

**The Project Gutenberg eBook of Owen's Fortune; Or, "Durable Riches", by
Mrs. Frederic West**

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Owen's Fortune; Or, "Durable Riches"

Author: Mrs. Frederic West

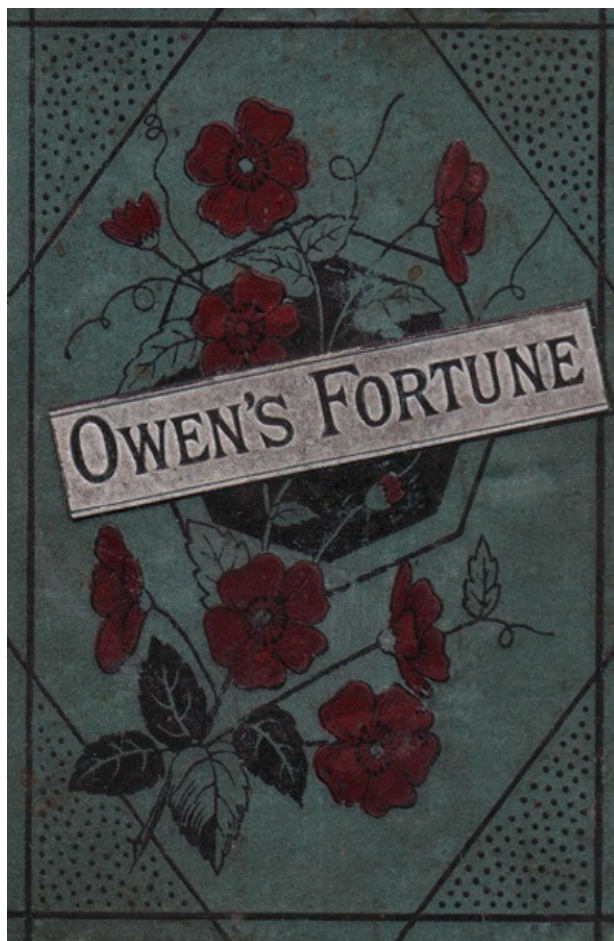
Release date: June 22, 2011 [EBook #36493]

Most recently updated: January 7, 2021

Language: English

Credits: Produced by David Edwards, Brett Fishburne, Dave Morgan,
David E. Brown and the Online Distributed Proofreading
Team at <https://www.pgdp.net>

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OWEN'S FORTUNE; OR, "DURABLE
RICHES" ***





"OWEN ... MADE A DART AFTER THE LITTLE CREATURE."--Page 9.

OWEN'S FORTUNE;

OR,

"DURABLE RICHES."

BY

MRS. F. WEST,

AUTHOR OF "FRYING-PAN ALLEY," "THE BATTLE-FIELD,"
ETC.

NEW YORK:
E. P. DUTTON & CO.,
31, WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET.



[5]

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE RESOLVE,	7
II. CHANGES,	17
III. MAKING HIS FORTUNE,	26
IV. AN UNEXPECTED TRIAL,	37
V. SUNSHINE AND SHADE,	46
VI. "POOR, YET MAKING MANY RICH,"	56



OWEN'S FORTUNE.



CHAPTER I. THE RESOLVE.



It was a lovely fresh autumn afternoon; there were still a few blossoms in the cottage gardens, and the leaves which were left on the trees were coloured rich crimson and gold and brown, causing them to look almost like flowers ere they dropped off the branches to make room for the young buds that were swelling underneath, and silently preparing for the spring.

But two boys, who were in the woods just outside the village, were far too occupied to notice the leaves. They were searching for nuts; and a basket on the ground, already more than half filled, showed that their search had not been in vain. The younger of the two, Owen Hadleigh, was a fine, strong, intelligent boy of about fourteen years of age; his bright, dark eye was full of merriment as he laughingly told his companion he intended to make his fortune. [8]

"Over these nuts?" asked Sam, ironically.

"Now look here, Sam Netherclift, you can laugh; I don't care for that. But I intend to make my fortune one day, and be a rich man."

"Like Squire Rowland?"

"Maybe; why not? I can work and earn it all."

"A likely thing!" laughed Sam; "and your father only a village schoolmaster."

"You'd better not laugh at my father," returned Owen, hotly; "there isn't a better man in the world than he is, and I intend to share all my fortune with him."

"How are you going to make it?"

"I don't know yet;" and Owen's face rather fell, for he had talked so confidently of what he would do, that Sam naturally would expect he had some sort of a plan, and he did not wish him to think he was only building castles in the air. But he added, bravely, "There are more ways than one of making a fortune, and I 'll try something yet. Father says Squire Rowland made his money by inventing a new dye, some bright colour no one had thought of before, and now he is rolling in riches. So I shall be sure to find some way of making money, never fear."

"When you have found out what to do, let me know, and I will come and help you," said Sam, laughing. He was a thorough boy, and had no thought beyond the present, though he was older than his companion, and had already to work on his father's farm. [9]

But the conversation was suddenly interrupted by a squirrel, who flew rapidly up a branch just before them. Owen sprang to the tree, and made a dart after the little creature, but though he could not catch it, it had done him good service, for it had led him to a tree he had not noticed before, and which was covered with clusters of nuts.

"Hurrah!" shouted Owen, "here's the beginning of the fortune!"

Sam, of course, hastened to help, and to take his share, and both boys were too much engaged for the next hour to have any more lengthened conversation. As it grew dusk they started for home, carrying the basket between them, well pleased with the result of their afternoon's work.

The schoolhouse, with the adjoining cottage for the schoolmaster, stood somewhat apart from the other houses. Both buildings were almost covered with ivy and monthly roses, some of which were even now blooming, though it was late in the year. The little garden in front of the cottage was trim and tidy, though all was still and quiet as the boys pushed the gate open and went in. Owen's mother had died before he could remember, but his father had so loved and cared for his only child, that the boy realised no loss or want. His father was everything to him, and he repaid his care with most grateful love. The two lived alone in the rose-covered cottage, and did the needful work, with the help of a woman who came in twice a-week to do the washing and set things straight in general. She was in the kitchen when the boys went in. [10]

"Is that you, Owen?" she said, raising her voice, that he might hear her in the front parlour.

"Yes, Mrs. Mitchell, it's all right; it is only me and Sam. Where is father?" he added, going into the kitchen, where she was busily ironing.

"He's gone to Allenbury," she answered shortly.

"Gone to town! He never said anything about going!" exclaimed the boy, with surprise, for his father mostly made him his confidant in everything.

"He'll be back in good time; he said he had to go on particular business." And Mrs. Mitchell turned back to her ironing, as if she did not care to be questioned.

Owen looked at her anxiously, but he did not speak again, and returned to the next room with a somewhat saddened face. He had noticed that his father was not quite himself lately, and he feared that there was some trouble pressing on him, that he should go off to Allenbury like this, without saying a word.

Sam was already dividing the nuts, and in this interesting occupation Owen soon forgot his anxiety, and was laughing and joking with his friend, as if there was no such thing as trouble in the world.

"Well," said Sam at last, "I must go, I suppose; I have those cows to see after, and father is pretty strict if I don't attend them well. It's fine to be you, having your time to yourself, and nothing to do."

"Nothing to do!" echoed Owen. "Why, I've no idle time, I can tell you. I have the water to fetch in, and the wood to chop, and the garden to see to, besides my lessons, and father is very particular about them." [11]

"When are you going to leave school? You are near fourteen, are you not? I left when I was twelve. Shall you go to school when you are a man?"

Owen laughed. "Father wants me to learn all I can; he says we can't have too much education, and if I want to make a fortune, I must gather all knowledge I can now."

"How will geography, and sums, and history help you to make your fortune?"

"I don't know *how*, but I suppose they all come in. If I didn't know anything of geography, how could I trade with foreign countries, or know where to write for the stuff I wanted? And how could I tell whether they were cheating me or not, if I couldn't add up my sums? I should like to learn foreign languages too, to be able to talk to the merchants myself; but father does not know any language but English."

