

No. XVII.]

THE

[PRICE 1s.

POSTHUMOUS PAPERS

OF THE

PICKWICK CLUB

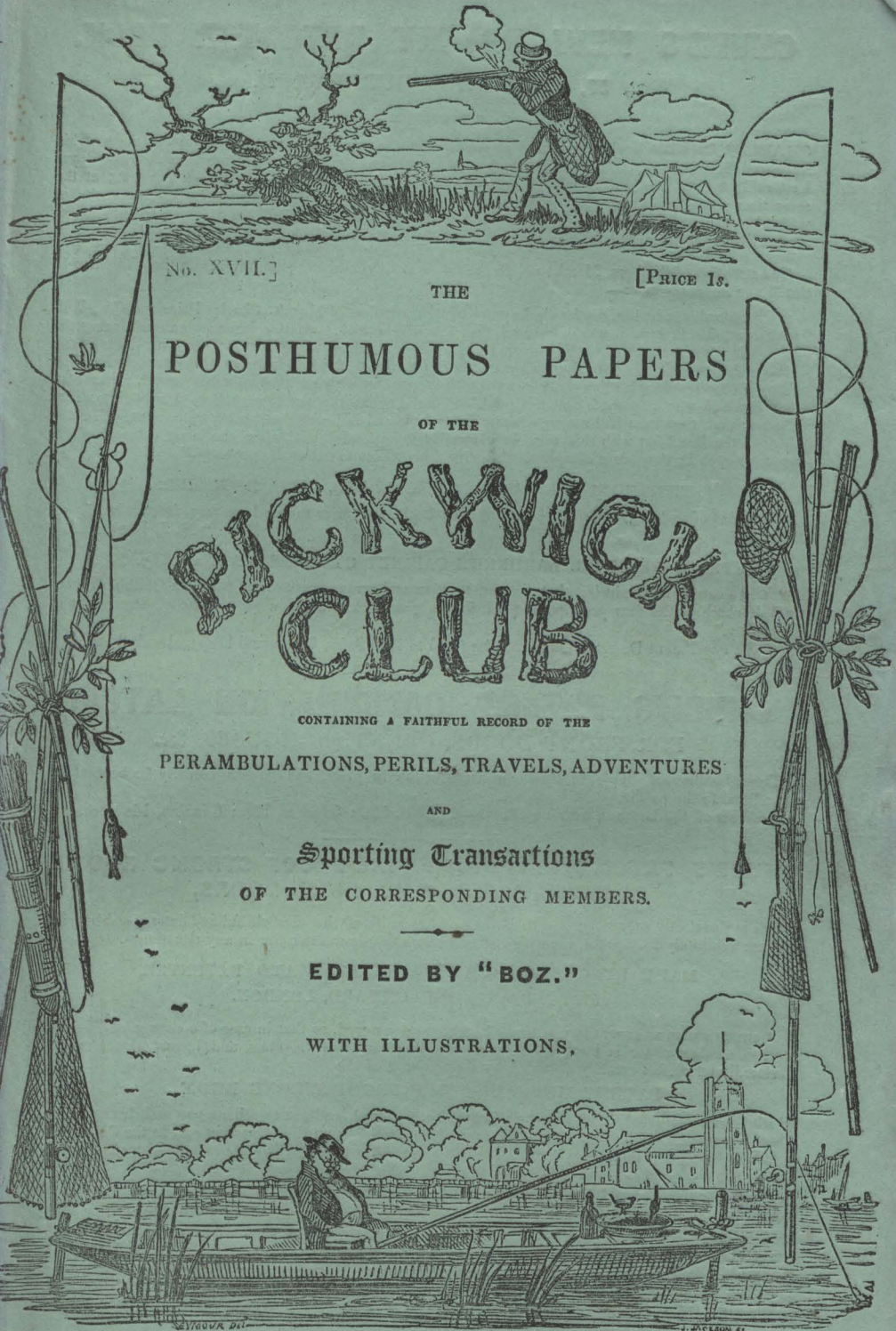
CONTAINING A FAITHFUL RECORD OF THE
PERAMBULATIONS, PERILS, TRAVELS, ADVENTURES

AND

Sporting Transactions
OF THE CORRESPONDING MEMBERS.

EDITED BY "BOZ."

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.



CHUBB'S NEW PATENT DETECTOR LOCK.

57, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

CHARLES CHUBB having succeeded in simplifying the form and arrangement of the parts of his Improved Patent Detector Lock, for which new improvements his late Majesty granted his Royal Letters Patent, is enabled to manufacture his NEW PATENT LOCKS at much less cost; at the same time retaining all the security and advantages of his Improved Detector Lock, the merits of which have been so fully ascertained and appreciated by the public. The New Patent Detector Locks are made of every size, and for all purposes to which locks are applied.

The attention of Bankers, Merchants, &c. is called to the following paragraph from the *Standard* of the 6th of February last:—

“On Saturday morning, on the clerks entering the premises of Messrs. Charles Price and Co., William Street, Blackfriars, it was discovered that the offices had been burglariously entered during the night. It appears that the outside door locks had been opened with skeleton keys, nine desks in the counting-house had been forced open by a jemmy, and the lock of a large iron safe was picked. The principal object of attack, however, was another iron safe (in which all the valuable property was contained), which was fitted with one of Chubb's Patent Locks; this the thieves first attempted to pick, failing in that, they next had recourse to the formidable and hitherto destructive instrument, called the ‘Jack in the Box,’ but with this they were equally unsuccessful, and, after the most determined attempts to open it, they were completely foiled in their efforts to get at the property.”


TESTIMONIAL OF M. J. BRUNELL, ESQ. CIVIL ENGINEER.

“In point of security, Chubb's Patent Detector Lock is superior to any I am acquainted with.

“M. J. BRUNELL.”

EXTRACT FROM DR. LARDNER'S CABINET CYCLOPEDIA, No. 42, p. 273.

“There can be no doubt but that the construction and arrangement of the parts, in Chubb's Invention, do combine the four principal requisites of a good lock, viz. Security, Simplicity, Strength, and Durability.”

 The Patent Detector Locks may be fitted to Iron Safes, Chests and Doors, already in use.

CHUBB'S PATENT COMBINATION LATCH, FOR FRONT DOORS, COUNTING-HOUSES, &c.

These Latches are simple in their construction, low in price, and possess security far beyond any yet offered to the public.

Prices of the Latches, with Two Keys—4 inches, 12s.; 5 inches, 13s.; 6 inches, 14s. each.

CHUBB'S PATENT MOVEABLE FIRE-PROOF STRONG ROOMS, CHESTS, SAFES, AND IRON DOORS,

which are perfectly secure against the force and ingenuity of the most skilful and determined burglar, and are absolutely Fire-proof, even if exposed to the most destructive fire in any situation*.

MADE BY CHARLES CHUBB, INVENTOR AND PATENTEE,
57, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON.

A strong room, as generally constructed, cannot be removed, so that in case of a change of residence a considerable expense is incurred in again building one; but this loss and inconvenience may be obviated, and perfect security obtained, by the adoption of the

PATENT MOVEABLE FIRE-PROOF STRONG ROOM,

which is so constructed that it may be taken down, removed, and put together again with little trouble. These advantages render them peculiarly applicable for Banks on the Continent and in the Colonies.

Patent Fire-proof Boxes, forming a complete security for Deeds, Plate, Jewellery, &c., all sizes, on sale or made to order.

All the above are fitted with Chubb's Patent Detector Locks.

Wrought Iron Fire-proof Chests, Safes, and Iron Doors for Strong Rooms, Cash Boxes, Travelling Desks, Despatch Boxes, Portfolios, and Private Boxes for depositing with Bankers, on sale and made to order, all fitted with the Detector Locks.

