

face of all the hue and cry over the seeming success of some of these state menageries of ours, common-sense still laughs at them, though generally now with its hand over its mouth, and still maintains that the home training, under the supervision of a kind and judicious mother is the first step towards a successful school training. That training I had in the kindergarten round my mother's knee, and, you may call it prejudice if you like, the effects of that training within me have led me to frown upon every direct or indirect attempt to divorce the home influences when they are good, from the influences of school life. I know I am digressing; but then you have been told that I am an old man, and an old teacher besides, and consequently you must train yourself to bear with my weaknesses and your own infirmity of impatience. I have told you that I am accustomed to speak my mind freely when my experiences have been such as to enable me to form a correct opinion; and if any mind eccentricity or any strange co-relation of thought in my thinking-box leads me into what you or your impatience may call a digression, you must just turn over the leaf, my dear madam, and begin a new page. Indeed, as I must always have my say out, no matter what it is, it is just as well that we should come to some such agreement from the first.

Perhaps it would be well, while the reader and I are thus being introduced, that I should bring my narrative into closer quarters with these early memories of mine, though what good purpose is to be served by so doing is more than I can make out. Yet I know there is always a craving for details about our antecedents on the part of those who are being introduced to us, and as I have asked my readers to bear with me and my peculiarities, I must endeavour to enlist their forbearance by example as well as by precept—by doing as I would be done by. Therefore, it falls upon me to tell them *what I was* as well as *who I am*.

"But you have not told us who you are," I think I hear the editor saying, "and unless you make this plain in your first communication, I shall in all probability be flooded with letters asking for your name and address."

"And what will your answer be, Mr. Editor, if you please, should such a tidal wave of communications descend upon your sanctum?"