

and at once perceived the damage that had been done. The blame appeared to lie between me and the boy next the curtain on the other side; but my confusion soon pointed me out as the culprit, and my master angrily ordered me to come and have a dozen blows of the cane. I got up, staggering like a drunken man; I tried to speak to ask pardon, but fear had glued my tongue to my mouth; my knees trembled under me; a cold perspiration broke out on my face. The instrument of punishment was already raised over me, when I heard some one say—

“Do not punish him. It was my fault!”

“It was the boy on the other side of the curtain. He was at once called forward and received the dozen blows. My first impulse was to prevent this unjust punishment by confessing the truth; but I could not summon up courage, and when the first blow had been given I was ashamed to speak.

“When the flogging was over the boy passed near me with bleeding hands, and whispered to me with a smile that I shall never forget all my life—

“Do not meddle with the curtain again, youngster. The cane hurts.”

“I sank down in a fit of sobbing, and they had to send me out of the room.

“Since that day I have been disgusted with my cowardice, and have done all I can to overcome it. I hope I have not been altogether unsuccessful.”

“And do you know this generous fellow?” asked one of his guests. “Have you ever seen him again?”

“Never, unfortunately. He was not in my form, and left the school soon afterwards. Ah! God knows that I have often wished to meet with the gallant fellow who suffered so much for me, and that I would give years of my life to be able to shake hands with him at my table.”

At that moment a glass was held out towards Sir