# ALGER HORATIO JR.

## SLOW AND SURE: THE STORY OF PAUL HOFFMAN THE YOUNG STREET-MERCHANT

**Horatio Alger**

# Slow and Sure: The Story of Paul Hoffman the Young Street-Merchant

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# Содержание

# Jr. Horatio Alger
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## PREFACE

"SLOW AND SURE" is a volume of the stories of New York street life inaugurated by Ragged Dick. While it chronicles the advancement of Paul, the young street merchant, from the sidewalk to the shop, a large portion of it is devoted to the experiences of a street waif, who has been brought up by burglars, and passed the greater part of his time among them, without being wholly spoiled by his corrupt surroundings. His struggles between gratitude and duty on the one hand, and loyalty to his vicious guardians on the other, will, it is hoped, excite the interest and sympathy of the reader. The author has sought to indicate some of the influences which make it difficult for the neglected street children to grow up virtuous and well-conducted members of society. Philanthropy is never more nobly employed than in redeeming them, and "giving them a chance" to rise to respectability.

# CHAPTER I.
# SIX MONTHS AFTER

"It's most time for Paul to come home," said Mrs. Hoffman. "I must be setting the table for supper."

"I wonder how he will like my new picture," said Jimmy, a delicate boy of eight, whose refined features, thoughtful look, and high brow showed that his mind by no means shared the weakness of his body. Though only eight years of age he already manifested a remarkable taste and talent for drawing, in which he had acquired surprising skill, considering that he had never taken lessons, but had learned all he knew from copying such pictures as fell in his way.

"Let me see your picture, Jimmy," said Mrs. Hoffman. "Have you finished it?"

She came up and looked over his shoulder. He had been engaged in copying a humorous picture from the last page of *Harper's Weekly*. It was an ambitious attempt on the part of so young a pupil, but he had succeeded remarkably well, reproducing with close fidelity the grotesque expressions of the figures introduced in the picture.

"That is excellent, Jimmy," said his mother in warm commendation.

The little boy looked gratified.

"Do you think I will be an artist some day?" he asked.

"I have no doubt of it," said his mother, "if you can only obtain suitable instruction. However, there is plenty of time for that. You are only seven years old."

"I shall be eight to-morrow," said Jimmy, straightening up his slender form with the pride which every boy feels in advancing age.

"So you will. I had forgotten it."

"I wonder whether I can earn as much money as Paul when I get as old," said Jimmy thoughtfully. "I don't think I can. I shan't be half as strong."

"It isn't always the strongest who earn the most money," said his mother.

"But Paul is smart as well as strong."

"So are you smart. You can read unusually well for a boy of your age, and in drawing I think Paul is hardly your equal, though he is twice as old."

Jimmy laughed.

"That's true, mother," he said. "Paul tried to draw a horse the other day, and it looked more like a cow."

"You see then that we all have our different gifts. Paul has a talent for business."

"I think he'll be rich some day, mother."

"I hope he will, for I think he will make a good use of his money."

While Mrs. Hoffman was speaking she had been setting the

table for supper. The meal was not a luxurious one, but there was no lack of food. Beside rolls and butter, there was a plate of cold meat, an apple pie, and a pot of steaming hot tea. The cloth was scrupulously clean, and I am sure that though the room was an humble one not one of my readers need have felt a repugnance to sitting down at Mrs. Hoffman's plain table.

For the benefit of such as may not have read "Paul the Peddler," I will explain briefly that Mrs. Hoffman, by the death of her husband two years previous, had been reduced to poverty, which compelled her to move into a tenement house and live as best she could on the earnings of her oldest son, Paul, supplemented by the pittance she obtained for sewing. Paul, a smart, enterprising boy, after trying most of the street occupations, had become a young street merchant. By a lucky chance he had obtained capital enough to buy out a necktie stand below the Astor House, where his tact and energy had enabled him to achieve a success, the details of which we will presently give. Besides his own profits, he was able to employ his mother in making neckties at a compensation considerably greater than she could have obtained from the Broadway shops for which she had hitherto worked.

Scarcely was supper placed on the table when Paul entered. He was a stout, manly boy of fifteen, who would readily have been taken for a year or two older, with a frank, handsome face, and an air of confidence and self-reliance, which he had acquired through his independent efforts to gain a livelihood.

He had been thrown upon his own resources at an age when most boys have everything done for them, and though this had been a disadvantage so far as his education was concerned, it had developed in him a confidence in himself and his own ability to cope with the world not usually found in boys of his age.

"Well, mother," said he briskly, "I am glad supper is ready, for I am as hungry as a wolf."

"I think there will be enough for you," said his mother, smiling. "If not, we will send to the baker's for an extra supply."

"Is a wolf hungry, Paul?" asked Jimmy, soberly accepting Paul's simile.

"I'll draw you one after supper, Jimmy, and you can judge," answered Paul.

"Your animals all look like cows, Paul," said his little brother.

"I see you are jealous of me," said Paul, with much indignation, "because I draw better than you."

"After supper you can look at my last picture," said Jimmy. "It is copied from *Harper's Weekly*."

"Pass it along now, Jimmy. I don't think it will spoil my appetite."

Jimmy handed it to his brother with a look of pardonable pride.

"Excellent, Jimmy. I couldn't do it better myself," said Paul. "You are a little genius."

"I like drawing so much, Paul. I hope some time I can do something else besides copy."

"No doubt you will. I am sure you will be a famous artist some day, and make no end of money by your pictures."

"That's what I would like—to make money."

"Fie, Jimmy! I had no idea you were so fond of money."

"I would like to help mother just as you are doing, Paul. Do you think I will ever earn as much as you do?"

"A great deal more, I hope, Jimmy. Not but what I am doing well," added Paul in a tone of satisfaction. "Did you know, mother, it is six months to-day since I bought out the necktie stand?"

"Is it, Paul?" asked his mother with interest. "Have you succeeded as well as you anticipated?"

"Better, mother. It was a good idea putting in a case of knives. They help along my profits. Why, I sold four knives to-day, making on an average twenty-five cents each."

"Did you? That is indeed worth while."

"It is more than I used to average for a whole day's earnings before I went into this business."

"How many neckties did you sell, Paul?" asked Jimmy.

"I sold fourteen."

"How much profit did you make on each?"

"About fourteen cents. Can you tell how much that makes?"

"I could cipher it out on my slate."

"No matter; I'll tell you. It makes a dollar and ninety-six cents. That added to the money I made on the knives amounts to two dollars and ninety-six cents."

