

which at the time he thought would be indelible. He was the more disturbed on this point from having succeeded in gaining the affections of an amiable girl, and nearly determined to make the disclosure, but a fear of unpleasant consequences prevented him. He married—with his wife's little fortune, and with his own accumulations, he obtained a share in the house in which he was employed. In the early part of his residence in Hull, Frederick had been at times apprehensive of being recognised by commercial people he had formerly met in town; but the obscurity of his station probably protected him. Years had now passed, and such a circumstance was not probable.

Disaster always takes us by surprise: we watch for an enemy—he comes not till we have forgotten our danger. One morning in the streets of Hull, Rose encountered a shabbily dressed man, who, with surprise, hailed him in his own name. It was Ned West. Ten years had elapsed since Ned had given his purse to assist his heart-broken friend, a time sufficient to work a change in the appearance of the two cronies—and altered they were. Frederick appeared the healthy, noble looking gentleman—West, once handsome and gallily attired, was now clothed in threadbare, darned garments, and bearing altogether the appearance which is usually called shabby genteel; his countenance, pale, though bloated, betokened at once, excess and want—his manner was still gay, even to recklessness, which was increased by the nonchalant cock of a sorry apology for a hat. With a flushed face, and embarrassed manner, Frederick gave him his hand.

"Hush—for mercy's sake," said he. The other looked steadily at him.

"I see how it is, Fred! you are too much the man I take you for to shun me for my seedy looks—never fear me, man—I am heartily glad to see that fortune has dealt better with you than she has with me, but no doubt you deserve all the difference in her regard. I was sure that you would pick yourself up again;—'you've taken arms against a sea of evils, and by opposing ended them'—the quotation doesn't apply very well, though, does it?"

Rose smiled in spite of himself. "The same wild fellow still, I see—but excuse me now, and let me entreat, mention not my name here—do me the favour to accept this and supply yourself instantly with better apparel: it cuts me to the heart to see you in such a plight—meet me this evening at the inn at the corner of this street, and I will say more with you." Good heavens! thought Rose, as he left his old companion, am I yet to be punished for my folly! my character at the mercy of this unfortunate fellow!

Shuddering at the bare possibility of the one blot in his life being discovered by his valued friends, and one more valued still, he passed the day in a perturbation of spirit he had not experienced since his misfortune; but at the same time determined to repay the kindness of the unlucky Ned to the utmost of his power: according to his appointment, he repaired to the inn and found West, who had availed himself of the unexpected help afforded him, to entirely alter his exterior, and was now with a pipe in his mouth, and a tumbler of brandy and water before him evidently making himself comfortable. The two friends again presented a strange contrast, though different to that of the morning. Rose, pale and exhausted, the other looking as if he had never known sorrow, or had "fairly driven it away."

Frederick rallied a little at Ned's improved appearance and jovial greeting—"I am pleased Ned, to see you looking more like yourself," said he kindly.

"Yes, Fred, thanks to you. Richard's himself again; good clothes and good quarters have been strange things to me lately."

"At your tricks of quotation still," said Rose.

"My dear friend, had you murdered Shakespeare as often as I, he would haunt you, depend upon it."

"Has it come to that?" returned the other. "But tell me, West, what has reduced you to this condition? I should not have thought to have seen you compelled to adopt the miserable life of a strolling player."

"Ah, Fred, there 'you have me on the hip.' My old dad was pretty warm, and used to make me a good allowance, which you know went pretty freely. He had been a wild dog in his day, and held it as a maxim, that a young man should not be shackled while sowing his wild oats. Unfortunately he went off the books before I had completed that part of my education, and left me in possession of a handsome sum, which I scattered in as little time as it could be done decently and according to the most approved methods. Wine, cards, horse-flesh, &c. I sometimes wonder, now it is gone, how I could have been such a block-head; however, so it was, and here I am. To make a short story of it, I took to the stage, partly from fancy, partly from necessity, and 'tis but fair to say that, bad as it is, I might have cut a respectable figure but for being too much inclined to the 'inordinate cup.'"

Rose was distressed, not only at the destitute situation of his friend, but the levity with which he spoke of his indiscretion. There is risk in attempting what I had intended, thought he; but surely want and degradation have shown him the