ALGER HORATIO JR.

FAME AND FORTUNE; OR, THE PROGRESS OF RICHARD HUNTER

Horatio Alger
Fame and Fortune; or, The Progress of Richard Hunter

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Содержание

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PREFACE

"Fame and Fortune," like its predecessor, "Ragged Dick," was contributed as a serial story to the "Schoolmate," a popular juvenile magazine published in Boston. The generous commendations of the first volume by the Press, and by private correspondents whose position makes their approval of value, have confirmed the author in his purpose to write a series of stories intended to illustrate the life and experiences of the friendless and vagrant children to be found in all our cities, numbering in New York alone over twelve thousand.

In the preparation of the different volumes, the requisite information will be gathered from personal observation mainly, supplemented, however, by facts communicated by those who have been brought into practical relations with the class of children whose lives are portrayed.

The volumes might readily be made more matter-of-fact, but the author has sought to depict the inner life and represent the feelings and emotions of these little waifs of city life, and hopes

thus to excite a deeper and more widespread sympathy in the public mind, as well as to exert a salutary influence upon the class of whom he is writing, by setting before them inspiring examples of what energy, ambition, and an honest purpose may achieve, even in their case.

In order to reach as large a number of these boys as possible, the publisher is authorized, on application, to send a gratuitous copy of the two volumes of the "Ragged Dick Series" already issued, to any regularly organized Newsboys' Lodge within the United States.

New York, *December*, 1868.

CHAPTER I.
A BOARDING-HOUSE IN BLEECKER STREET

"Well, Fosdick, this is a little better than our old room in Mott Street," said Richard Hunter, looking complacently about him.

"You're right, Dick," said his friend. "This carpet's rather nicer than the ragged one Mrs. Mooney supplied us with. The beds are neat and comfortable, and I feel better satisfied, even if we do have to pay twice as much for it."

The room which yielded so much satisfaction to the two boys was on the fourth floor of a boarding-house in Bleecker Street. No doubt many of my young readers, who are accustomed to elegant homes, would think it very plain; but neither Richard nor his friend had been used to anything as good. They had been thrown upon their own exertions at an early age, and had a hard battle to fight with poverty and ignorance. Those of my readers who are familiar with Richard Hunter's experiences when he was "Ragged Dick," will easily understand what a great rise in the world it was for him to have a really respectable home. For years he had led a vagabond life about the streets, as a boot-black, sleeping in old wagons, or boxes, or wherever he could find a lodging gratis. It was only twelve months since a chance meeting with an intelligent boy caused him to form the resolution to grow

up respectable. By diligent evening study with Henry Fosdick, whose advantages had been much greater than his own, assisted by a natural quickness and an unusual aptitude for learning, he had, in a year, learned to read and write well, and had, besides, made considerable progress in arithmetic. Still he would have found it difficult to obtain a situation if he had not been the means of saving from drowning the young child of Mr. James Rockwell, a wealthy merchant in business on Pearl Street, who at once, out of gratitude for the service rendered, engaged our hero in his employ at the unusual compensation, for a beginner, of ten dollars a week. His friend, Henry Fosdick, was in a hat store on Broadway, but thus far only received six dollars a week.

Feeling that it was time to change their quarters to a more respectable portion of the city, they one morning rang the bell of Mrs. Browning's boarding-house, on Bleecker Street.

They were shown into the parlor, and soon a tall lady, with flaxen ringlets and a thin face, came in.

"Well, young gentleman, what can I do for you?" she said, regarding them attentively.

"My friend and I are looking for a boarding-place," said Henry Fosdick. "Have you any rooms vacant?"

"What sort of a room would you like?" asked Mrs. Browning.

"We cannot afford to pay a high price. We should be satisfied with a small room."

"You will room together, I suppose?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"I have a room vacant on the third floor, quite a good-sized one, for which I should charge you seven dollars apiece. There is a room on the fourth floor, not so large, which you can have for five dollars each."

"I think we'll look at that," said Richard Hunter.

"Very well, then follow me."

Mrs. Browning preceded the boys to the fourth floor, where she opened the door of a neat room, provided with two single beds, a good-sized mirror, a bureau, a warm woollen carpet, a washstand, and an empty bookcase for books. There was a closet also, the door of which she opened, showing a row of pegs for clothing.

"How do you like it?" asked Fosdick, in a low voice, turning to his companion.

"It's bully," said Dick, in admiring accents.

I may as well say here, what the reader will find out as we proceed, that our hero, in spite of his advance in learning, had not got entirely rid of some street phrases, which he had caught from the companions with whom he had for years associated.

"Five dollars is rather a steep price," said Fosdick, in a low voice. "You know I don't get but six in all."

"I'll tell you what, Fosdick," said Dick; "it'll be ten dollars for the two of us. I'll pay six, and you shall pay four. That'll be fair, —won't it?"

"No, Dick, I ought to pay my half."

"You can make it up by helpin' me when I run against a snag,

in my studies."

"You know as much as I do now, Dick."

"No, I don't. I haven't any more ideas of grammar than a broomstick. You know I called 'cat' a conjunction the other day. Now, you shall help me in grammar, for I'm blessed if I know whether I'm a noun or an adjective, and I'll pay a dollar towards your board."

"But, Dick, I'm willing to help you for nothing. It isn't fair to charge you a dollar a week for my help."

"Why isn't it? Aint I to get ten dollars a week, and shan't I have four dollars over, while you will only have two? I think I ought to give you one more, and then we'd be even."

"No, Dick; I wouldn't agree to that. If you insist upon it, we'll do as you propose; but, if ever I am able, I will make it up to you."

"Well, young gentleman, what have you decided?" asked Mrs. Browning.

"We'll take the room," said Dick, promptly.

"When do you wish to commence?"

"To-day. We'll come this evening."

"Very well. I suppose you can furnish me with references. You're in business, I suppose?"

"I am in Henderson's hat and cap store, No. – Broadway," said Henry Fosdick.

"And I am going into Rockwell & Cooper's, on Pearl Street, next Monday," said Dick, with a sense of importance. He felt that this was very different from saying, "I black boots in Chatham

Square."

"You look like good boys," said Mrs. Browning, "and I've no doubt you're honest; but I'm a widow, dependent on my boarders, and I have to be particular. Only last week a young man went off, owing me four weeks' board, and I don't suppose he'll ever show his face again. He got a good salary, too; but he spent most of it on cigars and billiards. Now, how can I be sure you will pay me your board regular?"