"Almost three dollars."

"Yes; sometimes I sell more neckties, but then I don't always sell as many knives. However, I am satisfied."

"I have made two dozen neckties to-day, Paul," said his mother.

"I am afraid you did too much, mother."

"Oh, no. There isn't much work about a necktie."

"Then I owe you a dollar and twenty cents, mother."

"I don't think you ought to pay me five cents apiece, Paul."

"That's fair enough, mother. If I get fourteen cents for selling a tie, certainly you ought to get five cents for making one."

"But your money goes to support us, Paul."

"And where does yours go, mother?"

"A part of it has gone for a new dress, Paul. I went up to Stewart's to-day and bought a dress pattern. I will show it to you after supper."

"That's right, mother. You don't buy enough new dresses. Considering that you are the mother of a successful merchant, you ought to dash out. Doesn't Jimmy want some clothes?"

"I am going to buy him a new suit to-morrow. He is eight years old to-morrow."

"Is he? What an old fellow you are getting to be, Jimmy! How many gray hairs have you got?"

"I haven't counted," said Jimmy, laughing.

"I tell you what, mother, we must celebrate Jimmy's birthday. He is the only artist in the family, and we must treat him with

proper consideration. I'll tell you what, Jimmy, I'll close up my business at twelve o'clock, and give all my clerks a half-holiday. Then I'll take you and mother to Barnum's Museum, where you can see all the curiosities, and the play besides. How would you like that?"

"Ever so much, Paul," said the little boy, his eyes brightening at the prospect. "There's a giant there, isn't there? How tall is he?"

"Somewhere about eighteen feet, I believe."

"Now you are making fun, Paul."

"Well, it's either eighteen or eight, one or the other. Then there's a dwarf, two feet high, or is it inches?"

"Of course it's feet. He couldn't be so little as two inches."

"Well, Jimmy, I dare say you're right. Then it's settled that we go to the museum tomorrow. You must go with us, mother."

"Oh, yes, I will go," said Mrs. Hoffman, "and I presume I shall enjoy it nearly as much as Jimmy."

# CHAPTER II.
# BARNUM'S MUSEUM

Barnum's Museum now lives only in the past. Its successor, known as Wood's Museum, is situated at the corner of Twenty-ninth street and Broadway. But at the time of my story the old Barnum's stood below the Astor House, on the site now occupied by those magnificent structures, the *Herald* building and the Park Bank. Hither flowed daily and nightly a crowd of visitors who certainly got the worth of their money, only twenty-five cents, in the numberless varied curiosities which the unequaled showman had gathered from all quarters of the world.

Jimmy had often seen the handbills and advertisements of the museum, but had never visited it, and now anticipated with eagerness the moment when all its wonders should be revealed to him. In fact, he waked up about two hours earlier than usual to think of the treat in store for him.

Paul, as he had promised, closed up his business at twelve o'clock and came home. At half-past one the three were on their way to the museum. The distance was but short, and a very few minutes found them in the museum. Jimmy's eyes opened wide as they took in the crowded exhibition room, and he hardly knew what to look at first, until the approach of a giant eight feet high irresistibly attracted him. It is a remarkable circumstance that

Barnum's giants were always eight feet high *on the bill,* though not always by measure. Sometimes the great showman lavishly provided two or three of these Titans. Where they came from nobody knew. It has been conjectured by some that they were got up to order; but upon this point I cannot speak with certainty. As a general thing they are good-natured and harmless, in spite of their formidable proportions, and ready to have a joke at their own expense.

"Oh, see that big man!" exclaimed Jimmy, struck with awe, as he surveyed the formidable proportions of the giant.

"He's bigger than you will ever be, Jimmy," said Paul.

"I wouldn't like to be so tall," said the little boy.

"Why not? You could whip all the fellows that tried to tease you."

"They don't tease me much, Paul."

"Do they tease you at all?" asked his brother quickly.

"Not very often. Sometimes they call me Limpy, because I am lame."

"I'd like to catch any boy doing it," said Paul energetically. "I'd make him see stars."

"I don't mind, Paul."

"But I do. Just let me catch the next fellow that calls you Limpy, and he won't do it again."

By this time a group had gathered round the giant. Paul and Jimmy joined it.

"Was you always so large?" asked a boy at Paul's side.

"I was rather smaller when I was a baby," said the giant, laughing.

"How much do you weigh?"

"Two hundred and seventy-five pounds."

"That beats you, Jimmy," said Paul.

"Were you big when you were a boy?"

"I was over seven feet high on my fifteenth birthday," said the giant.

"Did the teacher lick you often?" asked one of the boys shyly.

"Not very often. He couldn't take me over his knee very well."

"What an awful lot of cloth you must take for your clothes!" said the last boy.

"That's so, my lad. I keep a manufactory running all the time to keep me supplied."

"Do you think that's true, Paul?" asked Jimmy, doubtfully.

"Not quite," answered Paul, smiling.

"Don't you need to eat a good deal?" was the next question.

"Oh, no, not much. Half a dozen chickens and a couple of turkeys are about all I generally eat for dinner. Perhaps I could eat more if I tried. If any of you boys will invite me to dinner I'll do my best."

"I'm glad you ain't my son," said one of the boys. "I shouldn't like to keep you in food and clothes."

"Well, now, I shouldn't mind having you for a father," said the giant, humorously looking down upon his questioner, a boy of twelve, and rather small of his age, with a humorous twinkle in

his eye. "You wouldn't whip me very often, would you?"

Here there was a laugh at the expense of the small boy, and the group dispersed.

"Now, you've seen a large man, Jimmy," said Paul. "I'm going next to show you a small one."

They moved on to a different part of the building, and joined another crowd, this time surrounding the illustrious Tom Thumb, at that time one of the attractions of the museum.

"There's a little man, smaller than you are, Jimmy," said Paul.

"So he is," said Jimmy. "Is that Tom Thumb?"

"Yes."

"I didn't think he was so small. I'm glad I'm not so little."

"No, it might not be very comfortable, though you could make a good deal of money by it. Tom is said to be worth over a hundred thousand dollars."

"I guess it doesn't cost him so much for clothes as the giant."

"Probably not. I don't think he would need to run a manufactory for his own use."