Sam looked wonderingly at his young companion's eager face. He did not care for education himself, and he could not understand the desire for it in Owen. He had passed through school, as do many, learning just so much as he was obliged, and no more. Though he could read and write, it was very seldom he took up either book or pen, spending his time in wandering about the lanes and woods when he was released from the farm duties which fell to his share. He was a good-natured, pleasant companion, but could in no way share Owen's aspirations, though it amused him to listen to them. [12]

When he was gone, Owen took up a book in order to study his lessons for the next day, but the fading light soon drove him into the brighter region of the fire. The warm glow spread itself all over the little kitchen, and even the snowy linen on the table looked attractive as it grew gradually smoother and fairer under Mrs. Mitchell's experienced hands. Owen watched her a while from the chimney-corner, and presently he said—

"It must be very nice to iron, Mrs. Mitchell; to see the things that look all rough, and uncomfortable, and damp, smoothing themselves out under your hand, and looking pleasant and happy."

Mrs. Mitchell was a character in her way, and had many thoughts under her somewhat stern face, but it had never occurred to her that the clothes were any happier for being ironed.

"I expect it is you who are happier for seeing the things smooth, Owen," she said; "it makes no difference to them, of course. But it do make a great difference to us to have things nice about us. I suppose that is the reason the dear Lord says, 'Whatsoever things are lovely, ... think on these things.'"

"Do you think that God cares about our having things nice and pretty?"

"Why, my dear, of course I do. Do you think God would have taken all the trouble to put so much beauty into the world if He hadn't meant us to love it and enjoy it? See what lots of flowers He has given us, and such beautiful colours, even turning the leaves bright for us when the flowers are going. And when the snow comes down, He arranges it as beautiful as possible, making the very frost trace delicate patterns on the windows, and on the ground." [13]

"Yes, I know," said Owen, eagerly; "father was reading to me yesterday how that every snowflake is a crystal."

"Ah, I expect the more you search into God's works, the more beauty you will find, Owen." The good woman went on busily with her work as she spoke, presently adding, "I think, too, that God's children should always try to have things nice and pleasant about them, at least, as far as may be. I know that a struggling woman, with a lot of little children, can't have things as nice as she would. But every one may be clean, and if all did their best, the world would look different to what it does now."

"Mrs. Mitchell, I am going to do my best, and make my fortune one day."

"I am very glad, Owen; I hope you will."

"Do you? That is kind of you. Sam Netherclift laughs, and thinks I shall never do it."

"You may do it, if you seek it in the right way. There are two sorts of fortune, Owen. I hope you'll get the better."

"Two sorts! What are they?"

"One is a fortune of riches that take to themselves wings, and soon fly away; and the other sort is 'durable riches.'"

"Oh, I should make a fortune that would last, of course. Riches that fly away are not of much use. I should seek the best fortune, Mrs. Mitchell." [14]

"I hope so, I hope so, indeed," said the woman, as she set down her cool iron, and took a fresh one from the fire.

Owen did not reply at once; he fancied there was some hidden meaning in Mrs. Mitchell's words, but he did not understand what it was. He turned to his book, and for a while there was silence, only broken by the sound of the iron on the board.

Presently he looked up, and asked, "Did father say when he would be in, Mrs. Mitchell?"

"No, he said he wasn't sure, but he should not be late."

"You knew my mother, didn't you? I wish she had lived till now."

"Ah, you may well wish that. A sweeter and a better woman never lived. Yes, I knew her, and tended her in her last illness. She was a rich woman, too."

"A rich woman! how do you make that out?"

"Rich in faith, and love, and good works; those are the riches that last, Owen. You will never be rich unless you come to the Saviour."

"Squire Rowland is rich, and he isn't——" Owen paused for a suitable word—"you know what I mean, Mrs. Mitchell; he does not go to church, or visit the poor."

"No, I fear he is not a child of God, poor man. He is rich in this world's goods; but this world will not last for ever, and we shall live on after this world is burnt up. So it is best to have riches we can take with us. Better be poor here, and rich in the world to come, than rich on earth, to pine in miserable poverty for ever." [15]

"But will all rich men be poor in the other world?"

"No, indeed. God sometimes gives earthly riches to His children to spend for Him, though I must say I think they are generally poor. But those of God's children who are rich here count their money the least part of their fortune. A wealthy Christian man once lost all his money by the breaking of a bank, and a friend meeting him after, said, 'I am sorry to hear you have lost everything.' He replied, 'It is a mistake; I have not lost everything. I have not lost Christ, I have not lost heaven, nor God's Word, nor the peace He gives. And on earth I have not lost my wife, nor my health, nor my senses, nor many good friends.' You see, Owen, one may be very rich, and yet have very little money."

"But money is a good thing, too; we cannot do without it."

"It is good for what we can do with it. Money is no good stored away and laid up. But it may be of great use and blessing if laid out and spent for the Saviour. Yet I think those people are the happiest who have just enough for every day's use."

"I don't know, Mrs. Mitchell. I should like to have more than I could count."

"God grant you never may, Owen; it would ruin you, body and soul. Seek the lasting riches, and leave God to give you sufficient means to live on. Isn't that a Bible on the shelf? Just reach it down, and turn to Proverbs, the eighth chapter and seventeenth and eighteenth verses." [16]

Owen did as he was bid, and read out aloud, "I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me. Riches and honour are with Me; yea, durable riches and righteousness."

"That's the true fortune; God give you grace to seek it."

Owen did not reply; he sat with the book in his hands, looking thoughtfully into the fire, till suddenly he heard a step outside, and jumped up to greet his father.





CHAPTER II.

CHANGES.



MR. HADLEIGH was a tall, thin, anxious-looking man, a great contrast to his son. He entered the room slowly, and sat down in the arm-chair by the fire, as if he were very weary.

"Are you not well, father?" asked Owen, anxiously.

"I have had a long walk, my son. I shall be better when I have had some tea."

Owen was accustomed to wait upon his father, and soon put the tea in the little teapot, and set it down by the fire to brew while he fetched the bread and butter out of a neighbouring cupboard, and cutting a slice of bread off the loaf, he knelt down before the fire to toast it. Mrs. Mitchell meanwhile put her irons away, and folded up the remaining clothes without a word, except just as she was tying on her bonnet she ventured to say, "I suppose you got through your business, Mr. Hadleigh. It seems to have knocked you up a bit."

"Yes; the result was what I expected. But I am more concerned for others than for myself."

"God can see after them, and care for them even better than you can. His ways are always better than ours." [18]

"No doubt; but one cannot always realise it," said the schoolmaster wearily.

Mrs. Mitchell ventured no more than a quiet "good-night," as she saw Owen was listening to the conversation, evidently desiring to know what they meant. But when she was by herself out in the road, she said softly, "Poor things, they are both in trouble. Mr. Hadleigh is a clever man, no doubt, and gets the children on wonderful; but he has not got that quiet trust in God that Mrs. Hadleigh had. God give it him!"

Just as she turned the corner of the lane leading to her cottage, she met the vicar.

"Ha, Mrs. Mitchell, I have just been to your cottage, but your little girl told me you were not in yet. I hear that Mr. Hadleigh has some trouble pressing upon him. I have thought him looking anxious and careworn for some time; but he is such a reserved man, one cannot get much out of him. I thought perhaps you could give me a hint how I could help him."

"Indeed, sir, I wish you would go and see him; I fear he is in a sad way. He has not been feeling well for a long time, though he will not own it. He will not go to Dr. Benson for fear all the village should talk; but to-day he went over to Allenbury to see Dr. Foster, and he has evidently told him some bad news about himself, for he seemed very low when he came in; but Owen was there, so I could not ask."

"No; the poor boy will feel it sadly if his father is really seriously ill. I never saw such deep attachment between father and son." [19]

Meanwhile Owen and his father were having a little talk. The poor boy seemed very uneasy during tea, and as soon as he had cleared away the remains of the meal, he sat down on his accustomed seat by his father's side, and said anxiously, "What is it father? Something is wrong, I am sure."

