



"TO RAISE THE GENIUS AND TO MEND THE HEART."

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Written for the Canadian Garland.

—ROLAND UPTON.

Before commencing the following tale, I would premise that its general outlines are not strictly original, but in other respects it is entirely so. Roland Upton, the hero of the tale, was a young man by birth a gentleman, and by fortune placed beyond the thought of want or even desire, if such a thing can be; for his father died when he was at the age of twenty-one, leaving him his only child and sole heir of a property worth twenty thousand pounds a year. He had lost his mother when young. Soon after this he lost an uncle who left him a fortune only inferior to that of his father. Besides these advantages, Roland had received from his deceased parents a finished and splendid education, which, added to his natural genius and comprehensive mind, would alone have made him an object of human envy. He likewise had the advantage of uncommon comeliness of person, a sprightly wit, and a flowing vivacity of spirits. Such was the condition of our hero at the age of twenty-one. It was indeed enviable if any thing mortal could be so. Roland's father was a merchant formerly, though he had been some time retired from business.—For this employment the father had intended his son, but he had never been particularly nice in drawing his attention chiefly to it.—Young Roland, like many of his age and condition, did not think it worth his while to follow the occupation of his father; but determined, since fortune had been so lavish of her favors, to indulge in all the pleasure of the age, and to give unreined freedom to all the pleasure of the appetites. To spur him on to this determination, he lacked not many seeming friends, and jolly well dressed fellows.—With such friends his presence was ever crowded. Many young noblemen were likewise his comrades and flatterers, which circumstance added more than any thing else to the young man's vanity. Roland became giddy with his situation, and openly participated in all the fashionable vices of the day; vices which young noblemen and young gentlemen are allowed to follow, and for which other of

their inferior fellow creatures are despised and punished. However, it seems young men of education and fortune are privileged to indulge in such things, to show how much more worthless and insignificant they are than the rest of mankind; and what appears odd in this indulgence, is, that they should persevere in doing that from which they can receive no solid satisfaction or true enjoyment, and which ought, in truth, rather to debase them in their own eyes than fill them with pride.—Gambling and drinking to excess were the premature fruits of the instruction received by our young hero from his gay and dissolute companions. The great emporium of the world, London, could produce no luxury, no pleasure, no vice which he did not purchase and obtain, and enjoy in company with friends, glittering like butterflies on a sunny morning round the table of their spoil child. With no money in their own pockets, and with little but viciousness and dishonor in their hearts, they fed upon the dupe of their folly and vanity. Three short and ill spent years had not passed over the head of Roland Upton before he had seen himself in prison thrice for crimes, the punishment of which, through the influence of his money, and the names of some of his titled friends and comrades, he escaped; and lastly for debt, from which he only escaped as a poverty stricken and forsaken bankrupt. Thus, at the age of twenty-five, after having been worth hundreds of thousands of pounds, he saw himself a friendless beggar in the streets of London; where, not a twelve month before, he had ridden in his coach and six, in princely splendor, followed by liveried servants and footmen. O debasement of fortune, how great! and yet the change how insignificant! In this time this silly young man had had many offers of marriage, even with nobility, but he had refused them. He thought marriage would drag him from his pleasures and his companions, and justly judging they were only proposed for the sake of his fortune, he refused them. He judged others from himself, and thought there was no stability or goodness in men, but that they were all a mass