

## CHAPTER IX

“Others apart sat on a hill retired,  
In thoughts more elevate ; and reasoned high  
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,  
Fixed fate, freewill, foreknowledge absolute,  
And found no end in wandering mazes lost.”

MILTON.

SPRING came on, and brought with it its round of labor,—quarrying, building, and stone-cutting; but labor had now no terrors for me: I wrought hard during the hours allotted to toil, and was content; and read, wrote, or walked, during the hours that were properly my own, and was happy. Early in May, however, we had finished all the work for which my master had previously contracted; and as trade was usually dull at the time, he could procure no further contracts, and the squad was thrown out of employment. I rushed to the woods and rocks, and got on with my lessons in geology and natural science; but my master, who had no lessons to learn, wearied sadly of doing nothing; and at length, very unwillingly,—for he had enacted the part of the employer, though on a small scale, for a full quarter of a century,—he set himself to procure work as a journeyman. He had another apprentice at the time; and he, availing himself of the opportunity which the old man's inability of employing him furnished, quitted his service, and commenced work on his own behalf,—a step to which, though the position of a journey