

and to give him an opportunity of recovering his reputation, it was deemed necessary to send him out of the country. By his kind but deeply-distressed parents, to the full extent of their ability, everything was done to contribute to his comfortable settlement in a foreign land. But there also his vicious propensities led him captive: in a very short time he spent the money with which he had been provided, and every disposable article had to be parted with for bread. Thus he found the way of transgression to be hard, being reduced to the most abject state of poverty. By some means or other, he obtained a passage in a ship sailing to his native shore. During the voyage there was time for reflection, and it might have been thought that his sufferings and degradation would have induced him to resolve on reformation. But this was not the case: on the contrary, he became more vile, and was detected during the passage in an act of dishonesty. For this he was placed under arrest, and, on arriving in port, was conveyed to prison as a felon. The next day he was brought to trial, found guilty, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment, in company with some of the lowest and most depraved criminals. By a kind interposition of Providence, this came to a knowledge of a minister residing in the town, who was well acquainted with his father. Respect for the father soon induced the Minister to visit the son. He found him destitute of decent apparel, and mixing with many in the same condition; but there was something in his demeanor and appearance that distinguished him from the rest,—a gentility of manners, that showed that he had not always herded with the outcasts of society.—Suitable advice was given, and the minister engaged to inform his father of his return and imprisonment. It

was a painful service to communicate intelligence of trouble; and as might be expected, the tidings threw the whole family into sorrow. The feelings of the Christian father, the tender mother, and loving sisters, on the reception of the doleful letter, cannot be described. A reply of thanks was returned to the writer, containing a communication to be made to the son, to the effect that having so degraded his father's name and station, and so abused the past act of forgiveness, he was never more to return to the parental abode, for the family would not receive or acknowledge him again. It was natural for an offended and dishonoured parent to arrive at this conclusion on hearing of his son's wicked ungrateful conduct; but it was hoped that, after calm reflection, parental feeling would return and plead for some compassion to the prodigal.—The minister presumed to intercede; but was answered by a recapitulation of past acts of pardon and help, and told that the offence was beyond pardon, and that the son must bear the consequence of his own sin. The time drew near when the youth must be liberated, and the minister urged on the father by every argument he could employ to *try him once more*; offering, at the same time to use his influence to obtain for him the situation as surgeon on board a ship going on a long foreign voyage. The father relented and consented to give the son *the one more trial*. On leaving the prison he was received for a short period into the Minister's house, clothed and sent by coach to the place of his father's residence. Shortly after, the desired office was obtained, and he sailed to a distant land, from whence he did not return for many months. During this absence he was led to review his past conduct carefully, became fully sensible of his folly, and was deeply humbled at the thought