"We'll pay it every week in advance," said Dick, promptly. "Them's our best references," and he produced his bank-book, showing a deposit of over one hundred dollars to his credit in the savings bank, motioning at the same time to Fosdick to show his.

"You don't mean to say you've saved all that from your earnings?" said Mrs. Browning, surprised.

"Yes," said Dick, "and I might have saved more if I'd begun sooner."

"How long has it taken you to save it up?"

"About nine months. My friend hasn't saved so much, because his salary has been smaller."

"I won't require you to pay in advance," said Mrs. Browning, graciously. "I am sure I can trust you. Boys who have formed so good a habit of saving can be depended upon. I will get the room ready for you, and you may bring your trunks when you please. My hours are, breakfast at seven, lunch at half-past twelve, and dinner at six."

"We shan't be able to come to lunch," said Fosdick. "Our

stores are too far off."

"Then I will make half a dollar difference with each of you, making nine dollars a week instead of ten."

The boys went downstairs, well pleased with the arrangement they had made. Dick insisted upon paying five dollars and a half of the joint weekly expense, leaving three and a half to Fosdick. This would leave the latter two dollars and a half out of his salary, while Dick would have left four and a half. With economy, both thought they could continue to lay up something.

There was one little embarrassment which suggested itself to the boys. Neither of them had a trunk, having been able to stow away all their wardrobe without difficulty in the drawers of the bureau with which their room in Mott Street was provided.

"Why are you like an elephant, Fosdick?" asked Dick, jocosely, as they emerged into the street.

"I don't know, I'm sure."

"Because you haven't got any trunk except what you carry round with you."

"We'll have to get trunks, or perhaps carpet-bags would do."

"No," said Dick, decisively, "it aint 'spectable to be without a trunk, and we're going to be 'spectable now."

"*Re*spectable, Dick."

"All right,—respectable, then. Let's go and buy each a trunk."

This advice seemed reasonable, and Fosdick made no objection. The boys succeeded in getting two decent trunks at three dollars apiece, and ordered them sent to their room in Mott

Street. It must be remembered by my readers, who may regard the prices given as too low, that the events here recorded took place several years before the war, when one dollar was equal to two at the present day.

At the close of the afternoon Fosdick got away from the store an hour earlier, and the boys, preceded by an expressman bearing their trunks, went to their new home. They had just time to wash and comb their hair, when the bell rang for dinner, and they went down to the dining-room.

Nearly all the boarders were assembled, and were sitting around a long table spread with a variety of dishes. Mrs. Browning was a good manager, and was wise enough to set a table to which her boarders could not object.

"This way, if you please, young gentlemen," she said, pointing to two adjoining seats on the opposite side of the table.

Our hero, it must be confessed, felt a little awkward, not being used to the formality of a boarding-house, and feeling that the eyes of twenty boarders were upon him. His confusion was increased, when, after taking his seat, he saw sitting opposite him, a young man whose boots he remembered to have blacked only a week before. Observing Dick's look, Mrs. Browning proceeded to introduce him to the other.

"Mr. Clifton," she said, "let me introduce Mr. Hunter and his friend, Mr. Fosdick,—two new members of our family."

Dick bowed rather awkwardly, and the young man said, "Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Hunter. Your face looks quite

familiar. I think I must have seen you before."

"I think I've seen *you* before," said Dick.

"It's strange I can't think where," said the young man, who had not the least idea that the well-dressed boy before him was the boot-black who had brushed his boots near the Park railings the Monday previous. Dick did not think proper to enlighten him. He was not ashamed of his past occupation; but it was past, and he wanted to be valued for what he might become, not for what he had been.

"Are you in business, Mr. Hunter?" inquired Mr. Clifton.

It sounded strange to our hero to be called Mr. Hunter; but he rather liked it. He felt that it sounded respectable.

"I am at Rockwell & Cooper's, on Pearl Street," said Dick.

"I know the place. It is a large firm."

Dick was glad to hear it, but did not say that he knew nothing about it.

The dinner was a good one, much better than the two boys were accustomed to get at the eating-houses which in times past they had frequented. Dick noticed carefully how the others did, and acquitted himself quite creditably, so that no one probably suspected that he had not always been used to as good a table.

When the boys rose from the table, Mrs. Browning said, "Won't you walk into the parlor, young gentlemen? We generally have a little music after dinner. Some of the young ladies are musical. Do either of you play?"

Dick said he sometimes played marbles; at which a young lady

laughed, and Dick, catching the infection, laughed too.

"Miss Peyton, Mr. Hunter," introduced Mrs. Browning.

Miss Peyton made a sweeping courtesy, to which Dick responded by a bow, turning red with embarrassment.

"Don't you sing, Mr. Hunter?" asked the young lady.

"I aint much on warblin'," said Dick, forgetting for the moment where he was.

This droll answer, which Miss Peyton supposed to be intentionally funny, convulsed the young lady with merriment.

"Perhaps your friend sings?" she said.

Thereupon Fosdick was also introduced. To Dick's astonishment, he answered that he did a little. It was accordingly proposed that they should enter the next room, where there was a piano. The young lady played some well-known melodies, and Fosdick accompanied her with his voice, which proved to be quite sweet and melodious.

"You are quite an acquisition to our circle," said Miss Peyton, graciously. "Have you boarded in this neighborhood before?"

"No," said Fosdick; "at another part of the city."

He was afraid she would ask him in what street, but fortunately she forbore.

In about half an hour the boys went up to their own room, where they lighted the gas, and, opening their trunks, placed the contents in the bureau-drawers.

"Blessed if it don't seem strange," said Dick, "for a feller brought up as I have been to live in this style. I wonder what Miss

Peyton would have said if she had known what I had been."

"You haven't any cause to be ashamed of it, Dick. It wasn't a very desirable business, but it was honest. Now you can do something better. You must adapt yourself to your new circumstances."

"So I mean to," said Dick. "I'm going in for respectability. When I get to be sixty years old, I'm goin' to wear gold spectacles and walk round this way, like the old gentlemen I see most every day on Wall Street."

Dick threw his head back, and began to walk round the room with a pompous step and an air of great importance.

"I hope we'll both rise, Dick; we've got well started now, and there've been other boys, worse off than we are, who have worked hard, and risen to Fame and Fortune."

"We can try," said Dick. "Now let us go out and have a walk."

"All right," said Fosdick.