Mr. Hadleigh put his hand on the boy's head for a few moments without speaking. Presently he said, "You have often talked of making your fortune, Owen; how should you like to go to your Uncle James, and learn his business as a beginning?"

"I should like to go into business very well, father, but I could not leave you. You will not send me away?"

"No, I will not do that, but I may have to leave you, Owen. The doctor says my heart is seriously diseased."

Mr. Hadleigh could get no further for the look of dismay that crept over his son's face. But, boy-like he would not let the tears fall, keeping his eyes steadfastly fixed on the fire, till his voice was calm enough to say, "Perhaps the doctor was mistaken, and you may get better. Doctors are often wrong."

"It may be," returned Mr. Hadleigh, anxious not to grieve the boy too much at first.

While they were talking, Mr. Sturt, the vicar, came in, and Owen gladly took the opportunity of escaping upstairs for a while. It was a sore trouble to him, for he loved his father devotedly; but after the first grief was over, hope took her place again, and the boy went downstairs more [20]

cheerfully than his father expected.

The days and weeks passed by, and things went on much as usual for Owen. His father still taught in the school, and the boy did all he could to help him, sweeping out the schoolroom, and getting up in the dark mornings to light the fire before his father was out of bed—in every way he could, trying to lessen his father's work. But Mr. Hadleigh's health was not again alluded to. No doubt he spoke of it to Mrs. Mitchell, who was often in and out, but Owen heard nothing of it, and he began to hope it was all a mistake. The winter came in early, with sharp frosts and snow, and Owen, with his friend Sam, was often on the ponds a good part of the day, sliding and skating to his heart's content.

One evening, as he ran home glowing with exercise and fun, his father asked him, "How shall you like the town, Owen? It will be a great contrast to the country."

"I should not like it at all, father; except, I suppose, one can get more money there."

"Yes, I suppose so. Your uncle is reckoned a rich man, and he has always been annoyed with me that I did not go into business too; but I had no taste for it. Country life always had greater charms for me, even with less to live upon. But I think you will get on, Owen; you have more push in you than I ever had. Only don't let the earthly fortune that you desire, blind your eyes to the heavenly riches. I neglected them too long, and though I can thank God that He has saved me, yet I often fear I shall have little reward yonder, for I have hidden my hope in my own breast, and have been content to keep my riches to myself, instead of trading with them. Mind that you do otherwise, Owen. Seek *first* the kingdom of God, and all other things needful, food and clothing, shall be added unto you."

[21]

These were the last words that Owen ever heard from his father's lips. He had not seemed worse that night, but before the next morning he had passed away. At first Owen was inconsolable, and would not be comforted at all. But kind neighbours gathered round, and in the evening his uncle arrived, having been telegraphed for by Mr. Sturt, according to Mr. Hadleigh's instructions.

Mr. James Hadleigh was a great contrast to his brother; he was a strong, active man, quick, business-like, and energetic. He seemed to know exactly what to do, and speedily made all arrangements. He could not stay long in the village, of course; he had his business to attend to. But he had promised his brother to look after Owen, and he would take him back with him. A few of his brother's belongings were packed up for the boy, but the rest Mr. James Hadleigh decided should be sold. There were several things that Owen greatly desired to keep; the arm-chair that his father used, a small cabinet which contained botanical specimens that his father had collected, some books of his mother's, and other treasures. But his uncle spoke decidedly—

"Nonsense; they are mostly old things. I cannot have my house filled with lumber. Your clothes and a few books are all that I can allow you to take; the remainder must be sold. The money will be useful to you, till you are able to earn something. I began life with half-a-crown, and by laying it out judiciously, have obtained a tolerable income for myself. You will have more than I had, and ought to do better."

[22]

Owen did not say more then, but when he went up to the vicarage to bid good-bye to Mr. Sturt, he told him of his trouble. The vicar listened sympathisingly; he knew well that such treasures are not to be valued with money, and he felt, too, that such home-valuables might be helps to the boy amid the temptations of a town life. This little glimpse of Mr. James Hadleigh's character, too, made him fear that the boy would have very different surroundings to what he had been accustomed; but he determined not to discourage him, so he only said, kindly—

"I am sorry your uncle has not more room for your belongings; but I think I can help you. I will buy those things you value most, and when you have a room where you can put them, you shall have them again."

"Thank you, sir," said Owen, gratefully. "I will pay you back all you give for them, sir. I am going to make my fortune, and do the best I can."

"I hope indeed you will do the best you can whatever your hands find to do. But as to making your fortune, that is another matter, and I don't know that I can wish you success in that. Seek the heavenly riches, my boy, and amid all the lower aims of earth, keep your heart fresh and pure by yielding yourself to the Saviour, and asking His grace to live only for Him."

[23]

The next day Owen and his uncle started on their journey; they had a long way to go, and it was quite a novelty to Owen to go any distance in a train. At first he was very sorrowful; the little village had been his home all his life, and he felt that no other place could ever be the same to him. His eyes filled as he thought of his dear father, but he was glad to know that he was doing just what his father wished in going with his uncle. By-and-by the train stopped at a station, and when they went on again, Owen found that he and his uncle were alone in the carriage. He wished he would talk to him; his father would have pointed out places of interest, and been so companionable, but his uncle seemed wrapped up in his own thoughts.

"Have we much farther to go, please?" ventured Owen at last.

"About an hour more," said his uncle, turning round, as if suddenly aware of his presence. "What can you do?" he asked, after a pause; "have you been accustomed to work at all?"

"I did odd jobs about the house, sir, but I never went out to work; father wanted me to learn all I

could."

"Wanted to make a scholar of you, did he?"

"No; but he said learning was always a good thing, and he would give me as much as he could."

"Humph, your father was always an unpractical man. You might have been earning a nice little sum now."

"Perhaps I shall be able to work better for what father taught me," said the boy, timidly.

[24]

Mr. Hadleigh looked at his orphan nephew, and said more kindly, "Perhaps you will; your father was a good man, though he did not know how to make money. Do you know much of arithmetic?"

"Yes, I am very fond of it."

"That's a good thing; a quick reckoner is valuable in business. Of course you know you will have to work. Your aunt and Clarice both help, and I can keep no idler on the premises."

"Is Clarice my cousin?"

"Yes; she is some years older than you, though. She helps me with the books, and makes a good business woman. I think that everybody, young people specially, should stick to their work. If people did that, there would not be so many poor about."

"But people cannot help being poor, can they? Some are always richer than others."

"That may be, but all can earn their own living, if they will. If not, they have no business to live."

Owen was rather startled at this view of things, and did not reply. But the end of the journey was nearly reached; already he saw tall chimneys and spires, and numbers of houses in the distance, and soon they were in that dull haze that always surrounds large towns. But there was no time to think about it, for the train pulled up at a large station, and all was bustle and confusion, as people ran here and there in anxiety for their luggage.

His uncle thought Owen quite capable of carrying his own belongings, and led the way down a narrow street into a broader one, with some fine buildings; then, to the boy's surprise, over a bridge, which crossed a fine dock filled with shipping, for he had no idea that Barmston was a seaport town. He was tempted to stop and look at the busy life, where the twinkling lights of the lamps were reflected in the dark waters of the dock. But his uncle was walking with rapid steps, and he ran to keep up with him. As he turned into the broad market-place, he entered a bright, cheerful grocer's shop, over which Owen had just time to catch the name "Hadleigh" in large letters.

[25]

His uncle passed at once into the counting-house, and entered into eager conversation with a man who was there, and a young girl, who, Owen concluded, was his cousin. But nobody seemed to think of the orphan, who sat on his box in a corner of the bright and busy shop, unnoticed and uncared for. After a while he grew so interested in watching the various customers that he almost forgot where he was, till a clear voice close at his side asked pleasantly, "Are you my cousin Owen?"



[26]

CHAPTER III.

MAKING HIS FORTUNE.



OWEN sprang up and acknowledged the relationship, following the girl through the back of the shop, upstairs to a pleasant room, where tea was already spread.

