

I intended, however, to speak rather of the pleasure to be derived, by even the humblest, in the pursuit of knowledge, than of the power with which knowledge in the masses is invariably accompanied. For it is surely of greater importance that men should receive accessions to their own happiness, than to the influence which they exert over other men. There is none of the intellectual, and none of the moral faculties, the exercise of which does not lead to enjoyment. nay, it is chiefly in the active employment of these that all enjoyment consists; and hence it is that happiness bears so little reference to station. It is a truth which has been often told, but very little heeded or little calculated upon, that though one nobleman may be happier than another, and one laborer happier than another, yet it cannot be at all premised of their respective orders, that the one is in any degree happier than the other. Simple as the fact may seem, if universally recognized, it would save a great deal of useless discontent, and a great deal of envy. Will my humbler readers permit me at once to illustrate this subject, and to introduce the chapters which follow, by a piece of simple narrative? I wish to show them how possible it is to enjoy much happiness in very mean employments. Cowper tells us that labor, though the primal curse, "has been softened into mercy;" and I think that, even had he not done so, I would have found out the fact for myself.

It was twenty years, last February, since I set out a little before sunrise to make my first acquaintance with a life of labor and restraint, and I have rarely had a heavier heart than on that morning. I was but a slim, loose-jointed boy at the time — fond of the pretty intangibilities of romance, and of dreaming when broad awake; and, woful change! I was now going to work at what Burns has instanced in his "Twa