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SNOWDROPS.

Slender form, with girlhood's supple grace
giving its charm to her sweet thoughtful face;
Dressed in a robe of silken, shining white,
I had never seen a fairer sight.
The breath of snowdrops shading her fair brow;
When I then saw her, so I see her now.

When I saw her all my love: I know not why,
When wealth and rank had failed, I dared to try;
When yet two little hands crept into mine;
When whisper told me, "My heart's love is thine."
My heart thanked Heaven for my untold bliss
When her pure lips met mine in love's first kiss.

When I saw her high two years since I had won my flower;
When life had been like one bright summer's hour;
When she had always thought for others' grief;
When tender sympathy oft gave relief,
When I saw her what she was to me words fail to tell.
When I saw her own sweet Snowdrop, oh! I loved her well.

When I saw her morn I had to go some miles away;
When memory ever blot out that sad day;
When an angel came with message for my love,
When a royal message, from her King above,
When I saw her her, God be thanked! Ay! heard the sigh,
When I saw her scarcely more—her whispered, soft good-
bye.

When I saw her cians called it death; I knew 'twas life,
When I saw her gh e'en Faith wavered in my sorrow's strife;
When I saw her years have passed, yet have not eased my
pain—
When I saw her I be forgotten when we meet again:
When I saw her own of snowdrops on her pale, still brow;
When I saw her st I saw her, so I see her now.

VERY polite and impressible gentleman,
When I saw him in the street, said, "My dear boy,
When I saw him inquire where Robinson's shop is?" "Cer-
tainly, sir," said the boy, very respectfully. After
a few minutes, the gentleman said, "Well,
When I saw him boy, where is it?" "I have not the least
idea," said the urchin.

WITH, the tragedian, had a broken nose. A
man once remarked to him, "I like your acting,
When I saw him good, but, to be frank with you, I can't get
over your nose." "No wonder, madam," replied
the tragedian, "the bridge is gone."

MAN troubles himself with imaginary sorrows,
When I saw him discards those things which could help him
to eradicate those sorrows.

NAPOLEON's hat having fallen off, a young
man stepped forward, picked it up, and pre-
sented it to him. "Thank you, captain," said
the emperor, inadvertently. "In what regi-
ment?" inquired the subaltern, quick as light-
ning. Napoleon smiled, and forthwith promoted
the youth to a captaincy.

MAN visiting London went to church and
prayed himself without hesitation in the nearest
congregation. Soon the owner came in, eyed the stranger
curiously, and then writing "My pew" on the
book of a prayer-book handed the book to the
stranger. The stranger read the message, smiled
and smiled, and wrote underneath: "Nice
what do you pay for it?"

THE LONELY HAMPSHIRE COTTAGE.

JOHN RANTER, ex-landlord of the "Battle of
Dettingen" public-house in Southampton, was
not a man whom one would desire as a friend,
and still less would one relish him as a foe.
Tall and strong in his person, dark and saturn-
ine in his disposition, the two-and-fifty years
which had passed over John's head had done
little to soften his character or to modify his
passions. Perhaps the ill-fortune which had at-
tended him through life had something to do with
his asperity, yet this same ill-fortune had been
usually caused by his own violent and headstrong
temper. He had quarrelled with his parents when
a lad, and left them. After working his way up
in the world, to some extent, he had fallen in
love with a pretty face, and mated himself to a
timid, characterless woman, who was a drag
rather than a help to him. The fruit of this
union had been a single son; but John Ranter
beat the lad savagely for some trivial offence,
and he had fled away to sea as a cabin-boy, and was
reported to have been drowned in the great wreck
of the *Queen of the West*. From that time the
publican went rapidly down-hill. He offended
his customers by his morose and sullen temper,
and they ceased to frequent the "Battle of Det-
tingen," until, at last, he was compelled to dispose
of the business. With the scanty proceeds he
purchased a small house upon the Portsmouth and
Southampton road, about three miles from the
latter town, and settled down with his wife to a
gloomy and misanthropic existence.

Strange tales were told of that lonely cottage,
with its bare brick walls and great, overhanging
thatch, from under which the diamond-paned
windows seemed to scowl at the passers-by. Wag-
goners at roadside inns talked of the dark-faced,
grizzly-haired man, who lounged all day in the
little garden which adjoined the road, and of the
pale, patient face, which peered out at them some-
times through the half-opened door. There were
darker things, too, of which they had to speak,
of angry voices, of the dull thud of blows, and the
cries of a woman in distress. However tired the
horses might be, they were whipped up into a trot,
when, after nightfall, they came near the wooden
gate which led up to that ill-omened dwelling.

