

Reuben, we were quite as happy then as we are now. Ye have still a very excellent business, and a fortune far beyond anything that you and I could ever expect to have when we cam' together. You have health and I have mine, and our two bairnies are growing up to be a comfort to us baith. They will ne'er feel the loss of the cotton-mill, and you and I ne'er kened a guid o' it. Wherefore, then, should ye grieve. Ye ought rather to be thankful that the name o' your family that is ta'en frae ye. I have nae doubt, that, although we foolish and short-sighted mortals cannot see, this visitation will be for the guide o' all. It is better that ye should lose the mill than forget your Maker; and forgie me for saying it, but I feared it was setting your mind upon the things o' this world, to a degree which did not become the faither o' a Christian family. Therefore, let me intreat you to say, 'His will be done,' and to believe that this 'has fallen upon you for the best.—The loss is not so great but that, if times keep on, we may soon overcome it.'

He had often experienced the value of my wife, and admired her meek, patient spirit, and affectionate heart; but I never, until Priscilla came upon me, knew her real worth. She enabled me to begin the world; ay, Sir, and this far she has guided me through it.—She was better than twelve years older than I—but what of that? She looked as young at forty as ever I saw another woman do at twenty; and now, when she has been my wife for thirty years, I hardly ken her aulder. A staid lassie, under such circumstances, might have wrung her hands and upbraided me for allowing the supper and the dance; but Priscilla strove only to comfort me, to turn my mind with fortitude, and to turn every accident to my eternal advantage. I had loved and esteemed her, but I now repented her.

He sat and I listened to her, and looked in her face for the space of ten minutes without speaking a word; and, at last, fairly overpowered wi' her gentleness and her tenderness, I rose and took her hand, 'Priscilla,' I said, 'for your sake dear, I will think no more about the matter. The mill is destroyed, but, as you say, we may overcome the loss, and I shall try.'

Enough I have as keen feelings as any body—was not a person to sit down long, and

croon and shake my head over misfortunes that couldna be helped. I might be driven back from an object, and defeated in accomplishing it; but it would be necessary to take my life before I could be made to relinquish my attempts, or to conquer me. Perseverance, and a restless, ambitious spirit of enterprise, spurred me on.

I endeavoured to extend my business more widely than ever; and as I had sometimes had losses with houses on the Continent, I resolved to visit France, and Germany, and other places, myself, and see in what situation the land lay. I did so; and in Holland and Switzerland in particular. I entered into what proved some very profitable speculations. Now, Sir, it is my conviction, that where there is no speculation, there can be no luck. As well might a man with his hands in his pockets expect a guinea to drop into them. People who, perhaps, have been born with a silver spoon in their mouths, or had enough to purchase them a hot joint every day, trust upon them by accident, will tell you, in speaking of any particular subject—'Oh, I will hae nothing to do with it; it is only a speculation.' Now, Sir, but for some speculation that had been entered into before they were, the one would neither have had the silver spoon in his teeth, nor the other the hot joint. Without speculation, commerce could not exist. In the community where its spirit is not felt, they must be dull as horses in a ring; moving round and round as regularly and as monotonously as the wheels of a machine, to procure the every-day bread and cheese of existence. I have been a speculator all my life—I am a speculator still. Neither you nor I have time for me to enter into the particulars of thirty-years' enterprise. It is true I have lost by some, but in more I have been successful, or until this day I would been a hand-loom weaver in this my native town of Galashiels.

But, Sir, within three years I had built another mill. I commenced manufacturer, and prospered, and, in a short time, I began the business of printer also. You understand me—it is a calico-printer I mean, not a book or newspaper printer; for if, in a town in Lancashire, you ask for a printer, nobody would think of shewing you to a consumer of ink and paper.

Our two daughters had been educated at a boarding-school in Yorkshire; but they