breeding, well-dressed, dark hair, black eyes." All which Mrs. Sparsit observed in her womanly way—like the Sultan who put his head in the pail of water—merely in dipping down and coming up again.

"Please to be seated, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit.

"Thank you. Allow me." He placed a chair for her, but remained himself carelessly lounging against the table. "I left my servant at the railway looking after the luggage—very heavy train and vast quantity of it in the van—and strolled on, looking about me. Exceedingly odd place. Will you allow me to ask you if it's always as black as this?"

"In general much blacker," returned Mrs. Sparsit, in her uncompromising way.
"Is it possible! Excuse me: you are not a native, I think?"

"No, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit. "It was once my good or ill fortune, as it may be—before I became a widow—to move in a very different sphere. My husband was a Powler."

"Beg your pardon, really!" said the stranger. "Was—?"

Mrs. Sparsit repeated, "A Powler." "Powler Family," said the stranger, after reflecting a few moments. Mrs. Sparsit signified assent. The stranger seemed a little more fatigued than before.

"You must be very much bored here?" was the inference he drew from the communication.

"I am the servant of circumstances, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, "and I have long adapted myself to the governing power of my life."

"Very philosophical," returned the stranger, "and very exemplary and laudable, and—" It seemed to be scarcely worth his while to finish the sentence, so he played with his watch-chain wearily.

"May I be permitted to ask, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, "to what I am indebted for the favour of—"

"Assuredly," said the stranger. "Much obliged to you for reminding me. I am the bearer of a letter of introduction to Mr. Bounderby the banker. Walking through this extraordinarily black town, while they were getting dinner ready at the hotel, I asked a fellow whom I met; one of the working people, who appeared to have been taking a shower-bath of something fluffy, portentously hard-headed reputation, that I have a burning desire to know. Is she absolutely unapproachable? I repulsively and stunningly clever? I see, by your meaning smile, you think not. You have poured balm into my anxious soul. As to age, now. Forty? Five and thirty?" Mrs. Sparsit laughed outright. "A chit," said she. "Not twenty when she was married."

"I give you my honor, Mrs. Powler," returned the stranger, detaching himself from the table, "that I never was so astonished in my life!"

"I assure you, Mrs. Powler," he then said, "that the father's manner prepared me for a grim and stony maturity. I am obliged to you, of all things, for correcting so absurd a mistake. Pray excuse my intrusion. Many thanks. Good day!"

"Thank you. I had no intention of delivering my letter at the present moment, nor have I. But, strolling on to the Bank to kill time, and having the good fortune to observe at the window, towards which he languidly waved his hand, then slightly bowed, "a lady of a very superior and agreeable appearance, I considered that I could not do better than take the liberty of asking that lady where Mr. Bounderby the Banker, does live. Which I accordingly venture, with all suitable apologies, to do."

"You know the family, and know the world. I am about to know the family, and may have much to do with them. Is the lady so very alarming? Her father gives her such a portentously hard-headed reputation, that I have a burning desire to know. Is she absolutely unapproachable? Repulsively and stunningly clever? I see, by your meaning smile, you think not. You have poured balm into my anxious soul. As to age, now. Forty? Five and thirty?"

Mrs. Sparsit laughed outright. "A chit," said she. "Not twenty when she was married."

"I give you my honor, Mrs. Powler," returned the stranger, detaching himself from the table, "that I never was so astonished in my life!"

"It really did seem to impress him, to the utmost extent of his capacity of being impressed. He looked at his informant for a quarter of a minute, and appeared to have the surprise in his mind all the time. "I assure you, Mrs. Powler," he then said, "that the father's manner prepared me for a grim and stony maturity. I am obliged to you, of all things, for correcting so absurd a mistake. Pray excuse my intrusion. Many thanks. Good day!"

"He bowed himself out; and Mrs. Sparsit, hiding in the window-curtain, saw him lean to take away.
JOHN DUNTON WAS A CITIZEN.

Many thanks to our modern literary antiquaries for the curious diaries and amusing collections of old letters, which afford us such pleasant glimpses of social life in long past times. Many thanks, too, to the worthy inditters of these long-forgotten relics—good, quiet souls, many of them—who little thought, when they were simply jotting down some passing occurrence for their own exclusive use, or detailing to some loving kinsman a piece of family news, or the gossip of the neighbourhood, that after generations had passed away, they would appear in print, and be quoted and reviewed. Thanks, also, to those egotistical writers, numerous in every age, though mostly enjoying but an ephemeral reputation, who, scorning private diary and confidential correspondence, claimed the public for their friend, and sent forth the story of their unsuccessful struggles, their misfortunes—always, according to them, unmerited—their wrongs, and their grievances, in small pica, and bound in strong sheep or calf.

Next to old newspapers we have found no species of composition more suggestive, and more illustrative than these homely prosing books, where in the midst of dull details, of which the public whom the writer addressed, cared but little, and we, its great-great-grandchildren, of course, still less, some sketch of the public characters of the day, some vivid notice of some recent public event, some picture of times passed away for ever, may be found, and found nowhere else. Among this class of publications is one volume, which attracted some notice on its appearance, almost a hundred and fifty years ago, and which, among collectors of old books, is not wholly forgotten, but which few of our readers have perhaps ever heard of. It is the autobiography of a London bookseller, one John Dunton:

John Dunton was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
who dealt with left-legged Tonson, and with Thomas Guy when he kept shop in Lombard Street; who employed Elkanah Settle to do his poetry, and the author of the Turkish Spy his prose; who published many a volume during the feverish times of James the Second, and the prosperous years succeeding the Revolution—John Dunton, of the Black Raven, opposite the Poultry Compter, who, in seventeen hundred and five, turned writer himself, and gave the world the history of his life and errors; and, more amusing still, pen-and-ink portraits of the various bookmakers and booksellers, with whom he had been associated.

Determined to begin at the beginning, and with sufficient minuteness too, John tells us that he was born in sixteen hundred and fifty-nine, was very weakly, and so small, that he was placed in a quart pot, which contained him very easily; a process this, not very well adapted, as we think, to the boy as his hornbook; and the father was reluctantly compelled to give up the cherished hope of seeing his son in the Church, and to seek out some secular calling. From the notices Dunton gives us of his father, he seems to have been an
HARD TIMES.
BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XVIII.
The Gradgrind party wanted assistance in murdering the Graces. They went about recruiting; and where could they enlist recruits more readily, than among the fine gentlemen who, having found out everything to be worth nothing, were equally ready for anything?

Moreover, the healthy spirits who had mounted to this sublime height were attractive to many of the Gradgrind school. They liked fine gentlemen; they pretended that they did not, but they did. They became exhausted in imitation of them; and they yawned in their speech like them; and they served out, with an enervated air, the little mouldy rations of political economy, on which they regaled their disciples. There never before was seen on earth such a wonderful hybrid race as was thus produced.

Among the fine gentlemen not regularly belonging to the Gradgrind school, there was one of a good family and a better appearance, with a happy turn of humour which had told immensely with the House of Commons on the occasion of his entertaining it with his (and the Board of Directors') view of a railway accident, in which the most careful officers ever known, employed by the most liberal managers ever heard of, assisted by the finest mechanical contrivances ever devised, the whole in action on the best line ever constructed, had killed five people and wounded thirty-two, by a casualty without which the excellence of the whole system would have been positively incomplete. Among the slain was a cow, and among the scattered articles unowned, a widow's cap. And the honourable member had so tickled the House (which has a delicate sense of humour) by putting the cap on the cow, that it became impatient of any serious reference to the Coroner's Inquest, and brought the railway off with Cheers and Laughter.

Now, this gentleman had a younger brother of still better appearance than himself, who had tried life as a Cornet of Dragoons, and found it a bore; and had then strolled to Jerusalem, and got bored there; and had then gone yachting about the world, and got bored everywhere. To whom this honorable and jocular member fraternally said one day, "Jem, there's a good opening among the hard Fact fellows, and they want men. I wonder you don't go in for statistics." Jem, rather taken by the novelty of the idea, and very hard up for a change, was as ready to "go in" for statistics as for anything else. So, he went in. He coached himself up with a blue book or two; and his brother put it about among the hard Fact fellows, and said, "If you want to bring in, for any place, a handsome dog who can make you a devilish good speech, look after my brother Jem, for he's your man." After a few dashes in the public meeting way, Mr. Gradgrind and a council of political sages approved of Jem, and it was resolved to send him down to Coketown, to become known there and in the neighbourhood. Hence the letter Jem had last night shown to Mrs. Sparsit, which Mr. Bounderby now held in his hand; super­scribed, "Josiah Bounderby, Esquire, Banker, Coketown. Specially to introduce James Harthouse, Esquire. Thomas Gradgrind."

Within an hour of the receipt of this dispatch and Mr. James Harthouse's card, Mr. Bounderby put on his hat and went down to the Hotel. There, he found Mr. James Harthouse looking out of window, in a state of mind so disconsolate, that he was already half disposed to "go in" for something else.

"My name, sir," said his visitor, "is Josiah Bounderby of Coketown."

Mr. James Harthouse was very happy indeed (though he scarcely looked so), to have a pleasure he had long expected.

"Coketown, sir," said Bounderby, obstinately taking a chair, "is not the kind of place you have been accustomed to. Therefore, if you'll allow me—or whether you will or not, for I am a plain man—I'll tell you something about it before we go any further."

Mr. Harthouse would be charmed.

"Don't be too sure of that," said Bounderby. "I don't promise it. First of all, you see our smoke. That's meat and drink to us. It's the healthiest thing in the world in all respects, and particularly for the lungs. If you are one of those who want us
to consume it, I differ from you. We are not going to wear the bottoms of our boilers out any faster than we wear 'em out now, for all the humbugging sentiment in Great Britain and Ireland."

"You're right," said Mr. Bounderby, "as to our Hands. There's not a Hand in this town, sir, man, woman, or child, but has one ultimate object in life. That object is, to be fed on turtle soup and venison with a gold spoon. Now, they're not a-going—none of 'em—ever to be fed on turtle soup and venison with a gold spoon. And now you know the place."

Mr. Harthouse professed himself in the highest degree instructed and refreshed, by this condensed epitome of the whole Coke-town question.

"Why, you see," replied Mr. Bounderby, "it suits my disposition to have a full understanding with a man, particularly with a public man, when I make his acquaintance. I have only one thing more to say to you, Mr. Harthouse, before assuring you of the pleasure with which I shall respond, to the utmost of my poor ability, to my friend Tom Gradgrind's letter of introduction. You are a man of family, and they don't deceive themselves by supposing for a moment that I am a man of family. I am a bit of dirty riff-raff, and a genuine scrap of tag, rag, and bobtail."

If anything could have exalted Jem's interest in Mr. Bounderby, it would have been this very circumstance. Or, so he told him.

"So it is," said Bounderby, "we may shake hands on equal terms. I say, equal terms, because although I know what I am, and the exact depth of the gutter I have lifted myself out of, better than any man does, I am as proud as you are. I am just as proud as you are. I am as proud as you are. I am just as proud as you are. Having now asserted my independence in a proper manner, I may add, how do you find yourself, and I hope you're pretty well."

The better, Mr. Harthouse gave him to understand as they shook hands, for the salubrious air of Coke-town. Mr. Bounderby received the answer with favor.

"Perhaps you know," said he, "or perhaps you don't know, I married Tom Gradgrind's daughter. If you have nothing better to do than to walk up town with me, I shall be glad to introduce you to Tom Gradgrind's daughter."

"Mr. Bounderby," said Jem, "you anticipate my dearest wishes."

They went out without further discourse; and Mr. Bounderby piloted the new acquaintance who so strongly contrasted with him, to the private red brick dwelling, with the black outside shutters, the green inside blinds, and the black street door up the two white steps. In the drawing-room of which mansion, there presently entered to them the most remarkable girl Mr. James Harthouse had ever seen. She was so constrained, and yet so careless; so reserved, and yet so watchful; so cold and proud, and yet so sensitively ashamed of her husband's bragart humility—from which she shrunk as if every example of it were a cut or a blow; that it was quite a new sensation to observe her. In face she was no less remarkable than in manner. Her features were handsome; but their natural play was so suppressed and locked up, that it seemed impossible to guess at their genuine expression. Utterly indifferent, perfectly self-reliant, never at a loss, and yet never at her ease, with her figure in company with them there, and her mind apparently quite alone, it was of no use "going in" yet awhile to comprehend this girl, for she baffled all penetration.

From the mistress of the house, the visitor glanced to the house itself. There was no mute sign of a woman in the room. No graceful little adornment, no fanciful little device, however trivial, anywhere expressed her influence. Cheerless and comfortless, boastfully and doggedly rich, there the room stared at its present occupants, unsoftened and unrelieved by the least trace of any womanly occupation. As Mr. Bounderby stood in the midst of his household gods, so those unrelenting divinities occupied their places around Mr. Bounderby, and those who were worthy of one another and well matched.

"This, sir," said Bounderby, "is my wife, Mrs. Bounderby; Tom Gradgrind's eldest daughter. Loo, Mr. James Harthouse. Mr. Harthouse has joined your father's muster-roll. If he is not Tom Gradgrind's colleague before long, I believe we shall at least hear of him in connexion with one of our neighbouring towns. You observe, Mr. Harthouse, that my wife is my junior. I don't know what she saw in me to marry me, but she saw something in me, I suppose, or she wouldn't have married me. She has lots of expensive knowledge, sir, political and otherwise. If you want to cram for anything, I should be troubled to recommend you to a better adviser than Loo Bounderby."

To a more agreeable adviser, or one from whom he would be more likely to learn, Mr. Harthouse could never be recommended.

"Come!" said his host, "if you're in the complimentary line, you'll get on here, for you'll meet with no competition. I have
never been in the way of learning compliments myself, and I don't profess to understand the art of paying 'em. In fact, I despise 'em. But, your bringing-up was different from mine; mine was a real thing, by George! You're a gentleman, and I don't pretend to be one. I am Josiah Bounderby of Coketown, and that's enough for me. However, though I am not influenced by manners and station, Loo Bounderby may be. She hadn't my advantages—disadvantages you would call 'em, but I call 'em advantages—so you wouldn't waste your power, I hope." "Mr. Bounderby," said Jem, turning with a smile to Louisa, "is a noble animal in a comparatively natural state, quite free from the harness in which a conventional hack like myself works." "You respect Mr. Bounderby very much," she quietly returned. "It is natural that you should." He was disgracefully thrown out, for a gentleman who had seen so much of the world, and thought, "Now, how am I to take this?" "You are going to devote yourself, as I gather from what Mr. Bounderby has said, to the service of your country. You have made up your mind," said Louisa, still standing before him where she had first stopped—in all the singular contrariety of her self-possession, and her being obviously so very ill at ease—to show the nation the way out of all its difficulties." "Loo Bounderby," he returned laughing, "upon my honour, no. I will make no such pretence to you. I have seen a little, here and there, up and down; I have found it all to be very worthless, as everybody has, and as some confess they have, and some do not; and I am going in for your respected father's opinions—only because I have no choice of opinions, and may as well back them as anything else." "Have you none of your own?" asked Louisa. "I have not so much as the slightest predilection left. I assure you I attach not the least importance to any opinions. The result of the varieties of boredom I have undergone, is a conviction (unless conviction is too indueartions a word for the lazy sentiment I entertain on the subject), that any set of ideas will do just as well as any other set, and just as much harm as any other set. There's an English family with a capital Italian motto. What will be, will be. It's the other truth quite new!" "This vicious assumption of honesty in dishonesty—a vice so dangerous, so deadly, and so common—seemed, he observed, a little to impress her in his favor. He followed up the advantage, by saying in his pleasantest manner: a manner to which she might attach herself, as she pleased: "The side that can prove anything in a line of units, tens, hundreds, and thousands, Mrs. Bounderby, seems to me to afford the most fun, and to give a man the best chance. I am quite as much attached to it as if I believed it. I am quite ready to go in for it, to the same extent as if I believed it. And what more could I possibly do, if I did believe it?"

"You are a singular politician," said Louisa. "Pardon me; I have not even that merit. We are the largest party in the state, I assure you, Mrs. Bounderby, if we all fell out of our adopted ranks and were reviewed together." Mr. Bounderby, who had been in danger of bursting in silence, interposed here with a project for postponing the family dinner to half-past six, and taking Mr. James Harthouse in the meantime on a round of visits to the voting and interesting notabilities of Coketown and its vicinity. The round of visits was made; and Mr. James Harthouse, with a discreet use of his blue coaching, came off triumphantly, though with a considerable accession of boredom. In the evening, he found the dinner-table laid for four, but they sat down only three. It was an appropriate occasion for Mr. Bounderby to discuss the flavour of the halfpint of stewed eels he had purchased in the street at eight years old, and also of the inferior water, specially used for laying the dust, with which he had washed down that repast. He likewise entertained his guest, over the soup and fish, with the calculation that he (Bounderby) had eaten in his youth at least three horses under the guise of polonies and saveloys. These recitals, Jem, in a languid manner, received with "charming!" every now and then; and they probably would have decided him to go in for Jerusalem again to-morrow-mornin', had he been less curious respecting Louisa. "Is there nothing" he thought, glancing at her as she sat at the head of the table, where her youthful figure, small and slight, but very graceful, looked as pretty as it looked misplaced; "is there nothing that will move that face?"

"Yes! By Jupiter, there was something, and here it was, in an unexpected shape! Tom appeared. She changed as the door opened, and broke into a beaming smile. "Ay, ay!" thought the visitor. "This whelp is the only creature she cares for. So, so!"

The whelp was presented, and took his chair. The appellation was not flattering, but not unmended. "When I was your age, young Tom," said
that a young gentleman who had never
with a cooling drink adapted to the weather,
house, when they came to the hotel.
emotions; but such a monster,
inconvenienced by its ghost in the form of
young gentleman whose imagination had
been left to his own guidance for five consec­
tive minutes, should be incapable at last of
governing himself; but so it was with Tom.
It was altogether unaccountable that a
young gentleman whose imagination had
been strangled in his cradle, should be still
inconvenienced by its ghost in the form of
groveling sensualitys; but such a monster,
beyond all doubt, was Tom.
"Do you smoke ?" asked Mr. James Hart­
house, when they came to the hotel.
"I believe you!" said Tom.
He could do no less than ask Tom up;
and Tom could do no less than go up. What
with a cooling drink adapted to the weather,
"My sister Loo?" said Tom. "She never cared for old Bounderby."

"That's the past tense, Tom," returned Mr. James Harthouse, striking the ash from his cigar with his little finger. "We are in the present tense, now."

"Verb neuter, not to care. Indicative mood, present tense. First person singular, I do not care; second person singular, thou dost not care; third person singular, she does not care," returned Tom.

"Good! Very quaint!" said his friend. "Though you don't mean it."

"But I do mean it," cried Tom. "Upon my honor! Why, you won't tell me, Mr. Harthouse, that you really suppose my sister Loo does care for old Bounderby."

"My dear fellow," returned the other, "what am I bound to suppose, when I find two married people living in harmony and happiness?"

Tom had by this time got both his legs on the sofa. If his second leg had not been already there when he was called a dear fellow, he would have put it up at that great stage of the conversation. Feeling it necessary to do something then, he still managed to get himself out at greater length, and, reclining with the back of his head on the end of the sofa, and smoking with an infinite assumption of negligence, turned his common face, and not too sober eyes, towards the face looking down upon him, and he said, in a highly complacent tone, "You know our governor, Mr. Harthouse?"

"Yes, but she wouldn't have been as dutiful as it would not have come off as easily," returned the whelp, "if it hadn't been for me.

"You know your governor, Mr. Harthouse," said Tom, "and therefore you needn't be surprised that Loo married old Bounderby. She never had a lover, and the governor proposed old Bounderby, and she took him."

"Very dutiful in your interesting sister," said Mr. James Harthouse.

"Yes, but she wouldn't have been as dutiful and it would not have come off as easily," returned the whelp, "if it hadn't been for me."

The tempter merely lifted his eyebrows; but the whelp was obliged to go on.

"I persuaded her," he said, with an edifying air of superiority. "I was stuck into old Bounderby's bank (where I never wanted to be), and I knew I should get into scrapes there, if she put old Bounderby's pipe out; so I told her my wishes, and she came into them. She would do anything for me. It was very game of her, wasn't it?"

"It was charming, Tom!"

"Not that it was altogether so important to her as it was to me," continued Tom coolly, "because my liberty and comfort, and perhaps my getting on, depended on it; and she had no other lover, and staying at home was like staying in jail—especially when I was gone. It wasn't as if she gave up another lover for old Bounderby; but still it was a good thing in her."

"Perfectly delightful. And she gets on so placidly."

"Oh," returned Tom, with contemptuous patronage, "she's a regular girl. A girl can get on anywhere. She has settled down to the life, and she don't mind. The life does just as well for her, as another. Besides, though Loo is a girl, she's not a common sort of girl. She can shut herself up within herself, and think—as I have often known her sit and watch the fire—for an hour at a stretch."

"Ay, ay? Has resources of her own," said Harthouse, smoking quietly.

"Not so much of that as you may suppose," returned Tom; "for our governor had her crammed with all sorts of dry bones and sawdust. It's his system."

"Formed his daughter on his own model?" suggested Harthouse.

"His daughter! Ah! and everybody else. Why, he formed Me that way," said Tom. "Impossible!"

"He did though," said Tom, shaking his head. "I mean to say, Mr. Harthouse, that when I first left home and went to old Bounderby's, I was as flat as a warming-pan, and knew no more about life, than any oyster does."

"Come, Tom! I can hardly believe that. A joke's a joke."

"Upon my soul!" said the whelp. "I am serious; I am indeed!" He smoked with great gravity and dignity for a little while, and then added, in a highly complacent tone, "Oh! I have picked up a little, since. I don't deny that. But I have done it myself; no thanks to the governor."

"And your intelligent sister?"

"My intelligent sister is about where she was. She used to complain to me that she had nothing to fall back upon, that girls usually fall back upon; and I don't see how she is to have got over that since. But she don't mind," he sagaciously added, puffing at his cigar again. "Girls can always get on, somehow."

"Calling at the Bank yesterday evening, for Mr. Bounderby's address, I found an ancient lady there, who seems to entertain great admiration for your sister," observed Mr. James Harthouse, throwing away the last cigarette he had now smoked out.

"Mother Sparsit?" said Tom. "What! you have seen her already, have you?"

His friend nodded. Tom took his cigar out of his mouth, to shut up his eye (which had grown rather unmanageable) with the greater expression, and to tap his nose several times with his finger.

"Mother Sparsit's feeling for Loo is more than admiration, I should think," said Tom. "Say affection and devotion. Mother Sparsit never set her cap at Bounderby when he was a bachelor. Oh no!"

These were the last words spoken by the whelp, before a giddy drowsiness came upon him, followed by complete oblivion. He was roused from the latter state by an uneasy
dread of being stirred up with a boot, and also of a voice saying: "Come, it's late. Be off!"

"Well!" he said, scrambling from the sofa. "I must take my leave of you though. I say. Your's is very good tobacco. But it's too mild."

"Yes, it's too mild," returned his entertainer. "It's—it's ridiculously mild," said Tom. "Where's the door? Good night!"

He had another odd dream of being taken by a waiter through a mist, which, after giving him some trouble and difficulty, resolved itself into the main street, in which he stood alone. He then walked home pretty easily, though not yet free from an impression of the presence and influence of his new friend—as if he were lounging somewhere in the air, in the same negligent attitude, regarding him with the same look.

The whelp went home, and went to bed. If he had had any sense of what he had done that night, and had been less of a whelp and more of a brother, he might have turned short on the road, might have gone down to the ill-smelling river that was dyed black, might have gone to bed in it for good and all, and have curtailed his head for ever with its filthy waters.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

A TURKISH AUCTIONEER.

It was the sale of a bankrupt's effects, and they were huddled together in disorderly confusion under a little craggly shed just outside the town. I was attracted thither by the shouts of a Turk, with a stentorian voice, who was running about in a state of great excitement, stopping persons in the street to insist on their examining the articles which he carried in his hand. He was the auctioneer of the place; and I followed him into the crazy shed as a student of manners. There was a considerable crowd of those greasy, dingy persons, who seem to have an abstract love of second-hand goods, and who are thrust between the collar of his shirt and the nape of his neck. Our friend, thus goaded, makes another excited bolt out of the shed and, next moment, is heard shouting about the cracked pipkin again, in the same furious manner as that which first attracted my attention. His hand was disposed to become a purchaser looks rather disconcerted: I suspect he is not thoroughly broken in at auction; but nobody else pays any further attention to the proceedings for the present. In fact, all seem to be rather glad to have got rid of the auctioneer than otherwise, probably in the hope that the festive occasion may be prolonged until a later hour. So they sit down and light a great number of paper cigars as a necessary preliminary to the discussion of the news of the day. Their conversation is composed merely of coffee-house politics and their neighbours' business. Woe to the Costaki, or Nikolaki who does not happen to be present; the character of that Costaki or Nikolaki is handled with a ferocity which quite makes one's ears tingle; and I listen attentively for one pleasant thought or kindly expression; for one plain sensible idea, or healthy view of anything talked about, in vain.

Presently the auctioneer returns. While the majority of his customers are wrangling, he has slyly disposed of the pipkin to the somebody who first bid for it; and I think another roguish wink to the purchaser signified that he should expect a con-si-de-ra-tion for the same unpromising object. He then walked out of the shed and, next moment, is heard shouting about the cracked pipkin again, in the same furious manner as that which first attracted my attention. The somebody who was disposed to become a purchaser looks rather disconcerted: I suspect he is not thoroughly broken in at auction; but nobody else pays any further attention to the proceedings for the present. In fact, all seem to be rather glad to have got rid of the auctioneer than otherwise, probably in the hope that the festive occasion may be prolonged until a later hour. So they sit down and light a great number of paper cigars as a necessary preliminary to the discussion of the news of the day. Their conversation is composed merely of coffee-house politics and their neighbours' business. Woe to the Costaki, or Nikolaki who does not happen to be present; the character of that Costaki or Nikolaki is handled with a ferocity which quite makes one's ears tingle; and I listen attentively for one pleasant thought or kindly expression; for one plain sensible idea, or healthy view of anything talked about, in vain.

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"On my friends, the down-trodden operatives of Coketown! Oh my friends and fellow-countrymen, the slaves of an iron-handed and a grinding despotism! Oh my friends and fellow-sufferers, and fellow-workmen, and fellow men! I tell you that the hour is come, when we must rally round one another as One united power, and crumble into dust the oppressors that too long have battened upon the plunder of our families, upon the sweat of our brows, upon the labor of our hands, upon the strength of our sinews, upon the God-created glorious rights of Humanity, and upon the holy and eternal privileges of Brotherhood!"

"Good!" "Hear, hear!" "Hurrah!" and other cries, arose in many voices from various parts of the densely crowded and suffocatingly close Hall, in which the orator, perched on a stage, delivered himself of this and what other froth and fume he had in him. He had declaimed himself into a violent heat, and crumble into dust the oppressors that too long have battened upon the plunder of our families, upon the sweat of our brows, upon the labor of our hands, upon the strength of our sinews, upon the God-created glorious rights of Humanity, and upon the holy and eternal privileges of Brotherhood!"

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himself aloof, and will not be one of those the proceedings, and this, functionary now took was pale and a little moved in the face—his the orator's side before the concourse. He violent scorn, "I do not wonder that you, the right hand at arm's length (as the manner of voice called out, "Is the man heer? If the him up for the condemnation of a man unheard. and for Right Slackbridge is), to still the thundering sea, with a withering smile; and, holding out his "Be sure you're right, Slackbridge!" "Put man's heer, Slackbridge, let's hear the man with a round of applause. Slackbridge, the orator, looked about him with a withering smile; and, holding out his right hand at arm's length (as the manner of all Slackbridges is), to still the thundering sea, waiting until there was a profound silence. Here, a brief press and confusion near the stage, ended in the man himself standing at the orator's side before the concourse. He was pale and a little moved in the face—his lips especially showed it; but he stood quiet, with his left hand at his chin, waiting to be heard. There was a chairman to regulate the proceedings, and this functionary now took the case into his own hands.

"My friends," said he, "by virtue o' my office as your president, I ashes o' our friend Slackbridge, who may be a little over hetter in this business, to take his seat, whiles this man Stephen Blackpool is heern. You all know this man Stephen Blackpool. You know him awlung o' his misfort'us, and his good name." 

With that, the chairman shook him frankly by the hand, and sat down again. Slackbridge likewise sat down, wiping his hot forehead—always from left to right, and never the reverse way.

"My friends," Stephen began, in the midst of a dead calm; "I ha' hed wha's been spok'n o' me, and 'tis lickly that I shan't mend it. But I'd liefer you'd hear the truth concernin myself, fro my lips than fro onny good. Licker they'll do yo hurt." Slackbridge laughed, folded his arms, and frowned sarcastically.

"But 'tant summuch for that as I stands out. If that were aw, I'd coom in wi' th' rest. But I ha' my reasons—mine, yo see—for being hindered; not only now, but awius—awius—life long!" Slackbridge jumped up and stood beside him, grinning and tearing. "Oh my friends, what but this did I tell you? My friends, fellow-countrymen, what warning but this did I give you? And how shows this recreant conduct in a man on whom unequal laws are known to have fallen heavy? Oh you Englishmen, I ask you how does this subornation show in one of yourselves, who is thus consenting to his own undoing and to yours, and to your children's and your children's children's?"

There was some applause, and some crying of Shame upon the man; but the greater part of the audience were quiet. They looked at Stephen's worn face, rendered more pathetic by the homely emotions it evinced; and, in the mind seas of their nature, they were more sorry than indignant.

"'Tis this Delegate's trade for 't speak," said Stephen, "an he's paid for't, an he knows his work. Let him keep to't. Let him give no heed to what I ha'nd'n to bear. That's not for him. That's not for nobody but me."

There was a propriety, not to say a dignity in these words, that made the hearers yet more quiet and attentive. The same strong voice called out, "Slackbridge, let the man be heern, and howd thee tongue!" Then the place was wonderfully still.

"My brothers," said Stephen, whose low voice was distinctly heard, "and my fellow workmen—for that yo are to me, though not, as I knows on, to this delegate hear—'I ha but a word to sen, and I could sen nommore to this man Stephen Blackpool is heern. You all know this man Stephen Blackpool. You know him awlung o' his mishort, and his good name." 

But with that, the chairman shook him frankly by the hand, and sat down again. Slackbridge likewise sat down, wiping his hot forehead—always from left to right, and never the reverse way.

"My friends," Stephen began, in the midst of a dead calm; "I ha' hed wha's been spok'n
There was an universal murmur to the same effect, though no man articulated a word. Every eye was fixed on Stephen's face. To repent of his determination, would be to take a load from all their minds. He looked around him, and knew that it was so. Not a grain of anger with them was in his heart; he knew them, far below their surface weaknesses and misconceptions, as no one but their fellow laborer could.

"I ha thowt on't, above a bit, sir. I simply caana coom in. I mun go th' way as lays afore me. I mun tak my leave o' aw here.

He made a sort of reverence to them by holding up his arms, and stood for the moment in that attitude; not speaking until they slowly dropped at his sides.

"Manny's the pleasant word as soon hear has spok'n wi' me; manny's the face I see hear, as I first seen when I was young and licker heart'n than now. I ha never had no fratch afore, an' I never d'nt like; Gonnaws I ha' none now that's o' my makin'. Yo'll ca' me traitor and that — yo I mean t' say," addressing Slackbridge, "but 'tis easier to ca' than mak' out. So le's.

He had moved away a pace or two to come down from the platform, when he remembered something he had not said, and returned again.

"Haply," he said, turning his furrowed face slowly about, that he might as it were individually address the whole audience, those both near and distant; "haply, when this question has been tak'n up and dismissed, there'll be a threat to turn out if I'm let to work among yo. I hope I shall die ere ever such a time cooms, and I shall work solitary among yo unless it cooms — truly, I mun do't, my friends; not to brave yo, but to among a familiar crowd. The stranger in the land who looks into ten thousand faces for some answering look and never finds it, is in cheering society as compared with him who passes ten averted faces daily, that were once the countenances of friends. Such experience was to be Stephen's now, in every waking moment of his life; at his work, on his way to it and from it, at his door, at his window, everywhere. By general consent, they even avoided that side of the street on which he habitually walked; and left it, of all the working men, to him only.

He had been for many years, a quiet, silent man, associating but little with other men, and used to companionship with his own thoughts. He had never known before, the strength of the want in his heart for the frequent recognition of a nod, a look, a word; or the immense amount of relief that had been poured into it by drops, through such small means. It was even harder than he could have believed possible, to separate in his own conscience his abandonment by all his fellows, from a baseless sense of shame and disgrace.

