

am in too great a hurry to stay," and he hastened off.

Another schoolboy I met, in answer to my enquiry if he knew any lumber merchants, answered, "Any amount; all over the street," and he was gone.

I was desperate, and went into the first office I came to, on the door of which I read: "Gates & Co'y," and asked a supercilious-looking lad if Mr. Gates was in?

Mr. Gates was in, but could not be seen for an hour.

The next office bore the name of "Wild & Burns." Was Mr. Wild in? I asked, and was answered no; the same answer was given to my enquiry as to Mr. Burns. It was morning, and I thought it probable that neither gentleman had yet arrived; I therefore said that I would wait. I was told to take a seat and did so. While thus attending on the pleasure of Messrs. Wild & Burns, I took stock of the apartment and its contents. The gentleman who had politely answered my questions and asked me to be seated was middle-aged, gray whiskers, below the average height, and had a sort of owl-faced countenance, which, although he assumed a most grave manner, verged on the ridiculous. He was old-fashioned in his dress and especially so in his politeness, as I had an opportunity of judging by the manner in which he addressed those who called; in fact nothing could exceed his civility. He stood at his desk, and, except when interrupted, continued ceaselessly to scribble away at his books. An hour passed away and I became anxious lest I should be losing another day, so I ventured to ask how long it might be before either of the gentlemen would come in.

"To tell you the truth, my dear boy," he replied, "it is most difficult to say; for," and not a smile appeared on the face of the owl-faced man, "one is dead and the other is in England."

My late loss, my friendless position, and my dying hope flushed my eyelids and choked my quavering speech. I could make no answer and turned to leave. "However," continued the gentleman, "I may be able to do what you require, as I represent the firm. May I ask what your business is?"

I noticed a kind expression on his face mixed with a twinkling of humor, and I replied hurriedly and excitedly: "My name is Edwin Getty, son of Mr. Edwin Getty, who lately died; he was a lumber merchant and I want to get a place in an office to learn the business. Do you want a clerk?"

"Bless my soul!" cried Mr. Withus, for such I found out afterwards was his name; "are you the son of Mr. Edwin Getty? Why, my dear boy, I knew your poor father well; come in and sit down." We sat a long time talking, for Mr. Withus was a most interminable talker and an inveterate joker. Punning was his mania, and no subject was safe from his perpetrations. In the end I was engaged at the rate of thirty pounds a year as clerk in the office of Messrs. Wild & Burns, my duties to commence on the morrow.

I was a happy boy when I returned home that day and kissed my little sister, and she, dear child, seemed delighted that the trouble of yesterday had left me. I helped her with her lessons that evening with a gay heart, and talked in a grand way of the plans for the future. As for Agnes, she thought the world did not contain my equal, and sitting on the sofa beside me she would look at me with her wondering, confiding eyes, and exclaim, when I had uttered some more than usual grandiloquent assertion, "Oh, shan't we be happy then!" We both worked hard, I in my office and she at her lessons; in the evening we would sit together and, after looking over exercises and school duties, build castles in the air.

Years passed on and my position with the firm of Wild & Burns was much better. I received more than sufficient for my daily wants. Agnes had left school and was now my housekeeper, a dainty little housekeeper of seventeen. I lived for her alone, and she worshipped me. A quiet life we passed,—a life without a care, a life with many joys. We had but few friends, and now and then these dropped in to spend the evening. Among them was Walter Graham, a clever young Scotchman, who had come out to Canada to learn the lumber business, and make money. Young, remarkably handsome and full of information and anecdote, he was especially well-