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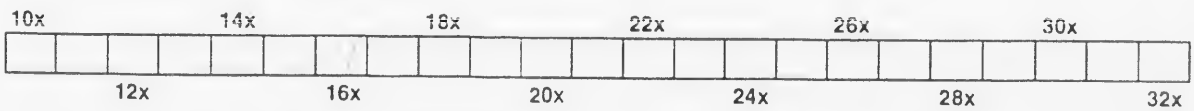

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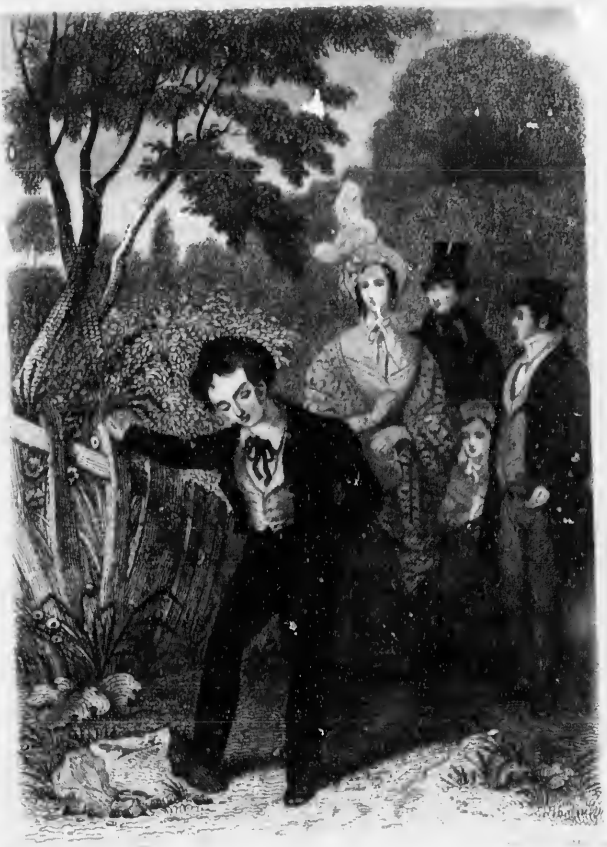

ROWLAND MASSINGHAM:

OR,

I WILL BE MY OWN MASTER.

BY

SUSANNAH STRICKLAND,

AUTHOR OF

PROFESSION AND PRINCIPLE; ADVENTURES OF LITTLE DOWNEY, KEEPSAKE GUINEAS, — HUGH LATIMER;

&c. &c.

The way of a fool *is* wise in his own eyes; but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise. PROVERBS.

LONDON:

DEAN AND MUNDAY,

THREADNEEDLE-STREET.

ROWLAND MASSINGHAM.

ROWLAND MASSINGHAM was a fine, well-grown youth of fourteen; the son of wealthy parents in the city, who had expended a considerable sum of money in giving their eldest son the education of a gentleman. Rowland possessed excellent abilities, and his talents were of that superior kind which made his fond and anxious parents anticipate that he would, one day, make a very clever man. But he possessed, likewise, a perverse and obstinate disposition, and would only learn

just what he pleased; and when his tutor, Mr. Hill, remonstrated with him on the impropriety of this conduct, he always made one uniform answer: "You cannot make me learn what I do not like, sir; and I am determined, in what so nearly concerns myself, to be my own master."

"When you arrive at years of discretion, and are a competent judge of the propriety or impropriety of your actions, Rowland," said Mr. Hill, "I will allow you the reins of self-government. At present, your conduct is presumptuous and improper, in the highest degree; and your mind will be very poorly regulated, if superintended by no better master than yourself. Do

you remember the Greek fable you translated to me the other day?"

"Perfectly well, sir. I likewise anticipate the reference you are about to make to it. But, after all, it is but a fable; and I am determined never to wear a cap of another person's fitting."

"Then I will thank you, Rowland, to reach down the volume, and read it again, to day, as it made so little impression on you, yesterday."

"I know it by heart," said Rowland; "and do not mean to bother my brains with it any more. It would be a sad waste of time to learn a lesson twice over, which I already know."

"I am no advocate for misspent

time," returned Mr. Hill; "I know how precious every moment is, and that we shall have to give an account for every minute we waste in idle and useless employments. I perceive, by the obstinate expression of your countenance, that you only choose to obey your own headstrong will, in preference to my command. For once, I will indulge you; and as you do not choose to read the fable, reach me the book, and I will only impose on you the task of listening."

Rowland reached the volume from the book-case, with a very sullen air, and sat down in the window-seat. He felt very much inclined to stop his ears, but that he dared not do: besides, he loved his tutor,

though, at times, he was exceedingly rude and impertinent to him. So he sat, in no very amiable mood, twisting the pen with which he had been writing his Greek exercise, and scattering the fragments of feather all over the carpet. There was little wisdom in this conduct, but it was the young gentleman's pleasure. He endeavoured not to listen to Mr. Hill; but, as he had not lids to his ears, to let up and down at his pleasure, and he possessed the sense of hearing to an acute degree, he could not fail, in spite of his inattention, to catch a part of what his tutor was reading. He tried to think of something else; but his imagination, which was generally roving on some wild-goose chase,

just then could not supply him with a single idea. He had no other resource but to listen, and he did this involuntary act with a very ill grace; while Mr. Hill read aloud the well-known fable of Phæton and the horses of the sun.

As he laid down the book, he fixed his eyes on Rowland. The young gentleman coloured deeply, and was very angry with himself for so doing. "What a fool I am to blush," he thought, "as Mr. Hill will certainly think I apply the fable to myself."

Finding that Rowland would give no opinion of the tale, without it was demanded of him, Mr. Hill asked him what he thought of Phæton's conduct?"

"Oh! sir, I admire him very much. He is a fine, spirited fellow, and always was a great favourite of mine."

"Then, I suppose, you made him the model of your conduct: really I pity the perverseness of your taste."

"I think he was perfectly right," returned Rowland, "to try his skill in horsemanship; and though he did get a sad tumble, and had his head split with a thunderbolt, it was worth making the experiment. Had he succeeded, he would have been pronounced a god. I dare say I should have done the same."

"I do not doubt it," said Mr. Hill; "and am very sorry to see such a resemblance in your conduct,

But beware, my young friend, lest you draw upon yourself the punishment of disobedience."

After Rowland had finished his tasks, and was left to enjoy the rest of the day in whatever manner best pleased himself, a whim suddenly popped into his head, that he should like to drive his father's carriage, which was going as far as Ryegate, to fetch his little sister, on her return from a visit to Mrs. Newman, their aunt.

"As Mr. Hill so illiberally compared me to Phæton, I have just a mind to show him that I can drive much better than the son of Apollo. I will ask papa to let me go down in the carriage to fetch Anne. I will make the coachman give me the

reins, when we are once off the stones."

Away walked Master Rowland, highly delighted with this scheme. He could hardly eat any dinner, for thinking of it; and after the cloth was removed, he made several ineffectual attempts to broach the subject to his father; but Mr. Massingham was engaged in conversation with two gentlemen, on business of importance; and all the answer Rowland received to his repeated applications was, a positive command to "hold his tongue."

He was not one to wait any body's leisure but his own. "Papa is busy," he said, "with those two disagreeable old men, and the carriage goes for Anne in half an hour.

There is no time to be lost. So I shall please myself, and go without asking leave: I think I am old enough to be my own master."

"Are you going down to Rye-gate, sir, to fetch Miss Anne?" said Jacob, the coachman, letting down the steps of the carriage.

"To be sure, Jacob; she would think it very unkind of me, after an absence of two whole months, to miss such a nice opportunity of being the first to welcome her home. But, coachee, you may just put up the steps of the carriage, again. I mean to ride by you, on the box."

"No, master Rowland, I am very sure you will not. The footman

sits by me, and it looks very much for rain."

"The footman may stand behind: That is his proper place," said Rowland, eagerly ascending the coach-box; "I mean to ride with you, to see the face of the country, as papa says. And as to the rain, here, Betty!" he continued, calling to the housemaid, who stood at the door, "fetch me mamma's best silk umbrella: that is large enough to cover us both."

"Indeed, master Rowland, I shall receive your mamma's orders, first," returned Betty, in a taunting tone: "a likely thing, indeed, that I am going to fetch my mistress's best silk umbrella with the ivory handle, that cost two guineas, only

last week, to please you. The old one is quite good enough. And here it is," she added, holding it up to him.

Rowland deliberately took the umbrella, and flung it into the kennel. "Now you may go and fetch the other, mistress Betty; and, for the future, mind what I say to you."

"Nay, for the matter of that," said Betty, scornfully, "you are not my master; and I will never live in any place to be ordered about by a young jackanapes, like you. I declare I will give my mistress warning, to-morrow."

"I wish you may hold in the same mind," returned Rowland; "we can have plenty better than you, any day; and, for my part, I

am quite tired with your inattention and ill-humours."

"I almost wish," said Betty, in her first burst of passion, "that Jacob might overturn the coach, and break your worthless neck,—I do."

"The prayers of the wicked never prevail?" returned the young gentleman, as the coach drove off. "I wonder mamma can keep that shrew in the house; I hate the sight of her."

The coachman and footman heartily laughed at what they termed their young master's humour, instead of pointing out to him the folly of such conduct: but Rowland had, among other bad habits, used himself to be so familiar with the

servants, and to order them about on all his petty errands, that they had ceased to treat him with the respect they always shewed to his younger brothers and sisters.

The coachman and footman very much disliked Betty; and they were highly diverted at her anger, and told master Rowland they thought he had served her just right.

"I think so, myself," said Rowland; "I was determined to let her know that I would be my own master."

They had scarcely cleared the streets of London, before Rowland was anxious to put his intended scheme into practice; but he hardly knew how, conveniently, to ask the question.

"Coachee," he said, "This is a very fine road."

"Yes, sir; a beautiful road to travel on."

"Is it such a hard matter to learn to drive, Jacob?"

"Not when your hand is strong to hold the horses," said the coachman; "it requires a great deal of skill to drive a carriage through London, where the stoppages occur so frequently, and a man seldom becomes a good driver without a a great deal of practice; but in the country a babe might almost hold the reins."

Jacob spoke figuratively; but Rowland eagerly interpreted his words to suit his own purpose. "I should like just to try if I could

drive for a little way," he said, in a coaxing tone.

"I would not trust the reins in your hands, Master Rowland, for a hat full of silver!"

"Why not, Coachee?"

"You would be sure to overturn the carriage, and break all our necks. I thought you were up to something when you wanted to ride by me; no, no, Master Rowland, I have too much value for our lives to trust such spirited cattle to your rash guidance."

Rowland was very angry, and very much disappointed at the ill-success of his adventure. He was not one to be abashed by trifles, and he determined to persevere in his application; adopting, therefore, a

haughtier tone, and giving himself an air of consequence he said, "Don't you know that *I* am your master, Jacob; and, consequently, you have a right to obey my commands."

"Thank you for the information, Mr. Rowland," returned the coachman, touching his hat with mock gravity; "I assure you it is quite news to me. You have long been your own master; but I can let you into a bit of a secret—you are no master of mine."

This answer put Rowland into such a passion that he declared he would kick with his feet against the footboard, and shout till he frightened the horses.

"Nay," said Jacob drily, as he

saw his petulant companion in the very act of putting his threat into execution;" if you persist in this sort of behaviour I shall be forced to dismount and bind a handkerchief over your mouth, tie your hands behind you, and put you into the carriage, with the footman to guard you; and I shall tell all the passengers I meet I am carrying a mad young gentleman to St. Luke's."

In spite of Rowland's late indignation he could not help laughing at this speech, and he sat ruminating in his own mind some plan to bring the coachman over to his wishes, till they were within a mile of Ryegate. The coachman happened to be a jolly soul who dearly loved a draught of good ale; he suddenly drew up

before a public-house by the road side, and asked the footman to lend him sixpence to procure a pot of his favourite beverage, as he had no money about him.

"I emptied my purse last night," returned John; "and have not a farthing to bestow upon myself."

