

friends with a view to obtain employment for him in some foreign embassy, fortunately without success. It was not long before he had reason to congratulate himself on the failure, and to discover that in an age and country of so practical a character as this, the knowledge of facts and habits of business to be acquired in commercial pursuits, by a mind endowed with faculties of a high order, are far more likely to lead to station and power than any familiarity with foreign courts or diplomatic intrigue. Had his wishes been fulfilled, and his career consequently changed, he might, and probably would have grown grey in the pleasant but somewhat idle occupation of a *chargé d'affaires* at some petty foreign court, without ever attaining one-tenth part of the reputation or power, to which his mercantile education and information, gathered in the busy marts of British industry, speedily elevated him.

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Whether, as yet, any aspirations of this character had crossed his thoughts or not, the young merchant, at all events, continued from this time to apply himself unremittingly to the study of his business, which his natural quickness of comprehension and tact very soon enabled him to master. And after a probation of a year and a half passed in London, he was once more sent out to St. Petersburg in the spring of 1821, entrusted with a share in the conduct, and of course in the profits, of the business.

The journey was performed leisurely by the