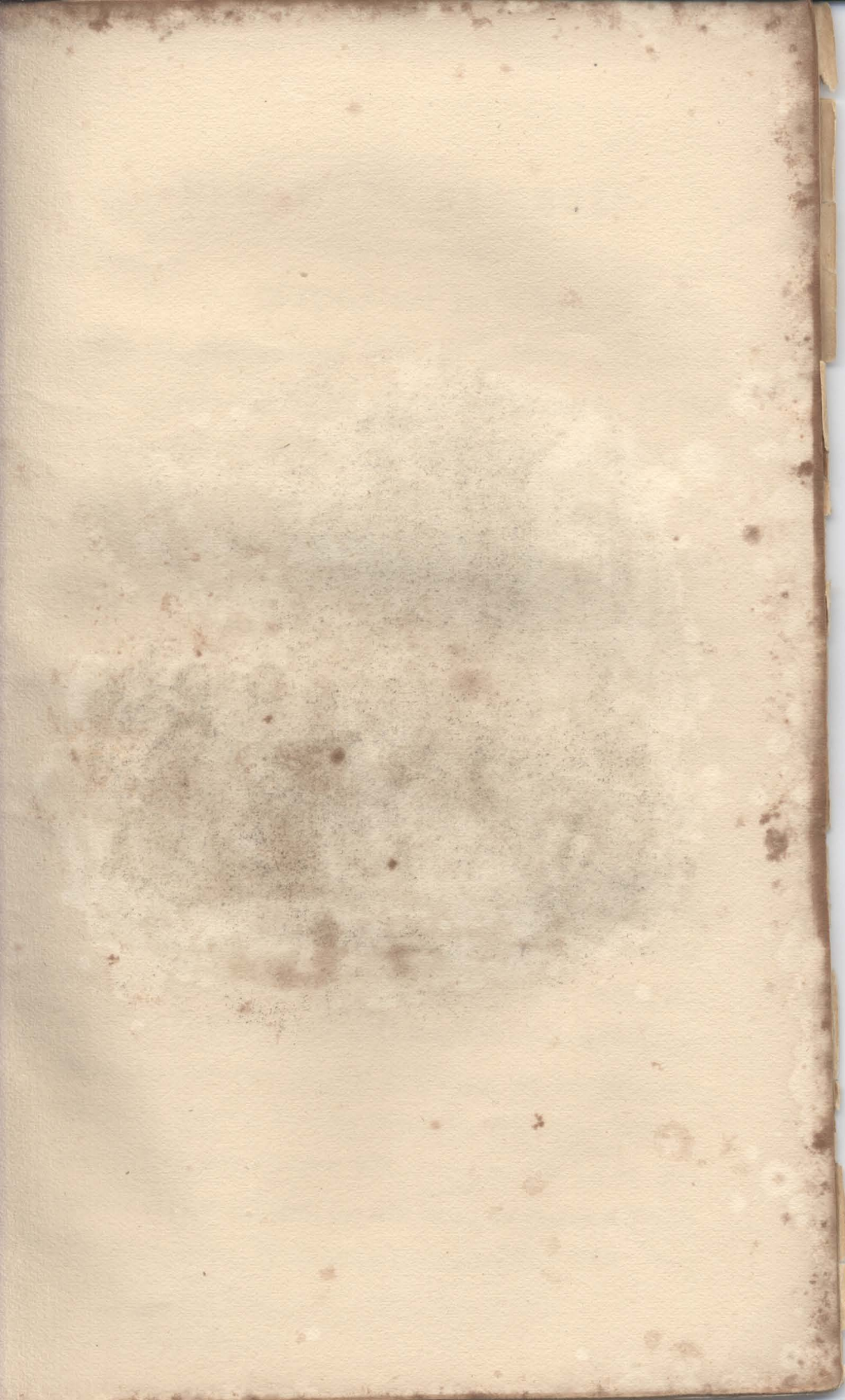
* The efficacy of this invention has been proved by enclosing some papers in a Patent Box made on the same principle, and exposing it in the furnace of a steam-engine, where it soon became red-hot, and remained in that state for a considerable time; when taken out, the papers were found to be uninjured.

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W. H. - 1860





W. H. P. del.

NEW WORK BY "BOZ."

Messrs. CHAPMAN and HALL have the pleasure of announcing that they have completed arrangements with Mr. CHARLES DICKENS, for the production of an ENTIRELY NEW WORK, to be published monthly, at the same price, and in the same form, as the *Pickwick Papers*. The first Number will appear on the 31st of March, 1838.

SKETCHES BY "BOZ."

Messrs. CHAPMAN and HALL also beg to announce that they have purchased the entire Copyrights of both Series of these popular Works, for the purpose of enabling the Subscribers to the PICKWICK PAPERS to obtain the whole in one book of the same size, and at the same price. With this view, they purpose publishing the complete collection in Twenty Monthly Numbers, price One Shilling each. The first Number will appear on the 1st of November next, embellished (as will be all its successors) with Two Illustrations, by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

186, STRAND,

August 26, 1837.

NEW WORK BY "BOZ"

New Works

PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

I.

In One Volume, square 16mo,

THE JUVENILE BUDGET;

OR,

Stories for Little Readers :

CHIEFLY COLLECTED FROM "THE JUVENILE FORGET-ME-NOT."

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

WITH

SIX ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. K. BROWNE.

II.

In One Volume, square 16mo.

MORALS FROM THE CHURCH-YARD;

IN

A SERIES OF CHEERFUL FABLES FOR THE YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES.

WITH

EIGHT BEAUTIFULLY ENGRAVED ILLUSTRATIONS ON WOOD

FROM DESIGNS BY H. K. BROWNE.

III.

A VISIT TO

THE BRITISH MUSEUM:

CONTAINING

A FAMILIAR DESCRIPTION OF EVERY OBJECT OF INTEREST

IN THE

VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS OF THAT ESTABLISHMENT.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

186, Strand
August 26, 1857

CHAPTER XLVI.

IS CHIEFLY DEVOTED TO MATTERS OF BUSINESS, AND THE TEMPORAL ADVANTAGE OF DODSON AND FOGG.—MR. WINKLE REAPPEARS UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES; AND MR. PICKWICK'S BENEVOLENCE PROVES STRONGER THAN HIS OBSTINACY.

JOB TROTTER, abating nothing of his speed, ran up Holborn, sometimes in the middle of the road, sometimes on the pavement, and sometimes in the gutter, as the chances of getting along varied with the press of men, women, children, and coaches, in each division of the thoroughfare, and, regardless of all obstacles, stopped not for an instant until he reached the gate of Gray's Inn. Notwithstanding all the expedition he had used, however, the gate had been closed a good half hour when he reached it, and by the time he had discovered Mr. Perker's laundress, who lived with a married daughter, who had bestowed her hand upon a non-resident waiter, and occupied the one-pair of some number, in some street, closely adjoining to some brewery, somewhere behind Gray's Inn Lane, it was within fifteen minutes of the time of closing the prison for the night. Mr. Lowten had still to be ferreted out from the back parlour of the Magpie and Stump; and Job had scarcely accomplished this object, and communicated Sam Weller's message, than the clock struck ten.

"There," said Lowten, "it's too late now. You can't get in to-night; you've got the key of the street, my friend."

"Never mind me," replied Job, "I can sleep anywhere. But won't it be better to see Mr. Perker to-night, so that we may be there, the first thing in the morning?"

"Why," responded Lowten, after a little consideration, "if it was in any body else's case, Perker wouldn't be best pleased at my going up to his house, but as it's Mr. Pickwick's, I think I may venture to take a cab and charge it to the office." Deciding upon this line of conduct, Mr. Lowten took up his hat, and begging the assembled company to appoint a deputy chairman during his temporary absence, led the way to the nearest coach stand, and summoning the cab of most promising appearance, directed the driver to repair to Montague Place, Russell Square.

Mr. Perker had had a dinner party that day, as was testified by the appearance of lights in the drawing-room windows, the sound of an improved grand piano, and an improveable cabinet voice issuing therefrom; and a rather overpowering smell of meat which pervaded the steps and entry. In fact a couple of very good country agencies happening to come up to town at the same time, an agreeable little party had been got together to meet them, comprising Mr. Snicks the

Life Office Secretary, Mr. Prosee the eminent counsel, three solicitors, one commissioner of bankrupts, a special pleader from the Temple, a small-eyed peremptory young gentleman, his pupil, who had written a lively book about the law of demises, with a vast quantity of marginal notes and references; and several other eminent and distinguished personages. From this society little Mr. Perker detached himself on his clerk being announced in a whisper; and repairing to the dining-room, there found Mr. Lowten and Job Trotter looking very dim and shadowy by the light of a kitchen candle, which the gentleman who condescended to appear in plush shorts and cottons for a quarterly stipend, had, with a becoming contempt for the clerk and all things appertaining to "the office," placed upon the table.

"Now, Lowten," said little Mr. Perker, shutting the door, "what's the matter? No important letter come in a parcel, is there?"

"No, Sir," replied Lowten. "This is a messenger from Mr. Pickwick, Sir."

"From Pickwick, eh?" said the little man, turning quickly to Job.

"Well; what is it?"

"Dodson and Fogg have taken Mrs. Bardell in execution for her costs, Sir," said Job.

"No!" exclaimed Perker, putting his hands in his pockets, and reclining against the sideboard.

"Yes," said Job. "It seems they got a cognovit out of her for the amount of 'em, directly after the trial."

"By Jove!" said Perker, taking both hands out of his pockets and striking the knuckles of his right against the palm of his left, emphatically, "those are the cleverest scamps I ever had any thing to do with!"

"The sharpest practitioners I ever knew, Sir," observed Lowten.

"Sharp!" echoed Perker. "There's no knowing where to have them."

"Very true, Sir, there is not," replied Lowten; and then both master and man pondered for a few seconds with animated countenances, as if they were reflecting upon one of the most beautiful and ingenious discoveries that the intellect of man had ever made. When they had in some measure recovered from their trance of admiration, Job Trotter discharged himself of the rest of his commission. Perker nodded his head thoughtfully, and pulled out his watch.

"At ten precisely I will be there," said the little man. "Sam is quite right. Tell him so. Will you take a glass of wine, Lowten?"

"No, thank you, Sir."

"You mean yes, I think," said the little man, turning to the sideboard for a decanter and glasses.

As Lowten *did* mean yes, he said no more upon the subject, but enquired of Job, in an audible whisper, whether the portrait of Perker, which hung opposite the fire-place, wasn't a wonderful likeness, to which Job of course replied that it was. The wine being by this time poured out, Lowten drank to Mrs. Perker and the children, and Job to Perker. The gentleman in the plush shorts and cottons considering it no part of his duty to show the people from the office out, con-

sistently declined to answer the bell, and they showed themselves out. The attorney betook himself to his drawing-room, the clerk to the Magpie and Stump, and Job to Covent Garden Market to spend the night in a vegetable basket.

Punctually at the appointed hour next morning the good-humoured little attorney tapped at Mr. Pickwick's door, which was opened with great alacrity by Sam Weller.

"Mr. Perker, Sir," said Sam, announcing the visitor to Mr. Pickwick, who was sitting at the window in a thoughtful attitude. "Wery glad you've looked in accidentally, Sir. I rayther think the gov'ner wants to have a vord and a half vith you, Sir."

Perker bestowed a look of intelligence upon Sam, intimating that he understood he was not to say he had been sent for: and beckoning him to approach, whispered briefly in his ear.

