

"Shame! shame! brother Robert; and this from you? Has your ducking in the salt brine changed your nature—deprived you of all manly fortitude, and given you a woman's heart? I always felt proud of our relationship until now—if you go on with this puling and whining, I shall be tempted to drown you for my brother. But, no—that would be too much like the world I despise. I pity you for your irritable temper, and love you the better for your misfortunes."

"You speak of our mutual calamity as if I were the only sufferer."

"I speak the truth. You suffer—I am resigned to the will of God, and am as happy as the present circumstances will allow me to be—thankful that my life is spared, and that I still possess those inestimable treasures, youth and health; and while I continue to enjoy these, I will never complain. It is the loss of the sordid pelf that makes you so miserable. I verily believe you would rather have lost your life than your money."

Robert Redpath looked discomforted, and remained silent. He was not one to imagine he could possibly err—still less was he likely to own it.

"How ungraciously you listen to all my sage remarks," said Richard. "If I were to preach resignation to you for an hour, you would never remember one word of the text—so difficult is it for a proud man to overcome the evil spirit within him."

"It is one thing to preach—another to practice," said Robert, coldly. "Can your boasted philosophy fill that empty purse?"

"Regretful murmurs will never do it, at any rate. Fortune, like an ill-natured step-dame, has determined that I shall dine with Duke Humphrey today; and I, like a dutiful son, have been racking my brains for the last hour, to outwit her capricious ladyship. If I cannot make the land restore what the sea so unceremoniously took away, my name is not Richard Redpath."

"Have you formed any plan for the future?" said Robert, with an eager look.

A nod, and a bright smile, were the sole reply.

"Any thing feasible?"

"I hope so; but time only can determine that. But before I answer the host of questions, which I perceive, by a certain twinkle in your eye, you are preparing to put to me, will you allow me to ask a few in my turn? Why did you and I leave England?"

"We were precious fools!" groined forth Robert.

"We thought ourselves wise men," said Richard; "and I see no reason to alter our opinion; for, had things turned out as we expected, we

should have thought ourselves so still. This is human nature; and we are no wiser than our neighbours. Had our adventure proved prosperous, we should have applauded our own sagacity, and the world, always on the side of the fortunate, would have echoed the good opinion we had formed of ourselves. From the world we cannot reasonably expect any sympathy, for we have lost our all; and as she will not help us, we must boldly meet the difficulties that surround us, and dare to help ourselves."

"This unexpected calamity has paralysed exertion," said Robert. "I cannot work in this hot climate. I would rather die than toil like a slave."

"Then you must starve. Adopt my plans, however, and you will not be compelled to do either."

"What are they? Why do you keep me in suspense?" said Robert, pettishly.

"Have patience for half an hour—until then adieu; I have business in the town, and reluctantly leave you to your own sad thoughts."

"Incorrigible triller!" muttered Robert, looking moodily after him. "When you learn wisdom I shall grow rich."

He started up from the bench he occupied, and strode gloomily through the room, bitterly cursing his evil destiny, which had thus unexpectedly thrown him upon his own resources—and again and again recurring to the dismal scene of the wreck, and the disasters which had befallen them.

The history of these brothers may be condensed into a few words. They were the sons of a respectable merchant in London, who died without realising the fortune which he had toiled through a long life to obtain. Many unexpected disappointments and misfortunes had occurred, to blast the hopes of the anxious parent. He had given his sons a good education—his ardent desire was to leave them independent gentlemen; but on his death-bed, the sum of fifteen hundred pounds in hard cash, was all that he had been able to save from the wreck of his property, to divide between them. With this small capital, he advised them to emigrate to a more genial climate, and endeavour, by patience and industry, to acquire that competency which he had failed to obtain for them.

The lads pondered long over their father's injunction, and, after forming and abandoning various schemes, they at length agreed to go to the West Indies, and embark their property in some mercantile speculation then afloat. Full of sanguine expectations, they sailed for the beautiful islands of the west, hoping speedily to make a large fortune out of their scanty means. But