But there were multitudes of curiosities to be seen, and they could not linger long. Jimmy was particularly interested in the waxwork figures, which at first he thought must be real, so natural was their appearance. There were lions and tigers in cages, who looked out from between the gratings as if they would like nothing better than to make a hearty meal from one or more of the crowd who surrounded the cages. Jimmy clung to Paul's hand timidly.

"Couldn't they get out, Paul?" he asked.

"No, the cages are too strong. But even if they could, I don't think they would attack you. You would only be a mouthful for them."

"I don't see how Mr. Barnum dared to put them in the cages."

"I don't think Barnum would dare to come very near them. But he has keepers who are used to them."

But it was time for the afternoon performance to commence. The play was Uncle Tom's Cabin, which no doubt many of my readers have seen. They got very good seats, fronting the stage, though some distance back. When the curtain rose Jimmy's attention was at once absorbed. It was the first time he had ever seen a play, and it seemed to him a scene of rare enchantment. To Paul, however, it was much less of a novelty. He had frequently been to Barnum's and the Old Bowery, though not as often as those boys who had no home in which to spend their evenings. Mrs. Hoffman was scarcely less interested than Jimmy in the various scenes of the play. It was not particularly well acted, for most of the actors were indifferent in point of talent; but then none of the three were critics, and could not have told the difference between them and first-class performers.

Both laughed heartily over the eccentricities of Topsy, probably the most original character in Mrs. Stowe's popular story, and Jimmy was affected to tears at the death of little Eva. To his unaccustomed eyes it seemed real, and he felt as if Eva was really dying. But, taking it altogether, it was an afternoon of

great enjoyment to Jimmy, whose pleasures were not many.

"Well, Jimmy, how did you like it?" asked Paul, as they were working their way out slowly through the crowd.

"It was beautiful, Paul. I am so much obliged to you for taking me."

"I am glad you liked it, Jimmy. We will go again some time."

They were stepping out on the sidewalk, when a boy about Paul's size jostled them rudely.

"There's Limpy!" said he, with a rude laugh.

"You'd better not say that again, Peter Blake," he said menacingly.

"Why not?" demanded Peter defiantly.

"It won't be safe," said Paul significantly.

"I'll call you Limpy if I like."

"You may call me so, and I won't mind it. But don't you call my little brother names."

"I don't mind, Paul," said Jimmy.

"But I do," said Paul. "No boy shall call you names when I am near."

Paul's resolute character was well understood by all the boys who knew him, and Peter would not have ventured to speak as he did, but he did not at first perceive that Jimmy was accompanied by his brother. When he did discover it he slunk away as soon as he could.

They were walking up Park Row, when Jim Parker, once an enemy, but now a friend of Paul, met them. He looked excited,

and hurried up to meet them.

"When were you home, Paul?" he asked abruptly.

"Two or three hours since. I have just come from Barnum's."

"Then you don't know what's happened?"

Paul turned instantly.

"No. What is it?"

"Your house has caught fire, and is burning down. The engines are there, but I don't think they can save it."

"Let us hurry home, brother," said Paul. "It's lucky I've got my bank-book with me, so if we are burned out, we can get another home at once."

Excited by this startling intelligence, they quickened their steps, and soon stood in front of the burning building.

# CHAPTER III.
# THE BURNING OF THE TENEMENT HOUSE

The scene was an exciting one. The occupants of the large tenement house had vacated their rooms in alarm, each bearing what first came to hand, and reinforced by a numerous crowd of outsiders, were gazing in dismay at the sudden conflagration which threatened to make them homeless.

"Och hone! och hone! that iver I should see the day!" exclaimed a poor Irish woman, wringing her hands. "It's ruined intirely I am by the fire. Is that you, Mrs. Hoffman, and Paul? Indade it's a sad day for the likes of us."

"It is indeed, Mrs. McGowan. Do you know how the fire caught?"

"It's all along of that drunken brute, Jim O'Connel. He was smokin' in bed, bad luck to him, as drunk as a baste, and the burnin' tobacker fell out on the shates, and set the bed on fire."

"Cheer up, Mrs. McGowan!" said the hearty voice of Mrs. Donovan. "We ain't burnt up ourselves, and that's a comfort."

"I've lost all my money," said Mrs. McGowan disconsolately. "I had twenty-siven dollars and thirty cents in the bank, and the bank-book's burnt up, och hone!"

"You can get your money for all that, Mrs. McGowan," said

Paul. "Just tell them at the savings-bank how you lost your book, and they will give you another."

"Do you think so?" asked Mrs. McGowan doubtfully.

"I feel sure of it."

"Then that's something," said she, looking considerably relieved. "Whin can I get it?"

"I will go with you to the bank to-morrow."

"Thank you, Paul. And it's you that's a fine lad intirely."

"All my pictures will burn up," said Jimmy.

"You can draw some new ones," said Paul. "I am afraid, mother, you will never wear that new dress of yours."

"It's a pity I bought it just at this time."

"Here's a bundle I took from your room, Mrs. Hoffman," said a boy, pushing his way through the crowd.

"My dress is safe, after all," said Mrs. Hoffman in surprise. "It is the only thing we shall save."

"You can have it made up and wear it in remembrance of the fire, mother."

"I shall be likely to remember that without."

Meanwhile the fire department were working energetically to put out the fire. Stream after stream was directed against the burning building, but the fire had gained too great headway. It kept on its victorious course, triumphantly baffling all the attempts that were made to extinguish it. Then efforts were made to prevent its spreading to the neighboring buildings, and these were successful. But the building itself, old and rotten, a very

tinderbox, was doomed. In less than an hour the great building, full as a hive of occupants, was a confused mass of smoking ruins. And still the poor people hovered around in uncertainty and dismay, in that peculiarly forlorn condition of mind induced by the thought that they knew not where they should lay their heads during the coming night. One family had saved only a teakettle to commence their housekeeping with. A little girl had pressed close to her breast a shapeless and dirty rag baby, her most valued possession. A boy of twelve had saved a well-used pair of skates, for which he had traded the day before, while an old woman, blear-eyed and wrinkled, hobbled about, groaning, holding in one hand a looking-glass, an article the most unlikely of all, one would think, to be of use to her.

"Did you save nothing, Mrs. Donovan?" asked Paul.

"Shure and I saved my flatirons, and my tub I threw out of the window, but some spalpeen has walked off with it. I wish it had fallen on his head. What'll my Pat say when he comes home from work?"

"It's lucky no lives were lost."