"Vy, you don't mean that 'ere, Sir?" said Sam, starting back in excessive surprise.

Perker nodded and smiled.

Mr. Samuel Weller looked at the little lawyer, then at Mr. Pickwick, then at the ceiling, then at Perker again; grinned, laughed outright, and finally, catching up his hat from the carpet, without further explanation disappeared.

"What does this mean?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, looking at Perker with astonishment. "What has put Sam into this most extraordinary state?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing," replied Perker. "Come my dear Sir, draw up your chair to the table. I have a good deal to say to you."

"What papers are those?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, as the little man deposited on the table a small bundle of documents tied with red tape.

"The papers in Bardell and Pickwick," replied Perker, undoing the knot with his teeth.

Mr. Pickwick grated the legs of his chair against the ground; and throwing himself into it, folded his hands and looked sternly—if Mr. Pickwick ever could look sternly—at his legal friend.

"You don't like to hear the name of the case?" said the little man, still busying himself with the knot.

"No, I do not indeed," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Sorry for that," resumed Perker, "because it will form the subject of our conversation."

"I would rather that the subject was never mentioned between us, Perker," interposed Mr. Pickwick hastily.

"Pooh pooh, my dear Sir," said the little man, untying the bundle, and glancing eagerly at Mr. Pickwick out of the corners of his eyes. "It must be mentioned. I have come here on purpose. Now, are you ready to hear what I have to say, my dear Sir? No hurry; if you are not, I can wait. I have got this morning's paper here. Your time shall be mine. There." Hereupon the little man threw one leg over the other, and made a show of beginning to read, with great composure and application.

"Well, well," said Mr. Pickwick with a sigh, but softening into a smile at the same time. "Say what you have to say; it's the old story I suppose?"

“With a difference, my dear Sir; with a difference,” rejoined Perker, deliberately folding up the paper and putting it into his pocket again. “Mrs. Bardell, the plaintiff in the action, is within these walls, Sir.”

“I know it,” was Mr. Pickwick’s reply.

“Very good,” retorted Perker. “And you know how she comes here, I suppose; I mean on what grounds, and at whose suit?”

“Yes; at least I have heard Sam’s account of the matter,” said Mr. Pickwick, with affected carelessness.

“Sam’s account of the matter,” replied Perker, “is, I will venture to say, a perfectly correct one. Well now, my dear Sir, the first question I have to ask, is, whether this woman is to remain here?”

“To remain here!” echoed Mr. Pickwick.

“To remain here, my dear Sir,” rejoined Perker, leaning back in his chair and looking steadily at his client.

“How can you ask me?” said that gentleman. “It rests with Dodson and Fogg; you know that very well.”

“I know nothing of the kind,” retorted Perker firmly. “It does *not* rest with Dodson and Fogg; you know the men, my dear Sir, as well as I do. It rests solely, wholly, and entirely with you.”

“With me!” ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, rising nervously from his chair, and reseating himself directly afterwards.

The little man gave a double knock on the lid of his snuff-box, opened it, took a great pinch, shut it up again, and repeated the words “—With you.”

“I say, my dear Sir,” pursued the little man, who seemed to gather confidence from the snuff; “I say that her speedy liberation or perpetual imprisonment rests with you, and with you alone. Hear me out, my dear Sir, if you please, and do not be so very energetic, for it will only put you into a perspiration and do no good whatever. I say,” continued Perker, checking off each position on a different finger, as he laid it down; “I say that nobody but you can rescue her from this den of wretchedness; and that you can only do that, by paying the costs of this suit—both of plaintiff and defendant—into the hands of these Freeman Court sharks. Now pray be quiet, my dear Sir.”

Mr. Pickwick, whose face had been undergoing most surprising changes during this speech, and who was evidently on the verge of a strong burst of indignation, calmed his wrath as well as he could; and Perker, strengthening his argumentative powers with another pinch of snuff, proceeded.

“I have seen the woman this morning. By paying the costs, you can obtain a full release and discharge from the damages; and further—this I know is a far greater object of consideration with you, my dear Sir—a voluntary statement under her hand, in the form of a letter to me, that this business was, from the very first, fomented and encouraged and brought about, by these men, Dodson and Fogg; that she deeply regrets ever having been the instrument of annoyance or injury to you; and that she entreats me to intercede with you, and implore your pardon.”

“If I pay her costs for her,” said Mr. Pickwick, indignantly; “a valuable document, indeed!”

“No ‘if’ in the case, my dear Sir,” said Perker, triumphantly. “There is the very letter I speak of. Brought to my office by another woman at nine o’clock this morning, before I had set foot in this place, or held any communication with Mrs. Bardell, upon my honour.” And selecting the letter from the bundle, the little lawyer laid it at Mr. Pickwick’s elbow, and took snuff for two consecutive minutes without winking.

“Is this all you have to say to me?” enquired Mr. Pickwick, mildly.

“Not quite,” replied Perker. “I cannot undertake to say at this moment, whether the wording of the cognovit, the nature of the ostensible consideration, and the proof we can get together about the whole conduct of the suit, will be sufficient to justify an indictment for conspiracy. I fear not, my dear Sir; they are too clever for that, I doubt. I do mean to say, however, that the whole facts, taken together, will be sufficient to justify you in the minds of all reasonable men. And now, my dear Sir, I put it to you. This one hundred and fifty pounds, or whatever it may be—take it in round numbers—is nothing to you. A jury has decided against you; well, their verdict is wrong, but still they decided as they thought right, and it is against you. You have now an opportunity, on easy terms, of placing yourself in a much higher position than you ever could by remaining here; which would only be imputed by people who didn’t know you to sheer, dogged, wrong-headed, brutal obstinacy: nothing else, my dear Sir, believe me. Can you hesitate to avail yourself of it, when it restores you to your friends, your old pursuits, your health and amusements; when it liberates your faithful and attached servant, whom you otherwise doom to imprisonment for the whole of your life? and above all, when it enables you to take the very magnanimous revenge—which I know, my dear Sir, is one after your own heart—of releasing this woman from a scene of misery and debauchery, to which no man should ever be consigned if I had my will, but the infliction of which, on any female, is frightful and barbarous. Now I ask you, my dear Sir, not only as your legal adviser, but as your very true friend, will you let slip the occasion of attaining all these objects and doing all this good, for the paltry consideration of a few pounds finding their way into the pockets of a couple of rascals, to whom it makes no manner of difference, except that the more they gain the more they’ll seek, and so the sooner be led into some piece of knavery that must end in a crash? I have put these considerations to you, my dear Sir, very feebly and imperfectly, but I ask you to think of them—turn them over in your mind as long as you please: I wait here most patiently for your answer.”

Before Mr. Pickwick could reply, before Mr. Perker had taken one twentieth part of the snuff which so unusually long an address imperatively required to be followed up with, there was a low murmuring of voices outside, and then a hesitating knock at the door.

“Dear, dear,” exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, who had been evidently roused by his friend’s appeal; “what an annoyance that door is! Who is that?”

“Me, Sir,” replied Sam Weller, putting in his head.

"I can't speak to you just now, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick. "I am engaged at this moment, Sam."

"Beg your pardon, Sir," rejoined Mr. Weller. "But here's a lady here, Sir, as says she's somethin' verry particler to disclose."

"I can't see any lady," replied Mr. Pickwick, whose mind was filled with visions of Mrs. Bardell.

"I wouldn't make too sure o' that, Sir," urged Mr. Weller, shaking his head. "If you know'd who was near, Sir, I rayther think you'd change your note; as the hawk remarked to himself with a cheerful laugh, ven he heerd the robin redbreast a singin' round the corner."

"Who is it?" enquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Vill you see her, Sir?" asked Mr. Weller, holding the door in his hand, as if he had got some curious live animal on the other side.

"I suppose I must," said Mr. Pickwick, looking at Perker.

"Vell then, all in to begin," cried Sam. "Sound the gong, draw up the curtain, and enter the two con-spirators."

As Sam Weller spoke, he threw the door open, and there rushed tumultuously into the room, Mr. Nathaniel Winkle, leading after him by the hand the identical young lady who, at Dingley Dell, had worn the boots with the fur round the tops; and who, now a very pleasing compound of blushes and confusion, and lilac silk, and a smart hat, and a rich lace veil, looked prettier than ever.

"Miss Arabella Allen!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, rising from his chair.

"No," replied Mr. Winkle, dropping on his knees. "Mrs. Winkle. Pardon, my dear friend, pardon."

Mr. Pickwick could scarcely believe the evidence of his own senses, and perhaps would not have done so, but for the corroborative testimony afforded by the smiling countenance of Perker, and the bodily presence, in the background, of Sam and the pretty housemaid, who appeared to contemplate the proceedings with the liveliest satisfaction.

"Oh, Mr. Pickwick," said Arabella in a low voice, as if alarmed at the silence, "can you forgive my imprudence?"

Mr. Pickwick returned no verbal response to this appeal, but he took off his spectacles in great haste, and seizing both the young lady's hands in his, kissed her a great number of times—perhaps a greater number than was absolutely necessary—and then, still retaining one of her hands, told Mr. Winkle he was an audacious young dog, and bade him get up, which Mr. Winkle, who had been for some seconds scratching his nose with the brim of his hat in a penitent manner, did; whereupon Mr. Pickwick slapped him on the back several times, and then shook hands heartily with Perker, who, not to be behindhand in the compliments of the occasion, saluted both the bride and the pretty housemaid with right good will, and having wrung Mr. Winkle's hand most cordially, wound up his demonstrations of joy, by taking snuff enough to set any half dozen men, with ordinarily constructed noses, a sneezing for life.