They went downstairs, and out into the street. Accustomed to the lower part of the city, there was a novelty in the evening aspect of Broadway, with its shops and theatres glittering with light. They sauntered carelessly along, looking in at the shop-windows, feeling more and more pleased with their change of location. All at once Dick's attention was drawn to a gentleman accompanied by a boy of about his own size, who was walking a little in advance.

"Stop a minute," he said to Fosdick, and hurrying forward placed his hand on the boy's arm.

"How are you, Frank?" he said.

Frank Whitney, for it was he, turned in some surprise and looked at Dick, but did not at first recognize in the neat, well-dressed boy of fifteen the ragged boot-black he had encountered a year before.

"I don't think I remember you," he said, surveying Dick with a puzzled expression.

"Perhaps you'd remember me better if I had on my Washington coat and Napoleon pants," said our hero, with a smile. He felt rather pleased to find he was not recognized, since it was a compliment to his improved appearance.

"What!" exclaimed Frank, his face lighting up with pleasure, "is it possible that you are—"

"Richard Hunter, at your service," said our hero; "but when you knew me I was Ragged Dick."

CHAPTER II.
INTRODUCTION TO MERCANTILE LIFE

Frank Whitney was indeed surprised to find the ragged boot-black of a year before so wonderfully changed. He grasped Dick's hand, and shook it heartily.

"Uncle," he said, "this is Dick. Isn't he changed?"

"It is a change I am glad to see," said Mr. Whitney, also extending his hand; "for it appears to be a change for the better. And who is this other young man?"

"This is my private tutor," said Dick, presenting Fosdick, —"Professor Fosdick. He's been teachin' me every evenin' for most a year. His terms is very reasonable. If it hadn't been for him, I never should have reached my present high position in literature and science."

"I am glad to make your acquaintance, *Professor* Fosdick," said Frank, laughing. "May I inquire whether my friend Dick owes his elegant system of pronunciation to your instructions?"

"Dick can speak more correctly when he pleases," said Fosdick; "but sometimes he falls back into his old way. He understands the common English branches very well."

"Then he must have worked hard; for when I first met him a year ago, he was—"

"As ignorant as a horse," interrupted Dick. "It was you that first made me ambitious, Frank. I wanted to be like you, and grow up 'spectable."

"*Re*spectable, Dick," suggested Fosdick.

"Yes, that's what I mean. I didn't always want to be a boot-black, so I worked hard, and with the help of Professor Fosdick, I've got up a little way. But I'm goin' to climb higher."

"I am very glad to hear it, my young friend," said Mr. Whitney. "It is always pleasant to see a young man fighting his way upward. In this free country there is every inducement for effort, however unpromising may be the early circumstances in which one is placed. But, young gentlemen, as my nephew would be glad to speak further with you, I propose that we adjourn from the sidewalk to the St. Nicholas Hotel, where I am at present stopping."

"Yes, Dick," said Frank, "you and Professor Fosdick must spend the evening with me. I was intending to visit some place of amusement, but would much prefer a visit from you."

Dick and Fosdick readily accepted this invitation, and turned in the direction of the St. Nicholas, which is situated on Broadway, below Bleecker Street.

"By the way, Dick, where are your Washington coat and Napoleon pants now?"

"They were stolen from my room," said Dick, "by somebody that wanted to appear on Broadway dressed in tip-top style, and hadn't got money enough to pay for a suit."

"Perhaps it was some agent of Barnum who desired to secure the valuable relics," suggested Frank.

"By gracious!" said Dick, suddenly, "there they are now. It's the first time I've seen 'em since they was stolen."

He pointed to a boy, of about his own size, who was coming up Broadway. He was attired in the well-remembered coat and pants; but, alas! time had not spared them. The solitary remaining coat-tail was torn in many places; of one sleeve but a fragment remained; grease and dirt nearly obliterated the original color; and it was a melancholy vestige of what it had been once. As for the pantaloons, they were a complete wreck. When Dick had possessed them they were well ventilated; but they were now ventilated so much more thoroughly that, as Dick said afterwards, "a feller would be warmer without any."

"That's Micky Maguire," said Dick; "a partic'lar friend of mine, that had such a great 'fection for me that he stole my clothes to remember me by."

"Perhaps," said Fosdick, "it was on account of his great respect for General Washington and the Emperor Napoleon."

"What would the great Washington say if he could see his coat now?" said Frank.

"When I wore it," said Dick, "I was sorry he was so great, 'cause it prevented his clothes fitting me."

It may be necessary to explain to those who are unacquainted with Dick's earlier adventures, that the clothes in which he was originally introduced were jocosely referred to by him as

gifts from the illustrious personages whose names have been mentioned.

Micky Maguire did not at first recognize Dick. When he did so, he suddenly shambled down Prince Street, fearful, perhaps, that the stolen clothes would be reclaimed.

They had now reached the St. Nicholas, and entered. Mr. Whitney led the way up to his apartment, and then, having a business engagement with a gentleman below, he descended to the reading-room, leaving the boys alone. Left to themselves, they talked freely. Dick related fully the different steps in his education, with which some of our readers are already familiar, and received hearty congratulations from Frank, and earnest encouragement to persevere.

"I wish you were going to be in the city, Frank," said Dick.

"So I shall be soon," said Frank.

Dick's face lighted up with pleasure.

"That's bully," said he, enthusiastically. "How soon are you comin'?"

"I am hoping to enter Columbia College next commencement. I suppose my time will be a good deal taken up with study, but I shall always find time for you and Fosdick. I hope you both will call upon me."

Both boys readily accepted the invitation in advance, and Dick promised to write to Frank at his boarding-school in Connecticut. At about half past ten, the two boys left the St. Nicholas, and went back to their boarding-house.

After a comfortable night's sleep, they got up punctually to the seven o'clock breakfast. It consisted of beefsteak, hot biscuit, potatoes, and very good coffee. Dick and Fosdick did justice to the separate viands, and congratulated themselves upon the superiority of their present fare to that which they had been accustomed to obtain at the restaurants.

Breakfast over, Fosdick set out for the hat and cap store in which he was employed, and Dick for Rockwell & Cooper's on Pearl Street. It must be confessed that he felt a little bashful as he stood in front of the large warehouse, and surveyed the sign. He began to feel some apprehensions that he would not be found competent for his post. It seemed such a rise from the streets to be employed in such an imposing building. But Dick did not long permit timidity to stand in his way. He entered the large apartment on the first floor, which he found chiefly used for storing large boxes and cases of goods. There was a counting-room and office, occupying one corner, partitioned off from the rest of the department. Dick could see a young man through the glass partition sitting at a desk; and, opening the door, he entered. He wished it had been Mr. Rockwell, for it would have saved him from introducing himself; but of course it was too early for that gentleman to appear.