"Thrue for you, Mrs. Hoffman. It might have been a dale worse. I don't mind meself, for I've strong arms, and I'll soon be on my fate again. But my Pat'll be ravin'. He had just bought a new coat to go to a ball wid tomorrow night, and it's all burnt up in the fire. Do you see that poor craythur wid the lookin' glass? I'm glad I didn't save mine, for I wouldn't know what to do wid it."

"Well, Mrs. Donovan, we must find a new home."

"I've got a sister livin' in Mulberry street. She'll take me in till I can get time to turn round. But I must stay here till my Pat comes home, or he would think I was burnt up too."

The crowd gradually diminished. Every family, however poor, had some relations or acquaintances who were willing to give them a temporary shelter, though in most cases it fed to most uncomfortable crowding. But the poor know how to sympathize with the poor, and cheerfully bore the discomfort for the sake of alleviating the misfortune which might some day come upon themselves.

"Where shall we go, mother?" asked Jimmy anxiously.

Mrs. Hoffman looked doubtfully at Paul.

"I suppose we must seek shelter somewhere," she said.

"How will the Fifth Avenue Hotel suit you?" asked Paul.

"I think I will wait till my new dress is finished," she said, smiling faintly.

"Why, what's the matter, Paul? You're not burnt out, are you?"

Turning at the voice, Paul recognized Sam Norton, a newsboy, who sold papers near his own stand.

"Just about so, Sam," he answered. "We're turned into the street."

"And where are you going to stop over night?"

"That's more than I know. Mother here isn't sure whether she prefers the St Nicholas or Fifth Avenue."

"Paul likes to joke at my expense," said Mrs. Hoffman.

"Come over and stop with us to-night," said Sam. "My mother'll be glad to have you."

"Thank you, Sam," said Mrs. Hoffman, who knew the boy as a friend of Paul, "but I shouldn't like to trouble your mother."

"It'll be no trouble," said Sam eagerly.

"If you think it won't, Sam," said Paul, "we'll accept for to-night. I am afraid they wouldn't take us in at any of the big hotels with only one dress, and that not made up, by way of baggage. To-morrow I'll find some other rooms."

"Come along, then," said Sam, leading the way. "We'll have a jolly time to-night, Paul."

"By way of celebrating the fire. It's jolly enough for us, but I shouldn't like it too often."

"I say, Paul," said Sam, wheeling round, "if you're out of stamps, I've got a dollar or two that I can spare."

"Thank you, Sam; you're a brick! But I've saved my bank-book, and I've got plenty to start on. Much obliged to you, all the same."

It was true that Paul was in an unusually good position to withstand the blow which had so unexpectedly fallen upon him. He had a hundred and fifty dollars in the hands of Mr. Preston, a wealthy gentleman who took an interest in him, and moreover had a hundred dollars deposited to his credit in a savings-bank, beside his stock in trade, probably amounting to at least fifty dollars, at the wholesale price. So there was no immediate reason for anxiety. It would have been rather awkward, however, to look

up a shelter for the night at such short notice, and therefore Sam Norton's invitation was particularly welcome.

Sam led the way to the lodgings occupied by his parents. They were located on Pearl street, not far from Centre, and were more spacious and well furnished than any in the burned tenement house.

"You go up first and tell your mother, Sam," said Paul. "She won't know what to make of it if we go in without giving her any notice."

"All right," said Sam. "I'll be down in a jiffy."

Two minutes were sufficient for Sam to explain the situation. His mother, a good, motherly woman, at once acknowledged the claim upon her hospitality. She came downstairs at once, and said heartily to Paul, whom she knew:

"Come right up, Paul. And so this is your mother. I am very glad to see you, Mrs. Hoffman. Come right up, and I'll do all I can to make you comfortable."

"I am afraid we shall give you trouble, Mrs. Norton," said Mrs. Hoffman.

"Not in the least. The more the merrier, that's my motto. I haven't got much to offer, but what there is you are very welcome to."

The room into which they were ushered was covered with a plain, coarse carpet. The chairs were wooden, but there was a comfortable rocking-chair, a cheap lounge, and a bookcase with a few books, besides several prints upon the wall. Sam's father

was a policeman, while his mother was a New England woman of good common-school education, neat and thrifty, and so, though their means were small, she managed to make a comfortable home. Mrs. Hoffman looked around her with pleased approval. It was pleasant to obtain even temporary refuge in so homelike a place.

"Is this your little brother who draws such fine pictures?" asked Mrs. Norton.

Jimmy looked pleased but mystified. How should Mrs. Norton have heard of his pictures?

"You must draw me a picture to-night, won't you?" asked Mrs. Norton.

"I should like to, if I can have a pencil and some paper. All mine are burned up."

"Sam will give you some from his desk. But you must be hungry."

Sam was drawn aside by his mother, and, after a whispered conference, was dispatched to the butcher's and baker's, when he soon returned with a supply of rolls and beefsteak, from which in due time an appetizing meal was spread, to which all did full justice.

# CHAPTER IV.
# THE POLICEMAN'S HOME

It was not till later in the evening that Mr. Norton came in. He had been on duty all day, and to-night he was free. Though one of the constituted guardians of the public peace, he was by no means fierce or formidable at home, especially after he had doffed his uniform, and put on an old coat.

"Edward," said his wife, "this is Paul's mother, who was burned out to-day. So I have asked her to stay here till she can find a place of her own."

"That is right," said the policeman. "Mrs. Hoffman, I am glad to see you. Paul has been here before. He is one of Sam's friends."

"Paul likes to keep in with father," said Sam slyly, "considering he is on the police."

"If he is to be known by the company he keeps," said Mr. Norton, "he might have to steer clear of you."

Here I may explain why Sam was a newsboy, though his father was in receipt of a salary as a policeman. He attended school regularly, and only spent about three hours daily in selling papers, but this gave him two or three dollars a week, more than enough to buy his clothes. The balance he was allowed to deposit in his own name at a savings-bank. Thus he was accumulating a small fund of money, which by and by might be of essential use to him.

The group that gathered around the supper-table was a lively one, although half the party had been burned out. But Paul knew he was in a position to provide a new home for his mother, and thus was saved anxiety for the future.

"You have very pleasant rooms, Mrs. Norton," said Mrs. Hoffman.

"Yes, we have as good as we can afford. Twenty dollars a month is a good deal for us to pay, but then we are comfortable, and that makes us work more cheerfully."

"How do you like being a policeman, Mr. Norton?" asked Paul.

"I don't like it much, but it pays as well as anything I can get."