"Why, my dear girl," said Mr. Pickwick, "how has all this come about? Come, sit down, and let me hear it all. How well she looks, doesn't she Perker?" added Mr. Pickwick, surveying Arabella's face

with a look of as much pride and exultation, as if she had been his own daughter.

"Delightful, my dear Sir," replied the little man. "If I were not a married man myself, I should be disposed to envy you, you dog, I should." Thus expressing himself, the little lawyer gave Mr. Winkle a poke in the chest, which that gentleman reciprocated; after which they both laughed very loudly, but not so loudly as Mr. Samuel Weller, who had just relieved his feelings by kissing the pretty housemaid under cover of the cupboard door.

"I can never be grateful enough to you, Sam, I am sure," said Arabella, with the sweetest smile imaginable. "I shall not forget your exertions in the garden at Clifton."

"Don't say nothin' wotever about it, Ma'm," replied Sam. "I only assisted natur, Ma'm; as the doctor said to the boy's mother, arter he'd bled him to death."

"Mary, my dear, sit down," said Mr. Pickwick, cutting short these compliments. "Now then—how long have you been married, eh?"

Arabella looked bashfully at her lord and master, who replied, "Only three days."

"Only three days, eh?" said Mr. Pickwick. "Why, what have you been doing these three months?"

"Ah, to be sure," interposed Perker; "come, account for this idleness. You see Pickwick's only astonishment is, that it wasn't all over months ago."

"Why the fact is," replied Mr. Winkle, looking at his blushing young wife, "that I could not persuade Bella to run away for a long time; and when I had persuaded her, it was a long time more before we could find an opportunity. Mary had to give a month's warning, too, before she could leave her place next door, and we couldn't possibly have done it without her assistance."

"Upon my word," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, who by this time had resumed his spectacles, and was looking from Arabella to Winkle, and from Winkle to Arabella, with as much delight depicted in his countenance as warm-heartedness and kindly feeling can communicate to the human face—"upon my word! you seem to have been very systematic in your proceedings. And is your brother acquainted with all this, my dear?"

"Oh, no, no," replied Arabella, changing colour. "Dear Mr. Pickwick, he must only know it from you—from your lips alone. He is so violent, so prejudiced, and has been so—so anxious in behalf of his friend, Mr. Sawyer," added Arabella, looking down, "that I fear the consequences dreadfully."

"Ah, to be sure," said Perker, gravely. "You must take this matter in hand for them, my dear Sir. These young men will respect you when they would listen to nobody else. You must prevent mischief, my dear Sir. Hot blood—hot blood." And the little man took a warning pinch, and shook his head doubtfully.

"You forget, my love," said Mr. Pickwick, gently, "you forget that I am a prisoner."

"No, indeed I do not, my dear Sir," replied Arabella. "I never

have forgotten it ; never ceased to think how great your sufferings must have been in this shocking place, but I hoped that what no consideration for yourself would induce you to do, a regard to our happiness might. If my brother hears of this first from you, I feel certain we shall be reconciled. He is my only relation in the world, Mr. Pickwick, and unless you plead for me, I fear I have lost even him. I have done wrong—very, very wrong, I know." Here poor Arabella hid her face in her handkerchief, and wept bitterly.

Mr. Pickwick's nature was a good deal worked upon by these same tears, but when Mrs. Winkle, drying her eyes, took to coaxing and entreating in the sweetest tones of a very sweet voice, he became particularly restless, and evidently undecided how to act, as was evinced by sundry nervous rubbings of his spectacle-glasses, nose, tights, head, and gaiters.

Taking advantage of these symptoms of indecision, Mr. Perker (to whom it appeared the young couple had driven straight that morning) urged with legal point and shrewdness that Mr. Winkle, senior, was still unacquainted with the important rise in life's flight of steps which his son had taken ; that the future expectations of the said son depended entirely upon the said Winkle senior continuing to regard him with undiminished feelings of affection and attachment, which it was very unlikely he would do if this great event were long kept a secret from him ; that Mr. Pickwick repairing to Bristol to seek Mr. Allen, might with equal reason repair to Birmingham to seek Mr. Winkle, senior ; lastly, that Mr. Winkle, senior, had good right and title to consider Mr. Pickwick as in some degree the guardian and adviser of his son, and that it consequently behoved that gentleman, and was indeed due to his personal character, to acquaint the aforesaid Winkle, senior, personally, and by word of mouth, with the whole circumstances of the case, and with the share he had taken in the transaction.

Mr. Tupman and Mr. Snodgrass arrived most opportunely in this stage of the pleadings, and as it was necessary to explain to them all that had occurred, together with the various reasons pro and con, the whole of the arguments were gone over again, after which everybody urged every argument in his own way and at his own length. And at last Mr. Pickwick, fairly argued and remonstrated out of all his resolutions, and being in imminent danger of being argued and remonstrated out of his wits, caught Arabella in his arms, and declaring that she was a very amiable creature, and that he didn't know how it was, but he had always been very fond of her from the first, said he could never find it in his heart to stand in the way of young people's happiness, and they might do with him as they pleased.

Mr. Weller's first act, on hearing this concession, was to dispatch Job Trotter to the illustrious Mr. Pell, with an authority to deliver to the bearer the formal discharge which his prudent parent had had the foresight to leave in the hands of that learned gentleman, in case it should be at any time required on an emergency ; his next proceeding was to invest his whole stock of ready money in the purchase of five-and-twenty gallons of mild porter, which he himself dispensed on the racket ground to everybody who would partake of it ; this done, he

hurra'd in divers parts of the building until he had lost his voice, and then quietly relapsed into his usual collected and philosophical condition.

At three o'clock that afternoon, Mr. Pickwick took a last look at his little room, and made his way as well as he could, through the throng of debtors who pressed eagerly forward to shake him by the hand, until he reached the lodge steps. He turned here to look about him, and his eye lightened as he did so. In all the crowd of wan emaciated faces, he saw not one which was not the happier for his sympathy and charity.

"Perker," said Mr. Pickwick, beckoning one young man towards him, "this is Mr. Jingle, whom I spoke to you about."

"Very good, my dear Sir," replied Perker, looking hard at Jingle. "You will see me again, young man, to-morrow. I hope you may live to remember deeply what I shall have to communicate, Sir."

Jingle bowed respectfully, trembled very much as he took Mr. Pickwick's proffered hand, and withdrew.

"Job you know, I think?" said Mr. Pickwick, presenting that gentleman.

"I know the rascal," replied Perker, good-humouredly. "See after your friend, and be in the way to-morrow at one. Do you hear? Now, is there anything more?"

"Nothing," rejoined Mr. Pickwick. "You have delivered the little parcel I gave you for your old landlord, Sam?"

"I have, Sir," replied Sam. "He bust out a cryin', Sir, and said you wos very gen'rous and thoughtful, and he only wished you could have him innockilated for a gallopin' consumption, for his old friend as had lived here so long wos dead, and he'd noveres to look for another."

"Poor fellow, poor fellow!" said Mr. Pickwick. "God bless you, my friends!"

As Mr. Pickwick uttered this adieu, the crowd raised a loud shout, and many among them were pressing forward to shake him by the hand again, when he drew his arm through Perker's, and hurried from the prison, far more sad and melancholy, for the moment, than when he had first entered it. Alas! how many sad and unhappy beings had he left behind! and how many of them lie caged there, still!

A happy evening was that for at least one party in the George and Vulture, and light and cheerful were two of the hearts that emerged from its hospitable door next morning; the owners thereof were Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller, the former of whom was speedily deposited inside a comfortable post coach, with a little dickey behind, in which the latter mounted with great agility.

"Sir," called out Mr. Weller, to his master.

"Well, Sam," replied Mr. Pickwick, thrusting his head out of the window.

"I wish them horses had been three months and better in the Fleet, Sir."

"Why, Sam?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Vy, Sir," exclaimed Mr. Weller, rubbing his hands, "how they would go if they had been!"

CHAPTER XLVII.

RELATES HOW MR. PICKWICK, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF SAMUEL WELLER, ESSAYED TO SOFTEN THE HEART OF MR. BENJAMIN ALLEN, AND TO MOLLIFY THE WRATH OF MR. ROBERT SAWYER.

MR. BEN ALLEN and Mr. Bob Sawyer sat together in the little surgery behind the shop, discussing minced veal and future prospects, when the discourse, not unnaturally, turned upon the practice acquired by Bob the aforesaid, and his present chances of deriving a competent independence from the honourable profession to which he had devoted himself.

"—Which, I think," observed Mr. Bob Sawyer, pursuing the thread of the subject, "which I think, Ben, are rather dubious."

"What's rather dubious?" enquired Mr. Ben Allen, at the same time sharpening his intellects with a draught of beer. "What's dubious?"

"Why, the chances," responded Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"I forgot," said Mr. Ben Allen. "The beer has reminded me that I forgot, Bob—yes; they *are* dubious."

"It's wonderful how the poor people patronise me," said Mr. Bob Sawyer, reflectively. "They knock me up at all hours of the night, take medicine to an extent which I should have conceived impossible, put on blisters and leeches with a perseverance worthy of a better cause, and make additions to their families in a manner which is quite awful. Six of those last-named little promissory notes, all due on the same day Ben, and all entrusted to me."

"It's very gratifying, isn't it?" said Mr. Ben Allen, holding his plate for some more minced veal.

"Oh, very," replied Bob; "only not quite so much so as the confidence of patients, with a shilling or two to spare, would be. This business was capitally described in the advertisement, Ben. It is a practice, a very extensive practice—and that's all."

"Bob," said Mr. Ben Allen, laying down his knife and fork, and fixing his eyes on the visage of his friend—"Bob, I'll tell you what it is."

