

hardships, fatigues, and privations which the youthful wanderer underwent on his journey furnish ample food for reflection. How different was Oliver from the ordinary child of ten years, who as a rule is unwilling to be disengaged from the mother's apron string! Oliver may have been clinging to some such imaginary string, as it is reasonable to suppose that his thoughts were with her for whose sake he had quit the service of his late master ; nor can it be doubted that such visionary things are often sources of much consolation but it does not come within the domain of probability that they should be of much service during a seventy mile walk in winter time. That Oliver did not die before he reached his destination cannot be ascribed to the fact that he was sustained by abundance of meat and drink ; of these he had none save what he owed to the charity of those he met, and he was too timid and too unsophisticated to make a successful beggar : it must therefore be attributed to his extraordinary will power and uncommon force of character.

Oliver's early experiences in the great English Metropolis were at once trying and perilous ; however he remains unchanged and never in any circumstance does he fail to demonstrate the same noble nature and to vindicate his claim to our unmitigated admiration. How little he was influenced by his association with Fagin and Co. is shown by the fact that he heroically resolved to alarm the house to which he was brought by robbers in order to assist in executing their nefarious schemes. As a teacher in the rudiments of vagabondism Fagin's previous efforts had been attended with the fullest measure of success ; one of his pupils, Artful Dodger, was indisputably the most accomplished pick-pocket and the most brazen-faced, all-round scoundrel in London ; yet all his various plans for making a thief of Oliver failed signally. On the evidence of the Jew himself, as gleaned from the following scrap of conversation between him and one of his associates, Oliver's innate repugnance to the occupation was proof against all enticements.

“ ‘ Why not have kept him here amongst the rest and make a sneaking, snivelling pick-pocket of him at once ? ’ demanded Monks.

‘ I saw it was not easy to train him to the business,’ re-