The first four days of his endurance were days so long and heavy, that he began to be appalled by the prospect before him. Not only did he see no Rachael all the time, but he avoided every chance of seeing her; for, although he knew that the prohibition did not yet formally extend to the women working in the factories, he found that some of them with whom he was acquainted were changed to him, and he feared to try others, and dreaded that Rachael might be even singled out from the rest if she were seen in his company. So, he had been quite alone during the four days, and had spoken to no one, when, as he was leaving his work very late one night, a young man of a very light complexion accosted him in the street.
"Your name's Blackpool, ain't it?" said the young man.

Stephen colored to find himself with his hat in his hand, and his gratitude for being spoken to, or in the suddenness of it, or both. He made a feint of adjusting the lining, and said, "Yes."

"You are the Hand they have sent to Coventry, I mean?" said Bitzer, the very light young man in question.

"I supposed so, from their all appearing to keep away from you. Mr. Bounderby wants to speak to you. You know his house, don't you?"

Stephen said "Yes," again.

"Then go straight up there, will you?" said Bitzer. "You're expected, and have only to tell the servant it's you. I belong to the Bank; so, if you go straight up without me (I was sent to fetch you), you'll save me a walk."

Stephen, whose way had been in the contrary direction, turned about, and betook himself as in duty bound, to the red brick castle of the giant Bounderby.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Well, Stephen," said Bounderby, in his windy manner, "what's this I hear? What have these pests of the earth been doing to you? Come in, and speak up."

Stephen, as he had been in the drawing-room that he was thus bidden. A tea-table was set out; and Mr. Bounderby's young wife, and her brother, and a great gentleman from London, were present. To whom Stephen made his obeisance, closing the door and standing near it, with his hat in his hand.

"This is the man I was telling you about, Harthouse," said Mr. Bounderby. The gentleman he addressed, who was talking to Mrs. Bounderby on the sofa, got up, saying in an indolent way, "Oh really?" and dawdled to the hearthrug where Mr. Bounderby stood.

"Now," said Bounderby, "speak up!"

After the four days he had passed, this address fell rudely and discordantly on Stephen's ear. Besides being a rough handling of his wounded mind, it seemed to assume that he really was the self-interested deserter he had been called.

"What were it, sir," said Stephen, "as yo were pleased to want wi' me?"

"Why, I have told you," returned Bounderby. "Speak up like a man, since you are a man, and tell us about yourself and this Combination."

"W' yer pardon, sir," said Stephen Blackpool, "'I ha' nowt to sen about it."

Mr. Bounderby, who was always more or less like a Wind, finding something in his way here, began to blow at it directly. "Now, look here, Harthouse," said he, "here's a specimen of 'em. When this man was here once before, I warned this man against the mischievous strangers who are always about—and who ought to be hanged wherever they are found—and I told this man that he was going in the wrong direction. Now, would you believe it, that although they have put this mark upon him, he is such a slave to them still, that he's afraid to open his lips about them?"

"I sed as I had nowt to sen, sir; not as I was fearfo' o' openin' my lips."

"You said. Ah! I know what you said; more than that, I know what you mean, you see. Not always the same thing, by the Lord Harry! Quite different things. You had better tell us at once, that that fellow Slackbridge is not in the town, stirring up the people to mutiny; and that he is not a regular qualified leader of the people; that is, a most confounded scoundrel. You had better tell us so at once; you can't deceive me. You want to tell us so. Why don't you?"

"I'm as soorny as yo, sir, when the people's leaders is bad," said Stephen, shaking his head. "They takes such as offers. Haply 'tis na the smallest of their misfortunes when they can't get no better."

The wind began to be boisterous.

"Now, you'll think this pretty well, Harthouse," said Mr. Bounderby. "You'll think this tolerably strong. You'll say, upon my soul, this is a tidy specimen of what my friends have to deal with; but this is nothing, sir! I shall hear me ask this man a question. Pray, Mr. Blackpool!—wind springing up very fast—'may I take the liberty of asking you how it happens that you refused to be in this Combination?"

"How 't happens?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Bounderby, with his thumbs in the arms of his coat, and jerking his head and shutting his eyes in confidence with the opposite wall: "how it happens."

"I'd leeffnor not coom to't, sir; but sin you put th' question—an not want'n t' be ill—manner'n—I'll answer. I ha passed a promiss."

"Not to me, you know," said Bounderby. (Gusty weather with deceitful calms. One now prevailing). "O no, sir. Not to yo."

"As for me, any consideration for me has had just nothing at all to do with it," said Bounderby, still in confidence with the wall. "If only Josiah Bounderby of Coketown had been in question, you would have joined and made no bones about it?"

"Why yes, sir. 'Tis true."

"Though he knows," said Mr. Bounderby, now blowing a gale, "that these are a set of rascals and rebels whom transportation is too good for! Now, Mr. Harthouse, you have been knocking about in the world some time. Did you ever meet with anything like that man out of this blessed country?" And Mr. Bounderby pointed him out for inspection, with an angry finger. "Nay, 'ma'am," said Stephen Blackpool,
staunchly protesting against the words that had been used, and instinctively addressing himself to Louisa, after glancing at her face.

"Not rebels, nor yet rascals. Nowt o' that kind, ma'am, nowt o' th' kind. They've not done me a kindness, ma'am, as I know and feel. But there's not a dozen men amoong 'em, ma'am—a dozen? Not six—

but what believes as he has done his duty by the rest and by himself. God forbid as I, that ha' known an had'n experiences o' these men aw my life—I, that ha' ett'n an droonken wi' em, an see't n' wi' em, an tol'n wi' em, and lov'n 'em, should fail fur to stan' by 'em wi' the truth, let 'em ha done to me what they may!"

He spoke with the rugged earnestness of his place and character—deepened perhaps by a proud consciousness that he was faithful to his class under all their mistrust; but he fully remembered where he was, and did not even raise his voice.

"No, ma'am, no. They're true to one another, faith' to one another, factionate to one another, e'en to death. Be poor amoong 'em, be sick amoong 'em, grieve amoong 'em for onny o' th' munny causes that carries grief to the poor man's door, an' they'll be tender wi' yo, gentle wi' yo, comfortable wi' yo, Chrsien wi' yo. Be sure o' that, ma'am. They'd be riven to bits, ere ever they'd be different."

"In short," said Mr. Bounderby, "it's because they are so full of virtues that they have turned you adrift. Go through with it for I know precious well, beforehand, of it—for I know precious well, beforehand, what it will be; nobody knows better than I do, take notice!—instead of receiving it on trust, from my mouth."

Stephen bent his head to the gentleman from London, and showed a rather more troubled mind than usual. He turned his eyes involuntarily to his former refuge, but at a look from that quarter (expressive though instantaneous) he settled them on Mr. Bounderby's face.

"Now, what do you complain of?" asked Mr. Bounderby.

"I ha' not coom heer, sir," Stephen reminded him, "to complain. I coom for that I were sent for."

"What," repeated Mr. Bounderby, folding his arms, "do you people, in a general way, complain of?"

Stephen looked at him with some little irresolution for a moment, and then seemed to make up his mind.

"Sir, I were never good at shovin' o't, though I ha' had'n my share in feeling o't. 'Deed we are in a muddle, sir. Look round town—so rich as 'tis—and see th' numbers o' people as has been broughten into bein heer, fur to weave, an' to card, an' to piece out a livin', aw the same way, somehow, twixt their cradles an' their graves. Look how we live, an' wheer we live, an' what numbers, an' by what chances, an' wi' what sameness; an' look how the mills is awlus a goin', an' how they never works us no nigher to onny distant object—cep'tin awlus, Death. Look how you considers of us, an' writes of us, an' talks of us, an' goes up wi' yor depatures to Secretaries o' State 'bout us, an' how yo are awlus right, an' how we are awlus wrong, an' never had'n no reason in us sin ever we were born. Look how this ha' growen an grown, sir, bigger an' bigger, broader an' broader, harder an' harder, frro year to year, fro generation unto generation. Who can look out, sir, an' fairly tell a man 'tis not a muddle?"

"Of course," said Mr. Bounderby. "Now perhaps you'll let the gentleman know, how you would set this muddle (as you're so fond of calling it) to rights."

"I donno, sir. I canna be expecten to'. 'Tis not me as should be looken to for that, sir. 'Tis them as is put ower me, an' ower aw the rest of us. What do they take upon themsen, sir, if not to do'?

"I'll tell you something towards it, at any rate," returned Mr. Bounderby. "We will make an example of half a dozen Slackbridges. We'll indict the blackguards for felony, and get 'em shipped off to penal settlements."

Stephen gravely shook his head.

"Don't tell me we won't, man," said Mr. Bounderby, by this time blowing a hurricane, "because we will, I tell you!"

"Sir," returned Stephen, with the quiet confidence of absolute certainty, "if yo was' t tak a hundred Slackbridges—anaw as there is, an' aw the number ten times towd—an was' t sew 'em up in separate sacks, an' sink 'em in the deepest ocean as were made ere dry land coom to be, yo'd leave the
muddle just wheer 'tis. Mischeevous strangers!" said Stephen, with an anxious smile: "when ha we not heern, I am sure, sin ever we can call to mind, o' th' mischeevous strangers!

"Tis not by th'ems the trouble's made, sir. "Tis not by th'ems 't'comes. I ha no favor for 'em—I ha no reason to favor 'em—but 'tis hopeless an useless to dream o' takin them fro their trade, 'stead o' takin their trade fro th'ems! Aw that's now about me in this room were heer afore I coom, an will be heer when I am gone. Put that clock aboard a ship an pack it off to Norfolk Island, an the time will go on just the same. So 'tis wi' Slackbridge every bit."

Reverting for a moment to his former refuge, he observed a cautionary movement of her eyes towards the door. Stepping back, he put his hand upon the lock. But, he had not spoken out of his own will and desire; and he felt it in his heart a noble return for his late injurious treatment, to be faithful to the last to those who had repudiated him. He stayed to finish what was in his mind.

"Sir, I canna, wi' my little learning an my common sense—tell me—wi' my learning an my common sense I canna, nor wi' my common sense nor wi' my learning. What will better aw this—though some working-men o' this town could, above my powers—but I can tell him what I know will never do't. The strong hand will never do't. Vict'ry and triumph will never do't. Agreerin fur to mak one side unnat'rally awlin baiter for ever right, and tother side unnat'rally awlin and for ever wrong, will never, never do't. Nor yet lettin alone will never do't. Let thousands upon thousands alone, aw leadin the like lives and aw faw'en into the like muddle, an them will be as one, an yo will be as another, wi' a black impassable world betwixt yo, just as | long or short a time assitch like misery can last. Not drawin nigh to folk, wi' kindness an inclinations, wi'out souls to weary an souls to in—was figures in a soom, or machines: wi'out memories and in—was figures in a soom, or machines: wi'out souls to weary an souls to in—was figures in a soom, or machines. Heaven help us aw in this wo—'

"That's now about me in this room were heer afore I coom, an will be heer when I am gone. Put that clock aboard a ship an pack it off to Norfolk Island, an the time will go on just the same. So 'tis wi' Slackbridge every bit."
HARD TIMES.
BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was falling dark when Stephen came out of Mr. Bounderby's house. The shadows of night had gathered so fast, that he did not look about him when he closed the door, but plodded straight along the street. Nothing was further from his thoughts than the curious old woman he had encountered on his previous visit to the same house, when he heard a step behind him that he knew, and, turning, saw her in Bachael's company.

He saw Bachael first, as he had heard her only.

"Ah Rachael, my dear! Missus, thou wi' her!"

"Well, and now you are surprised to be sure, and with reason I must say," the old woman returned. "Here I am see."  

"But how wi' Rachael?" said Stephen, falling into their step, walking between them, and looking from the one to the other.

"Why, I come to be with this good lass pretty much as I came to be with you," said I the old woman cheerfully, taking the reply upon herself. "My visiting time is later this year than usual, for I have been rather troubled with shortness of breath, and so put it off till the weather was fine and warm. For the same reason I don't make all my journey in one day, but divide it into two days, and get a bed to-night at the Travellers' Coffee House down by the railroad (a nice clean house), and go back, Parliamentary, at six in the morning. Well, but what has this to do with this good lass, says you? I'm going to tell you. I have heard of Mr. Bounderby being married. I read it in the paper, where it looked grand—oh, it looked fine!" the old woman dwelt on it with strange enthusiasm; "and I want to see his wife. I have never seen her yet. Now, if you'll believe me, she hasn't come out of that house since noon to-day. So, not to give her up too easily, I was waiting about, a little last bit more, when I passed close to this good lass two or three times; and her face being so friendly I spoke to her, and she spoke to me. There!" said the old woman to Stephen, "you can make all the rest out for yourself now, a deal shorter than I can, I dare say!"

"Well, missus," said he, "I ha seen the lady, and she were young and hansom. Wi' fine dark thinfcin eyes, and a still way, Rachel, as I ha never seen the like on."

"Young and handsome. Yes!" cried the old woman, quite delighted. "As bonny as a rose! And what a happy wife!"

"Aye, missus, I suppose she be," said Stephen. But with a doubtful glance at Bachael.

"Suppose she be? She must be. She's your master's wife," returned the old woman. "Suppose she be? She must be. She's your master's wife," returned the old woman.

Stephen nodded assent. "Though as to master," said he, glancing again at Rachael, "not master onny more. That's aw enden twixt him and me."

"Have you left his work, Stephen?" asked Rachael, anxiously and quickly.

"Why, Rachael," he replied, "whether I ha left'n his work, or whether his work ha left'n me, cooms t' th' same. His work and me are parted. 'Tis as weil so—better, I were thinkin when yo coom up wi' me. It would ha brought'n trouble upon trouble if I had stayed ther. Haply 'tis a kindness to monny that I go; haply 'tis a kindness to myseln; anyways it mun be done. I mun turn my face fro Coketown fur th' time, an seek a fort'n, dear, by beginnin fresh."

"Where will you go, Stephen?"

"I donno t'night," said he, lifting off his hat, and smoothing his thin hair with the flat of his hand. "But I'm not a goin' t'night, Bachael; nor yet t' morrow. 'Tain't easy overmuch, t' know wheer t' turn, but a good heart will coom to me."

Herein, too, the sense of even thinking unselfishly aided him. Before he had so much as closed Mr. Bounderby's door, he had reflected that at least his being obliged to go away was good for her, as it would save her from the chance of being brought into question for not withdrawing from him. Though it would cost him a hard pang to..."
for many days. He too, with the world a
first glimpse of sociality the host had had

the visitor enjoyed it mightily. It was the
exemplifying the utter want of calculation on
necessitated the borrowing of a cup), and |
sir. Bachael made the tea (so large a party
some butter, from the nearest shop. The bread
the part of these people, sir.

again in corroboration of the magnates, as
the sugar lump, of course—in fulfilment of»|
was new and crusty, the butter fresh, and
in small portions of tea and sugar, a loaf, and

Stephen, “o’ askin thy name.”
The old lady announced herself as “Mrs.
Pegler.”

“Oh, many long years!” Mrs. Pegler’s
husband (one of the best on record) was
already dead, by Mrs. Pegler’s calculation,
when Stephen was born.

“Twere a bad job too, to lose so good a
one,” said Stephen. “Oumy children?”

Mrs. Pegler’s cup, rattling against her
sauce as she held it, denoted some nervous-
ness on her part. “No,” she said. “Not now,
not now.”

“Dead, Stephen,” Rachael softly hinted.

“I'm sorry I ha spok'n on't,” said
Stephen. “I ought t' ha hadn in my mind
as I might touch a sore place. I—I blame
myself.”

While he excused himself, the old lady's
cup rattled more and more. I had a son,”
she said, curiously distressed, and not by any
of the usual appearances of sorrow; “and he
did well, wonderfully well. But he is not to
be spoken of if you please. He is—”

Putting down her cup, she moved her hands
as if she would have added, by her action,
“dead!” Then, she said, aloud, “I have lost
him.”

Stephen had not yet got the better of his
having given the old lady pain, when his
landlady came stumbling up the narrow
stairs, and calling him to the door, whis-
pered in his ear. Mrs. Pegler was by
means dead, for she caught a word as it
was uttered.

“Bounderby!” she cried, in a suppressed
voice, starting up from the table. “Oh hide
me! Don't let me be seen for the world.
Don't let him come up till I have got away.
Pray, pray!” She trembled, and was exces-
ively agitated; getting behind Rachael,
when Rachael tried to reassure her; and not
seeming to know what she was about.

“But hearken, missus, hearken;” said
Stephen, astonished, “Tisn't Mr. Bounderby;
tis his wife. Yor not fearfo' o' her. Yo was
hey-go-mad about her, but an hour sin'.”

“But are you sure it's the lady and not
the gentleman?” she asked, still trembling.

“Certain sure.”

“Well then, pray don't speak to me, nor
yet take any notice of me,” said the old
woman. “Let me be quite to myself in this
corner.”

Stephen nodded; looking to Rachael for an
explanation, which she was quite unable to
give him; took the candle, went down stairs,
and in a few moments returned, lighting
Louisa into the room. She was followed by
the whelp.

Rachael had risen, and stood apart with
her shawl and bonnet in her hand, when
Stephen, himself profoundly astonished by
this visit, put the candle on the table. Then
he too stood, with his doubled hand upon
the table near it, waiting to be addressed.

For the first time in her life, Louisa had
come into one of the dwellings of the Coke-
town Hands; for the first time in her life,
she was face to face with anything like
individuality in connexion with them.
She knew of their existence by hundreds
and by thousands. She knew what results in
work a given number of them would produce,
in a given space of time. She knew them in crowds passing to and from their nests, like ants or beetles. But she knew from her reading infinitely more of the ways of toiling insects, than of these toiling men and women.

Something to be worked so much and paid so much, and there ended; something to be infallibly settled by laws of supply and demand; something that blundered against those laws, and floundered into difficulty; something that was a little plunged when wheat was dear, and over-ate itself when wheat was cheap; something that increased at such a rate of percentage, and yielded such another percentage of crime, and such another percentage of pauperism; something wholesale, of which vast fortunes were made; something that occasionally rose like a sea, and did some harm and waste (chiefly to itself), and fell again; this she knew the Coketown Hands to be. But, she had scarcely thought more of separating them into units, than of separating the sea itself into its component drops.

She stood for some moments looking round the room. From the few chairs, the few books, the common prints, and the bed, she glanced to the two women, and to Stephen.

"I have come to speak to you, in consequence of what passed just now. I should like to be serviceable to you, if you will let me.

Rachael raised her eyes, and they sufficiently answered no, and dropped again.

"I remember," said Louisa, reddening at her mistake; "I recollect, now, to have heard your domestic misfortunes spoken of, though I was not attending to the particulars at the time. It was not my meaning to ask a question that would give pain to any one here. If I should ask any other question that may happen to have that result, give me credit, if you please, for being in ignorance how to speak to you as I ought."

As Stephen had but a little while ago instinctively addressed himself to her, so she now instinctively addressed herself to Rachael. Her manner was short and abrupt, yet faltering and timid.

"He has told you what has passed between himself and my husband? You would be his first resource, I think."

"I have heard the end of it, young lady," said Rachael.

"Did I understand, that, being rejected by one employer, he would probably be rejected by all? I thought he said as much?"

"The chances are very small, young lady—next to nothing—for a man who gets a bad name among them."

"What shall I understand that you mean by a bad name?"

"The name of being troublesome."

"Then, by the prejudices of his own class, and by the prejudices of the other, he is sacrificed alike? Are the two so deeply separated in this town, that there is no place whatever, for an honest workman between them?"

Rachael shook her head in silence.

"He fell into suspicion," said Louisa, "with his fellow-weavers, because he had made a promise not to be one of them. I think it must have been to you that he made that promise. Might I ask you why he made it?"

Rachael burst into tears. "I didn't seek it of him, poor lad. I prayed him to avoid trouble for his own good, little thinking he'd come to it through me. But I know he'd die a hundred deaths, ere ever he'd break his word. I know that of him well."

Stephen had remained quietly attentive, in his usual thoughtful attitude, with his hand at his chin. He now spoke in a voice rather less steady than usual.

"No one, excepting myself, can ever know what honor, an what love, an respect, I bear to Rachael, or wi' what cause. When I passed that promise, I towd her true, she were th' Angel o' my life. 'Twere a solemn promess. 'Ts gone fro me, fur ever."

Louisa turned her head to him, and bent it with a deference that was new in her. She looked from him to Rachael, and her features softened. "What will you do?" she asked him. And her voice had softened too.

"Weel, manny," said Stephen, making the best of it, with a smile; "when I ha finished off, I mun quit thi part, an try another. Fortnet or misfortnet, a man can but try; there's nowt to be done wi'out tryin'—cept laying doon an dying."

"How will you travel?"

"Afoot, my kind ledy, afoot."

Louisa colored, and a purse appeared in her hand. The rustling of a bank-note was audible, as she unfolded one and laid it on the table.

"Rachael, will you tell him—for you know how, without offence—that this is freely his, to help him on his way? Will you entreat him to take it?"

"I canna' do that, young lady," she answered, turning her head aside; "bless you for thinking o' the poor lad wi' such tenderness. But 'tis for him to know his heart, and what is right according to it."

Louisa looked, in part incredulous, in part frightened, in part overcome with quick sympathy, when this man of so much self-command who had been so plain and steady through the late interview, lost his composure in a moment, and now stood with his hand before his face. She stretched out hers, as if she would have touched him; then checked herself, and remained still.

"Not o'en Rachael," said Stephen, when he stood again with his face uncovered, "could mak sitch a kind offerin, by onny word, knder. T' show that I'm not a man wi'out reason and gratitude, I'll tak two pound. I'll borrow't for t' pay't back. 'Twill be the sweetest work as ever I ha
She was fain to take up the note again, and to substitute the much smaller sum he had named. He was neither courteously nor handsomely nor picturesque, in any respect; and yet his manner of accepting it, and of expressing his thanks without more words, had a grace in it that Lord Chesterfield could not have taught his son in a century.

Tom had sat upon the bed, swinging one leg, and sucking his walking-stick with sufficient unconcern, until the visit had attained this stage. Seeing his sister ready to depart, he got up, rather hurriedly, and put in a word.

"Just wait a moment, Loo! Before we go, I should like to speak to him a moment. Something comes into my head. If you'll step out on the stairs, Blackpool, I'll mention it. Never a light was it?" Tom was remarkably impatient of his moving towards the cupboard, to get one. "It don't want a light."

Stephen followed him out, and Tom closed the room door, and held the lock in his hand.

"I say!" he whispered. "I think I can do you a good turn. Don't ask me what it is, because it may not come to anything. But there's no harm in my trying."

His breath fell like a flame of fire on Stephen's ear; it was so hot.

"That was our light porter at the Bank," said Tom, "who brought you the message to-night. I call him our light porter, because I belong to the Bank too."

Stephen thought "What a hurry he is in!"

"Well!" said Tom. "Now look here! When are you off?"

"T'day's Monday," replied Stephen, considering.

"Friday or Saturday," said Tom. "Now, look here! I am not sure that I can do you the good turn I want to do you—that's my sister, you know, in your room—but I may be able to, and if I should not be able to, there's no harm done. So I tell you what. You'll know our light porter again?"

"Yes sure," said Stephen.

"Very well," returned Tom. "When you leave work of a night, between this and your going away, just hang about the Bank an hour or so, will you? Don't take on, as if you meant anything, if he should see you hanging about there; because I shan't put him up to speak to you, unless I find I can do you the service I want to do you. In that case he'll have a note or a message for you, but not else. Now look here! You are sure you understand?"

He had wormed a finger, in the darkness, through a button-hole of Stephen's coat, and was screwing that corner of the garment tight up, round and round, in an extraordinary manner.

"I understan, sir," said Stephen.

"Now look here!" repeated Tom. "Be sure you don't make any mistake then, and don't forget, I shall tell my sister as we go home, what I have viewed, and she'll approve, I know. Now look here! You're all right, are you? You understand all about it? Very well then. Come along, Loo!"

He pushed the door open as he called to her, but did not return into the room, or wait to be lighted down the narrow stairs. He was at the bottom when she began to descend, and was in the street before she could take his arm.

Mrs. Pegler remained in her corner until the brother and sister were gone, and until Stephen came back with the candle in his hand. It was in a state of insuperable admiration of Mrs. Bounderby, and, like an unaccountable old woman, wept, "because she was such a pretty dear." Yet Mrs. Pegler was so flurried lest the object of her admiration should return by any chance, or anybody else should come, that her cheerfulness was ended for that night. It was late too, to people who rose early and worked hard; therefore the party broke up; and Stephen and Rachel escorted their mysterious acquaintance to the door of the Travellers' Coffee House, where they parted from her.

They walked back together to the corner of the street where Rachel lived, and as they drew nearer and nearer to it, silence crept upon them. When they came to the dark corner where their unfrequent meetings always ended, they stopped, still silent, as if both were afraid to speak.

"I shall strive t'see thee agen, Rachel, afore I go, but if not—"

"Thou wilt not, Stephen, I know. 'Tis better that we make up our minds to be open w' one another."

"Thou'rt awlus right. 'Tis bolder and better. I ha been thinkin then, Rachel, that as tis but a day or two that remains, 'twere better for thee, my dear, not t' be seen w' me, 'T might bring thee into trouble, fur no good."

"'Tis not for that, Stephen, that I mind. But thou know'st our old agreement. 'Tis for that."

"Well, well," said he. "'Tis better, anyways. Will you, will you?"

"Thon'lt write to me, and tell me all that happens, Stephen?"

"Yes, What can I say now, but Heaven be wi' thee, Heaven bless thee, Heaven thank thee and reward thee!"

"May it bless thee, Stephen, too, in all thy wanderings, and send thee peace and rest at last!"

"I towd thee, my dear," said Stephen.
Blackfoot—"that night—that I would never see or think o' anything that angered me, but thou, so much better than me, shouldst be beside it. Thou'rt beside it now. Thou mak'st me see it wi' a better eye. Bless thee. Good night. Good bye!"

It was but a hurried parting in the common street, yet it was a sacred remembrance to these two common people. Utilitarian economists, skeletons of schoolmasters, Commissioners of Fact, gented and used-up infidels, gabblerers of many little dog's-eared creeds, the poor you will have always with you. Cultivate in them, while there is yet time, the utmost graces of the fancies and affections, to adorn their lives so much in need of ornament; or, in the moment of your triumph, when romance is utterly driven out of their souls, and they and a bare existence stand face to face, Reality will take a wolfish turn, and make an end of you!

Stephen worked the next day, and the next, uncheered by a word from any one, and stunned in all his coming and going as before. At the end of the second day, he saw land; at the end of the third, his loom stood empty.

He had overstayed his hour in the street outside the Bank, on each of the two first evenings; and nothing had happened there, good or bad. That might be looked for in the steps for a breath of air. When he first came out, Stephen thought he might be looking for him, and passed near; but the light porter only cast his winking eyes upon him slightly, and said nothing.

Two hours were a long stretch of lounging about, after a long day's labor. Stephen sat upon the step of a door, leaned against a wall under an archway, strolled up and down, listened for the church clock, stopped and watched children playing in the street. Some purpose or other is so natural to every one, that a mere loiterer always looks and feels remarkable. When the first hour was out, Stephen even began to have an uncomfortable sensation upon him of being for the time a disreputable character.

Then came the lamplighter, and two lengthening lines of light all down the long perspective of the street, until they were blended and lost in the distance. Mrs. Sparsit closed the first floor window, drew down the blind, and went up stairs. Presently, a light went up stairs after her, passing first the fanlight of the door, and afterwards the two staircase windows, on its way up. By and by, one corner of the second floor blind was disturbed, as if Mrs. Sparsit's eye were there; also the other corner, as if the light porter's eye were on that side. Still, no communication was made to Stephen.

He had only to take leave of his landlady, and lie down on his temporary bed upon the floor; for his bundle was made up for to-morrow, and all was arranged for his departure. He meant to be clear of the town very early: before the Hands were in the streets.

It was barely daybreak, when with a parting look round his room, mournfully wondering whether he should ever see it again, he went out. The town was as entirely deserted as if the inhabitants had abandoned it, rather than hold communication with him. Every-thing looked wan at that hour. Even the coming sun made but a pale waste in the sky, like a sad sea.

By the place where Rachael lived, though it was not in his way; by the red brick streets; by the great silent factories, not trembling yet; by the railway, where the danger-lights were waning in the strengthening day; by the railway's crazy neighbourhoood, half pulled down and half built up; by scattered red brick villas, where the besmoked evergreens were sprinkled with a dirty powder, like untidy snuff-takers; by coal-dust paths and many varieties of ugliness; Stephen got to the top of the hill, and looked back.

Day was shining radiantly upon the town then, and the bells were going for the morning work. Domestic fires were not yet lighted, and the high chimneys had the sky to themselves. Puffing out their poisonous volumes, they would not be long in hiding it; but, for half an hour, some of the many windows were golden, which showed the Coketown people a sun eternally in eclipse, through a medium of smoked glass.

So strange to turn from the chimneys to the birds. So strange to have the road-dust on his feet instead of the coal-grit. So strange to have lived to his time of life, and yet to be beginning like a boy this summer morning! With these musings in his mind, and his bundle under his arm, Stephen took his attentive face along the high road. And the trees arched over him, whispering that he left a true and loving heart behind.
HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Mr. James Harthouse, "going in" for his adopted party, soon began to score. With the aid of a little more coaching for the political sages, a little more genteel listlessness for the general society, and a tolerable management of the assumed honesty in dishonesty, most effective and most patronised of the polite deadly sins, he speedily came to be considered of much promise. The not being troubled with earnestness was a grand point in his favour, enabling him to take to the hard Fact fellows with as good a grace as if he had been born one of the tribe, and to throw all other tribes overboard, as conscious impostors.

"Whom none of us believe, my dear Mrs. Bounderby, and who do not believe themselves. The only difference between us and the professors of virtue or benevolence, or philanthropy—never mind the name—is, that we know it is all meaningless, and say so; while they know it equally and will never say so."

Why should she be shocked or warned by this reiteration? It was not so unlike her father's principles, and her early training, that it need startle her. Where was the great difference between the two schools, when each chained her down to material realities, and inspired her with no faith in anything else? What was there in her soul for James Harthouse to destroy, which Thomas Gradgrind had nurtured there in its state of innocence!

It was even the worse for her at this pass, that in her mind—implanted there before her eminently practical father began to form it—a struggling disposition to believe in a wider and higher humanity than she had ever heard of, constantly strove with doubts and resentments. With doubts, because the aspiration had been done to her; if it were indeed a whisper of the truth. Upon a nature long accustomed to self-suppression, thus torn and divided, the Harthouse philosophy came as a relief and justification. Everything being hollow, and worthless, she had missed nothing and sacrificed nothing. What did it matter, she had said to her father, when he proposed her husband. What did it matter, she said still. With a scornful self-reliance, she asked herself, What did anything matter—and went on.

Towards what? Step by step, onward and downward, towards some end, yet so gradually that she believed herself to remain motionless. As to Mr. Harthouse, whither he tended, he neither considered nor cared. He had no particular design or plan before him; no energetic wickedness ruffled his lassitude. He was as much amused and interested, at present, as it became so fine a gentleman to be; perhaps even more than it would have been consistent with his reputation to confess. Soon after his arrival he languidly wrote to his brother, the honorable and jocular member, that the Bounderbys were "great fun"; and further, that the female Bounderby, instead of being the Gorgon he had expected, was young and remarkably pretty. After that, he wrote no more about them, and devoted his leisure chiefly to their house. He was very often in their house, in his hittings and visitings about the Coke town district; and was much encouraged by Mr. Bounderby. It was quite in Mr. Bounderby's gusty way to boast to all his world that he didn't care about your highly connected people, but that if his wife Tom Gradgrind's daughter did, she was welcome to their company.

Mr. James Harthouse began to think it would be a new sensation, if the face which changed so beautifully for the whelp, would change for him.

He was quick enough to observe; he had a good memory, and did not forget a word of the brother's revelations. He interwove them with everything he saw of the sister, and he began to understand her. To be sure, the better and profounder part of her character was not within his scope of perception; for in natures, as in seas, depth answers unto depth; but he soon began to read the rest with a student's eye.

Mr. Bounderby had taken possession of a house and grounds, about fifteen miles from the town, and accessible within a mile or two, by a railway striding on many arches over a wild country, undermined by deserted...
coalpits, and spotted at night by fires and black shapes of engines. This country, gradually softening towards the neighbourhood of Mr. Bounderby's retreat, there mellowed into a rustic landscape, golden with heath and snowy with hawthorn in the spring of the year, and tremulous with leaves and their shadows all the summer time. The bank had foreclosed a mortgage on the property thus pleasantly situated: effected by one of the Coketown magnates: who, in his determination to make a shorter cut than usual to an enormous fortune, overspeculated himself afterwards by about two hundred thousand pounds. These accidents did sometimes happen in the best situated families of Coketown, though the bankrupts had no connexion whatever with the improvident classes.

