



THE POOR MAN'S BOOK.

BY GEORGE W. RUSGAY.

The winds have blown the smoke away—
Cold is the forge and hushed the mill;
The "toil-worn cotta" rests to-day—
Traffic is mute and labor still.

The unharnessed horse feeds on the green,
The laboring ox rests in the shade;
A holy calm pervades the scene;
And beauty smiles from hill and glade.

The modest flowers that light the ead,
Like drops of sunshine from the sky,
Bow their sweet heads and worship God,
And send their fragrant praise on high.

Heath his fig-tree and his vine,
Beside the lowly cottage door;
The poor man reads the precious line
Of promise to the humble poor.

The Bible is the poor man's law,
A blessed boon to mortals given;
A ladder such as Jacob saw,
With angels coming down from Heaven.

—New-York Tribune.

UNCLE JOHN.

OF THE ROUGH ROAD TO RICHES.

and affords, even in these degenerate days of
passerable examples of the class called "lucky"
that is to say, men who have begun life with
school education and a shilling, and are now
in wealth and station. Perhaps it is hardly
appate to good luck what may be mainly owing

to industry, frugality, patience, and perseverance. But after all, one may starve with all these virtues, in spite of all that copy-book maxims may say to the contrary. There is good luck in success, whatever may have been the qualities by which that good luck has been seized at the right moment and turned to good account. Industry, frugality, patience, and perseverance, form a perfect locomotive—good luck is the engine-driver who turns the handle and sets them in motion at the right moment.

Men who have been the "architects of their own fortunes," never admit that good luck has had anything to do with their prosperity. They are pardonably vain at their own success makes them guilty of a species of ingratitude to Providence. Listen to one of these old gentlemen holding forth to his hopeful son or nephew on his, the said old gentleman's, past life; on his early poverty, his self-denial, his hard work, and his subsequent reward; and the burden of his discourse is ever the same:

"Alone I did it, boy!"

Should the listener at any point be tempted rashly to exclaim "how lucky!" the old gentleman will turn on him with a severe frown and say:

"Luck, sir; non-sense. There's no such thing as luck. Live on a crust, sir; that's the only way for a man to get on in the world."

The old gentleman quite forgets that if his first venture in the *Chutnee* East Indianian had been a failure, or his first dabble in the stocks had not been followed by the battle of Leipzig; or his senior partner, who had nine-tenths of the profits of the business, had not departed this life suddenly in an apoplectic fit, he would have held a very different position in the world, and probably have been now a denizen of the second floor over his counting-house in the city, instead of a resident in Hyde Park Gardens.

An excellent specimen of this class of old gentlemen is "Uncle John." The obscurity of his early days is so great that even he himself finds it difficult to penetrate it. That he had a father and a mother is incontestable; but these worthy people seem to have left this world of us at so early a period of Uncle John's existence that, for all practical purposes, he might as well have been without them. His first juvenile recollections are connected with yellow stockings, leather shorts, a cutaway coat with a tin badge on it, and a little round woolen

cap with a tuft in the middle of it, resting on a head formed by nature to accommodate a cap of double its dimensions. In a word, Uncle John was a charity-boy.

It must not be imagined that the above fact has ever been communicated by Uncle John himself; for the worthy man is weak enough to be ashamed of it, though he will discourse of his early privations in a mystical manner, with the design apparently of inducing you to regard him rather as a counterpart of Louis Phillipe in his days of early exile, than as a common place, though equally interesting (to a right-thinking mind) young gentleman in yellow stockings. It is a fact, however, as indisputable as that Uncle John is now worth thirty or forty thousand pounds.

Emerging from the charity school, and exchanging the leather shorts and yellow stockings for corduroys and grey worsted socks, Uncle John obtained the appointment of office-boy to a Temple attorney. His duties were trifling—sweeping the office and mending writing, cleaning boots, and copying declarations. His emoluments were not large—seven shillings a week and "find himself," which was less difficult, poor boy, than to find anything for himself. But Uncle John persevered and was not disheartened. He lived literally on a crust, and regulated himself only with the savory smells issuing from the cook's-shop, which was not only an economical luxury, but had the advantage of affording a stimulus to the imagination. He actually saved two shillings a week out of his salary, not to mention an occasional donation of a shilling on high days and holidays from his master.

Uncle John was never idle. When he had nothing to do for his master, which was rarely the case, he used to take a pen and any loose piece of paper or parchment, and'de or, or imitate, the lawyer's engraving hand—known as court hand—till he became a good penman in this cramped style of writing. Having accomplished this object, Uncle John determined to "better himself" by getting a situation as copying clerk instead of office boy. He succeeded in his attempts, and was installed in another attorney's office as engraving clerk at twelve shillings a week—a salary which appeared to him at the time enormous. But riches did not turn his head. The only increase which he made in his previous expenditure, was in wearing a rather cleaner shirt and discarded corduroys for some more genteel material. Uncle John was too wise and too self-denying to be seduced inside the cook's-shop yet.