"What is it?" enquired Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You must make yourself, with as little delay as possible, master of Arabella's one thousand pounds."

"Three per cent. consolidated Bank annuities, now standing in her name in the book or books of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England," added Bob Sawyer, in legal phraseology.

"Exactly so," said Ben. "She has it when she comes of age, or marries. She wants a year of coming of age, and if you plucked up a spirit she needn't want a month of being married."

"She's a very charming and delightful creature," quoth Mr. Robert Sawyer, in reply; "and has only one fault that I know of, Ben. It happens unfortunately, that that single blemish is a want of taste. She don't like me."

"It's my opinion that she don't know what she does like," said Mr. Ben Allen, contemptuously.

"Perhaps not," remarked Mr. Bob Sawyer. "But it's my opinion that she does know what she doesn't like, and that's of even more importance."

"I wish," said Mr. Ben Allen, setting his teeth together, and speaking more like a savage warrior who fed upon raw wolf's flesh which he carved with his fingers, than a peaceable young gentleman who eat minced veal with a knife and fork—"I wish I knew whether any rascal really has been tampering with her, and attempting to engage her affections. I think I should assassinate him, Bob."

"I'd put a bullet in him if I found him out," said Mr. Sawyer, stopping in the course of a long draught of beer, and looking malignantly out of the porter pot. "If that didn't do his business, I'd extract it afterwards, and kill him that way."

Mr. Benjamin Allen gazed abstractedly on his friend for some minutes in silence, and then said—

"You have never proposed to her point-blank, Bob?"

"No. Because I saw it would be of no use," replied Mr. Robert Sawyer.

"You shall do it before you are twenty-four hours older," retorted Ben, with desperate calmness. "She *shall* have you, or I'll know the reason why—I'll exert my authority."

"Well," said Mr. Bob Sawyer, "We shall see."

"We *shall* see, my friend," replied Mr. Ben Allen, fiercely. He paused for a few seconds, and added in a voice broken by emotion, "You have loved her from a child, my friend—you loved her when we were boys at school together, and even then she was wayward, and slighted your young feelings. Do you recollect, with all the eagerness of a child's love, one day pressing upon her acceptance two small caraway-seed biscuits and one sweet apple, neatly folded into a circular parcel with the leaf of a copy-book?"

"I do," replied Bob Sawyer.

"She slighted that, I think?" said Ben Allen.

"She did," rejoined Bob. "She said I had kept the parcel so long in the pockets of my corduroys, that the apple was unpleasantly warm."

"I remember," said Mr. Allen, gloomily. "Upon which we ate it ourselves, in alternate bites."

Bob Sawyer intimated his recollection of the circumstance last alluded to, by a melancholy frown; and the two friends remained for some time absorbed, each in his own meditations.

While these observations were being exchanged between Mr. Bob Sawyer and Mr. Benjamin Allen, and while the boy in the grey livery, marvelling at the unvonted prolongation of the dinner, cast an anxious look from time to time towards the glass door, distracted by inward misgivings regarding the amount of minced veal which would be ulti-

mately reserved for his individual cravings, there rolled soberly on through the streets of Bristol, a private fly, painted of a sad green colour, drawn by a chubby sort of brown horse, and driven by a surly looking man with his legs dressed like the legs of a groom, and his body attired in the coat of a coachman. Such appearances are common to many vehicles belonging to, and maintained by, old ladies of economical habits; and in this vehicle there sat an old lady who was its mistress and proprietor.

"Martin!" said the old lady, calling to the surly man out of the front window.

"Well?" said the surly man, touching his hat to the old lady.

"Mr. Sawyer's," said the old lady.

"I was going there," said the surly man.

The old lady nodded the satisfaction which this proof of the surly man's foresight imparted to her feelings; and the surly man giving a smart lash to the chubby horse, they all repaired to Mr. Bob Sawyer's together.

"Martin!" said the old lady, when the fly stopped at the door of Mr. Robert Sawyer late Nockemorf.

"Well?" said Martin.

"Ask the lad to step out and mind the horse."

"I'm going to mind the horse myself," said Martin, laying his whip on the roof of the fly.

"I can't permit it on any account," said the old lady; "your testimony will be very important, and I must take you into the house with me. You must not stir from my side during the whole interview. Do you hear?"

"I hear," replied Martin.

"Well; what are you stopping for?"

"Nothing," replied Martin. So saying, the surly man leisurely descended from the wheel upon which he had been poising himself on the tops of the toes of his right foot, and having summoned the boy in the grey livery, opened the coach-door, flung down the steps, and thrusting in a hand enveloped in a dark wash-leather glove, pulled out the old lady with as much unconcern in his manner as if she were a handbox.

"Dear me," exclaimed the old lady, "I am so flurried now I have got here Martin, that I'm all in a tremble."

Mr. Martin coughed behind the dark wash-leather glove, but expressed no further sympathy; so the old lady, composing herself, trotted up Mr. Bob Sawyer's steps, and Mr. Martin followed. Immediately upon the old lady's entering the shop, Mr. Benjamin Allen and Mr. Bob Sawyer, who had been putting the spirits and water out of sight, and upsetting nauseous drugs to take off the smell of the tobacco-smoke, issued hastily forth in a transport of pleasure and affection.

"My dear aunt," exclaimed Mr. Ben Allen, "how kind of you to look in upon us. Mr. Sawyer, aunt; my friend Mr. Bob Sawyer that I have spoken to you about, regarding—you know, aunt." And here Mr. Ben Allen, who was not at the moment extraordinarily sober, added

the word "Arabella," in what was meant to be a whisper, but which was in fact an especially audible and distinct tone of speech, which nobody could avoid hearing, if anybody were so disposed.

"My dear Benjamin," said the old lady, struggling with a great shortness of breath, and trembling from head to foot—"don't be alarmed, my dear, but I think I had better speak to Mr. Sawyer alone for a moment—only for one moment."

"Bob," said Mr. Ben Allen, "will you take my aunt into the surgery?"

"Certainly," responded Bob, in a most professional voice. "Step this way, my dear Ma'am. Don't be frightened, Ma'am. We shall be able to set you to rights in a very short time, I have no doubt, Ma'am. Here, my dear Ma'am. Now then." With this Mr. Bob Sawyer having handed the old lady to a chair, shut the door, drew another chair close to her, and waited to hear detailed the symptoms of some disorder from which he saw in perspective a long train of profits and advantages.

The first thing the old lady did, was to shake her head a great many times, and begin to cry.

"Nervous," said Bob Sawyer complacently. "Camphor-julep and water three times a day, and composing draught at night."

"I don't know how to begin, Mr. Sawyer," said the old lady. "It is so very painful and distressing."

"You need not begin, Ma'am," rejoined Mr. Bob Sawyer. "I can anticipate all you would say. The head is in fault."

"I should be very sorry to think it was the heart," said the old lady, with a slight groan.

"Not the slightest danger of that, Ma'am," replied Bob Sawyer. "The stomach is the primary cause."

"Mr. Sawyer!" exclaimed the old lady, starting.

"Not the least doubt of it, Ma'am," rejoined Bob, looking wondrous wise. "Medicine, in time, my dear Ma'am, would have prevented it all."

"Mr. Sawyer," said the old lady, more flurried than before, "this conduct is either great impertinence to one in my situation, Sir, or it arises from your not understanding the object of my visit. If it had been in the power of medicine or any foresight I could have used to prevent what has occurred, I should certainly have done so. I had better see my nephew at once," said the old lady, twirling her reticule indignantly, and rising as she spoke.

"Stop a moment, Ma'am," said Bob Sawyer; "I am afraid I have not understood you. What is the matter, Ma'am?"

"My niece, Mr. Sawyer," said the old lady—"your friend's sister."

"Yes, Ma'am," said Bob, all impatience; for the old lady, although much agitated, spoke with the most tantalising deliberation, as old ladies often do. "Yes, Ma'am."

"Left my home, Mr. Sawyer, three days ago, on a pretended visit to my sister, another aunt of hers, who keeps the large boarding school just beyond the third mile-stone, where there is a very large laburnum

tree and an oak gate," said the old lady, stopping in this place to dry her eyes.

"Oh, devil take the laburnum tree! Ma'am," said Bob, quite forgetting his professional dignity in his anxiety. "Get on a little faster; put a little more steam on, Ma'am, pray."

"This morning," said the old lady, slowly, "this morning, she——"

"She came back Ma'am, I suppose," said Bob, with great animation. "Did she come back?"

"No, she did not—she wrote," replied the old lady.

"What did she say?" enquired Bob, eagerly.

"She said, Mr. Sawyer," replied the old lady—"and it is this I want you to prepare Benjamin's mind for, gently and by degrees; she said that she was—I have got the letter in my pocket, Mr. Sawyer, but my glasses are in the carriage, and I should only waste the time if I attempted to point out the passage to you, without them; she said, in short, Mr. Sawyer, that she was married."

"What!" said, or rather shouted, Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"Married," repeated the old lady.

Mr. Bob Sawyer stopped to hear no more; but darting from the surgery into the outer shop, cried in a stentorian voice, "Ben, my boy, she's bolted!"

Mr. Ben Allen, who had been slumbering behind the counter with his head half a foot or so below his knees, no sooner heard this appalling communication, than he made a precipitate rush at Mr. Martin, and twisting his hand in the neckcloth of that taciturn servitor, expressed an obliging intention of choking him where he stood, which intention, with a promptitude often the effect of desperation, he at once commenced carrying into execution with much vigour and surgical skill.

