

of the weight of it till, after the interment of his father, he repaired, for the first time, to resume his visits to his Rosalie.

He was stepping up without ceremony to the drawing room, when the servant begged his pardon for stopping him, telling him at the same time, that he had received instructions from his master to show Theodore into the parlor when he should call.

'Was Miss Wilford there?'

'No,' Theodore was shown into the parlor. Of all savage brutes, the human brute is the most pernicious and revolting, because he unites to the evil propensities of the inferior animal the mental faculties of the superior one; and then he is at large. A vicious tempered dog you can muzzle and render innocuous;—but there is no preventing the human dog that bites from fleshing his tooth; he is sure to have it in somebody. And then the infliction is so immeasurably more severe!—the quick of the mind is so much more sensitive than that of the body. Besides, the savage that runs upon four legs is so inferior in performance to him that walks upon two. 'Tis he that knows how to gnaw! I have often thought it a pity and a sin that the man who plays the dog should be protected from dying the death of one. He should hang, and the other go free.

'Well, young gentleman,' was the salutation which Theodore received when he entered the parlor; 'and pray what brings you here?'

Theodore was struck dumb; and no wonder.

'Your father, I understand, has died a beggar! Do you think to marry my niece?' If Theodore respired with difficulty before, his breath was utterly taken away at this. He was a young man of spirit; but who can keep up his heart, when his ship, all at once, is going down?

The human dog went on. 'Young gentleman, I shall be plain with you, for I am a straight-forward man; young women should mate with their matches—you are no match for my niece; so a good morning to you!'—How more in place to have wished him a good halter! Saying this, the straight-forward savage walked out of the room, leaving the door wide open, that Theodore might have room for egress; and steadily walked up stairs.

It was several minutes before he could recover his self-recollection. When he did so, he rang the bell.

'Tell your master I wish to speak to him,' said Theodore to the servant who answered it. The servant went up stairs after his master, and returned.

'I am sorry, sir,' said he, 'to be the bearer of such an errand; but my master desires you instantly to quit the house; and has commanded me to tell you that he has given me orders not to admit you again.'

'I must see Miss Wilford!' exclaimed Theodore.

'You cannot, sir!' respectfully remarked the servant; 'for she is locked up in her own room; but you can send a message to her,' added he, in a whisper, 'and I will be the bearer of it. There is not a servant in the house, Mr. Theodore, but is sorry for you to the soul!'

This was so much in season, and was so evidently spoken from the heart, that Theodore could not help catching the honest fellow by the hand. Here the drawing-room bell was rung violently.

'I must go, sir,' said the servant; what message to my mistress?'

'Tell her to give me a meeting, and to apprise me of the time and place,' said Theodore; and the next moment the hall-door was shut upon him.

One may easily imagine the state of the young fellow's mind. To be driven with insult and barbarity from the house in which he had been received a thousand times with courtesy and kindness—which he looked upon as his own! Then, what was to be done? Rosalie's uncle, after all, had told him nothing but the truth. His father had died a beggar! Dear as Rosalie was to Theodore, his own pride recoiled at the idea of offering her a hand which was not the master of a shilling! Yet was not Theodore portionless. His education was finished; that term he had completed his collegiate studies. If his father had not left him a fortune, he had provided him the means of making one himself—at all events, of commanding a competency. He had the credit of being a young man of decided genius, too. 'I will not offer Rosalie a beggar's hand!' exclaimed Theodore; 'I shall ask her to remain true to me for a year, and I'll go up to London, and maintain myself by my pen. It may acquire me fame as well as fortune; and then I may marry Rosalie!'

This was a great deal of work to be done in a year; but if Theodore was not a man of genius, he possessed a mind of that sanguine temperament which is usually an accompaniment of the richer gift. Before the hour of dinner, all his plans were laid, and he was ready to start for London. He waited now for nothing but a message from Rosalie, and as soon as the sweet girl could send it came to him. It appointed him to meet her in the green lane after sunset: the sun had scarcely set when he was there; and there, too, was Rosalie. He found that she was Rosalie still. Fate had stripped him of fortune—but she could not persuade Rosalie to refuse him her hand, or her lip; when, half-way down the lane, she heard a light quick step behind her, and, turning, beheld Theodore.