It was one lovely autumn evening that John
Ranter leaned his elbows upon that identical gate,
and puffed meditatively at his black clay pipe.
He was pondering within himself as to what his
future should be. Should he continue to exist in
the way in which he was doing, or should he em-
bark what little capital he had in some attempt
to better his fortunes? His present life, if unam-
bitious, was at least secure. It was possible that
he might lose all in a new venture. Yet, on the
other hand, John felt that he still had all the
energy of his youth, and was as able as ever to
turn his hand to anything. If his son, he reflected,
who had left him fifteen years before had been
alive, he might have been of assistance to him
now. A vague longing for the comforts which he
had enjoyed in more fortunate days filled and
unsettled his mind. He was still brooding over
the matter when, looking up, he saw, against the
setting sun, a man dressed in a long grey over-
coat, who was striding down the road from the
direction of Southampton.

It was no uncommon thing for pedestrians of
every type to pass the door of John Ranter, and
yet this particular one attracted his attention to an
unusual degree. He was a tall, athletic young
fellow, with a yellow moustache, and a face which
was tanned by exposure to the sun and weather.
His hat was a peculiar slouched one, of soft felt,
and it may have been this, or it may have been the
grey coat, which caused the ex-publican to look
closely at him. Over his shoulder the stranger
had a broad leather strap, and to this was attached
a large black bag, something like those which are
worn by bookmakers upon a race-course. Indeed,
John Ranter's first impression was that the
traveller belonged to the betting fraternity.

When the young fellow came near the gate, he
slowed down his pace, and looked irresolutely
about him. Then he halted, and addressed John,
speaking in a peculiar metallic voice.

"I say, mate," he said; "I guess I'd have to
walk all night if I wanted to make Portsmouth in
the morning?"

"I guess you would," the other answered,
surlily, mimicking the stranger's tone and pro-
nunciation. "You've hardly got started yet."

"Well now, that beats everything," the traveller
said, impatiently. "I'd ha' put up at an inn in
Southampton if I dared. To think o' my spend-
ing my first night in the old country like that!"

"And why dar'n't you put up at an inn?" John
Ranter asked.

The stranger winked one of his shrewd eyes at
John.

"There ain't such a very long way between an
innkeeper and a thief," he said; "anyway, there's
not in Californy, and I guess human natur' is
human natur' all the world over. When I've got
what's worth keepin' I give the inns a wide
berth."

"Oh, you've got what's worth keeping, have
you?" said the old misanthrope to himself, and
he relaxed the grimness of his features as far as he
could, and glanced out of the corner of his eyes at
the black leather bag.

"Ye see, it's this way," the young man said,
confidentially; "I've been out at the diggings,
first in Nevada and then in Californy, and I've
struck it, and struck it pretty rich too, you bet.
When I allowed that I'd made my pile, I pushed
for home in the *Marie Rose* from Frisco to South-
ampton. She got in at three to-day, but those
sharks at the customs kept us till five fore we
could get ashore. When I landed I let out for
Portsmouth, where I used to know some folk;
but you see I didn't quite reckon up how far it
was before I started. Besides, this bag ain't
quite the thing a man would lug about with him if
he was walkin' for a wager."

"Are your friends expecting you in Ports-
mouth?" John Ranter asked.

The young man laid down his bag, and laughed
so heartily that he had to lean against the gate for
support.

"That's where the joke comes in," he cried;
"they don't know that I've left the States."

"Oh, that's the joke, is it?"

"Yes; that's the joke. You see, they are all
sitting at breakfast, maybe, or at dinner, as the
case might be, and I pushes my way in, and I up
with this here bag and opens it, and then ker-

down comes the whole lot on the table; ' the young man laughed heartily once more the idea. "The whole lot of what?" asked John. "A lot of shiners, of course—dollars, you know."

"But you mean to say you carry your whole lot about with you in gold?" Ranter asked, looking at the young man.

"My whole fortune! No, boss, I reckon not. It's all in notes and shares, and they're packed away right enough. This is just eight dollars that I put to one side for this little game that I spoke of. But I suppose I'm going to get there to-night, and I'll have to trust to an inn after all."

"You do that," the elder man said, smiling. "They are a rough lot in the inns here, and there's many a poor sailor found with his pockets as empty in the morning as they were when he sailed out of port. You find some other man and ask him for a night's lodging; that's the best thing you can do."

