

difficulty in procuring employment, and none at all in retaining it when once procured. Kenneth, on the contrary, was tossed about from shop to shop, and from one establishment to another; and for a full twelvemonth, during the half of which he was wholly unemployed, he did not work for more than a fortnight together with any one master. It would have fared worse with him than it did had it not been for his companion, Willie Sandison, who generously shared his earnings with him every time he stood in need of his assistance. In about a year after they had gone to London, however, Willie, an honest and warm-hearted, but thoughtless lad, was inveigled into a bad, disreputable marriage, and lost, in consequence, his wonted ability to assist his companion. We have seen one of Kenneth's letters to his old master, written about this time, in which he bewails Willie's mishap, and dwells gloomily on his own prospects. How these first began to brighten we are unable to say, for there occurs about this period a wide gap in his story, which all our inquiries regarding him have not enabled us to fill; but in a second letter to his mother, now before us, which bears date 1772, just ten years after the other, there are the proofs of a surprising improvement in his circumstances and condition.

He writes in high spirits. Just before sitting down to his desk, he had heard from his old friend Willie, who had gone out to one of the colonies, where he was thriving, in spite of his wife. He had heard, too, by the same post, from his mother, who had been so kind to him during his luckless boyhood; and the old woman was well. He had, besides, been enabled to remove from his former lodging to a fine, airy house in Duke's Court, opposite St. Martin's Church, for which he had engaged, he said, to pay a rent of forty-two pounds per annum—a very considerable sum