It afforded Mr. Bounderby supreme satisfaction to instal himself in this snug little estate, and with demonstrative humility to grow cabbages in the flower-garden. He delighted to live a barrack fashion, among the elegant furniture, and he bullied the very pictures with his origin. "Why, sir," he would say to a visitor, "I am told that Mr. Nickits, the late owner, gave seven hundred pound for that Sea-beach. Now, to be plain with you, if I ever, in the whole course of my life, take seven looks at it, at a hundred pound a look, it will be as much as I shall do. No, by George! I don't forget that I am Josiah Bounderby of Coketown. For years upon years, the only pictures in my possession, or that I could have got into my possession by any means, unless I stole 'em, were the engravings of a man shaving himself in a boot, on the blacking bottles that I was overjoyed to use in cleaning boots. I was delighted to live, barrack fashion, among the elegant furniture, and he bullied the very pictures with his origin. "Why, sir," he would say to a visitor, "I am told that Nickits, the late owner, gave seven hundred pound for that Sea-beach. Now, to be plain with you, if I ever, in the whole course of my life, take seven looks at it, at a hundred pound a look, it will be as much as I shall do. No, by George! I don't forget that I am Josiah Bounderby of Coketown. For years upon years, the only pictures in my possession, or that I could have got into my possession by any means, unless I stole 'em, were the engravings of a man shaving himself in a boot, on the blacking bottles that I was overjoyed to use in cleaning boots.

Then he would address Mr. Harthouse in the same style. "Hathouse, you have a couple of horses down here, I believe, and I want more. Bring half a dozen more if you like, and we'll find room for 'em. There's stabling in this place for a dozen horses; and unless Nickits is belied, he kept the full number. A round dozen of 'em, sir. When that man was a boy, he went to Westminster School. Went to Westminster School as a King's Scholar; when I was principally living on garbage, and sleeping in market baskets. Why, if I wanted to keep a dozen horses—which I don't, for one's enough for me—I couldn't bear to see 'em in their stalls here, and think what my own lodging used to be. I couldn't look at 'em, sir, and not order 'em out. Yet so things come round. You see this place; you know what sort of a place it is; you are aware that there's not a complete place of its size in this kingdom or elsewhere—I don't care where—and here, got into the middle of it, like a maggot into a nut, is Josiah Bounderby. While Nickits (as a man came into my office, and told me yesterday), Nickits, who used to act in Latin,
length. You have done so much for him, you are so fond of him; your whole life, Mrs. Bounderby, expresses such charming self-forgetfulness on his account—pardon me again—I am running wide of the subject. I am interested in him for his own sake.

She had made the slightest action possible, as if she would have risen in a hurry and gone away. He had turned the course of what he said at that instant, and she remained.

"Mrs. Bounderby," he resumed, in a lighter manner, and yet with a show of effort in assuming it, which was even more expressive than the manner he dismissed; "it is no irrevocable offence in a young fellow of your brother's years, if he is heedless, inconsiderate, and expensive—a little dissipated, in the common phrase. Is he?"

"Yes."

"Allow me to be frank. Do you think he game at all?"

"I think he makes bets," Mr. Harthouse said, waiting, as if that were not her whole answer, she added, "I know he does."

"Of course he loses?"

"Yes."

"Everybody loses who bets. May I hint at the probability of your sometimes supplying him with money for these purposes?"

She flushed deeper and deeper, and was about to stretch out a helping hand to him from the depths of her heart. She stopped, and reddened again. If he had not known it before, he would have known it then, though he had been a much duller man than he was.

"Since then, I have given my brother, at various times, what money I could spare; in short, what money I have had. Confiding in you at all, on the faith of the interest you profess for him, I will not do so by halves. Since you have been in the habit of visiting here, he has wanted in one sum as much as a hundred pounds. I have not been able to give it to him. I have felt uneasy for the consequences of his being so involved, but I have kept these secrets until now, when I trust them to your honor. I have held no confidence with any one, because—you anticipated my reason just now." She abruptly broke off.

He was a ready man, and he saw, and seized, an opportunity here of presenting her own image to her, slightly disguised as her brother.

"Mrs. Bounderby, though a graceless person, of the world worldly, I feel the utmost interest, I assure you, in what you tell me. I cannot possibly be hard upon your brother. I cannot possibly be hard upon your brother. I—whether any great amount of confidence is likely to have been established between himself and his most worthy father."

"I do not," said Louisa, flushing with her own great remembrance in that wise, "think it likely."

"Or, between himself, and—I may trust to your perfect understanding of my meaning I am sure—and his highly esteemed brother-in-law.

She flushed deeper and deeper, and was burning red when she replied in a fainter voice, "I do not think that likely, either."

"Mrs. Bounderby," said Harthouse, after a short silence, "may there be a better confidence between yourself and me? Tom has borrowed a considerable sum of you?"

"You will understand, Mr. Harthouse," she returned, after some indecision: she had been more or less uncertain, and troubled throughout the conversation, and yet had in the main preserved her self-contained manner: "you will understand that if I tell you what you press to know, it is not by way of complaint or regret. I would never complain of anything, and what I have done I do not in the least regret."

"So spirited, too!" thought James Harthouse.

"When I married, I found that my brother was even at that time heavily in debt. Heavily for him, I mean. Heavily enough to oblige me to sell some trinkets. They were no sacrifice. I sold them very willingly, I attached no value to them. They were quite worthless to me.

Either she saw in his face that he knew, or she only feared in her conscience that he knew, that she spoke of some of her husband's gifts. She stopped, and reddened again. If he had not known it before, I would have known it then, though he had been a much duller man than he was.

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"You will understand, Mr. Harthouse," she returned, after some indecision: she had been more or less uncertain, and troubled throughout the conversation, and yet had in
them much too often to believe in them.”

He was idly beating the branches as he lounged along; or he stopped viciously to rip the moss from the trees with his stick. He was startled when they came upon him while

He assisted her to rise, and she took his arm, and they advanced to meet the whelp. He was startled when they came upon him while

“We have a suspicious appearance of inscribing some fair creature’s on the bark, Tom.”

“Not much of that, Mr. Harthouse, unless some fair creature with a slashing fortune at her own disposal would take a fancy to me. Or she might be as ugly as she was rich, without any fear of losing me. I’d carve her name as often as she liked.”

“T’m afraid you are mercenary, Tom.”


“You have so proved it to be a failing of mine, Tom,” said Louisa, showing no other sense of his discourse demands of his constant love and gratitude, not his ill humour and caprice. Careless fellow as I am, I am not so indifferent, Mrs. Bounderby, as to be regardless of this vice in your brother, or inclined to consider it a venal offence.”

The wood floated before her; for her eyes were suffused with tears. They rose from a deep well, long concealed, and her heart was filled with acute pain that found no relief in them.

“In a word, it is to correct your brother in this, Mrs. Bounderby, that I most aspire. My better knowledge of his circumstances, and as this confidence regarding your brother, Mr. Harthouse, I prize I am sure above all—well, you must decide for yourself as to the propriety of my request. You know whether the cap fits you, Lou,” returned her brother sulkily. “If it does, you can wear it.”

“Tom is misanthropical to day, as all bored people are, now and then,” said Mr. Harthouse. “Don’t believe him, Mrs. Bounderby. He knows much better. I shall discipline some of his opinions of you, privately expressed to me, unless he relents a little.”

“At all events, Mr. Harthouse,” said Tom, softening in his admiration of his patron, but shaking his head sullenly too, “you can’t tell her that I ever praised her for being mercenary. I may have praised her for being the contrary; and I should do it again if I had as good reason. However, never mind this now; it’s not very interesting to you, and I am sick of the subject.”

They walked on to the house, where Louisa quitted her visitor’s arm and went in. He stood looking after her, as she ascended the steps, and passed into the shadow of the door; then put his hand upon her brother’s shoulder again, and invited him with a confidential nod to a walk in the garden.

“Tom, my fine fellow, I want to have a word with you.”

They had stopped among a disorder of roses—it was part of Mr. Bounderby’s humbleness to keep Nickits’s roses on a reduced scale—and Tom sat down on a terrace-parapet, plucking buds and picking them to pieces; while his powerful Familiar stood over him, with a foot upon the parapet, and his figure easily resting on the arm sup­porting that knee. They were just visible from her window. Perhaps she saw them.

“Tom, what’s the matter?”

“Oh! Mr. Harthouse,” said Tom, with a groan, “I am hard up, and bothered out of my life.”

An allowance,” he stammered, “I didn’t know you were here.”

“Whose name, Tom?” said Mr. Harthouse, putting his hand upon his shoulder and turning him, so that they all three walked towards the house together, “have you been carving on the trees?”

“You mean what girl’s name?”

“Whose name?” returned Tom. “Oh! You mean what girl’s name?”

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“Oh! Mr. Harthouse,” said Tom, with a groan, “I am hard up, and bothered out of my life.”
"My good fellow, so am I."

"You!" returned Tom. "You are the picture of independence. Mr. Harthouse, I am in a horrible mess. You have no idea what a state I have got myself into—what a state my sister might have put me out of, if she would only have done it."

He took to biting the rose-buds now, and tearing them away from his teeth with a hand that trembled like an infirm old man's. After one exceedingly observant look at him, his companion relapsed into his lightest air.

"Take you are in. She could get it. I've no use pretending to make a secret of what I want, out of him, for my sake. She is sharp enough; she could get it. It's not got it, Mr. Harthouse? I don't say she has got it. I may have wanted more than she was likely to have got. But then she ought to give it; she should have had money of her, you dog, you know you have.

"Well, Mr. Harthouse, I know I have. How else was I to get it? Here's Old Bouncerby always boasting that at my age he lived upon two-pence a month, or something of that sort. I want something of the same sort. I want to save my father drawing what he calls a line, and tying down to it from a baby, neck and heels. Here's my mother who never has anything of her own, except her complaints. What is a fellow to do for money, and where am I to look for it, if not to my sister?"

He was almost crying, and scattered the buds about by dozes. Mr. Harthouse took him persuasively by the coat.

"But, my dear Tom, if your sister has not got it—"

"Not got it, Mr. Harthouse? I don't say she has got it. I may have wanted more than she was likely to have wanted. But then she ought to give it. I've no use pretending to make a secret of what I want, out of him, for my sake!"

"Having made which bargain, Tom," said Harthouse, "for God's sake, replied Tom, suddenly, "don't talk about bankers!"

"For God's sake," replied Tom, suddenly, "don't talk about bankers!" And very white he looked, in contrast with the roses. Very white.

Mr. Harthouse, as a thoroughly well bred man, accustomed to the best society, was not to be surprised—he could as soon have been affected—but he raised his eyelids a little more, as if they were lifted by a feeble touch of wonder. Albeit it was as much against the precepts of his school to wonder, as it was against the doctrines of the Gradgrind College.

"What is the present need, Tom? Three figures? Out with them. Say what they are."

"Mr. Harthouse," returned Tom, now actually crying; and his tear was rather than his injuries, however pitiful a figure he made; "it's too late; the money is of no use to me at present. I should have had it before, to be of use to me. But I am very much obliged to you; you're a true friend."

A true friend! "Whelp, whelp!" thought Mr. Harthouse, lazily; "what an Ass you are!"

"And I take your offer as a great kindness," said Tom, grasping his hand. "As a great kindness, Mr. Harthouse."

"Well," returned the other, "it may be of more use by and by. And, my good fellow, if you will open your bedevilments to me when they come thick upon you, I may show you better ways out of them than you can find for yourself."

"Thank you," said Tom, shaking his head dismally, and chewing rosebuds. "I wish I had known you sooner, Mr. Harthouse."

"Now, you see, Tom," said Mr. Harthouse in conclusion; himself tossing over a rose or two, as a contribution to the island, which was always drifting to the wall as if it wanted to become a part of the mainland; "every man is selfish in everything he does, and I am exactly like the rest of my fellow creatures. If the present need, Tom?"

"I will be, Mr. Harthouse."

"No time like the present, Tom. Begin at once."

"Certainly I will. And my sister Loo shall say so."

"Having made which bargain, Tom," said Harthouse, clapping him on the shoulder again, with an air which left him at liberty to infer—as it did, poor fool—that this condition was imposed upon him in mere careless good nature, to lessen his sense of obligation, "we will tear ourselves asunder until dinner-time."

When Tom appeared before dinner, though his mind seemed heavy enough, his body was on the alert; and he appeared before Mr. Bouncerby came in. "I didn't mean to be cross, Loo," he said, giving her his hand, and kissing her. "I know you are fond of me, and you know I am fond of you."
After this, there was a smile upon Loman's face that day, for some one else. Also, for some one else!

"So much the less is the whelp the only creature that she cares for," thought James Herthouse, reversing the reflection of his first day's knowledge of her pretty face. "So much the less, so much the less."

FRENCH DOMESTICITY.

A Frenchwoman's characteristics are generally that she is unexceptionally shod; that she wears imitable gloves; that she has a toilette of two colours only, with a distracting way of wearing a shawl; that her manners are bewitching, full of small graces and delicately-shaded coquetries, but never wanting in the nicest appreciation of external proprieties, to which her flirtations are always subordinate; that she has a marvellous facility of walking clean through the dirty streets of Paris, and as may be supposed from a knack of holding up her skirts with one hand over her left hip (I have seen many Englishwomen try to imitate this, but I never saw one succeed); that she has a supernatural preservation of youth, and a bewinding habit of mistaking her friend's husband for her own. These are her popular characteristics, and few people allow her any other; but those who know her well, know that other thoughts besides dress and flirting work beneath those smooth bands of glossy hair, which look as if they had taken a lifetime to bring into their present high condition of polish and intricate arrangement, and that the hands, in their close-fitting gloves, carry a very different task than those that make up caps or croquet purses; that she is not only an agreeable woman of society, but also a careful housekeeper, an affectionate mother, and a submissive wife.

Look at that pretty little woman, tripping gaily along the boulevard, and chatting, perhaps, with some, nor simply a Norman cap, who walks familiarly by her side. The bonne is carrying an infant, clothed all in white down to its boots, or in blue and white, which shows that it is voue au blanc, or an bleu et blanc: that is, consecrated to the white, which shows that it is voye au blanc, for fear or for gratitude. Our little woman can do something better than make up caps or a mutton cutlet, or a piece of biftek from the entre-côtes, or anything else small and relishing for the plat de viande. Anyhow, it is sure to contain something useful and domestic, whether in the shape of fruit, vegetables, meat, or butter and eggs, of which there is a large consumption in a French household; something that few English ladies would buy for themselves, and fewer still carry home through Regent Street, when dressed, as our little friend is to-day. We have seen a marquise of the real old nobility, a rich woman too, carry a big flower-pot from the Marché des Fleurs, at the Madeleine, with as much indifference as our line ladies would carry a bouquet or a fan.

Let us follow this little woman, and see how she lives in her own house, and if she be there only the gay butterfly she looks in the streets, or if she have any graver notion of the duties of life than dress and flirting. We follow her into a by-street, perhaps to Chaillot, or just in the contrary direction, to the Marais, or to Berly. She suddenly distinguishes herself in the yawning jaws of a porte-cochère in one of these by-streets, in the high white Norman cap, who walks familiarly by her side. The bonne stops at the porter's lodge to take her key, and speak a few words pleasantly to the porter: in all probability more than a few, for our little woman loves talking, and is usually well informed on all the gossip of the street. Our little woman herself is dressed in perfect good taste; from head to foot not an incongruous colour, nor an ill-fitting line. Her bonnet alone would madden the country milliner from head to foot not an incongruous herself is dressed in perfect good taste; and that the hands, in their close-fitting gloves, carry a very different task than those that make up caps or a mutton cutlet, or a piece of biftek from the entre-côtes, or anything else small and relishing for the plat de viande. Anyhow, it is sure to contain something useful and domestic, whether in the shape of fruit, vegetables, meat, or butter and eggs, of which there is a large consumption in a French household; something that few English ladies would buy for themselves, and fewer still carry home through Regent Street, when dressed, as our little friend is to-day. We have seen a marquise of the real old nobility, a rich woman too, carry a big flower-pot from the Marché des Fleurs, at the Madeleine, with as much indifference as our line ladies would carry a bouquet or a fan.

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The next morning was too bright a morning for sleep, and James Harthouse rose early, and sat in the pleasant bay window of his dressing-room, smoking the rare tobacco that had had so wholesome an influence on his young friend. Reposing in the sunlight, with the fragrance of his eastern pipe about him, and the dreamy smoke vanishing into the air, so rich and soft with summer odors, he reckoned up his advantages as an idle winner might count his gains. He was not at all bored for the time, and could give his mind to it.

He had established a confidence with her, from which her husband was excluded. He had established a confidence with her, that absolutely turned upon her indifference towards her husband, and the absence, now and at all times, of any congeniality between them. He had artfully, but plainly assured her, that he knew her heart in its last most delicate recesses; he had come so near to her through its tenderest sentiment; he had associated himself with that feeling; and the barrier behind which she lived, had melted away. All very odd, and very satisfactory!

And yet he had not, even now, any earnest wickedness of purpose in him. Publicly and privately, it were much better for the age in which he lived, that he and the legion of whom he was one were designedly bad, than indifferent and purposeless. It is the drifting icebergs setting with any current anywhere, that wreck the ships.

So, James Harthouse reclined in the window, indolently smoking, and reckoning up the steps he had taken on the road by which he happened to be travelling. The end to which it led was before him, pretty plainly; but he troubled himself with no calculations about it. What will be, will be.

As he had rather a long ride to take that day—for there was a public occasion "to do" at some distance, which afforded a tolerable opportunity of going in for the Gradgrind men—he dressed early, and went down to breakfast. He was anxious to see if she had relapsed since the previous evening. No. He resumed where he had left off. There was a look of interest for him again.

He got through the day as much (or as little) to his own satisfaction, as was to be expected under the fatiguing circumstances; and came riding back at six o'clock. There was a sweep of some half mile between the lodge and the house, and he was riding along at a foot pace over the smooth gravel, once Nickits's, when Mr. Bounderby burst out of the shrubbery with such violence as to make his horse shy across the road.

"Harthouse!" cried Mr. Bounderby.
"Have you heard?"
"Heard what?" said Harthouse, soothing his horse, and inwardly favoring Mr. Bounderby with no good wishes.
"Then you haven't heard!"
"I have heard you, and so has this brute. I have heard nothing else."

Mr. Bounderby, red and hot, planted himself in the centre of the path before the horse's head, to explode his bombshell with more effect.

"The Bank's robbed!"
"You don't mean it!"
"Bobbed last night, sir. Robbed in an extraordinary manner. Robbed with a false key."

"Of much?"

Mr. Bounderby, in his desire to make the most of it, really seemed mortified by being obliged to reply, "Why, no; not of very much. But it might have been." "Of how much?"

"Oh! as a sum—if you stick to a sum—of not more than a hundred and fifty pound," said Bounderby, with impatience. "But it's not the sum; it's the fact. It's the fact of the Bank being robbed, that's the important circumstance. I am surprised you don't see it."

"My dear Bounderby," said James, dis-
as they moved on very slowly, asked how the Tom's closet, the safe used for petty purposes, well. Yesterday afternoon, at the close of interruptions. It's enough to be rob­

your usual. In the iron room that this young business hours, everything was put away as know they live at the Bank perhaps? Very

Bitzer knuckled his forehead. Harthouse inclined his head in assent, and

Bounderby, irritably giving his arm to Mrs. Sparsit, —on your not having sustained a greater

pound.

“I suppose it might.”

“Suppose it might? By the Lord, you may suppose so. By George!” said Mr. Boun­
dry, with sundry menacing nods and shakes of his head, “I might have been twice twenty. There's no knowing what it would have been, or wouldn't have been, as it was, but for the fellows' being disturbed.”

Louisa had come up now, and Mrs. Sparsit, and Bitzer.

“Here's Tom Gradgrind's daughter knows pretty well what it might have been, if you don't,” blustered Bounderby. “Dropped, sir, as if she was shot, when I told her! Never knew her do such a thing before. Does her credit, under the circumstances, in my opinion!”

She still looked faint and pale. James Harthouse begged her to take his arm; and as they moved on very slowly, asked how the robbery had been committed.

“Why, I am going to tell you,” said Bounderby, irritably giving his arm to Mrs. Sparsit. “If you hadn't been so mighty particular about the sum, I should have begun to tell you before. You know this lady (for she is a lady), Mrs. Sparsit o'—

“I have already had the honor”—

“Well. And this young man, Bitzer, you saw him too on the same occasion? Mr. Harthouse inclined his head in assent, and Bitzer knuckled his forehead.

“Very well. They live at the Bank. You know they live at the Bank perhaps? Very well. Yesterday afternoon, at the close of business hours, everything was put away as usual. In the iron room that this young fellow sleeps outside of, there was never mind how much. In the little safe in young Tom's closet, the safe used for petty purposes, there was a hundred and fifty odd pound.

“Hundred and fifty-four, seven, one,” said Bitzer.

“Come!” retorted Bounderby, stopping to wheel round upon him, “let's have none of your interruptions. It's enough to be robbed while you're snoring because you're too comfortable, without being put right with your four seven ones. I didn't snore, myself, when I was your age, let me tell you. I hadn't victuals enough to snore. And I didn't four seven one. Not if I knew it.”

Bitzer knuckled his forehead again, in a speaking manner, and seemed at once particularly impressed and depressed by the instance last given of Mr. Bounderby's moral abstinence.

“A hundred and fifty odd pound," resumed Mr. Bounderby. “That sum of money, young Tom locked in his safe; not a very strong safe, but that's no matter now. Everything was left, all right. Some time in the night, while this young fellow snored—Mrs. Sparsit, ma'am, you say you have heard him snore?"

“Sir,” returned Mrs. Sparsit, “I cannot say that I have heard him precisely snore, and therefore must not make that statement. But on winter evenings, when he has fallen asleep at his table, I have heard him, what I should prefer to describe as partially choke. I have heard him on such occasions produce sounds of a nature to appall and prepare his offices for business. Then, looking at Tom's safe, he sees the door ajar, and finds the lock forced, and the money gone.—

“Where is Tom, by the by?" asked Harthouse, glancing round.

“He has been helping the police," said Bounderby, "and stays behind at the Bank.

“Why?” said the exasperated Bounderby. “ ‘While he was snoring, or choking, or Dutch-clocking, or something or other—being asleep—some fellows, somehow, whether previously concealed in the house or not remains to be seen, got to young Tom's safe, forced it, and abstracted the contents. Being then disturbed, they made off; letting themselves in at the main door, and double-locking it again (it was double-locked, and the key under Mrs. Sparsit's pillow) with a false key, which was picked up in the street near the Bank, about twelve o'clock to-day. No alarm takes place, till this chap, Bitzer, turns out this sound, of a nature to appall and prepare his offices for business. Then, looking at Tom's safe, he sees the door ajar, and finds the lock forced, and the money gone." 

“Well!” said the exasperated Bounderby, “when I was at his time of life. They would have been out of pocket, if they had invested eighteenpence in the job; I can tell 'em that." 

Is anybody suspected?"

“Suspected? I should think there was somebody suspected. Egad!” said Bounderby, relinquishing Mrs. Sparsit's arm to wipe his heated head, “Josiah Bounderby of Coke-town is not to be plundered and nobody suspected. No, thank you!"

Might Mr. Harthouse inquire Who was suspected"

“Well," said Bounderby, stopping and facing about to confront them all, "I'll tell you. It's not to be mentioned everywhere; it's not to be mentioned anywhere; in order that the scoundrels concerned (there's a gang of 'em) may be thrown off their guard. So take this in confidence. Now wait a bit.

"Mr. Bounderby."}
Mr. Bounderby wiped his head again. "What should you say to this?" he asked, and to his voice, I exploded; "to his head in it!"

"I hope," said Harthouse, lazily, "not our friend Blackpot?"

"Say Pool instead of Pot, sir," returned Bounderby, "and that's the man."

Louisa faintly uttered some word of incredulity and surprise.

"Yes! I know!" said Bounderby, immediately catching at the sound. "I know! I am used to that. I know all about it. They are the finest people in the world, these fellows are. They have got the gift of the gab, they have. Their only want is to have their rights explained to them, do. But I tell you what. Show me a dissatisfied Hand, and I'll show you a man that's fit for anything bad, I don't care what it is."

Another of the popular fictions of Coke-town, which some pains had been taken to disapprove—and which some people really believed.

"But I am acquainted with these chaps," said Bounderby. "I can read 'em off, like books. Mrs. Sparsit, ma'am, I appeal to you. What warning did I give that fellow, the first time he set foot in the house, when the express object of his visit was to know how he could knock Religion over, and dethrone the Established Church? Mrs. Sparsit, in point of high connexions, you are on a level with the aristocracy,—did I say, or did I not say, to that fellow, 'you can't hide the truth from me; you are not the kind of fellow I like; you'll come to no good.'"

"Assuredly, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, "you did, in a highly impressive manner, give him such an admonition."

"When he shocked you, ma'am," said Bounderby; "when he shocked your feelings!"

"Yes, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, with a meek shake of her head, "I know 'em. Very well, sir. Three days after that, he bolted. Went off, nobody knows where: as my mother did in my infancy—only with this difference, that he is a worse subject than my mother, if possible. What did he do before he went? What do you say?"

"Mr. Bounderby, with his hat in his hand, gave a beat upon the crown at every little division of his sentences, as if it were a tambourine; "to his being seen—night after night—watching the Bank? To his lurking about there—after dark—To its striking Mrs. Sparsit—that he could be lurking for no good—To her calling Bitzer's attention to him, and their both taking notice of him—and to its appearing on inquiry to-day—that he was also noticed by the neighbours?"

Having come to the climax, Mr. Bounderby, like an oriental dancer, put his tambourine on his head.

"Suspicious," said James Harthouse, "certainly."

"I think so, sir," said Bounderby, with a defiant nod. "I think so. But there are fellows who go in for Banks. They have the gift of the gab, they have. They only want to have their rights explained to them, do. But I tell you what. Make her report on going off duty, and be dammed to her."

There was such a person in the room that night, and she shrank from observation, and one never hears of these things till the mischief's done; all sorts of defects are found out in the stable door after the horse is stolen; there's an old woman turns up now. An old woman who seems to have been flying into town on a broomstick, every now and then. She watches the place a whole day before this fellow begins, and, on the night when you saw him, she steals away with him and holds a council with him—I suppose, to make her report on going off duty, and be dammed to her."

"This is not all of 'em, even as we already know 'em," said Bounderby, with many nods, "It's policy to give 'em line enough, and there's no objection to that."

"Of course, they will be punished with the utmost rigor of the law, as notice-boards observe," replied James Harthouse, "and serve them right. Fellows who go in for Banks must take the consequences. If there were no consequence, we should all go in for Banks. He had gently taken his parasol from her hand, and had put it up for her; and she walked under its shade, though the sun did not shine there.

"For the present, Loo Bounderby," said her husband, "here's Mrs. Sparsit to look after. Mrs. Sparsit's nerves have been acted upon by this business, and she'll stay here a day or two. So, make her comfortable."

"Thank you very much, sir," that discreet lady observed, "but pray do not let My comfort be a consideration. Anything will do for Me."

It soon appeared that if Mrs. Sparsit had a falling in her association with that domestic establishment, it was that she was so excessively regardless of herself and regardful of others, as to be a nuisance. On being shown her chamber, she was so dreadfully sensible of its comforts as to suggest the inference that she would have preferred to pass the night on the mangle in the laundry. True, the Powlers and the Scadgerses were accus-
to the fullest extent in the testimony he had betrayed into these evidences of emotion, she shook her head, as who should say, "Alas for Bounderby. There were occasions when in periods a tear of large dimensions, like a crystal, would pour itself down her Roman nose. It was a further singularity of this remarkable case, that the more she thought about it, the more impossible it appeared to her, and the more she spoke of it, the more such the difference, she observed, being such—"

In the drawing-room after dinner, Mr. Bounderby tried the case of the robbery, examined the witnesses, made notes of the evidence, found the suspected persons guilty, and sentenced them to the extreme punishment of the law. That done, Bitzer was dismissed to town with instructions to recoin the money.

When the time drew near for retiring, Mr. Bounderby took a glass of water. "Oh, sir?" said Mrs. Sparsit. "Not your sherry warm, with lemon-peel and nutmeg?" "Why, I have got out of the habit of taking it now, ma'am," said Mr. Bounderby. "The more's the pity, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit; "you are losing all your good old habits. Cheer up, sir! If Miss Gradgrind will permit me, I will offer to make it for you, as I have often done." Miss Gradgrind readily permitting Mrs. Sparsit to do anything she pleased, that considerate lady made the beverage, and handed it to Mr. Bounderby. "It will do you good, sir. It will warm your heart. It is the sort of thing you want, and ought to take," said Mr. Bounderby.

"Your health, ma'am!" she answered with great feeling. "Thank you, sir. The same to you, and happiness also." Finally, she wished to have the young lady whom she had had the happiness of knowing from a child could be really and truly Mrs. Bounderby, she found it excessively difficult to conquer. She had a curious propensity to call Mrs. Bounderby "Miss Gradgrind;" and yielded to it some three or four score times in the course of the evening. Her repetition of this mistake covered Mrs. Sparsit with modest confusion; but indeed, she said, it seemed so natural to say Miss Gradgrind: whereas, to persuade herself that the young lady whom she had had the happiness of knowing from a child could be really and truly Mrs. Bounderby, she found it almost impossible. It was a further singularity of this remarkable case, that the more she thought about it, the more impossible it appeared; "the differences," she observed, being such—"
brother's coming home. That could hardly be, she knew, until an hour past midnight; but in the country silence, which did anything but calm the trouble of her thoughts, time had flown leisurely. At last, when the darkness and stillness had seemed for hours to thicken one another, she heard the bell at the gate. She felt as though she would have been glad that it rang on until daylight; but it ceased, and the circles of its last sound spread out fainter and wider in the air, and all was dead again.

She waited yet some quarter of an hour, as she judged. Then she arose, put on a loose robe, and went out of her room in the dark, and up the staircase to her brother's room. His door being shut, she softly opened it and spoke to him, approaching his bed with a noiseless step.

She kneeled down beside it, passed her arm over his neck, and drew his face to hers. She felt as though she would hide him from every one but herself: "is there nothing that you have to tell me? Is there nothing you can tell me, if you will. You can tell me nothing that will change me. O Tom, tell me the truth!"

"I don't know what you mean, Loo. You have been dreaming."

"My dear brother: she laid her head down on his breast, and her hair flowed over him as if she would hide him from every one but herself: "is there nothing that you have to tell me? Is there nothing you can tell me, if you will. You can tell me nothing that will change me. O Tom, tell me the truth!"

"I don't know what you mean, Loo."

"As you lie here alone, my dear, in the melancholy night, so you must lie somewhere one night, when even I, if I am living then, shall have left you. As I am here beside you, barefoot, unclothed, unavailing in darkness, so must I lie through all the night of my decay, until I am dust. In the name of that time, Tom, tell me the truth now!"

"What is it you want to know?"

"You may be certain;" in the energy of her love she took him to her bosom as if he were a child: "that I will not reproach you. You may be certain that I will be compassionate and true to you. You may be certain that I will save you at whatever cost. O Tom, have you nothing to tell me? Whisper very softly. Say only 'yes,' and I shall understand you!"

She turned her ear to his lips, but he remained doggedly silent.

"Not a word, Tom?"

"How can I say Yes, or how can I say No, when I don't know what you mean? Loo, you are a brave, kind girl, worthy I begin to think of a better brother than I am. But I have nothing more to say. Go to bed, go to bed."

"You are tired," she whispered presently, more in her usual way.

"Yes, I am quite tired out."

"You have been so hurried and disturbed to-day. Have any fresh discoveries been made?"

"Only those you have heard of, from him."

"Tom, have you said to any one that we made a visit to those people, and that we saw those three together?"

"No. Didn't you yourself particularly ask me to keep it quiet, when you asked me to go there with you?"

"Yes. But I did not know then what was going to happen."

"Nor I neither. How could I?"

He was very quick upon her with this retort.

"Ought I to say, after what has happened," said his sister, standing by the bed—she had gradually withdrawn herself and risen, "that I made that visit? Should I say so? Must I say so?"

"Good Heavens, Loo," returned her brother, "you are not in the habit of asking my advice. Say what you like. If you keep it to yourself, I shall keep it to myself. If you disclose it, there's an end of it."