"Father is busy with Dawson just for a few minutes," she said, "but mother will be here presently. Oh, there she is. Mother, here is Owen; where is he to sleep?"

"In the little room at the top of the stairs," replied a middle-aged, active-looking woman, who stood before Owen, without giving him a word of greeting, saying, critically, "You look pretty capable; are you willing to work?"

"Oh yes, ma'am; I will do anything I can."

"That is right," said Clarice, kindly; "come, I will show you your room, and you can wash your hands and face, and then come down to tea. I expect you want something after your journey."

Owen looked gratefully at his cousin as he carried his box upstairs after her. The little room in

which she left him was dreary and cold, so different to his pretty little bedroom at home, which his father had made so cheerful and pleasant. But Owen was determined not to look on the dark side. He peeped out of the window; it looked down on the busy street, and the tops of the houses. As far as he could see were house-tops, and he wondered how far off the country could be. He felt a little sore at his aunt's cool manner, and was almost inclined to cry, as he turned to the washstand to follow his cousin's suggestion. The cold water refreshed him, and things looked brighter when he made his way down to the parlour, and found only Clarice waiting for him.

[27]

"You and I will have tea by ourselves," she said, cheerfully; "father is not ready yet, and mother has gone down to him. Would you like a slice of ham? Here is bread, and a nice hot cup of tea. I wonder how you will like the town."

So Clarice chatted away, trying to make the boy at home. The warm tea revived him, and his cousin's kindness won his heart, so that when she said, "I am so glad you have come, I know we shall be good friends," he was able to respond, "Yes, I am glad too; you are good and pretty."

Clarice laughed. "Nobody ever told me that before. I have to work too hard to be pretty. Father and mother let no one be idle. We must do all we can to make a fortune." But she said it somewhat bitterly, and Owen did not know how to reply, though he said, after a pause, "Don't you want to make a fortune?"

"I would rather enjoy what money we have," said Clarice. "What is the good of going on heaping up money all your life, and never enjoying what it brings at all?"

[28]

"That is what Mrs. Mitchell said."

"Who is Mrs. Mitchell?"

"A neighbour of ours. She said it was best to get 'durable riches.'"

"What sort of riches are they?"

"I don't quite know, but they are in the Bible; I read it there."

"Oh," said Clarice, "I don't know much of the Bible. Perhaps it would be better if I did, but father would not like me to spend time reading it. Will you have some more tea? No? Then we had better go down, and father and mother can come up. Father never likes to leave the counting-house unless one of us is there, but I don't see why he can't trust Dawson."

Owen followed his cousin downstairs. The shop was now brightly lighted up, and the fragrant smell of newly-ground coffee pervaded the place. Looking out at the door, he could see the twinkling lights of the pier at the end of the broad street, and the tall, dark masts of the vessels in the river; while nearer were rows of bright shops, and many feet hurrying past. It was a great change for the country-bred boy.

"What time do the people go to bed here?" he asked, as he returned to his cousin.

"Why, not yet for a long time."

"They all look as if it was the middle of the day, and in Westbrook every one was at home and quiet after tea."

Clarice laughed. "You will see a great difference here, Owen."

[29]

The next morning his uncle told him he must set to work, and gave him some employment at once, quite to Owen's satisfaction, for he did not care to be idle. It was a new thing to be busy about a shop, but he liked the change. It had been arranged that he should serve his uncle for the first three months without payment, only getting his board and lodging; but after that, if he proved capable, his uncle promised him a small salary.

"Of course you will have to buy your clothes out of it. But if you really wish to make your fortune, take my advice, never spend more than you can help! Save up all you can, and never buy anything you can possibly do without."

Owen promised obedience, and threw his whole heart into his work. Poor lad, he seemed in danger of forgetting his father's advice, and the unworldly lessons he had learnt in earlier days, as he made haste to be rich. For no one in his uncle's household seemed to think of anything beyond this present life. His uncle was somewhat strict with him, though on the whole he treated him kindly, while his aunt was very cool and stern. But Clarice was very fond of her young cousin, and whenever she could obtain her father's consent, would take him out with her, and walk along the river-side, or round the docks, where the boy never ceased to wonder at the new and strange things he saw.

Among the men and boys employed in the shop, Owen was much attracted by a young errand-boy, about his own age, whom everybody called "David," and he soon made friends with him. David was very obliging, and always willing to help Owen any way he could, which was not the case with Norris, one of the young men, who seemed to take a delight in thwarting and hindering him.

[30]

One day when David had some extra heavy parcels to carry, Owen was sent out with him, and as they walked along, he asked him his surname.

"David Netherclift," he replied.

"What!" said Owen, "Netherclift, did you say?"

"Yes, why not?"

"Why, Sam Netherclift was my greatest friend down home. It is funny you should have the same name."

"Where is your home?"

"At Westbrook, near Allenbury; a long way from here."

"Westbrook? I have often heard my father speak of it; his brother lives there. I expect Sam is my cousin. I'll ask father."

"Oh, do. Does your father live near here?"

"Not far off. But we must not go there now."

"Why not?"

"Because this is the time for work. Father says it is as bad as stealing to take my master's time for my own use. I'll ask him all about it to-night, and tell you in the morning."

"I expect your father is something like mine was," said Owen; "he was so good, and never let me do wrong if he could help it."

"Is he dead?" asked David.

[31]

"Yes, he died some time ago. If he had been alive I should not be here, for I would never have left him."

When the boys returned to the shop, they were both set busily to work, and had no time for further conversation. But next day David found opportunity to say, "Sam is my cousin, and father says he hopes you will come and see him some day; he would like to hear about Westbrook."

Owen was getting rapidly initiated into business habits, and being a quick, intelligent boy, did not often want telling twice how to do a thing, so that his uncle regarded him with favour, and at times allowed him to help Clarice in the counting-house when she was extra busy. The boy missed the country life, the long walks, the skating, the thousand pleasures of unfettered rural life, and he sometimes wished he could have a holiday, though he never said so to his uncle, but stuck manfully to his work till late every night, and then threw himself on his bed, and went sound asleep.

Mr. Hadleigh seldom went to church; indeed, the whole family were generally too tired on a Sunday, after a week of incessant labour, to do anything but rest. In fine weather Clarice generally went for a walk in the afternoon, and her father sometimes accompanied her. But on winter evenings they sat round the fire, yawning and tired, wishing the hours would pass rapidly by, so that the shop could be opened again. Mr. Hadleigh really cared for nothing but business.

The first Sunday or two Owen was very miserable. Sundays had been such bright days in his old home. He had always gone to church with his father in the morning, and to a class he held for elder boys in the afternoon; and though he had not always taken heed to the lessons as he ought, he had at any rate enjoyed the time. And he looked back to the Westbrook Sundays as days of peaceful rest. The first Sunday after he had found out that David was a cousin of his old friend Sam, he ventured to ask his uncle if he might go and spend the afternoon with the Netherclifts. His uncle gave him leave, not caring what he did on Sundays, so long as he attended well to his work during the week.

[32]

Owen started off eagerly, and just round the corner saw David, who had come to meet him by agreement. They walked some little distance, till they reached a narrower street, with smaller houses—a dingy street Owen thought it. But David stopped at a house which looked brighter than the rest, having clean blinds and curtains to the windows, and a very white stone step at the door. Owen noticed this as he followed David in.

"This is Owen Hadleigh, father," he said, bringing him into the little sitting-room.

"I am very glad to see you," said Mr. Netherclift; "but I cannot rise to greet you. I am a constant prisoner with rheumatism."

And then Owen noticed that the man's hands, too, were twisted and swollen with the same painful disease. He hardly knew what to say. But Mr. Netherclift was anxious to set him at his ease, and bid David bring a chair forward, as he remarked—

[33]

"You have come from Westbrook, David tells me. I used to go there often, many years ago."

"Did you really?" asked Owen, eagerly, ready for a talk with one who knew his old home. "Did you know my father, too?"

"I have seen him, but I don't think I ever spoke to him. My visits to my brother were always short, so I did not get to know many of his friends. And so your father is now home with Christ; it is a blessed change even from such a pretty place as Westbrook."