Rowland drew his purse carelessly from his pocket. It was a heavy one. The coachman eyed it, but said nothing. "I am rather thirsty myself," he said; "the sun is very hot: I think we shall have a thunder-storm; landlord, bring me a glass of negus."

While the master of the house hastened to obey his orders, turning towards the coachman he said' "You are very warm, Jacob?"

"Yes, sir, driving is hard work in dusty weather like this," replied Jacob, taking off his hat and wiping his brow; "a draught of good beer would be worth a guinea."

"You may have one for less money than that if you please," said Rowland; "if you will let me only drive to the next mile-stone, I will give you half-a-crown."

Jacob looked perplexed: the mile stone was in sight: the road, just at that moment, quite clear of carriages; no harm could happen and he on the box. Deliberation on a point of duty is dangerous: when we know we are about to act foolishly all the arguing in the world will never make our conduct appear right, when we know it to be wrong. Jacob was

still biting the head of his whip, and revolving in his own mind that knotty question. "Shall I—or shall I not?" when the landlord handed his young master the glass of negus: it looked so cool, and Jacob was so hot, that the very sight of it instantly decided the question. Rowland was to drive to the next milestone; and Jacob never quitted the door of the public-house till he had expended the whole half-crown in liquor. With his head none of the lightest, he entrusted the reins to the impatient Rowland, who rejoiced to find himself, in this instance, his own master.

All went on swimmingly for a few minutes, and Rowland began to imagine himself a most skilful

charioteer, when two opposition stage-coaches, advancing at a rapid pace, threw the young coachman into such a flutter that, not knowing which side to take, he pulled the wrong rein with such a sudden jerk that the horses plunged on one side, and before Jacob could snatch the reins from his inexperienced hand, the wheel came in contact with one of the coaches, and the carriage was instantly upset and literally broken to pieces.

Fortunately for Rowland, he fell into a soft pile of dirt that had been scraped up by the road-side, and escaped without any personal damage, though his clothes were soiled all over. The footman, too, received no injury; but Jacob, being

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intoxicated, fell so heavily to the ground that he fractured his arm.

Rowland was in a fine fright when he discovered the mischief he had so successfully plotted. "This is worse than Phæton," said he mentally; "he only hurt himself; but I have broken my father's carriage to pieces, damaged materially two fine horses, and perhaps lamed the coachman for life. Well," he continued, after a long pause, "the mischief is done, and it can't now be helped; I must make the best of the matter at home. I do not so much mind papa and mamma scolding, as that cannot last for ever: but Mr. Hill will quiz me abominably for the time to come; and, perhaps, treat me with reading that detestable

fable again—which, by the bye, has proved no fable, but a sad reality, in my case."

Leaving the footman to take charge of Jacob and the broken carriage, he proceeded on foot to his aunt's. "Why, Rowland, how dirty you are? you surely have had a fall? Did you come walking?" said Mrs. Newman; "I thought my sister meant to send the carriage for Anne?"

"I came in the carriage," returned Rowland; "but an accident has happened by the way. Anne must return with me by the stage-coach."

"What is the nature of the accident?" said Mrs. Newman, rather

alarmed at the constrained expression of her nephew's countenance.

"The carriage was overturned," replied Rowland, regaining his usual composure; "and the coachman has broken his arm."

"You seem to consider it an affair of little importance," returned his aunt, dropping her work. "It is well the accident is no worse; but you must be aware, Rowland, that you were in imminent danger of losing your lives. That coachman is a sad careless fellow—I wonder my sister keeps him; besides, I hear he is given to drink. Pray how did the accident happen?"

Rowland, with all his faults, was not given to utter falsehoods; and he possessed too much independ-

ence, nay, it might almost be deemed effrontery, to deny any action, however mercenary or imprudent, which he had committed. His aunt had always sadly spoiled him, and trusting to her usual indulgence, and hoping also that she would break the matter to his father, he told her that he wished very much to try and drive for a little way; that he had bribed the coachman to consent to his wishes, and that he had succeeded in overturning the carriage.

His aunt listened to him with surprise and vexation. "Rowland," she said, "your conduct deserves a severe reprimand; and I hope the ill success of this adventure will warn you, for the future, to be

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guided by others, instead of always relying upon yourself. Your conceit deserves a punishment, and I trust Mr. Hill and your father will lecture you well upon the subject. I shall write a note to the latter, and state the particulars, without depriving you of the only merit you possess. I shall certainly say, you had the grace to acknowledge yourself the author of the catastrophe."

Rowland was more hurt by his aunt's gentle manner than he would have been had she scolded him. He had expected a sharp rebuke, and had prepared his answers accordingly; he was, therefore, almost disappointed at her mildness. She talked to him a long time on the

impropriety of his masterly conduct, and he was nearly convinced of his folly, when a lovely little girl about two years younger than Rowland, entered the room ready equipped for a journey.

"Ah! Rowland!" she cried, flinging her arms round his neck; "how glad I am to see you—How is dear papa, and mamma, and all the little darlings at home? How kind it was of you to come and fetch me, I suppose papa sent the carriage to take my luggage?"

"Yes, my dear," replied her aunt, "he did—but your brother, wishing to try what sort of a Jehu he should make, has overturned the carriage, broken it to pieces, da-

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maged two fine horses, and fractured the coachman's arm."

Anne who was one of the meekest creatures in the world, stood aghast at her brother's rash conduct, fixing her blue eyes in utter astonishment, first on him, and then on Mrs. Newman,—"The poor coachman," she said, "how sorry I am for him! oh dear, what will papa say? You may as well prepare yourself, Rowland, for a dreadful scolding; I shall be quite afraid to go home."

"And so shall I," thought Rowland; "I wish my aunt would invite me to stay with her a day or two till papa's anger has a little subsided. Dear aunt," he continued aloud, "I wish you would send

that note by your footboy, and let me remain with you this week?"

"No, indeed, Rowland, I should be very much your enemy, if I granted your request. I will send the boy to order a chaise from the nearest inn to take you home; your father must know this accident sooner or later: and I advise you, honestly to confess your fault, ask his forgiveness, and promise never to act so for the future."

"So I would, my dear aunt, but Mr. Hill will laugh at me."

"Laugh at you!—I should think Mr. Hill a very unfit preceptor for youth, if he could laugh at such conduct as your's, Rowland."

Her nephew was thinking of the fable of Phæton; but, as he did

not choose to inform his aunt of the anecdote, she could not possibly divine the meaning of his words.

His heart died within him, when the postillion's rap at the door announced that all was ready; he thought his sister's parcels were sooner arranged than young ladies' packages generally are; and the tears actually sprung to his eyes when he bid his good aunt farewell.

He was so very cross all the way home, and answered Anne's questions as to the domestic welfare of the family so tartly, that he even exhausted her abundant stock of patience.

"Really, Rowland, you are so very testy to-night. I wish papa

had not sent you to fetch me, for more reasons than one."

"My father did not send me," returned Rowland, pettishly, "I came of my own accord."

"Why, you surely did not leave home without your parents' leave?"

"And pray, Miss Anne, what occasion was there to ask any body's leave? I think I am old enough to please myself."

"I am afraid you will find yourself greatly mistaken, my dear," returned Anne: "this makes your breaking the carriage just ten times worse than it was before—I dare not think how angry papa will be."

"You are one of Job's comforters, Anne; as I have heard mamma's

maid say—I am sure I wish, with all my heart, I had never left home."

"We shall soon be there now," said Anne, looking wistfully through the window of the chaise; "I see we turned into Threadneedle-street."

"Indeed!" cried Rowland, growing very pale—"then my trials will soon commence."

Mr. Massingham lived in the centre of the city, and kept a large wholesale stationers' shop, in which he had amassed a fine fortune; and when the chaise stopped at the door, Rowland was so agitated that the driver had twice to desire him to alight before he found sufficient courage to obey the summons.

He held his aunt's note, tightly

grasped in his hand, which he considered in the light of a petition, on which he might build hopes of pardon. He begged Anne to alight first; a request she readily obeyed, as she had not seen her kind parents for many weeks, and had a thousand things to tell them about her pleasant visit, and a great many pretty toys to show them that Mrs. Newman had taught her how to make. She had worked a rich lace pelerine for her mamma, which had been admired by all her friends at Ryegate; and she was very anxious to present it with her own hands to her parent. Her uncle had bought her a nice writing desk, and her aunt an elegant work box, and various other treasures, which

Anne was eager to display to her brothers and sisters; so that the little lady was as happy as Rowland was miserable; and to add to his mortifications, Betty came to the door, light in hand, to welcome her young mistress home.

Poor Rowland!—The sight of her ugly crabbed face heightened his ill-humour, which had already gained a degree of petulancy that was almost intolerable to himself.

"So she has come to exult in my misfortune?" he thought. "I could almost imagine, by the spiteful way she eyes the driver, that she is perfectly acquainted with the whole affair:" Nor was Rowland mistaken.

The footman had returned home, and informed Mr. Massingham of

the whole catastrophe; and though he had, very benevolently, shielded Rowland as much as possible from his father's indignation, Mr. Massingham was extremely displeased with his son, particularly as he went down to Ryegate without his permission.

The damage to his property could not be less than £100, and he, as a man of business, knew that such a sum was no trifle, and could not be easily obtained. It was fortunate for Rowland, that he did not arrive on the first burst of his father's displeasure; or, for the first time since he entered his teens, he might have met with severe personal chastisement, which he, certainly, richly deserved.

Betty, who had learned from John the whole particulars, felt, I am sorry to say, a malicious pleasure in Rowland's discomfiture, and she came to the door on purpose to show him that she could return, with interest the insolence with which he had treated her.

She helped Anne from the chaise, and welcomed her home with the most extravagant expressions of pleasure; then, turning to Rowland, said in a sarcastic tone:—"You seem in no great hurry to alight, Master Rowland, this evening, though you mounted the coach-box so expeditiously this afternoon: I thought, by the airs and graces you played off, that all was not right. Well, your papa is in a

desperate passion, and will teach you, for once, who is master, and who is not."

Rowland was so excessively annoyed by this speech, that he so far forgot himself as to sneer in Betty's face. "You disagreeable creature," he said; "if I disliked you before, I hate you now."

"Who cares for your likes and dislikes? not I, I trow," returned Betty, tossing up her head; "you will catch that which will learn you how to behave yourself for the future."

Papa has a right to find fault with me, but you have not," cried Rowland, springing from the carriage; and, his head being full of the heathen mythology he was

studying, he could not forbear telling her, as he passed, that she was a second Medusa.

"You are a wicked young gentleman to call me such bad names; I am no seducer," returned Betty, whimpering; "I declare I'll tell your Pa to-morrow; you will meet with your deserts to-night."

With a face flushed with the deepest crimson, Rowland entered the parlour. Anne was already in her mother's arms, and had received the salutations of her father and Mr. Hill.

On the entrance of the culprit, whom Mrs. Massingham had always blindly indulged, she rose, and taking her daughter's hand, quitted the room, leaving Rowland alone

with his offended parent and Mr. Hill.

When his mother disappeared, all Rowland's courage forsook him; unable to advance or recede a single step, he stood, with the half-shut door in his hand, trembling from head to foot.

For some minutes, Mr. Massingham did not speak, but fixed his eyes on the countenance of his son, with such a stern and searching glance, that Rowland felt more embarrassed by his scrutiny than if he had addressed him in an angry tone. He shrank from his observation; and was on the point of retiring, when Mr. Massingham bade him advance, and shut the door.

Rowland shut the door, but moved not a step nearer.

"I see, sir," said his father, "you know your place best; when you turned coachman, you forgot the situation you held in this room, as the son of a gentleman: but stand where you are; Mr. Hill and myself are not used to be on terms of familiarity with servants. Pray who gave you leave to visit Ryegate this afternoon?"

"You were busy, papa, with the two strange gentlemen who dined here to-day; I meant to ask you to give me you permission to fetch home my sister, but every time I opened my mouth you bade me hold my tongue."