"Well, pard, I guess I've lost my bearings in this neighbourhood," the gold-digger said. "If you can put me on the track of any such berth as I speak of, I'd be beholden to you."

"Why, for that matter," John Ranter said, "I have a spare bed of our own, and should be glad if you would pass the night in it. We're simple folk, my wife and I; but as far as a fire and a warm supper go, you're very welcome to the one and the other."

"Well, you can't say fairer than that," the younger man responded, and he walked up the little path with his companion, while the shadow of the night spread slowly over the landscape, and the wind whistled mournfully in the neighbouring woods.

Mrs. Ranter, who had been a comely lass thirty years before, was now a white-haired, melancholy old woman, with a wan face and a timid manner. She welcomed the stranger in a nervous, constrained fashion, and proceeded to cook some bits of bacon, which she cut from a great side of pork hung from the rafters of the rude kitchen. The young man deposited his bag under a chair, then, sitting down above it, he drew out his pipe and lit it. Ranter filled his again at the same time, eyeing his companion furtively all the while he was under his heavy eye-brows.

"You'd best take your coat off," he said, in an unobtrusive way.

"No; I'll keep it on, if you don't mind," the stranger returned. "I never take this coat off."

"Please yourself," said John, puffing at his pipe. "I thought maybe you'd find it hot with your fire burning; but then, Californy is a hot place, I'm told, and maybe you find England chilly?"

The other did not answer, and the two men sat silently watching the rashers, which frizzled and sizzled under the pan.

"What sort o' ship did you come in?" the host asked, at last.

"The *Marie Rose*," said the other. "She's a three-masted schooner, and came over with hides and other goods. She's not much to look at, but she's no slouch of a sea boat. We'd a gale off Cape Horn that would have tried any ship that ever sailed. Three days under a single double-reefed topsail, and that was rather more than she could carry. Am I in your way, missus?"

"No, no," said Mrs. Ranter, hurriedly. The stranger had been looking at her very hard while she spoke.

"I guess the skipper and the mates will wonder what has become of me," he continued. "I was in such a hurry that I came off without a word to one of them. However, my traps are on board, so they'll know I've not deserted them for good."

"Did you speak to anyone after you left the ship?" Ranter asked, carelessly.

"No."

"Why didn't you take a trap if you wanted to get to Portsmouth?"

"Mate, you've never come ashore from a long sea voyage, else you'd not ask me that question. Why, man, it's the greatest pleasure you can have to stretch your legs, and keep on stretching them. I'd have padded on right enough if the light had held."

"You'll be a deal better in a comfortable bed," said Ranter; "and now the supper's ready, so let us fall to. Here's beer in the jug, and there's whisky in that bottle, so it's your own fault if you don't help yourself."

The three gathered round the table and made an excellent meal. Under the influence of their young guest's genial face and cheery conversation, the mistress of the house lost her haggard appearance, and even made one or two timid attempts to join in the talk. The country postman, coming home from his final round, stopped in astonishment when he saw the blazing light in the cottage window, and heard the merry sound of laughter which pealed out on the still night air.

If any close observer had been watching the little party as they sat round the table, he might have remarked that John Ranter showed a very lively curiosity in regard to the long grey coat in which his visitor was clad. Not only did he eye that garment narrowly from time to time, but he twice found pretexts to pass close to the other's chair, and each time he did so he drew his hand, as though accidentally, along the side of the overcoat. Neither the young man nor the hostess appeared, however, to take the slightest notice of this strange conduct upon the part of the expatriate.

After supper the two men drew their chairs up to the fire once more, while the old woman removed the dishes. The traveller's conversation turned principally upon the wonders of California and of the great republic in which he had spent the best part of his life. He spoke of the fortunes which were made at the mines, too, and of the golden store which may be picked up by whoever is lucky enough to find it, until Ranter's eyes sparkled again as he listened.

"How much might it take to get out there?" he said.

"Oh! a hundred pounds or so would start you comfortably," answered the man with the grey coat.

"That doesn't seem much."

"Why anyone should stay in England while there is money to be picked up there is more than I can understand," the miner remarked. "And now, mate, you'll excuse me, but I'm a man that likes to go to roost early and be up at cock-crow. If the missus here would show me my room I'd be obliged."

"Won't you have another whisky? No? Ah! well, good-night. Lizzie, you will show Mr.—Mr.——"

"Mr. Goodall," said the other.

"You will show Mr. Goodall up to his room. I hope you'll sleep well."

"I always sleep sound," said the man with the grey coat; and, with a nod, he tramped heavily, bag in hand, up the wooden staircase, while the old woman toiled along with the light in front of him.