It was too dark for either to see the other's face; but each seemed very attentive, and to consider before speaking.

"Tom, do you believe the man I gave the money to, is really implicated in this crime?"

"I don't know. I don't see why he shouldn't be."

"He seemed to me an honest man."

"Another person may seem to you dishonest, and yet not be so."

"There was a pause, for he had hesitated and stopped.

"In short," resumed Tom, "as if he had made up his mind, "if you come to that, perhaps I was so far from being altogether in his favor, that I took him outside the door to tell him quietly, that I thought he might consider himself very well off to get such a windfall as he had got from my sister, and that I hoped he would make a good use of it. You remember whether I took him out or not. I say nothing against the man; he may be a very good fellow, for anything I know; I hope he is.""

"Was he offended by what you said?"

"No, he took it pretty well; he was civil enough. Where are you, Loo?" He sat up in bed and kissed her. "Good night, my dear, good night."

"You have nothing more to tell me?"

"No. Why should I have? You wouldn't have me tell you a lie?"

"I wouldn't have you do that to-night. Tom, of all the nights in your life; many and much happier as I hope they will be.""

"Thank you, my dear Loo. I am so tired, that I am sure I wonder I don't say anything, to get to sleep. Go to bed, go to bed."
Kissing her again, he turned round, drew the overcoat over his head, and lay as still as if that time had come by which she had adjured him. She stood for some time at the bedside before she slowly moved away. She stopped at the door, looked back when she had opened it, and asked him if he had called her? But he lay still, and she softly closed the door and returned to her room.

Then the wretched boy looked cautiously up and found her gone, crept out of bed, fastened his door, and threw himself upon his pillow again: tearing his hair, morosely crying, grudgingly loving her, hatefully but impenitently spurning himself, and no less hatefully and unprofitably spurning all the good in the world.

THE LEARNED SAILOR.

Once upon a time it was the ne'er-do-well of any family who went to sea, and he went out under the impression that he would not do very well, even if he should rise among sailors to the head of his profession: always supposing that he had not entered the navy or John Company's service. He would be, when at his best, only the captain of a trading vessel, a man scarcely distinguished intellectually from a dealer in marine stores. His education was held to be no voucher for his respectability, or for his knowledge of anything more than a few practical details about ropes and sails and compasses. Little more science was credited to him for his power of guiding his ship from London to Rio Janeiro than would be supposed to be in the possession of a cab-driver able to guide his horse from Peckham to the Bank. Now, however, times, if they are not much changed, are changing, and the advance from barber-surgery to an age producing Jenners and John Hunters, was not greater than the advance will be from the decaying race of skippers to the age that will produce merchant officers looking upon their profession as a learned one, and ranking with the best class in the aristocracy of intellect.

That the youngster who goes to sea shall ever be considered by his friends really to have embraced one of the learned professions may seem a remarkably foolish expectation. Time will show. Medicine was once a craft whose work carries him about the world, and who is qualified to observe those things for himself in nature which are by others only seen in print. As one may learn French among Frenchmen, Spanish among Spaniards, almost without opening a dictionary, so may a sailor, who is always seeing that about which shore-going philosophers can only read and write, by the right use of his time and opportunities, ten times more truly learn than a landsman,—and that, too, perhaps, by help of but a tenth part of the landsman's literary toil. A certain quantity of book-work is of course essential, as the means by which a sailor becomes qualified to understand what he sees, knows what to look for, and how to observe. The learned sailor will not be in a condition to dispense with books; we only contend that he can become learned without more reading than his mode of life will readily permit.

And there will hereafter be great need that the merchant officer should be, in the broad and true sense of the word—a learned man. The same change is coming over the profession of the sailor that has come over other professions long ago. Its means and appliances are changing. Knowledge has increased enough to make it evident that an investigation of many secrets, and an application of many known principles of nature, are more and more becoming necessary for its perfect practice. The sailor in a hurricane now uses, or ought to use, his knowledge of the theory of storms, and saves his vessel from distress or loss easily enough by help of a little of his learning. The sailor on a voyage observes winds and currents; and, thanks to a subtle comprehension of what we may call the internal anatomy of the seas traversed by his vessel—such, for example, as may be found broadly displayed in Lieutenant Maury's Wind and Current Charts, and his Sailing Directions—he makes clipping voyages, that bless the man of trade with quick returns, and bless the world through the increased vitality of commerce. Nearly a thousand merchant captains now leave the American ports freighted with results of the latest investigations, and at the same time in-structed how to investigate, so that fresh information may be stored. The voyage to California are, through such knowledge, shortened by a third; and the seamen who are competent to take notes, sailing abroad in all directions, have determined accurately the limits within which sperm-whales and other whales are found, to the great help of the whale-fishery; have discovered a system of southwardly monsoons in the equatorial regions of the Atlantic, and on the west coast of America; have determined a vibratory motion of the trade-wind zones, with their belts of calms and their limits for every month of the year; have added greatly to the distinctness of our knowledge on the subject of the Gulf Stream; have thoroughly proved the existence of currents nearly as remarkable in the Indian Ocean, on the coast of China, and on the north-western coast of America, besides storing up other knowledge, all in the most direct way conducive to the
HARD TIMES.
BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XXV.

MRS. SPARSI T, lying by to recover the tone of her nerves in Mr. Bounderby's retreat, kept such a sharp look-out, night and day, under her Coriolanian eyebrows, that her eyes, like a couple of lighthouses on an iron-bound coast, might have warned all prudent mariners from that bold rock her Roman nose and the dark and craggy region in its neighbour-stone, but for the placidity of her manner.

Although it was hard to believe that her retiring for the night could be anything but a form, so severely wide awake were those classical eyes of hers, and so impossible did it seem that her rigid nose could yield to any relaxing influence, yet her manner of sitting, smoothing her uncomfortable, not to say, gritty, mittens (they were constructed of a cool fabric like a meat-safe), or of ambling to unknown places of destination with her foot in her cotton stirrup, was so perfectly serene, that most observers would have been constrained to suppose her a dove, embodied, by some freak of nature, in the earthly tabernacle of a bird of the hook-beaked order.

She was a most wonderful woman for prowling about the house. How she got from story to story, was a mystery beyond solution. A lady so decorous in herself, and so highly connected, was not to be suspected of dropping over the bannisters or sliding down them, yet her extraordinary facility of locomotion suggested the wild idea.

Another noticeable circumstance in Mrs. Sparsit was, that she was never hurried. She would shoot with consummate velocity from the roof to the hall, yet would be in full possession of her breath and dignity on the moment of her arrival there. Neither was she ever seen by human vision to go at a great pace.

She took very kindly to Mr. Harthouse, and had some pleasant conversation with him soon after her arrival. She made him her stately curtsey in the garden, one morning before breakfast.

"It appears but yesterday, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, "that I had the honor of receiving you at the Bank, when you were so good as to wish to be made acquainted with Mr. Bounderby's address."

"An occasion, I am sure, not to be forgotten by myself in the course of Ages," said Mr. Harthouse, inclining his head to Mrs. Sparsit with the most indolent of all possible airs.

"We live in a singular world, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit.

"I have had the honor, by a coincidence of which I am proud, to have made a remark, similar in effect, though not so epigrammatically expressed."

"A singular world, I would say, sir," pursued Mrs. Sparsit; after acknowledging the compliment with a dropping of her dark eyebrows, not altogether so mild in its expression as her voice was in its dulcet tones; "as regards the intimacies we form at one time, with individuals we were quite ignorant of, at another. I recall, sir, that on that occasion you went so far as to say you were actually apprehensive of Miss Gradgrind."

"Your memory does me more honor than my insignificance deserves. I availed myself of your obliging hints to correct my timidity, and it is unnecessary to add that they were perfectly accurate. Mrs. Sparsit's talent for—indeed, for anything requiring accuracy—with a combination of strength of mind and Family—is too habitually developed to admit of any question." He was almost falling asleep over this compliment; it took him so long to get through, and his mind wandered so much in the course of its execution.

"You found Miss Gradgrind—I really cannot call her Mrs. Bounderby; it's very absurd of me—as youthful as I described her."

"You drew her portrait perfectly," said Mrs. Sparsit, sweetly.

"Highly so."

"It used to be considered," said Mrs. Sparsit, "that Miss Gradgrind was wanting in animation, but I confess she appears to me considerably and strikingly improved in that respect. Ay, and indeed here is Mr. Bounderby!" cried Mrs. Sparsit, noding her head a great many times, as if she had been...
talking and thinking of no one else. "How do you find yourself this morning, sir? Pray let us see you cheerful, sir!"

Now, these persistent assuagements of his misery, and lightening of his load, had by this time begun to have the effect of making Mr. Bounderby softer than usual towards Mrs. Sparsit, and harder than usual to meet other people from his wife downward. So, when Mrs. Sparsit said with forced lightness of heart, "You want your breakfast, sir, but I dare say Miss Gradgrind will soon be here to preside at the table," Mr. Bounderby replied, "If I waited to be taken care of by my wife, ma'am, I believe you know pretty well I should wait till Doomsday, so I'll trouble you to take charge of the teapot." Mrs. Sparsit complied, and assumed her old position at table.

This again made the excellent woman vastly sentimental. She was so humble within, that when Louisa appeared, she rose, protesting she never could think of sitting in that place under existing circumstances, often as she had had the honor of making Mr. Bounderby's breakfast, before Mrs. Gradgrind—she begged pardon, she meant to say, Miss Bounderby—she hoped to be excused, but she really could not get it right yet, though she trusted could not get it right yet, though she trusted she would in a due time. "There! Stop where you are, ma'am," said Mr. Bounderby, "stop where you are! Miss Bounderby will be very glad to be relieved of her liberty of complying with his request; long as his will had been a law to her."

"You may set your mind at rest, ma'am.—You can take it very quietly, can't you? Mrs. Bounderby will be very glad to be relieved of the trouble, I believe."

"Don't say that, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, almost with severity, "because that is very unkind to Mrs. Bounderby. And to be unkind is not to be you, sir."

"You may set your mind at rest, ma'am.—You can take it very quietly, can't you, Loo?" said Mr. Bounderby, in a clustering way, to his wife.

"Of course it is of no moment, Why should it be of any importance to me?"

"Why should it be of any importance to any one, Mrs. Sparsit, ma'am?" said Mr. Bounderby, swelling with a sense of slight. "You attach too much importance to these things, ma'am. By George, you'll be corrected in some of your notions here. You are old fashioned, ma'am. You are behind Tom Gradgrind's children's time."

"What is the matter with you?" asked Louisa, coldly surprised. "What has given you offence?"

"Offence!" repeated Bounderby. "Do you suppose if there was any offence given me, I shouldn't name it, and request to have it corrected? I am a straightforward man, I believe. I don't go beating about for side-winds,"

"I suppose no one ever had occasion to think you so did, or too delicate," Louisa answered him composedly: "I have never made that objection to you, either as a child or as a woman, I don't understand whatever you could have."

"Have I?" returned Mr. Bounderby. "Nothing. Other, don't you, Loo Bounderby, know thoroughly well that I, Josiah Bounderby of Coketown, would have it?"

She looked at him, as he struck the table and made the teacups ring, with a proud color in her face that was a new change, Mr. Harthouse thought. "You take no further trouble to explain yourself. I am not curious to know your meaning. What does it matter!"

Nothing more was said on this theme, and Mr. Harthouse was soon idly gay on indifferent subjects, and then alone with him in the hall, she imprinted a chaste kiss upon his hand, murmured "my benefactor!" and retired, overwhelmed with grief. Yet it is an indubitable fact, within the cognizance of this history, that five minutes after he had left the house in the self-same hat, the same descendant of the Scadgerses and connexion by marriage of the Powlers, shook her right-hand mitten at his portrait, made a contemptuous grimace at that work of art, and said "Serve you right, you Noodle, and I am glad of it!"

Mr. Bounderby had not been long gone, when Bitzer appeared. Bitzer had come down by train, shrieking and rattling over the long line of arches that bound the wild country of past and present coalpits, with an express from Stone Lodge. It was a hasty note to inform Louisa, that Mrs. Gradgrind lay very ill. She had never been well, within her daughter's knowledge; but, she had declined within the last few days, had continued sinking all through the night, and was now as nearly dead, as her limited capacity of being in any state that implied the ghost of an intention to get out of it, allowed.

Accompanied by the lightest of porters, fit colorless servitor at Death's door when Mrs. Gradgrind knocked, Louisa rumbled to Coketown, over the coalpits past and present, and was whirled into its smoky jaws. She dismissed the messenger to his own devices, and rode away to her old home.
She had seldom been there, since her marriage. Her father was usually sitting and sitting at his parliamentary cinder-heap in London (without being observed to turn up many precious articles among the rubbish), and was still hard at it in the national dust-yard. Her mother had taken it rather as a disturbance than otherwise, to be visited, as she reclined upon her sofa; young people, Louisa felt herself all unit for; Sissy had never softened to again, since the night when the stroller's child had raised her eyes to look at Mr. Bounderby's intended wife. She had no inducements to go back, and had rarely done so.

Neither, as she approached her old home now, did any of the best influences of old home descend upon her. The dreams of childhood—its airy fables; its graceful, beautiful, human, impossible adornments of the world beyond; so good to be believed in, so good to remember when outgrown, for then the least among them rises to the stature of a great Charity in the heart, suffering little children to come into the midst of it, and to keep with their pure hands a garden in the stony ways of this world, wherein it were better for all the children of Adam that they should turn themselves, simple and trustful, and not worldly-wise—what had she to do with these? Remembrances of how she had journeyed to the little that she knew, by the enchanted roads of what she and millions of innocent creatures had hoped and imagined; of how, first coming upon Reason through the tender light of Fancy, she had seen it a beneficent god, deferring to gods as rare as itself; not a grim Idol, cruel and cold, with its victims bound hand to foot, and its big dumb shape set up with a sightless stare, never to be moved by anything but so many calculated tons of leverage—what had she to do with these? Her remembrances of her mother's side were crowded so far and so well in her young heart as it gushed out. The golden waters were not there. They were flowing for the fertilisation of the land where grapes are gathered from thorns, and figs from thistles.

She went, with a heavy, hardened kind of sorrow upon her, into the house and into her mother's room. Since the time of her leaving home, Sissy had lived with the rest of the family on equal terms. Sissy was at her mother's side; and Jane, her sister, now ten or twelve years old, was in the room.

There was great trouble before it could be made known to Mrs. Gradgrind; that her eldest child was there. She reclined, propped up, from mere habit, on a couch; as nearly in her old usual attitude, as anything so helpless could be kept in. She had positively refused to take to her bed; on the ground that if she did, she would never hear the last of it. She was carried so far away in her bundle of shawls, and the sound of another voice addressing her seemed to take such a long time in getting down to her ears, that she might have been lying at the bottom of a well. The poor lady was nearer Truth than she ever had been: which had much to do with it.

On being told that Mrs. Bounderby was there, she replied, at cross-purposes, that she had never called him by that name since he married Louisa; that pending her choice of an unobjectionable name, she had called him J; and that she could not at present depart from that regulation, not being yet provided with a permanent substitute. Louisa had sat by her for some minutes, and had spoken to her often, before she arrived at a clear understanding who it was. She then seemed to come to it all at once.

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Gradgrind, "and I hope you are going on satisfactorily to yourself. It was all your father's doing. He set his heart upon it. And he ought to know remembrance."

"I want to hear of you, mother; not of myself."

"You want to hear of me, my dear? That's something new, I am sure, when anybody wants to hear of me. Not at all well, Louisa. Very faint and giddy."

"Are you in pain, dear mother?"

"I think there's a pain somewhere in the room," said Mrs. Gradgrind, "but I couldn't positively say that I have got it."

After this strange speech, she lay silent for some time. Louisa, holding her hand, could feel no pulse; but kissing it, could see a slight thin thread of life in fluttering motion. "You very seldom see your sister," said Mrs. Gradgrind. "She grows like you. I wish you would look at her. Sissy, bring her here."

She was brought, and stood with her hand in her sister's. Louisa had observed her with her arm round Sissy's neck, and she felt the difference of this approach.

"Do you see the likeness, Louisa?"

"Yes, mother. I should think her like me. But——"

"Eh? Yes, I always say so," Mrs. Gradgrind cried, with unexpected quickness. "And that reminds me. I want to speak to you, my dear. Sissy, my good girl, leave us alone a minute."

Louisa had relinquished the hand; had thought that her sister's was a better and brighter face than hers had ever been; had seen in it, not without a rising feeling of resentment, even in that place and at that time, something of the gentleness of the other face in the room; the sweet face with the trusting eyes, made paler than watching and sympathy made it, by the rich dark hair.

Left alone with her mother, Louisa saw her lying with an awful lull upon her face, like one who was floating away upon some great water, all resistance over, content to be carried down the stream. She put the shadow of a hand to her lips again, and recalled her.
Mr. Bounderby, having got it into his explosive composition that Mrs. Sparsit was a highly superior woman to perceive that he had that general cross upon him in his deserts (for he had not yet settled what it was), and further that Louisa would have objected to her as a frequent visitor if it had comported with his greatness that she should object to anything he chose to do, resolved not to lose sight of Mrs. Sparsit easily. So, when her nerves were strung up to the pitch of again consuming sweetbreads in solitude, he said to her at the dinner-table, on the day before her departure, "I tell you what, ma'am; you shall come down here of a Saturday while the fine weather lasts, and stay till Monday." To which Mrs. Sparsit returned, in effect, though not of the Mahommedan persuasion: "To hear is to obey."

Now, Mrs. Sparsit was not a poetical woman; but she took an idea, in the nature of an allegorical fancy, into her head. Much watching of Louisa, and much consequent observation of her impenetrable demeanor, which keenly whetted and sharpened Mrs. Sparsit's edge, must have given her as it were a lift, in the way of inspiration. She created in her mind a mighty Staircase, with a dark pit of shame and ruin at the bottom; and now, these stairs, from day to day and hour to hour, she saw Louisa coming down.

It became the business of Mrs. Sparsit's life, to look up at the staircase, and to watch Louisa coming down. Sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, sometimes several steps at one bout, sometimes stopping, never turning back. If she had once turned back, it might have been the death of Mrs. Sparsit in spleen and grief.

She had been descending steadily, to the day, and on the day, when Mr. Bounderby issued the weekly invitation recorded above. Mrs. Sparsit was in good spirits, and inclined to be conversational.

"And pray, sir," said she, "if I may venture to ask a question appertaining to any subject on which you show reserve—which is indeed hardy in me, for I well know you have a reason for everything you do—have you received intelligence respecting the robbery?"

"Why, ma'am, no; not yet. Under the circumstances, I didn't expect it yet. Home wasn't built in a day, ma'am."

"Very true, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, shaking her head.

"Nor yet in a week, ma'am."

"No, indeed, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, with an air of melancholy.

"In a similar manner," said Bounderby. "I can wait, you know. If Romulus and Remus could wait, Josiah Bounderby can wait. They were better off in their youth than I was, however. They had a she wolf for a nurse; I had only a she wolf for a grandmother. She didn't give any milk,
ma'am; she gave bruises. She was a regular Alderney at that.

"Ah!" Mrs. Sparsit sighed and shuddered.

"No, ma'am," continued Bounderby, "I have not heard anything more about it. It's in hand, though; and you, Tom, who rather sticks to business at present—something new for him; he hadn't the schooling I had—is helping. My injunction is, keep it quiet, and let it seem to blow over. Do what you like under the rose, but don't give a sign of what you're about; or half a hundred of 'em will combine together and get this fellow who has bolted, out of reach for good. Keep it quiet, and the thieves will grow in confidence by little and little, and we shall have 'em."

"Very sagacious indeed, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit. "Very interesting. The old woman you mentioned, sir—"

"The old woman I mentioned, ma'am," said Bounderby, cutting the matter short, as if it was nothing to boast about, "is not laid hold of; but, she may take her oath she will be, if that is any satisfaction to her villainous old mind. In the mean time, ma'am, I am of opinion, if you ask me my opinion, that the less she is talked about, the better."

That same evening, Mrs. Sparsit, in her chamber window, resting from her packing operations, looked towards her great staircase and saw Louisa still descending.

She sat by Mr. Harthouse, in an alcove in the garden, talking very low. He stood leaning over her, as they whispered together, and his face almost touched her hair. "If not quite!" said Mrs. Sparsit, straining her hawk's eyes to the utmost. Mrs. Sparsit was too distant and her face almost touched her hair. "If not quite! said Bounderby, cutting the matter short, as if he had the cleverness. Equally probable!"

"I almost feel as though it must be bad in me," returned Louisa, after sitting thoughtfully, "to be so ready to agree with you, and to be so lightened in my heart by what you say."

"I only say what is reasonable; nothing worse. I have talked it over with my friend Tom more than once—of course I remain on terms of perfect confidence with Tom—and he is quite of my opinion, and I am quite of his. Will you walk?"

They strolled away, among the lanes beginning to be indistinct in the twilight—she leaning on his arm—and she little thought how she was going down, down, down, Mrs. Sparsit's staircase.

Night and day, Mrs. Sparsit kept it standing. When Louisa had arrived in the bottom and disappeared in the gulf, it might fall in upon her if it would; but, until then, there it was to be, a Building, before Mrs. Sparsit's eyes. And there Louisa always was, upon it. Always gliding down, down, down.

Mrs. Sparsit saw James Harthouse come and go; she heard of him here and there; she saw the changes of the face he had studied; she, too, remarked to a nicety how and when it clouded, how and when it cleared; she kept her black eyes wide open, with no touch of pity, with no touch of compassion, all absorbed in interest; but, in the interest of seeing her, ever dragging her hand to stay her, nearer and nearer to the bottom of this new Giants' Staircase.

With all her deference for Mr. Bounderby, as contradistinguished from his portrait, Mrs. Sparsit had not the smallest intention of interrupting the descent. Eager to see it...
accomplished, and yet patient, she waited for the last fall as for the ripeness and fulness of the harvest of her hopes. Hushed in expectancy, she kept her wary gaze upon the stairs, and seldom so much as darkly shook her right mitten (with her fist in it), at the figure coming down.

HER MAJESTY'S CONSULAR SERVICE.

There are one or two important consulates in the Levant about to become vacant; and as I have a very sensible opinion which tells me that prevention is better than cure, I shall go on to say a few words upon this subject. To understand clearly, however, the duties and precise position of our consuls in this part of the world, it will be necessary to go back a little.

Well as the state of Turkey still is, it was formerly very much worse. The Greeks had given the Turks such an indifferent opinion of the Christian world that they looked upon our race as a species of game it was lawful to hunt. Unbelievers had, therefore, neither justice nor mercy to expect from the followers of the Prophet. Thus, if one Frank did wrong, the cadi not only punished the sinner, but any other Frank who was to be found.

Ships were stopped on the high seas in time of peace, and made to deliver up their cargoes; and cabin boys; sometimes the ships also were taken. Turkish officers not only exacted arbitrary taxes and customs dues, but they levied them as often as they pleased. They were all sorts of vexatious monopolies. Merchants were compelled to exchange their money for the debased currency of Turkey, and to take it at its nominal value. There were numerous class of persons who speak no English, and whose depositions he is obliged to sift; and thus, however upright himself, he cannot always honest, and whom he cannot always understand. He has to decide cases, also, where every effort is made to deceive him; where evidence is often particularly difficult to sift; and thus, however upright himself, your British consul is often made the involuntary instrument of cruel wrong. I know that this is not the tenor of the reports which I have seen the system at work.

The British consul in the Levant is entrusted with both civil and criminal jurisdiction. He can only recommend to prevent capital punishment; but he has almost every other. He may banish, dishonour, imprison, and fine at pleasure; he is bankier, notary, arbitrator, judge, priest, registrar, and administrator of dead men's goods. Untold property is confided to his care; the many interests of travellers and merchants are almost entirely entrusted to him. Finally, he has power to enforce attendance at his office by a fine. He is recommended to prefer summary decisions, and not to give his mind to juries.

The British consul has such weight and authority among the Turks that he may cause almost any amount of mischief of which it is a species. There is no press to watch his doings; no society to cry shame on him; no means by which an ignorant Maltese or Ionian can make a grievance known or obtain redress; there is, indeed, no control of any kind over your British consul; and a very august and singular personage he has become in consequence. If we grant that your British consul is always a high-minded and conscientious man (and I am not doubting it), it must still be borne in mind, he has to deal with a numerous class of persons who speak no English, and whose depositions he is obliged to receive through dragomen who are not always honest, and whom he cannot always understand. He has to decide cases, also, where every effort is made to deceive him; where evidence is often particularly difficult to sift; and thus, however upright himself, your British consul is often made the involuntary instrument of cruel wrong. I know that this is not the tenor of the reports which I have seen the system at work.

THERE was also an antipatic evil: they were required to receive through dragomen who are not always honest, and whom he cannot always understand. He has to decide cases, also, where every effort is made to deceive him; where evidence is often particularly difficult to sift; and thus, however upright himself, your British consul is often made the involuntary instrument of cruel wrong. I know that this is not the tenor of the reports which I have seen the system at work.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

The figure descended the great stairs, steadily, steadily; always verging, like a weight in deep water, to the black gulf at the bottom.

Mr. Gradgrind, apprised of his wife’s decease, made an expedition from London, and buried her in a business-like manner. He then returned with promptitude to the national cinder-heap, and resumed his sifting for the odds and ends he wanted, and his throwing of the dust about into the eyes of other people who wanted other odds and ends—in fact, resumed his parliamentary duties.

In the meantime, Mrs. Sparsit kept unwinking watch and ward. Separated from her staircase, all the week, by the length of iron road dividing Coketown from the country house, she yet maintained her cat-like observation of Louisa, through her husband, through her brother, through James Harthouse, through the outsides of letters and packets, through everything animate and inanimate that at any time went near the stairs. "Your foot on the last step, my lady," said Mrs. Sparsit, apostrophising the descending figure, with the aid of her threatening mitten, "and all your art shall never blind me."

Art or nature though, the original stock of Louisa's character or the graft of circumstances upon it,—her curious reserve did baffle, while it stimulated, one as sagacious as Mrs. Sparsit. There were times when Mr. James Harthouse was not sure of her. There were times when he could not read the face he had studied so long; and when this lonely girl was a greater mystery to him, than any woman of the world with a ring of satellites to help her.

So the time went on; until it happened that Mr. Bounderby was called away from home by business which required his presence elsewhere, for three or four days. It was on a Friday that he intimated this to Mrs. Sparsit at the Bank, adding: "But you'll go down to-morrow, ma'am, all the same. You'll go down just as if I was there. It will make no difference to you."

"Pray, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, profoundly, "let me beg you not to say that. Your absence will make a vast difference to me, sir, as I think you very well know."

"Well, ma'am, then you must get on in my absence as well as you can," said Bounderby, not displeased.

"Mr. Bounderby," retorted Mrs. Sparsit, "your will is to me a law, sir; otherwise, it might be my inclination to dispute your kind commands, not feeling sure that it will be quite so agreeable to Miss Gradgrind to receive me, as it ever is to your own munificent hospitality. But you shall say no more, sir. I will go, upon your invitation."

"Why, when I invite you to my house, ma'am," said Bounderby, opening his eyes, "I should hope you want no other invitation."

"No indeed, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit, "I should hope not. Say no more, sir. I would, sir, I could see you gay again!"

"What do you mean, ma'am?" blustered Bounderby.

"Sir," rejoined Mrs. Sparsit, "there was wont to be an elasticity in you which I sadly miss. Be buoyant, sir!"

Mr. Bounderby, under the influence of this difficult adjuration, backed up by her compassionate eye, could only scratch his head in a feeble and ridiculous manner, and afterwards assert himself at a distance, by being heard to bully the small-fry of business all the morning.

"Bitzer," said Mrs. Sparsit that afternoon, when her patron was gone on his journey, and the Bank was closing, "present my compliments to young Mr. Thomas, and ask him if he would step up and partake of a lamb chop and walnut ketchup, with a glass of India ale."

Young Mr. Thomas being usually ready for anything in that way, returned a gracious answer, and followed on its heels. "Mr. Thomas," said Mrs. Sparsit, "these plain viands being on table, I thought you might be tempted." "Thank ye, Mrs. Sparsit," said the whelp. And gloomily fell to.

"How is Mr. Harthouse, Mr. Tom?" asked Mrs. Sparsit. "Oh he is all right," said Tom.

"Where may he be at present?" Mrs. Sparsit asked in a light conversational manner, after mentally devoting the whelp to the Furies for being so uncommunicative.
“He is shooting in Yorkshire,” said Tom.

“Sent Loo a basket half as big as a church, you know,” said the whelp, “if it isn’t a long un.”

“He is a down-looking young fellow, but this characteristic had so increased of late that he never raised his eyes to my face for three seconds together. Mrs. Sparsit consequently had ample means of watching his looks, if she were so inclined.

“Mr. Harthouse is a great favourite of mine,” said Mrs. Sparsit, “as indeed he is of most people. May we expect to see him again shortly, Mr. Tom?”

“Why, I expect to see him to-morrow,” returned the whelp.

“Good news!” cried Mrs. Sparsit, blandly.

“I have got an appointment with him to meet him in the evening at the station here,” said Tom, “and I am going to dine with him afterwards, I believe. He is not coming down to Nicker’s for a week or so, being due somewhere else. At least, he says so; but I shouldn’t wonder if he was to stop here over Sunday, and stray that way.”

“Which reminds me!” said Mrs. Sparsit.

“Would you remember a message to your sister, Mr. Tom, if I was to charge you with one?”

“Well! I’ll try,” returned the reluctant whelp, “if it isn’t a long un.”

“It is merely my respectful compliments,” said Mrs. Sparsit, “and I fear I may not trouble her with my society this week; being still a little nervous, and better perhaps by my own self.”

“Oh! If that’s all,” observed Tom, “it wouldn’t matter much, even if I was to forget it, for Loo’s not likely to think of you unless she sees you.”

Having paid for his entertainment with this agreeable compliment, he resampled into a languid stillness, until there was no more India ale left, when he said, “Well, Mrs. Sparsit, I must be off!” and went off.

Next day, Saturday, Mrs. Sparsit sat at her window all day long; looking at the customers coming in and out, watching the postmen, keeping an eye on the general traffic of the street, revolving many things in her mind, but, above all, keeping her attention on her staircase. The evening came, she put on her bonnet and shawl, and went quietly out: having her reasons for hovering in a furtive way about the station by which a passenger would arrive from Yorkshire, and for preferring to peep into it round pillars and corners, and out of ladies’ waiting-room windows, to appearing in its precincts openly.

Tom was in attendance, and loitered about until the expected train came in. It brought no Mr. Harthouse. Tom waited until the crowd had dispersed, and the bustle was over; and then referred to a posted list of trains, and took counsel with porters. That done, he strolled away idly, stopping in the street and looking up it and down it, and lifting his hat off and putting it on again, and yawning, and stretching himself, and exhibiting all the symptoms of mortal weariness to be expected in one who had still to wait until the next train should come in, an hour and forty minutes hence.

“The kind of gentleman now,?” said Mrs. Sparsit, starting from the dull office window whence she had watched him last. “Hartouse is with his sister now?”

It was the conception of an inspired moment, and she shot off with her utmost swiftness. The station for the country house was at the opposite end of the town, the time was short, the road not easy; but she was so quick in pouncing on a disengaged coach, so quick in darting out of it, producing her money, seizing her ticket, and diving into the train, that she was borne along the arches spanning the land of coal-pits past and present, as if she had been caught up in a cloud and whirled away.

All the journey, immovable in the air though never left behind; plain to the dark eyes of her mind, as the electric wires which ruled a colossal strip of music-paper out of the evening sky, were plain to the dark eyes of her body; Mrs. Sparsit saw her staircase, with the figure coming down. Very near the bottom now. Upon the brink of the abyss.

An overcast September evening, just at nightfall, saw beneath its drooping eyelid Mrs. Sparsit glide out of her carriage, pass down the wooden steps of the little station into a stony road, cross it into a green lane, and become hidden in a summer-growth of leaves and branches. One or two late birds sleepily chirping in their nests, and a bat heavily crossing and recrossing her, and the reek of her own tread in the thick dust that felt like velvet, were all Mrs. Sparsit’s eyes of her mind, as the electric wires which ruled a colossal strip of music-paper out of the evening sky, were plain to the dark eyes of her body; Mrs. Sparsit saw her staircase, with the figure coming down. Very near the bottom now. Upon the brink of the abyss.

She went up to the house, keeping within the shrubbery, and went round it, peeping between the leaves at the lower windows. Most of them were open, as they usually were in such warm weather, but there were no lights yet, and all was silent. She tried the garden with no better effect. She thought of the wood, and stole towards it, heedless of low grass and briars: of worms, snails, and slugs, and all the creeping things that be. With her dark eyes and her hook nose warily in advance of her, Mrs. Sparsit softly crept her way through the thick undergrowth, so intent upon her object that she probably would have done no less, if the wood had been a wood of adders.