"In your usual inconsiderate and

thoughtless manner, you chose, very impertinently, to address me while engaged in affairs of consequence. Your duty should have taught you to wait my leisure; but you thought fit to be your own master, to pave your own way, and to consider the consent of your parents of no moment, while following the bent of your own headstrong wishes. You were not contented with committing such a flagrant breach of your duty, but you must bribe my servants to forget theirs. The art you adopted to attain your object, has wounded my mind far more than the mere loss of my property. I blush for my son; and, if it was not for your age, should certainly inflict on you

the personal chastisement you so richly deserve."

"Indeed, Rowland," said Mr. Hill, addressing him in his turn, "you have every reason to be thankful to God for having spared your life. Had you died in the commission of such an act of disobedience, I am afraid you would have met with an awful punishment. After what passed between us in the morning, I did not so soon expect you to verify the fable."

Rowland, all this time, stood in the same posture, without once venturing to raise his eyes, twisting his Aunt Newman's note into every possible shape that half a sheet of paper could assume. He quite forgot what it was, or how it came

it came into his possession, till suddenly twirling it round, he perceived the direction, and thinking the perusal of it would, for a few minutes, divert his father's attention, he carefully smoothed it between his hands, and placed it timidly on the table before him.

After Mr. Massingham had perused the note, he handed it over to Mr. Hill. "you see," he said, Rachel perfectly agrees with us; however, I am glad he did not deny his fault." Then turning to the disappointed Rowland, who thought, at least, that his aunt had written to implore his pardon, he asked him who, he supposed, was to pay for the damage he had done?

"I do not know," returned Row-

land; but he thought at the same time that his father must.

"Well, then, I will inform you," replied Mr. Massingham: "the person who occasioned it."

"I—I—," said Rowland, the golden vision of the hundred guineas his rich god-father had given him on his birth-day, darted into his mind. "Surely you do not mean to take from me my god-father's present?"

"You have forfeited it," returned Mr. Massingham: nay, it will not replace the carriage, much less pay Jacob's doctor's bill: I shall, in addition, have to stop your weekly allowance for a year to come, to make good this day's frolic. It would be an act of injustice to my

other children for me to pay for your misdemeanors."

Of all the punishments his father could have devised, this touched Rowland most to the quick. His god-father was a very rich banker, who had no children of his own, and was very fond of Rowland. He had presented him with a hundred pounds on his last birth-day, which his father had promised to buy into the funds for him, and permit him to spend the interest in purchasing books, or any useful articles of which he wished to to become the possessor.

Never did a miser exult more over his treasure than Rowland did over this acquisition of wealth. If he had been proud and masterly before,

this present had rendered his company intolerable to his brothers and sisters. He was always boasting of his hundred pounds, and laying them out, to their mortification, in a thousand different ways; till he gained among his playfellows, the nick-name of the "hundred pounds boy." His youngest sister, Susan, lisped; and, though only three years old, did not wish to be backward in bestowing on her wealthy brother the title his folly had gained him; but, unable to pronounce such a long word, the little thing, in the drollest manner in the world, called him the *howdrum powdrum* boy.—The rest of the children eagerly adopted the blunder, and poor Rowland was known to every boy

in the street by this comical denomination.

Yet, in spite of all these mortifications, Rowland thought it a very comfortable thing to be rich; and the possession of the money repayed him for the sneers of his comrades. "When I grow older," he would say, "I will buy a horse, and a saddle, and a whip, and take delightful rides into the country.—Those who laugh at me, would be very glad to be as rich as I am; and it is only their envy which makes them affect to despise a good they do not possess." Perhaps Rowland was right: those who make a boast of their worldly goods, generally draw upon them the envy

or contempt of their neighbours;—he had succeeded in doing both.

The idea, therefore, of losing this long-prized present, was deeply mortifying to him, after all the boast he had made of it; it would diminish his power among the household; it would reduce him to the same level with his less-fortunate brethren; and then, which was the most bitter thought of all, he would still be called the *howdrum powdrum* boy, without having the satisfaction of shaking his heavy purse in the face of his tormentors.

All these things occurred instantaneously, as it were, to his mind; and so overcame him, that, in spite

of his boasted age and courage, he burst into a hearty fit of crying.

"I have done with you, sir," said his father; "you have heard your sentence, and may now walk off to bed."

It was not in Rowland's nature to part so quietly with his treasure, without making one appeal for the mitigation of his punishment; summoning courage, therefore, he said, "You surely do not mean to enforce this punishment, papa, and make me pay for the mischief I have done?"

"Your own sense of justice, Rowland, should have made you the proposer of that which I am obliged to demand. You ought to be very

glad that you have it in your power to make restitution."

"Yes, but this was an accident."

How, sir?—Do you call your going to Ryegate, without my leave, an accident?—Or making my coachman tipsy, an accident?—Or driving my carriage, an accident? These things were all premeditated, and you took great pains to carry them into execution; you must, therefore make good the damage occasioned by your own folly and wickedness. You have laid out your hundred pounds to great advantage, in losing both principal and interest."

Rowland bit his lips and hung down his head; but, as he found all remonstrances would be to no

purpose, he slowly withdrew and retired weeping to bed.

The loss of his money now put him into such an ill-humour, that he could not sleep. He did not feel so penitent for the past as he ought to have felt, and he lay, revolving, in his own mind, every possible means by which he might reclaim his property.—"Papa will never put his threat into execution," he thought—"He dare not take my money, without my leave." But Rowland found, for the first time, that he was not exactly his own master; and that his father was invested with a power which it was in vain to resist. He was, as I have before stated, a boy of quick parts, and he determined to write

a petition to his father, and to get all the children to sign it; intending to present it to him on the morrow. He now lay awake, hour after hour, trying to compose one to his mind, but not a single idea occurred to please him. He sat up in the bed, and rubbed his eyes, and looked out of the window; but it was a dark night, and, consequently, there was no moon: no; nor even a single star to inspire him with a bright thought—and not being able to indite a petition in rhyme, he rose early and wrote the following in prose:—

The Petition of Rowland Massingham, to his principal creditor, and much honoured Father:

Sheweth,—That his humble peti-

tioner hath often heard him avow that it is a sad thing for any person to be brought into a state of bankruptcy; which his petitioner's dictionary inform him is, when a man's creditors become the lawful possessors of his property. As he, the petitioner's honoured father, is his sole and principal creditor, he prays him to mitigate the severity of his sentence, and not bring him, at his tender years, into a state of insolvency. If he, his humble petitioner's honoured father, will grant his request, his petitioner will, for the time to come, strive to amend his conduct, and ever pray."

Rowland was vastly satisfied with this performance; and he proceeded to the nursery, petition in hand,

to prevail on the rest of the children to sign it.

The children greeted in a breath with—"Well, Rowland!—so you have lost your hundred pounds."

"It is not gone yet," said Rowland:—"and I should be much obliged to you all, if you will sign this paper."

"What is it for?" asked the little folks eagerly.

"It is a petition to my father, to request him to restore my money," returned Rowland.

"Then I am sure I shall not sign it," said Robert, "you have always made such a fuss about your money, that I am heartily glad it is gone."

"You should not say so, Robert," cried Anne, taking the paper and

stepping to the table and writing her name beneath it with a pencil—"It is very naughty to bear malice. I dare say, if Rowland recovers his money, he will never brag over us as he used to do—Here, take my pencil, and write your name."

"Not I," returned Robert, trying to twitch the paper out of his sister's hands. "Mr. Hundred Pounds is Mr. No Pounds now—ha! ha! ha!—Let me see, Rowland, how your poverty becomes you?" he continued, walking up to his brother, and looking roguishly in his face—"Umph! I think I shall set up being my own master now."

"That you never shall, while I exercise the rights of eldership over you," cried Rowland, seizing him

by the collar, and dragging him to the table—"You shall sign your name, or I will soon make you confess who is your superior."

But finding Robert, who was only a year his junior, was nearly as strong as himself, and that he could not compel him to do the thing he required, he said, in a milder tone, "just put your name to it, Bob, and I will give you a shilling."

"It is poor bribery which comes out of an empty purse," returned Robert drily. "You have not a single farthing you can now call your own; you will never be able to come in with such an air of consequence, and tell us you have just received your dividend from the bank—ha! ha! ha! The hundred

pounds boy is become even like one of us, and is glad to petition my father's charity. Let me advise you, Rowland, to go round the parish; perhaps you may collect a few shillings that way, ha! ha! ha!"—"Ha! ha! ha!" reiterated all the children.

Rowland was in a fever of passion; he looked indignantly from one to the other. The contagion was general; even little Susan was holding her sides, and trying to lisp out, "the poor Humdrum Powdrum boy."

"I see nothing to laugh at," said Rowland, fiercely.

"Because you cannot see yourself," returned Robert; "however,

I will have compassion on you;" hand me the paper."

"You will tear it to pieces," cried Rowland, holding it in both hands for better security.

"No, indeed, I will not, nor burn it either."

Rowland considered it a most excellent performance, far superior to any of the speeches which he was generally obliged to read aloud from the Parliamentary debates to his father of an evening, and with great reluctance he trusted the precious paper out of his own hands.

Robert who, in his way, was quite a humourist, received it at arms' length with mock gravity, and, after signing his name, sprang

on the table, and began to deliver it aloud, not only to the diversion of the children, but for the benefit of all in the street—the windows, on account of the warmth of the weather, being open.

"Humble," he said, "is it possible that you could get any pen to write the word humble?"

Rowland's passion had now risen to such a pitch of fury, that he sprang forward with the intention of knocking his brother down; but Robert jumped lightly off the table, and, eluding the intended blow, flung the petition out of the window.

"Oh dear," said Anne, "what have you done, Robert? Mr. Basset's shop-boy has just picked it up, and it will be public in a few minutes."

Rowland's pride took the alarm, and he postponed the beating he was in the very act of administering to the laughing Robert, to rescue his petition from the hands of the group of boys beneath.

"Run, Rowland, run!" cried Robert, following him to the head of the stairs. "It's all over the town by this time; and, before night, you will have half a dozen letters by the two-penny post, with private donations. Ha! ha! ha!" In the hall, somebody grasped Rowland's arm; his headlong career was stayed by his father.

Without looking up, Rowland tried to extricate himself from his hold. "I can't stay a moment; pray let me go. I *must* rescue my peti-

tion from the hands of those insulting boys."

"Rowland!" said his father in a stern voice. Rowland's eyes were immediately opened, he recognised his father, and was in a moment tongue tied.

"Pray whither are you going so fast?"

"Only just across the street."

"What business have you there?"

"Oh, sir," returned Rowland, covering his face with his hands, to conceal his confusion, "I wrote this morning a petition to you to mitigate my punishment, and restore my property; and Robert has very ill-naturedly thrown it out of the window; Basset's shop-boy is reading it aloud in the street, and I

might as well employ the town cryer. Do pray allow me to step to him and make him restore it?"

"And by so doing render your folly more conspicuous," returned Mr. Massingham, hardly able to forbear from laughter. "The boy will, doubtless, consider it a good joke, and will gratify your pride, Rowland, by making you a public character some years before you expected."

"But, dear papa, consider the ridicule and mortification this disagreeable circumstance will expose me to. I shall never be able to leave the house without a train of idle boys following me for the future, and offering to subscribe to my petition."

"Your name truly is likely to have

but an ill savour," returned Mr. Massingham; "I hope this adventure will cure your inordinate love of popularity."

"Indeed, papa," cried Rowland, wringing his hands, "I would rather have broken my neck yesterday than had this humiliating circumstance happen to me to day."

"That would have been no laughing matter, Rowland; while this is. Your brothers and sisters laugh at you; the whole street will laugh at you; and if any person who has felt your insolence should take it into his or her head to put it into the public papers, the world will laugh at you."

Rowland's vexation was complete; he burst into tears.

"You see, Rowland," continued Mr. Massingham, "that guilt always carries with it its own chastisement, and a few hours badly spent bring with them the punishment of years." Rowland made no answer, for Robert popping his curly head into the hall said, in a facetious voice, "Rowland, if you want to regain your petition, a man has just pasted it on the opposite wall, and a crowd of people are collected round to read it."