"Yes, and he was glad to go; though he was sorry to leave me," said the boy, wistfully. "Mother died when I was a baby, so now I have nobody."

"Have you not got Christ?"

Owen looked up inquiringly; he did not quite know his friend's meaning.

"The blessed Saviour loves you, my boy; have you no love in your heart for Him? Those who belong to Him can never say they have nobody to love them. Are you not his child?"

The question was asked very tenderly, and Owen looked into the kind face that watched his so earnestly, as he said, slowly, "I don't think so."

"Then I am sure you are both poor and lonely."

"Yes, I am poor, because father had very little to leave me—only a few books and furniture. But I have come to Barmston to make my fortune." [34]

"I hope you will find the truest fortune; it is already made for you, and all you have to do is to accept it."

"What is the truest fortune?"

"It is to belong to Christ, the King of kings. The peace and rest and joy He gives are riches of untold price, more valuable—ininitely so—than any wealth of earth. And they are riches that will last for ever."

"How can we get them?"

"By first of all realising our poverty, that we, you and I, are poor lost sinners in ourselves, fit for nothing but hell, and that we can do nothing to save ourselves. Then, knowing this fact, because God says it, to come just as we are, and believe in His Son, who died to save us from all sin."

Owen listened earnestly, the boy's heart was roused; it was God's message to him. He looked thoughtfully into the fire for a few moments. Presently he said, "Father's last words to me were to seek the heavenly riches."

"Have you sought them?"

"There is no time here in Barmston. From morning to night I am as busy as can be, often till ten o'clock, and then I am so tired I almost drop asleep while I am undressing."

"Poor boy, you are hard-worked. But remember this, God never puts you into any place where you cannot seek Him. Do you never read your Bible, or speak to God in prayer?"



[35]

"DID YOU KNOW MY FATHER?"—Page 33.

"Not now. Perhaps I shall have more time when I am older."

[36]

"Nay, never think that. God says, 'Now is the day of salvation.' You may not live to be older."

The conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Netherclift coming in with the tea, and directly after the two boys went out together to a neighbouring mission-hall, where David's father knew they would hear an earnest Gospel message. He, being unable to walk, remained at home, earnestly praying that both lads might get a blessing.



[37]

CHAPTER IV. AN UNEXPECTED TRIAL.



DAVID NETHERCLIFT ushered Owen into a small, but cheerful and brightly-lighted mission-hall. The place was nearly full, but they found comfortable seats, and the service almost immediately commenced. The singing was hearty, and the speaker's manner so earnest and manly that Owen's attention was gained even before he began to preach. But when he read out his text, the boy listened still more earnestly, for the words seemed to have some reference to the fortune he so eagerly desired. Slowly and deliberately they were read out: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."

"You see here," began the speaker, "that One who was rich gave up His wealth, and became a poor man that you, poor men, women, and children, might become rich. It was a wonderful thing to do, for it was not only that He gave up home and comfort and wealth for poor people, but for those who cared nothing for Him, even for His enemies. And He did it out of His own great love and grace. Who was it who did this? It was the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Glory, the God who made the world, and all those countless stars that fill our sky. If it was a good man that had done it, we should have thought it a great thing to do; but that God should stoop so low fills us with surprise. He might have stayed in heaven, rejoicing in His Father's love, listening to the songs and adoration of the angels, leaving us in our poverty and ruin to die eternally. But no; out of His boundless love and grace, He came to suffer and die—'for your sakes.'"

[38]

"Yes, for our sakes, because we were poor, lost sinners, and He pitied us. So He came down from heaven, and lived a poor man, dying a death of shame to redeem us and save us from hell. Should we not then seek His rich salvation, and take the wealth the Saviour went through such deep poverty to win for us? You may refuse it; God does not force it upon you. But oh, the terrible punishment that will fall on those who neglect or reject God's salvation!"

"You, here before me, are mostly poor; you would all like to be rich. Listen, then, to God's Word: 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.' The heavenly riches never disappoint, never fly away, but last on, growing deeper and fuller, right into eternity. Who will come to Christ to-night, and seek His unsearchable riches?"

They were simple words simply spoken, but were God's message to many hearts. Owen did not say much as he walked home with his friend; but he did not forget the words he had heard. That night he opened his Bible for the first time since he came to Barmston, and knelt in prayer before he went to bed. All that week he was very thoughtful, longing for Sunday to come, that he might again have some help heavenward, for he was beginning to set his face that way. Not that he neglected his work. No; his uncle never found him more diligent and active, though he was on his feet from morning till night, and was often thoroughly tired out.

[39]

"No sorrow with it," he said softly to himself one evening, as he was copying some writing by his cousin's side in the counting-house.

"What do you say, Owen?"

The boy smiled. "I did not know I was speaking out loud," he said.

"But what did you say about 'no sorrow'?"

"It was something I heard on Sunday: 'The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.'"

"Those riches must be worth getting," said Clarice, after a pause, with tears in her eyes. She had long known a deeply unsatisfied feeling in her heart, though no one suspected it; and she herself hardly knew how the uneasiness arose.

"Yes, I think so too," said Owen, as he went on busily with his work.

It was only a few days after this that Mr. Hadleigh called his nephew to him, and said, "Clarice has to go on business for me over to Horley, across the river, and she wants you to go too; so run and change your jacket, and get ready to go with her." [40]

"Thank you, uncle," said the boy, delighted at the prospect of a change. He had never been on the river before, and it was a great charm to him to step on board the little steamer waiting at the pier-head, and start off in the fresh breeze across the river.

"How long will it take us?" he asked his cousin.

"About twenty minutes crossing; then we have to go into the village for father, and take the next boat back."

"How curious it feels; it looks as if the town and pier were moving away."

"Yes, it often does at first; but it is really we who are moving. You will see better when we get farther out into the river."

The shipping and the new sights occupied the boy the whole way across, and Clarice had to answer numberless questions, so that it was not till they had reached the other side, and were walking down a country road to the neighbouring village, that she was able to say, "Do you know why I asked father to let you come to-day?"

"Because you are kind, and wanted me to have a holiday."

"It was not altogether that," said the girl, looking down on the young boy at her side; "I wanted you to tell me more about that 'no sorrow.'"

"Why, I told you all I knew."

"Ah, but how can we get it?"

The boy hesitated. "You must come with me to the mission-hall on Sunday night, and hear the preacher yourself, Clarice. Then you will know all about it." [41]

"I cannot do that; mother would not let me, nor father either, I fear."

"But they let me."

"Yes; but they had a talk about it the first Sunday evening you were gone. Mother said she did not like you to go at all, but father said as long as you did your work well he did not mind where you went on Sundays, as you are a boy. So you really must tell me more, Owen. No one but you can help me."

"I don't know what to tell you. I don't quite understand it myself yet. He said we were to read the Bible and pray, and seek the salvation God offers. He said the Lord Jesus loves us, and wants us to be His children."

"Are you His child?"

"I don't know. I want to be. Father and mother were, and——" the boy stopped.

"I must know more about it," said Clarice, earnestly; "you must listen for yourself and me too, Owen, when you go again, and try to remember all you can to tell me."

When they returned to Barmston, they found Mr. Hadleigh evidently in a bad temper. He was talking very loudly, and seemed considerably annoyed. The moment he caught sight of Owen, he called him to him.

"Didn't you put out that order for Mr. Davenport yesterday? I gave it into your hands."

"Yes, sir, I did it. I weighed out the things, and wrapped them up."

"This comes of trusting to boys," he said, bitterly; "but you seemed different to most. Mr. Davenport has just been in, and says the things never arrived." [42]

"I packed them up all right," said Owen, respectfully, but firmly.

"Whose place was it to take them out?"

"It was David's round."

"Then the matter lies between you and David. Which of you stole the goods?"

"Oh, father!" exclaimed Clarice, "neither of them would do such a thing."

"Well, the goods must be somewhere," he replied, half-ashamed of his hot words. "Norris has often given me hints about the two, David and Owen; he says they are too much together for good."