"I sometimes feel anxious about him," said Mrs. Norton. "He is liable to be attacked by ruffians at any time. The day he came home with his face covered with blood, I was frightened then, I can tell you."

"How did it happen?"

"I was called in to arrest a man who was beating his wife," said the policeman. "He was raging with drink at the time. He seized one of his wife's flatirons and threw it at me. It was a stunner. However, I managed to arrest him, and had the satisfaction of knowing that he would be kept in confinement for a few months. I have to deal with some tough customers. A policeman down in this part of the city has to take his life in his hand. He never knows when he's going to have a stormy time."

"I wish my husband were in some other business," said Mrs.

Norton.

"There are plenty of men that would like my position," said her husband. "It's sure pay, and just as good in dull times as in good. Besides, some people think it's easy work, just walking around all day. They'd better try it."

"There's one part Mr. Norton likes," said his wife slyly. "It's showing ladies across the street."

"I don't know about that," rejoined the policeman. "It gets rather monotonous crossing the street continually, and there's some danger in it too. Poor Morgan was run over only three months ago, and injured so much that he's been obliged to leave the force. Then some of the ladies get frightened when they're halfway over, and make a scene. I remember one old woman, who let go my arm, and ran screaming in among the carriages, and it was a miracle that she didn't get run over. If she had clung to me, she'd have got over all right."

"I don't think I'll be a policeman," said Sam. "I might have to take you up, Paul, and I shouldn't like to do that."

"Paul isn't bad," said Jimmy, who was very apt to take a joke seriously, and who always resented any imputation upon his brother. "He never got took up in his life."

"Then he wasn't found out, I suppose," said Sam.

"He never did anything bad," retorted Jimmy indignantly.

"Thank you, Jimmy," said Paul, laughing. "I'll come to you when I want a first-class recommendation. If I never did anything bad, I suppose you won't call that horse bad that I drew the other

day."

"It was a bad picture," said the little boy; "but people don't get took up for making bad pictures."

"That's lucky," said Sam, "or I shouldn't stand much chance of keeping out of the station-house. I move Jimmy gives us a specimen of his skill. I've got a comic paper here somewhere. He can copy a picture out of that."

"Where is it?" asked Jimmy eagerly.

The paper was found, and the little boy set to work with great enthusiasm, and soon produced a copy of one of the pictures, which was voted excellent. By that time he was ready to go to bed. Paul and he had to take up with a bed on the floor, but this troubled them little. They felt thankful, under the circumstances, to have so comfortable a shelter. Indeed, Jimmy troubled himself very little about the future. He had unbounded faith in Paul, to whom he looked up with as much confidence as he would have done to a father.

Early the next morning Mr. Norton was obliged to enter upon his daily duties. The poor must be stirring betimes, so they all took an early breakfast.

"Mother," said Paul, "it won't be much use to look up new rooms before the middle of the forenoon. I think I will open my stand as usual, and return at ten, and then we can go out together."

"Very well, Paul. I will help Mrs. Norton, if she will let me, till then."

"There is no need of that, Mrs. Hoffman."

"I would rather do it. I want to make some return for your kindness."

So the two women cleared away the breakfast dishes and washed them, and then Mrs. Hoffman sewed for two hours upon a shirt which his mother had commenced for Sam. Jimmy amused himself by copying another picture from the comic paper before mentioned.

Meantime Paul got out his stock in trade, and began to be on the watch for customers. He bought a copy of the *Herald* of his friend Sam, and began to pore over the advertisements headed "FURNISHED ROOMS AND APARTMENTS TO LET."

"Let me see," soliloquized Paul; "here are four elegantly furnished rooms on Fifth avenue, only fifty dollars a week, without board. Cheap enough! But I'm afraid it would be rather too far away from my business."

"I suppose that's the only objection," said Sam slyly.

"There might be one or two others, Sam. Suppose you pick out something for me."

"What do you say to this, Paul?" said Sam, pointing out the following advertisement:

"FURNISHED NEATLY FOR HOUSEKEEPING. Front parlor, including piano, with front and back bedrooms on second floor; front basement; gas, bath, hot and cold water, stationary tubs; rent reasonable. West Twenty-seventh street."

"That would be very convenient, especially the piano and the stationary tubs," observed Paul. "If I decide to take the rooms,

you can come round any time and practice on the tubs."

"Thank you, Paul, I think I'd rather try the piano."

"I thought you might be more used to the tubs. However, that's too far up town for me."

"Are you going to get furnished rooms?"

"I haven't spoken to mother about it, but as we have had all our furniture burned up, we shall probably get furnished rooms at first."

"Perhaps this might suit you, then," said Sam, reading from the paper:

"TO LET—FOR HOUSEKEEPING, several nicely furnished rooms; terms moderate. Apply at – Bleecker street."

"That must be near where Barry used to live."

"Would it be too far?"

"No, I don't think it would. It isn't far to walk from Bleecker street. But it will depend a little on the terms."

"Terms moderate," read off Sam.

"They might call them so, even if they were high."

"I wish there were some rooms to let in our building."

"I shouldn't mind taking them if they were as nice as yours. How long have you lived there?"

"We only moved on the first day of May."

"How much do you charge for your neckties, boy?" asked a female voice.

Looking up, Paul beheld a tall, hard-visaged female, who had stopped in front of his stand.

"Twenty-five cents," answered Paul.

"Seems to me they're rather high," returned the would-be customer. "Can't you sell me one for twenty cents?"

"I never take less than twenty-five, madam."

"I am looking for a nice birthday present for my nephew," said the hard-visaged lady, "but I don't want to spend too much. If you'll say twenty cents, I'll take two."

"I'm sorry, but I have only one price," said the young merchant.

"I'll give you twenty-two cents."

"I shall have to charge twenty-five."

"I suppose I must pay it then," said the lady in a dissatisfied tone. "Here, give me that blue one."

The necktie was wrapped up, and the money reluctantly paid.

"How would you like to be her nephew, Sam?" asked Paul, as soon as she was out of hearing. "You might get a nice birthday present now and then."

"Shouldn't wonder if that twenty-five cents bust the old woman! Do you often have customers like that?"

"Not very often. The other day a young man, after wearing a necktie for a week, came back, and wanted to exchange it for one of a different color."

"Did you exchange it?"

"I guess not. I told him that wasn't my style of doing business. He got mad, and said he'd never buy anything more of me."

"That reminds me of a man that bought a *Tribune* of me

early in the morning, and came back after reading it through and wanted to exchange it for a *Times*. But I must be goin', or I'll be stuck on some of my papers."