There was something so exquisitely ridiculous in the whole scene, that Mr. Massingham, with difficulty, kept his risibility; yet turning to Robert, he sharply reprehended him for appearing to enjoy so highly

a circumstance, which was so annoying to his brother.

"I cannot help laughing, papa," returned Robert, giving way to a fresh peal of merriment. "It would make my sister's cat Tib laugh, if she could comprehend what was going forward. I do not mean to vex Rowland; but I think he ought to ask my pardon, for he has put me in great jeopardy of my life."

"But, Robert, if you had any commiseration for his present uneasiness, you should restrain your feelings. His folly does not excuse your want of humanity," returned Mr. Massingham. "Tell my porter to bring in the paper, and follow me into the study."

By the time the children were all

assembled, the porter arrived with the petition, and with a broad grin delivered it to his master.

Mr. Massingham read it, and then turning to Rowland, asked him if he fully meant to adhere to the last clause.

Rowland replied in the most earnest manner in the affirmative.

"And you, Anne; your signature I find stands at the head of the list. Do you wish me to forgive your brother?"

"Certainly, papa; or I should not have put down my name."

"And you, Robert?"

"Oh, that was an act of compulsion," said the laughter-loving boy; "I am proof against bribery and corruption, and will not own to the

name written under such circumstances; but if Mr. Hill will give me a pen, I will freely give my vote." He went to the table to sign his name; and Rowland almost forgave him for the vexation he had caused him by his thoughtless levity.

Robert returned the paper; "Very well, sir, you have I think made the amende honourable. But stay; here is a cross."

"Dat my mark," lisped forth little Susan. "Then you wish me to forgive Rowland, my little maid?" said her father, lifting her up at the same time in his arms and kissing her.

"Oh yeth; give poor Roly his howdrum powdrum again."

"No," said Rowland, "I will never be called by that odious name for the future; dear papa, if you are indeed so good as to forgive me for my past conduct, keep the money if that can atone for the mischief I have done, or divide it equally among my brothers and sisters; I never wish to touch a farthing of it again."

Mr. Massingham granted this last request, and if Rowland could have forgotten the ridicule which had been attached to him in the morning, he would have been as happy as ever.

But every time Robert laughed, or the children exchanged merry glances with each other, he fancied they were making game of him, or

that he was the object of their mirth.

However, he determined for the future to try and forget his old maxim of "I will be my own master;" and for a week succeeded. Mr. Hill very kindly never alluded to his late adventure, and was rejoiced to perceive such a change for the better in his pupil's conduct.

But bad habits, that have been a long time indulged, require constant and unremitting perseverance entirely to overcome; and Rowland soon grew tired of submitting to the control of others. The old leaven would at times, appear; and though carefully concealed from his parents, was often exercised on the domestics and his brothers and sisters.

One morning, Robert and Rowland were studying their lessons, preparatory to Mr. Hill's appearance in the study, when Robert said that gentleman had left him to choose the fable he was to translate that morning from the Greek. "And which have you chosen?" said Rowland, carelessly.

"One I think I shall like very much; Phæton setting the world on fire."

"You chose that on purpose to vex and mortify me," cried Rowland, springing from his seat, and trying to wrench the book out of his brother's hand. "You shall not read it."

"Rowland," returned Robert calmly, "I thought you had been

punished enough for exercising authority over those who are not bound to obey you; I shall certainly read the fable without consulting you. Had you expressed your dislike to it in a mild voice, and requested me civilly not to read it, I would have complied with your wishes."

"I shall certainly never stay to examine my words when speaking to a younger brother," returned Rowland; "put down the book directly." Robert held the volume firmly at one end, and Rowland pulled it with all his strength at the other. The consequence of this fray was, as might be expected; the young gentlemen succeeded in tearing both the covers off.

They looked very foolishly, it must be confessed, when Mr. Hill entered the room, and enquired the cause of the noisy altercation he had just heard. Robert pointed to the tattered leaves of the book that strewed the floor, and related the plain facts; expressing, at the same time, his ignorance of his brother's dislike at what he considered a very fine fable.

Mr. Hill knew Rowland's reasons for objecting to it, though Robert did not; and turning to him, he said, "Had you paid a proper attention to that fable, Rowland, it would have spared you a great deal of uneasiness. But I am surprised you should censure your brother for wishing to profit by a moral that was so entirely lost upon you."

"I do think," replied Rowland,

putting his hands involuntarily to his ears; "I should go mad if I were to listen to it a third time. If I had never heard it, I should never have thought of attempting to drive the carriage; I should have stayed at home, and the accident could not have occurred."

"Why, surely, Rowland, you did not wish to rival the worst charioteer in the whole heathen mythology?" said Robert, with a sly grin; for his love of the ludicrous always overcame his prudence. "I had better not read it, for fear of being bitten by the same mania; but I am not so vain as to imagine that either my brains or yours, Rowland, will ever set the Thames on fire."

"Sir, you are very impertinent," cried Rowland, "and I will not put

up with your insolence; so you had best hold your tongue."

"Rowland, this is somewhat in your old strain," said Mr. Hill, parting the angry brothers; "I am sorry to perceive that you have so soon abandoned your good resolutions. How can you expect Robert to attend to your passionate and overbearing manners, when you cannot even take a playful joke from him?"

"He has no right to indulge them at my expence."

"You have put yourself in his power, Rowland, and I am sorry to find that he can abuse it, though in a different manner, as well as yourself But, as we are on the subject of Phæton, own to me candidly that

you undertook that expedition to Ryegate on purpose to vex me, and out of pure contradiction to my advice."

Rowland was no utterer of falsehoods; he coloured like scarlet, and after a few minutes of painful and embarrassing silence, frankly confessed the truth, and asked Mr. Hill to forgive him.

"How can you expect me, Rowland, to forgive you, when you can bear malice against your brother, for such a trifle. I wish you would oftener call to mind that golden rule, "Do unto others as you would be done unto yourself." You are very fond of exercising an authority which does not belong to you; but I find you are very chary of yielding obe-

dience to those who have a right to demand it."

"Sir," said Rowland, "you seem to think me very criminal in merely endeavouring to establish my independence. Is not every man his own master?"

"Certainly not. No man who is placed under the authority of another, can justly be termed his own master. His actions, too, are regulated by the laws of his country; and though he certainly could go on the high-way and put a pistol to the head of a fellow creature, or break open his neighbour's house and murder him in bed, he must forfeit his life for exercising his free will in so unprincipled a manner. Even the king himself cannot do as he pleases

without first consulting his responsible ministers. And can you, a boy of fourteen, who are placed under the control of your parents and masters, imagine that you are more independent than the monarch whose subject you are? There are relative duties, Rowland, that one human being owes to another, which he cannot transgress without violating those laws which unite society together. And though you certainly have the power of committing crimes, you are not sufficiently your own master to avert the punishment which follows the perpetration of them."

"And who gave the king the power of exercising any authority over his fellow-men?" said Rowland, "for I suppose he differs very little

from others in personal appearance, and is subject to the same bodily infirmities?"

"Divested of his regal state, he is no more than one of his poorest subjects. But it has pleased God to invest him with that dignity, and his authority has received the sanction of his countrymen, and is, fortunately for us, regulated by wise and just laws; so that he cannot abuse his power, or oppress and maltreat us. A good king will always consider the welfare of his subjects as nearly as he would his own; but you, Rowland, of your own accord, endeavour to exercise a lawless and despotic government over your brothers and sisters. Let me ask of

you, in my turn, from whence you received this authority?"

Rowland was silent, but he was still unconvinced; and determined in his own mind to persevere in having his own way.

"Till you arrive at the age of one and twenty, you are called upon to yield implicit obedience to the commands of your parents. Your father can demand your services, as freely and absolutely as he does those of his hired servants; and it is your duty to obey him. Has he given you permission to enjoy the same privileges in his house which he exercises himself, and make you lord over your brothers and sisters."

"No, sir."

"You are a self-elected governor,

then? no wonder that you should find so few to attend to your commands. You are acting in open rebellion to the wishes of your parents, and are as criminal in that respect as the man that was hung the other day for treason."

"I cannot see how you can possibly compare me to a wicked traitor," said Rowland, indignantly.

"You are hourly guilty of the same offence, Rowland, for which that man died. He wished to be his own master: he thought that he could make better laws, and govern with more equity and wisdom than his sovereign. He was less fortunate than you were in making the experiment, and the sequel proved the extent of his folly."

Rowland now began diligently to study his Greek lexicon, to avoid any continuation of an argument which was likely to go against himself.

Shortly after this conversation, Mr. Hill was appointed chaplain on board a man-of-war; and Rowland, for a few weeks, was left to superintend his own studies.

This time he thought fit to employ in a very idle and unprofitable manner, and soon forgot the good advice of his kind and excellent tutor. His manners became as haughty and offensive as usual, and his old motto of "I will be my own master," was heard on every occasion.

The children regretted the ab-

sence of Mr. Hill, and shrunk with aversion from the hasty commands of their tyrannical brother. Robert, who possessed almost as much self-conceit as Rowland, constantly disputed his authority, which kept the house in a perpetual state of warfare. Mr. Massingham was advised by a friend to send Rowland to school to finish his education; where it was presumed he might meet with young men who would not put up with his insolence, and who might teach him the respect due to his superiors.

Rowland's education had always been superintended by a tutor; and the gentleman who had instructed him for five years prior to Mr. Hill, was so very good-natured, that he

had allowed his young pupil to gain a complete ascendancy over him. He had contented himself with making him a good scholar; and had wholly neglected his morals. Rowland thought he could dispute Mr. Hill's authority as easily as he had done that of his first instructor. He found himself mistaken; and was just beginning to reap the benefit of that gentleman's advice, when he was again thrown upon his own hands; as his father's business precluded him from attending to his children till the affairs of the day were settled.

Rowland did not object to going to school; indeed, it had always been his ardent wish. He possessed a great deal of ambition; and he

thought it must be a delightful thing to stand at the head of a class, and to have the opportunity of domineering over those whom nature had not endowed with so good a capacity as he imagined himself to possess.

Rowland was delighted at the prospect of seeing these hopes realized; and when Mr. Massingham expected the greatest opposition on his son's part, he was agreeably surprised to find him anticipating his wishes. Rowland was accordingly sent to a large public school. For a few days, the novelty of the situation pleased him. The progress he had made in his studies procured him the commendations of the masters, but it drew upon him

the envy of the scholars before whom he was placed.

They treated him in the same uncourteous manner with which schoolboys generally greet a stranger; and Rowland, who had been so long used to command at home, thought it would be as easy a thing to control others abroad.

But it happened there were many young gentlemen at that school who were much older, and even greater tyrants than himself; and they would not permit him to infringe on their rights, or exercise the same lawless privileges; consequently, Rowland was always engaged in some fray with the elders in his class; and before a quarter of a year had expired, he had

learned to become an excellent boxer.

So great indeed was the prowess of his arm, that many boys older and stronger than himself, shrunk from a combat with Rowland Massingham. In order to increase his power, he took under his protection those boys who dared to resist the tyranny of their elders, and had the satisfaction of becoming the leader of a party, and of dividing the class to which he belonged into two regular factions. A young entleman of the name of Morley headed the first party, and was, by his adherents, denominated the King; while Rowland's followers bestowed on him the title of the Protector.

Rowland's prime minister and

bosom friend was a sprightly, intelligent youth, of the name of Fletcher; but so eccentric in his manners and pursuits, that he was the general butt of the whole school. Rowland admired his abilities, which were very fine, and invited him so pressingly to join his party, that Fletcher, who was constantly tormented by Morley, for being a book-worm, was glad to escape from his persecutors and accept the protection that Rowland so liberally offered. Fletcher was generally called, out of mockery, the *Professor*, because all his leisure hours were employed in the study of abstruse sciences. His father was a surgeon of some celebrity, and Fletcher almost adored the profession. He would expatiate to

Rowland on the glorious science of chemistry, the noble study of anatomy, and the usefulness of surgery, till Rowland caught a portion of his enthusiasm, and he thought it would be a very delightful thing to know more of these studies, which his friend admired so much.

