

where he had laid it, it was very white and resolute—every trace of indecision had vanished. Mr. Frost felt as he furtively examined it, that the young man had determined to refuse the hand of the heiress, Harriet Percy, and though he secretly applauded the determination he trembled for the result. The elder Sinclair's mind had been a 'sealed book' to him always, and he now feared that the first broken seal would disclose an angry parent, and a disinherited son.

Guy wrote to his father that night, and declined forever all alliance with Harriet Percy. He informed his tutor that until he received an answer to his letter, he should remain in Liverpool; it might affect his contemplated tour very decisively.

The answer came at length; a very different one from what he had anticipated. It was very gentle and tender, and the disobedient son felt his heart throb with regretful relief,—regretful because so unmerited. In speaking of Harriet Percy he wrote, "I am sorry, my dear son, that you should have felt it necessary to refuse so decidedly the hand of the young girl I had selected for you—but since it is so, I will not urge you to reconsider the subject—I can only hope you had some urgent inducement for so doing. On my side of the question, I will say that I cannot accept your rejection of my word at this time. On your return home if you say you still adhere to your resolution, then I will accept it. But it can affect you in no other way than matrimonially. You are free to do just as you please—draw on me as often and as largely as you need—all that I have is yours. Why should you then imagine that for one act contrary to my wishes in twenty years, I could or would disinherit you? May such a thought never enter your heart again!"

The next morning Guy and his tutor were on the way to France.

(To be continued.)

POST OFFICE "MYSTERIES."

One of the most curious things connected with the Post Office (says a London journal) is the constant demand made upon the officials for the exercise of patience and ingenuity. No one would, beforehand, have expected such gross carelessness on the part of the public as is now known to be exhibited. The successive annual reports of the Postmaster-General show in how many different ways this carelessness makes itself felt. Sometimes there is inadvertency at the Post Office itself. For instance, on a particular day in 1861, five hundred bankers' parcels, containing bills, notes, drafts, and other kinds of monetary paper, were not forthcoming at the proper hour; the postman did not bring them, and Lombard street was in consternation. Messages and telegrams were despatched hither and thither without avail; when, lo! the five hun-

dred packets were found safely reposing in a basket, which had inadvertently been pushed under a table out of sight in one of the rooms at St. Martin's-le-Grand. This one peccadillo, however, is small compared with those which the public are every day perpetrating.

On one occasion a gentleman at Westmeath complained bitterly to the postal authorities that a letter containing notes and bills for £400 had not been delivered. After a world of trouble the letter was found safe in a drawer belonging to whom it had been really delivered.

An important letter having miscarried, a clerk was examined as to whether he had posted it; he solemnly averred he had, and honestly believed what he said; but happening to put his hand in his pocket while he was speaking there was the letter! A check for twelve pounds not forthcoming at the proper time, was found (after much anxiety and waste of time on the part of the postal authorities) to have been innocently sold among scraps of waste paper to a *papier-mache* manufacturer to make into tea-trays. A letter containing halves of two ten pound notes was dropped on its way to the Post Office and lost; but the finder, happening to be honest, transmitted it to the proper owner. Another letter, delivered at a music-shop, was heedlessly wrapped up by a lady in a roll and carried away, a fact which was not ascertained until the Post Office had been much worried and pestered about it.

Many letters, of which non-delivery was made matter for complaint, have been found peacefully lying in street-door letter-boxes. In one case, where the letter-box was out of order, fifteen letters, one as much as nine years old, were found between the box and the door. A bank agent sent his son to the post-office to receive a letter containing valuable enclosures; the boy did so; but father and son were wonderfully forgetful, seeing that the letter with enclosures valued at £1,500 found its way to school, and there remained unnoticed till the next holidays.

A letter containing negotiable bills for one thousand two hundred pounds was given to a boy to post; he transferred it to another boy, with a penny to buy a stamp; this second boy spent the penny in taffy, and tore up the letter to escape detection, the pieces of paper found in the field being the means of unveiling the young rogue. A money letter was sent from one part of Ireland to another, but being fastened with very soft wax, it stuck to a letter directed to Nova Scotia, and made a double voyage across the Atlantic before it reached the hands of the proper person.

Lord Chancellor Cranworth on one occasion complained to Sir Rowland (then Mr. Rowland) Hill that a letter of great importance had not reached him; he afterwards found it buried under a heap of papers on his own table. A £10 note was put into a letter placed beside it, each letter was put into the envelope intended for the other, and an honest postman-