# CHAPTER V.
# HOUSE HUNTING

At ten o'clock Paul closed up his business for the forenoon, and returning to their temporary home, found his mother waiting for him.

"Well, Paul," she said inquiringly, "have you heard of any good rooms?"

"Here is an advertisement of some nicely furnished rooms in Bleecker street;" and Paul pointed to the *Herald*.

"They may be above our means, Paul."

"At any rate we can go and look at them. We must expect to pay more if we take them furnished."

"Do you think we had better take furnished rooms?" asked Mrs. Hoffman doubtfully.

"I think so, mother, just now. All our furniture is burned, you know, and it would take too much of our capital to buy new. When we get richer we will buy some nice furniture."

"Perhaps you are right, Paul. At any rate we will go and look at these rooms."

"If they don't suit us, I have the paper with me, and we can look somewhere else."

"May I go, mother?" asked Jimmy.

"We might have to go about considerably, Jimmy," said Paul.

"I am afraid you would get tired."

"If Mrs. Norton will let you stay here, I think it will be better," said his mother. "Are you sure he won't be in your way, Mrs. Norton?"

"Bless his heart, no," returned the policeman's wife heartily. "I shall be glad of his company. Mr. Norton and Sam are away most of the time, and I get lonely sometimes."

Jimmy felt rather flattered by the thought that his company was desired by Mrs. Norton, and readily resigned himself to stay at home. Paul and his mother went out, and got on board a Bleecker street car, which soon brought them to the desired number.

The house was quite respectable in appearance, far more so certainly than the burned tenement house. The time had been when Bleecker street was fashionable, and lined with the dwellings of substantial and prosperous citizens. That time had gone by. Still it was several grades above the streets in the lower part of the city.

Paul rang the bell, and the door was opened by a maid-servant.

"I saw an advertisement in the *Herald* about some rooms to let," said Paul. "Can we see them?"

"I'll speak to the mistress," was the reply. "Won't you come in?"

They entered the hall, and were shown into the parlor, where they took seats on a hard sofa. Soon the door opened, and a tall lady entered.

"You would like to look at my rooms?" she inquired, addressing Mrs. Hoffman.

"If you please."

"They are on the third floor—all that I have vacant. If you will follow me, I will show you the way."

At the top of the second staircase she threw open the door of a good-sized room, furnished plainly but neatly.

"There is another room connected with this," she said, "and a bedroom on the upper floor can go with it."

"Is it arranged for housekeeping?" asked Mrs. Hoffman.

"Yes; you will find the back room fitted for cooking. Come in and I will show you."

She opened a door in the rear room, displaying a pantry and sink, while a cooking-stove was already put up. Both rooms were carpeted. In the front room there was a sofa, a rocking-chair, some shelves for books, while three or four pictures hung from the walls.

"I don't see any sleeping accommodations," said Mrs. Hoffman, looking around.

"I will put a bed into either room," said the landlady. "I have delayed doing it till the rooms were let."

"How do you like it, mother?" asked Paul.

"Very well, but–"

Mrs. Hoffman hesitated, thinking that the charge for such accommodations would be beyond their means. Paul understood, and asked in his turn:

"How much do you ask for these rooms by the month?"

"With the small room upstairs besides?"

"Yes."

"Thirty dollars a month."

Mrs. Hoffman looked at Paul in dismay. This was more than three times what they had been accustomed to pay.

"We can afford to pay more than we have hitherto," he said in a low voice. "Besides, there is the furniture."

"But thirty dollars a month is more than we can afford," said his mother uneasily.

"My mother thinks we cannot afford to pay thirty dollars," said Paul.

"The price is very reasonable," said the landlady. "You won't find cheaper rooms in this street."

"I don't complain of your price," said Mrs. Hoffman, "only it is more than we can afford to pay. Could you take less?"

"No," said the landlady decidedly. "I am sure to get tenants at that price."

"Then, Paul, I think we must look further," said his mother.

"If you don't find anything to your mind, perhaps you will come back," suggested the landlady.

"We may do so. How much would you charge for these two rooms alone?"

"Twenty-six dollars a month."

The prices named above are considerably less than the present rates; but still, as Paul's income from his business only amounted

to fifty or sixty dollars a month, it seemed a good deal for him to pay.

"We may call again," said Mrs. Hoffman as they went downstairs. "But we will look around first."

"How much do you think we can afford to pay, Paul?" asked Mrs. Hoffman.

"We can easily afford twenty dollars a month, mother."

"That is more than three times as much as we pay now."

"I know it, but I want a better home and a better neighborhood, mother. When we first took the other rooms, six dollars a month was all we were able to pay. Now we can afford better accommodations."

"What other rooms have you got on your list, Paul?"

"There are some rooms in Prince street, near Broadway."

"I am afraid they would be too high-priced."

"At any rate we can go and look at them. They are near by."

The rooms in Prince street proved to be two in number, well furnished, and though not intended for housekeeping, could be used for that purpose. The rent was twenty-five dollars a month.

"I do not feel able to pay more than twenty dollars," said Mrs. Hoffman.

"That is too little. I'll split the difference and say twenty-two and a half. I suppose you have no other children?"

"I have one other—a boy of eight."

"Then I don't think I should be willing to let you the rooms," said the landlady, her manner changing. "I don't like to take

young children."

"He is a very quiet boy."

"No boys of eight are quiet," said the landlady decidedly. "They are all noisy and troublesome."

"Jimmy is never noisy or troublesome," said Mrs. Hoffman, resenting the imputation upon her youngest boy.

"Of course you think so, as you are his mother," rejoined the landlady. "You may be mistaken, you know."

"Perhaps you object to me also," said Paul. "I am more noisy than my little brother."

"I look upon you as a young man," said the landlady—a remark at which Paul felt secretly complimented.

"I think we shall have to try somewhere else, mother," he said. "Perhaps we shall find some house where they don't object to noisy boys."

It seemed rather a joke to Paul to hear Jimmy objected to as noisy and troublesome, and for some time afterward he made it a subject for joking Jimmy. The latter took it very good-naturedly and seemed quite as much amused as Paul.

The *Herald* had to be consulted once more. Two other places near by were visited, but neither proved satisfactory. In one place the rooms were not pleasant, in the other case the price demanded was too great.

"It's twelve o'clock already," said Paul, listening to the strokes of a neighboring clock. "I had no idea it was so hard finding rooms. I wonder whether Mrs. Norton would keep us a day

longer."