Theodore's wishes, as I stated before, were granted as soon as communicated: and now nothing remained but to say good-bye—perhaps the hardest thing to two young lovers. Rosalie stood passive in the arms of Theodore, as he took the farewell kiss, which appeared

as if it would join his lips to hers for ever, instead of tearing them away. She heard her name called from a short distance, and in a half-suppressed voice; she started, and turned towards the direction whence the preconcerted warning came; she heard it again; she had stopped till the last moment! She had half withdrawn herself from Theodore's arms; she looked at him; flung her own around him, and burst into tears upon his neck!—In another minute there was nobody in the lane.

London is a glorious place for a man of talent to make his way in—provided he has extraordinary good luck. Nothing but merit can get on there; nothing is sterling that is not of its coinage. Our provincial towns won't believe that gold is gold, unless it has been minted in London. There is no trickery there; no canvassing, no intrigue, no coalition! There worth has only to show itself, if it wishes to be killed with kindness! London tells the truth! You may swear to what it says—whatsoever may be proved to the contrary. The cause—the cause is everything in London! Show but your craft, and straight your brethren come crowding around you, and if they find you worthy, why you shall be brought into notice—even though they should tell a lie for it and damn you. Never trouble yourself about getting on by interests in London! Get on by yourself. Posts are filled there by merit; or if the man suits not the office, why the office is made to adapt itself to the man, and so there is unity after all! What a happy fellow was Theodore to find himself in such a place as London!

He was certainly happy in one thing; the coach in which he came set him down at a friend's whose circumstances were narrow, but whose heart was large—a curate of the church of England. Strange that with all the appurtenances of hospitality at his command, abundance shall allow, be it said, that the kindest welcome which adversity usually meets with, is that which it receives from adversity! If Theodore found that the house was a cold one to what he had been accustomed, the warmth of the greeting made up for it. 'They breakfasted at nine, dined at four, and, if he could not sleep upon the sofa, why there was a bed for him!' In a day he was settled, and at his work.

And upon what did Theodore find his hopes of making a fortune, and rising to fame in London? Upon writing a play. At an early period he had discovered, as his friends imagined, a talent for dramatic composition; and having rather sedulously cultivated that branch of literature, he thought he would now try his hand in one bold effort, the success of which should determine him as to his future course in life. The play was written, presented, and accepted; the performers were ready in their parts; the evening of representation came on, and Theodore, seated in the pit beside his friend, at last, with a throbbing heart, beheld the curtain rise. The first and second acts went off smoothly, and with applause.

Two gentlemen were placed immediately in front of Theodore. 'What do you think of it?' said the one to the other.

'Rather tame,' was the reply.

'Will it succeed?'

'Doubtful.'

The third act, however, decided the fate of the play—the interest of the audience became so intense, that, at one particular stage of the action, numbers in the second and third rows of the side boxes stood up, and the clapping of hands was universal, intermingled with cries of 'bravo!' from every part of the theatre. 'Twill do,' was now the remark, and Theodore breathed a little more freely than he had done some ten minutes ago. Not to be too tedious, the curtain fell amidst shouts of approbation, unmingled with the slightest demonstration of displeasure, and the author had not twenty friends in the house.

If Theodore did not sleep that night, it was not from inquietude of mind—contentment was his repose. His most sanguine hopes had been surpassed; that fit of a London audience had stamped him a dramatist—the way of fortune was open and clear, and Rosalie would be his.

'Next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Theodore and his friend repaired to the coffee room. 'We must see what the critics say,' remarked the latter. Theodore, with prideful confidence—the offspring of fair success—took up the first morning print that came to his hand. *Theatre Royal* met his eye. 'Happy is the successful dramatist!' exclaimed Theodore to himself; 'at night he is greeted by the applause of admiring thousands, and in the morning they are repeated, and echoed all over the kingdom through the medium of the press! What will Rosalie say when her eye falls upon this?' And what, indeed, would Rosalie say when she read the utter damnation of her lover's drama, which the critic denounced from the beginning to the end, without presenting his readers with a single quotation to justify the severity of his strictures!

'Tis very odd!' said Theodore.

'Tis very odd, indeed!' rejoined his friend, repeating his words. 'You told me this play was your own, and here I find that you have copied it from half a dozen others, that have been founded upon the same story.'

'Where?' inquired Theodore, reaching for the paper.

'There!' said his friend, pointing to the paragraph.

'And this is London!' exclaimed Theodore. 'I never read a play, nor the line of a play upon the same subject. Why does not the writer prove the plagiarism?'