Hark!

The smaller birds might have tumbled out.
of their nests, fascinated by the glittering of Mrs. Sparsit's eyes in the gloom, as she stopped and listened. Low voices close at hand. His voice, and hers. The appointment was a device to keep the brother away! There they were yonder, by the felled tree.

Bending low among the dewy grass, Mrs. Sparsit advanced closer to them. She drew herself up, and stood behind a tree, like Robinson Crusoe in his ambuscade against the savages; so near to them that at a spring, and that no great one, she could have touched them both. He was there secretly, and had not shown himself at the house. He had come on horseback, and must have passed through the neighbouring fields; for his horse was tied to the meadow side of the fence, within a few paces. "My dearest love," said he, "what could I do! Knowing you were alone, was it possible that I could stay away?"

"You may have tried, to make yourself the more attractive; I don't know what they see in you when you hold it up," thought Mrs. Sparsit; "but you little think, my dearest love, whose eyes are on you!"

That she hung her head, was certain. She urged him to go away, she commanded him to go away, but she neither raised her face to him, nor raised it. Yet it was remarkable that she sat as still, as ever the amiable woman is at-home and will be charmed to receive her; and even her manner of speaking was not hurried. The appointment was to be that night. Mrs. Sparsit received into her mind; set off with her white stockings were of many colors, green predominating; prickly things were in her shoes; rills ran from various parts of her dress; rills ran from her bonnet, and her Rouen nose. In such condition Mrs. Sparsit stood hidden in the density of the shrubbery, considering what next? Bending low among the dewy grass, Mrs. Sparsit saw him detain her with his encircling arm, and heard him then and there, within her (Mrs. Sparsit's) greedy hearing, tell her how he loved her, and how she was the stake for which he ardently desired to play away all that he had in life. The objects he had lately pursued, turned worthless beside her; such success as was almost in his grasp, he flung away from him like the dirt it was, compared with her. His pursuit, nevertheless, if it kept him near her, or its remuneration if it took him from her, or flight if she shared it, or secrecy if she commanded it, or any fate, or every fate, all was alike to him, so that she was true to him,—the man who had seen how cast away she was, whom she had inspired at their first meeting with an admiration and interest of which he had thought himself incapable, whom she had received into her confidence, who was devoted to her and adored her. All this, and more, in his hurry, and in hers, in the whirl of her own gratified malice, in the dread of being discovered, in the rapidly increasing noise of heavy rain among the leaves, and a thunder-storm rolling up—Mrs. Sparsit received into her mind; set off with such an unavoidable halo of confusion and indistinctness, that when at length he climbed the fence and led his horse away, she was not sure where they were to meet, or when, except that they had said it was to be that night. But one of them yet remained in the darkness before her; and while she tracked that one, she must be right. "Oh, my dearest love," thought Mrs. Sparsit, "you little think how well attended you are."

Mrs. Sparsit saw her out of the wood, and saw her enter the house. What to do? It rained now, in a sheet of water. Mrs. Sparsit's white stockings were of many colors, green predominating; prickly things were in her shoes; caterpillars slung themselves, in hammocks of their own making, from various parts of her dress; rills ran from her bonnet, and her Rouen nose. In such condition Mrs. Sparsit stood hidden in the density of the shrubbery, considering what next? Lo, Louisa coming out of the house! Hastily cloakéd and muffled, and stealing away. She elopes! She falls from the lowest stair, and is swallowed up in the gulf! Indifferent to the rain, and moving with a quick determined step, she struck into a side-path parallel with the ride. Mrs. Sparsit followed in the shadow of the trees, at but a short distance; for, it was not easy to keep a figure in view going quickly through the unbrave darkness. When she stopped to close the side-gate without noise, Mrs. Sparsit stopped.
she went on; Mrs. Sparsit went on. She went by the way Mrs. Sparsit had come, emerged from the green lane, crossed the stony road, and ascended the wooden steps to the railroad. A train for Coketown would come through presently, Mrs. Sparsit knew; so, she understood Coketown to be her first place of destination.

In Mrs. Sparsit's limp and streaming state, no extensive precautions were necessary to change her usual appearance; but, she stopped under the lee of the station wall, tumbled her shawl into a new shape, and put it on over her bonnet. So disguised, she had no fear of being recognised when she followed up the railroad steps, and paid her money in the small office. Louisa got into no coach, and was with a rash of rain upon her classical visage; with a bonnet like an over-ripe fig; with all her clothes spoiled; with damp impressions of every button, string, and hook-and-eye she wore, printed off upon her highly-connected back; with a stagnant verdure on her general exterior, such as accumulates on an old park fence in a muddy lane; Mrs. Sparsit had no resource but to burst into tears of bitterness and say, "I have lost her!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The national dustmen, after entertaining one another with a great many noisy little fights among themselves, had dispersed for the present, and Mr. Gradgrind was at home for the vacation.

He sat writing in the room with the deadly statistical clock, proving something no doubt —probably, in the main, that the Good Samarian was a Bad Economist. The noise of the rain did not disturb him much; but it attracted his attention sufficiently to make him raise his head sometimes, as if he were rather remonstrating with the elements. When it thundered very loudly, he glanced towards Coketown, having it in his mind that some of the tall chimneys might be struck by lightning.

The thunder was rolling into distance, and the rain was pouring down like a deluge, when the door of his room opened. He looked round the lamp upon his table, and saw with amazement, his eldest daughter.

"Louisa!"

"Father, I want to speak to you."

"What is the matter? How strange you look! And good Heaven," said Mr. Gradgrind, wondering more and more, "have you come here exposed to this storm?"

She put her hands to her dress, as if she hardly knew. "Yes." Then she uncovered her head, and letting her cloak and hood fall with a crash, a bell, and a shriek; Louisa put into one carriage, Mrs. Sparsit put into another; the little station a desert speck in the thunder-storm.

' Though her teeth chattered in her head from wet and cold, Mrs. Sparsit exulted triumph, do less than exult.

But, Mrs. Sparsit was wrong in her calculation. Louisa got into no coach, and was already gone. The black eyes kept upon the railroad-carriages in which she had travelled, settled upon it a moment too late. The door not being opened after several minutes, Mrs. Sparsit passed it and repassed it, saw nothing, looked in, and found it empty. Wet through and through; with her feet squelching and squashing in her shoes whenever she moved; with a rash of rain upon her classical visage;
I have almost repulsed, and crushed my better not quite absolute; I have grown up, battling with an ardent impulse towards some region which have never been for a moment appeased; looking fixedly in his face.

Where rules, and figures, and definitions were they: she with a hand upon his shoulder, the eyes I have. Now, hear what I have human in all good respects, than I am with them, and to hope in my little sphere to make them better %"

She rising as he did so, they stood close together, what has arisen in my heart; if you had strove against it—as it has been my task from last together here, what even I feared while I

He moved, to support her with his arm. She rising as he did so, they stood close together: she with a hand upon his shoulder, looking fixedly in his face.

With a hunger and thirst upon me, father, which have never been for a moment appeased; with an ardent impulse towards some region where rules, and figures, and definitions were not quite absolute; I have grown up, battling every inch of my way."

I never knew you were unhappy, my child."

"Yet father, if I had been stone blind; if I could you have doomed me, at any time, to the frost and blight that have hardened and spoiled me | Would you have robbed me, or you that I loved him. I knew, and, father, you knew, and he knew, that I never did. I was not wholly indifferent, for I had a hope of being pleasant and useful to Tom. I made that wild escape into something visionary, and have gradually found out how wild it was. But Tom had been the subject of all the little imaginative tenderness of my life; perhaps he became so because I knew so well how to pity him. It matters little now, except as it may dispose you to think more leniently of his errors."

"When I was irrevocably married, there rose up into rebellion against the tie, the old strife, made fiercer by all those causes of disparity which arise out of our two individual natures, and which no general laws shall ever rule or state for me, father, until they shall be able to direct the anatomist where to strike his knife into the secrets of my soul."
know of the story of my marriage, he soon
know, just as well.

Her father's face was ashy white, and he
held her in both his arms.

"I have done no worse, I have not dis-
graced you. But if you ask me whether I
have loved him, or do love him, I tell you plainly
father, that it may be so. I don't know!"

She took her hands suddenly from his
shoulders and pressed them both upon her side;
while in her face, not like itself—and in her
figure, drawn up, resolute to finish by a last
effort what she had to say—the feelings long
suppressed broke loose.

"This night, my husband being away, he
has been with me, declaring himself my
lover. Tell me exactly, for I cannot
release myself of his presence by no other
means. I do not know that I am sorry, I do
not know that I am ashamed, I do not know
that I am degraded in my own esteem. All
that I know is, your philosophy and your
teaching will not save me. Now, father, you
have brought me to this. Save me by some
other means!"

He tightened his hold in time to prevent
her sinking on the floor, but she cried out
in a terrible voice, "I shall die if you hold
me! Let me fall upon the ground!" And
he laid her down there, and saw the pride
of his heart and the triumph of his system,
lying, an insensible heap, at his feet.

SEA VIEWS.

The lodgings provided in the Regent's
Park for the small people of the sea, first
called the Aquarium, now the Marine
Aquarium—for a new thing there was a new
name wanted, and the first name is not always
the best—have given satisfaction to their
tenants. The Aquarium is now an established
institution, and Mr. Gosse, the naturalist,
who was most active in its establishment, and
by whom it was most actively stocked, has just
published a little book descriptive of his lodger-
hunting in the Bay of Weymouth, and of the
characters of the lodgers usually to be met
with in apartments furnished like those of the
fishes in the Zoological Gardens.

Every man, woman, or child, may establish
a private aquarium upon any scale that may
be found convenient. An aquarium may be
made in a doctor's bottle or a pudding-
basin. The first thing requisite is a com-
prehension of the principle on which such
a little institution is founded.

The main idea hangs upon the fact that,
by a wise ordinance of nature, the vegetable
and animal worlds are made to play into each
other's hands. Animals want plenty of oxy-
gen, and plants want plenty of carbon. Ani-
mals take oxygen, and carbonize it, making
carbonic acid; plants take the carbonic acid,
and de-carbonize it, making oxygen. This,
plants are doing all day long, under the influ-
ence of light. Growing plants, under water,
while the light shines upon them, are to be
seen hung with minute pearls—fairy bubbles
that detach themselves, and make fairy
balloon-ascents towards the surface. These
are bubbles of pure oxygen; we see here
with our eyes what goes on unseen every
summer in our fields and forests. As fast,
indeed, as oxygen is spoiled by animals it is
restored by plants. This maintains a right
balance of life on land. This maintains nearly
a right balance under water. The sea is full
of creatures that require, as well as the land
animals, to breathe air containing oxygen
efficient enough for the support of life. There
must be in the water, air sufficient in quantity and
quality, otherwise the swimmers and
creepers of the river and the ocean would
creep no more—they must all die, and make
the ocean putrid.

Therefore, partly, it is that the sea includes
not only a realm of its own animals, but also
a realm of its own plants. The plants, besides
furnishing nutritious pasture, carry on a
wholesome chemical process by which they
render the surface of the water, for the manufacture of a
main ingredient in the breath of life.
The fishes, however, are not left to depend wholly
upon this means of support. The billows of the
great ocean beat the air, and catching it
in the form of foam-bubbles, force it down to
considerable depths, and carries it, both in its
descent and in its rising again to the surface,
to come into contact with the water that re-
quires its purifying influence. The sea beats
on the beaches, and dashes itself into a thick
froth against rocks; that is to say, beats air
into itself on an extensive scale, and carries
the precious bubbles so obtained even to con-
siderable depths. Its movement causes, also,
a constant change of surface water, to say
nothing of the influence of currents.

There are two actions, then, to be imitated
in a marine vivarium. In the first place, the
sea-water is to be furnished with healthy
vegetation, in the proportion necessary to main-
tain, by their respiration, a balance of life with the animals which it is
proposed to keep. This balance is not very
difficult to get, and may suffice of itself in
some cases; but for the further aeration of
the water, if it be required, nothing is easier
than to provide a substitute for the mechanical
process used in nature. It is only necessary
to take every morning a portion of water out
of the aquarium, and allow it to drip back from
some little height into the vessel. The water
thus exposed to contact with air drop by drop,
and further entangling and carrying down air in small bubbles with it, will be
maintained by these means in a state of per-
fected purity; in fact, there is no reason why
the same supply of sea-water should not last
for a twelvemonth or even longer.

Of course, during all this time, loss by evap-
oration has to be supplied; but, as the evaporation
is of pure water only, all the salts remaining
LOUISA awoke from a torpor, and her eyes languidly opened on her old bed at home, and her old room. It seemed, at first, as if all that had happened since the days when these objects were familiar to her were the shadows of a dream; but gradually, as the objects became more real to her sight, the events became more real to her mind.

She could scarcely move her head for pain and heaviness, her eyes were strained and sore, and she was very weak. A curious passive inattention had such possession of her, that the presence of her little sister in the room did not attract her notice for some time. Even when their eyes had met, and her sister had approached the bed, Louisa lay for minutes looking at her in silence, and suffering her timidly to hold her passive hand, before she asked:

"When was I brought to this room?"

"Last night, Louisa."

"Who brought me here?"

"Sissy, I believe."

"Why do you believe so?"

"Because I found her here this morning. She didn't come to my bedside to wake me, as she always does; and I went to look for her. She was not in her own room either; and I went looking for her all over the house, until I found her here, taking care of you and cooling your head. Will you see father?"

Sissy said I was to tell him when you woke."

"What a beaming face you have, Jane!" said Louisa, as her young sister—timidly still—bent down to kiss her.

"Have I? I am very glad you think so. I am sure it must be Sissy's doing."

The arm Louisa had begun to twine about her neck, unbent itself. "You can tell father, if you will." Then, starting her a moment, she said, "It was you who made my room so cheerful, and gave it this look of welcome?"

"Oh no, Louisa, it was done before I came. It was."

Louisa turned upon her pillow, and heard no more. When her sister had withdrawn, she turned her head back again, and lay with her face towards the door, until it opened and her father entered.

He had a jaded anxious look upon him, and his hand, usually steady, trembled in hers. He sat down at the side of the bed, tenderly asking how she was, and dwelling on the necessity of her keeping very quiet after her agitation and exposure to the weather last night. He spoke in a subdued and troubled voice, very different from his usual dictatorial manner; and was often at a loss for words.

"My dear Louisa. My poor daughter."

He was so much at a loss at that place, that he stopped altogether. He tried again.

"My unfortunate child." The place was so difficult to get over, that he tried again.

"It would be hopeless for me, Louisa, to endeavour to tell you how overwhelmed I have been, and still am, by what broke upon me last night. The ground on which I stand has ceased to be solid under my feet. The only support on which I leaned, and the strength of which it seemed, and still does seem, impossible to question, has given way in an instant. I am stunned by these discoveries. I have no selfish meaning in what I say; but I find the shock of what broke upon me last night, to be very heavy indeed."

She could give him no comfort herein. She had suffered the wreck of her whole life upon the rock.

"I will not say, Louisa, that if you had by any happy chance undeceived me some time ago, it would have been better for us both; better for your peace, and better for mine. For I am sensible that it may not have been a part of my system to invite any confidence of that kind. I have proved my—my system to myself, and I have rigidly administered it; and I must bear the responsibility of its failures. I only entreat you to believe, my favorite child, that I have meant to do right."

He said it earnestly, and to do him justice he had. In gauging fathomless deeps with his little mean excise-rod, and in staggering over the universe with his rusty stiff-legged compasses, he had meant to do great things. Within the limits of his short tether he had tumbled about, annihilating the flowers of existence with greater singleness of purpose than many of the blatant personages whose company he kept.
I am well assured of what you say, father. I know I have been your favorite child. I know you have intended to make me happy. I have never blamed you, and I never shall.

He took her outstretched hand, and retained it in his.

"My dear, I have remained all night at my table, pondering again and again on what has so painfully passed between us. When I consider your character; when I consider that what has been known to me for hours, has been concealed by you for years; when I consider under what immediate pressure it has been forced from you at last; I come to the conclusion that I cannot but mistrust myself.

He might have added more than all, when he saw the face now looking at him. He did add it in effect perhaps, as he softly moved her scattered hair from her forehead with his hand. Such little actions, slight in another man, were very noticeable in him; and he could not do, as if they had been words of contrition.

"But," said Mr. Gradgrind slowly, and with hesitation, as well as with a wretched sense of helplessness, "if I see reason to mistrust myself for the past, Louisa, I should also mistrust myself for the present and the future. To speak unreservedly to you, I do. I am far from feeling convinced now, however differently I might have felt only this time yesterday, that I am fit for the trust you repose in me; that I know how to set you right, my child."

She had turned upon her pillow, and lay with her face upon her arm, so that he could not see it. All her wildness and passion had subsided; but, though softened, she was not so much as in the respect that he would have seen it. Her father was changed in nothing. To speak unreservedly to you, I do. I am far from feeling convinced now, however differently I might have felt only this time yesterday, that I am fit for the trust you repose in me; that I know how to set you right, my child.

She turned upon her pillow, and lay with her face upon her arm, so that he could not see it. All her wildness and passion had subsided; but, though softened, she was not so much as in the respect that he would have seen it. Her father was changed in nothing. To speak unreservedly to you, I do. I am far from feeling convinced now, however differently I might have felt only this time yesterday, that I am fit for the trust you repose in me; that I know how to set you right, my child.

"Some persons hold," he pursued, still hesitating, "that there is a wisdom of the Head, and that there is a wisdom of the Heart; but not supposed so; but, as I have said, I mistrust myself now. I have supposed the Head to be all-sufficient. It may not be all-sufficient; how can I venture to set you right, my child?"

He suggested it very doubtfully, as if he were half unwilling to admit it even now. She made him no answer; lying before him on her bed, still half-dressed, much as he had seen her lying on the floor of his room last night.

"Louisa," and his hand rested on her hair again, "I have been absent from here, my dear, a good deal of late; and though your sister's training has been pursued according to—the system, he appeared to come to that word with great reluctance always, "it has necessarily been modified by daily associations begun, in her case, at an early age. I ask you—ignorantly and humbly, my daughter—for the better, do you think?"

"Father," she replied, without stirring, "if any harmony has been awakened in her young breast that was mute in mine until it turned to discord, let her thank Heaven for it, and go upon her happier way, taking it as her greatest blessing that she has avoided my way."

"O my child, my child!" he said, in a forlorn manner, "I am an unhappy man to see you thus! What avails it to me that you do not reproach me, if I so bitterly reproach myself?" He bent his head, and spoke low to her. "Louisa, I have a misgiving that some change may have been slowly working about me in this house, by mere love and gratitude; that what the Head has left unspoken and unfeared, the Heart may have been doing silently. Can it be so?"

She made him no reply.

"I am not too proud to believe it, Louisa. How could I be arrogant, and you before me! Can it be so? Is it so, my dear?"

He looked upon her, once more, lying cast away there; and without another word went out of the room. He had not been long gone, when she heard a light tread near the door, and knew that some one stood beside her.

She did not raise her head. A dull anger that she should be seen in her distress, and that the involuntary look she had so resented should come to this fulfilment, smothered within her like an unwholesome fire. All closely imprisoned forces rend and destroy. The air that would be healthful to the earth, the water that would enrich it, the heat that would ripen it, tear it when caged up. So in her bosom even now; the strength of gentler thoughts; and she lay till the conscious pathetic hand did not claim her resentment.

So it lay there, warming into life a crowd of forlorn manner, "I am an unhappy man to see you thus! What avails it to me that you do not reproach me, if I so bitterly reproach myself?"

As Louisa feigned to rouse herself, and sat up, Sissy retired, so that she stood placidly near the bed-side.

"I hope I have not disturbed you. I have come to ask if you will let me stay with you—ignorantly and humbly, my daughter—"

"Why should you stay with me? My
sister will miss you. You are everything to her."

"Am I?" returned Sissy, shaking her head. "I would be something to you, if I might!"

"What?" said Louisa, almost sternly.

"Whatever you want most, if I could be that. At all events, I would like to try to be as near it as I can. And however far off that may be, I will never tire of trying. Will you let me?"

"My father sent you to ask me."

"May I try?" said Sissy, emboldened to raise her hand to the neck that was insensibly drooping towards her.

Louisa, taking down the hand that it might clasp her neck, and join its fellow there. She fell upon her knees, and clinging to this stroller's head. "I would be something to you, if I might!"

"O lay it here!" cried Sissy. "Lay it here, my dear."

CHAPTER XXX.

Mr. James Harthouse passed a whole night and a day in a state of so much hurry, that the World, with its best glass in its eye, would scarcely have recognised him during that insane interval, as the brother Jem of the honorable and jocular member. He was positively agitated. He several times spoke with an emphasis, similar to the vulgar manner. He went in and went out in an unaccountable way, like a man with an object. He rode like a highwayman. In a word, he was so horribly bored by existing circumstances, that he forgot to go in for boredom in the manner prescribed by the authorities.

After putting his horse at Coketown through the storm, as if it were a leap, he waited up all night: from time to time ringing his bell with the greatest fury, charging the porter who kept watch with delinquency in withholding letters or messages that could not fail to have been entrusted to him, and demanding restitution on the spot. The dawn coming, the morning coming, and the day coming, and neither message nor letter coming with either, he went down to the country house. There, the report was, Mr. Bounderby away, and Mrs. Bounderby in town. Left for town suddenly last evening. Not even known to be gone until receipt of message, importing that her return was not to be expected for the present.

In these circumstances he had nothing for it but to follow her to town. He went to the house in town. Mrs. Bounderby not there. He looked in at the Bank. Mr. Bounderby away, and Mrs. Sparsit away. Mrs. Sparsit away? Who could have been reduced to sudden extremity for the company of thatgrimin!"

"Well! I don't know," said Tom, "who had his own reasons for being uneasy about it. She was off somewhere at daybreak this morning. She's always full of mystery; I hate her. So I do that white chap; he's always got his blinking eyes upon a fellow."

"Where were you last night, Tom?"

"Where was I last night!" said Tom.

"Where?"

"Come! I like that. I was waiting for you, Mr. Harthouse, till it came down as I never saw it come down before. Where was I too! Where were you, you mean."

"I was prevented from coming—detained."

"Detained!" murmured Tom. "Two of us were detained. I was detained looking for you, till I lost every train but the mail. It would have been a pleasant job to go down by that on such a night, and have to walk home through a pond. I was obliged to sleep in town after all."

"Where?"
"Where? Why, in my own bed at Bound-
bery’s."
"Did you see your sister?"
"How the deuce," returned Tom, staring,
"could I see my sister when she was fifteen
miles off?"
Cursing these quick retorts of the young
gentleman to whom he was so true a friend,
Mr. Harthouse disembarrassed himself of
that interview with the smallest conceivable
amount of ceremony, and debated for the
hundredth time what all this could mean?
He made only one thing clear. It was, that
whether she was in town or out of town,
whether he had been premature with her who
was so hard to comprehend, or she had lost
courage, or they were discovered, or some
miscarriage or mistake at present incompre-
hensible had occurred, he must remain to con-
front his fortune, whatever it was. The hotel
where he was known to live when condemned
to that region of blackness, was the stake to
which he was tied. As to all the rest—What
will be, will be.
"So, whether I am waiting for a hostile
message, or an assignation, or a penitent re-
munistrance, or an impromptu wrestle with
my friend Boundary in the Lancashire man-
ner—which would seem as likely as anything
else in the present state of affairs—I’ll dine,
said Mr. James Harthouse. "Boundary
has the advantage in point of weight; and if
anything of a British nature is to come off
between us, it may be as well to be in
training."
Therefore he rang the bell, and tossing
himself negligently on a sofa, ordered "Some
dinner at six—with a beefsteak in it," and got
through the intervening time as well as he
could. That was not particularly well; for
he remained in the greatest perplexity, and,
as the hours went on, and no kind of expla-
nation offered itself, his perplexity augmented
at compound interest.
However, he took affairs as coolly as it
was in human nature to do, and entertained
himself with the facetious idea of the training
more than once. "It wouldn’t be bad," he
yawned at one time, "to give the waiter five
shillings, and throw him." At another time it
occurred to him, "Or a fellow of about thirteen
or fourteen stone might be hired by the
hour." But these jests did not tell materially
on the afternoon, or his suspense; and,
sooth to say, they both lagged fearfully.
It was impossible, even before dinner, to
avoid often walking about in the pattern of
the carpet, looking out of the window, listening
at the door for footsteps, and occasionally be-
coming rather hot when any steps approached
that room. But, after dinner, when the day
turned to twilight, and the twilight turned to
night, and still no communication was made
to him, it began to be, as he expressed it,
"like the Holy Office and slow torture."
However, still true to his conviction that
indifference was the genuine high-breeding
(the only conviction he had), he seized this
 crisis as the opportunity for ordering candles
and a newspaper.
He had been trying in vain, for half an
hour, to read this newspaper, when the waiter
appeared and said, at once mysteriously and
apologetically:
"Beg your pardon, sir. You’re wanted,
sir, if you please."
A general recollection that this was the
kind of thing the Police said to the swell mob,
causèd Mr. Harthouse to ask the waiter in
return, with blistering indignation, what the
Devil he meant by "wanted?"
"Beg your pardon, sir. Young lady out-
side, sir, wishes to see you."
"Outside? Where?"
"Outside this door, sir."
Giving the waiter to the personage before-
mentioned, as a blockhead sufficiently
qualified for that consignment, Mr. Harthouse hurried
into the gallery. A young woman whom he
had never seen stood there. Plainly dressed,
very quiet, very pretty. As he conducted
her into the room and placed a chair for her,
he observed, by the light of the candles, that
her face was innocent and youthful, and
its expression remarkably pleasant. She
was not afraid of him, or in any way disco-
certed; she seemed to have her mind entirely
pre-occupied with the occasion of her visit,
and to have substituted that consideration
for herself.
"I speak to Mr. Harthouse?" she said,
when they were alone.
"To Mr. Harthouse." He added in his
mind, "And you speak to him with the most
confiding eyes I ever saw, and the most
earnest voice (though so quiet) I ever heard."
"If I do not understand—and I do not,
sir"—said Sissy, "what your honor as a
gentleman binds you to, in other matters:
the blood really rose in his face as she began
in these words: "I am sure I may rely upon
it, if you will tell me I may so far trust you.
"You may, I assure you."
"I am young, as you see; I am alone, as
you see. In coming to you, sir, I have no
advice or encouragement beyond my own
hope."
He thought, "But that is very strong," as
he followed the momentary upward glance of
her eyes. He thought besides, "This is a
very odd beginning. I don’t see where we
are going."
"I think," said Sissy, "you have already
guessed whom I left just now?"
"I have been in the greatest concern and
meanness during the last four-and-twenty
hours (which have appeared as many years)," he
returned, "on a lady’s account. The
hopes I have been encouraged to form that
you come from that lady, do not deceive me,
I trust."
“I left her within an hour.”

"At seven o'clock?"

"At her father's." Mr. Harthouse's face lengthened in spite of his coolness, and his perplexity increased. "Then I certainly," he thought, "do not see where we are going."

"She hurried there last night. She arrived there in great agitation, and was insensible all through the night. I live at her father's, and was with her. You may be sure, sir, you will never see her again, as long as you live."

Mr. Harthouse drew a long breath; and, if ever man found himself in the position of not knowing what to say, made the discovery beyond all question that he was so circumstanced. The child-like ingenuousness with which his visitor spoke, her modest fearlessness, her truthfulness which put all artifice aside, her entire forgetfulness of herself in her earnest quiet holding to the object with which she had come; all this, together with her reliance on him, that not only the arrangement — which in itself shamed him — presented something in which he was so inexperienced, and against which he knew any of his usual weapons would fall so powerless; that not a word could he rally to his relief.

"At last he said:

"So startling an announcement, so condescending, and by such lips, is really disconcerting in the last degree. May I be permitted to inquire, if you are charged to be polynomial, is really flattering in the last degree. May I be permitted to convey that information to me in those hopeless words, by the lady of whom we speak?"

"I have no charge from her."

"The drowning man catches at the straw."

With no disrespect for your judgment, and with no doubt of your sincerity, excuse my saying that I cling to the belief that there is yet hope that I am not condemned to perpetual exile from that lady's presence."

"But if I can't—or if I should, by infirmity of nature, be obstinate—and won't—"

"I am not a moral sort of fellow," he said, "and I never make any pretensions to the character of a moral sort of fellow. I am as immoral as need be. At the same time, in bringing any distress upon the lady who is the subject of the present conversation, or in unfortunately compromising her in any way, or in committing myself by any expression of sentiments towards her, not perfectly reconcilable with—in fact with—the domestic hearth; or in taking any advantage of her father's being a machine, or of her brother's being a whole-wife— of her husband's being a bear; I beg to be allowed to assure you that I have had no particularly evil intentions, but have guided on from one step to another with a smoothness so perfectly irresistible, that I had not the slightest idea the catalogue was half so long until I began to turn it over. Whereas I find," said Mr. James Harthouse, in conclusion, "that it is really as it is, and as I have said it."

"After what has been just now represented to me, in a manner I find it impossible to doubt—I know of hardly any other source from which I could have accepted it so readily—I feel bound to say to you, in whom the confidence you have mentioned has been reposed, that I cannot refrain from contemplating the possibility (however unexpected) of my seeing the lady no more. I am solely to blame for the thing having come to this—and—and, I cannot say," he added, rather hard up for a general peroration, "that I have any sanguine expectation of ever becoming a moral sort of fellow, or that I have any belief in any moral sort of fellow whatever."

Sissy's face sufficiently showed that her appeal to him was not finished. "You spoke," he resumed, as she raised her eyes to him again, "of your first object. I may assume that there is a second to be mentioned?"

"Yes."

"Will you oblige me by confiding it?"

"Mr. Harthouse," returned Sissy, with a blending of gentleness and steadiness that quite defeated him, and with a simple con-
fidence in his being bound to do what she required, that held him at a singular disadvantage, "the only reparation that remains with you, is to leave here immediately and finally. I am quite sure that you can mitigate in no other way the wrong and harm you have done. I am quite sure that it is the only compensation you have left it in your power to make. I do not say that it is much, or that it is enough; but it is something, and it is necessary. Therefore, though without any other authority than I have given you, and even without the knowledge of any other person than yourself and myself, I ask you to depart from this place to-night, under an obligation never to return to it."

If she had asserted any influence over him beyond her plain faith in the truth and right of what she said; if she had concealed the least doubt or irresolution, or had harboured for the best purpose any reserve or pretence; if she had shown, or felt, the lightestKENP of any sensitiveness to his ridicule or his astonishment, or any remonstrance he might offer; he would have carried it against her at this point. But he could as easily have changed a clear sky by looking at it in surprise, as affect her.

"But do you know," he asked, quite at a loss, "the extent of what you ask? You probably are not aware that I am here on a public kind of business, preposterous enough in itself, but which I have gone in for, and sworn by, and am supposed to be devoted to in quite a desperate manner? You probably are not aware of that, but I assure you it's the fact."

It had no effect on Sissy, fact or no fact. "Besides which," said Mr. Harthouse, taking a turn or two across the room, dubiously, "it's so alarmingly absurd. It would make a man so ridiculous, after going in for these fellows, to back out in such an incomprehensible way."

"I am quite sure," repeated Sissy, "that it is the only reparation in your power, sir. I am quite sure, or I would not have come here."

He glanced at her face, and walked about again. "Upon my soul, I don't know what to say. So immensely absurd!"

"If I were to do such a very ridiculous thing," he said, stopping again presently, and leaning against the chimney-piece, "it could only be in the most inviolable confidence."

"I will trust to you, sir," returned Sissy, "and you will trust to me."

"If I were to do such a very ridiculous thing," he said, after looking down, and looking up, and laughing, and frowning, and walking off, and walking back again. "But I see no way out of it. What will be, will be. Thos will be, I suppose. I must take off myself, I imagine—in short, I engage to do it."

Sissy rose. She was not surprised by the result, but she was happy in it, and her face beamed brightly.

"You will permit me to say," continued Mr. James Harthouse, "that I doubt if any other ambassador, or ambassador's, could have addressed me with the same success. I must not only regard myself as being in a very ridiculous position, but as being vanquished at all points. Will you allow me the privilege of remembering my enemy's name?"

"The only name I could possibly care to know, to-night."

"Sissy Jupe."

"Pardon my curiosity at parting. Related to the family?"

"I am only a poor girl," returned Sissy. "I was separated from my father—he was only a stroller—and taken pity on by Mr. Gradgrind. I have lived in the house ever since."