Mr. Martin, who was a man of few words and possessed but little power of eloquence or persuasion, submitted to this operation with a very calm and agreeable expression of countenance, for some seconds; finding, however, that it threatened speedily to lead to a result which would place it beyond his power to claim any wages, board or otherwise, in all times to come, he muttered an inarticulate remonstrance, and felled Mr. Benjamin Allen to the ground. As that gentleman had got his hands entangled in his cravat, he had no alternative but to follow him to the floor. There they both lay struggling, when the shop-door opened, and the party was increased by the arrival of two most unexpected visitors, to wit, Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Samuel Weller.

The impression at once produced upon Mr. Weller's mind by what he saw, was, that Mr. Martin was hired by the establishment of Sawyer late Nockemorf, to take strong medicine, or to go into fits and be experimentalised upon, or to swallow poison now and then with the view of testing the efficacy of some new antidotes, or to do something or other to promote the great science of medicine, and gratify the ardent spirit of enquiry burning in the bosoms of its two young professors. So, without presuming to interfere, Sam stood perfectly still, and looked on as if he were mightily interested in the result of the then

pending experiment. Not so, Mr. Pickwick. He at once threw himself upon the astonished combatants with his accustomed energy, and loudly called upon the by-standers to interpose.

This roused Mr. Bob Sawyer, who had been hitherto quite paralysed by the frenzy of his companion; and with that gentleman's assistance, Mr. Pickwick raised Ben Allen to his feet. Mr. Martin finding himself alone on the floor, got up and looked about him.

"Mr. Allen," said Mr. Pickwick, "what is the matter, Sir?"

"Never mind, Sir," replied Mr. Allen, with haughty defiance.

"What is it?" enquired Mr. Pickwick, looking at Bob Sawyer.

"Is he unwell?"

Before Bob could reply, Mr. Ben Allen seized Mr. Pickwick by the hand, and murmured, in sorrowful accents, "My sister, my dear Sir; my sister."

"Oh, is that all!" said Mr. Pickwick. "We shall easily arrange that matter, I hope. Your sister is safe and well, and I am here, my dear Sir, to——"

"Sorry to do anythin' as may cause an interruption to such wery pleasant proceedin's, as the king said ven he dissolved the parliament," interposed Mr. Weller, who had been peeping through the glass door; "but there's another experiment here, Sir. Here's a venerable old lady a lyin' on the carpet vaitin' for dissection, or galwinism, or some other rewivin' and scientific invention."

"I forgot," exclaimed Mr. Ben Allen. "It is my aunt."

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick. "Poor lady! gently Sam, gently."

"Strange sivation for one o' the family," observed Sam Weller, hoisting the aunt into a chair. "Now, depitty Sawbones, bring out the wollatilly."

The latter observation was addressed to the boy in grey, who, having handed over the fly to the care of the street-keeper, had come back to see what all the noise was about. Between the boy in grey, and Mr. Bob Sawyer, and Mr. Benjamin Allen (who having frightened his aunt into a fainting fit, was affectionately solicitous for her recovery) the old lady was at length restored to consciousness; and then Mr. Ben Allen, turning with a puzzled countenance to Mr. Pickwick, asked him what he was about to say when he had been so alarmingly interrupted.

"We are all friends here, I presume?" said Mr. Pickwick, clearing his voice, and looking towards the man of few words with the surly countenance, who drove the fly with the chubby horse.

This reminded Mr. Bob Sawyer that the boy in grey was looking on, with eyes wide open and greedy ears. The incipient chemist having been lifted up by his coat collar and dropped outside the door, Bob Sawyer assured Mr. Pickwick that he might speak without reserve.

"Your sister, my dear Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, turning to Benjamin Allen, "is in London; well and happy."

"Her happiness is no object to me, Sir," said Mr. Benjamin Allen, with a flourish of the hand.

"Her husband is an object to me, Sir," said Bob Sawyer. "He shall be an object to me, Sir, at twelve paces, and a very pretty object

I'll make of him, Sir—a mean-spirited scoundrel!" This, as it stood, was a very pretty denunciation, and magnanimous withal; but Mr. Bob Sawyer rather weakened its effect, by winding up with some general observations concerning the punching of heads and knocking out of eyes, which were commonplace by comparison.

"Stay, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick; "before you apply those epithets to the gentleman in question, consider dispassionately the extent of his fault, and above all remember that he is a friend of mine."

"What!" said Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"His name," cried Ben Allen. "His name."

"Mr. Nathaniel Winkle," said Mr. Pickwick, firmly.

Mr. Benjamin Allen deliberately crushed his spectacles beneath the heel of his boot, and having picked up the pieces and put them into three separate pockets, folded his arms, bit his lips, and looked in a threatening manner at the bland features of Mr. Pickwick.

"Then it's you, is it, Sir, who have encouraged and brought about this match?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, at length.

"And it's this gentleman's servant, I suppose," interrupted the old lady, "who has been skulking about my house, and endeavouring to entrap my servants to conspire against their mistress. Martin!"

"Well?" said the surly man, coming forward.

"Is that the young man you saw in the lane, whom you told me about this morning?"

Mr. Martin, who, as it has already appeared, was a man of few words, looked at Sam Weller, nodded his head, and growled forth, "That's the man." Mr. Weller, who was never proud, gave a smile of friendly recognition as his eyes encountered those of the surly groom, and admitted, in courteous terms, that he had "known him afore."

"And this is the faithful creature," exclaimed Mr. Ben Allen, "that I had nearly suffocated! Mr. Pickwick, how dare you allow your fellow to be employed in the abduction of my sister? I demand that you explain this matter, Sir."

"Explain it, Sir!" cried Bob Sawyer, fiercely.

"It's a conspiracy," said Ben Allen.

"A regular plant," added Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"A disgraceful imposition," observed the old lady.

"Nothing but a do," remarked Martin.

"Pray hear me," urged Mr. Pickwick, as Mr. Ben Allen fell into a chair that patients were bled in, and gave way to his pocket-handkerchief. "I have rendered no assistance in this matter, beyond that of being present at one interview between the young people, which I could not prevent, and from which I conceived my presence would remove any slight colouring of impropriety that it might otherwise have had: this is the whole share I have taken in the transaction, and I had no suspicion that an immediate marriage was even contemplated. Though, mind," added Mr. Pickwick, hastily checking himself, "mind, I do not say I should have prevented it, if I *had* known that it was intended."

"You hear that, all of you; you hear that?" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

“I hope they do,” mildly observed Mr. Pickwick, looking round; “and,” added that gentleman, his colour mounting as he spoke, “I hope they hear this, Sir, also,—that from what has been stated to me, Sir, I assert that you were by no means justified in attempting to force your sister’s inclinations as you did, and that you should rather have endeavoured by your kindness and forbearance to have supplied the place of other nearer relations whom she has never known from a child. As regards my young friend, I must beg to add, that in every point of worldly advantage, he is at least on an equal footing with yourself, if not on a much better one, and that unless I hear this question discussed with becoming temper and moderation, I decline hearing any more said upon the subject.”

“I wish to make a very few remarks in addition to wot has been put forard by the honorable gen’l’m’n as has jist given over,” said Mr. Weller, stepping forth, “vich is this here: a individual in company has called me a feller.”

“That has nothing whatever to do with the matter, Sam,” interposed Mr. Pickwick. “Pray hold your tongue.”

“I ain’t a goin’ to say nothin’ on that ere pint, Sir,” replied Sam, “but merely this here. P’raps that gen’l’m’n may think as there vos a priory ’tachment, but there vorn’t nothin’ o’ the sort, for the young lady said in the very beginnin’ o’ the keepin’ company that she couldn’t abide him. Nobody’s cut him out, and it ’ud ha’ been just the very same for him if the young lady had never seen Mr. Vinkle. That’s wot I vished to say, Sir, and I hope I’ve now made that ’ere gen’l’m’n’s mind easy.”

A short pause followed these consolatory remarks of Mr. Weller, and then Mr. Ben Allen rising from his chair, protested that he would never see Arabella’s face again, while Mr. Bob Sawyer, despite Sam’s flattering assurance, vowed dreadful vengeance on the happy bridegroom.

But, just when matters were at their height and threatening to remain so, Mr. Pickwick found a powerful assistant in the old lady, who, evidently much struck by the mode in which he had advocated her niece’s cause, ventured to approach Mr. Benjamin Allen with a few comforting reflections, of which the chief were, that after all, perhaps, it was well it was no worse; the least said the soonest mended, and upon her word she did not know that it was so very bad after all; that what was over couldn’t be begun, and what couldn’t be cured must be endured, with various other assurances of the like novel and strengthening description. To all of which, Mr. Benjamin Allen replied that he meant no disrespect to his aunt or anybody there, but if it were all the same to them, and they would allow him to have his own way, he would rather have the pleasure of hating his sister till death and after it.

At length when this determination had been announced half a hundred times, the old lady suddenly bridling up and looking very majestic, wished to know what she had done that no respect was to be paid to her years or station, and that she should be obliged to beg and pray in that way of her own nephew, whom she remembered about five-and-twenty years before he was born, and whom she had known

personally when he hadn't a tooth in his head; to say nothing of her presence on the first occasion of his having his hair cut, and assistance at numerous other times and ceremonies during his babyhood, of sufficient importance to found a claim upon his affection, obedience, and sympathies, for ever.

