

liberty do for you ! will it gain you a better situation, establish your claims to gentility, or fill your purse ? Think of these things, Geoffrey, and instead of spending your leisure hours in writing verses to some imaginary Dulcinea, give your whole mind to the study of that profession which your uncle has bestowed upon you, which is a fortune in itself. Prove the independence of your mind by storing it with knowledge, which will be able to raise you above dependence ; wear the short emphatic sentence of Lord Bacon, like an amulet, round your heart ; " Knowledge is power ! "

I was struck speechless with the truth of his argument, and, for the first time in my life, saw the necessity of non-resistance in those who are completely dependent on the empire of another. I shook Harrison heartily by the hand, and promised to attend to his advice—nor was it lost upon me. From that hour my prospects brightened, and I took so deep an interest in my legal studies that I had no longer leisure to brood over my wrongs. My uncle's tyranny, and my cousin's insolence, appeared beneath my notice, and were regarded with indifference and contempt. My mind had taken an estimate of its own powers. The energetic spirit which had been crushed beneath the withering influence of neglect, asserted its dignity, and I was astonished at my mental qualifications, and ashamed of having suffered them so long to remain inactive. Harrison had given me a motive for exertion, and my tasks ceased to be distasteful or laborious. My mind recovered a healthful tone, my spirits rose in proportion, and every day as it brought me nearer to the termination of my labours, increased my desire of improvement, while my industry not only surprised, but drew forth the commendations of my master. As I rose in his favour, the bitter hatred I had cherished towards him was softened, and in the conscientious discharge of my duty, I learned to consider his interest as my own.

There is a period in every young man's first outset in life which gives a colouring to his future destiny. It is the time for action, for mental exertion and moral improvement, and the manner in which it is applied or neglected, will decide his character, or leave him weak and vacillating all the days of his life. If this precious portion of existence is wasted, time gets the start of us, and no after exertion enables us to overtake him in his flight. This important period was mine, and I lost no opportunity of turning it to the best advantage. I worked early and late for my uncle, for I had learned to consider, and with truth, that in serving him faithfully I was befriending myself. During the hours allotted to the office, I had no leisure on which I could seize, to store my mind with useful and polite literature, but as I was seldom admitted into my uncle's drawing-room, or allowed to mingle with his evening parties, I devoted those hours

which would otherwise have hung heavily on my hands, in the privacy of my own chamber, to the cultivation of the *Belles Lettres*, and the moments thus redeemed were among the happiest of my life. My solitary and companionless youth had deeply tinctured my mind with romance. I pictured to myself a paradise in that world from which I was excluded, and fancied myself an illustrious actor in imaginary scenes of greatness which bore no analogy to the cold, cheerless realities of life. I was a dreamer of wild dreams, and suffered my enthusiastic feelings to transport me beyond the regions of probability. My love for poetry and music was a passion ; I played upon the flute by ear, and often dissipated my melancholy thoughts, by breathing them into the instrument. Through this medium Harrison became an adept at discovering the state of my feelings—my flute told tales, he used to say ; it spoke too plainly the language of my heart—yet from him, I had no concealments. He was my friend and bosom counsellor, in whom I reposed the most unreserved confidence—nor did he ever betray the sacred trust ; yet there was a mystery about George, which I could not fathom. He was a gentleman, in education, appearance, and manners, and possessed those high and honourable feelings, which are inseparable from those who really deserve that appellation—but he never spoke of his family. He never alluded to the events of his past life, or to the scenes in which his childhood had been spent. He talked of sorrow, and of chastisements in the school of adversity, in general terms, but he never had revealed to me the cause of these trials, or why he was reduced to move in a sphere so far below the station which he ought to have filled in society. I was half inclined to quarrel with him for so pertinaciously concealing from me circumstances in which I was fully prepared to sympathize. A thousand times I was on the point of remonstrating with him on this undue reserve, but a feeling of delicacy restrained me—what right had I to pry into his secrets ? My impertinent curiosity might re-open wounds that time had closed ; yet I must confess that I had a burning desire to know the history of his past life. But for many months my wishes remained ungratified. Whilst I continued to pursue my studies with ardour, I felt less inclination to mingle with the world, or to accept the pressing invitations of several of our clerks, to accompany them to places of public resort and amusement. I might have found many opportunities of evading the vigilance of my uncle, and yielding to their earnest solicitations, but I was too proud to expose the meanness of my wealthy relative, by confessing that mine was an empty purse. As I could not appear as a gentleman, I determined not to appear at all, and these resolutions were strengthened by the counsel of Harrison.

"Wait patiently, Geoffrey," he would say, "and