"Perhaps we can go out this afternoon and prove more successful, Paul."

"I've a great mind to consult Mr. Preston, mother. I think I'll call at his place of business at any rate, as I may need to draw some of the money we have in his hands. You know we've all got to buy new clothes."

"Very well, Paul. Do as you think best. You won't need me."

"No, mother."

Mrs. Hoffman returned to her temporary quarters, and reporting her want of success, was cordially invited by Mrs. Norton to remain as her guest until she succeeded in obtaining satisfactory rooms.

# CHAPTER VI.
# PAUL TAKES A HOUSE ON MADISON AVENUE

Paul kept on his way to the office of Mr. Preston. Those who have read the previous volume will remember him as a gentleman whose acquaintance Paul had made accidentally. Attracted by our hero's frank, straightforward manner and manly bearing, he had given him some work for his mother, and on other occasions had manifested an interest in his welfare. He now held one hundred and fifty dollars belonging to Paul, or rather to Mrs. Hoffman, for which he allowed legal interest.

On entering the mercantile establishment, of which Mr. Preston was at the head, Paul inquired for him of one of the salesmen.

"He is in his office," said the latter.

"Can I see him?"

"I don't know. Do you want to see him personally?"

"Yes, if he has time to see me."

"From whom do you come?"

"I come on my own business."

"Then I don't think you can see him," said the clerk, judging that a boy's business couldn't be very important.

"If you will be kind enough to carry in my name," said Paul,

"Mr. Preston will decide that."

Paul happened to have in his pocket a business card of the firm from which he bought the silk used in making up his neckties. He wrote on the back his name, PAUL HOFFMAN, and presented it to the clerk.

The latter smiled a little superciliously, evidently thinking it rather a joke that a boy of Paul's age should think himself entitled to an interview with Mr. Preston during business hours, and on business of his own. However, he took the card and approached the office.

"There's a boy outside wishes to see you, Mr. Preston," he said.

"From whom does he come?" asked his employer, a portly, pleasant-looking gentleman.

"On business of his own, he says. Here is his card."

"Oh, to be sure. Paul Hoffman!" repeated Mr. Preston, glancing at the card. "Tell him to come in."

"I wonder what business he can have with Mr. Preston," thought the clerk, considerably surprised.

"You can go in," he said on his return.

Paul smiled slightly, for he observed and enjoyed the other's surprise.

"Well, my young friend," said Mr. Preston cordially, "how are you getting on?"

"Pretty well in business, sir," answered Paul. "But we got burned out yesterday."

"How burned out?"

"I mean the tenement house in which we lodged was burned down."

"No one injured, I hope."

"No, sir; but we lost what little we had there."

"Were you at home at the time?"

"No, sir; my mother and little brother and myself were at Barnum's Museum. But for that we might have saved some of our clothing."

"Well, have you got a new place?" "No, sir; we are stopping at the rooms of some friends. I am looking out for some furnished rooms, as I don't want to buy any new furniture. As all our clothes are burned, I may have to draw fifty dollars of the money in your hands."

"How much rent do you expect to pay?"

"I suppose we must pay as much as twenty dollars a month for comfortable furnished rooms."

"Can you afford that?"

"My business brings me in as much as fifty dollars a month."

"You haven't engaged rooms yet?"

"No, sir; my mother and I went out to look at some this morning. We only saw one place that suited us. That we could have got for twenty-two dollars and a half rent, but when they heard of my little brother they wouldn't take us."

"I see. Some persons object to young children. I am glad you have not engaged a place yet."

Paul looked at Mr. Preston inquiringly.

"A gentleman of my acquaintance," proceeded the merchant, "is about sailing to Europe with his family. He is unwilling to let his house, fearing that his furniture would be injured. Besides, the length of his stay is uncertain, and he would want to go into it at once if he should return suddenly. What I am coming to is this. He wants some small family to go in and take care of the house while he is away. They would be allowed to live in the basement and use the chambers on the upper floor. In return they would receive the rent free. How would your mother like to make such an arrangement?"

"Very much," answered Paul promptly. He saw at a glance that it would be a great thing to save their rent, amounting, at the sum they expected to pay, to more than two hundred and fifty dollars a year. "Where is the house?"

"It is in Madison avenue, between Thirty-third and Thirty-fourth streets."

This was a considerable distance uptown, about three miles away from his place of business; but then Paul reflected that even if he rode up and down daily in the cars the expense would be trifling, compared with what they would save in house-rent. Besides, it would be rather agreeable to live in so fashionable a street.

"Do you think my mother can get the chance?" he asked.

"I think so. The gentleman of whom I spoke, Mr. Talbot, expects to sail for Europe next Wednesday, by the Cunard Line.

So the matter must be decided soon."

"Shall I call upon Mr. Talbot," asked Paul, "or shall you see him?"

"Here he is, by good luck," said Mr. Preston, as the door opened and an elderly gentleman entered. "Talbot, you are just the man I want to see."

"Indeed! I am glad to hear that. What is it?"

"Have you arranged about your house yet?"

"No; I came in partly to ask if you knew of any trustworthy family to put in while I am away."

"I can recommend some one who will suit you, I think," returned Mr. Preston. "The young man at your side."

"He hasn't got a family already?" inquired Mr. Talbot, with a humorous glance at our hero. "It seems to me he is rather forward."

"I believe not," said Mr. Preston, smiling; "but he has a mother, a very worthy woman, and a little brother. As for my young friend himself, I can recommend him from my own knowledge of his character. In fact, he has done me the honor of making me his banker to the extent of a hundred and fifty dollars."

"So that you will go bail for him. Well, that seems satisfactory. What is his name?"

"Paul Hoffman."

"Are you in a counting-room?" asked Mr. Talbot, turning to Paul.

"No, sir; I keep a necktie stand below the Astor House."

"I must have seen you in passing. I thought your face looked familiar. How much can you make now at that?"

"From twelve to fifteen dollars a week, sir."

"Very good. That is a good deal more than I made at your age."

"Or I," added Mr. Preston. "Paul was burned out yesterday," he added, "and is obliged to seek a new home. When he mentioned this to me, I thought at once that you could make an arrangement for your mutual advantage." "I shall be glad to do so," said Mr. Talbot. "Your recommendation is sufficient, Mr. Preston. Do you understand the terms proposed?" he continued, addressing Paul.

