

his lines to his half-sister Jane, after speaking in his usual way about their father:—

“ Oh how we loved him, love him now,
Our noble father ! By his side
My mother, who my faults would chide ;
With cares domestic on her brow,
More wayward, and of sterner mood,
But ever provident and good ;
Hating all shams, and looking through
The Beautiful, to find the True.”

I have spoken of his father and mother, because surely the one question to be asked concerning any man who is considered worth describing should be, “ What was the real heart of the man, what the real fibre of which he was made ? ” And the child is to an awfully absolute extent what his parents were. The great heart and open hand of Joe Howe ; that milk of human kindness in him which no opposition could permanently sour ; his poetic nature, which if it inclined him to be visionary at times, was yet at the bottom of his statesmanship ; his reverence for the past ; and many other of his best qualities he inherited from his father. His methodical habits, and his shrewd native common-sense came from his mother. His inexhaustible humour and sound physical constitution he owed to the blending in him of the qualities of both.

Old Mr. Howe was King’s Printer, and Postmaster-General of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Prince Edward’s Island, New Brunswick, and the Bermudas. He resigned his offices in favour of his eldest son, and to him Joe, when thirteen years of age was entrusted, that he might be made a printer, and fitted perhaps for some snug berth in connection with the Post Office. Such a respectable position he was sure of, for in those days offices continued in families as streams run in the channels they have once scooped out for themselves. But the prospect of being Postmaster of the Bermudas, or even of Prince Edward’s Island, had no charms for him. The boy was made of quite different mettle. True, there was nothing

to fire his ambition in the start that was given him. He began at the lowest rung in the ladder, learned his trade from the bottom upwards, sweeping out the office, delivering the *Gazette*, and doing all the multitudinous errands and jobs of printer’s boy before he attained to the dignity of setting up type and working as a mechanic. “ So, you’re the devil,” said the Judge to him on one occasion when the boy was called on as a witness. “ Yes sir, in the office, but not in the Court House,” he at once answered, with a look and gesture that threw the name back on his lordship to the great amusement of all present. He had his wits about him and was seldom caught napping as boy or man.

His education went on while he learned his trade. The study of books, talks in the long evenings with his father, and intimate loving communion with nature, all contributed to build up his inner man. While he read everything he could get hold of, the Bible and Shakespeare were his great teachers. He knew these thoroughly, and as his memory was like sticking-plaster he often astonished people in after days with his knowledge. To his thorough acquaintance with them, he owed that pure well of English undefiled he was master of, and which streamed with equal readiness from his lips and his pen. His taste was formed on English classics not on dime novels. His knowledge, not only of the great highways of English literature, but of its nooks, corners, and by-ways, was singularly thorough. It could easily be seen in his speeches in after years that his knowledge was not of the kind that is got up for the occasion. It exuded from him without effort, and gave a charm to his ordinary conversation. Though living in the city during his teens, he spent as much of his time at home as he possibly could. He loved the woods, and as he seldom got away from work, he often spent Sundays in them in preference to attending the terribly long-drawn-out Sandemanian ser-