"What is your business?" inquired the book-keeper, for it was he.

"I've come to work," said Dick, shortly, for somehow he did not take much of a fancy to the book-keeper, whose tone was

rather supercilious.

"Oh, you've come to work, have you?"

"Yes, I have," said Dick, independently.

"I don't think we shall need your valuable services," said the book-keeper, with something of a sneer. The truth was, that Mr. Rockwell had neglected to mention that he had engaged Dick.

Dick, though a little inclined to be bashful when he entered, had quite got over that feeling now. He didn't intend to be intimidated or driven away by the man before him. There was only one doubt in his mind. This might be Mr. Cooper, the second member of the firm, although he did not think it at all probable. So he ventured this question, "Is Mr. Rockwell or Mr. Cooper in?"

"They're never here at this hour."

"So I supposed," said Dick, coolly.

He sat down in an arm-chair, and took up the morning paper.

The book-keeper was decidedly provoked by his coolness. He felt that he had not impressed Dick with his dignity or authority, and this made him angry.

"Bring that paper to me, young man," he said; "I want to consult it."

"Very good," said Dick; "you can come and get it."

"I can't compliment you on your good manners," said the other.

"Good manners don't seem to be fashionable here," said Dick, composedly.

Apparently the book-keeper did not want the paper very particularly, as he did not take the trouble to get up for it. Dick therefore resumed his reading, and the other dug his pen spitefully into the paper, wishing, but not quite daring, to order Dick out of the counting-room, as it might be possible that he had come by appointment.

"Did you come to see Mr. Rockwell?" he asked, at length, looking up from his writing.

"Yes," said Dick.

"Did he tell you to come?"

"Yes."

"What was that you said about coming to work?"

"I said I had come here to work."

"Who engaged you?"

"Mr. Rockwell."

"Oh, indeed! And how much are you to receive for your valuable services?"

"You are very polite to call my services valuable," said Dick. "I hope they will be."

"You haven't answered my question."

"I have no objection, I'm sure. I'm to get ten dollars a week."

"Ten dollars a week!" echoed the book-keeper, with a scornful laugh. "Do you expect you will earn that?"

"No, I don't," said Dick, frankly.

"You don't!" returned the other, doubtfully. "Well, you're more modest than I thought for. Then why are you to get so

much?"

"Perhaps Mr. Rockwell will tell you," said Dick, "if you tell him you're very particular to know, and will lose a night's rest if you don't find out."

"I wouldn't give you a dollar a week."

"Then I'm glad I aint goin' to work for you."

"I don't believe your story at all. I don't think Mr. Rockwell would be such a fool as to overpay you so much."

"P'r'aps I shouldn't be the only one in the establishment that is overpaid," observed Dick.

"Do you mean me, you young rascal?" demanded the book-keeper, now very angry.

"Don't call names. It isn't polite."

"I demand an answer. Do you mean to say that I am overpaid?"

"Well," said Dick, deliberately, "if you're paid anything for bein' polite, I should think you was overpaid considerable."

There is no knowing how long this skirmishing would have continued, if Mr. Rockwell himself had not just then entered the counting-room. Dick rose respectfully at his entrance, and the merchant, recognizing him at once, advanced smiling and gave him a cordial welcome.

"I am glad to see you, my boy," he said. "So you didn't forget the appointment. How long have you been here?"

"Half an hour, sir."

"I am here unusually early this morning. I came purposely to see you, and introduce you to those with whom you will

labor. Mr. Gilbert, this is a young man who is going to enter our establishment. His name is Richard Hunter. Mr. Gilbert, Richard, is our book-keeper."

Mr. Gilbert nodded slightly, not a little surprised at his employer's cordiality to the new boy.

"So the fellow was right, after all," he thought. "But it can't be possible he is to receive ten dollars a week."

"Come out into the ware-room, and I will show you about," continued Mr. Rockwell. "How do you think you shall like business, Richard?"

Dick was on the point of saying "Bully," but checked himself just in time, and said instead, "Very much indeed, sir."

"I hope you will. If you do well you may depend upon promotion. I shall not forget under what a heavy obligation I am to you, my brave boy."

What would the book-keeper have said, if he had heard this?

"How is the little boy, sir?" asked Dick.

"Very well, indeed. He does not appear even to have taken cold, as might have been expected from his exposure, and remaining in wet clothes for some time."

"I am glad to hear that he is well, sir."

"You must come up and see him for yourself, Richard," said Mr. Rockwell, in a friendly manner. "I have no doubt you will become good friends very soon. Besides, my wife is anxious to see and thank the preserver of her boy."

"I shall be very glad indeed to come, sir."

"I live at No. – Madison Avenue. Come to-morrow evening, if you have no engagement."

"Thank you, sir."

Mr. Rockwell now introduced Dick to his head clerk with a few words, stating that he was a lad in whose welfare he took a deep interest, and he would be glad to have him induct him into his duties, and regard with indulgence any mistakes which he might at first make through ignorance.

The head clerk was a pleasant-looking man, of middle age, named Murdock; very different in his manners and bearing from Mr. Gilbert, the book-keeper.

"Yes, sir," he said, "I will take the young man under my charge; he looks bright and sharp enough, and I hope we may make a business man of him in course of time."

That was what Dick liked. His heart always opened to kindness, but harshness always made him defiant.

"I'll try to make you as little trouble as possible, sir," he said. "I may make mistakes at first, but I'm willin' to work, and I want to work my way up."

"That's right, my boy," said Mr. Murdock. "Let that be your determination, and I am sure you will succeed."

"Before Mr. Murdock begins to instruct you in your duties," said Mr. Rockwell, "you may go to the post-office, and see if there are any letters for us. Our box is No. 5,670."

"All right, sir," said Dick; and he took his hat at once and started.

He reached Chatham Square, turned into Printing House Square, and just at the corner of Spruce and Nassau Streets, close by the Tribune Office, he saw the familiar face and figure of Johnny Nolan, one of his old associates when he was a boot-black.

"How are you, Johnny?" he said.

"Is that you, Dick?" asked Johnny, turning round. "Where's your box and brush?"

"At home."

"You haven't give up business,—have you?"

"I've just gone into business, Johnny."

"I mean you aint give up blackin' boots,—have you?"

"All except my own, Johnny. Aint that a good shine?" and Dick displayed his boot with something of his old professional pride.

