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FORTUNES AND ADVENTURES

OF

RABY RATTLER,

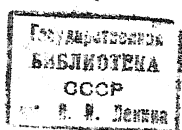
AND

HIS MAN FLOSS.

Illustrated with Twenty-eight Illustrations.

LONDON: WILLIAM TEGG.

1864.



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"EFFECTS" AND ADVENTURES  
OF  
RABY RATTLER,  
GENT.

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CHAPTER I.

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THE hero of the following pages, and whose name has given a title to them, was the only son and heir of the wealthy stock broker, well-known to the monied circles of London, and, indeed, to half the world; George Rattler, Esquire by courtesy, and gentleman by right; the first meeting a ready concession in superscriptions of all the begging letters and petitions, the other being patented to him by all who had ever dealt with, or known him. The subject of this faithful history was, as we have just said, his only son, and consequently liable to all those little endearments, which, for want of greater extent of radius, are so powerfully concentrated by parents, who are themselves in love with each other.

It is true there was another child, a daughter, and though *slightly* idolized, still her sex and position could never claim for her the lower of the foci of this family ellipse, its contracted form clearly precluding it from the nomenclature of a circle.

Our hero, Raby Rattler, was just arrived at that age, which enabled him to tandem a retreat from college, having finished, he being about twenty-one, and profound in every dogma that the first progenitor of his race was who studied there, as well as furnished with the degrees, which usually fall to the lot of elder brothers, or wealthy only sons, it was supposed time to conclude. In few, his college degrees satisfied his friends, as much as the elegance of his person charmed them.

Now the father of this aspiration concluded, the reader will judge how wisely, that a youth reared in the best side of London society, and educated at Oxford, would be likely enough to have administered unto himself a sufficient amount of what the senior world would call earthly vanities, without sending him to the continent to take in another dose, although it might be of little else, save that feeble compound rose-water, or some innocent perfume for the person. Instead of witnessing the fripperies that are the subject of golden-edged continental guide-books, the elder Rattler thought his son could not do

better than visit the internal regulations, manufactories, and resources of a kingdom that had given laws to the whole commercial universe, and possessed more claims to the prudent inquirist than the whole of the foreign gewgaws put together.

These were the considerations which induced a request from the sire, that the subject of our history, would at once take a trip to Ireland, Scotland, and finally settle down for the rest of the time given him for his tour, in his mother's native county, Lancashire.

Our plan will not afford a tracing of him through the early parts of his researches, adventures, and the rest, but will take him up when he first enters the capital of that county, in which we see his further ramblings met with an interdiction in the last direction of his father.

In Liverpool then we commence.

Raby Rattler had scarcely arrived at that queen of commerce, fixed upon head quarters, and fairly rubbed down for a stroll previously to the introduction of those letters, which were to introduce him to such society, as not only could, but of course daily would, transmit with other letters of business, an account current of his conduct and position, when he received a hastily wrapped billet which ran thus :

"Can it possibly be that my servant is correct, when he positively asserts without dread of correction, that he saw the gentleman who confers the same honor upon your honor that he himself honors me with, he says he did, and the same gentleman informed him that he arrived in Liverpool this morning, bringing *their* young squire with them. If all these things be true, do, I beseech thee, honest Raby, vouchsafe an answer to thy delighted correspondent, that, and a speedy embrace will greatly exhilarate,

"Thine ever truly,

"WILTHROP PILCHER.

"Now of —— I have not time to inquire —— and lately

"of her Majesty's sweetheart, the Aurora."

The epistle was put into Raby's hands as he was dressing, and so inspired him that he rolled up the letters, which were likely to procure him so many welcomes, and put them into the very place his servant had just taken them from.

"Captain Wiltthrop Pilcher, now by the cold water of formality, this is worth all the introductions put together, a noble fellow, with a heart bigger than most men's heads, still I feel more shame than ever I should have done in missing a fellowship, when I think of his glorious career, only a few days older than myself, and commands a frigate, whilst I could never yet command myself, I ——"

"Captain Pilcher, sir, is below."

"Do you call this below?—honest Raby, how art thou?" said the gallant captain, seizing our hero's arm with a tug, that would have dislocated those of half a dozen fops—"right happy to see you."

Mr. Rattler responded in the way that gladness ever does, that is by asking questions, and not waiting for answers, but prudently replying to those which are not even suggested.

"Right welcome Wildthrop."

"I am sure of it, well any thing in the *effective* way now? this will not be a bad field, this Liverpool."

"Why the fact is honest Pilcher, with a little friendly assistance, we might induce a recollection from some of the honest citizens of this place. What say you for a sail to the Cheshire side of the river, and astonish some of the fashionables who resort there, as I have at least a week before I *finish* at Oakmote, and I suppose," said Raby playfully, "that is the portion of this county which is destined to be honored with a visit from the gallant Captain Pilcher."

A lady novelist would say, that a slight crimson suffusion mantled o'er the captain's face at this hint of Mr. Rattler's, we perhaps might agree with the lady, that is if his sun burnt features, would have permitted so slight a hint to druggist-bottle it, after standing the colouring thrown upon it by the blaze of St. Jean de Acre.

"Oakmote," started the captain, "Why are you not aware that the family is here,—that is—I mean—to the Cheshire shore, you would like to go and try a few effects; be it so; we will have an early dinner, and as the days are long, we shall be more likely to meet with company now than in the evening."

It was at once agreed upon, the captain unknown to the effective Mr. Rattler, dispatched a messenger to New Brighton, for what purpose we shall perhaps soon see.

After dinner they at once started for that elegant resort of fashion. Mr. Rattler supposing, from its name and situation, that the most satisfactory results would arise from their researches, and after a delightful passage of something less than an hour, they arrived, and were consigned with a number of other passengers, into a punt, (it would be a libel on that respectable machine to call it a boat,) and propelled for about a hundred yards shorewards by a couple of long poles. At length a sudden jerk pitched some of the parties on their faces, giving the remainder also a kind of shaking up, by way of improving any acquaintance they might have formed during the passage.

"Aground! Joe, jump out;" and Joe managed the feat. For those who were not so alert, a conveyance was provided after this fashion: "Now marm, please get on my back;" and one by one, the long legged portion trailing their lower extremities in the water, the whole freight was placed upon *terra shaka*, it being a loose sort of puddle.

Having landed or rather sanded, for land appears to be out of the question at New Brighton, they sauntered about for a considerable time, and found it to contain every thing but what the maps, prospectuses, &c. promised; viz. baths, villas, news-rooms, promenades. In place, of these, however, there were every variety of sandy roads, gravel walks and sandy hills, upon one of which they observed a solitary rabbit, which gave a finished and picturesque appearance to the whole. Not having met with much to please the eye, they at last resolved to look out for something to please the taste, and at once entered the inn, Raby despairing of being able to meet with a sufficient field for the display of his brilliant genius. They had not, however, been long