A few days after this very great intimacy had commenced, Frank Fletcher told Rowland that, if he would accompany him into his apartment, he would show him a treasure which he prized beyond the fine case of books, of which his learned uncle had made him the happy possessor.

Knowing his friend's great love of learning, Rowland was rather puzzled, and very curious to behold what this treasure could be; what

was his surprise, therefore,—nay horror—on seeing Frank carefully unlock his trunk, and produce out of a black velvet bag a human skull!

"There, Rowland!" he said, holding it up with an air of triumph. "There's a fine specimen for you! Only see how beautifully all the organs are developed. What a clever fellow this must have been!"

"What do you mean, Fletcher?" cried Rowland, shrinking back, with a feeling of disgust strongly depicted on his countenance; "what business have you with a man's skull hid up in your box? you surely have not murdered any one?"

After a long and hearty burst of laughter, Fletcher replied, "No, thank heaven, I have not the organ

of combativeness very strongly developed. I bought this specimen of the sexton of St. John's church. What! is it possible, Rowland, that you know nothing of the science?"

"What science? be brief; I cannot comprehend you?"

"Why, Phrenology?"

"I never remember hearing the name before. Is it any way connected with anatomy, that you have to study skulls? There, put it away, Fletcher; the very sight of the horrid thing makes me feel sick."

"That is because you know nothing about it. I did not till lately. I had heard my father discussing it, but fool like, thought it a ridiculous science and paid no attention to it. But the last time I went home, a

celebrated German professor was on a visit at my father's; I listened to his lectures, Rowland, and the whole truth burst at once on my mind. I procured a skull, marked out with all the different organs, and studied Spurzheim night and day, and have happily arrived at some proficiency in this most beautiful science. You shrink with horror from this relic of mortality; look at it again. Why, Rowland, you are not so weak as to be afraid of the emblem of your own head? Are not you aware that this discoloured piece of bone, that you view with such aversion, is the temple of the soul?"

Fletcher paused, quite out of breath, and Rowland laughed outright. "That may be, Frank; but

what knowledge will the studying and turning over that dismal looking thing impart? How can you bear to handle it?"

"A great deal," returned Fletcher, "before I studied Phrenology, I was always in hot water with my school-fellows; I often wondered why we should differ so much in opinion, and had no idea at that time that it arose from the different construction of our heads. I can now discern whether they have the intellectual, or the animal organs; and being of a very peaceable disposition, I always shun those boys in whom I perceive the organ of combativeness very strongly marked."

"And do they calmly submit to such an inspection?"

"They know nothing about it," returned Fletcher quickly; "I have kept it a secret from them, for they would quiz me terribly about it, and, perhaps, it would call all their bad organs into action, for few people like to hear the truth. But I take an opportunity of making my observations when they are not aware of my scrutiny."

"Well, Fletcher, it seems a strange thing to know the character of any one by these projections in the head. And as you choose your friends by the lumps and bumps in their pericraniums, for what good or bad organs did you take a fancy to me?"

This was a question Fletcher expected, for he knew Rowland's vanity

would instantly be on the alert, and that he would imagine he had a finer and cleverer head than any boy in the school. But for the credit of the science, Fletcher disdained to tell an untruth. "It must be owned, Rowland," he said, "that you have the organ of combativeness very strongly marked, and that of firmness also, till it becomes downright obstinacy; but, on the whole, you have a good head, though I never thought of examining it till this moment."

"I am sure," said Rowland, pettishly, "I have no bad organs in my head; or, if I have, I dare say you know nothing about it."

"That idea originates in the very great prominence of number ten,"

continued the young philosopher, not in the least disconcerted, and pertinaciously continuing his observations on Rowland's head.

"Number ten! and pray what may that folly be?"

"Why it must be confessed it is not a very wise organ," returned Fletcher, "and I am sorry you possess it so largely. It is self-esteem; or, to speak in plainer language, in your case downright vanity."

"Your's is a levelling argument," cried Rowland, starting forward and knocking poor Fletcher down, whose skull received a painful contusion by coming in contact with the empty tenement, on which he had lavished so many encomiums.

"Ah, Rowland! this only demon-

strates the truth of the science," returned Fletcher; slowly rising, and putting his hand to his head, as if to lull the pain the violent blow had occasioned. "This is the effect of your organ of combativeness, which has bestowed a bump where nature never gave one. Dear me! how my head aches."

Rowland was very much vexed with himself for having struck Fletcher so rudely; and, the more so, when he saw that his friend did not even reproach him for his violence. He offered him his hand, and asked his forgiveness in so earnest a manner, that the past was soon forgotten; and they were ere long on terms of greater intimacy than ever.

In spite of Rowland's affected contempt of Phrenology, he found a strange fascination in the study, till it became quite a mania; and all his leisure moments were employed in contemplating the heads of his school-fellows; even the sacred pericranium of his master did not escape his scrutiny. All the young gentlemen he disliked, he boldly avowed had vile heads.

Fletcher begged him to be more cautious in his remarks; but Rowland, ever his own master, cared not at whose expence he indulged his humour.

One rainy afternoon, when the young gentlemen could not saunter about the play-ground, but were confined to the school room, Morley offered to sell Rowland a pen-knife

for half a crown; and after he had agreed as to the price, he declared he had asked three shillings for it, and he would not take a farthing less.

Rowland wanted the knife, just then, very much, as he had lost his own the morning before, and he could not send any of the day scholars to purchase one; but yet he was not willing to pay more for the knife than it was worth, and he flung it back rather scornfully on the table. "There, take back your knife," he said; "I should be ashamed to be such a Jew as to make two prices on the article; but, to be sure, you cannot help it," he continued, casting as he ceased speaking, a significant glance at Morley's head.

"And pray, sir, what do you mean by your insinuations?" cried the other, reddening with passion, "I would thank you not to stare so impertinently at me."

"I was only looking at your head," returned Rowland sarcastically. "It certainly is a part of you, and the principal part of you, for it is thick enough. I should be sorry if it belonged to me."

"What fault have you to find with my head?" exclaimed Morley, starting fiercely forward, and clenching his fist in Rowland's face. "I demand an explanation of your words, or, perhaps, you may find my fist yet harder than my head."

"I was surprised, Mr. Morley,

that you, as a gentleman, should attempt to cheat me out of such a paltry sum as six-pence. I looked at your head, and it ceased to be a matter of wonder; your organ of acquisitiveness so largely marked, and your want of conscientiousness, lead you to the commission of dishonorable actions."

A dreadful battle was the result of this rash and unjust speech. The other boys gathered in silence round the combatants; but Rowland received such a complete overthrow, that he was not able to leave his bed for a week afterwards; and the boys jestingly said "that the King had beaten the Protector."

It might naturally be concluded that this adventure cured Rowland

of making observations on his school-fellows' heads, and drawing his own inferences from thence, relying upon his supposed knowledge of a science, with which he was merely acquainted by name. But he was one whom bitter experience could alone convince that he was in fault, and he rose from a sick bed, infatuated by the name of Phrenology.

Not contented with examining heads, he and Fletcher thought they should like to make casts of them; and, by so doing, follow the example of the more learned professors of the science.

It was with difficulty they prevailed on their school-fellows, at least those of their party, to submit to undergo the operation, which is

rather disagreeable, and to some even painful. But a few pieces of silver judiciously disposed bought more heads than would have been imagined, and the younger part of the community considered these ghastly likenesses in the way of playthings. Headed by Rowland and Fletcher, the whole school became phrenologists; they ceased to confine their speculations to their own heads, but violently seized on all the youthful passengers who were so unfortunate as to have occasion to pass the bounds of the play ground. Two or three strong lads held the little prisoner, while one of the learned expatiated on his head. The ushers tried to a stop to these proceedings, but their authority was

so stoutly resisted, that they were obliged to let this new whim die away as it had originated.

One fine afternoon, a very handsome Jew boy, or rather lad, of sixteen, entered the bounds to offer trinkets for sale. He certainly did possess a very noble looking head, which was adorned with a profusion of chestnut curling hair.

While one of the young gentlemen was choosing a watch-key, Fletcher, who had been carefully eyeing the youth's head, whispered to Rowland, "Massingham, what a fine cast he would make! I never saw such a beautiful forehead in my life. He would be quite an ornament to our collection."

"And we will have him, too,"

returned Rowland. "It will be no difficult matter to bribe a Jew." Then turning to Josiah Spires, for so the lad was called, he asked him if he would allow them to take a cast of his head.

Josiah had too much regard for his own personal safety to trust himself in any such hands. He well knew there was no law to be obtained when once he had entered the bounds of the school; and he civilly declined the honor intended him.

But Rowland was determined to take no denial, and finding he could not prevail on Josiah Spires with words, he pulled his purse out of his pocket, and offered him half-a-crown for a cast.

"I would not have it done for a guinea," said Josiah; carefully arranging the trinkets in his box, and moving to depart.

Thinking the bribe too small, Rowland intercepted his path, and held up a five-shilling piece. "No, no, master; money cannot prevail on me to submit to anything so repugnant to my feelings. I see I am likely to have no more purchasers among the young gentlemen this afternoon. Pray let me pass."

"You shall not go hence with your head on your shoulders," said Rowland, half in jest and half in earnest, "without you comply with my request. I have heard that a Jew would sell his soul for sixpence; but you will not dispose of

the mask of your head for five shillings. "Why, you fool, we will not hurt you."

"I do not choose to trust myself in your hands," said the youth, proudly and firmly; "and you have no right to detain me here." He looked round the deepening ring of scholars that enclosed him, and tears started into his fine dark eyes: "Gentlemen, I appeal to your generosity to let me pass."

"Let him alone, Rowland," said Fletcher. "He certainly has a right to please himself; we cannot compel him to submit to the operation."

"But he shall!" cried Rowland, calling all his old passions and domineering propensities into ac-

tion. "It is my pleasure; and I will have it so. Down with him, boys, and fetch here the plaister."

Many of the young gentlemen greatly enjoyed the frolic; and while others, afraid of venturing in the affair, withdrew to observe the sport at a distance, some of Rowland's companions rushed suddenly on Josiah, and flinging him to the ground, bound his hands behind him, and his feet together. The youth made a most desperate resistance, but he cried and struggled in vain.

"I think he has the organ of murder," says one.

"And the organ of number," cried another.

Could he be a Jew without that?" exclaims a third.

"How can we tell any thing about what he has, or has not," said Rowland, "with this mass of hair upon his head? Fetch the scissors, Smith."

Young Spires was very proud of his hair, which was one of his greatest personal ornaments, and he gave a heavy groan as Rowland commenced divesting his head of some of its rich clustering ringlets.

"I think you had better desist, Rowland," said Frank Fletcher, hastily pulling him by the sleeve: "I am afraid what you are doing is not altogether right."

"Let me alone, Frank. Now I have got him down, I will proceed.

In this instance, I must be my own master."

Exhausted by the violent struggles he had made to regain his liberty, the youth was now quite passive, and lay perfectly still.

"I thought we could bring him to," said Rowland: "I dare say he imagines himself as badly off as Joseph was among the Egyptians. The five shillings will work miracles, by and by."

The Jew made no resistance: perhaps he thought resistance among such a lawless train was only fatigueing himself to no purpose; so in about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, Rowland had succeeded in taking a very fine cast. But when he removed the mould from

Josiah's face, he was surprised at the rigidity of his features, and the motionless appearance of his whole figure, which lay stretched in utter supineness at his feet.

"Come, my fine fellow," he cried, unfastening his hands and arms, "I have done with you now. Here is the five shillings, and I doubt not my friends will subscribe something for you as well."

He spoke, but received no answer. A cold chill crept over him, and his limbs smote one against the other. He looked down on the face of the youth with an eagerness almost approaching to agony;—there was no colour on his cheek, no breath, apparently, on his lip; his face ex-

hibited the same deathlike appearance as the cast.

"Your patient seems in no hurry to rise," said Smith; "shall I give him a rousing shake."

"He is sulky," cried one.

"He is dead!" exclaimed another, in a more impressive voice.

Something like this dread had flashed upon Rowland's mind; these words confirmed his suspicions, and uttering a wild cry, he sunk down by the side of the lifeless boy, and buried his face in the dust.