"What you up to now, Dick? You're dressed like a swell."

"Oh," said Dick, "I've retired from shines on a fortun', and embarked my capital in mercantile pursuits. I'm in a store on Pearl Street."

"What store?"

"Rockwell & Cooper's."

"How'd you get there?"

"They wanted a partner with a large capital, and so they took me," said Dick. "We're goin' to do a smashin' business. We mean to send off a ship to Europe every day, besides what we send to other places, and expect to make no end of stamps."

"What's the use of gassin', Dick? Tell a feller now."

"Honor bright, then, Johnny, I've got a place at ten dollars a week, and I'm goin' to be 'spectable. Why don't you turn over a new leaf, and try to get up in the world?"

"I aint lucky, Dick. I don't half the time make enough to live on. If it wasn't for the Newsboys' Lodgin' House, I don't know what I'd do. I need a new brush and box of blacking, but I aint got money enough to buy one."

"Then, Johnny, I'll help you this once. Here's fifty cents; I'll give it to you. Now, if you're smart you can make a dollar a day easy, and save up part of it. You ought to be more enterprisin', Johnny. There's a gentleman wants a shine now."

Johnny hitched up his trousers, put the fifty cents in his mouth, having no pocket unprovided with holes, and proffered his services to the gentleman indicated, with success. Dick left him at work, and kept on his way down Nassau Street.

"A year ago," he thought, "I was just like Johnny, dressed in rags, and livin' as I could. If it hadn't been for my meetin' with Frank, I'd been just the same to day, most likely. Now I've got a good place, and some money in the bank, besides 'ristocratic friends who invite me to come and see them. Blessed if I aint afraid I'm dreamin' it all, like the man that dreamed he was in a palace, and woke up to find himself in a pigpen."

CHAPTER III.
AT THE POST-OFFICE

The New York Post-Office is built of brick, and was formerly a church. It is a shabby building, and quite unworthy of so large and important a city. Of course Dick was quite familiar with its general appearance; but as his correspondence had been very limited, he had never had occasion to ask for letters.

There were several letters in Box 5,670. Dick secured these, and, turning round to go out, his attention was drawn to a young gentleman of about his own age, who, from his consequential air, appeared to feel his own importance in no slight degree. He recognized him at once as Roswell Crawford, a boy who had applied unsuccessfully for the place which Fosdick obtained in Henderson's hat and cap store.

Roswell recognized Dick at the same time, and perceiving that our hero was well-dressed, concluded to speak to him, though he regarded Dick as infinitely beneath himself in the social scale, on account of his former employment. He might not have been so condescending, but he was curious to learn what Dick was about.

"I haven't seen you for some time," he said, in a patronizing tone.

"No," said Dick, "and I haven't seen you for some time either, which is a very curious coincidence."

"How's boot-blacking, now?" inquired Roswell, with something of a sneer.

"Tip-top," said Dick, not at all disturbed by Roswell's manner. "I do it wholesale now, and have been obliged to hire a large building on Pearl Street to transact my business in. You see them letters? They're all from wholesale customers."

"I congratulate you on your success," said Roswell, in the same disagreeable manner. "Of course that's all humbug. I suppose you've got a place."

"Yes," said Dick.

"Who are you with?"

"Rockwell & Cooper, on Pearl Street."

"How did you get it?" asked Roswell, appearing surprised. "Did they know you had been a boot-black?"

"Of course they did."

"I shouldn't think that they would have taken you."

"Why not?"

"There are not many firms that would hire a boot-black, when they could get plenty of boys from nice families."

"Perhaps they might have secured your services if they had applied," said Dick, good-humoredly.

"I've got a place," said Roswell, in rather an important manner. "I'm very glad I didn't go into Henderson's hat and cap store. I've got a better situation."

"Have you?" said Dick. "I'm glad to hear it. I'm always happy to hear that my friends are risin' in the world."

"You needn't class me among your friends," said Roswell, superciliously.

"No, I won't," said Dick. "I'm goin' to be particular about my associates, now that I'm gettin' up in the world."

"Do you mean to insult me?" demanded Roswell, haughtily.

"No," said Dick. "I wouldn't on any account. I should be afraid you'd want me to fight a duel, and that wouldn't be convenient, for I haven't made my will, and I'm afraid my heirs would quarrel over my extensive property."

"How much do you get a week?" asked Roswell, thinking it best to change the subject.

"Ten dollars," said Dick.

"Ten dollars!" ejaculated Roswell. "That's a pretty large story."

"You needn't believe it if you don't want to," said Dick. "That won't make any difference to me as long as they pay me reg'lar."

"Ten dollars! Why, I never heard of such a thing," exclaimed Roswell, who only received four dollars a week himself, and thought he was doing well.

"Do you think I'd give up a loocrative business for less?" asked Dick. "How much do you get?"

"That's my business," said Roswell, who, for reasons that may be guessed, didn't care to mention the price for which he was working. Judging Dick by himself, he thought it would give him a chance to exult over him.

"I suppose it is," said Dick; "but as you was so partic'lar to

find out how much I got, I thought I'd inquire."

"You're trying to deceive me; I don't believe you get more than three dollars a week."

"Don't you? Is that what you get?"

"I get a great deal more."

"I'm happy to hear it."

"I can find out how much you get, if I want to."

"You've found out already."

"I know what you say, but I've got a cousin in Rockwell & Cooper's."

"Have you?" asked Dick, a little surprised. "Who is it?"

"It is the book-keeper."

"Mr. Gilbert?"

"Yes; he has been there five years. I'll ask him about it."

"You'd better, as you're so anxious to find out. Mr. Gilbert is a friend of mine. He spoke only this morning of my valooable services."

Roswell looked incredulous. In fact he did not understand Dick at all; nor could he comprehend his imperturbable good-humor. There were several things that he had said which would have offended most boys; but Dick met them with a careless good-humor, and an evident indifference to Roswell's good opinion, which piqued and provoked that young man.

It must not be supposed that while this conversation was going on the boys were standing in the post-office. Dick understood his duty to his employers too well to delay unnecessarily while on an

errand, especially when he was sent to get letters, some of which might be of an important and urgent nature.

The two boys had been walking up Nassau Street together, and they had now reached Printing House Square.

"There are some of your old friends," said Roswell, pointing to a group of ragged boot-blacks, who were on the alert for customers, crying to each passer, "Shine yer boots?"

"Yes," said Dick, "I know them all."

"No doubt," sneered Roswell. "They're friends to be proud of."

