

**THE  
AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
OF A BEGGER BOY**

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The Autobiography of a Begger Boy by James Dawson Burn

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**JAMES DAWSON BURN**

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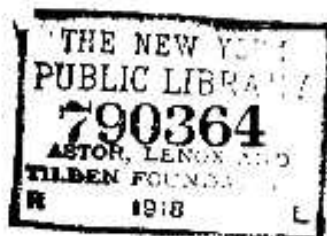
IN WHICH WILL BE FOUND RELATED THE NUMEROUS TRIALS,  
HARD STRUGGLES, AND VICISSITUDES OF A STRANGELY  
CHECKERED LIFE; WITH GLIMPSSES OF SOCIAL  
AND POLITICAL HISTORY OVER A PERIOD  
OF FIFTY YEARS.

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1859.

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RICHARD CLAYTON, PRINTER  
MARK LANE.

## PREFACE.

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THE AUTHOR has been induced to publish this little volume, from a consideration that a perusal of the numerous trials and hard struggles of his life, may have a tendency to stimulate young men to an endeavour to overcome the obstacles and difficulties which may surround their early positions in the world. This brief history of an eventful and highly chequered career, he thinks, cannot fail to impress upon the youthful reader a lesson of useful import. Men in their daily intercourse have frequent opportunities to study each other's history, but as they cannot keep up the connection in the regular order of events, their narratives necessarily become disjointed. There is also another consideration of still greater importance to the proper understanding of a man's character, which is a knowledge of his motives. Could we but see the hidden springs which prompt men to action, we should often be less liable to judge harshly of each other's conduct, and, instead of censuring, find it our duty to praise!

The first division of the book will introduce the Author in the character of a wandering vagrant. It will be seen, that when he was cast upon his own resources, he was placed in circumstances of extreme danger, being exposed to the twofold temptations of poverty and bad company. It may be said that he overcame the difficulties of his truly critical position by the energy and determination of his character.

The second division will show the reader the misdirected energies of an uneducated man, whose ambition

was fettered by the want of early training. In this part of the work the Author has endeavoured to open up the whole volume of his mind, and thereby expose its most secret springs. It will thus be seen that many of his commercial failures have arisen from a pure want of caution, and like many a well-meaning man, who has split upon the same rock, instead of looking for the sources of his numerous mishaps in his own want of judgment, he has frequently attributed them to causes which never existed !

The third epoch of the Author's life may be said to have been ruled by a series of conflicting circumstances, over which he appeared to have had little or no control ; however, the reader will not fail to observe that the same laudable determination of character which saved him from moral shipwreck in early life, still enabled him to weather the storms of adversity in more advanced years. On the whole, the narrative will be found to be a series of natural incidents arising out of their various causes, and the Author has made no attempt either to heighten their colour, or enhance their importance. Much of the reflective matter in this volume will be appreciated, or otherwise, according to the pre-conceived opinions of those into whose hands it may fall, the Author has only to add, that his notions of men and things, whether right or wrong, have been produced by much rubbing with the world, and in the *meantime*, they are the honest expressions of his mind.

THE AUTHOR.



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