

imagined that this neglected child could be the son of the beautiful Elinor Wildegrave, and heir to the richest commoner in England. But the boy resembles my own dear Godfrey, and for his poor mother's sake, I will rescue him from the curse—curse, said I?—the barbarous indifference of such a father!”

Then, informing the bare footed urchin, that he was his uncle, Algernon, and that he should come and live with him, and have plenty to eat and drink, pretty clothes to wear, a pony to ride upon, and a sweet little fellow of his own age to play with, he lifted the delighted child before him on his horse, (who made no scruple of revealing to his new companion, the secrets of the prison house,) and was about to proceed to the Hall.

“The Squire does not live at the Hall,” said the boy, pulling at the rein, in order to give the horse another direction. “Oh, no, he is too poor! (and here he laughed outright,) to live there!”

“What do you mean, Anthony? And why do you call Mr. Hurdlestone the Squire, instead of papa?”

“He never tells me to,” said the boy. “He never calls me son, or even Anthony, or speaks to me as papas and fathers speak to their little boys; but he calls me chit, and brat, and rude noisy fellow, and get away you little wretch! and, don't come here to annoy me! and how can I call him dear father, or papa, when he treats me as if I did not belong to him.”

“My dear child, I much fear that you do not love your father!”

“How can I love him, when he does not love me? If he were kind to me, I would love him very much, for I have nothing in the world to love but poor old kind Shock, and he's half starved; but he does love me, and I give him all I can spare from my meals, and that's little enough. I often wish for more, for poor Shock's sake, for they say he was mamma's dog;” and Ruth Candler told me, that when mamma died, he used to go every day, for months, and lie upon her grave. Now, was not that kind of Shock? I wish the Squire would love me half as much as Shock loved my poor mother, and I would not mind being starved, and going about the streets without shoes.”

Had Anthony looked up at that moment into his uncle's face, he would have seen the tears streaming down his cheeks. He pressed the poor child silently against him as they rode on.

“We will take Shock with us, Anthony, and he shall have plenty to eat as well as you.”

“Oh, dear uncle! how we shall love you—both Shock and I.”

“But tell me, Anthony, has your father really left the Hall?”

“Oh! yes—long, long ago—as far back as I

can remember. It is the first thing I can remember since I awoke in this world and found myself alive—the removing to old Pike's cottage. The Squire said that he was too poor to live at the Hall, and there was plenty of room in the gardener's cottage for us there; and there we have lived ever since. See, uncle, we are now coming to it.”

Algernon looked up, and saw that they had entered a long narrow avenue of lofty trees, which he well recollected led to the back entrance to the extensive gardens, at the further extremity of which stood a small cottage, once neat and comfortable, where he had often played with his brother and Grenard Pike, in their young days. The place had fallen into decay; the walls of the building in many places had given way, and the broken windows were filled with pieces of board, which, if they kept out the wind and rain, dimly diminished the small portion of light which found its way through the dusty panes.

Fastening his horse to the broken paling, Algernon proceeded to knock at the door.

“Who's there?” growled a deep voice from within.

“A person who wishes to speak with Mr. Hurdlestone.”

“He's not at home,” responded the former growl, without unclosing the door.

“That's Grenard Pike?” whispered the boy; “you may depend upon it the Squire's not far off.”

“If you please, Mr. Pike, I must wait until he returns,” said Algernon, unclosing the door and walking into the house. “I ought, I think, to be no stranger here.”

A small spare man with sharp features, a deep red face, and thin lank black hair, drew back from the entrance, as Algernon thus unceremoniously obtained admittance, and discovered his partner in penury seated at an old oak table, making arithmetical calculations upon a bit of broken slate.

The tall stately figure of Mark Hurdlestone was at this period unbent by years, and a flush of anger suffused his face at being thus detected in sanctioning an untruth, until his quick eye recognized his brother in the intruder. It was not in the nature of the miser to receive Algernon as a welcome visitor. He was continually haunted by the recollection of the ten thousand pounds that remorse had extorted from him, in the evil hour when death stared him in the face, and the thought of future punishment, for a brief season, triumphed over the madness of his besetting sin. He could not forgive Algernon for this dreadful sacrifice, and but for very shame would have demanded the money from him again, promising to restore it at his death.

“Well, brother, what business brings you here?”

“I came to ask of you a favour,” said Algernon, taking a seat, and still holding the little Anthony by