

effect of arresting either individuals or peoples in their course of development; and is perilously allied to great suffering, when the men who exemplify it are so thoroughly happy amid the mediocrities of the present, that they fail to make provision for the contingencies of the future.

We were joined in about a fortnight by the other workmen from the low country, and I resigned my temporary charge (save that I still retained the time-book in my master's behalf) into the hands of an ancient mason, remarkable over the north of Scotland for his skill as an operative, and who, though he was now turned of sixty, was still able to build and hew considerably more than the youngest and most active man in the squad. He was at this time the only survivor of three brothers, all masons, and all not merely first-class workmen, but of a class to which, at least to the north of the Grampians, only they themselves belonged, and very considerably in advance of the first. And on the removal of the second of the three brothers to the south of Scotland, it was found that, amid the stone-cutters of Glasgow, David Fraser held relatively the same place that he had done among those of the north. I have been told by Mr. Kenneth Matheson,—a gentleman well known as a master-builder in the west of Scotland,—that in erecting some hanging stairs of polished stone, ornamented in front and at the outer edge by the common fillet and torus, his ordinary workmen used to complete for him their one step apiece per day, and David Fraser his *three* steps, finished equally well. It is easily conceivable how, in the higher works of art, one man should excel a thousand,—nay, how he should have neither competitor when living, nor successor when dead. The English gentleman who, after the death of Canova, asked a surviving brother of the sculptor whether he proposed carrying on Canova's *business*, found that he had achieved in the query an unintentional joke. But in the commoner avocations there appear no such differences between man and man; and it may seem strange how, in ordinary stone-cutting, one man could thus perform the work of three. My acquaintance with old John Fraser showed me how very much the ability de-