

of my work, he informed me, to my perfect amazement and mortification, that the whole of the copies were yet upon his shelves, and that he was ready to hand me over the entire impression, of which, as he might well be, he expressed himself desirous of being relieved. He assured me that he had employed the usual means to push them off, but that he had not been able, in a single instance, to effect a sale. He regretted to say that it was the most decided failure in the literary line that had ever come under his observation; not, he was pleased to observe, from any defect in point of literary ability, but solely from the fact that matter of that nature was totally unfit for the Parisian market. The whole edition was returned upon my hands; not a single copy had been sold in twenty years, although offered at a price below the cost of production. Still I never repented the attempt, mistaken though it proved to be. It afforded me occupation during some wretched months of confinement, and comforted me with the hope that, were I to die by the guillotine, I might leave a voice behind me which might be of use to my fellow-creatures.

A CELEBRATED FRENCH CLOCK-MAKER.

THE superiority of French clocks and watches has been achieved only by the laborious efforts of many ingenious artisans. Of one of these, to whom France owes no little of its celebrity in this branch of art, we propose to speak. Bréguet was the name of this remarkable individual. He was a native of Neuchâtel, in Switzerland, and thence he was removed, while young, to Versailles, for the purpose of learning his business as a horologist. His parents being poor, he found it necessary to rely on his own energy for advancement in life.

At Versailles, he served a regular apprenticeship, during which his diligence in improving himself was almost beyond example. He became greatly attached to his profession; and soon, by studious perseverance his talents were developed by real knowledge. At length the term of apprenticeship expired, and as the master was expressing to the pupil the satisfaction which his good conduct and diligence had given him, he was struck with astonishment when he replied: "Master, I have a favor to ask of you. I feel that I have not always as I ought employed my time, which was to have indemnified you for the cares and lessons you have spent on me. I beg of you, then, to permit me to continue with you three months longer without salary." This request confirmed the attachment of the master to his pupil. But scarcely was the apprenticeship of the latter over, when he lost his mother and his stepfather, and found himself alone in the world with an elder sister—being thus left to provide, by his own industry, for the maintenance of two persons. Nevertheless, he ardently desired to complete his necessary studies, for he felt that the knowledge of mathematics was absolutely indispensable to his attaining

perfection in his art. This determined purpose conquered every obstacle. Not only did he labor perseveringly for his sister and himself, but also found means to attend regularly a course of public lectures which the Abbé Marie was then giving at the College Mazarin. The professor, having remarked the unwearied assiduity of the young clockmaker, made a friend of him, and delighted in considering him as his beloved pupil. This friendship, founded on the truest esteem and the most affectionate gratitude, contributed wondrously to the progress of the student.

The great metamorphosis which was effected so suddenly in the young clockmaker was very remarkable. There is something very encouraging in his example, affording as it does a proof of the power of the man who arms himself with a determined purpose. At first, the struggle with difficulties appears hard, painful, almost impossible; but only let there be a little perseverance, the obstacles vanish one after the other, the way is made plain: instead of the thorns which seem to choke it, verdant laurels suddenly spring up, the reward of constant and unwearied labor. Thus it was with our studious apprentice. His ideas soon expand; his work acquires more precision; a new and a more extended horizon opens before him. From a skillful workman, it is not long before he becomes an accomplished artist. Yet a few years, and the name of Bréguet is celebrated.

At the epoch of the first troubles of the Revolution of 1789, Bréguet had already founded the establishment which has since produced so many master-pieces of mechanism. The most honorable, the most flattering reputation was his. One anecdote will serve to prove the high repute in which he was held, even out of France. One day a watch, to the construction of which he had given his whole attention, happened to fall into the hands of Arnold, the celebrated English watchmaker. He examined it with interest, and surveyed with admiration the simplicity of its mechanism, the perfection of the workmanship. He could scarcely be persuaded that a specimen thus executed could be the work of French industry. Yielding to the love of his art, he immediately set out for Paris, without any other object than simply to become acquainted with the French artist. On arriving in Paris, he went immediately to see Bréguet, and soon these two men were acquainted with each other. They seem, indeed, to have formed a mutual friendship. In order that Bréguet might give Arnold the highest token of his esteem and affection, he requested him to take his son with him to be taught his profession, and this was acceded to.