When he had gone, John Ranter put both his hands into his trousers pockets, stretched out his legs, and stared gloomily into the fire, with a wrinkled brow and projecting lips. A great many thoughts were passing through his mind—so many that he did not hear his wife re-enter the kitchen, nor did he answer her when she spoke to him. It was half-past ten when the visitor retired, and at twelve John Ranter was still bending over the smouldering heap of ashes with the same look of thought upon his face. It was only when his wife asked him whether he was not going to bed that he appeared to come to himself.

"No, Lizzie," he said, in a more conciliatory tone than was usual with him. "We'll both stay up a short time to-night."

"All right, John," the poor woman said, with a glad smile. It was many a year since he had ever asked her for her company.

"Is he upstairs all right?"

"Who? Oh, Mr. Goodall? Yes; I showed him into the spare room."

"D'ye think he's asleep?"

"I suppose so, John. He's been there nigh an hour and a half."

"Is there a key in the door?"

"No, dear; but what queer questions you do ask."

John Ranter was silent for a time.

"Lizzie," he said at last, taking up the poker and playing with it nervously, "in the whole world there is no one who knows that that man came here to-night. If he never left us again, no one would know what had become of him, or how to make any search after him."

His wife said nothing, but she turned white to her very lips.

"He has eight hundred dollars in that bag, Lizzie, which makes over a hundred and twenty pounds of our money. But he has more than that in his pockets. He's got lumps of gold sewn into the lining of that grey coat of his. That's why he didn't care about taking it off. I saw the knobs, and he managed to feel 'em too. That money, my dear, would be enough to take the two of us out to any same country where he picked all this up—"

"For Heaven's sake, John," cried his wife, flinging herself at his feet, and clasping his knees in her arms, "for my sake—for the sake of our child who might be about this young man's age—think no more of this! We are old, John, and, rich as we are, we must in a few short years go to our graves. Don't go with the stain of blood on your hands. Oh, spare him! We have been bad, but never so bad as this!"

But John Ranter continued to gaze over his wife's head into the fire, and the set sternness of his features never relaxed for one moment. It seemed to her, as she looked up into his eyes, that a strange new expression had come into them, such as she had never seen before—the baleful, glaring glare of the beast of prey.

"This is a chance," he said, "such as would never come to us again. How many would be glad to have it! Besides, Lizzie, it is my life in this man's. You remember what Dr. Coombe said of me when we were at Portsea. I was liable to apoplexy, he said, and disappointed in my or hardships or grief, might bring it on. Now my wretched life has enough of all three. Now we had the money, we could start afresh, and it would be well. I tell you, wife, I shall do it."

and he clenched his large brown hand round the poker.

"You must not, John—and you shall not."

"I shall, and I will. Leave go of my knees."

He was about to push her from him when he perceived that she had fainted. Picking her up he carried her to the side of the room and laid her down there. Then he went back, and taking up the poker he balanced it in his hand, as if to strike him as being too light, and then went into the scullery, and after groping about in the dark he came back with a small axe.

He swung this backwards and forwards when his eye fell upon the knife which his wife had used before supper in cutting the rashers of bacon. He ran his finger along the edge of it. It was as sharp as a razor. "It's handier and surer!" he murmured, and going to the cupboard he drank off a large glass of raw whisky, after which he kicked off his boots and began silently to ascend the old-fashioned stair.

There were twelve steps which led up from the kitchen to a landing, and from the landing up to the bedroom of their guest. John Ranter was nearly half an hour in ascending these twelve. The woodwork was rotten, and the construction weak, so that they creaked under the weight of the heavy man. He would first put his right foot lightly upon the board, and gradually increase the pressure upon it until his whole weight was there. Then he would carefully move up with his left foot, and stand listening breathlessly for the sound from above. Nothing broke the stillness, however, except the dull ticking of the clock in the kitchen behind him and the melancholy howling of an owl among the shrubbery. In the uncertain light there was something terrible in this vague, dark figure creeping slowly up the little staircase—moving, pausing, creaking, and always coming nearer to the top.

When he reached the landing he could see the door of the young miner's room. John Ranter stood aghast. The door was on the left, and through the narrow opening there shone a bright golden stream. The light was still burning, it meant that the traveller was awake. John Ranter listened intently, but there was no sound.

movement in the room. For a long time he examined his ears, but all was perfectly still.

"If he were awake," John said to himself, "he would have turned in his bed, or made some noise during this time."