She was gone.

"It wanted this to complete the defeat," said Mr. James Harthouse, sinking, with a resigned air, on the sofa, after standing transfixed in a sudden terible. "The defeat may now be considered perfectly accomplished. Only a poor girl—only a stroller—only James Harthouse made nothing of—all James Harthouse a Great Pyramid of failure."

The Great Pyramid put it into his head to go up the Nile. He took a pen upon the instant, and wrote the following note (in appropriate hieroglyphics) to his brother:

Dear Jack. All up at Coketown. Bored out of the place, and going in for camels. Affectionately, JEM.

He rang the bell.

"Send my fellow here."

"Gone to bed sir."

"Tell him to get up, and pack up."

He wrote two more notes. One, to Mr. Bounderby, announcing his retirement from that part of the country, and showing where he would be found for the next fortnight. The other, similar in effect, to Mr. Gradgrind. Almost as soon as the ink was dry upon their superscriptions, he had left the tall chimneys of Coketown behind, and was in a railway carriage, tearing and glaring over the dark landscape.

The moral sort of fellows might suppose that Mr. James Harthouse derived some comfortable reflections afterwards, from this peaceful retreat, as one of his few actions that made any amends for anything, and as a token to himself that he had escaped the climax of a very bad business. But it was not so, at all. A secret sense of having failed and being ridiculous—a dread of what other fellows who went in for similar sorts of things, would say at his expense if they knew
it—so oppressed him, that what was about the very best passage in his life was the one of all others he would not have owned to on any account, and the only one that made him ashamed of himself.

CALLED TO THE SAVAGE BAR.

Or the numerous books that have been published on the colonisation of Canada by the French, there are few more entertaining than a work printed during the last century, which bears the singular title of Adventures of the Sieur Lebeau, Advocate of the Parliament; or, New and Curious Travels amongst the Savages of North America.*

The Sieur Lebeau was one who, it appears, had not thriven by his profession, and he laboured under the additional disadvantage of having given offence to certain persons of condition; in consequence of which he became desirous of leaving France; and, early in the year seventeen hundred and twenty-nine, exerting what interest he possessed, obtained a letter of recommendation to Monsieur Hocquart, who had just been named Intendant of Canada, and was about to set out for that country. This letter, he was assured, would procure him a situation in one of the Intendant's offices; and, full of hope, he set out for La Rochelle, where he was to embark. On his way to that port, he fell in with one of those groups which were at that time frequently to be seen on the high road of France. It was a chain of convicts who were being conducted to the vessel destined to transport them to penal servitude at that time. Lebeau, by the aid of this letter, obtained a situation as a tutor in a family of the well-born rogues who arrived from Europe; the others found the means of existence they could, for the only care the French government took of their convicts was simply to transport them to Canada, and prevent them from coming back again.

In the eyes of the Paris lawyer the colonists presented a rather strange appearance. They followed none of the pursuits of privileged life—did not even cultivate the soil—but addicted themselves entirely to hunting for the sake of the skins of the animals that were abundant. “Every one,” says Lebeau, “wears a robe of fur crossed over the breast, and fastened at the waist by a girdle ornamented with porcupines’ quills; these suits—are made by themselves, as well as their sandals, which are of kid, or the skin of the sea-wolf.” As it would have been lost time to look for clients where there were no courts of law, Lebeau resolved to travel, and, ascending the St. Lawrence, visited Quebec, the settlement of the Three Rivers, and Montreal. In the latter place he enjoyed the spectacle of the great annual fair, to which the Indian tribes always came in great numbers to barter their furs for European manufactures. This fair, which lasted three months, began in May, and was held on the banks of the river, inside the palisades which formed the outer defence of Montreal. The Indians sold their furs, which, for fear of quarrels, the colonists were prevented from entering by a cordon of sentinels; the sale of spirits was also forbidden, but it took place nevertheless, and gave rise to many disturbances. Lebeau was very much struck with the costume of the Red-skins, who, in addition to their Indian attire, arrayed themselves in gold-braid cocked hats, full-bottomed wigs, and court suits—the spoils of Rag Fair. He took a liking to the aborigines, though perhaps it was more on account of the service they were likely to render him than from admiration of their customs and manners. Lebeau’s chief object in travelling westward was to escape from Canada, and establish himself in the English colonies. With this view he cultivated an intimacy with some baptised Hurons who were established at Lorette, near Quebec, and for once his talents as an advocate appear to have been turned to account; for he succeeded in persuading a French merchant to offer these Hurons the value of a hundred and fifty livres (six pounds), in European merchandise, provided they conducted Lebeau...
HARD TIMES.

By CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The indefatigable Mrs. Sparsit, with a violent cold upon her, her voice reduced to a whisper, and her stately frame so racked by continual sneezes that it seemed in danger of dismemberment, gave chase to her patron until she found him in the metropolis; and there, majestically sweeping in upon him at his hotel in St. James's Street, exploded the combustibles with which she was charged, and blew up. Having executed her mission with infinite relish, this high-minded woman then fainted away on Mr. Bounderby's coat-collar.

Mr. Bounderby's first procedure was to shake Mrs. Sparsit off, and leave her to progress as she might through various stages of suffering on the floor. He next had recourse to the administration of potent restoratives, such as screwing the patient's thumbs, smiting her hands, abundantly watering her face, and inserting salt in her mouth. When these attentions had recovered her (which they speedily did), he hustled her into a fast train without offering any other refreshment, and carried her back to Coketown more dead than alive.

Regarded as a classical ruin, Mrs. Sparsit was an interesting spectacle on her arrival at her journey's end; but considered in any other light, the amount of damage she had by that time sustained was excessive, and impaired her claims to admiration. Utterly heedless of the wear and tear of her clothes and constitution, and adamant to her pathetic sneezes, Mr. Bounderby immediately crammed her into a coach, and bore her off to Stone Lodge.

"Now, Tom Gradgrind," said Bounderby, bursting into his father-in-law's room late at night; "here's a lady here—Mrs. Sparsit—you know Mrs. Sparsit—who has something to say to you that will strike you dumb."

"You have missed my letter!" exclaimed Mr. Gradgrind, surprised by the apparition.

"Missed your letter, sir!" bawled Bounderby. "The present time is no time for letters. No man shall talk to Josiah Bounderby of Coketown about letters, with his mind in the state it's in now."

"Bounderby," said Mr. Gradgrind, in a tone of temperate remonstrance. "I speak of a very special letter I have written to you, in reference to Louisa."

"Tom Gradgrind," replied Bounderby, knocking the flat of his hand several times with great vehemence on the table, "I speak of a very special messenger that has come to me, in reference to Louisa. Mrs. Sparsit ma'am, stand forward!"

That unfortunate lady hereupon essaying to offer testimony, without any voice and with painful gestures expressive of an inflamed throat, became so aggravating and underwent so many facial contortions, that Mr. Bounderby, unable to bear it, seized her by the arm and shook her.

"If you can't get it out, ma'am," said Bounderby, "leave me to get it out. This is not a time for a lady, however highly connected, and seemingly swallowing marbles. Tom Gradgrind, Mrs. Sparsit latterly found herself, by accident, in a situation to overhear a conversation out of doors between your daughter and your precious gentleman-friend, Mr. James Harthouse."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Gradgrind.

"Ah! Indeed!" cried Bounderby. "And in that conversation—"

"It is not necessary to repeat its tenor, Bounderby. I know what passed."

"You do! Perhaps," said Bounderby, staring with all his might at his so quiet and assuasive father-in-law, "you know where your daughter is at the present time?"

"Undoubtedly. She is here."

"Here?"

"My dear Bounderby, let me beg you to restrain these loud outbreaks, on all accounts. Louisa is here. The moment she could detach herself from that interview with the person of whom you speak, and whom I deeply regret to have been the means of introducing to you, Louisa hurried here, for protection. I myself had not been at home many hours, when I received her—here, in this room. She hurried by the train to town, she ran from town to this house through a raging storm, and presented herself before me in a state of distraction. Of course, she
health is at present too much impaired, in a coach. And the coach in which we came not be made with propriety to a woman of our pace, with no other luggage than a Cock-and-a-Bull, ma'am!"

"Sir," whispered Mrs. Sparsit, "my nerves are at present too much shaken, and my health is at present too much impaired, in your service, to admit of my doing more than taking refuge in tears."

"Now, ma'am! We shall be happy to hear any little apology you may think proper to offer, for going about the country at express pace, with no other luggage than a Cock-and-a-Bull, ma'am!" "Well, ma'am," said Bounderby, "without making any observation to you that may not be made with propriety to a woman of good family, what I have got to add to that, is, that there's something else in which it appears to me you may take refuge, namely, a coach. And the coach in which we came here, being at the door, you'll allow me to hand you down to it, and pack you home to the Bank: where the best course for you to pursue, will be to put your feet into the hottest water you can bear, and take a glass of scalding rum and butter after you get into bed. With these words, Mr. Bounderby extended his right hand to the weeping lady and escorted her to the conveyance in question, shedding many plaintive sobs by the way. He soon returned alone.

"Now, as you showed me in your face, Tom Gradgrind, that you wanted to speak to me," he resumed, "here I am. But, I am not considering that I am at any time as well disposed as in the previous years. The enlightenment has been painfully forced upon me, and the discovery is one which—which have been harshly neglected, and—which have been stupidly neglected, but I don't want to be too dear. That, to start with. When I begin to be dear to a man, I generally find that his intention is to come over me. I am not speaking to you politely; but, as you are aware, I am not polite. If you like politeness, you know where to get it. You have your gentleman friends you know, and they'll serve you with as much of the article as you want. I don't keep it myself."

"Bounderby," urged Mr. Gradgrind, "we are all liable to mistakes——"

"I thought you couldn't make 'em," interrupted Bounderby.

"Perhaps I thought so. But, I say we are all liable to mistakes; and I should feel very sensible of your delicacy, and grateful for it, if you would spare me these references to Harthouse. I shall not associate him in our conversation with your intimacy and encouragement; pray do not persist in connecting him with mine."

"I never mentioned his name!" said Bounderby.

"Well, well!" returned Mr. Gradgrind, with a patient, even a submissive, air. And he sat for a little while pondering. "Bounderby, see reason to doubt whether we have ever quite understood Louisa."

"Who do you mean by We?"

"Let me say, I, then," he returned, in answer to the coarsely blurted question; "I doubt whether I have understood Louisa. I doubt whether I have been quite right in the manner of her education."

"There you hit it," returned Bounderby.

"There I agree with you. You have found it out at last, have you? Education! I'll tell you what education is—to be tumbled out of doors, neck and crop, and put upon the shortest allowance of everything except blows. That's what I call education."

"I think your good sense will perceive," Mr. Gradgrind remonstrated in all humility, "that whatever the merits of such a system may be, it would be difficult of general application to girls."

"I don't see it at all, sir," returned the obstinate Bounderby.

"Well," sighed Mr. Gradgrind, "we will not enter into the question. I assure you I have no desire to be controversial. I seek to repair what is amiss, if I possibly can; and I hope you will assist me in a good spirit, Bounderby, for I have been very much distressed."

"I don't understand you, yet," said Bounderby, with determined obstinacy, "and therefore I won't make any promises."

"In the course of a few hours, my dear Bounderby," Mr. Gradgrind proceeded, in the same depressed and propitiatory manner, "I appear to myself to have become better informed as to Louisa's character, than in previous years. The enlightenment has been painfully forced upon me, and the discovery is not mine. I think there are—Bounderby, you will be surprised to hear me say this—I think there are qualities in Louisa, which—which have been hitherto neglected, and—and a little perverted. And—and I would suggest to you, that—that if you would kindly meet me in a timely endeavour to leave her to her better nature for a while—and to encourage it to develop itself by tenderness and consideration,—I would be the better for the happiness of all of us."

Mr. Gradgrind, shading his face with his hand, said:—
hand, "has always been my favorite child."

The blustering Bounderby crimsoned and swelled to such an extent on hearing these words, that he seemed to be, and probably was, on the brink of a fit. With his very ears a bright purple shot with crimson, he pelted up his indignation, however, and said:

"You'd like to keep her here for a time?"

"I—I had intended to recommend, my dear Bounderby, that you should allow Louisa to remain here on a visit, and be attended by Sissy (I mean of course Cecilia Jupé), who understands her, and in whom she trusts."

"I gather from all this, Tom Gradgrind," said Bounderby, standing up with his hands in his pockets, "that you are of opinion that there's what people call some incompatibility between Louisa Bounderby and myself?"

"I fear there is a present general incompatibility between Louisa, and—and—and almost all the relations in which I have placed myself," was her father's sorrowful reply.

"Now, look you here, Tom Gradgrind," said Bounderby the flushed, confronting him with his legs wide apart, his hands deeper in his pockets, and his hair like a hay field wherein his winds had blown round. "You have said your say; I am going to say mine. I am a Coketown man. I am Josiah Bounderby of Coketown. I know the bricks of this town, and I know the chimneys of this town, and I know the smoke of this town, and I know the hands of this town. I know 'em all pretty well. They're real. When a man tells me anything about imaginative qualities, I always tell that man, whoever he is, that I know what he means. He means tarts-soup and venison, with a gold spoon, and that he wants to be set up in his pockets, 'ways and six. That's what your daughter wants. Since you are of opinion that she ought to have what she wants, I recommend you to provide it for her. Because, Tom Gradgrind, she will never have it from me."

"Bounderby," said Mr. Gradgrind, "I hoped, after my entreaty, you would have taken a different tone."

"Just wait a bit," retorted Bounderby; "you have said your say, I believe. I heard you out; hear me out, if you please. Don't make yourself a spectacle of unfairness as well as inconsistency, because, although I am sorry to see Tom Gradgrind reduced to his present position, I should be doubly sorry to see him brought so low as that. Now, there's an incompatibility of some sort or another, I am given to understand by you, between your daughter and me. I'll give you to understand, in reply to that, that there unquestionably is an incompatibility of the first magnitude—to be summed up in this—that your daughter don't properly know her husband's merits, and is not impressed with such a sense as would become her, by George! of the honor of his alliance. That's plain speaking, I hope."

"Bounderby," urged Mr. Gradgrind, "this is unreasonable."

"Is it?" said Bounderby. "I am glad to hear you say so. Because when Tom Gradgrind, with his new dignity, tells me that what I say is unreasonable, I am convinced at once it must be devilish sensible. With your permission I am going on. You know my origin; and you know that for a good many years of my life I didn't want a shoeing-horn, in consequence of not having a shoe. Yet you may believe or not, as you think proper, that there are ladies—born ladies—belonging to families—Families—who next to worship the ground I walk on."

He discharged this, like a Rocket, at his father-in-law's head.

"Whereas your daughter," proceeded Bounderby, "is far from being a born lady. That you know, yourself. Not that I care a pinch of candle-smoke about such things, for you are very well aware I don't; but that such is the fact, and you, Tom Gradgrind, can't change it. Why do I say this?"

"Not, I fear," observed Mr. Gradgrind, in a low voice, "to spare me."

"Hear me out," said Bounderby, "and refrain from cutting in till your turn comes round. I say this, because highly connected females have been astonished to see the way in which your daughter has conducted herself, and to witness her insensibility. They have wondered how I have suffered it. And I wonder myself now, and I won't suffer it."

"Bounderby," returned Mr. Gradgrind, rising, "the less we say to-night the better, I think."

"On the contrary, Tom Gradgrind, the more we say to-night, the better, I think. That is," the consideration checked him, "till I have said all I mean to say, and then I don't care how soon we stop. I come to a question that may shorten the business. What do you mean by the proposal you made just now?"

"What do I mean, Bounderby?"

"By your visiting proposition," said Bounderby, with an inflexible jerk of the hay field.

"I mean that I hope you may be induced to arrange, in a friendly manner, for allowing Louisa a period of repose and reflection here, which may tend to a gradual alteration for the better in many respects."

"To a softening down of your ideas of the incompatibility?" said Bounderby.

"If you put it in those terms."

"What made you think of this?" said Bounderby.

"I have already said, I fear Louisa has not been understood. Is it asking too much, Bounderby, that you, so far her elder, should aid in trying to set her right? You have accepted a great charge of her; for better or worse, for—"

Mr. Bounderby may have been annoyed by the repetition of his own words to Stephen.
Blackpool, but he cut the quotation short with an airy start.

"Come!" said he, "I don't want to be told about that. I know what I took her for, as well as you do. Never you mind what I took her for; that's my look-out."

"I was merely going on to remark, Bounderby, that we may all be more or less in the wrong, not even excepting you; and that some yielding on your part, remembering the trust you have accepted, may not only be an act of true kindness, but perhaps a debt incurred towards Louisa."

"I think differently," blustered Bounderby; "I am going to finish this business according to my own opinions. Now, I don't want to make a quarrel of it with you, Tom Gradgrind. To tell you the truth, I don't think it would be worthy of my reputation to quarrel on such a subject. As to your gentleman-friend, he may take himself off, wherever he likes best. If he falls in my way, I shall tell him my mind; if he don't fall in my way, I sha'n't, for it won't be worth my while to do it. As to your daughter，whom I made Loo Bounderby, and might have done better by leaving Loo Gradgrind, if she don't come home to morrow, by twelve o'clock at noon, I shall understand that she prefers to stay away, and I shall send her wearing apparel and so forth over by post. If you don't take charge of her for the future, what I shall say to people in general, of the incompatibility that led to my laying down the law, will be this. I am Josiah Bounderby, and I had my bringing-up; she's the daughter of Tom Gradgrind, and she had her bringing-up; and the two horses wouldn't pull together. I am pretty well known to be rather an uncommon man, I believe; and most people will understand fast enough that it must be a woman rather out of the common also, who in the long run, would come up to my mark."

"Let me seriously entreat you to reconsider this, Bounderby," urged Mr. Gradgrind, "before you commit yourself to such a decision."

"I always come to a decision," said Bounderby, tossing his hat on; "and whatever I do, I do at once. I should be surprised at Tom Gradgrind's addressing such a remark to Josiah Bounderby of Coketown, knowing what he knows of him, if I could be surprised by anything Tom Gradgrind did, after his making himself a party to sentimental humbug."

I have given you my decision, and I have got no latent signs of stirring beyond it, the upshot of Mr. Bounderby's investigations was, that he resolved to hazard a bold burst. He drew up a placard, offering Twenty Pounds reward for the apprehension of Stephen Blackpool, suspected of complicity in the robbery of the Coketown Bank on such a night; he described the said Stephen Blackpool by dress, complexion, estimated height, and manner, as minutely as he could; he recited how he had left the town, and in what direction he had been last seen going; he had the whole printed in great black letters on a staring broadsheet; and he caused the walls to be posted with it in the dead of night, so that it should strike upon the sight of the whole population at one blow.

The factory-bells had need to ring their loudest that morning to disperse the groups of workers who stood in the tardy daybreak, collected round the placards, devouring them with eager eyes. Not the least eager of the eyes assembled, were the eyes of those who could not read. These people, as they listened to the friendly voice that read aloud — there was always some such ready to help them—stared at the characters which meant so much with a vague awe and respect that would have been half ludicrous, if any aspect of public ignorance could ever be otherwise than threatening and full of evil. Many ears and eyes were busy with a vision of the matter of these placards, among turning spindles, rattling looms, and whirring wheels, for hours afterwards; and when the hands cleared out again into the streets, there were still as many readers as before.

Slackbridge, the delegate, had to address his audience too that night; and Slackbridge had obtained a clean bill from the printer,
and had brought it in his pocket. Oh my friends, and fellow countrymen, the down-trodden operatives of Coketown, oh my fellow brothers and fellow workers and fellow citizens and fellow men, what a to-do was there, when Slackbridge unfolded what he called "that damning document," and held it up to the gaze, as my coin the exclamation, of the working-man community! "Oh my fellow men, behold of what a traitor in the camp of those great spirits who are enrolled upon the holy scroll of Justice and of Union, is appropriately capable! Oh my prostrate friends, with the galling yoke of tyrants on your backs and the iron foot of despotic treading down your fallen forms into the dust of the earth, upon which right glad would your oppressors be to see you creeping on your bellies all the days of your lives, like the serpents in the garden—oh my brethren, and shall I as a man not add my sisters too, what do you say, now, of Stephen Blackpool, with a slight stoop in his shoulders and about five foot seven in height, as set forth in this degraded and disgusting document, this blighting bill, this pernicious placard, this abominable advertisement; and with what majesty of denounced will you crush the viper, who would bring this stain and shame upon the Godlike race that happily has cast him out for ever! Yes my compatriots, happily out for ever! Yes my brothers, and fellow workmen and trodden operatives of Coketown, oh my fellow countrymen, the downfallen intenders with a cool nod, "I don't disturb you, Tom Gradgrind, as your son, young Tom, and your brother Mr. Tom, and a young woman who says her name is Rachael, and that you know her."

"What do they want, Sissy dear?"

"They want to see you. Rachael has been crying, and seems angry."

"Father," said Louisa, for he was present, "I cannot refuse to see them, for a reason that will explain itself. Shall they come in here?"

As he answered in the affirmative, Sissy went away to bring them. She reappeared with them directly. Tom was last; and remained standing in the obscurest part of the room, near the door.

"Mrs. Bounderby," said her husband, entering with a cool nod, "I don't disturb you, I hope. This is an unreasonable hour, but here is a young woman who has been making statements which render my visit necessary. Tom Gradgrind, as your son, young Tom, refuses for some obstinate reason or other to say anything at all about those statements, good or bad, I am obliged to confront him with your daughter."

"You have seen me once before, young lady," said Rachael, standing in front of Louisa.

Tom coughed.

"You have seen me, young lady," repeated Rachael, as she did not answer, "once before."

Tom coughed again.

"I have."

"Rachael cast her eyes proudly towards Mr. Bounderby, and said, "Will you make it known, young lady, where, and who was there?"

"I went to the house where Stephen Blackpool lodged, on the night of his discharge from his work, and I saw you there. He was there too; and an old woman who did not speak, and whom I could scarcely see, stood in a dark corner. My brother was with me."

"Why couldn't you say so, young Tom?" demanded Bounderby.

"I promised my sister I wouldn't." Which Louisa hastily confirmed. "And besides," said the whelp bitterly, "she tells her own
story so precious well—and so full—that what business had I to take it out of her mouth?"

"Say, young lady, if you please," pursued Rachael, "why, in an evil hour, you ever come to Stephen's that night?"

"I felt compassion for him," said Louisa, her color deepening, "and I wished to know what he was going to do, and wished to offer him assistance."

"Thank you, ma'am," said Bounderby. "Much flattered and obliged."

"Did you offer him," asked Rachael, "a bank note?"

"Yes; but he refused it, and would only take two pounds in gold."

Rachael cast her eyes towards Mr. Bounderby again.

"Oh certainly!" said Bounderby. "If you put the question whether your ridiculous and impracticable account was true or not, I am bound to say it's confirmed."

"Young lady," said Rachael, "Stephen Blackpool is now named as a thief in public print all over this town, and where else! There have been a meeting to-night where he has been spoken of in the same shameful way. Stephen! The honestest lad, the truest lad, the best!" Her indignation failed her, and she broke off, sobbing.

"I am very, very sorry," said Louisa.

"Oh young lady, young lady," returned Rachael. "I hope you may be, but I don't know! I can't say what you may have done! The like of you don't know us, don't care for us, don't belong to us. I am not sure why you may have come that night. I can't tell but what you may have come with some aim of your own, not mindin to what trouble you brought such as the poor lad. I said then, Bless you for coming; and I said it of my heart, you seemed to take so pitifully to him; but I don't know now, I don't know!"

Louisa could not reproach her for her unjust suspicions; she was so faithful to her idea of the man, and so afflicted.

"And when I think," said Rachael through her sobs, "that the poor lad was so grateful, thinkin you so good to him—when I mind that he put his hand over his hard-worken face to hide the tears that you brought up there—O, I hope you may be sorry, and ha' no bad came to be it; but I don't know, I don't know!"

"You're a pretty article," growled the whelp, moving uneasily in his dark corner, "to come here with those previous imputations! You ought to be bundled out for not knowing how to behave yourself, and you would be by rights."

She said nothing in reply; and her low weeping was the only sound that was heard, until Mr. Bounderby spoke.

"Come!" said he, "you know what you have engaged to do. You had better give your mind to that; not this."

"Deed, I am loath," returned Rachael, drying her eyes, "that any here should see me like this; but I won't be seen so again. Young lady, when I had read what's put in print of Stephen—and what has just as much truth in it as if it had been put in print of you—I went straight to the Bank to say I knew where Stephen was, and to give a sure and certain promise that he should be here in two days. I couldn't meet Mr. Bounderby then, and your brother sent me away, and I tried to find you, but you was not to be found, and I went back to work. Soon as I come out of the Mill tonight, I hastened to hear what was said of Stephen—for I know wi' pride he will come back to shame it!—and then I went again to seek Mr. Bounderby, and I found him, and I told him every word I knew; and he believed no word I said, and brought me here."

"So far, that's true enough," assented Mr. Bounderby, with his hands in his pockets and his hat on. "But I have known you people before to-day, you'll observe, and I know you never die for want of talking. Now, I recommend you not so much to mind talking just now, as doing. You have undertaken to do something; all I remark upon that in present, is, do it!"

"I have written to Stephen by the post that went out this afternoon, as I have written to him once before sin' he went away," said Rachael; "and he will be here, at furthest, in seven days."

"Then, I'll tell you something. You are not aware, perhaps," retorted Mr. Bounderby, "that you yourself have been looked after now and then, not being considered quite free from suspicion in this business, on account of having people being judged according to the company they keep. The post-office hasn't been forgotten either. What I'll tell you is, that no letter to Stephen Blackpool has ever got into it. Therefore, what has become of yours, I leave you to guess. Perhaps you're mistaken, and never wrote any."

"He hadn't been gone from here, young lady," said Rachael, turning appealingly to Louisa, "as much as a week, when he sent me the only letter I have had from him, saying that he was forced to seek work in another name."

"Oh, by George!" cried Bounderby, shaking his head, with a whistle, "he changes his name, does he! That's rather unlucky, too, for such an immaculate chap. It's considered a little suspicious in Courts of Justice, I believe, when an Innocent happens to have many names."

"What?" said Rachael, with the tears in her eyes again, "what, young lady, in the name of Mercy, was left the poor lad to do! The masters against him on one hand, the men against him on the other, he only wantin to work hard in peace, and do what he felt right. Can a man have no soul of his own, no mind of his own? Must he go wrong all through wi' this side, or must he go wrong
all through with that, or else be hunted like a hare?"

"Indeed, indeed, I pity him from my heart," returned Louisa; "and I hope that he will clear himself."

"You need have no fear of that, young lady. He is sure!"

"All the surer, I suppose," said Mr. Bounderby, "for your refusing to tell where he is? Eh?"

"He shall not, through any act of mine, come back, wi' the unmerited reproach of being brought back. He shall come back of his own accord to clear himself, and put all those that have injured his good character and not here for its defence, to shame. I have told him what has been done against him," said Rachael, throwing off all distrust as a rock throws off the sea, "and he will be here, at forthset, in two days."

"And her confidence not to be shaken! I ask myself," said Mr. Gradgrind, musing, "does the real culprit know of these accusations? Where is he? Who is he?"

His hair had latterly begun to change its color. As he leaned upon his hand again, looking gray and old, Louisa, with a face of fear and pity, hurriedly went over to him, and sat close at his side. Her eyes by accident met Sissy's at the moment. Sissy flanked and started, and Louisa put her finger on her lip.

Next night, when Sissy returned home and told Louisa that Stephen was not come, she told it in a whisper. Next night again, when she came home with the same account, and added that he had not been heard of; she spoke in the same low frightened tone. From the moment of that interchange of looks, they never uttered his name, or any reference to him, aloud; nor ever pursued the subject of the robbery, when Mr. Gradgrind spoke of it.

The two appointed days ran out, three days and nights ran out, and Stephen Blackpool was not come, and remained unheard of. On the fourth day, Rachael, with unabated confidence, but considering her despatch to have miscarried, went up to the Bank, and shown her letter from him with his address, at a working colony, one of many, not upon the main road, sixty miles away. Messengers were sent to that place, and the whole town looked for Stephen to be brought in next day.

During this whole time the whelp moved about with Mr. Bounderby like his shadow, assisting in all the proceedings. He was greatly excited, horribly fevered, bit his nails down to the quick, spoke in a hard rattling voice, and with lips that were black and burnt up. At the hour when the suspected man was looked for, the whelp was at the station; offering to wager that he had made off before the arrival of those who were sent in quest of him, and that he would not appear.

The whelp was right. The messengers returned alone. Rachael's letter had gone, Rachael's letter had been delivered, Stephen Blackpool had decamped in that same hour; and no soul knew more of him. The only doubt in Coketown was, whether Rachael had
written in good faith, believing that he really would come back, or warning him to fly.

On this point opinion was divided.

Six days, seven days, far on into another week. The wretched whelp plucked up a ghastly courage, and began to grow defiant. "Was the suspected fellow the thief? A pretty question! If not, where was the man, and why did he not come back?"

Where was the man, and why did he not come back? In the dead of night the echoes of his own words, which had rolled Heaven knows how far away in the daytime, came back instead, and abided by him until morning.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

HADJI HASSAN.

HADJI HASSAN is an old gentleman who is the delight of the neighbourhood. He keeps a small coffee-house beneath the Pasha's kiosch on the brow of a hill overlooking the sea. He is the familiar of the mighty in the land—a fellow of infinite jest and humour; whose ill-temper is merely chartered licence; whose smile is condensation; whose sarcasm is more damaging than dishonour. He patronises the world; and the world, seeing nothing to envy in him, receives his dictatorship with a sort of contemptuous submission; but still submission. Hadji Hassan belongs to that class of landlords who lord it over their guests, and punishes any sort of rebellion with the most cutting severity. He accords his protection to the Pasha and the British Consul; and condescends to nod to those functionaries in a confidential manner when he meets them in private life. But he declines their intimacy; for he remembers a putte, obtains for him an unreasonable price for his coffee. Then his demand for something for the waiter is sometimes inflexible.

"Hark ye!" said Hadji Hassan to me the day after my first invasion of his territory. "Bucharest!" I loudly remonstrated. "Bucharest!" said Hadji Hassan, shaking his venerable beard, while an expression of utter disgust

fashion has changed since the days of Hadji Hassan's grandfather, fashion is wrong. That is his dictum, and he would not deign to argue the point further with anybody. He has made up his mind on this subject, and on most others; Hadji Hassan's mind being a hard, knotty, stubby sort of mind, requiring a great deal of making up, and he probably spent the first twenty years of his life in the process. It would be impossible, therefore, to unmake Hadji Hassan's mind. His opinions on public events may now and then be modified by a stray remark of his protégé, the Pasha; but in all private affairs Hadji Hassan believes himself to be infallible.

Hadji Hassan's turban is not the only part of his dress that belongs to a bygone time. His general appearance is that of an Algerine pirate of the eighteenth century. He has the same short ample clothes, the same close-fitting embroidered leggings (rather dirty), the same spare jacket and bare half-neck. In his girdle he wears a murderous-looking knife, unheathed. In build he is as powerful a man as you would find in the prize-ring in England. But he is a fine specimen of the common Turk. His pride, decision, stiffness, solemnity, and affected wisdom, all belong to his class, and are inseparable from it. He may be ignorant, but he is never vulgar; determined and prompt in action, if roused, but never loud or hectoring. It is highly probable that any Greek who disagreed with Hadji Hassan would receive a murderous thrashing, to teach him more respect for his conquerors in future; but there would be no previous wrangling—no hot words. Hadji Hassan would knock him about within an inch of his life with the first thing that came handy; and, merely muttering a contemptuous Kalk, Giaour! (Be off, dog!) would resume his nargilly with a dignity as unruffled as if he had merely thrown a brick-bat at a cat.

Hadji Hassan is aware that he is a privileged person, and turns this circumstance to excellent practical account. It is doubtful whether he has the smallest knowledge of any portion of the multiplication table; it was not a fashionable accomplishment in his early time, and his immense double-jointed hands have had too much to do with the musket to handle the slate-pencil or the Hoja's reed. But he has a marvellously keen memory for the things not only that they do, but from things in general.

I would rather not offend Hadji Hassan.

He is one of those who form public opinion in our little world; and I have noticed that those upon whom he looks unfavourably do not thrive. Whether this arises from his discernment in only looking unfavourably on thriftless people or otherwise, it would be hard to say.

Hadji Hassan is about sixty years of age. He wears a turban; for he has too independent a spirit to conform to the undignified modern fashion of the red cap. The turban was the head-dress of Hadji Hassan's grandfather, who was his guide, philosopher, and friend. If
CHAPTER XXXIII.