"I expect Norris is at the bottom of it," said Clarice, eager to defend her young cousin.

"Nonsense. Norris has been with us for years. I would trust him as well as anybody. Owen, you can go to your own room for the present, till I decide what is to be done. Send David to me as soon as he returns."

Poor Owen, it was a sad ending to a pleasant little holiday. Things looked black, but he knew he had done as he was told, and that the goods had been carefully wrapped up, and laid on the counter ready to be taken away. Yet how could he prove it? Norris had seen him weighing the things out, but he had turned against him, and there was no other witness. He sat down by the side of his bed, and wondered what he should do if his uncle sent him to prison. Could he not run away? There were lots of ships about; perhaps he could get work on one of them. But better thoughts prevailed, and at last he sank on his knees, and prayed that some way might be found for him out of his trouble. [43]

Meanwhile David had been questioned, and said that he had never been given anything for Mr. Davenport. He showed his book, stating what houses he had called at, and answered so straightforwardly that Mr. Hadleigh at once acquitted him of all complicity in wrong-doing.

"It is just that nephew of yours, Mr. Hadleigh," said his wife; "a little sneaking fellow, trying to toady himself into your favour by industry, and then returning it in this fashion."

"Owen never did it," said Clarice, decidedly.

"Ah, you always favoured him. You and your father should have believed me, and this would never have occurred," said her mother, sweeping out of the room.

Clarice possessed great influence with her father, so when they were alone, he asked, "Don't you really think it is Owen?"

"No, father, I don't. I am certain he would not do such a thing. His father brought him up too well for that. Things have been missing before he came. If I were you, I should look after somebody else."

Nothing more was said. Business went on as usual till ten o'clock; then the shop was closed, and the family went upstairs to the sitting-room. No one had been near Owen, or had even thought of taking him food, till Clarice suddenly remembered he had had nothing since breakfast; so filling a plate with some bread and butter, and a slice of cold meat, she hastily left the room, unquestioned by her parents. [44]

Owen had fallen asleep, with his head resting against the washstand, and Clarice noticed that there were traces of tears on his face. She touched his arm, and he jumped up in a moment.

"I have brought you something to eat," she said, kindly; "I am so sorry I forgot to do so before; I am afraid you are nearly starved."

"No, it didn't matter; but I am glad to have it now. What is going to be done?" he asked, watching his cousin's face anxiously.

"Nothing can be done to-night. Father wants to find out the truth, of course. I think if we asked God to let it be seen who took the things, He would make it plain."

"I am sure he would if we were His children. But you see we are not." The words were said sorrowfully and slowly.

Clarice did not reply for a moment, as she watched her cousin eating his supper. "We must see what to-morrow brings," she said, at last; "go to bed now."

Mr. Hadleigh could find no direct evidence against Owen. The goods had vanished, certainly, but it was not at all clear who had taken them. He did not care to prosecute his own nephew, and he would not turn him adrift for his dead brother's sake. So things went on much as usual, though the boy knew he was only tolerated, and was carefully watched, whatever he did.

When Sunday came, Owen gladly went off to his kind friends. Mr. Netherclift had heard all about the accusation from David, and felt much for the orphan lad. Again he put the Gospel earnestly and faithfully before him; but he was a wise man; he would not hurry any soul, though he knew there must be a moment of decision, and he entreated the boy not to put it off. As to the present trial, he urged Owen to do his every-day work faithfully and well, as under the eye of God, and he felt sure that his uncle would in time be assured that he was not the culprit. [45]

"It seems strange this should happen just now, when I want to do right. It is only this week that I have begun to read my Bible again. When I didn't read it nothing disagreeable happened."

"Ah, my boy, if you were older and more experienced, you would know why. When you were content to live just for this world alone, without a thought of God and eternal things, Satan left you alone. But the moment you begin to seek God, Satan does all he can to hinder and keep you back. No doubt he has stirred up some of his servants to work you this evil; but be sure of this, God will right you in good time."

A quiet, happy evening was spent, Owen feeling very grateful for sympathy, and being much cheered to see that the Netherclifts never for one moment doubted his honesty. But he went home early, saying he wished to be alone, and would not go to the mission-hall that night.



CHAPTER V.

SUNSHINE AND SHADE.



LARICE and Owen generally breakfasted together very early, some time before Mr. and Mrs. Hadleigh appeared. Clarice had spent an anxious night, partly on her own account, and partly being troubled about Owen, as Norris continued to speak against him whenever he could; so that she was quite startled to see her cousin come into the room with a calm, sunny face.

"What is the matter!" she exclaimed; "has father found out it was not you?"

"No; I wish he had."

"Then what makes you look so happy?"

"Clarice, I do believe the Lord Jesus has saved me, and made me His child."

They were simple words, but they told of a great change, and Clarice burst into tears.

"Why do you cry?" asked Owen, presently.

"Because I want the same; I see it has made you 'rich,' Owen."

"You can have it too, if you will. Only you must go to the Lord Jesus for it, as I did."

[47]

The rest of the breakfast passed almost in silence. Clarice could not speak, and it was not easy for Owen to tell of his new-found joy. They went down together to the shop, and the morning's work began. The boy's bright face was not unnoticed, though no one else asked him the reason of it.

A fortnight passed away, and Owen seemed no nearer being cleared. Norris was as disagreeable as ever, doing all he could to get the boy into trouble; but his unfailing truthfulness and integrity saved him from falling into the traps laid for him, and this angered Norris still more. Mrs. Hadleigh, too, continued as distant as ever, and was much annoyed to see the change in Clarice, which she attributed solely to her cousin's influence.

"I can't think what has taken the girl," she said to her husband one day; "your nephew has brought his religious notions here, and has turned her head. Such trouble as I've taken to keep her from all pious people, too, fearing they would fill her head with fancies. And here she is as religious as any of them. I might just as well have saved myself the trouble."

"Exactly so," said her husband, dryly.

"I do believe you will go the same way, James."

"Might do worse."

"And after all our toil to work up the business!"

"My dear, the business won't suffer."

Meanwhile, in the shop below, Norris had sent Owen on an errand to the stores underneath the ground; he had to go down through a trap door to the cellar, and not going quick enough to suit the young man, or out of spite, Norris gave him a push, which, loaded as he was, made him lose his footing and fall heavily through the opening.

[48]

"What a stupid!" exclaimed the man; "he is no more fit for business than a calf."

"Norris!" said Clarice, coming hastily out of the counting-house, "I saw the whole affair. You pushed him down, and my father shall know."

"You make a mistake, Miss Hadleigh," he said, blandly; "he is the most useless boy we ever had on the premises."

One of the porters and Dawson had hastily descended after the boy, who was lifted up in their arms, groaning heavily.

Mr. Hadleigh came in at the moment, asking what had happened. Every one gave a different answer.

"He is severely injured," he said, as he bent over the boy. "David, run for Mr. Daly; ask him to come at once. Can you two carry the lad upstairs?"

When Mrs. Hadleigh had found out what had happened, she declared he ought to be sent at once to the hospital. But her husband said the boy reminded him more of his brother every day, and for that brother's sake he should be nursed in the house. The doctor's verdict settled everything;

he said the patient must on no account be moved; the hip-bone was broken, and he must be kept perfectly quiet.

When the bone was set, and the boy somewhat more comfortable, though in great pain and weakness, Clarice crept softly into the room, and watched him for a moment with tears in her eyes. He looked so white and suffering; and to think it should happen through the carelessness and unkindness of another! [49]

Presently Owen opened his eyes. "Is that you, Clarice?"

"Yes; how are you now?"

"Isn't it a good thing I was saved in time?" His voice was feeble, though the tone was glad.

"Saved in time?" questioned Clarice.

"Yes, I mean saved before this happened. You see, I could not have thought about these things while I was in such pain—at least, it would have made me feel worse. Now the pain is all outside; my heart is happy. Jesus comes and says to me, 'My peace I give unto you.'"