Then he began stealthily to ascend the eight remaining steps until he was immediately outside the bedroom door. Still all was silent within. No doubt it was one of his foreign customs to leave the light burning during the night. He had mentioned in conversation that he was a sound sleeper. Ranter began to fear that unless he got it over soon his wife might recover and raise an alarm. Clutching his knife in his right hand, he quietly pushed the door a little more open with his left and inserted his head. Something cold pressed against his temple as he did so. It was the muzzle of a revolver.

"Come in, John Ranter," said the quiet voice of his guest; "but first drop your weapon, or I shall be compelled to fire. You are at my mercy."

Indeed, the ex-publican's head was caught in such a way that it was difficult for him either to withdraw or to force his way in. He gave a deep groan of rage and disappointment, and his knife clattered down upon the floor.

"I meant no harm," he said, sulkily, as he entered the room.

"I have been expecting you for a couple of hours," the man with the grey coat said, holding his pistol still cocked in his right hand, so that he might use it if necessary. He was dressed exactly as he had been when he went upstairs, and the faded bag was resting upon the unruffled bed. "I knew that you were coming."

"How—how?" John stammered.

"Because I know you; because I saw murder in your eye when you stood before me at the gate; because I saw you feel my coat here for the magnets. That is why I waited up for you."

"You have no proof against me," said John Ranter, sullenly.

"I do not want any. I could shoot you where you stand, and the law would justify me. Look at that bag upon the bed there. I told you there was money in it. What d'ye think I brought that money to England for? It was to give it to you—yes, to you. And that grey coat on me is worth five hundred pounds; that was for you also. Ah! you begin to understand now. You begin to see the mistake you have made."

John Ranter had staggered against the wall, and his face was all drawn down on one side.

"Jack!" he gasped. "Jack!"

"Yes; Jack Ranter—your son. That's who I am." The young man turned back his sleeve, and held a blue device upon his forearm. "Don't you remember Hairy Pete put that 'J. R.' on when I was a lad? Now you know me. I made my fortune, and I came back, earnestly hoping that you would help me to spend it. I called at the 'Battle of Dettingen,' and they told me where to find you. Then, when I saw you at the gate, I thought I'd test my mother and you, and see if you were the same as ever. I came to make you happy, and you have tried to murder me. I shall not punish you; but I shall go, and you shall never see either me or my money any more."

While the young man had been saying these words, a series of twitchings and horrible convulsions had passed over the face of his father, and at the last words he took a step forward, raised his hands above his head, and fell, with a hoarse cry, upon the ground. His eyes became glazed, his breathing stertorous, and foam stood upon his purple lips. It did not take much medical knowledge to see that he was dying. His son stooped over him and loosened his collar and shirt.

"One last question," he said, in quick, earnest tones. "Did my mother aid in this attempt?"

John Ranter appeared to understand the import of it, for he shook his head; and so, with this single act of justice, his dark spirit fled from this world of crime. The doctor's warning had come true, and emotion had hastened a long-impending apoplexy. His son lifted him reverentially on to the bed, and did such last offices as could be done.

"Perhaps it is the best thing that could have happened," he said, sadly, as he turned from the

room, and went down to seek his mother, and to comfort her in her sore affliction.

Young John Ranter returned to America, and by his energy and talents soon became one of the richest men in his State. He has definitely settled there now, and will return no more to the old country. In his palatial residence there dwells a white-haired, anxious-faced old woman, whose every wish is consulted, and to whom the inmates show every reverence. This is old Mrs. Ranter; and her son has hopes that with time, and among new associations, she may come to forget that terrible night when the man with the grey coat paid a visit to the lonely Hampshire cottage.

APPRENTICES IN THE OLDEN TIME.

APPRENTICES as a body no longer form so important a factor in the lives of large towns as they used to do. Times are changed. The introduction of steam and the invention of machinery to take the place of hand-work, and the greater freedom of trading now existing, together, perhaps, with the increased size of the community, have combined to lessen the apparent importance of apprenticeship, or at all events to render apprentices less conspicuous than they formerly were.

Notwithstanding these things, there will ever remain trades the mastery of which will demand a systematic course of instruction extending over no inconsiderable period of time—and learners will never be wanting. These learners are the apprentices—literally, "learners"—the word "apprentice" being derived from the French word *apprendre*, meaning "to learn."