"I'm glad you think so," said Dick. "They're a rough set," he continued, more earnestly; "but there's one of them, at least, that's ten times better than you or I."

"Speak for yourself, if you please," said Roswell, haughtily.

"I'm speakin' for both of us," said Dick. "There's one boy there, only twelve years old, that's supported his sick mother and sister for more'n a year, and that's more good than ever you or I did.—How are you, Tom?" he said, nodding to the boy of whom he had spoken.

"Tip-top, Dick," said a bright-looking boy, who kept as clean as his avocation would permit. "Have you given up business?"

"Yes, Tom. I'll tell you about it some other time. I must get back to Pearl Street with these letters. How's your mother?"

"She aint much better, Dick."

"Buy her some oranges. They'll do her good," and Dick slipped half a dollar into Tom's hand.

"Thank you, Dick. She'll like them, I know, but you oughtn't to give so much."

"What's half a dollar to a man of my fortune?" said Dick. "Take care of yourself, Tom. I must hurry back to the store."

Roswell was already gone. His pride would not permit him to stand by while Dick was conversing with a boot-black. He felt that his position would be compromised. As for Dick, he was so well dressed that nobody would know that he had ever been in that business. The fact is, Roswell, like a great many other people, was troubled with a large share of pride, though it might have puzzled himself to explain what he had to be proud of. Had Dick been at all like him he would have shunned all his former acquaintances, and taken every precaution against having it discovered that he had ever occupied a similar position. But Dick was above such meanness. He could see that Tom, for instance, was far superior in all that constituted manliness to Roswell Crawford, and, boot-black though he was, he prepared to recognize him as a friend.

When Dick reached the store, he did not immediately see Mr. Rockwell.

He accordingly entered the counting-room where Gilbert, the book-keeper, was seated at a desk.

"Here are the letters, Mr. Gilbert," said Dick.

"Lay them down," said the book-keeper, sourly. "You've been gone long enough. How many did you drop on the way?"

"I didn't know I was expected to drop any," said Dick. "If I

had been told to do so, I would have obeyed orders cheerfully."

Mr. Gilbert was about to remark that Dick was an impudent young rascal, when the sudden entrance of Mr. Rockwell compelled him to suppress the observation, and he was obliged to be content with muttering it to himself.

"Back already, Richard?" said his employer, pleasantly. "Where are the letters?"

"Here, sir," said Dick.

"Very well, you may go to Mr. Murdock, and see what he can find for you to do."

Mr. Rockwell sat down to read his letters, and Dick went as directed to the head clerk.

"Mr. Rockwell sent me to you, Mr. Murdock," he said. "He says you will find something for me to do."

"Oh, yes, we'll keep you busy," said the head clerk, with a manner very different from that of the book-keeper. "At present, however, your duties will be of rather a miscellaneous character. We shall want you partly for an entry clerk, and partly to run to the post-office, bank, and so forth."

"All right, sir," said Dick. "I'm ready to do anything that is required of me. I want to make myself useful."

"That's the right way to feel, my young friend. Some boys are so big-feeling and put on so many airs, that you'd think they were partners in the business, instead of beginning at the lowest round of the ladder. A while ago Mr. Gilbert brought round a cousin of his, about your age, that he wanted to get in here; but the young

gentleman was altogether too lofty to suit me, so we didn't take him."

"Was the boy's name Roswell Crawford?"

"Yes; do you know him?"

"Not much. He thinks I'm too far beneath him for him to associate with, but he was kind enough to walk up Nassau Street with me this morning, just to encourage me a little."

"That was kind in him, certainly," said the head clerk, smiling. "Unless I am very much mistaken, you will be able to get along without his patronage."

"I hope so," said Dick.

The rest of the day Dick was kept busy in various ways. He took hold with a will, and showed himself so efficient that he made a favorable impression upon every one in the establishment, except the book-keeper. For some reason or other Mr. Gilbert did not like Dick, and was determined to oust him from his situation if an opportunity should offer.

CHAPTER IV.
LIFE AT THE BOARDING-HOUSE

Dick found his new quarters in Bleecker Street very comfortable. His room was kept in neat order, which was more than could be said of his former home in Mott Street. There once a fortnight was thought sufficient to change the sheets, while both boys were expected to use the same towel, and make that last a week. Indeed, Mrs. Mooney would have considered the boys "mighty particular" if they had objected to such an arrangement. Mrs. Browning, fortunately, was very different, and Dick found nothing to complain of either in his chamber or in the board which was furnished.

Dick had felt rather awkward on his first appearance at the table, but he was beginning to feel more at his ease. It was rather remarkable, considering his past life, how readily he adapted himself to an experience so different. He left the store at five o'clock, and got to his boarding-house in time to get ready for dinner. Dick had now got to be quite particular about his appearance. He washed his face and hands thoroughly, and brushed his hair carefully, before appearing at the table.

Miss Peyton, the lively young lady who has already been mentioned in the first chapter, sat near the boys, and evidently was quite prepossessed in their favor. Both had bright and

attractive faces, though Dick would undoubtedly be considered the handsomest. He had a fresh color which spoke of good health, and was well-formed and strong. Henry Fosdick was more delicate in appearance; his face was thinner, and rather pale. It was clear that he was not as well able to fight his way through life as Dick. But there was something pleasant and attractive in his quiet sedateness, as well as in the frank honesty and humor that could be read in the glance of our friend Dick.

"Won't you and your friend stop a little while and sing?" asked Miss Peyton, addressing Henry Fosdick on the evening of the second day of Dick's business career.

Fosdick hesitated.

"My friend has an engagement this evening," he said.

"I suppose I may not ask where," said she.

"I am invited to spend the evening with some friends on Madison Avenue," said Dick.

"Indeed?" said Miss Peyton, surprised. "I wasn't aware you had such fashionable friends, or I couldn't have expected to retain you."

"All my friends are not as fashionable," said Dick, wondering what the young lady would say if she could see his late fellow-lodgers at Mrs. Mooney's, on Mott Street.

"If I can't hope to keep you this evening, you must promise to stay awhile to-morrow evening. I hope to have the pleasure of hearing you sing, Mr. Hunter."

"When I give a concert," said Dick, "I'll be sure to let you in

gratooitous."

"Thank you," said Miss Peyton. "I shall remind you of it. I hope that time will come very soon."

"Just as soon as I can engage the Academy of Music on reasonable terms."

"You'd better try first in the parlor here. We'll take up a contribution, to pay you for your exertions."