DAY and night again, day and night again.
No Stephen Blackpool. "Where was the man, and why did he not come back?"
Every night, Sissy went to Rachael's lodging, and sat with her in her small neat room. All day, Rachael toiled as such people must toil, whatever their anxieties. The smoke-serpents were indifferent who was lost or found, who turned out bad or good; the melancholy mad elephants, like the Hard Fact men, abated nothing of their set routine, whatever happened. Day and night again, day and night again. The monotony was unbroken. Even Stephen Blackpool's disappearance was falling into the general way, and becoming as monotonous a wonder as any piece of machinery in Coketown.

"I misdoubt," said Rachael, "if there is as many as twenty left in all this place, who have any trust in the poor dear lad now."
She said it to Sissy, as they sat in her lodging, lighted only by the lamp at the street corner. Sissy had come there when it was already dark, to await her return from work, and she not come back. The window where Rachael had found her, wanting no brighter light to shine on their sorrowful talk.

"If it hadn't been mercifully brought about that I was to have you to speak to," pursued Rachael, "times are when I think my mind would not have kept right. But I get hope and strength through you; and you believe that though appearances may rise against him, he will be proved clear."

"I do believe so," returned Sissy, "with my whole heart. I feel so certain, Rachael, that the confidence you hold in yours against all discouragement, is not like to be wrong, that I have no more doubt of him than if I had known him through as many years of trial as you have."

"And I, my dear," said Rachael, with a tremble in her voice, "have known him through them all, to be, according to his quiet ways, so faithful to everything honest and good, that if he was never to be heard of more, and I was to live to be a hundred years old, I could say with my last breath, God knows my heart, I have never once left trusting Stephen Blackpool!"

"We all believe, up at the Lodge, Rachael, that he will be freed from suspicion, sooner or later."

"The better I know it to be so believed there, my dear," said Rachael, "and the kinder I feel it that you come away from there, purposely to comfort me, and keep me company, and be seen wi' me when I am not yet free from all suspicion myself, the more grieved I am that I should ever have spoken those mistrusting words to the young lady."

"You don't mistrust her now, Rachael?"

"Now that you have brought us more together, no. But I can't at all times keep out of my mind—"

Her voice so sunk into a low and slow communing with herself, that Sissy, sitting by her side, was obliged to listen with attention.

"I can't at all times keep out of my mind, mistrusings of some one. I can't think who 'tis, I can't think how or why it may be done, but I mistrust that some one has put Stephen out of the way. I mistrust that by his coming back of his own accord, and showing himself innocent before them all, some one would be confounded, who—to prevent that—has stopped him, and put him out of the way."

"That is a dreadful thought," said Sissy, turning pale.

"It is a dreadful thought to think he may be murdered."

Sissy shuddered, and turned paler yet.

"When it makes its way into my mind, dear," said Rachael, "and it will come sometimes, though I do all I can to keep it out, wi' counting on to high numbers as I work, and saying over and over again pieces that I knew when I were a child,—I fall into such a wild, hot hurry, that, however tired I am, I want to walk fast, miles and miles. I must get the better of this before bed-time. I'll walk home wi' you."

"He might fall ill upon the journey back," said Sissy, faintly offering a worn-out scrap of hope; "and in such a case, there are many places on the road where he might stop."

"But he is in none of them. He has been sought for in all, and he's not there."
"True," was Sissy's reluctant admission.

"He'd walk the journey in two days. If he was footsore and couldn't walk, I sent him, in the latter he got, the money to ride, lest he should have none of his own to spare."

"Let us hope that to-morrow will bring something better, Rachael. Come into the air!"

Her gentle hand adjusted Rachael's shawl upon her shining black hair in the usual manner of her wearing it, and they went out. The night being fine, little knots of Hands were here and there lingering at street-corners; but it was supper-time with the greater part of them, and there were but few people in the streets.

"You are not so hurr'd now, Rachael, and your hand is cooler."

"I beg better dear, if I can only walk, and breathe a little fresh. 'Times when I can't, I turn weak and confused."

"If you must begin to fail, Rachael, for you may be detained at any time to stand by Stephen. To-morrow is Saturday. If no news comes to-morrow, let us walk in the country on Sunday morning, and strengthen you for another week. Will you go?"

"Yes, dear."

They were by this time in the street where Mr. Bounderby's house stood. The way to Sissy's destination led them past the door, and they were going straight towards it. Some train had newly arrived in Coketown, which had put a number of vehicles in motion, and scattered a considerable bustle about the town. Several coaches were rattling before them and behind them as they approached Mr. Bounderby's, and one of the latter drew up with such briskness as they were in the act of passing the house, that they looked round involuntarily. The bright gaslight over Mr. Bounderby's steps showed them Mrs. Sparsit in the coach, in an ecstasy of excitement, struggling to open the door; Mrs. Sparsit seeing them at the same moment, called to them to stop.

"It's a coincidence," exclaimed Mrs. Sparsit, as she was released by the coachman. "It's a Providence! Come out, ma'am!" then said Mrs. Sparsit, to some one inside, "come out, or we'll have you dragged out!"

"It's Mrs. Pegler," said Rachael.

"Rachael, young woman; you know who this is?"

"It's Mrs. Pegler, said Rachael.

"I should think it is!" cried Mrs. Sparsit, exulting. "Fetch Mr. Bounderby. Stand away, everybody!" Here old Mrs. Pegler, muffling herself up, and shrinking from observation, whispered a word of entreaty. "Don't tell me," said Mrs. Sparsit, aloud, "I have told you twenty times coming along, that I will not leave you till I have handed you over to him myself."

Mr. Bounderby now appeared, accompanied by Mr. Gradgrind and the wheel, with whom he had been holding conference upstairs. Mr. Bounderby looked more astonished than hospitable, at sight of this uninvited party in his dining-room.

"Why, what's the matter now?" said he.

"Mrs. Sparsit, ma'am!"

"Sir," explained that worthy woman, "I trust it is my good fortune to produce a person you have much desired to find. Stimulated by my wish to relieve your mind, sir, and connecting together such imperfect clues to the part of the country in which that person might be supposed to reside, as have been afforded by the young woman Rachael, fortunately now present to identify, I have had the happiness to succeed, and to bring that person with me—I need not say most unwillingly on her part. It has not been, sir, without some trouble that I have effected this; but trouble in your service is to me a pleasure, and to fall upon their heads. Accordingly, the chance witnesses on the ground, consisting of the busiest of the neighbours to the number of some five-and-twenty, closed in after Sissy and Rachael, as they closed in after Mrs. Sparsit and her prize; and the whole body made a disorderly irruption into Mr. Bounderby's dining-room, where the people behind lost not a moment's time in mounting on the chairs, to get the better of the people in front."

"Fetch Mr. Bounderby down!" cried Mrs. Sparsit. "Rachael, young woman; you know who this is?"

"Sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Sparsit, faintly.

"Why don't you mind your own business, which has nothing to do with me, and see the matter out. But when the phenomenon was enhanced by the notoriety and mystery by this time associated all over the town, with the Bank robbery, it would have lured the stragglers in, with an irresistible attraction, though the roof had been expected to fall upon their heads. Accordingly, the chance witnesses on the ground, consisting of the busiest of the neighbours to the number of some five-and-twenty, closed in after Sissy and Rachael, as they closed in after Mrs. Sparsit and her prize; and the whole body made a disorderly irruption into Mr. Bounderby's dining-room, where the people behind lost not a moment's time in mounting on the chairs, to get the better of the people in front."

Here Mrs. Sparsit ceased; for Mr. Bounderby's visage exhibited an extraordinary combination of all possible colors and expressions of discomfiture, as old Mrs. Pegler was disclosed to his view.

"Why, what do you mean by this!" was his highly unexpected demand, in great wrath.

"I ask you, what do you mean by this, Mrs. Sparsit, ma'am?"

"Sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Sparsit, faintly.

"Why don't you mind your own business, ma'am?" roared Bounderby. "How dare you go and poke your officious nose into my family affairs?"
This allusion to her favorite feature overpowered Mrs. Sparsit. She sat down stiffly in a chair, as if she were frozen; and, with a fixed stare at Mr. Bounderby, slowly grated her mittens against one another, as if they were frozen too.

"My dear Josiah!" cried Mrs. Pegler, trembling. "My darling boy! I am not to blame. It's not my fault, Josiah. I told this lady over and over again, that I knew she was doing what would not be agreeable to you, but she would do it."

"What did you let her bring you for? Couldn't you knock her cap off, or her tooth out, or scratch her, or do something or other to her?" asked Bounderby.

"My own boy! She threatened me that if I resisted her, I should be brought by constables, and it was better to come quietly than make that stir in such a—" Mrs. Pegler glanced round her but proudly round the walls—"such a fine house as this. Indeed, indeed, it is not my fault! My dear, noble, stately boy! I have always lived quiet and secret, Josiah, my dear. I have never broken the condition once. I have never said I was your mother. I have admired you at a distance; and if I have come to town sometimes, with long times between, to take a proud peep at you, I have done it unknown, my love, and gone away again."

Mr. Bounderby, with his hands in his pockets, walked in impatient mortification up and down at the side of the long dining-table, while the spectators greedily took in every syllable of Mrs. Pegler's appeal, and at each succeeding syllable became more and more round-eyed. Mr. Bounderby still walking up and down when Mrs. Pegler had done, Mr. Gradgrind addressed that maligned old lady:—

"I am surprised, madam," he observed with severity, "that in your old age you have the face to claim Mr. Bounderby for your son, after your unnatural and inhuman treatment of him."

"Me unnatural!" cried poor old Mrs. Pegler. "Me inhuman! To my dear boy!"

"Dear!" repeated Mr. Gradgrind. "Yes; dear in his self-made prosperity, madam, I dare say. Not very dear, however, when you deserted him in his infancy, and left him to the brutality of a drunken grandmother."

"I deserted my Josiah!" cried Mrs. Pegler, clasping her hands. "Now, Lord forgive you, sir, for your wicked imaginations, and for your scandal against the memory of my poor mother, who died in my arms before Josiah was born. May you repent of it, sir, and live to know better!"

She was so very earnest and injured, that Mr. Gradgrind, shocked by the possibility which dawned upon him, said in a gentler tone:—

"Do you deny, then, madam, that you left your son to— to be brought up in the gutter?"

"Josiah in the gutter!" exclaimed Mrs. Pegler. "No such a thing, sir. Never! For shame on you! My dear boy knows, and will give you to know, that though he come of humble parents, he come of parents that loved him as dear as the best could, and never thought it hardship on themselves to pinch a bit that he might write and cypher beautiful, and I've his books at home to show it! Aye, have I!" said Mrs. Pegler with indignant pride. "And my dear boy knows, and will give you to know, sir, that after his beloved father died when he was eight year old, his mother, too, could pinch a bit, as it was her duty and her pleasure and her pride to do it, to help him out in life, and put him 'prentice. And a steady lad he was, and a kind master he had to lend him a hand, and well he worked his own way forward to be rich and thriving. And I'll give you to know, sir—for this my dear boy won't—that though his mother kept but a little village shop, he never forgot her, but pensioned me on thirty pound a-year—more than I want, for I put by out of it—only making the condition that I was to keep down in my own part, and make no boasts about him, and not trouble him. And I never have, except with looking at him once a year, when he has never known it. And it's right," said poor old Mrs. Pegler, in affectionate championship, "that I should keep down in my own part, and I have no doubts that if I was here I should do a many unbefitting things, and I am well contented, and I can keep my pride in my Josiah to myself, and I can love for love's own sake! And I am ashamed of you, sir," said Mrs. Pegler, lastly, "for your slanders and suspicions. And I never stood here before, nor never wanted to stand here when my dear son said no. And I shouldn't be here now, if it hadn't been for being brought here. And for shame upon you, O for shame, to accuse me of being a bad mother to my son, with my son standing here to tell you so different!"

The bystanders, on and off the dining-room chairs, raised a murmur of sympathy with Mrs. Pegler, and Mr. Gradgrind felt himself innocently placed in a very distressing predicament, when Mr. Bounderby, who had never ceased walking up and down, and had every moment swelled larger and larger and grown redder and redder, stopped short.

"I don't exactly know," said Mr. Bounderby, "how I come to be favored with the attendance of the present company, but I don't inquire. When they're quite satisfied, perhaps they're satisfied or not, perhaps they'll be so good as to disperse. I'm not bound to deliver a lecture on my family affairs, I have not undertaken to do it, and I'm not going to do it. Therefore those who expect any explanation whatever upon that branch of the subject, will be disappointed—particularly Tom Gradgrind, and he can't know it too soon. In reference to the Bank robbery, there has been a mistake made, concerning
my mother. If there hadn't been over-officiousness it wouldn't have been made, and I hate over-officiousness at all times, whether or no. Good evening!"

Although Mr. Bounderby carried it off in those terms, holding the door open for the company to depart, there was a bustling sheepliness upon him, at once extremely crest-fallen and superlatively absurd. Detected as the Bully of humility, who had built his windy reputation upon lies, and in his boastfulness had put the honest truth as far away from him as if he had advanced the mean claim (there is no meaner) to tack himself on to a pedigree, he cut a most ridiculous figure. With the people filing off at the door he held, who he knew would carry what had passed to the whole town, to be given to the four winds, he could not have looked in that manner of Sissy and forlorn, if he had had his ears cropped. Even that unlucky female Mrs. Sparsit, fallen from her pinnacle of exultation into the Slough of Despond, was not so bad a plight as that remarkable man and self-made Humbug, Josiah Bounderby of Coketown.

Rachael and Sissy, leaving Mrs. Pegler to occupy a bed at her son's for that night, walked together to the gate of Stone Lodge and there parted. Mr. Gradgrind joined them before they had gone very far, and spoke with much interest of Stephen Blackpool; for whom he thought this signal failure of the suspicious against Mrs. Pegler was likely to work well.

As to the whele; throughout this scene as on all other late occasions, he had stuck close to Bounderby. He seemed to feel that as long as Bounderby could make no discovery without his knowledge, he was so far safe. He never visited his sister, and had only seen her once since she went home: that is to say, on the night when he still stuck close to Bounderby, as already related.

There was one dim unformed fear lingering about his sister's mind, to which she never gave utterance, which surrounded the graceless and ungrateful boy with a dreadful mystery. That dim dark possibility had presented itself in the same shapeless guise, this very day, to Sissy, when Rachael spoke of some one who would be confounded by Stephen's return, having put him out of the way. Louisa had never spoken of harboring any suspicion of her brother, in connexion with the robbery; she and Sissy had held no confidence on the subject, save in that uninterchange of looks when the unconscious father rested his gray head on his hand; but it was understood between them, and they both knew it. This other fear was so awful, that it hovered about each of them like a ghostly shadow; neither daring to think of its being near herself, far less of its being near the other.

And still the forced spirit which the whele had plucked up, throve with him. If Stephen Blackpool was not the thief, let him show himself. Why didn't he?
upon the ground. She got up to look at it. 

"And yet I don't know. This has not been broken very long. The wood is quite fresh where it gave way. Here are footsteps too.—O Rachael!"

She ran back, and caught her round the neck. Rachael had already started up.

"What is the matter?"

"I don't know. There is a hat lying in the grass."

They went forward together. Rachael took it up, shak¬ing from head to foot. She broke into a passion of tears and lamentations: Stephen Blackpool was written in his own hand on the inside.

"O the poor lad, the poor lad! He has been made away with. He is lying murdered here!"

"Is there—has the hat any blood upon it?"

Sissy faltered.

"They were afraid to look; but they did examine it, and found no mark of violence, inside or out. It had been lying there some days, for rain and dew had stained it, and the mark of its shape was on the grass where it had fallen. They looked fearfully about them, without moving, but could see nothing more. "Rachael," Sissy whispered, "I will go on a little by myself."

She had unclasped her hand, and was in the act of stepping forward, when Rachael caught her in both arms with a scream that resounded over the wide landscape. Before them, at their very feet, was the brick of a black ragged chasm, hidden by the thick grass. They sprang back, and fell upon their knees, each hiding her face upon the other's neck.

"O, my good God! He's down there! Down there!" At first this, and her terrific screams, were all that could be got from Rachael, by any tears, by any prayers, by any representations, by any means. It was impossible to hush her; and it was deadly necessary to hold her, or she would have flung herself down the shaft.

"Rachael, dear Rachael, good Rachael, for the love of Heaven not these dreadful cries! Think of Stephen, think of Stephen!"

By an earnest repetition of this entreaty, poured out in all the agony of such a moment, Sissy at last brought her to be silent, and to look at her with a tearless face of stone.

"Rachael, Stephen may be living. You wouldn't leave him lying maimed at the bottom of this dreadful place, a moment, if you could bring help to him?"

"No no no!"

"Don't stir from here, for his sake! Let me go all I will.

She shuddered to approach the pit; but she crept towards it on her hands and knees, and called to him as loud as she could call. She listened, but no sound replied. She called again and listened; still no answering sound. She tried this, twenty, thirty, times. She took a clod of earth from the broken ground where he had stumbled, and threw it in. She could not hear it fall.

The wide prospect, so beautiful in its stillness but a few minutes ago, almost carried despair to her brave heart, as she rose and looked all round her, seeing no help. "Rachael, we must lose not a moment. We must go in different directions, seeking aid. You shall go by the way we have come, and I will go forward by the path. Tell any one you see, and every one, what has happened. Think of Stephen, think of Stephen!"

She knew by Rachael's face that she might trust her now. After standing for a moment to see her running, wringing her hands as she ran, she turned and went upon her own search; she stopped at the hedge to tie her shawl there as a guide to the place, then threw her bonnet aside, and ran as she had never run before.

"Run, Sissy, run, in Heaven's name! Don't stop for breath. Run, run! Quickening herself by carrying such entreaties in her thoughts, she ran from field to field, and lane to lane, and place to place, as she had never run before; until she came to a shed by an engine-house, where two men lay in the shade asleep on straw.

"First to wake them, and next to tell them, all so wild and breathless as she was, what had brought her there, were difficulties; but they no sooner understood her than their spirits were on fire like hers. One of the men was in a drunken slumber, but on his comrade's shouting to him that a man had fallen down the Old Hell Shaft, he started out to a pool of dirty water, put his head in it, and came back sober.

With these two men she ran to another half-a-mile further, and with that one to another, while they ran elsewhere. Then a horse was found; and she got another man to ride for life or death to the railroad, and send a message to Louisa, which she wrote and gave him. By this time a whole village was up; and windlasses, ropes, poles, buckets, candles, lanterns, all things necessary, were fast collecting and being brought into one place, to be carried to the Old Hell Shaft.

It seemed now hours and hours since she had left the lost man lying in the grave where he had been buried alive. She could not bear to remain away from it any longer—it was like deserting him—and she hurried swiftly back, accompanied by half-a-dozen laborers, including the drunken man whom the news had sobered, and who was the best man of all. When they came to the Old Hell Shaft, they found it as lonely as she was, what spirits were on fire like hers. One of the men was in a drunken slumber, but on his comrade's shouting to him that a man had fallen down the Old Hell Shaft, he started out to a pool of dirty water, put his head in it, and came back sober.

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Every sound of insects in the air, every stirring of the leaves, every whisper among these men, made Sissy tremble, for she
thought it was a cry at the bottom of the pit. But the wind blew idly over it, and no sound arose to the surface, and they sat upon the grass, waiting and waiting. After they had waited some time, struggling people who had heard of the accident began to come up; then the real help of implements began to arrive. In those days of hardship, Rachael returned home; and with her party there was a surgeon, who brought some wine and medicines. But the expectation among the people that the man would be found alive, was very slight indeed.

There being now people enough present, to invigorate the work, the sobered man put himself at the head of the rest, or was put there by the general consent, and made a large ring round the Old Hell Shaft, and appointed men to keep it. Besides such volunteers as were accepted to work, only Sissy and Rachael were at first permitted within this ring; but, later in the day, the surgeon brought an express from Coketown, Mr. Gradgrind and Louisa, and Mr. Bounderby, and the whelp, and the whoop were also there.

The sun was four hours lower than when Sissy and Rachael had first sat down upon the grass, before a means of enabling two men to descend securely was rigged with poles and ropes. Difficulties had arisen in the construction of this machine, simple as it was; requisites had been found wanting, and messages had had to go and return. It was five o'clock in the afternoon of the bright autumnal Sunday, before a candle was sent down to try to those about him, which was quickly re-

When he said "Alive!" a great shout arose, and many eyes had tears in them.

"But he's hurt very bad," he added, as soon as he could make himself heard again, "Where's doctor? He's hurt so very bad, sir, that we donno how to get him up."

They all consulted together, and looked anxiously at each other, and the surgeon brought back some questions, and shook his head on receiving the replies. The sun was setting now; and the red light in the evening sky touched every face there, and caused it to be distinctly seen in all its wrap suspend. The consultation ended in the men returning to the windlass, and the pitman going down again, carrying the wine and some small matters with him. Then the other man came up. In the meantime, under the surgeon's directions, some men brought a hurdle, on which others made a thick bed of spare clothes covered with loose straw, while he himself contrived some bandages and slings from shawls and handkerchiefs. As these were made, they were hung upon an arm of the pitman who had last come up, with instructions how to use them; and as he stood, shown by the light he carried, leaning his powerful loose hand upon one of the poles, sometimes glancing round upon the people, sometimes glancing down the pit and the men at the windlass, he was not the least conspicuous figure in the scene. It was dark now, and torches were kindled.

It appeared from the little this man said to those about him, which was quickly repeated all over the circle, that the lost man with some crumbled rubbish with which the pit was half choked up, and that his fall had been further broken by some jagged earth at the side. He lay upon his back with one arm doubled under him, and according to his own belief had hardly stirred since he fell, except that he had moved his hand to a side pocket, in which he remembered to have some bread and treacle (of which he had swallowed crumbs), and had likewise scooped up a little water in it now and then. He had come straight away from his work, on being written to, and had walked the whole journey; and was on his way to Mr. Bounderby's country-house after dark, when he fell. He was crossing that dangerous country at such a dangerous time, because he was innocent of what was laid to his charge, and couldn't rest from coming the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to the nearest way to deliver himself up. The Old Hell Shaft, the pitman said, with a curse on it, was worthy of its bad name to
man removed his hand from it now. Every one waited with his grasp set, and his body bent down to the work, ready to reverse and wind in. At length the signal was given, and all the ring leaned forward.

For, now, the rope came in, tightened and sang to its utmost as it appeared, and the men turned heavily, and the windlass complained. It was scarcely endurable to look at the rope, and think of its giving way. But ring after ring was coiled upon the barrel of the windlass safely, and the connecting chains appeared, and finally the bucket with the two men holding on at the sides—a sight to make the head swim, and oppress the heart—and tenderly supporting between them, slung and tied within, the figure of a poor, crushed, human creature.

A low murmur of pity went round the throng, and the women wept aloud, as this form, almost without form, was moved very slowly from its iron deliverance, and laid upon the bed of straw. At first none but the surgeon went close to it. He did what he could in its adjustment on the couch, but the best that he could do was to cover it. That gently done, he called to him Rachael and Sissy. And at that time the pale, worn, patient face was seen looking up at the sky, with the broken right hand lying bare on the outside of the covering garments, as if waiting to be taken by another hand.

They gave him drink, moistened his face with water, and administered some drops of cordial and wine. Though he lay quite motionless looking up at the sky, he smiled and said, "Rachael."

She stooped down on the grass at his side, and bent over him until her eyes were between his and the sky, for he could not so much as turn them to look at her.

"Rachael, my dear."

She took his hand. He smiled again and said, "Don't let 't go."

"Thou'rt in great pain, my own dear Stephen !"

"I ha' been, but not now. I ha' been—dreadful, and dree, and long, my dear—but 'tis over now. Ah Rachael, aw a muddle! Fro' first to last, a muddle!"

The spectacle of his old look seemed to pass as he said the word.

"I ha' fell into th' pit, my dear, as have cost wi' the knowledge o' old fok now livin hundreds and hundreds o' men's lives—fathers, sons, brothers, dear to thousands an thousands, an keepin 'em fro want and hunger. I ha' fell into a pit that ha' been wi' th' fire-damp crueler than battle. I ha' fallen on it that they loveless well as gentlefok loves theirs. When it were in work, it killed w'ont need. See how we die an no need, one way an another—in a muddle—every day!"

He faintly said it, without any anger against any one. Merely as the truth.

"Thy little sister, Rachael, thou hast not forgiven her. Thou'rt not like to forget her now, and me so nigh her. Thou knowst—poor, patient, suff'rin' dear—how thou didn't work for her, seet'n all day long in her little chair at thy winder, and she died, young and misshapen, awlving o' sickly air as had'n no need to be, an awlving o' working people's miserable homes. A muddle! Aw a muddle!"

Louisa approached him; but he could not see her, lying with his face turned up to the night sky.

"If aw th' things that tooches us, my dear, was not so muddled, I should'n ha' had'n need to coom heer. If we was not in a muddle among ourseln, I should'n ha' been by my own fellow weavers and workin brothers, so mistook. If Mr. Bounderby had ever knowd me right—if he'd ever knowd me at aw—he would'n ha' took'n offence wi' me. He would'n ha' suspect'n' me. But look up yonder, Rachael! Look above!"

Following his eyes, she saw that he was gazing at a star.

"It ha' shined upon me," he said reverently, "in my pain and trouble down below. It ha' shined into my mind. I ha' lookd at 't an thowt o' thee, Eachael, till the muddle in my mind cleared awa, above a bit, I hope. If soon ha' been wantin in unnerstain me better, I, too, ha' been wantin in unnerstain them better. When I got thy letter, I easily believ'n that what the yoong lady sen an done to me was one, an that there were a wicked plot betwixt 'em. When I fell, I was in anger wi' her, an hurrin on t' be as onjust t' her as others was t' me. But in our judgments, like as in our doings, we mun bear and forbear. In my pain an trouble lookin up yonder,—wi' it shinin on me—I ha' seen more clear, and ha' made it my dyin' prayer that aw th' world may on'y come toether more, an get a better unnerstain o' one another, than when I were in my own weak seln."

Louisa hearing what he said, bent over him on the opposite side to Rachael, so that he could see her.

"You ha' heard it?" he said after a few moments silence. "I ha' not forgot yo, ledy."

"Yes, Stephen, I have heard you. And your prayer is mine."

"You ha' a father. Will yo tak a message to him?"

"He is here," said Louisa, with dread.

"Shall I bring him to you?"

"If yo please."

Louisa returned with her father. Standing hand-in-hand, they both looked down upon the solemn countenance.

"Sir, yo will clear me an mak my name good wi' aw men. This I leave to yo."
Mr. Gradgrind was troubled and asked how.

"Sir," was the reply; "yor son will tell yo how. Ask him. I mak no charges: I leave none a hint me: not a single word. I ha' seen an spok'n wi' yor son, one night. I ask no more o' yo than that, yo clear me—an I trust to yo to do't."

The bearers being now ready to carry him away, and the surgeon being anxious for his removal, those who had torches or lanterns, prepared to go in front of the litter. Before it was raised, and while they were arranging how to go, he said to Rachael, looking upward:

"Often as I coom to myseln, and found it shinin on me down there in my trouble, I thowt it were the star as guided to Our Saviour's home. I awmust think it be the very star!"

They lifted him up, and he was overjoyed to find that they were about to take him in the direction whither the star seemed to him to lead.

"Rachael, beloved lass! Don't let go my hand. We may walk togeth'er t'night, my thee, Stephen, all the way."

"Bless thee! Will soombody be pleased to cover my face?"

They carried him very gently along the fields, and down the lanes, and over the wide landscape; Rachael always holding the hand in hers. Very few whispers broke the mournful silence. It was soon a funeral procession. The star had shown him where to find the Redeemer's rest.

"I will hold thy hand, and keep beside thee, Stephen, all the way."

"I will hold thy hand, and keep beside thee, Stephen, all the way."

"How to go, he said to Rachael, looking upward at the star:

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"Rachael, beloved lass! Don't let go my hand. We may walk togeth'er t'night, my thee, Stephen, all the way."

"Bless thee! Will soombody be pleased to cover my face?"

They carried him very gently along the fields, and down the lanes, and over the wide landscape; Rachael always holding the hand in hers. Very few whispers broke the mournful silence. It was soon a funeral procession. The star had shown him where to find the Redeemer's rest.

IMITATION.

We copy each other more than most of us are aware; and what is further significant, a very large portion of all that we do is simply copying. A very few thinkers can cut out a pattern of a bandanna handkerchief. In all these cases the real work done is a copy, an imitation, a fac-simile, from sunken lines; and how it is with raised lines, every one knows. The types for common printing are raised lines or surfaces: the stereotype plates obtained from such types, are copies, intended themselves to produce copies; the wood-engraving; the blocks used by paper-stainers; the blocks which impart pattern to cloth and painted table-covers; the blocks employed in the better kind of calico-printing all belong to a system of raised lines. We employ a letter by any one of the numerous copying machines, or print from a lithographic stone or a zincographic plate, or steal a printed page by the Anastatic process, or copy shells and leaves by the nature-printing process, or transfer a pattern to blue earthenware from thin printed paper—what do we, in effect, but print or copy from chemical lines?

Fac-simile by casting. A truly wide world of imitation. We make a mould in sand by means of a hand-made model; we pour molten iron into the mould, and we obtain a cannon, a cylinder, a pipe, etc. We pour cold cast iron, a stove-grate, a girder, a railing, a scraper, all copies. We use steel instead of iron, and obtain an infinity of polished castings. We employ a mixed metal of copper with tin or with zinc, and we produce brass candlesticks and chandeliers, brass ornaments, brass guns, bronze statues, and bells—all copies. We also call to our aid the softer metals and summon into existence armies of useful articles in tin, lead, pewter, Britannia metal, and the like. We use a cold solution instead of a hot molten mass—cold plaster of Paris instead of hot metal, and obtain by casting, plaster statues, and thousands of copied beauties from the works of the greatest geniuses. We pour melted wax into moulds, and produce those superb copies of humanity which adorn the windows of the perruquier's shops; we pour melted stearine into moulds, and there come forth excellent candles; we pour liquid clay into moulds, and our Cope lands and Mintons show us their delicate Parian statuettes and translucent table-porcel lain.
HARD TIMES.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Before the ring formed round the Old Hell Shaft was broken, one figure had disappeared from within it. Mr. Bounderby and his shadow had not stood near Louisa, who held her father's arm, but in a retired place by themselves. When Mr. Gradgrind was summoned to the couch, Sissy, attentive to all that happened, slipped behind that wicked shadow—a sight in the horror of his face, if there had been eyes there for any sight but one—and whispered in his ear. Without turning his head, he conferred with her a few moments, and vanished. Thus the whelp had gone out of the circle before the people moved.

When the father reached home, he sent a message to Mr. Bounderby's, desiring his son to come to him directly. The reply was, that Mr. Bounderby having missed him in the crowd, and seen nothing of him since, had supposed him to be at Stone Lodge.

"I believe, father," said Louisa, "he will not come back to town to-night." Mr. Gradgrind turned away, and said no more.

In the morning, he went down to the Bank himself as soon as it was opened, and seeing his son's place empty (he had not the courage to look in at first), went back along the street to meet Mr. Bounderby on his way there. To whom he said that, for reasons he would soon explain, but entreated not then to be asked for, he had found it necessary to employ his son at a distance for a little while. Also, that he was charged with the duty of vindicating Stephen Blackpool's memory, and declaring the thief. Mr. Bounderby, quite confounded, stood stock still in the street after his father-in-law had left him, swelling like an immense soap-bubble, without its beauty.

"Let me know," said her father, "if your thoughts present your guilty brother in the same dark view as mine."

"I fear, father," hesitated Louisa, "he must have made some representation to Stephen Blackpool—perhaps in my name, perhaps in his own—which induced him to do in good faith and honesty, what he had never done before, and to wait about the Bank those two or three nights before he left the town."

"Too plain!" returned the father. "Too plain!"

He shaded his face, and remained silent for some moments. Recovering himself, he said:

"And now, how is he to be found? How is he
to be saved from justice? In the few hours that
I can possibly allow to elapse before I publish
the truth, how is he to be found by us, and
only by us? Ten thousand pounds could not
effect it."

"Sissy has effected it, father." He raised his eyes to where she stood, like
a good fairy in his house, and said in a tone of
mercury and grateful kindness.

"It is always you, my child!"

"We had our fears," Sissy explained, glanc-
ing at Louisa, "before yesterday; and when
I saw you brought to the side of the litter
last night, and heard what passed (being close
to Rachael all the time), I went to him when
no one saw, and said to him, 'Don't look at
me. See where your father is. Escape at
once, for his sake and your own!' He was
in a tremble before I whispered to him, and
in a trembling more then, and said,
'Where can I go? I have very little
money, and I don't know who will hide me!'