"Yes, sir, I think so. We are to have our rent free, and in return are to look after the house."

"That is right. I don't wish the house to remain vacant, as it contains furniture and articles of value, and an empty house always presents temptations to rogues. You will be free to use the basement and the upper floor. When the rest of the house needs cleaning, or anything of that kind, as for instance when I am about to return, it will be done under your or your mother's oversight, but I will pay the bills. Directions will be sent you through my friend Mr. Preston."

"All right, sir," said Paul. "How soon would you wish us to come?"

"I would like you and your mother to call up this evening and see Mrs. Talbot. You can move in next Tuesday, as we sail for

Europe on the following day."

"Yes, sir," said Paul in a tone of satisfaction.

"I will expect you and your mother this evening. My number is –."

"We will be sure to call, sir."

Mr. Talbot now spoke to Mr. Preston on another topic.

"Oh, by the way, Paul," said Mr. Preston in an interval of the conversation, "you said you wanted fifty dollars."

"I don't think I shall need it now, Mr. Preston," answered Paul. "I have some other money, but I supposed I might have to pay a month's rent in advance. Now that will not be necessary. I will bid you good-morning, sir."

"Good-morning, Paul. Call on me whenever you need advice or assistance."

"Thank you, sir; I will."

"That's what I call a good day's work," said Paul to himself in a tone of satisfaction. "Twenty dollars a month is a good deal to save. We shall grow rich soon at that rate."

He determined to go home at once and announce the good news. As he entered the room his mother looked up and inquired:

"Well, Paul, what news?"

"I've engaged a house, mother."

"A house? Where?"

"On Madison avenue."

"You are joking, Paul."

"No, I am not, or if I am, it's a good joke, for we are really to

live in a nice house on Madison avenue and pay no rent at all."

"I can't understand it, Paul," said his mother, bewildered.

Paul explained the arrangement which he had entered into. It is needless to say that his mother rejoiced in the remarkable good luck which came to them just after the misfortune of the fire, and looked forward with no little pleasure to moving into their new quarters.

# CHAPTER VII.
# THE HOUSE ON MADISON AVENUE

In the evening, as had been agreed, Paul accompanied his mother uptown to call on Mrs. Talbot and receive directions in regard to the house. They had no difficulty in finding it. On ringing the bell they were ushered into an elegantly furnished parlor, the appearance of which indicated the wealth of the owner.

"Suppose we give a party, mother, after we move in," said Paul, as he sat on the sofa beside his mother, awaiting the appearance of Mrs. Talbot.

"Mrs. Talbot might have an objection to our using her parlors for such a purpose."

"I wonder," said Paul reflectively, "whether I shall ever have a house of my own like this?"

"Not unless your business increases," said his mother, smiling.

"I rather think you are right, mother. Seriously, though, there are plenty of men in New York, who live in style now, who began the world with no better advantages than I. You see there is a chance for me too."

"I shall be satisfied with less," said his mother. "Wealth alone will not yield happiness."

"Still it is very comfortable to have it."

"No doubt, if it is properly acquired."

"If I am ever rich, mother, you may be sure that I shall not be ashamed of the manner in which I became so."

"I hope not, Paul."

Their conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Talbot. She was a stout, comely-looking woman of middle age and pleasant expression.

"I suppose this is Mrs. Hoffman," she said.

Paul and his mother both rose.

"I am Mrs. Hoffman," said the latter. "I suppose I speak to Mrs. Talbot?"

"You are right. Keep your seat, Mrs. Hoffman. Is this your son?"

Paul bowed with instinctive politeness, and his mother replied in the affirmative.

"Mr. Talbot tells me that you are willing to take charge of the house while we are absent in Europe."

"I shall be glad to do so."

"We have been looking out for a suitable family, and as our departure was so near at hand, were afraid we might not succeed in making a satisfactory arrangement. Fortunately Mr. Preston spoke to my husband of you, and this sets our anxiety at rest."

"I hope I may be able to answer your expectations, Mrs. Talbot," said Mrs. Hoffman modestly.

"I think you will," said Mrs. Talbot, and she spoke sincerely.

She had examined her visitor attentively, and had been very favorably impressed by her neat dress and quiet, lady-like demeanor. She had been afraid, when first informed by her husband of the engagement he had made, that Mrs. Hoffman might be a coarse, untidy woman, and she was very agreeably disappointed in her appearance.

"I suppose," she said, "you would like to look over the house."

"Thank you, I should."

"I also wish you to see it, that you may understand my directions in regard to the care of it. Follow me, if you please. We will first go down into the basement."

Mrs. Hoffman rose. Paul kept his seat, not sure whether he was included in the invitation or not.

"Your son can come, too, if he likes," said Mrs. Talbot, observing his hesitation.

Paul rose with alacrity and followed them. He had a natural curiosity to see the rooms they were to occupy.

They descended first into the basement, which was spacious and light. It consisted of three rooms, the one in front quite large and pleasant. It was plainly but comfortably furnished. The kitchen was in the rear, and there was a middle room between.

"These will be your apartments," said Mrs. Talbot. "Of course I have no objection to your moving in any of your own furniture, if your desire it."

"We have only ourselves to move in," said Paul. "We were burned out early this week."

"Indeed! You were unfortunate."

"I thought so at the time," said Mrs. Hoffman, "but if it had not been for that Paul would not have called upon Mr. Preston and we should not have heard of you."

"Were you able to save nothing?" asked Mrs. Talbot.

"Scarcely anything."

"If you are embarrassed for want of money," suggested Mrs. Talbot kindly, "I will advance you fifty dollars, or more if you require it."

"You are very kind," said Mrs. Hoffman gratefully; "but we have a sum of money, more than enough for our present needs, deposited with Mr. Preston. We are not less obliged to you for so kind an offer."

Mrs. Talbot was still more prepossessed in favor of her visitors by the manner in which her offer had been declined. She saw that they had too much self-respect to accept assistance unless actually needed.

"I am glad to hear that," she said. "It is not all who are fortunate enough to have a reserve fund to fall back upon. Now, if you have sufficiently examined the basement, we will go upstairs."

While passing through the upper chambers, Mrs. Talbot gave directions for their care, which would not be interesting to the reader, and are therefore omitted.

"I had intended," she said, "to offer you the use of the upper chambers, but they are so far off from the basement that it might

be inconvenient for you to occupy them. If you prefer, you may move down two bedsteads to the lower part of the house. I have no objection to your putting one in the dining-room, if you desire it."

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.