"Thank you," said Dick. "You're very kind, as the man said to the judge when he asked him when it would be perfectly agreeable for him to be hung."

Miss Peyton laughed at this remark, and Dick went upstairs to get ready for his visit to Madison Avenue.

Our hero felt a little bashful about this visit. He was afraid that he would do or say something that was improper, or that something would slip out which would betray his vagabond life of the streets.

"I wish you was going with me, Fosdick," he said.

"You'll get along well enough alone, Dick. Don't be afraid."

"You see I aint used to society, Fosdick."

"Nor I either."

"But it seems to come natural to you. I'm always makin' some blunder."

"You'll get over that in time, Dick. It's because you have so much fun in you. I am more sober. Miss Peyton seems very much amused by your odd remarks."

"I have to talk so; I can't think of anything else to say."

"There's one thing, Dick, we mustn't give up at any rate."

"What's that?"

"Studying. We don't either of us know as much as we ought to."

"That's so."

"You can see how much good studying has done for you so far. If it hadn't been for that, you wouldn't have been able to go into Mr. Rockwell's employment."

"That's true enough, Fosdick. I'm afraid I don't know enough now."

"You know enough to get along very well for the present, but you want to rise."

"You're right. When I get to be old and infirm I don't want to be an errand-boy."

"Nor I either. So, Dick, I think we had better make up our minds to study an hour or an hour and a half every evening. Of course, you can't begin this evening, but there are very few when you can't find the time."

"I'll send a circ'lar to my numerous friends on Fifth Avenue and Madison, tellin' 'em how much I'm obliged for their kind invitations, but the claims of literatoor and science can't be neglected."

"Do you know, Dick, I think it might be well for us to begin French?"

"I wonder what Johnny Nolan would say if I should inquire after his health in the polly-voo language?"

"It wouldn't be the first time you have astonished him."

"Well, Fosdick, I'm in for it if you think it's best. Now tell me what necktie I shall wear?"

Dick displayed two. One was bright red with large figures, which he had bought soon after he began to board in Mott Street. The other was a plain black.

"You'd better wear the black one, Dick," said Fosdick, whose taste was simpler and better than his friend's.

"It seems to me it don't look handsome enough," said Dick, whose taste had not yet been formed, and was influenced by the Bowery style of dress.

"It's more modest, and that is all the better."

"All right. I suppose you know best. Before I get ready I must give a new shine to my boots. I'm going to make them shine so you can see your face in them."

"Better let me do that for you, Dick. I can do it while you're dressing, and that will save time."

"No, Fosdick, I was longer in the business than you, and none of the boys could beat me on shines."

"I don't know but you're right, Dick. I freely yield the palm to you in that."

Dick stripped off his coat and vest and went to work with a will. He had never worked so hard for one of his old customers.

"I'm goin' to give it a twenty-five cent shine," he said.

Just then a knock was heard at the chamber-door.

"Come in!" said Dick, pausing a moment in his labors.

Mr. Clifton, a fellow-boarder, entered with a cigar in his mouth.

"Holloa," said he, "what's up? Going to the theatre, Hunter?"

"No," said Dick. "I'm goin' out to spend the evening with some friends up in Madison Avenue."

"So I heard you say at the table, but I thought you were joking."

"No," said Dick; "it's a fact."

"Seems to me you handle the brush pretty skilfully," remarked Mr. Clifton. "I should almost think you had served a regular apprenticeship at it."

"So I have," answered Dick. "Didn't you ever see me when I blacked boots on Chatham Square?"

"Good joke!" said the young man, who was far from supposing that Dick was in earnest. "Oh, yes, of course I've seen you often! Did you make money at it?"

"I retired on a fortun'," said Dick, "and now I've invested my capital in mercantile pursuits. There," and he took up one boot, and showed it to his visitor, "did you ever see a better shine than that?"

"No, I didn't, that's a fact," said Clifton, admiringly. "You beat the young rascal I employ all hollow. I say, Hunter, if you ever go into the 'shine' business again, I'll be a regular customer of yours."

"He little thinks I've blacked his boots before now," thought Dick.

"All right," said he, aloud. "When a commercial crisis comes, and I fail in business, I think I'll remember your encouragin' offer, and remind you of it."

"Have a cigar either of you?" asked Clifton, drawing out a case. "Excuse my not offering it before."

"No, thank you," said Fosdick.

"Don't smoke, eh? Won't you have one, Hunter?"

"No, thank you. Fosdick is my guardian, and he don't allow it."

"So you're a good boy. Well, I wish you a pleasant evening," and Clifton sauntered out to find some other companion.

"He wouldn't believe I'd been a boot-black," said Dick, "even after I told him. I knew he wouldn't, or I wouldn't have said so. Is my hair parted straight?"

"Yes, it's all right."

"How's my cravat?"

"It'll do. You're getting to be quite a dandy, Dick."

"I want to look respectable; got it right that time. When I visit Turkey I want to look as the turkeys do. Won't you go with me, —as far as the door, I mean?"

"Yes, if you're going to walk."

"I'd rather. I feel kind of nervous, and perhaps I'll walk it off."

The two boys got their caps, and walked up Broadway on the west side. The lights were already lit, and the shop windows made a brilliant display. At intervals places of amusement opened wide their hospitable portals, and large placards presented tempting invitations to enter.

They reached Union Square, and, traversing it, again walked up Broadway to Madison Park. At the upper end of this park commences the beautiful avenue which bears the same name. Only about half a dozen blocks now required to be passed, when the boys found themselves opposite a residence with a very imposing front.

"This is the place," said Dick. "I wish you were going in with me."

"I hope you will have a pleasant time, Dick. Good-by till I see you again."

Dick felt a little nervous, but he summoned up all his courage, and, ascending the broad marble steps, rang the bell.

CHAPTER V.
DICK RECEIVES TWO VALUABLE PRESENTS

At the end of the last chapter we left Dick standing on the steps of Mr. Rockwell's residence in Madison Avenue. He had rung the bell and was waiting to have his summons answered. To say that Dick expected to enjoy his visit would not be strictly true. He knew very well that his street education had not qualified him to appear to advantage in fashionable society, and he wished that Fosdick were with him to lend him countenance.

While under the influence of these feelings the door was thrown open, and a servant looked at him inquiringly.

"Is Mr. Rockwell at home?" asked Dick.

"Yes. Would you like to see him?"

"He asked me to call this evening."

"What! Are you the boy that saved Master Johnny from drowning?" asked the servant, her face brightening up, for Johnny was a great favorite in the house.