While the good lady was bestowing this objurgation on Mr. Ben Allen, Bob Sawyer and Mr. Pickwick had retired in close conversation to the inner room, where the former gentleman was observed to apply himself several times to the mouth of a black bottle, under the influence of which, his features gradually assumed a cheerful and even jovial expression. And at last he emerged from the room, bottle in hand, and remarking that he was very sorry to say he had been making a fool of himself, begged to propose the health and happiness of Mr. and Mrs. Winkle, whose felicity, so far from envying, he would be the first to congratulate them upon. Hearing this, Mr. Ben Allen suddenly arose from his chair, and seizing the black bottle drank the toast so heartily, that, the liquor being strong, he became nearly as black in the face as the bottle itself. Finally the black bottle went round till it was empty, and there was so much shaking of hands and interchanging of complements, that even the metal-visaged Mr. Martin condescended to smile.

"And now," said Bob Sawyer, rubbing his hands, "we'll have a jolly night."

"I am sorry," said Mr. Pickwick, "that I must return to my inn. I have not been accustomed to fatigue lately, and my journey has tired me exceedingly."

"You'll take some tea, Mr. Pickwick?" said the old lady, with irresistible sweetness.

"Thank you, I would rather not," replied that gentleman. The truth is, that the old lady's evidently increasing admiration was Mr. Pickwick's principal inducement for going. He thought of Mrs. Bardell. and every glance of the old lady's eyes threw him into a cold perspiration.

As Mr. Pickwick could by no means be prevailed upon to stay, it was arranged at once, on his own proposition, that Mr. Benjamin Allen should accompany him on his journey to the elder Mr. Winkle's, and that the coach should be at the door at nine o'clock next morning. He then took his leave, and, followed by Samuel Weller, repaired to the Bush. It is worthy of remark, that Mr. Martin's face was horribly convulsed as he shook hands with Sam at parting, and that he gave vent to a smile and an oath simultaneously, from which tokens it has been inferred by those who were best acquainted with that gentleman's peculiarities that he expressed himself much pleased with Mr. Weller's society, and requested the honor of his further acquaintance.

"Shall I order a private room, Sir?" inquired Sam, when they reached the Bush.

"Why, no, Sam," replied Mr. Pickwick; "as I dined in the coffee room, and shall go to bed soon, it is hardly worth while. See who there is in the traveller's room, Sam."

Mr. Weller departed on his errand, and presently returned to say

that there was only a gentleman with one eye, and the landlord, who were drinking a bowl of bishop together.

"I will join them," said Mr. Pickwick.

"He's a queer customer, the vun-eyed vun, Sir," observed Mr. Weller, as he led the way. "He's a gammonin' that 'ere landlord, he is, Sir, till he don't rightly know vether he 's a standing on the soles of his boots or the crown of his hat."

The individual to whom this observation referred, was sitting at the upper end of the room when Mr. Pickwick entered, and was smoking a large Dutch pipe, with his eye intently fixed upon the round face of the landlord, a jolly looking old personage, to whom he had recently been relating some tale of wonder, as was testified by sundry disjointed exclamations of, "Well, I wouldn't have believed it! The strangest thing I ever heard! Couldn't have supposed it possible!" and other expressions of astonishment which burst spontaneously from his lips as he returned the fixed gaze of the one-eyed man.

"Servant, Sir," said the one-eyed man to Mr. Pickwick. "Fine night, Sir."

"Very much so indeed," replied Mr. Pickwick, as the waiter placed a small decanter of brandy, and some hot water before him.

While Mr. Pickwick was mixing his brandy and water, the one-eyed man looked round at him earnestly, from time to time, and at length said—

"I think I've seen you before."

"I don't recollect you," rejoined Mr. Pickwick.

"I dare say not," said the one-eyed man. "You didn't know me, but I knew two friends of yours that were stopping at the Peacock at Eatanswill, at the time of the Election."

"Oh, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes," rejoined the one-eyed man. "I mentioned a little circumstance to them about a friend of mine of the name of Tom Smart. Perhaps you've heard them speak of it."

"Often," rejoined Mr. Pickwick, smiling. "He was your uncle, I think?"

"No, no—only a friend of my uncle's," replied the one-eyed man.

"He was a wonderful man, that uncle of yours, though," remarked the landlord, shaking his head.

"Well, I think he was; I think I may say he was," answered the one-eyed man. "I could tell you a story about that same uncle, gentlemen, that would rather surprise you."

"Could you?" said Mr. Pickwick. "Let us hear it by all means."

The one-eyed Bagman ladled out a glass of negus from the bowl, and drank it, smoked a long whiff out of the Dutch pipe, and then calling to Sam Weller who was lingering near the door, that he needn't go away unless he wanted to, because the story was no secret, fixed his eye upon the landlord's, and proceeded in the words of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CONTAINING THE STORY OF THE BAGMAN'S UNCLE.

“ My uncle, gentlemen,” said the bagman, “ was one of the merriest, pleasantest, cleverest fellows that ever lived. I wish you had known him, gentlemen. On second thoughts, gentlemen, I *don't* wish you had known him, for if you had, you would have been all by this time in the ordinary course of nature, if not dead, at all events so near it, as to have taken to stopping at home and giving up company, which would have deprived me of the inestimable pleasure of addressing you at this moment. Gentlemen, I wish your fathers and mothers had known my uncle. They would have been amazingly fond of him, especially your respectable mothers, I know they would. If any two of his numerous virtues predominated over the many that adorned his character, I should say they were his mixed punch and his after-supper song. Excuse my dwelling upon these melancholy recollections of departed worth ; you won't see a man like my uncle every day in the week.

“ I have always considered it a great point in my uncle's character, gentlemen, that he was the intimate friend and companion of Tom Smart, of the great house of Bilson and Slum, Cateaton Street, City. My uncle collected for Tiggin and Welps, but for a long time he went pretty near the same journey as Tom ; and the very first night they met, my uncle took a fancy for Tom, and Tom took a fancy for my uncle. They made a bet of a new hat before they had known each other half an hour, who should brew the best quart of punch and drink it the quickest. My uncle was judged to have won the making, but Tom Smart beat him in the drinking by about half a salt-spoon-full. They took another quart a-piece to drink each other's health in, and were staunch friends ever afterwards. There's a destiny in these things gentlemen ; we can't help it.

“ In personal appearance, my uncle was a trifle shorter than the middle size ; he was a thought stouter too, than the ordinary run of people, and perhaps his face might be a shade redder. He had the jolliest face you ever saw, gentlemen : something like Punch, with a handsomer nose and chin ; his eyes were always twinkling and sparkling with good humour, and a smile—not one of your unmeaning wooden grins, but a real, merry, hearty, good-tempered smile, was perpetually on his countenance. He was pitched out of his gig once, and knocked head first against a mile-stone. There he lay, stunned, and so cut about the face with some gravel which had been heaped up alongside it, that, to use my uncle's own strong expression, if his mother could have revisited the earth, she wouldn't have known him. Indeed, when I come to think of the matter, gentlemen, I feel pretty sure she wouldn't, for

she died when my uncle was two years and seven months old, and I think it's very likely that even without the gravel, his top-boots would have puzzled the good lady not a little, to say nothing of his jolly red face. However, there he lay, and I have heard my uncle say many a time that the man said who picked him up that he was smiling as merrily as if he had tumbled out for a treat, and that after they had bled him, the first faint glimmerings of returning animation were, his jumping up in bed, bursting out into a loud laugh, kissing the young woman who held the basin, and demanding a mutton chop and a pickled walnut instantly. He was very fond of pickled walnuts, gentlemen. He said he always found that, taken without vinegar, they relished the beer.

"My uncle's great journey was in the fall of the leaf, at which time he collected debts and took orders in the north: going from London to Edinburgh, from Edinburgh to Glasgow, from Glasgow back to Edinburgh, and thence to London by the smack. You are to understand that this second visit to Edinburgh was for his own pleasure. He used to go back for a week, just to look up his old friends; and what with breakfasting with this one, and lunching with that, and dining with a third, and supping with another, a pretty tight week he used to make of it. I don't know whether any of you, gentlemen, ever partook of a real substantial hospitable Scotch breakfast, and then went out to a slight lunch of a bushel of oysters, a dozen or so of bottled ale, and a noggin or two of whiskey to close up with. If you ever did, you will agree with me that it requires a pretty strong head to go out to dinner and supper afterwards.

"But, bless your hearts and eyebrows, all this sort of thing was nothing to my uncle. He was so well seasoned that it was mere child's play. I have heard him say that he could see the Dundee people out any day, and walk home afterwards without staggering; and yet the Dundee people have as strong heads and as strong punch, gentlemen, as you are likely to meet with, between the poles. I have heard of a Glasgow man and a Dundee man drinking against each other for fifteen hours at a sitting. They were both suffocated as nearly as could be ascertained at the same moment, but with this trifling exception, gentlemen, they were not a bit the worse for it.

"One night, within four-and-twenty hours of the time when he had settled to take shipping for London, my uncle supped at the house of a very old friend of his, a Baillie Mac something, and four syllables after it, who lived in the old town of Edinburgh. There were the baillie's wife, and the baillie's three daughters, and the baillie's grown-up son, and three or four stout, bushy-eye browed, canty old Scotch fellows that the baillie had got together to do honour to my uncle, and help to make merry. It was a glorious supper. There was kippered salmon, and Finnan haddocks, and a lamb's head, and a haggis; a celebrated Scotch dish, gentleman, which my uncle used to say always looked to him, when it came to table, very much like a cupid's stomach; and a great many other things besides, that I forget the names of, but very good things notwithstanding. The lassies were pretty and agreeable; the baillie's wife one of the best creatures that

ever lived ; and my uncle in thoroughly good cue : the consequence of which was, that the young ladies tittered and giggled, and the old lady laughed out loud, and the baillie and the other old fellows roared till they were red in the face, the whole mortal time. I don't quite recollect how many tumblers of whiskey toddy each man drank after supper, but this I know, that about one o'clock in the morning, the baillie's grown-up son became insensible while attempting the first verse of 'Willie brewed a peck o' maut ;' and he having been, for half an hour before, the only other man visible above the mahogany, it occurred to my uncle that it was almost time to think about going, especially as drinking had set in at seven o'clock in order that he might get home at a decent hour. But thinking it might not be quite polite to go just then, my uncle voted himself into the chair, mixed another glass, rose to propose his own health, addressed himself in a neat and complimentary speech, and drank the toast with great enthusiasm. Still nobody woke ; so my uncle took a little drop more—neat this time, to prevent the toddy disagreeing with him, and laying violent hands on his hat sallied forth into the street.