Clarice knelt down by the side of the bed, and softly stroked the boy's hair back from his forehead. He seemed to like the caressing motion, for he did not move till she said softly, "I know something of that peace, too, Owen, and it was through your lips the blessing came to me."

A sunny smile spread over the white face as he said, "It was worth all the pain to know that, Clarice. God has found us both now."

"Yes, I had been trying to help father to make his fortune; and you had come to Barmston wishing to make your fortune; but God has given us His riches."

"Would you mind reading to me a little? My head is so bad; I think it would comfort me, and give me something to think of while I am alone in the night."

Clarice was much touched to find that her young cousin expected no care or nursing during the night. It showed her how accustomed he was to be neglected, and put on one side in the house. But she said nothing, only opened Owen's Bible, and softly read the Psalm that so many, young and old, have rested their souls on in times of joy and sorrow: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Quietly and slowly, without any comment, she read the Psalm through, and then, seeing the boy was exhausted, went noiselessly out of the room to seek some refreshment for him. [50]

As soon as the shop was closed Mr. Hadleigh came up himself to visit his nephew, and assure him that he would take all care of him, and that he was not to trouble about the accusation, for the more he watched him, the more he was convinced that he was innocent, though where the goods had gone to was a great mystery.

"David shall sit up with you to-night," he said, "and we will see about a better nurse in the morning."

Owen was much surprised at his uncle's tender manner, for he had always been too absorbed in business to speak kindly to any of his family. But though Owen did not know it, his influence was working unconsciously upon his uncle, and opening his eyes to see that other things are worth obtaining besides money.

The pain was very severe, and Owen felt thoroughly sore all over, for, beside the broken bone, he was considerably bruised and shaken. Clarice peeped in again before she went to bed, bringing a little plate of jelly to moisten his mouth during the night, and to see that everything was arranged as comfortably as might be. Presently David came up, and took a seat by the bedside. He looked gravely at the drawn, white face, as he asked anxiously, "Is the pain terribly bad?" [51]

[52]



"QUIETLY AND SLOWLY ... SHE READ THE PSALM THROUGH."—Page 50.

"Bad enough," said Owen, faintly.

"What a coward that Norris is!" said the boy, indignantly; "the master ought to turn him away."

"Does uncle know he did it?"

"I don't know. I saw Norris talking away to him in the soft, sweet manner he has; and no doubt he made out it was no fault of his. I should like to tell Mr. Hadleigh himself."

"You must not do that."

"Why not?"

"Because we must not carry accusations of one another about."

"But it is true that he did knock you down."

"Yes; and if uncle asked you to tell him, you might do so; but I am sure you ought not to offer to tell him."

"That's rather queer, isn't it? Mr. Hadleigh was not there, and he may think it was your fault after all."

"God was there. He saw it all, and He knows everything—even why Norris is so against me; and He will make it right."

But Owen could not go on talking; the pain was so severe, he could only just bear it by keeping perfectly quiet. An hour or two passed away slowly, when Owen was surprised to hear his uncle's voice at the door, calling softly, "David!"

The boy rose. "Yes, sir," he replied.

"Is Owen asleep?"

"No, sir, he can't sleep, the pain is so bad."

"Well, come with me a minute, and then you shall return to him."

[53]

The door was gently closed, and Owen heard no more, except a whispered consultation outside. Then he was left alone for some time.

A strange thing had happened. In the bustle and confusion of Owen's accident Mr. Hadleigh had been somewhat upset, and just as he was getting into bed he remembered that he had left his cash-box in the counting-house. Such a thing had never occurred before in all his business life, and he was a good deal dismayed when he thought of it. Throwing on a dressing-gown, and stepping softly for fear of disturbing Owen, he went downstairs. He carried no candle, for he knew just where he had left the box, and he feared a light might set fire to something. He had

just reached the glass door leading into the shop, and was about to put his hand out to open it, when he observed a faint light in one corner, and a figure moving. For a moment he seemed paralysed, but gathering his wits together, he carefully watched for a moment or two, when he saw the muffled figure of a man reaching down canisters and boxes, carefully and gently, and abstracting part of their contents. Not much out of each, evidently, for the parcels he made up were small; but the basket on the floor held a good many of them. The man's face he could not see, nor could he at all make out the figure.

After watching him for a moment, he crept upstairs, and calling David out of Owen's room, sent him off by a back-door to the neighbouring police-station, while he again mounted guard at the glass door. It seemed a long time to Mr. Hadleigh as he stood watching the thief walking softly about the shop, helping himself here and there to tea, sugar, cloves and spices, dried fruit, and other goods. He felt sure it was one who knew the premises well, by the way he went about, laying his hands on exactly what he wanted. Who could it be? It was neither Owen nor David, that was clear, and Mr. Hadleigh felt quite relieved when David returned with two policemen, who did not speak a word, but looked through the glass door, as Mr. Hadleigh silently pointed out the thief to them. [54]

As they turned the handle of the door, the slight click caused the thief to start, and when he saw the policemen he hastily extinguished his light, and flew across the shop. But the policemen rushed after him; there was a few moments' struggle in the dark, as the thief tried to reach a small window at the back, from which he had evidently entered; but the two powerful men held him down and secured him, while David got matches, and lighted a lamp.

"That was a pretty tidy catch," said one of the men; "caught in the very act of stealing. A pretty long sentence you'll get, my man."

Mr. Hadleigh drew nearer to look at the man as they were leading him away, and to his surprise and indignation, saw Norris!

"Is it possible!" he exclaimed. "What can have been your object?"

"Let me off this time, Mr. Hadleigh," he whined; "let me off this time. It will ruin me for life if you put me in prison. Let me go this time."

"A likely thing!" said the policemen, grimly, as they led him out into the street. [55]

When they were gone, Mr. Hadleigh went round the house and shop to see that all was safe, David following with a light; and when everything was secure, they went upstairs again.

"Where have you been?" was Owen's first question. "Do lift up my pillow a bit; my head is so uncomfortable."

David did as he was asked; but he looked so excited that Owen inquired again, "Where have you been?"

"Mr. Hadleigh wanted me down in the shop."

"In the night! What time is it?"

"Two o'clock."

"What could he want?"

"We caught a thief stealing the goods out of the shop. I went for two policemen, and they got hold of him."

"How dreadful it must be to be a thief; it is worse for him even than for uncle to lose his things."

"Yes, I suppose so."

"I wish he knew I did not take those things of Mr. Davenport's."

"I think he'll know soon."

"Do you? Why?"

"I expect it was the same thief all along, and the truth will come out."

To David's relief, Owen did not ask any more questions, for Mr. Hadleigh had warned him not to excite the boy, nor tell him more than was needful. But David could hardly contain himself, it had been such a strange episode in the night.



CHAPTER VI.

"POOR, YET MAKING MANY RICH."



UST as the clock was striking five, to the great relief of both boys, Clarice softly opened the door. She sent David off at once to the sofa in the next room, bidding him get an hour's sleep as soon as he could. Then making up the fire, she speedily and skilfully made a refreshing cup of chocolate, and brought it to Owen's bedside. He looked white and wan, as he whispered softly, "There is 'no sorrow' with it, cousin Clarice, though the pain is so bad."

"Poor boy," she whispered, softly stroking his head, "I wish I could bear it for you. But Jesus knows, and He will help you through all."

"Oh, He does; He comforts me so. When I was all alone, He gave me such happy thoughts of going soon to be with Him and father."

"I hope you will not go yet awhile, Owen. But how were you alone in the night? I thought David was with you."

"He was, most of the time. But uncle called him down to help about some thief."

"Some thief!"

[57]

"Yes, David said so."

Clarice thought the boy's mind was wandering, and asked no more questions, only talked on soothingly for awhile, and then read the "keeping" Psalm to him, "The Lord is thy keeper, ... the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil," till Owen seemed quite comforted by the blessed words, both in mind and body, and laid so still, that his cousin hoped he might get a short sleep.

When at last she went into the breakfast-room, she found both her father and mother there before her, considerably excited and annoyed with the affair of the previous night. She was told the whole story, and said she was not much surprised, for she had never thought Norris was trustworthy.

