

acres. Each of these has a complicated system of vessels for the circulation of its juices. Some trees have leaves narrow and short; others—as the taliport of Ceylon—have leaves so large that one of them can shelter fifteen or twenty men. Some exuviate their leaves annually, as a whole robe, leaving the tree nude, its bare stem towering aloft and its branches spreading themselves uncovered in the sky; while the leaves of others drop off one by one, new ones constantly growing in place of the dis-

membered ones, and the tree retaining its perpetual verdure. There have actually been ascertained, in the animal kingdom, about 60,000 species of living creatures. There are 600 species of mamalia—those that suckle their young—the most of which are quadrupeds. Of birds there 4,000 species; of fishes 3,000; of reptiles, 700; and of insects 44,000 species.—Besides these there are 3,000 species of shell-fish, and not less than eighty or one hundred thousand species of animalculæ invisible to the naked eye.

The Choice of a Path in Life—or, what shall I be?

A CHAPTER FOR OUR SONS.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Owen, "this is the first New Year's Day I have felt really joyful for many a year, because the first of January has seemed a warning that the holidays would soon be over. Now we have no more school—no more fagging in Latin and Greek! Come, Edmund, why do you not join my shout of triumph? You look as grave as if you meditated undertaking all the cares of the nation!" he added, laughing, as he fixed his eyes upon the thoughtful countenance of his cousin.

"I have always been very happy at school," replied Edmund. "I like my schoolfellows, and we all loved our good tutor, so that leaving such friends is not altogether joy to me. Besides"—and he paused.

"Besides what?" rejoined Owen; "let us have it all out."

"Well, and besides," continued Edmund, "it seems to me rather a serious matter, to step out of boyhood into youth."

"Oh!" answered Owen, "I shall reckon myself quite a man now, I assure you."

"In what respect?" inquired Edmund, drily.

"In the first place, then, you know we shall not be plagued with any more lessons; nor shall we be forced to

obey our tutor's orders, or keep school rules, but may do as we please all day, and go where we choose. In short, we are independent now!"

"I should be sadly at a loss if I were independent yet," rejoined Edmund. "But are you not going into any business or profession, Owen?"

"Time enough for that, when I have had a year or two of relaxation, after studying so hard. I hope to get a little travelling before I buckle-to for riches."

"That will not do for me," said Edmund. "I must buckle-to at once, in good earnest, for a livelihood, and need not aspire to riches; moreover, I have heard my father and tutor both say that lads would not fancy work a hard-ship if they did not get a taste for dissipation between leaving school and fixing in life."

Owen opened his eyes wide at this speech, for the cousins had been educated, both at home and at school, under very different auspices.

"Pray, what shall you be then?" he asked.

"That is the very question that perplexes me," answered Edmund; "and fills my thoughts continually."

"Well, pray fix on something gentlemanly, and do not do anything that will spoil your hands."