

to bear on him at this time. Religion was at as low an ebb as education in Cumberland when this century began. His father and sister were very unwilling to part with him, and his own affection for them and home was then and always very strong; but go he must. 'The world must be won, and he must begin. It is a marvel of preventing grace that the lad's life at Wigton did not ruin him utterly. The arrangement made by his step-mother was that he should sleep at his employer's, and get his meals at the public-house. There he quickly learned to gamble, playing for high stakes with ræen. At length his employer discovered his habits, and nailed down the window by which George was accustomed to let himself in after midnight. It was at five o'clock on the morning of the 24th of December that he found himself shut out. By performing feats of climbing worthy of a burglar, poor George got into his bedroom; and there he lay all through Christmas Day, quite still, but passing through a hurricane of remorse and shame. A new leaf was turned. He resolved never again to disgrace his father's name, nor grieve his honest heart. Although he was a stranger to vital religion, both in theory and practice, until long after this time, he had, he says, a distinct conviction of the efficacy of prayer; and it would seem that the cries of that night of agony were answered in his preservation thenceforward from the temptations of drink and play. He found lodgings in the house of Nanny Graves, a worthy, motherly woman, gave all his energies to business and self-improvement, and kept the wolf from the door of his dissipated master by finding money to meet the demands of travellers. A banker in this way got to know the lad's value, and begged his services for a few days. He sent him all the way to Dumfries on horse-back, with several hundreds of pounds in his pocket, to give to a certain cattle-dealer. Moore not only discharged his commission safely, but helped the dealer to drive his cattle home across the sands of the Solway.

In 1825, by which time he was eighteen, George Moore felt that Wigton could not hold him; only in London could he find room. His father resisted, but the son's will was iron. Yet his heart was tender enough. It was a pathetic parting. "The father græt and the son græt, one against the other. At last Nanny Graves could stand it no longer. 'What gars ye greet that way?' she said to John Moore; 'depend upon't yer son'll either be a great nowt or a great soomat!'" A bachelor uncle had given him £100, to be his when he attained his majority, and a hair-trunk adorned with brass nails, on the possession of which he entered at once. With this trunk, and with £30 in his pocket, he set forth in search