

REMINISCENCES OF A STONEMASON

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Reminiscences of a stonemason by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**REMINISCENCES OF
A STONEMASON**

REMINISCENCES OF
A STONEMASON

BY A WORKING MAN

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1908

HD 8390
.R4

TO WHOM
IT MAY COME

TO THE READER

THIS is not a literary work, but a true and faithful description of the everyday life (during practically half a century) of an everyday working man

THE AUTHOR.

1908.

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CHAPTER I

INFANCY

My father was a tradesman, who, like many others, left his native village and came to London to seek employment.

While working in London he met my mother, who was a domestic servant, also from the country. After a brief acquaintance they were married, and my father settled down in business in my mother's native place. There they prospered until a year after I was born, when my father was carried off by an illness which also seriously affected my mother's health for the remainder of her life. Thus early did one of life's shadows fall across my path. In my third year I was placed in a Home. This name is applied now to a great variety of institutions. This particular institution became my home for the next five years, and it was within its walls that I first became conscious that I was one of the many

EARLY SCHOOLING

separate existences in this world, and that I must think and act for myself.

Of the Home itself, considered as a building, I can say little; the only thing I can remember is that it was a large stone erection, and had a big garden attached to it. There were also some tall trees, one being a mulberry-tree; whatever the others were I can't say. One thing I well remember, a lot of crows used to fly round these trees, in the autumn afternoons especially. I am not much of a naturalist. Perhaps the crows were there all the year round; but that is the impression left on my mind.

There was a lady, whose official title would most likely be "the matron"; but we children always spoke of her as the mistress. Whether she was single or a widow I never knew, nor can I remember her name. There would, of course, be assistants, but I have not the slightest remembrance of any of them. I know some of the elder children were picked out sometimes to teach the younger ones (I was chosen myself once, but soon dismissed). So many ladies came as visitors that they have obliterated all traces from my mind of any teachers but the mistress. This lady was of middle height, dark, rather good-looking, and inclined to be stout. The most of the time that we spent indoors was occupied in reading lessons. I never remember having heard the word "arithmetic," though I can see even now the coloured balls strung on wire just as I can see the large maps which hung on the walls of the