The Revolution destroyed the first establishment of Bréguet, and finally forced the great artist to seek an asylum on a foreign shore. There generous assistance enabled him, with his son, to continue his ingenious experiments in his art. At length, having returned to Paris after two years' absence, he opened a new establishment, which continued to flourish till 1823, when France lost this man, the pride and

boast of its industrial class. Bréguet was member of the Institute, was clockmaker to the navy, and member of the Bureau of Longitude. He was indeed the most celebrated clockmaker of the age; he had brought to perfection every branch of his art. Nothing could surpass the delicacy and ingenuity of his free escapement with a maintaining power. To him we owe another escapement called 'natural,' in which there is no spring, and oil is not needed; but another, and still more perfect one, is the double escapement, where the precision of the contacts renders the use of oil equally unnecessary, and in which the waste of power in the pendulum is repaired at each vibration.

The sea-watches or chronometers of Bréguet are famous throughout the world. It is well known that these watches are every moment subject to change of position, from the rolling and pitching of the vessel. Bréguet conceived the bold thought of inclosing the whole mechanism of the escapement and the spring in a circular envelope, making a complete revolution every two minutes. The inequality of position is thus, as it were, equalized on that short lapse of time; the mechanism itself producing compensation, whether the chronometer is subjected to any continuous movement, or kept steady in an inclined or upright position. Bréguet did still more: he found means to preserve the regularity of his chronometers even in case of their getting any sudden shock or fall, and this he did by the parachute. Sir Thomas Brisbane put one of them to the proof, carrying it about with him on horseback, and on long journeys and voyages; in sixteen months, the greatest daily loss was only a second and a half—that is, the 57,600th part of a daily revolution.

Such is the encouraging example of Bréguet, who was at first only a workman. And to this he owes his being the best judge of good workmen, as he was the best friend to them. He sought out such every where, even in other countries; gave them the instruction of a master of the art; and treated them with the kindness of a father. They were indebted to him for their prosperity, and he owed to them the increase of fortune and of fame. He well understood the advantages of a judicious division of labor, according to the several capabilities of artisans. By this means, he was able to meet the demand for pieces of his workmanship, not less remarkable for elegance and beauty than for extreme accuracy. It may indeed be said, that Bréguet's efforts gave a character to French horology that it has never lost. So much may one man do in his day and generation to give an impetus to an important branch of national industry.

BLEAK HOUSE.*

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER VIII.—COVERING A MULTITUDE OF SINS.

IT was interesting, when I dressed before daylight, to peep out of window, where my candles

* Continued from the May Number.

were reflected in the black panes like two beacons, and, finding all beyond still enshrouded in the indistinctness of last night, to watch how it turned out when the day came on. As the prospect gradually revealed itself, and disclosed the scene over which the wind had wandered in the dark, like my memory over my life, I had a pleasure in discovering the unknown objects that had been around me in my sleep. At first they were faintly discernible in the mist, and above them the later stars still glimmered. That pale interval over, the picture began to enlarge and fill up so fast, that at every new peep, I could have found enough to look at for an hour. Imperceptibly, my candles became the only incongruous part of the morning, the dark places in my room all melted away, and the day shone bright upon a cheerful landscape, prominent in which the old Abbey Church, with its massive tower, threw a softer train of shadow on the view than seemed compatible with its rugged character. But so from rough outsides (I hope I have learnt), serene and gentle influences often proceed.

Every part of the house was in such order, and every one was so attentive to me, that I had no trouble with my two bunches of keys: though what with trying to remember the contents of each little store-room, drawer, and cupboard; and what with making notes on a slate about jams, and pickles, and preserves, and bottles, and glass, and china, and a great many other things; and what with being generally a methodical, old-maidish sort of foolish little person; I was so busy that I could not believe it was breakfast-time when I heard the bell ring. Away I ran, however, and made tea, as I had already been installed into the responsibility of the tea-pot; and then, as they were all rather late, and nobody was down yet, I thought I would take a peep at the garden, and get some knowledge of that too. I found it quite a delightful place; in front, the pretty avenue and drive by which we had approached (and where, by-the-by, we had cut up the gravel so terribly with our wheels that I asked the gardener to roll it); at the back, the flower-garden, with my darling at her window up there, throwing it open to smile out at me, as if she would have kissed me from that distance. Beyond the flower-garden was a kitchen-garden, and then a paddock, and then a snug little rick-yard, and then a dear little farm-yard. As to the house itself, with its three peaks in the roof; its various shaped windows, some so large, some so small, and all so pretty; its trellis-work against the south front for roses and honey-suckle, and its homely, comfortable, welcoming look; it was, as Ada said, when she came out to meet me with her arm through that of its master, worthy of her cousin John—a bold thing to say, though he only pinched her dear cheek for it.

Mr. Skimpole was as agreeable at breakfast, as he had been over-night. There was honey on the table, and it led him into a discourse about bees. He had no objection to honey, he said (and I should think he had not, for he seemed to like it),