"What is to be done?" cried all the scholars in a breath, exchanging glances of surprise and anxiety.

"I thought how all this nonsense would end," said Morley.

"Do not inform the masters,

John," cried the young students, crowding eagerly round him;—"Fletcher has gone for the young surgeon, his friend, who lives in the next street. Perhaps, he is only in a swoon."

"I am no tell-tale," returned Morley, slowly striding away;—"Rowland has often insulted me with his pretended knowledge; I pity him now."

Insensible as Rowland appeared to all that was passing round him, these words, from one he considered his enemy, did not escape him; and he could not help, in his own mind, feeling the superiority of heart displayed by Morley, in spite of the contempt with which he had always regarded his head.

But at that moment the science he had abused appeared a bubble. It had, perhaps, occasioned the death of a fellow-creature.

Fletcher, who was all along fearful of the termination of his colleague's rashness, had ran as fast as possible to fetch a young surgeon, who had been apprenticed to his father, and who had just entered upon business for himself. He had not many paces to go, and Mr. Adams instantly obeyed the summons.

On approaching the scene of action, the boys fell back to let him pass. Mr. Adams examined the youth, and found he was only in a deep swoon, which so nearly resembled death, that, to their inex-

perienced eyes, it might well be mistaken for it.

Wishing, however, to cure Fletcher and Rowland of their folly, and afford them a useful lesson for the future, he shook his head in a portentous manner, and confirmed their fears, by ordering the body to be removed to his surgery. Then turning to the young gentlemen present, he represented to them the dreadful crime they had been guilty of; and bade them prepare to give an account of their late conduct, as the life of a fellow creature would shortly be demanded at their hands. This information spread a universal panic through the whole school; and those who had stood aloof in

the whole affair, deemed themselves the wise and fortunate.

Rowland, the miserable Rowland, would have given worlds to have been situated like them. He begged Fletcher to throw away his skull before it did any further mischief; and to forsake a science altogether, which had occasioned such a frightful accident. Frank was very unhappy; but he was too much of a philosopher to blame the science instead of himself.

"We are in fault," he said;—"Phrenology had nothing to do with the tyrannical manner in which you insisted on taking the lad's head, whether he wished it or no, but arises from your use and abuse of power—from constantly acting

up to your favourite maxim, 'I will be my own master.' Dear Rowland, forget that disagreeable sentence for the future." Rowland promised he would, and wept himself to sleep.

In the mean time, Mr. Adams succeeded in restoring the Jew-boy to animation; and the poor lad was very thankful for his kindness, and not a little relieved at finding himself freed from his tormentors. Mr. Adams told him he would frighten them well for their late frolic; and dismissed Josiah in perfect health, and renewed spirits, from his surgery.

Though the young Jew was willing to forget and forgive the ill-usage he had received, his father

was not. When his son returned home, he eagerly demanded his box of trinkets, and the proceeds of those he had disposed of.

Josiah had left his box in the school-bounds, and the whole truth unavoidably became known. Mr. Spires was determined not to let such conduct go unpunished; and he went, the next morning, and demanded his property, and informed the master of the school of the whole affair.

It was some relief to Rowland to find Josiah still in the land of the living; but he and Fletcher, who were considered the ringleaders in the affair, though Fletcher had no more to do with it than his being the introducer of the science into

the school, had not only to make good the value of the box that had been lost in the scuffle, but were both expelled from the school. This was a severe mortification to both young gentlemen, who were very proud of the rank they held there, but Rowland, in secret, congratulated himself that matters were no worse, and returned home more experienced in the ways of the world, but not much improved in character.

His father was excessively displeased with his late conduct. It was his wish to bring Rowland up to the church, but the young gentleman, in spite of all his recent mortifications, obstinately persisted

in claiming the privilege of pleasing himself.

"I will never be a whining parson," he cried, after his father had expressed to him his wishes.—"I think I see myself holding forth from a pulpit, and arrayed in a gown and bands; papa will never catch me preaching sermons. I am not over fond of hearing them, and to have to write them would be an intolerable bore. Robert may be a clergyman. I mean to please myself, and study surgery."

His father would have prefered bringing him up to the church. His brother was a rich man, and had many valuable livings in his gift, and had promised to bestow one on Rowland, if he received a

clerical education. But Rowland obstinately persisted in declaring, if he was not allowed to study surgery with his friend Fletcher, he would not settle to any thing else; and his father knowing of old his hasty and positive disposition, reluctantly consented to apprentice him to an eminent surgeon, in great practice, to whom his friend Frank had been previously bound.

Rowland had never been in a surgery in his life. He had only received account of it from Fletcher; and the disgusting scenes it sometimes displayed, being peculiarly adapted to his ideas of the sublime, he considered it in the light of a little paradise, which afforded him abundant opportunities of pursu-

ing the noble study of anatomy. When Rowland entered it for the first time, a man was having a leg amputated; Rowland shrank back with horror, while Fletcher eagerly inspected the whole operation.

"I hope we shall not often witness such scenes as this?" cried Rowland, rendered quite nervous by the cries and groans of the patient.

"You will witness many finer operations than this, Rowland;" returned Fletcher. "How expeditiously Mr. Lewis took up the veins and arteries; did not you think it a beautiful sight?"

"I shall never be a surgeon," said Rowland shuddering, "really, Frank, I shall consider you a per-

fect monster, if you take pleasure in assisting Mr. Lewis in such cases."

"I am sorry for the sufferers who require our assistance," returned Fletcher, "but I glory in the science which will render me so useful in alleviating the sufferings of my fellow creatures; and so will you, Rowland, when you have been here a few days. But we must not stay here any longer. Our services are required in the medical department, we have some pills to make up."

"Some pills to make up!" reiterated Rowland, "I am sure I am not a going to waste my time, and soil my hands, by making up pills. Why does not Mr. Lewis

send them to be done up at the chemist's."

"Because he unites the business of an apothecary with the profession of surgery; come, Rowland, you must not be so nice. We must do it, and it is better to go through the job, disagreeable as it is, with a good grace."

"There is no *must* in the case—I will not do it!"

"You will be obliged to give up your old motto here, Rowland. Mr. Lewis is our master, and he will be obeyed."

Rowland followed Fletcher very sulkily into an inner room, fitted up with drawers and shelves, containing every sort of drug which is required in compounding medicines,

Rowland had a very nice nose, and he stopped at the door, and declared the smell of the room was so intolerable, he was determined not to enter it.

"Nonsense, Rowland! I am ashamed of your weakness, surely what I can bear you may."

"You may not be troubled with such a sensitive nose as I am," returned Rowland tartly, "you surely do not pretend to smell for me."

"You will get used to it in a minute," said Fletcher, "it is an evil of your own seeking, remember that. But come, Rowland, here are two old women waiting for the medicine, and you must overcome these scruples.

If you will not stay to assist me, return to the surgery, and wash Mr. Lewis's instruments, and clear away the blood from the floor."

"I will wait in a butcher's shop first," cried Rowland, seizing the mortar and beginning, very reluctantly, to beat up some drugs which Fletcher had just weighed out. The perfume arising from them so affected his olfactory nerves, that he quickly flung the pestle in a rage to the other end of the room, and contented himself with sitting on the counter, and reading the names of the different medicines, backwards or forwards, as the whim pleased his fancy.

Fletcher was vexed; he picked up the pestle, and carefully wiping

the dust from it, finished, with indefatigable patience, the task Rowland had so frowardly rejected.

Rowland was humming a tune, and kicking with his feet against the counter, as he watched Frank cutting out the pills, with the spatula, preparatory to rolling them into their circular form, when Mr. Lewis hastily entered, and demanded if they were done.

"No, sir," said Fletcher, "I shall have finished them presently."

"You must have strangely idled your time away, gentlemen, that you have been an hour preparing a few pills; why, Mr. Massingham, do not you assist your friend?"

"I never mean to make pills, sir," was Rowland's laconic reply.

"Then what induced you to come here, Mr. Rowland, if such was your determination?"

"It was my pleasure," returned Rowland, "I wished to learn surgery, and never suspected that I should be condemned to the dirty drudgery of making pills, and mixing potions, scraping lint, and preparing plaisters."

"But you find that such will often be your employment. You should have thought of all these disagreeable occupations before you insisted on your father binding you to me. I think it was your own voluntary act."

"Yes, sir, I imagined I should

like the profession, while the knowledge of it disgusts me."

"You are completely ignorant of what affect to despise, Rowland; you have seen one operation performed, and been set to make up a few pills, and you have the presumption to call this a knowledge of a science, which will require the attention and study of years. I hardly know which appears in the most conspicuous light, your folly or your ignorance. Opposition is useless; I am your master. You must either conform to the rules established here, and obey my commands, or forfeit your indentures."

This last sentence frightened Rowland, as he well knew the large

sum that had been expended on his education, and that his father had paid down a heavy premium with him to Mr. Lewis. He therefore slowly dismounted from the counter, and affecting to hold his nose with one hand, and commenced rolling out the pills with the other.

"You will soon be tired of practising these airs," said Mr. Lewis, with a smile. "I hope, in a few days, to see you conduct yourself in a more gentlemanly manner; I pity Mr. Fletcher, the trial you are giving his patience."

After Mr. Lewis left the room, Rowland made up the pills, out of pure contradiction, as badly as ever he could; they looked more in the shape of triangles, than any thing

else; and as he chose to persevere in this conduct, there was a general complaint made by half the old women in the parish, on the infamous and slovenly manner in which Mr. Lewis's young gentlemen made up their pills. They could only say, they wished the manufacturers had to swallow them.

Rowland, who had made them thus merely to vex, as he imagined, Mr. Lewis, was diverted with these complaints, and pursued, out of mischief, what he had first commenced in spite.

Custom reconciles us to almost any thing, however disagreeable, and Rowland's dislike to the profession he had chosen, began daily to diminish. The pleasure with

which Frank pursued it, seemed to reproach him for his own wilful negligence, and he no longer viewed a surgical operation with the horror with which it had, at first, inspired him; but an unlucky accident revived his dislike in a tenfold degree, and made him abandon it altogether. He was one day in the surgery, watching one of the elder students dissecting an infant's arm, which was in a very putrid state. The gentleman, seeing him take up the knife he had just been using, to examine the form of it, bade him be careful, as the instrument was sharp; and the least puncture of the skin would be attended with great danger, or might even produce death.

Rowland heard the caution, but, as usual, thought fit to please himself; and he kept turning the knife, from side to side, and trifling with it out of bravado, when Fletcher suddenly entering the room, caused him to start; in turning round, the instrument slipped in his hand, and slightly wounded his thumb. Every assistance was instantly rendered him, but inflammation rapidly commenced; and, for many weeks, Rowland was confined to his bed, and, during part of the time, was delirious with the anguish he endured. Though the wound, in the end, was healed, it left such a weakness on him, that a decline was apprehended, and Mr. Massingham granted his earnest request,

by permitting him to relinquish the profession, and go down to a pretty seat in the country, which he had lately purchased, for the recovery of his health.

Fortunately for Mr. Massingham, Robert was very willing to fill Rowland's place; and as he did not possess such a volatile and capricious disposition as his brother, Mr. Lewis consented to the exchange, and Rowland retired to his father's estate in Berkshire; glad to escape from a line of life he had himself insisted on pursuing, to enjoy the pure air of the country.

He found his mother and sisters comfortably settled in this charming retreat, and, as he was almost tired of having his own way, he con-

descended to consult their wishes, and to make his company as agreeable to them as possible.

He had never before visited the country for any length of time, and he was enchanted by the surrounding scenery, and experienced a great deal of pleasure in accompanying his sisters in their walks, or driving his mamma out in a pretty pony chaise; or even helping the girls to work in the garden, of an evening, Mrs. Massingham was so well satisfied with his conduct, that she wrote a long letter to her husband on the subject; expressing her pleasure, in perceiving such a manifest improvement in his son's character. The summer passed away too quickly for Rowland, who had en-

joyed all the bustle of harvest, and had felt a keen delight in being able to shake the clustering apples from the pendant boughs, instead of buying them ready gathered in Covent-garden market. He was quite in love with a country life, and always expressed great dissatisfaction at the idea of again becoming an inhabitant of the metropolis.