"I jumped into the water after him," said Dick, modestly.

"I heard Mr. Rockwell say he was expecting you to-night. Come right in. Mistress is very anxious to see you."

Placed a little at his ease by this cordial reception, Dick followed the servant upstairs to a pleasant sitting-room on the

second floor. Mr. and Mrs. Rockwell were seated at a centre-table reading the evening papers, while Johnny and his sister Grace were constructing a Tower of Babel with some blocks upon the carpet before the fire.

Dick entered, and stood just within the door, with his cap in his hand, feeling a little embarrassed.

"I am glad to see you, Richard," said Mr. Rockwell, rising from his seat, and advancing to our hero with a pleasant smile. "Mrs. Rockwell has been anxious to see you. My dear, this is the brave boy who saved our little Johnny."

Mrs. Rockwell, a tall, graceful lady, with a smile that quite captivated Dick, offered her hand, and said, earnestly, "My brave boy, I have been wishing to see you. I shudder to think that, but for your prompt courage, I should now be mourning the loss of my dear little Johnny. Accept a mother's thanks for a favor so great that she can never hope to repay it."

Now this acknowledgment was very pleasant to Dick, but it was also very embarrassing. It is difficult to receive praise gracefully. So our hero, not knowing what else to say, stammered out that she was very welcome.

"I understand that you have entered my husband's employment," said Mrs. Rockwell.

"Yes," said Dick. "He was kind enough to take me."

"I hope to make a man of business of our young friend," said Mr. Rockwell. "He will soon feel at home in his new position, and I hope we may find the connection mutually satisfactory."

"Have you a pleasant boarding-place?" asked Mrs. Rockwell.

"Tip-top," said Dick. "I mean pretty good," he added, in a little confusion.

"Where is it?"

"In Bleecker Street," said Dick, very glad that he was not obliged to say Mott Street.

"That is quite a good location," said Mr. Rockwell. "How do you spend your evenings, Richard?"

"In studying with a friend of mine," said Dick. "I want to know something by the time I grow up."

"That is an excellent resolution," said his employer, with warm approval. "I wish more boys of your age were equally sensible. You may depend upon it that a good education is the best preparation for an honorable and useful manhood. What is your friend's name?"

"Henry Fosdick. He rooms with me."

"I am glad you have a friend who shares your tastes. But perhaps you would like to renew your acquaintance with the young gentleman to whom you have rendered so great a service. Johnny has been allowed to stay up beyond his usual bedtime because you were coming. Johnny, come here!"

Johnny rose from his blocks, and came to his mother's side. He was a pleasant-looking little fellow, with a pair of bright eyes, and round, plump cheeks. He looked shyly at Dick.

"Did you ever see this young man?" asked his mother.

"Yes," said Johnny.

"When was it?"

"When I was in the river," said Johnny. "He pulled me out."

"Are you glad to see him?"

"Yes," said Johnny. "What is his name?"

"Dick," said our hero, who somehow could not help feeling, when called Richard, that some other boy was meant.

"Won't you come and help me build a house?" asked little Johnny.

Dick accepted the invitation with pleasure, feeling more at home with children than with older persons.

"This is sister Grace," said Johnny, with an offhand introduction.

"I saw you on the boat," said Dick.

"Yes," said Grace, "I was there. Oh, how frightened I was when Johnny fell into the water! I don't see how you dared to jump in after him."

"Oh, I've been in swimming many a time. I don't mind it," said Dick.

"I s'pose you're used to it, like the fishes," said Johnny. "I'm glad I'm not a fish. I shouldn't like to live in the water."

"I don't think I should, either," said Dick. "Now, what do you think the fishes do when it rains?"

"I do not know."

"They go down to the bottom of the sea to get out of the wet."

"Isn't it wet down at the bottom of the sea?" asked Johnny, in good faith.

"Of course it is, you little goose," said Grace, with an air of superior wisdom.

"Will you make me a house?" said Johnny.

"What kind of a house do you want?" said Dick, seating himself on the carpet, and taking up the blocks.

"Any kind," said Johnny.

Dick, beginning to feel quite at home with the children, erected an imposing-looking house, leaving little spaces for the doors and windows.

"That's better than the house Grace made," said Johnny, looking at it with complacency.

"But it won't last very long," said Dick. "You'd better sell it before it tumbles over."

"Do you own any houses?" asked Johnny.

"Not many," said Dick, smiling.

"My father owns this house," said Johnny, positively. "He paid fifty dollars for it."

"I didn't think houses were so cheap," said Dick. "I'd like to buy one at that price."

"You're a little goose, Johnny," said Grace. "He gave as much as five hundred dollars."

"Grace doesn't know much more about the price of real estate than Johnny," said Mr. Rockwell.

"Didn't the house cost as much as five hundred dollars?" asked Grace.

"As much as that certainly, my dear."

Just then, by an unguarded movement of Johnny's foot, the edifice of blocks reared by Dick became a confused ruin.

"I've got tired of building houses," he announced, "Won't you tell me a story, Dick?"

"I don't think I know any," said our hero.

"Here is a book of pictures," said his mother, bringing one from the table. "Perhaps your new friend will show them to you."

Dick took the book, and felt very glad that he had learned to read. Otherwise he might have been considerably embarrassed.

The children asked a great many questions of Dick about the pictures, some of which he could not answer. Johnny, on being shown the picture of a Turkish mosque, asked if that was the place where the turkeys went to church.

"If there was any place for a goose to go to church, you'd go there," said his sister.

"I aint a goose any more than you are," said Johnny, indignantly; "am I, Dick?"

Just then the servant came in to carry the children to bed, and, considerably against their wishes, they were obliged to withdraw.

"Come again, Dick," said Johnny.

"Thank you," said Dick. "Good-night."

"Good-night," said the two children, and the door closed upon them.

"I think I'll be going," said Dick, who did not feel quite so much at ease, now that his young friends had left him.

"Wait a few minutes," said Mrs. Rockwell.

She rang the bell, and a servant brought up some cake and apples, of which Dick was invited to partake.

I need not detail the conversation; but Mrs. Rockwell, with the tact of a genuine lady, managed to draw out Dick, and put him quite at his ease.

"How old are you, Richard?" she asked.

"Fifteen," said Dick; "goin' on sixteen."

"You are getting to be quite a young man,—old enough to wear a watch. Have you one?"

"No," said Dick, not suspecting the motive that led to her question.

"Will you allow me the pleasure of supplying the deficiency?" said Mrs. Rockwell.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.