

pour salaries into the pockets of Alfred Magnus Bulkley, Esquire. How long the phenomenon might have lasted, had this most excellent gentleman lived any length of time after entering into the possession of place number five, no one can tell. To the mortification of all who knew him, he died just as place number six began to be prepared for his acceptance. Mankind often grumble when they see an individual pampered in this manner; but mankind never grumbled in seeing place after place given to Alfred Magnus Bulkley, Esquire. It was a positive pleasure to them when the object of their solicitude rose a step to his undeserved honors. There were many younger and less portentous persons, of excellent ability and great industry, who were of course better fitted than he for almost any literary or official duty that could be mentioned, and who would have been glad to give their whole time and pains to any honorable avocation; but all these were usually passed over in favor of a man of whose qualifications no positive proof existed, and who was only supposed to be great. It was sometimes asked, indeed, what has Alfred Magnus Bulkley, Esquire, done to entitle him to take so high a place in the literary world?—on what title-page of distinction do we find his name?—what have we to say to posterity, in justification of our having thrust so much honor upon this man? The answer to these queries was usually, “Ay, what has Alfred Magnus Bulkley, Esquire, done?—where are his title-pages?—what is posterity to say to it?” No one could pretend to clear the mystery of his elevation; nor could any one have ventured publicly to challenge a reputation in which the public was so much interested. Mankind appeared to be fascinated by this man while he lived. He seemed to possess the gipsy art of glamoury, or something equivalent to it, whereby to mystify his fellow-creatures. In fact, the fault did not lie with himself. He was scarcely conscious, we verily believe, of the strange influence he exercised. He was simply a man of gentlemanly station and deportment, possessed of respectable abilities and information, and incapable of doing anything unfavorable to his own reputation. The effect of this moderately positive, but splendidly negative character, in the midst of the follies, eccentricities, and mean circumstances of more highly endowed men, was to give him the eminence he attained. There was nothing in the case that was not perfectly natural, or that may not occur again. It is not until the world has got the monuments of such men erected, that it awakens from their magnetic sleep into which their dullness and decency have thrown it.

A rural friend, with whom we have often conversed respecting these pets of society, has supplied us, in the following terms with an account of another and humbler individual of the species, whose history had come prominently before his notice:—“Robert Fotheringham, the son of a small farmer in Forfashire (so the narrative proceeds), was a harmless, honest, inoffensive creature, but without the smallest

pretensions to any other merit, being alike destitute of talent and activity. It was his father's intention to bring him up to the same business which he himself followed; but, simple as that business is, Robert was found, on trial, unequal to it. It was soon evident that he never would be able to conduct it with even decent skill. In truth, it appeared he had no genius whatever for farming. He had neither the activity, nor the carefulness, nor the perseverance, nor, I may add, the judgment, necessary to afford any chance of success in that profession.

The father was greatly distressed on making this discovery, and did not know what to do with his son, who was now eighteen years of age, and it was full time he should be doing something. The position of matters, in short, as regarded Robert, was an uneasy one, although he felt none of it himself. But he was not lost sight of. His good genius, or rather the good genius of his class, was at hand to assist him. His father's landlord, who was a man of extensive property, called one day on the farmer, and asked him what he intended making of his son—whether he meant to make a farmer of him. The father replied, he rather thought not. “To tell truth,” said the honest man, “I don't know very well what to make of him. He's not just so active or pushing as I would like him.”

“But he writes a good hand,” replied the landlord, “and is not amiss at figures, I believe.” “Oh, yes,” said the honest farmer, “he does, certainly.” “And he's a pleasant, good-tempered, honest lad?” added the landlord. “I like the young man very much, and, to come to a point at once with you, Mr. Fotheringham, I have called on you to say, that I would be glad to engage him as a sort of under-factor, or overseer, to keep the farming accounts, and so forth, and look over my workmen.”

The old man was delighted with the proposal: it came just in the nick of time. Robert himself was neither delighted or otherwise with it, but he accepted it readily enough, and was next day regularly installed in his new appointment. The salary was not a great deal, indeed, but it was a pretty fair thing to begin with. Here, then, was the first instance in the case of Robert, illustrative of that kindness of nature towards creatures of this sort. He had made no exertions to obtain his present situation—he had never sought it—never gone an inch out of his way to obtain it. It was pitched into his hand.

With this employer Robert remained three years, during which time he by no means distinguished himself by activity, intelligence or ability; but his gentle and inoffensive disposition, won him the entire esteem of his master. At the end of that period mentioned, the landlord got into embarrassed circumstances, and was compelled to announce to Robert, and he did it with much regret, that he could no longer employ him. Robert took the intimation very coolly. He expressed neither surprise nor sorrow, nor, indeed, any