

show with perfect accuracy and minuteness, the day, hour, minute, and second, on which I made my first appearance in this vale of tears, and also that I am the eldest son of my papa and mamma. Papa was then a Captain in the 2nd Battalion of Mounted Shavers of the Secunderabad Irregular Cavalry Brigade.

It is not without considerable, natural diffidence that I thus delicately allude to my pedigree; and I certainly should have abstained from doing so, were it not for the circumstance that literary etiquette, not only sanctions but demands compliance with a custom which is religiously observed in all the prefatory chapters of the greater novels.

Reader! with this explanation, I do trust we understand each other.

The mixed communities whose destinies are linked with those of our great Indian dependency, may be embraced within two grand divisions, viz., *official* and *non-official*.

1st. The *natives proper* of the country, *i. e.*, Hindoos, Mahomedans, Parsees, &c.

2nd. *Eurasians* (or Indo-Europeans or *half-castes*, *i. e.*, all persons of mixed parentage). These are further classified according to the nationality of the father; hence the distinctive terms, *Indo-Briton*, *Indo-Portuguese*, &c.

3rd. *Anglo-Indians*, *i. e.*, Indian born persons of pure European extraction, their parents being natives of the British Islands.

To the latter class of that great community, I have the honour to belong—hence my proficiency in the vernacular languages of the Madras Presidency. Still, notwithstanding my acknowledged talents as an eastern linguist, I am bound in candour to inform the reader, that in “boyhood’s days” I had the bad, or rather the good fortune, to be a “*stupid*.” This appellation, however, had reference only to *mathematics*, *history*, and the *classics*. In other respects, I flatter myself I was not No. 2 to any young gentleman who had the honor of my acquaintance!

The reader will perceive from the sequel that it is of some importance that I should at once, and for all, make a “clean breast”—a full confession—of the depreciatory quality which characterized my University career. It is, however, equally important that I should trouble him with one or two explanatory remarks in reference to the successful influence which that scholastic trait has exercised in my favor.

In the *first* place, I was “*plucked*” at my first examination for a direct commission. [By the way, I have an innate aversion to the word “*pluck*”—not that the unpretentious monosyllable is inelegant in expression; nor that it is in any way repulsive, especially when used on the day preceeding Christmas; but, that its application to me is significant of a well known term of reproach. Reader, please pardon me if I refrain from being more explicit.]

In the *second* place the governor—I mean, my papa—was sufficiently sensible and considerate not to expect *much* from his “*darling Ramsawmy!*”

In the *third* place, the domestic position which I held in the gov