'Because he does not know whether it is or is not a

plagiarism,' rejoined the other. 'He is aware that several other authors have constructed dramas upon the same passage in history; and—to draw the most charitable inference, for you would not suspect him of telling a deliberate lie—he thinks you have seen them, and have availed yourself of them.'

'Is it not the next thing to a falsehood,' indignantly exclaimed Theodore, 'to advance a charge, of the justice of which you have not assured yourself?'

'I know not that,' rejoined his friend; 'but it certainly indicates a rather superficial reverence for truth; and a disposition to censure, which excludes from all claim to ingenuousness the individual who indulges it.'

'And this will go the round of the whole kingdom?'

'Yes.'

'Should I not contradict it?'

'No.'

'Why?'

'Tis beneath you; besides, the stamp of malignancy is so strong upon it, that, except to the utterly ignorant, it is harmless; and even these, when they witness your play themselves, as some time or another they will, will remember the libel, to the cost of its author and to your advantage. I see you have been almost as hardly treated by this gentlemen,' continued he, glancing over the paper which Theodore had taken up when he entered the room. 'Are you acquainted with any of the gentlemen of the press?'

'No; and is it not therefore strange that I should have enemies among them?'

'Not at all.'

'Why?'

'Because you have succeeded. Look over the rest of the journals,' continued his friend; 'you may find salve for these scratches.'

Theodore did so; and in one or two instances salve, indeed, he found; but upon the whole he was in little danger of being spoiled through the praises of the press. 'Why,' exclaimed Theodore, 'why do not letters enlarge the soul, while they expand the mind? Why do they not make men generous and honest? Why is not every literary man an illustration of Juvenal's axiom?'

'Teach a dog what you may,' rejoined his friend, 'can you alter his nature, so that the brute shall not predominate?'

'No,' replied Theodore.

'You are answered,' said his friend.

The play had what is called a run, but not a decided one. Night after night it was received with the same enthusiastic applauses; but the audience did not increase. It was a victory without the acquisition of spoils or territory. 'What can be the meaning of this?' exclaimed Theodore; 'we seem to be moving, and yet do not advance an inch?'

'They should paragraph the play as they do a pantomime,' remarked his friend. 'But then a pantomime is an expensive thing; they will lay out a thousand pounds upon one, and they must get their money back. The same is the case with their melo-dramas; so if you want to succeed to the height, as a play-wright, you know what to do.'

'What?' inquired Theodore.

'Write melo-dramas and pantomimes!'

Six months had now elapsed, and Theodore's purse, with all his success, was rather lighter than when he first pulled it out in London. However, in a week, two bills which he had taken from his publisher would fall due, and then he would run down to B—, and perhaps obtain an interview with Rosalie. At the expiration of the week his bills were presented, and dishonoured! He repaired to his publisher for an explanation—the house had stopped! Poor Theodore! They were in the Gazette that very day! Theodore turned into the first coffee room to look at a paper; there were, indeed, the names of the firm! 'I defy fortune to serve me a scurvier trick!' exclaimed Theodore, the tears half starting into his eyes. He little knew the lady whose ingenuity he was braving.

He looked now at one side of the paper, and now at the other, thinking all the while of nothing but the bills and the bankrupts' list.—*Splendid Fete at B—*, met his eye, and soon his thoughts were occupied with nothing but B—; for there he read that the young lord of the manor, having just come of age, had given a ball and supper, the former of which he opened with the lovely and accomplished Miss Rosalie ——. The grace of the fair couple was expatiated upon; and the editor took occasion to hint, that a pair so formed by nature for each other might probably before long, take hands in another, a longer and more momentous dance. What did Theodore think of Fortune now?

'O, that it were but a stride to B—!' he exclaimed, as he laid down the paper, and his hand dropped nerveless at his side. He left the coffee-house, and dreamed his way back to his friends. Gigs, carriages, cars rolled by him unheeded; the foot-path was crowded, but he saw not a soul in the street. He was in the ball-room at B—, and looking on while the young lord of the manor handed out Rosalie to lead her down the dance, through every figure of which Theodore followed them with his eyes with scrutinizing glance, scanning the countenance of his mistress. Then the set was over, and he saw them walking arm-in-arm up and down the room, and presently they were dancing again; and now the ball was over and he followed them to the supper-room, where he saw the young lord of the manor place Rosalie beside himself.—Then fancy changed the scene from the supper-room to the church, at the altar