"I know you never liked him," said her father; "but I thought it was only a girl's fancy. How is Owen this morning?"

"In great pain. This accident might never have happened but for Norris. I saw him push Owen just as he was stepping down; and having his arms full, he could not save himself."

Mr. Hadleigh went in to see the boy, before he went round to the police-court, and stayed some little time with him.

Owen asked to be sent back to Westbrook; he was sure some there would care for him for his father's sake; and he had not forgotten his uncle's words in the train, that if anyone could not work they had no right to live.

"It is impossible you should be moved, at any rate for some weeks," he said. "Why do you want to go?"

"Because I cannot earn anything, and shall not be able to do so for a long time, I fear," was the sorrowful reply.

[58]

"Never mind, Owen, these few months you have been here have shown me that money is not everything. Honesty, uprightness, and faithful service are more than money, and I will show you I value them by spending money on you. Don't you trouble; you will earn plenty when you are about again."

"Thank you," said the boy, greatly comforted, "I will get well as soon as I can, sir."

But the days passed slowly to the active lad, as he lay in weariness and pain, wondering if he should ever be able to walk again. He had intended to work hard and get on, and earn money, and do so much good in the world. Yet here he was laid on his back, unable to do anything, hardly knowing whether he should ever be more than a cripple. It was a trial to the young Christian, just as he started on the heavenly road. But he was very patient, and bore his pain manfully, while gratefully thanking any one who showed him any kindness.

His uncle continually came and sat down by him for half-an-hour at a time, and thus Owen often had sweet opportunities of witnessing for his Saviour, and telling his uncle of his peace and joy.

One day Mr. Hadleigh came in with a somewhat troubled face.

"Owen," he said, "how can I make up to you for wrongly accusing you?"

"Have you found out that I never took those things of Mr. Davenport's?" he asked, eagerly.

[59]

"Yes, I have just returned from Norris's trial, and it all came out. It seems that he and his sister kept a small grocer's shop in a low part of the town, and that for a long time he has partly stocked it through goods taken from me, by little and little, as he was able to do it. He confessed at last, when the evidence became too strong, and owned that he carried off Mr. Davenport's parcel to his own home. He is now in prison for two years."

"Isn't it sad for him?"

"It serves him right, for such wicked and underhand dealings."

"Yes, isn't it strange that people forget that they will be sure to be found out one day? Father always used to say that it paid best to be honest and upright in every way, even if it were not a question of right. Dishonest people must always live in fear of being found out. Father said we must always live *open* lives, and then everything would be right."

"Your father was a good man, Owen. I can't think how I came to suspect you. Only get well, and I will do all I can for you."

"Thank you, uncle; I am very glad you know I did not do it," replied the boy, as if he could not forget how heavy a weight had been lifted off him.

"It troubled you?" asked Mr. Hadleigh, kindly.

"Yes, sir, very much. Only I knew that God knew all about it, and I hoped He would right me one day."

"Does it comfort you to think that God knows all about you?"

[60]

"Yes, indeed it does; specially since He has made me His child. I like to think He knows just where I am, and what I am doing, and that He cares for me all the day long. He makes me so happy."

Mr. Hadleigh was silent; it was an experience he knew nothing of; yet as he looked at the thin, white face, smiling so peacefully, he felt it was possible so to live. And from that day forward he was very kind and tender to Owen, often encouraging him to talk, though saying little in reply himself.

Mr. Netherclift had sent many kind messages to Owen; he greatly regretted not being able to walk, as he should have liked to call on his young friend. But that not being possible, he sent kind words by David, and once he managed to write a few lines, to Owen's great joy, for it was a very rare thing for him to receive a letter.

At last he was able to get up once more, and in a few days longer could manage to go into the next room by the aid of a crutch on one side, and Clarice's strong arm on the other. It was a great delight to be able to move even so far, though the exertion made him feel somewhat faint at first. He had been there only a short time, when Clarice, who had been downstairs, came into the room with a smiling face.

"Could you bear to see a visitor, Owen?" she asked. "Do you feel strong enough?"

"A visitor! for me? Who is it?"

[61]



CLARICE HELPING OWEN.—Page 60.

"An old friend of yours," she replied, returning in a few minutes with an elderly gentleman, in [62]

whom Owen joyfully recognised his kind friend the Vicar of Westbrook.

"Oh, Mr. Sturt, sir, is it really you? I can't get up, sir, but I am glad to see you."

"Don't move, my boy. I have just heard of your accident from your uncle," he said, taking a chair which Clarice offered him, close to Owen. "I was passing through Barmston, and thought I should like to see you. You look very altered and weak," he said, kindly; "are you in much pain?"

"No, it is not so bad now, sir; I hardly knew how to bear it at first. But the Lord Jesus was with me all the time, and He helped me, sir."

"I am glad to hear you say that, Owen; it is a blessed thing to know that the Saviour is with His children at all times, under all circumstances, and we are very happy when we realise His presence."

"Yes, sir, I have had 'no sorrow' with it, though the suffering has been so great."

"You are changed, Owen; I think few at Westbrook would recognise you if they saw you now."

"No, sir, I daresay not. Will you tell me something about them all, please? It seems so long since I was there."

"No doubt it does, though to us things seem going on much as usual, except that we greatly miss your father, and his quiet influence for good. I have still got your things, Owen, but they are ready for you whenever you want them."

"I am afraid it will be a long time before I can have them, sir. There is no room to put them here, and I do not know when I shall be able to earn money enough to buy them back. I shall never win a fortune now, sir, as I used to wish to. I am afraid I shall always be a cripple." [63]

"I don't think there is much fear of that. You are young, and the bones soon knit together again. I have no doubt you will be as strong as ever by-and-by, though of course it will take time. But as for your fortune, I thought you had already obtained a large part of it," said Mr. Sturt, smiling kindly at the pale young face.

A bright smile flushed all over it, as Owen replied, "So I have, sir, in one way. I have got the best fortune now, for I belong to the Saviour, and I know He will give me just what I need. Only I meant I could not earn any money for a long time."

"Then occupy this leisure time in seeking more of the heavenly riches, and though you may be poor yourself, you can make many rich by giving."

"But I have nothing to give, sir, nothing at all."

"Can you not give grateful thanks and love to those around you, who so kindly look after you? And can you not give your voice and heart in prayer for those who yet know nothing of the riches of the Saviour's grace?"

"Yes," said the boy, slowly, "I can do that. And I have prayed, sir, often for uncle and Clarice."

"And God hears and answers. Your cousin tells me that it is mainly through you she has sought and found the Saviour; and your uncle is also seeking the same blessing. God is honouring you, Owen. Oh, keep always low down at His feet, and give Him all the glory. You came here wishing to gain riches, and God is giving you your desire, not in earthly coin, but in precious souls saved for all eternity. 'There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.' God give you grace to choose the lowly and the better way at all times through life." [64]

Mr. Sturt could not stay longer; he was only in Barmston for a short time; when Owen was strengthened and comforted by seeing his kind friend once more, and by his helpful words.

A few more weeks passed by, and Owen was able to accept a kind invitation from Farmer Netherclift to go and spend a month at Westbrook. The fresh country air, and the freedom, worked wonders for him, though his leg was still too stiff to enable him to go on the old rambling excursions that he and his friend Sam loved so much.

But they made the best use of their time together, and merry Sam learnt something of a joy he had hitherto thought little of. Owen visited all his old friends, greatly profited by Mr. Sturt's kind instructions, and at last returned to Barmston with a happy, thankful heart, resolved to be as industrious and active as possible, while yet keeping the heavenly riches foremost before his eyes; while diligent in business, to be fervent in spirit, in all things serving the Lord.



TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES:

Punctuation errors have been corrected without note.

Inconsistencies in spelling and hyphenation have been retained from the original except:
Page 34: Bramston changed to Barmston

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OWEN'S FORTUNE; OR, "DURABLE RICHES"

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™

electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in

paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to

provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements

concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.