"Instead of these beautiful trees, in front of the windows, that add, with their rich verdure, so greatly to the prospect, I shall only behold a dull row of red houses; and shall scarcely be able to discern even the face of the heavens, beyond their tall formal chimneys.

"The moon does not shine with

half the lustre there, that it does here, shedding its soft rays through the airy foliage of these graceful trees. The sun scorches us with the fervency of his beams, but he does not form the beautiful contrast of light and shade, which is produced by their being reflected on grove and river, on sloping lawns, and distant hills, Dear mamma, I hope, for the future; I shall always live in the country."

"You might have your wish, Rowland, if you were to conquer your aversion to become a minister of the Church. You would then live in a much prettier part of England than this, and occupy a sweet picturesque old-fashioned, but very comfortable parsonage, at I——, in

Devonshire," returned Mrs. Massingham.

"No, mamma, I have firmly resolved never to be a parson; and nothing in this world shall induce me to change my mind."

"Make no rash promises, Rowland," said she; "you know not what unforeseen events may take place to bring about an alteration in your sentiments. You, certainly, would be very wrong to enter upon such a holy office against your own inclinations; and a very great change must be wrought in your character, and you must learn to entertain an humbler opinion of yourself, before you could possibly fill so sacred a function. You have vexed me, Rowland, from your early childhood.

by your froward and perverse disposition. I hope your late illness has convinced you of the weakness of your nature, and how much you are obliged to depend upon the kind offices and assistance of your fellow creatures. When you were stretched on a sick bed at the point of death, you found it of little use declaring you would be 'your own master!' You refused at first to take the medicines which were prescribed for you; pain became 'your master,' and you were glad to entreat for any remedy, however nauseous, that you imagined would mitigate your torments. Tell me truly, Rowland, when you lay in that deplorable state did not you call to mind the positive manner in which you had

insisted on being a surgeon in opposition, I am sorry to say, to the wishes of your father?"

"Indeed, dear mother, once or twice I did think I had brought those severe sufferings upon myself by my own headstrong folly; but afterwards, when I was in such acute pain I could think of nothing beyond my bodily afflictions. Once, when I expected I should die, I felt very miserable, and prayed heartily to God to forgive me; and I promised, if ever I got well, I would submit myself to the guidance of my parents for the future. But when health returned, I forgot all my good resolutions; I have often wondered that the impression was so soon removed

from my mind, for while I was ill I heartily wished to improve."

"You trusted to your own strength, Rowland, and forgot to pray to God night and morning to strengthen and renew those resolutions and to soften your perverse and obstinate disposition. You imagined you could command your heart and thoughts to obey you; but you cannot even master your own evil passions and inclinations without the aid of God. How, therefore, do you expect to control the actions and enforce the obedience of others?"

Rowland returned his kind mother no answer. He sat, for a long time, pondering over her words. "I cannot always command my thoughts," he said to himself; "they often re-

proach me for my past conduct, and I would fain banish them, for the recollection of my folly pains me; but they will present themselves to my mind. I suppose this is conscience, which I have read much about in ancient history; and the greater sin a man is guilty of, the more tormenting these reflections must be. After Nero had killed his mother, he imagined himself continually haunted by a fury; and he who was master of the world could not command his own feelings, or get rid of the ghastly vision that tormented him. Yet I love to have my own way, and feel as it were compelled to resist the control of others."

Mrs. Massingham seeing her son

look very grave, partly guessed his thoughts. "Rowland," she said, "the next time you feel very much inclined to have your own way, will you promise me, for once, to renounce your old maxim, and submit yourself to the advice and guidance of others?"

"Dear mamma, I am so obstinate, and feel so certain in such cases that I am in the right, that I much fear I should break my word, if I were even to promise what you require."

"You can but make the experiment."

"I will try," said Rowland; "but I know I shall not succeed."

"If you were as resolute in persisting to do your duty as you always

are in violating it, my son, you would be equally successful; all reasonable people would imagine it was a pleasanter thing to gain the love and esteem of your friends and parents, than to incur their censure. You have, up to this moment, obstinately persisted in obeying the dictates of your own heart; as firmly resolve, for the future, to obey your father and me, and you will soon prove we are better and kinder masters than yourself."

Rowland said he would try, and meet his mother's wishes: he now left the room to fetch his hat, to accompany her and his sisters in a walk.

It was a fine afternoon, in the beginning of September; they pro-

ceeded down a green lane, which terminated in a long range of marshy meadows, through which flowed a clear winding stream. They had scarcely entered the meadows, before they overtook farmer Jones, their nearest neighbour, to whom the marshes belonged, who had been with his little girl and boy to inspect some weanling calves, that were feeding in the pastures.

Mary was walking with her father, but his son Joseph, a lad of ten years of age, was standing at some distance in a very dogged attitude, pouting out his lips, shaking his shoulders, and kicking with all his strength agains a large chalk stone that happened to be in his path; and his whole appearance denoted him to

be labouring under the effects of his own ill-humour.

"How much that boy reminds me of Rowland when he was his age," said Mrs. Massingham; "I have seen him assume that attitude while obstinately persisting in having his own way."

"I am sure I never did or could look like that boy," cried Rowland, indignantly surveying his likeness; "I never saw such a sulky, disagreeable monkey in my life!"

"You must not condemn him, my son. I am sure he is one of those self-willed young gentlemen who adopt heart and soul your motto, 'I will be my own master.' A few moments will convince you of the

truth of my assertion," she added, turning to his father.

"What is the matter with your little boy, Mr. James? he does not look in the best humour in the world."

"Pray do not speak to him, madam; let him alone; He is a very wicked and unworthy boy. I requested him not to go too near the banks of the rivulet, but he determined to have his own way, pertinaciously persisting in refusing to obey my commands; and you may perceive the consequence of his disobedience. He has slipped up to his knees into the water. I ordered him to return home and change his wet clothes, and there he stands as obstinate as a mule, and will rather.

run the risk of taking cold, than listen to the advice of his father."

"Come, Joseph, be a good boy, and obey your father," said Mrs. Massingham, turning to the delinquent.

"I tell you, I won't," was the reply of the unamiable youth: "I shan't go home till I please. So there's for you at once."

Mrs. Massingham felt grieved at the depravity of heart evinced by this speech. "Are you aware, Joseph, that you are behaving in a very wicked and undutiful manner; and that God will punish you for such conduct as this?"

"I don't care. It is no concern of yours, ma'am. You are not my mother." Then turning on his heel,

he said—"So here's good day to you and your advice;" and off the froward urchin ran as fast as he could, in an opposite direction.

Mrs. Massingham turned her eyes towards her son. Rowland's cheeks were glowing with crimson. "I hope," she said, "this sight will prove a warning to you, though so many years older, and convince you of your errors."

"Mr. Jones," she continued, again addressing the farmer; "I am afraid your son will prove a great trouble to you, as he grows older; if he dares at his tender years so absolutely to resist your authority."

"My dear lady," returned the farmer, "I am sorry to say he will

be his *own master:* he is quite beyond my management: my wife does not like me to bestow on him personal chastisement; and he does not pay the least attention to what I say to him. He is following in the steps of his eldest brother James; who proved a great trial and sorrow to me, till it pleased God to remove him hence.

"James would always have his own way. He never studied the wishes, nor minded the advice of his parents; and considered his best friends in the light of enemies. I did not wish him to go to sea; he had been brought up in the agricultural line; and was perfactly unacquainted with nautical affairs.

"He had been a great expense to

me; and when I represented the imprudence of his conduct to him, he laughed in my face, and informed me, with the greatest insolence, that he meant to please himself.—Two days after, he ran away, and left us; and did not so much as write a line to his poor mother, to bid her farewell.

"He went to sea; and was drowned the first voyage. His mother made a great affliction of his death; but he had ever proved himself such an undutiful son, that I felt thankful to God that he had not come to a worse end. For I have always found that a disobedient child never makes a good man or woman; nor ever prospers long in this world; whilst their children always treat them

with the same disrespect which they, in their youth, showed to their parents.

"I set my father's authority at defiance, and caused him, for many years, great uneasiness: and I sometimes think the bad and undutiful conduct of my children is sent as a punishment, to remind me of my own disobedience."

While the farmer was talking over his domestic grievances to Mrs. Massingham, Rowland's heart smote him as he called to mind the anxiety which, from his first recollection, conscience told him he had occasioned to his parents. He had not only set their authority at defiance, but had been a great expense to them; and he made a secret vow,

for the future, to submit himself entirely to their direction and control.

As they walked home, Mrs. Massingham asked her son what he thought of young Jones's conduct?

"Do not mention it, my dear mother," returned Rowland; "the very idea of my having acted like that boy pains me: I cannot bear to think of his conduct. Why, my sisters must have hated me, if I had treated them with the rudeness and insolence with which young Jones answered you."

"We did not hate you, Rowland," said Anne; "but we could not love you very much, when you vexed and thwarted us on every occasion; and we felt heartily glad of your

absence when you went to school. But now that you are growing into a young man, I should hope reason would teach you the impropriety of such conduct."

This conversation with his mother and sister, made such an impression on Rowland, that, for a long time, he steadily persisted in asking their advice in any little matter that particularly concerned himself; and, fearing lest he should lose his time while recovering his health in the country, he studied indefatigably; and soon felt the benefit arising from a steady perseverance in the path of duty.

His mother viewed the improving looks and mental acquirements with pride and pleasure; and his sisters

loved him with the most sincere affection: and both parties began to congratulate themselves in his perfect reformation, when a very unfortunate accident entirely overturned their high-raised expectations; though it, ultimately, succeeded in reclaiming the being in whose welfare they were so deeply interested.

Mrs. Massingham had a great dread of fire-arms; and she had requested Rowland, as the shooting season commenced, never to touch a gun.

Rowland had a very earnest desire to learn to shoot; and he thought his mother's request both tyrannical and unreasonable. "I am nearly sixteen years of age," he

said, "and yet not permitted to carry a gun. I really think my mother's objections are very ridiculous. What harm should happen to me more than to young Saverley, who is my own age?"

Day after day he constantly reasoned thus, till he felt every hour a greater inclination to resist his mother's authority, and a stronger wish to please himself.

He was, one day, in this frame of mind, when young Saverley came up to the garden gate, with his dog and gun.

"Rowland," he cried, "will you go with me, shooting, this beautiful morning?"

"I should like very much to accompany you, but I cannot shoot,"

returned Rowland; "and I should not feel much pleasure in being a mere looker on. I cannot bear to see another person in action, and myself standing still."

"That shall not prevent you, Mr. Massingham; I have another fowling-piece at home, and if you will accept the loan of that, I shall feel a great deal of pleasure in teaching you to shoot. It is the easiest thing imaginable; it only requires a good eye and a steady hand."

"I have often fired off a gun," returned Rowland; but my mother has a foolish prejudice against boys, as she calls young men of our age, carrying fire-arms; and I promised to yield to her wishes, and relinquish

my ardent desire to learn to be a good shot."

"I am sure you are very foolish, Massingham, to forfeit your independence in that manner. I am certain my mother and sisters never should control my wishes in any respect. I thought you had possessed too much spirit to be under petticoat government."

Rowland coloured slightly: "perhaps," said he, "if you asked my mother to let me accompany you this morning, she would grant your request."

"With all my heart, Rowland; leave me to persuade the old lady;" returned Saverley, putting his gun within the paling, and following Rowland into the parlour.

Mrs. Massingham received him in a very polite and friendly manner; but when he made known the purport of his visit, she candidly told him she was sorry she could not grant his request.

"All men," she said, ought to learn the use of fire-arms: but I have a very great objection to a lad of my son's age, carrying a gun."

"I should think, madam, a young man, like Mr. Rowland, might be trusted. I cannot see any reasonable objection you can urge to deprive him of a very manly and useful diversion?"

