

the mouth, and meant to spend all my life with my hands in my pockets.

To make a long story short, at the end of twelve months, whereof every day of the last ten increased my hatred of our home surroundings, the dull strip of common before the door, the duck-pond, the grey horizon, and the twin ash-trees on which I had cut my name so often, I heard through a neighbour that an usher was required in a school at Ware. This was enough for me; while, of my family, who saw me leave with greater relief on their own account than hope on mine, only my mother felt or affected regret. With ten shillings in my pocket, her parting gift, and my scanty library of three volumes packed among my clothes on my back, I plodded the twelve miles to Ware, satisfied the learned Mr. D—— that I had had the small-pox, would sleep three in a bed, and knew more than he did; and the same day was duly engaged to teach in his classical seminary, in return for my board, lodging, washing, and nine guineas a year.

He had trailed a pike in the wars, and was an ignorant, but neither a cruel, nor, save in the pretence of knowledge, a dishonest man; it might be supposed, therefore, that, after the taste of idleness and dependence I had had, I should here find myself tolerably placed, and in the fair way of promotion. But I presently found that I had merely exchanged a desert for a prison, wherein I had not only the shepherding of the boys to do, both by night and day, which in a short time grew inconceivably irksome, so that I had to choose whether I would be tyrant or slave; but also the main weight of teaching, and there no choice at all but to be a drudge. And this without any alleviation from week's end to week's end, either at meals or at any other time! for my employer's wife had high notions, and must keep a separate house, though next door, and with communications; sitting down with us only on Sundays, and then at dinner, when woe betide