

very large, and, *I believe, has a tolerable good lining of brain within*; my eyes are brown and large, and are the least exceptionable part of my person; my forehead is high, eyebrows bushy, nose large, mouth very big, teeth well enough, and limbs not ill-shaped. . . . You have asked me why I have in many places used the expression, 'When I am old enough in other people's opinion.' The customs of this country have declared that man is not competent to his own direction until he has attained the age of twenty-one. Not so I: I never was a lad. From the time of my fall, deprived of many external sources of occupation, I have been accustomed to find sources of occupation within myself,—to think as I read, as I worked, or as I walked. While other lads were employed with trifles, I have thought, felt, and acted as a man. At ignominious treatment, at blows, I have suppressed my indignation and my tears till I have felt myself almost choked. I have, however, felt also *the superiority of genius, which would not allow ignorance to triumph*. I have walked hours on hours in the most lonesome lanes I could find, abstracted in melancholy musing; or, with a book in my hand, I have sat for hours under a hedge or tree. Sometimes, too, sheltered from observation by a rock, I have sat in contemplation by the river-side. At such times I have felt such a melancholy pleasure as I have not known *since I have been in the hospital*. O Nature! why didst thou create me with feelings such as these? Why didst thou give such a mind to one in my condition? Why, O Heavens! didst thou enclose my proud soul within such a casket? Yet, pardon my murmurs: I will try to be convinced that 'whatever is is right.' Kind Heaven, endue me with resignation to thy will, and contentment with whatever situation it is thy pleasure I should fill." Such was the estimate formed of himself by the deaf workhouse boy, and such his mode of expressing it. Depressed as his circumstances might at this time seem, and