"Mr. Saverley, you consider yourself already a man," she returned; "but experience alone brings wisdom. When I inform

you of my reasons for objecting to my son learning the use of fire-arms, for some years to come, I am sure you will agree with me."

Both Rowland and his friend looked very sceptical, as Mrs. Massingham continued: "I was born and brought up in the country; my father being the owner of a fine estate in Norfolk, that abounded with game. I had two brothers, the only sons of my father, to whom I was strongly attached: they were both older than myself, and always treated me in the kindest and most affectionate manner. My father was not very indulgent to them; and it was a long time before he would grant my eldest brother

Frederic's earnest request to learn to shoot.

"At length he gratified his wishes, and presented him with a gun, an excellent pointer, and a license. Frederic, who had always imagined himself hardly done by, was but too happy in these acquisitions; and before the season was over, had gained some proficiency in the field, and was accounted a tolerable sportsman.

"My brother Miles was two years younger than Frederic, and was finishing his education at a large public school at Norwich. Frederic was very fond of Miles; and indeed he was such a gentle, sweet-tempered lad, we all loved him dearly. My poor mother doated on him; he

was so dutiful and obliging in his manners; and there was seldom a dry eye in the house on his departure to school.

My father was absent in London, on business of great importance, during the following September; and Frederic entreated my mother, who was but too indulgent, to let him send for Miles, to enjoy with him a week's shooting. For a long time, my mother resisted his earnest application; at length she was won over to grant his request.

"Miles returned from school, and the two brothers, for several days, enjoyed themselves highly, in traversing the woods and fields with their guns. My mother never saw them leave the house without much

mental anxiety. "Their father would be extremely angry," she said, "if he knew that I suffered Miles to return from school; and if any harm should happen to either of them, I should have reason to dread his displeasure."

The morning she made this remark, they were out later than usual; and she continued to pace the room with a countenance that evinced considerable alarm.

I felt so remarkably low-spirited, and so anxious for the return of my brothers, that I put on my hat and crossed the lawn, in order to meet them. My mother's uneasiness, perhaps, made me apprehensive; for I never, till that moment, felt so uncomfortable at their absence;

I crossed the lawn and the adjoining meadow, and entered a little copse that skirted the high road.

"As I descended a deep dell of pine trees, I thought I heard voices in earnest conversation. It was not the tone of altercation in which they were uttered, but low, hurried, indistinct sounds, which possessed more of fear than anger. I did not stop to listen, but sprang breathlessly forward; and never shall I forget the sight that first met my eyes.

"My brother Miles, stretched on a hurdle, with his head shattered almost to pieces, was carried between the game-keeper and his assistant; whilst my brother Frederic, the

most pitiable being of the two, walked slowly behi l.

"One glance on the bleeding, mangled form of Miles, convinced me that he was dead. I never could gain sufficient fortitude to look at him again.

"Frederic appeared a living corpse. It is true, he breathed and moved; but he neither glanced from the right to the left; his eyes were fixed on the bleeding corpse of his brother, as if he had no power to withdraw them thence. I took his hand, and spoke to him: he did not answer me, but appeared totally unconscious of my presence. The expression of his countenance frightened me—it wore the rigidity of death. My own mental anguish

was forgotten, while contemplating his. I felt, indeed, the pressure of calamity, but it was too deep for tears. At length, the idea of my mother rushed across my mind,—'Alas!' I said, 'this sad sight will kill my mother.'

"These words seemed to recal Frederic, for a moment, to a state of feeling; he turned his hollow eyes on me, and putting his hand to his head, said; in tones I shall never forget, and they were the last he ever uttered, 'Oh! my poor mother!'

"I learned from the game-keeper, that the brothers had pursued their diversion for some time without any success; at length the dog roused a covey of birds in a neigh-

bouring field, and Frederic was so anxious to follow them, that in trying to force his way through the hedge, one of the branches caught the trigger of the gun, which went off, and the mouth being in the exact direction of his brother's head, who had just succeeded in clearing the gap; it caused immediate death. Frederic fell instantly forward into the ditch, and received so severe a contusion on the head, that it was a long time before the two men who saw the accident take place from an adjoining field, could succeed in restoring him to animation. Though the blow my brother had received, must ultimately have caused his death, and given him great pain, he seemed

totally unconscious of his own sufferings, so completely was every feeling absorbed in contemplating the dreadful accident that had taken place. My mother was in a very weak state of health; and I dreaded the effect this shocking sight would have upon her nerves; and directed the men to carry the body of Miles to the gardener's cottage, while I broke the fatal intelligence to her, by degrees. This plan, however, was rendered abortive, for at the gate of the little copse, the sad procession was met by my mother herself. I cannot dwell on her agonies; the remembrance of them, even at this day, overwhelms me with grief.

"Before my father returned from

London, she had lost both her sons; and was herself tottering on the brink of the grave. Poor dear, she did not long survive this fatal stroke, and some of the last words she ever uttered, were addressed to me to this effect:

"'Lydia, if you should ever be the mother of sons, take warning by the sad example of your brothers; and never suffer them to touch fire arms, till they are men.' I hope, Rowland, after what I have now related, you will not wound my feelings, by attempting to shoot this morning?"

"I should almost deserve to meet with the fate of my poor uncles," returned Rowland,—"but

dear mother, you will not object to my being a looker on?"

"I think it equally dangerous," said Mrs. Massingham; "without you have some old and experienced person with you. But indeed, Rowland, if you consult my wishes, you will remain at home."

Rowland had a great desire to go; and he used to many arguments to prevail with his mother to yield to his wishes, that on his faithfully promising not to fire himself, she reluctantly consented.

After the two young gentlemen had left the room, she felt vexed with herself for having so far granted Rowland's suit,—"I am afraid, Anne," she said, "he does not mean to obey me: I saw him

and his friend exchange glances, several times, while I was relating that domestic tragedy. If Rowland should deceive me in this instance, I shall never be able to place any confidence in him again."

Anne thought his promises were not sincere, but she would not say so, for fear of distressing her mother. Half an hour after Rowland's departure, his father arrived from London, and Mrs. Massingham and Anne forgot in the joy which his presence occasioned, the anxiety they had entertained about Rowland. He brought too a letter from Robert, who was delighted with his profession; and likely to be very clever in it; Mr. Lewis gave him a very high character, and

this information raised Mrs. Massingham's spirits, and she forgot, in the well-doing of one son, the perverseness of the other.

After the first congratulations were over, Mr. Massingham enquired for Rowland.

"I have heard so much of his improvement, Lydia, I should like to see him; in short if he does not chuse to be a clergyman, he must not be idling his time away here. I must take him back with me to London. I think I shall bring him up either to my own business, or the law, and make a parson of little George."

"He has gone out this morning, with a young friend, shooting;" returned Mrs. Massingham. "I did

not like to grant his request, but he was so earnest in his entreaties, and promised not to touch a gun himself, that I was prevailed on to give him my permission; and I am surprised, as it is near dinner time, that he is not yet returned."

Mr. Massingham had not the objection that his wife had to field sports; he saw nothing particular in a youth of Rowland's age carrying a gun—"the boy is old enough," he said, "to take care of himself."

The day passed away, and the deep shadows of an autumnal evening darkened the room; the shutters were closed, the curtains drawn, and a cheerful fire gave an air of comfort to the apartment,

little Susan was on her father's knee; and every face, excepting Mrs. Massingham's, wore a smile.

"I wish Roly was home," said the little girl.

"Do not fidget mamma, dear, with your wishes," returned Anne, kissing her cheek:—"He will be here presently, perhaps he has gone home with Henry Saverley to tea."

"Perhaps he has, Anne," replied Mr. Massingham. "You had better pour out the tea."

Anne was scarcely installed in the seat of office, when the servant announced Mr. Jones.

"He is not a usual visitor," said Mrs. Massingham, as the farmer was making a hundred apologies at the door, to the footman, for en-

tering the hall with dirty feet. "I hope Rowland and his friend have not committed any trespass on his grounds."

"It is not at all unlikely," returned her husband, "young people, of their age, are often very lawless.—Mr. Jones," he continued; rising and shaking hands with the farmer; "to what circumstance are we indebted for the pleasure of your company this evening? Pray take a seat by the fire; my daughter shall give us a cup of tea directly."

The farmer stood bowing and scraping for some minutes, without accepting Mr. Massingham's offer; at length, turning to Mrs. Massingham, he said, "Madam, I don't

wish to disturb you, I have taken tea; but I called this evening to satisfy your fears respecting your son."

"Mr. Jones, this indeed a neighbourly act of you; I have been extremely anxious respecting him, and am glad to hear he is safe."

"Why, madam," returned the farmer, "I should like you to step over to my house, and speak to the poor lad. He is as well as can be expected, after meeting with such a shocking accident."

"Accident!" — exclaimed Mrs. Massingham, turning very pale, and catching hold of the farmer's arm; "what accident? you terrify me. Pray explain your words directly?"

"Why surely, madam, you have heard of it before?"

"No, indeed!" said Mrs. Massingham, bursting into tears; "what has happened to my dear boy? Is he dead?" she cried; "do not keep me longer in suspense."

"Dead, oh! no madam, nor likely to die; he went out this morning with young Saverley shooting, and they came to me and asked my permission to walk over my grounds. I had no objection to give them a day's sporting, but observing your son had a very rusty old fowling-piece in his hand, I took it from him and examined it; and told him that the lock was defective, and he must be careful how he used it, as it had most

likely been laid by for some years. Mr. Saverley, to whom the gun belonged, declared it was an excellent piece, and Master Rowland wished just then to have his own way.

"I apprehended some danger, and walked with them down to the plantations. Presently a hare sprang across the path, and both young gentlemen instantly fired.

"Mr. Rowland's gun burst, and shattered his left hand, in so dreadful a manner, that he was carried to my house, fainting from loss of blood. Mr. Grey, the surgeon, immediately attended, and he found it necessary to amputate it instantly. Your son underwent the operation with heroic fortitude, and never

uttered a single groan. I heard him say to Mr. Saverley: 'Do not pity me, Henry! I deserve the punishment I have met with, for disobeying the wishes of my kind mother.'

"He then requested me to walk over to your house, and inform you of his present situation."

The farmer's intelligence conveyed a pang of sorrow to every bosom present. Mrs. Massingham fainted in the arms of her husband, and both his sisters wept bitterly.

"My poor boy," said Mr. Massingham: "he has indeed purchased experience at a heavy rate. But this accident, which appears such a calamity to us, may be

[redacted]

turned by God into a great blessing."

When Mrs. Massingham recovered from her swoon, she accompanied her husband and Mr. Jones to visit the patient.

They found him composed, and resigned to his situation. The first words he uttered were addressed to his mother, requesting her forgiveness for the past.

This was readily granted; and both his parents forbore to make any comment on his conduct.

"Do not weep, dearest mother," said Rowland; "perhaps my loss may be a gain, I cannot feel sufficiently grateful to God for having spared my life."

This accident effected a thorough

change in Rowland Massingham's character. He was one of those on whom advice had been thrown away, and whom experience could alone make wise; and it was not till he was deprived of one of the most useful members of his body, that he could be convinced of the error of constantly acting in direct opposition to the wishes of his parents. Should any of my young readers feel inclined to act like Rowland Massingham, and insist on being their own masters, I hope they will receive a warning from his fate, and early renounce such a foolish and presumptuous line of conduct. Let them always consider that their parents are their best friends; their nearest and dearest relatives, who

never would advise them to do any thing which was not ultimately for their good; often what appears harsh and stern to a child, is absolutely necessary for his future welfare, and is adopted by his parents to save his body and soul from hell. Does not our blessed Lord himself tell us, "That if ye love not your parents whom ye have seen, how can you love God whom ye have not seen?"

Rowland's accident was followed by a long and severe illness; and during his confinement to the house, he derived the greatest comfort and consolation from the perusal of the sacred Scriptures. In fact, they became his constant study, and he so well amended his life by the holy

precepts they contained, that he as earnestly wished to become a clergyman, and by his future life and conduct, be the means of bestowing on his fellow creatures the benefit of the experience he had received, as he was before anxious to avoid entering upon that sacred office.

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