

give also the passage in which the "Eidolon Chairman" is made to announce the new direction his exertions were about to take, in furtherance of the grand "Joint-stock Adventure" for which Constable had been soliciting his alliance. The paternal shadow thus addresses his mutinous offspring — Cleishbotham, Oldbuck, Clutterbuck, Dryasdust, and the rest: —

"It signifies nothing speaking — I will no longer avail myself of such weak ministers as yon — I will discard you — I will unbeget yon, as Sir Anthony Absolute says — I will leave yon and your whole hacked stock in trade — your caverns and your castles — your modern antiques and your antiquated moderns — your confusion of times, manners, and circumstances — your properties, as player-folk say of scenery and dresses — the whole of your exhausted expedients, to the fools who choose to deal with them. I will vindicate my own fame with my own right hand, without appealing to such halting assistants,

"Whom I have used for sport, rather than need."

— I will lay my foundations better than on quicksands — I will rear my structure of better materials than painted cards; in a word, I will write HISTORY! . . .

"As the confusion began to abate, more than one member of the meeting was seen to touch his forehead significantly, while Captain Clutterbuck humm'd, —

'Be by your friends advised,
Too rash, too hasty dad,
Maugre your bolts and wise head,
The world will think you mad.'¹

"The world, and yon, gentlemen, may think what yon please," said the Chairman, elevating his voice; "but I intend to write the most wonderful book which the world ever read — a book in which every incident shall be incredible, yet strictly true — a work recalling recollections with which the ears of this generation once tingled, and which shall be read by our children with an admiration approaching to incredulity. Such shall be the *LIFE OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE*, by the AUTHOR OF *WAVERLEY*!"²

¹ *Midas* — a farce.

² See Introduction to *Tales of the Crusaders*.