

DONALD FAY;

OR, THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN IDLE MOMENT.

DONALD FAY, the hero of our tale of true life, had been, at the time of his marriage, sixteen years before the story opens, a thrifty young farmer on Bergen Hill; no one bade him to arrive at independence. His landlord was indulgent, and leased him his house, barn, and forty acres, at a rate that, with industry, he easily paid the first three years, and laid by something for a "rainy day." Sarah, his wife, was an excellent, frugal, and industrious partner, just such an one as a young farmer, in his condition, needed, a "help-meet" truly in every thing he did towards advancing the prosperity of his situation. She had presented him, also, with a little girl, a year after his marriage, and the interesting prattler, as it reached its third year, he felt united him closer to its fair mother, and was an additional spur to his industry. There were many ways by which Donald increased his profits, and turned all his labours to advantage, which are unknown to farmers living at a distance from a great city. His little farm was but three miles from New York, on the south side of Bergen Hill in Jersey, and an hourly ferry, at that time, gave him easy access to the market. Besides butter, eggs and poultry, which Sarah took to market twice a week, he, himself, hired and sent in a man with milk every morning to a large number of regular customers, the receipts from which were no small income at the year's end; besides, he found in the city, a ready cash market for his pork, veal and mutton, for his hay, corn and other produce. Thus Donald Fay was a thrifty farmer, and promised, one day, to be as rich a man as Henry Brevoort and others, who began the world in a small way, like him. Three years he had been thus prosperous, and as he was not intemperate, there seemed no prospect of any check being put to it, so long as he remained in health, and his wife proved so frugal. But Donald was covetous! The more money he made, the more he loved it; and at length he began to think he did not make it fast enough. He had calculated, and found that it would take him a good many years to get as rich as some of his neighbours; and he was ambitious to be rich! This was the period when lotteries—those curses which are paralleled only by distilleries, filled a large share of the public mind. Every body was talking of them, and every body felt tempted to leave the honest and laborious toil by which they lived, to arrive suddenly at

wealth by a lucky turn of the wheel of Fortune. The mania filled the land, and men became discontented with labour, and leaving their benches, their ploughs, their hammers and their anvils, flocked to the lottery-offices to win riches by a turn of the lottery director's hand. But Donald Fay had been too attentive to his farm, and the routine of his daily business, to pay much attention to the subject of lotteries; and if he ever spoke of them, it was without thinking of himself, or of improving his position in connection with them. But it chanced that one day he had sold off the mutton, veal, turkeys and geese he had brought to market, a little earlier than usual; when, instead of going directly home, as he should have done, he lingered about the market, idly looking at the other seller's stalls, and proudly, in his heart, comparing them with his own neat stand, clean bench and polished meat-hooks. But idleness is a dangerous indulgence; time accidentally gained, should be twice improved, instead of indolently spent. Five idle minutes after Donald had closed his stall, laid the foundation for years of future sorrow.

While he was carelessly lounging through the market, a lively young butcher who had often come out to his farm the year before, to buy of him sheep, and a beeve or two to kill for market, but who, having become intemperate, had, of late, so neglected his business, that he rarely now had money to purchase even a single lamb, came up and clapped him on the shoulder.

"Ah, Donald, my man, glad to see you! how do you come on out there to Bergen?"

"Oh, very well, James," said Donald, not feeling quite at ease in the society of his quondam friend, since he had taken to drinking.

"Very well, hey, Donald!" repeated Jim Talbot, with a slight sneer; "I don't call it very well to rise early and go to bed late, the year round, just to get together three or four hundred dollars to put in bank at the end o' the year!"

"I think, for a poor man like me, who am nothing but a small farmer, and a tenant at that, Jamie, I would do well to lay by four hundred dollars clear of the world each Christmas!"

"Hoit, man! You will always be a 'poor man,' as you say, and a tenant, too," said Jim, loudly; "you don't know what is for your interest. You want to be a rich man, Donald; now tell the truth."

"Yes, I would prefer to be independent,"