I thought of father's old circus. I have not
mentioned Mr. Sleary goes at this time of
year, and I read of him in a paper only
the other day. I told him to hurry there, and
of his look-out for base coin, Mr. Kidder-
minster, grown too maturely turfy to
anything but money; so Sissy passed him
along the street.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed his father.

"He may be got abroad yet."

It was the more hopeful, as the town to
which Sissy had directed him was within
three hours' journey of Liverpool, whence
he could be swiftly dispatched to any part of the world. But, caution being
necessary in communicating with him—for
there was a greater danger every moment of
his being suspected now, and nobody could be
sure at heart but that Mr. Bounderby him-
self, in a bullying vein of public zeal, might
play a Roman part—it was consented that
Sissy and Louisa should repair to the place
in question, by a circuitous course, alone;
and that the unhappy father, setting forth in
an opposite direction, should get round to the
same bourne by another and wider route. It
was further agreed that he should not present
himself to Mr. Sleary, lest his intentions
should be mistrusted, or the intelligence of
his arrival should cause his son to take flight
anew; but, that the communication should be
left to Sissy and Louisa to open; and that
they should inform the cause of so much
misery and disgrace of his father's being at
hand, and of the purpose for which they had
come. When these arrangements had been
well considered and were fully understood by
all three, it was time to begin to carry them
into execution. Early in the afternoon, Mr.
Gradgrind walked direct from his own house
into the country, to be taken up on the line
by which he was to travel; and at night the
remaining two set forth upon their different
course, encouraged by not seeing any face
they knew.

The two travelled all night, except when
they were left, for odd numbers of minutes, at
branch-places up illimitable flights of steps,
or down wells—which was the only variety of
those branches—and in early in the morning,
were turned out on a swamp, a mile or two
from the town they sought. From this dis-
mal spot they were rescued by a savage old
position, who happened to snap early, kicking
a horse in a fly; and so were smuggled into the
town by all the back lanes where the pigs
lived: which, although not a magnificent or
even savoury approach, was, as is usual in
such cases, the legitimate highway.

The first thing they saw on entering the
town was the skeleton of Sleary's Circus.
The company had departed for another town
more than twenty miles off, and had opened
there last night. The connection between
the two places was by a hilly turnpike-road,
and the travelling on that road was very
slow. Though they took but a hasty break-
fast, and no rest (which it would have
been very hard under such anxious cir-
stances), it was noon before they had
found the bills of Sleary's Horseriding on barns
and walls, and o'clock when they stopped
in the market-place.

A Grand Morning Performance by the
RIDING, commencing at that very hour, was in
course of announcement by the bellman as they
set their feet upon the stones of the street.
Sissy recommended that, to avoid making in-
quiries and attracting attention in the town,
they should present themselves to pay at the
door. If Mr. Sleary were taking the money,
he would be sure to know her, and would
proceed with discretion. If he were not, he
would have no cause to open them inside; and, know-
ing what he had done with the fugitive, would
proceed with discretion still.

Therefore they repaired with fluttering
hearts, to the well-remembered booth. The
flag with the inscription SLEARY'S HORSE-
RIDING, was there; and the Gothic niche was
there; but Mr. Sleary was not there. Master
Kidderminster, grown too maturely turfy to
to be received by the wildest credulity as Cupid
any more, had yielded to the invincible force
of circumstances (and his beard), and, in the
capacity of a man who made himself gen-
erally useful, presided on this occasion over
the exchequer—having also a drum in reserve,
on which to expend his leisure moments and
superfluous forces. In the extreme sharpness
of his look-out for base coin, Mr. Kidder-
minster, as at present situated, never saw any-
thing but money; so Sissy passed him
unrecognised, and they went in.

The Emperor of Japan, on a steady old
white horse stencilled with black spots, was
by two twirling five wash-hand basins at once, as it
is the favorite recreation of that monarch to
do. Sissy, though well acquainted with his
Royal line, had no personal knowledge of the
present Emperor, and his reign was peaceful.
Miss Josephine Sleary in her celebrated
graceful Equestrian Tyrolean Flower-Act, was then announced by a new clown (who humorously said Cauliflower Act), and Mr. Sleary appeared, leading her in.

Mr. Sleary had only made one cut at the Clown with his long whip-lash, and the Clown had only said, "If you do it again, I'll throw the horse at you!" when Sissy was recognised both by father and daughter. But they got through the Act with great self-possession; and Mr. Sleary, saving for the first instant, conveyed no more expression into his locomotive eye than into his fixed one. The performance seemed a little long to Sissy and Louisa, particularly when it stopped to afford the Clown an opportunity of telling Mr. Sleary (who said: "Indeed, sir!") to all his observations in the calmest way, and with his eye on the house), about two legs sitting on three legs looking at one leg, when in came four legs, and laid hold of one leg, and up got two legs, caught hold of three legs, and threw them at four legs, who ran away with one leg. For, although an ingenious Allegory relating to a butcher, a three-legged stool, a dog, and a leg of mutton, this narrative consumed time, and they were in great suspense. At last, however, little fair-haired Josephine made her curtsey amid great applause; and the Clown, left alone in the ring, had just warmed himself, and said, "Now I'll have a turn!" when Sissy was touched on the shoulder, and beckoned out. She took Louisa with her; and they were received by Mr. Sleary in a very little private apartment, with canvas sides, a grass floor, and a wooden ceiling all aslant, on which the box company stamped their approbation as if to know any there, but I supposed I may at hand, "it doth me good to thee you. You done uth credith thinth the old timeth I'm through. You mutht thee our people, my dear, afore we speak of bithnith, or they'll break every one of you, and ring in the band from tears.

"There! Now Thesthilia hath kithd all the children, and hugged all the women, and taken handth all round with all the men, clear, every one of you, and ring in the band for the thecond part!" said Sleary.

As soon as they were gone, he continued in a low tone. "Now, Thesthilia, I don't athk to know any theeeth, but I thuppothe I may contbider thith to be Mith Thquire?"

"This is his sister. Yes."

"And thither oneth daughter. That's what I mean. Hope I thee you well, mith. And I hope the Thquire'eth well?"

"My father will be here soon," said Louisa, anxious to bring him to the point.

"Is my brother safe?"

"Thafe and thound!" he replied. "I want you juth to take a peep at the Ring, mith, through here. Thesthilia, you know the dodgeth; find a thpy-hole for yourthelf!"

They each looked through a chink in the boards.

"That's Jack the Giant Killer—pieth of comic infant bithnith," said Sleary.

"There's a property-douthe, you thee, for Jack to hide in; there's thy Clown with a thancheen-thiad and a thpy, for Jack's thervant; there's little Jack himself in a splendido thoot of armour; there's two comic black thervanth twithe ath big ath the houte, to thtanby it and to bring it in and clear it; and the Giant (a very expen­thive bathketh one), he athn't yet. Now, do you thee on all?"

"Yes," they both said.

"Look at em again," said Sleary, "look at the second part!"
'em well. You thee 'em all? Very good. Now, muth;" he put a form for them to sit on; "I have my opinion, and the Thquire your father hath thith. I don't want to know what your brother'th been up to; ith better for me not to know. All I thay ith, the Thquire hath thhood by Thethilia, and I'll thand by the Thquire. Your brother it's kinder than them black thervanth."

Louisa uttered an exclamation, partly of distress, partly of satisfaction.

"Ith a fact," said Sleary, "and even knowin it, you couldn't put your finger on him. Let the Thquire come. I thall keep your brother here after the performanthen. I thant unddreth him, nor yet wath ith paint off. Let the Thquire come here after the performanthen, or come here yourself after the performanthen, and you thall find your brother, and have the whole plathe to talk to him in. Never mind the lookth of him, ath long ath he'th well hid."

Louisa, with many thanks and with a lightened load, detained Mr. Sleary no longer than she left her love for her brother, with her eyes full of tears; and she and Sissy went away until later in the afternoon.

Mr. Gradgrind arrived within an hour afterwards. He too had encountered no one whom he knew; and was now sanguine, with Sleary's assistance, of getting his disgraced son to Liverpool. As neither of the three could be his companion without almost identifying him under any disguise, he prepared a letter to a correspondent whom he had the misery to call his son. As neither of these could be his companion without almost identifying him under any disguise, he prepared a letter to a correspondent whom he could trust, beseeching him to ship the bearer off, at any cost, to North or South America, or any distant part of the world to which he could be the most speedily and privately dispatched. This done, they walked about, waiting for the Circus to be quite vacated: not only by the audience, but by the company and by the horses. After watching it a long time, they saw Mr. Sleary bring out a chair and sit down by the side-door, smoking; as if that were his signal that he might approach.

"Your thervanth, Thquire," was his cautious salutation as they passed in. "If you want me you'll find me here. You muthn't mind your thon having a comic livery on."

They all three went in; and Mr. Gradgrind sat down, forlorn, on the Clown's performing chair in the middle of the ring. On one of the back benches, remote in the subdued light and the strangeness of the place, sat the villainous whelp, sulky to the last, whom he had the misery to call his son.

In a preposterous coat, like a beadle's, with nothing fitting him, and everything of coarse material, moth-eaten, and full of holes; with seams in his black face, where fear and heat had started through the greasy composition daubed all over it; anything so grimly, detestably, ridiculously shameful as the whelp in his comic livery, Mr. Gradgrind never could by any other means have believed in, weighable and measurable fact though it was. And one of his model children had come to this!

At first the whelp would not draw any nearer, but persisted in remaining up there by himself. Yielding at length, if any concession so suddenly made can be called yielding, to the entreaties of Sissy—for Louisa he disowned altogether—he came down, bench by bench, until he stood in the sawdust, on the verge of the circle, as far as possible, within its limits from where his father sat.

"How was this done?" asked the father.

"How was what done?" moodily answered the son.

"This robbery," said the father, raising his voice upon the word.

"I forced the safe myself over night, and shut it up njar before I went away. I had had the key that was found, made long before. I dropped it that morning that it might be supposed to have been used. I didn't take the money all at once. I pretended to put my balance away every night, but I did n't. Now you know all about it."

"If a thunderbolt had fallen on me," said the father, "it would have shocked me less than this."

"I don't see why," grumbled the son. "So many people are employed in situations of trust; so many people, out of so many, will be dishonest. I have heard you talk, a hundred times, of its being a law. How can I help laws! You have comforted others with such things, father. Comfort yourself!"

The father buried his face in his hands, and the son stood in his disgraceful grotesqueness, biting straw: his hands, with the black partly worn away inside, looking like the hands of a monkey. The evening was fast closing in; and, from time to time, he turned the whites of his eyes restlessly and impatiently towards his father. They were the only parts of his face that showed any life or expression; the pigment upon it was so thick.

"You must be got to Liverpool, and sent abroad."

"I suppose I must. I can't be more miserable anywhere," whimpered the whelp, "than I have been here, ever since I can remember. That's one thing."

Mr. Gradgrind went to the door, and returned with Sleary, to whom he submitted the question, How to get this deplorable object away?

"Why, I've been thinking of it, Thquire. Thereth no muth time to lothe, tho you muth thy yeth or no. Ith over twenty mileth to the rail. Thereth a coath in half an hour, that goeth to the rail, 'purposed to cath the mail train. That train will take him right to Liverpool."
["But look at him," groaned Mr. Gradgrind, "Will any coach—"
"I don't mean that he should go in the comic livery," said Sleary. "Thay the word, and I'll make a Jothkin of him, out of the wardrobe, in five minutes."
"I don't understand," said Mr. Gradgrind.
"A Jothkin—a Carter. Make up your mind quick, Thquire. There'll be beer to fetch. I've never met with nothing but beer ath'll ever clean a comic blackamoor."
Mr. Gradgrind rapidly assented; Mr. Sleary rapidly turned out from a box, a smock frock, a felt hat, and other essentials; the whole rapidly changed clothes behind a screen of baize; Mr. Sleary rapidly brought beer, and washed him white again.
"Now," said Sleary, "come along to the coast, and jump up behind; I'll go with you there, and they'll thump you one of my people. Thay farewell to your family, and tharp'th the word!" With which he deliberately retired.
"Here is your letter," said Mr. Gradgrind.
"All necessary means will be provided for you. Atome, by repentance and better conduct, for the shocking action you have committed, and the dreadful consequences to which it has led. Give me your hand, my poor boy, and may God forgive you as I do!"
The culprit was moved to a few abject tears by these words and their pathetic tone. But, when Louisa opened her arms, he repulsed her afresh.
"Not you: I don't want to have anything to say to you!"
"O Tom, Tom, do we end so, after all my love!"
"After all your love!" he returned, obdurately. "Pretty love! Leaving old Bounderby to himself, and packing my best friend Mr. Harthouse off, and going home, just when I was in the greatest danger. Pretty love that!" He had got out with every word about our having gone to that place, when you saw the net was gathering round me. Pretty love that! You have regularly given me up. You never cared for me."
"Tharp'th the word!" said Sleary at the door.
They all confusedly went out: Louisa crying to him that she forgave him, and loved him still, and that he would one day be sorry to have left her so, and glad to think of these her last words, far away; when some one ran against them. Mr. Gradgrind and Sissy, who were both before him while his sister yet clung to his shoulder, stopped and recoiled.
For, there was Bitzer, out of breath, his thick lips parted, his thin nostrils distended, his white eyelashes quivering, his colorless face more colorless than ever, as if he ran himself into a white heat, when other people ran themselves into a glow. There he stood, panting and heaving, as if he had never stopped since the night, now long ago, when he had run them down before.
"I'm sorry to interfere with your plans," said Bitzer, shaking his head, "but I can't allow myself to be done by horseriders. I must have young Mr. Tom; he mustn't be got away by horseriders; here he is in a smock frock, and I must have him!"
By the collar, too, it seemed. For, so he took possession of him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

They went back into the booth, Sleary shutting the door to keep intruders out. Bitzer, still holding the paralysed culprit by the collar, stood in the Ring, blinking at his old patron through the darkness of the twilight.
"Bitzer," said Mr. Gradgrind, broken down, and miserably submissive to him, "have you a heart?"
"The circulation, sir," returned Bitzer, smiling at the oddity of the question, "couldn't be carried on without one. No man, sir, acquainted with the facts established by Harvey relating to the circulation of the blood, can doubt that I have a heart."
"Is it accessible," cried Mr. Gradgrind, "to any compassionate influence?"
"It is accessible to Reason, sir," returned the excellent young man. "And to nothing else."
They stood looking at each other; Mr. Gradgrind's face as white as the pursuer's.
"What motive—what motive in reason—can you have for preventing the escape of this wretched youth," said Mr. Gradgrind, "and crushing his miserable father? See his sister here. Pity us!"
"Sir," returned Bitzer, in a very business-like and logical manner, "since you ask me what motive I have in reason, for taking young Mr. Tom back to Coketown, it is only reasonable to let you know. I have suspected young Mr. Tom of this bank robbery from the first. I had had my eye upon him before that time, for I knew his ways. I have kept my observations to myself, but I have made them; and I have got ample proofs against him now, besides his running away, and besides his own confession, which I was just in time to overhear. I had the pleasure of watching your house yesterday morning, and following you here. I am going to take young Mr. Tom back to Coketown, in order to deliver him over to Mr. Bounderby. Sir, I have no doubt whatever that Mr. Bounderby will then promote me to young Mr. Tom's situation. And I wish to have his situation, sir, for it will be a rise to me and will do me good."
"If this is solely a question of self-interest with you—" Mr. Gradgrind began.
"I beg your pardon for interrupting you, sir," returned Bitzer; "but I am sure you know that the whole social system is a question of self-interest. What you must always
appeal to, is a person's self-interest. It's your only hold. We are so constituted. I was brought up in that catechism when I was very young, sir, as you are aware."

"What sum of money," said Mr. Gradgrind, "will you set against your expected profit?"

"Thank you, sir," returned Bitzer, "for hinting at the proposal; but I will not set any sum against it. Knowing that your clear head would propose that alternative, I have gone over the calculations in my mind; and I find that to compound a felony, even on very high terms indeed, would not be as safe and good for me as my improved prospects in the Bank."

"Bitzer," said Mr. Gradgrind, stretching out his hands as though he would have said, See how miserable I am! "Bitzer, I have but one chance left to soften you. You were many years at my school. If, in remembrance of this business there, you will but show..." He paused, desiring her to linger behind. As he locked the door, he said excitedly:

"The Thquire thtood by you, Thethilia, and I'll thtand by the Thquire. More than that; thith ith a prethiouth ratheal, and belongth to the thit. My people—Thquire, you know perfectly well, and your daughter knowth perfectly well (better than you, becauto I thied it to her), that I didn't know what your thon hath done, and that I didn't want to know—I thied it watther better not, though I only thought, then, it thath thome thlykaring. However, thith young man having made it known to be a robbery of a bank, why, that's a theriothuth thing; much too theriothuth a thing for me to compound, ath thith young man hath very properly called it. Conthsequently, Thquire, you muthn't quarrel with me if I take thith young man'ith thide, and they he'th right and there'th no help for it. But I tell you what I'll do, Thquire; I'll drive your thon and thith young man over to the rail, and prevent expect thy young. I can't conteth to do more, but I'll do that."

Fresh lamentations from Louisa, and deeper animation on Mr. Gradgrind's part, followed this assertion of them by their last friend. But, Sissy glanced at him with great attention; nor did she in her own breast misunderstand him. As they were all going out again, he favored her with one slight roll of his movable eye, desiring her to linger behind. As he locked the door, he said excitedly:

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"The Thquire thtood by you, Thethilia, and I'll thtand by the Thquire. More than that; thith ith a prethiouth ratheal, and belongth to the thit. My people—Thquire, you know perfectly well, and your daughter knowth perfectly well (better than you, becauto I thied it to her), that I didn't know what your thon hath done, and that I didn't want to know—I thied it watther better not, though I only thought, then, it thath thome thlykaring. However, thith young man having made it known to be a robbery of a bank, why, that's a theriothuth thing; much too theriothuth a thing for me to compound, ath thith young man hath very properly called it. Conthsequently, Thquire, you muthn't quarrel with me if I take thith young man'ith thide, and they he'th right and there'th no help for it. But I tell you what I'll do, Thquire; I'll drive your thon and thith young man over to the rail, and prevent expect thy young. I can't conteth to do more, but I'll do that."

FRESH LAMENTATIONS FROM LOUISA, AND DEEPER ANIMATION ON MR. GRADGRIND'S PART, FOLLOWED THIS ASSERTION OF THEM BY THEIR LAST FRIEND. BUT, SISSEY GLANCED AT HIM WITH GREAT ATTENTION; NOR DID SHE IN HER OWN BREAST MISUNDERSTAND HIM. AS THEY WERE ALL GOING OUT AGAIN, HE FAVORED HER WITH ONE SLIGHT ROLL OF HIS MOVABLE EYE, DESIRING HER TO LINGER BEHIND. AS HE LOCKED THE DOOR, HE SAID EXCITEDLY:

"THE THQUIRE THTOOD BY YOU, THETHILIA, AND I'LL THTAND BY THE THQUIRE. MORE THAN THAT; THITH ITH A PRETHIOUTH RATHHEEL, AND BELONGTH TO THE THIT. MY PEOPLE—THQUIRE, YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL, AND YOUR DAUGHTER KNOWTH PERFECTLY WELL (BETTER THAN YOU, BECAUTO I THIED IT TO HER), THAT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT YOUR THON HATH DONE, AND THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW—I THIED IT WHATHER BETTER NOT, THOUGH I ONLY THOUGHT, THEN, IT WATH THEOME THLYKARING. HOWEVER, THITH YOUNG MAN HAVING MADE IT KNOWN TO BE A ROBBERY OF A BANK, WHY, THAT'S A THERIOUTH THING; MUCH TOO THERIOUTH A THING FOR ME TO COMPOUND, ATH THITH YOUNG MAN HATH VERY PROPERLY CALLED IT. CONSEQUENTLY, THQUIRE, YOU MUTHN'T QUARREL WITH ME IF I TAKE THITH YOUNG MAN'ITH THIDE, AND THEY HETH RIGHT AND THERE'NTH NO HELP FOR IT. BUT I TELL YOU WHAT I'LL DO, THQUIRE; I'LL DRIVE YOUR THON AND THITH YOUNG MAN OVER TO THE RAIL, AND PREVENT EXPECT THY YOUNG. I CAN'T CONTETH TO DO MORE, BUT I'LL DO THAT."
time. Childerth took him off, an hour and a half after we left here, laft night. The horth daueth the Poika till he wath dead beat (he would have watcht, if he hadn't been in hart), and then I gave him the word and he went to sleep comfortable. When that prethiouth young Rathcal thed he'd go for'ard afoot, the dog hung on to hith neck-hankercher with all four leght in the sir and pulled him down and rolled him over. Tho he come back into the drag, and there he that, 'till I turned the horth'eth head, at halipast thith thith morning.'

Mr. Gradgrind overwhelmed him with thanks, of course; and hinted as delicately as he could, at a handsome remuneration in money.

"I don't want money myself, Thquire; but Childerth ith a family man, and I wouldn't like to offer him a five-pound note, it mightn't be unacceptable. Likewise, if you wath to itht a collar for the dog, or a thet of belth for the horth, I should be very glad to take 'em. Brandy and water I alwayth take." He had already called for a glass, and now called for another. "If you wouldn't think it going too far, Thquire, to make a little thetread for the company at about three and thith ahead, not reckoning with, it mightn't be unactheptable. Like with thethter, and a thith litter that you trutht and a thith, don't it, Thquire?" said Mr. Sleary, "I'm bletht if I know what to call it," said Mr. Gradgrind, "is surprising." "Whatever you call it—and I'm bletht if I know what to call it"—said Sleary, "it ith ah thetthing. The way in with a dog'll find you—the diabanthe he'll come!"

"His scent," said Mr. Gradgrind, "being so fine."

"I'm bletht if I know what to call it," repeated Sleary, shaking his head, "but I have had doght find me, Thquire, in a way that made me think whether that dog hadn't gone to another dog, and thed, 'You don't happen to know a perthon of the name of Thleary, do you? Perthon of the name of Thleary, in the Horth-Riding way—that man—game eye!' And whether that dog mightn't have thought it over, and thed, 'Thleary, Thleary! O yeth, to be thure! A friend of mine mentioned him to me at one time. I can get you thit addreth directly,' In conseqhuent of my being afore the puible, and going about tho muth, you thee, there mutht be a number of dogth acquainted with me, Thquire, that I don't know!"

Mr. Gradgrind seemed to be quite con­founded by this speculation.

"Any way," said Sleary, after putting his lips to his brandy and water, "ith fourteen month ago, Thquire, thin she wath at Chethter. We wath getting up our Children in the Wood one morning, when there cometh into our Bng, by the thight door, a dog. He had travelled a long way, he wath in very bad condition, he wath lame, and pretty well blind. He went round to our children, one after another, as if he wath a theeking for a child he known't; and then he come to me, and threw hithself up behind, and thtoed on hith two fore-legs, weak at hith wath, and then he wagged hith tail and died. Thquire, that dog wath Merrylythth."

"Sissy's father's dog!"

"Thethilia, their father's old dog. Now, Thquire, I can take my oath, from my knowledge of that dog, that that man wath dead—and buried—after that dog come back to me, Joth, Thleary and Childerth and me talked it over a long time, whether I should write or not. But we agreed, 'No. There's nothing comfortable to tell; why unhettle her mind, and make her unhappy?' Tho, whether her father balthely dethert her; or whether he broke hith own heart alone, rather than pull her down along with him, never will be known, now, Thquire, till—no, not till we know how the dogth finith thith out!"

"She keeps the bottle that he sent her for, to this hour; and she will believe in his affection to the last moment of her life," said Mr. Gradgrind.

"It's thet he thought no two thinght to a thetption, don't it, Thquire?" said Mr. Sleary, "I'm bletht if I know what to call it, and I'm bletht if I'm bletht if I know what to call it." Mr. Gradgrind seemed to be quite con­founded. Mr. Gradgrind, when there cometh in the Wood one morning, when there cometh into our Bng, by the thight door, a dog. He had travelled a long way, he wath in very bad condition, he wath lame, and pretty well blind. He went round to our children, one after another, as if he wath a theeking for a child he known't; and then he come to me, and threw hithself up behind, and thtoed on hith two fore-legs, weak at hith wath, and then he wagged hith tail and died. Thquire, that dog wath Merrylythth."

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"She keeps the bottle that he sent her for, to this hour; and she will believe in his affection to the last moment of her life," said Mr. Gradgrind.
It is a dangerous thing to see anything in the sphere of a vain blusterer, before the vain blusterer sees it himself. Mr. Bounderby felt that Mrs. Sparsit had audaciously anticipated him, and presumed to be wiser than he. Inappositely indignant with her for her triumphant discovery of Mrs. Pegler, he turned this presumption, on the part of a woman in her dependant position, over and over in his mind, until it accumulated with turning like a great snowball. At last he made the discovery that to discharge this highly-connected female—to have it in his power to say, "she was a woman of family, and wanted to stick to me, but I wouldn't have it—nor yet of her"—would be to get the utmost possible amount of crowning glory out of the connection, and at the same time to punish Mrs. Sparsit according to her deserts.

Filled fuller than ever, with this great idea, Mr. Bounderby came in to lunch, and sat himself down in the dining-room of former days, where his portrait was. Mrs. Sparsit sat by the fire, with her foot in her cotton stirrup, little thinking whither she turned Mrs. Sparsit; "but now you mention it, I have been thinking it over, you see, since the late affairs have happened, ma'am, said Bounderby; "and it appears to my poor judgment—""Oh! Pray, sir," Mrs. Sparsit interposed, with sprightly cheerfulness, "don't disparage your judgment. Everybody knows how unerring Mr. Bounderby's judgment is. Everybody has had proofs of it. It must be the theme of general conversation. Disparage anything in yourself but your judgment, sir," said Mrs. Sparsit, laughing.

Mr. Bounderby, very red and uncomfortable, resumed:

"It appears to me, ma'am, I say, that a different sort of establishment altogether, would suit out a lady of your genius in other people's affairs. Such an establishment as your relation, Lady Scargrave's, now. Don't you think you might find some affairs there, ma'am, to interfere with?"

"It never occurred to me before, sir," returned Mrs. Sparsit; "but now you mention it, I think I should think it highly probable."

"Then suppose you try, ma'am," said Bounderby, laying an envelope with a cheque in it, in her little basket. "You can take your own time for going, ma'am; but perhaps in the meanwhile, it will be more agreeable to a lady of your powers of mind, to eat her meals by herself, and not to be intruded upon. You really ought to apologize to your——being only Josiah Bounderby of Coketown—for having stood in your light so long.""
ture of a Noodle. Nothing that a Noodle does, can awaken surprise or indignation, the proceedings of a Noodle can only inspire contempt.

Thus saying, Mrs. Sparsit, with her Roman features like a medal struck to commemorate her scorn of Mr. Bounderby, surveyed him fixedly from head to foot, swept disdainfully past him, and ascended the staircase. Mr. Bounderby closed the door, and stood before the fire; projecting himself after his old explosive manner into his portrait—and into futurity.

Into how much of futurity? He saw Mrs. Sparsit fighting out a daily fight, at the points of all the weapons in the female armoury, with the grudging, smarting, peevish, tormenting Lady Scadgers, still laid up in bed with her mysterious leg, and gobbling her insufficient income down by about the middle of every quarter, in a mean little airless lodging, a mere closet for one, a mere crib for two; but did he see, and did he catch any glimpse of himself making a show of Bitzer to strangers, as the rising young man, so devoted to his master's great merits, who had won young Tom's place, and had almost captured young Tom himself, in the times when by various rascals he was spirited away? Did he see any faint reflection of his own image making a vain-glorious will, whereby five-and-twenty Humbugs past five away? Did he catch sight of himself, a white-haired drunken wretch of her own sex, who was once settled that the national dustmen were of the Present. So, Stephen Blackpool's tombstone, with her father's record of his death, was almost of the Present, for she knew it was to be. These things she could plainly see. But, how much of the Future? A working woman, christened Rachael, after a long illness once again appearing at the ringing of the Factory bell, and passing to and fro at the set hours, among the Coketown Hands; a woman of a pensive beauty, always dressed in black, but sweet-tempered and serene, and even cheerful; who, of all the people in the place, alone appeared to have compassion on a degraded, drunken wretch of her own sex, who was sometimes seen in the town, secretly beseeching of her, and crying to her; a woman working, ever working, but content to do it, and preferring to do it as her natural lot, until she should be too old to labor any more? Did Louisa see this? Such a thing was to be. A lonely brother, many thousands of miles away, writing, on paper blotted with tears, that her words had too soon come true, and that all the treasures in the world would be cheaply bartered for a sight of her dear face! At length this brother coming nearer home, with hope of seeing her, and being delayed by illness; and then a letter in a strange hand, saying, "he died in hospital, of fever, such a day, and died in penitence and love of you; his last word being your name." Did Louisa see these things? Such things were to be.

Here was Mr. Gradgrind on the same day, and in the same hour, sitting thoughtfully in his own room. How much of futurity did he see? Did he see himself, a white-haired decrepid man, bending his hitherto inflexible theories to appointed circumstances; making his facts and figures subservient to Faith, Hope, and Charity; and no longer trying to grind that Heavenly trio in his dusty little mills? Did he catch sight of himself, therefore much despised by his late political associates? Did he see them, in the era of its being quite settled that the national dustmen have only to do with one another, and owe nothing to an abstraction called a People, "taunting the honorable gentleman" with this and, with that and, with what not, five nights a-week, until the small hours of the morning? Probably he had that much fore-knowledge, knowing his men.

Here was Louisa on the night of the same day, watching the fire as in days of yore, though with a gentler and a humbler face. How much of the future might arise before her vision? Broadside in the streets, signed with her father's name, exonerating the late Stephen Blackpool, weaver, from misplaced suspicion, and publishing the guilt of his own son, with such extenuation as his years and temptation (he could not bring himself to add, his education) might beseech; were of the Present. So, Stephen Blackpool's tombstone, with her father's record of his death, was almost of the Present, for she knew it was to be. These things she could plainly see. But, how much of the Future? A working woman, christened Rachael, after a long illness once again appearing at the ringing of the Factory bell, and passing to and fro at the set hours, among the Coketown Hands; a woman of a pensive beauty, always dressed in black, but sweet-tempered and serene, and even cheerful; who, of all the people in the place, alone appeared to have compassion on a degraded, drunken wretch of her own sex, who was sometimes seen in the town, secretly beseeching of her, and crying to her; a woman working, ever working, but content to do it, and preferring to do it as her natural lot, until she should be too old to labor any more? Did Louisa see this? Such a thing was to be. A lonely brother, many thousands of miles away, writing, on paper blotted with tears, that her words had too soon come true, and that all the treasures in the world would be cheaply bartered for a sight of her dear face! At length this brother coming nearer home, with hope of seeing her, and being delayed by illness; and then a letter in a strange hand, saying, "he died in hospital, of fever, such a day, and died in penitence and love of you; his last word being your name." Did Louisa see these things? Such things were to be.

Herself again a wife—a mother—lovingly watchful of her children, ever careful that they should have a childhood of the mind no less than a childhood of the body, as knowing it to be even a more beautiful thing, and a possession, any hoarded scrap of which, is a blessing and happiness to the wisest! Did Louisa see this? Such a thing was never to be.

But, happy Sissy's happy children loving her; all children loving her; she, grown learned in childish lore; thinking no innocent and pretty fancy ever to be despised; trying hard to know her humbler fellow-creatures, and to beautify their lives of machinery and reality with those imaginative graces and delights, without which the heart
of infancy will wither up, the studtiest physi­ cal manhood will be morally stark death, and the plainest national prosperity figures can shew, will be the Writing on the Wall, —she holding this course apart of a fantastic vow, or bond, or brotherhood, or sisterhood, or pledge, or covenant, or fancy dress or fancy fair; but, simply as a duty to be done,—did Louise see these things of herself? These things were to be.

Dear reader! It rests with you and me whether, in our two fields of action, similar things shall be or not? Let them be! We shall sit with lighter bosoms on the hearth, to see the ashes of our fires turn grey and cold.

THE END.

THE ROVING ENGLISHMAN.

THE SEA CAPTAIN AND HIS SHIP.

The compliments are over—there have been a good many of them—and the sailor sits cut up beside me on a most uncompromising little sofa in his narrow low cabin. Twisting myself round as nearly as possible, I front him fairly, and we examine each other with much benevo­ lence. So much, indeed, that the forehead of my friend quite shines with it. He is about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too rather about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too rather about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too rather about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too rather about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too rather about fifty, a spare man, with a slight stoop. He wears a brawn surtout coat, rather too