The inquiries we have received from time to time from apprentices of both sexes who have some complaint to make with respect to their treatment by their masters, or who are confronted with some difficulty in their relations to them, have led us to believe that some information regarding apprenticeship as it used to be and as it is may commend itself to large numbers of our readers. If not themselves interested as masters or apprentices, they may at all events be glad to glean a little knowledge in relation to some old-time customs of their native land.

We cannot but suppose that since the times when men began to follow distinctive callings and trades they undertook to teach those who were to succeed them how to do so in a worthy and befitting manner; but the contract of apprenticeship as we understand it does not come under our notice until some little time after the Norman Conquest. This fact, and the French derivation of the term mentioned above, seem to point to the conclusion that it was of Norman or French origin.

Be this as it may, the 'Prentice lads appear to have attained some degree of notoriety by the time of Edward III. (1327), for Chaucer, in his "Canterbury Tales," mentions them in the *Coke's Tale* as the "restless 'prentices."

The manners and practices of these apprentices would appear to have been anything but polished; and, sad to relate, the small items of intelligence regarding them which have come to us through the ages are such as lead us to the inevitable conclusion that they were most in their element when in the thick of a street fight. What some classes of students seem inclined to do in our day the apprentices did in theirs. They were the promoters of rowdiness. There was some excuse for the ready 'prentices, however, for the times they lived in were rougher than ours, and civilisation was comparatively in its infancy. They were constantly in trouble by reason of their quarrelsome ways.

In 1513, on the occasion of a rising against the Lombards, who, as foreigners making money in London, were greatly detested, the cry of "Prentices and Clubs" bore witness to the readiness of the lads to do battle. This, indeed, seems to have been one of their favourite rallying cries. In 1621, for having abused the Spanish

Ambassador as he passed their masters' door King James I. ordered certain apprentices to be whipped from Aldgate to Temple Bar. In Fleet Street, however, their companions rose in force and shouting "Rescue!" released the lads and beat the marshals who were carrying out the punishment.

Pepys, in his Diary of 1664, refers to Cheapside as full of apprentices who had done violence.

Fighting was not their only vice, apparently, for in the reign of Henry VIII. a statute was passed prohibiting them from gambling or sporting. In the same reign it was enacted that aliens, i. e. foreigners, were not to take apprentices, under penalty of £10, half of which was to be paid to the king and half to the informer.

We will now consider for a moment the terms and incidents of the contract of apprenticeship itself as they formerly existed. The City of London set the fashion in regard to these, and the practice throughout the country was by an Act of Parliament of the fifth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign assimilated in some of the principal matters to that of the City.

The masters were to be householders of not less than twenty-four years of age, dwelling in a city or town corporate, and using or exercising some art, mystery, or manual occupation there. The apprentices were to be the sons of freemen inhabiting some such city or town; they were to be bound for at least seven years, and the period of apprenticeship was not to expire until the youth had attained twenty-four years of age. There were other provisions for apprentices to husbandry, and apprentices in market towns, not being cities or towns corporate, and elsewhere.

In addition to the provisions of the statute of Elizabeth the City of London had its own customs which have never been interfered with by Parliament, although from time to time modified by the bye-laws and regulations of the corporation itself.

It was necessary at one time that the master should bind the apprentice to the company of his trade, to which he himself invariably belonged. The company exercised a certain control over its members and their apprentices, and instances are recorded of floggings administered to refractory apprentices on the premises of a city company and under the supervision of its officers.

Apprenticeship was, and still is, under certain conditions, a qualification to take up the freedom of the City of London—the indentures requiring to be enrolled at the Chamberlain's office for the purpose—either within a limited time from their date, or, after the expiration of that time, upon payment of a small fine. Women were entitled in this way to take up the freedom, and could themselves take apprentices—the latter, in the case of married women carrying on a trade separately from their husbands, being bound to the husbands.

There is also a custom that the executor of a deceased master must find a fresh master for an apprentice to enable him to complete his term of service.

All disputes between master and apprentice were settled by the Chamberlain, who seems to have exercised the chief civic authority over the general body of apprentices.

The compulsory clauses of the statute of Elizabeth, after being in force for two centuries and a half, were repealed by 54 George III., chap. 96, with a reservation, however, in favour of the customs of London or any other city, town, corporation, or company legally constituted, and, the whole control over trade having now been taken away from other corporations by the Municipal Corporations Act, the old system of apprenticeship remains in force only in the City of London, which is not included in that Act.

The modern law of apprenticeship will be explained in another paper.

"NATURE has written 'honest man' on his face," said a man to Douglas Jerrold, speaking of a person they one day met in the street. "Humph!" replied the wit, "then the pen must have been a very bad one."