“ It was a wild gusty night when my uncle closed the baillie's door ; and settling his hat firmly on his head to prevent the wind from taking it, thrust his hands into his pockets, and looking upwards, took a short survey of the state of the weather. The clouds were drifting over the moon at their giddiest speed, at one time wholly obscuring her, at another, suffering her to burst forth in full splendour and shed her light on all the objects around ; anon, driving over her again with increased velocity, and shrouding everything in darkness. ‘ Really, this won't do,’ said my uncle, addressing himself to the weather, as if he felt himself personally offended. ‘ This is not at all the kind of thing for my voyage. It will not do at any price,’ said my uncle, very impressively. And having repeated this, several times, he recovered his balance with some difficulty—for he was rather giddy with looking up into the sky so long—and walked merrily on.

“ The baillie's house was in the Canongate, and my uncle was going to the other end of Leith Walk, rather better than a mile's journey. On either side of him, there shot up against the dark sky, tall, gaunt, straggling houses, with time-stained fronts, and windows that seemed to have shared the lot of eyes in mortals, and to have grown dim and sunken with age. Six, seven, eight stories high were the houses ; story piled above story, as children build with cards—throwing their dark shadows over the roughly paved road, and making the night darker. A few oil lamps were scattered, at long distances, but they only served to mark the dirty entrance to some narrow close, or to show where a common stair communicated, by steep and intricate windings with the various flats above. Glancing at all these things with the air of a man who had seen them too often before, to think them worthy of much notice now, my uncle walked up the middle of the street with a thumb in each waistcoat pocket, indulging from time to time in various snatches of song, chaunted forth with such good will and spirit, that the quiet honest folk started from their first sleep and lay trembling in bed till the sound died away in the

distance; when, satisfying themselves that it was only some drunken ne'er-do-weel finding his way home, they covered themselves up warm and fell asleep again.

"I am particular in describing how my uncle walked up the middle of the street with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, gentlemen, because, as he often used to say (and with great reason too) there is nothing at all extraordinary in this story, unless you distinctly understand at the beginning, that he was not by any means of a marvellous or romantic turn.

"Gentlemen, my uncle walked on with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, taking the middle of the street to himself, and singing now a verse of a love song, and then a verse of a drinking one; and when he was tired of both, whistling melodiously, until he reached the North Bridge, which at this point connects the old and new towns of Edinburgh. Here he stopped for a minute to look at the strange irregular clusters of lights piled one above the other, and twinkling afar off so high in the air that they looked like stars gleaming from the castle walls on the one side and the Calton Hill on the other, as if they illuminated veritable castles in the air, while the old picturesque town slept heavily on in gloom and darkness below; its palace and chapel of Holyrood, guarded day and night, as a friend of my uncle's used to say, by old Arthur's Seat, towering, surly and dark like some gruff genius, over the ancient city he has watched so long. I say, gentlemen, my uncle stopped here for a minute to look about him; and then, paying a compliment to the weather which had a little cleared up, though the moon was sinking, walked on again as royally as before, keeping the middle of the road with great dignity, and looking as if he should very much like to meet with somebody who would dispute possession of it with him. There was nobody at all disposed to contest the point, as it happened; and so on he went, with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, as peaceable as a lamb.

"When my uncle reached the end of Leith Walk, he had to cross a pretty large piece of waste ground which separated him from a short street which he had to turn down to go direct to his lodging. Now in this piece of waste ground there was at that time an inclosure belonging to some wheelwright, who contracted with the Post-office for the purchase of old worn-out mail coaches; and my uncle being very fond of coaches, old, young, or middle-aged, all at once took it into his head to step out of his road for no other purpose than to peep between the palings at these mails, about a dozen of which he remembered to have seen, crowded together in a very forlorn and dismantled state, inside. My uncle was a very enthusiastic, emphatic sort of person, gentlemen; so, finding that he could not obtain a good peep between the palings, he got over them, and setting himself quietly down on an old axletree, began to contemplate the mail coaches with a great deal of gravity.

"There might be a dozen of them, or there might be more—my uncle was never quite certain upon this point, and being a man of very scrupulous veracity about numbers, didn't like to say—but there they stood, all huddled together in the most desolate condition imaginable. The doors had been torn from their hinges and removed, the linings had

been stripped off, only a shred hanging here and there by a rusty nail; the lamps were gone, the poles had long since vanished, the iron-work was rusty, the paint worn away; the wind whistled through the chinks in the bare wood-work, and the rain, which had collected on the roofs, fell drop by drop into the insides with a hollow and melancholy sound. They were the decaying skeletons of departed mails, and in that lonely place, at that time of night, they looked chill and dismal.

"My uncle rested his head upon his hands, and thought of the busy bustling people who had rattled about, years before, in the old coaches, and were now as silent and changed; he thought of the numbers of people to whom one of those crazy, mouldering vehicles had borne, night after night for many years and through all weathers, the anxiously expected intelligence, the eagerly looked-for remittance, the promised assurance of health and safety, the sudden announcement of sickness and death. The merchant, the lover, the wife, the widow, the mother, the schoolboy, the very child who tottered to the door at the postman's knock—how had they all looked forward to the arrival of the old coach. And where were they all now!

"Gentlemen, my uncle used to *say* that he thought all this at the time, but I rather suspect he learnt it out of some book afterwards, for he distinctly stated that he fell into a kind of doze as he sat on the old axletree looking at the decayed mail coaches, and that he was suddenly awakened by some deep church-bell striking two. Now, my uncle was never a fast thinker, and if he had thought all these things, I am quite certain it would have taken him till full half-past two o'clock at the very least. I am, therefore, decidedly of opinion, gentlemen, that my uncle fell into the kind of doze without having thought about any thing at all.

"Be this as it may, a church bell struck two. My uncle woke, rubbed his eyes, and jumped up in astonishment.

"In one instant, after the clock struck two, the whole of this deserted and quiet spot had become a scene of the most extraordinary life and animation. The mail coach doors were on their hinges, the lining was replaced, the iron-work was as good as new, the paint was restored, the lamps were alight; cushions and great coats were on every coach box, porters were thrusting parcels into every boot, guards were stowing away letter-bags, hostlers were dashing pails of water against the renovated wheels; numbers of men were rushing about, fixing poles into every coach, passengers arrived, portmanteaus were handed up, horses were put to, and in short it was perfectly clear that every mail there was to be off directly. Gentlemen, my uncle opened his eyes so wide at all this, that, to the very last moment of his life, he used to wonder how it fell out that he had ever been able to shut 'em again.

"'Now then,' said a voice, as my uncle felt a hand on his shoulder, 'You're booked for one inside. You'd better get in.'

"'I booked!' said my uncle, turning round.

"'Yes, certainly.'

"My uncle, gentlemen, could say nothing, he was so very much astonished. The queerest thing of all, was, that although there was such a crowd of persons, and although fresh faces were pouring in,

every moment, there was no telling where they came from; they seemed to start up in some strange manner from the ground or the air, and to disappear in the same way. When a porter had put his luggage in the coach and received his fare, he turned round and was gone; and before my uncle had well begun to wonder what had become of him, half-a-dozen fresh ones started up, and staggered along under the weight of parcels which seemed big enough to crush them. The passengers were all dressed so oddly too—large, broad-skirted laced coats with great cuffs and no collars; and wigs, gentlemen,—great formal wigs with a tie behind. My uncle could make nothing of it.

“‘Now, *are* you going to get in?’ said the person who had addressed my uncle before. He was dressed as a mail guard, with a wig on his head and most enormous cuffs to his coat, and had got a lantern in one hand and a huge blunderbuss in the other, which he was going to stow away in his little arm-chest. ‘*Are* you going to get in, Jack Martin?’ said the guard, holding the lantern to my uncle’s face.

“‘Hallo,’ said my uncle, falling back a step or two. ‘That’s familiar?’

“‘It’s so on the way-bill,’ replied the guard.

“‘Isn’t there a ‘Mister’ before it?’ said my uncle—for he felt, gentlemen, that for a guard he didn’t know to call him Jack Martin, was a liberty which the Post-office wouldn’t have sanctioned if they had known it.

“‘No; there is not,’ rejoined the guard coolly.

“‘Is the fare paid?’ enquired my uncle.

“‘Of course it is,’ rejoined the guard.

“‘It is, is it?’ said my uncle. ‘Then here goes—which coach?’

“‘This,’ said the guard, pointing to an old-fashioned Edinburgh and London Mail, which had got the steps down, and the door open. ‘Stop—here are the other passengers. Let them get in first.’

“As the guard spoke, there all at once appeared, right in front of my uncle, a young gentleman in a powdered wig and a sky blue coat trimmed with silver, made very full and broad in the skirts, which were lined with buckram. Tiggin and Welps were in the printed calico and waistcoat piece line, gentlemen, so my uncle knew all the materials at once. He wore knee breeches and a kind of leggings rolled up over his silk stockings, and shoes with buckles; he had ruffles at his wrists, a three-cornered hat on his head, and a long taper sword by his side. The flaps of his waistcoat came half way down his thighs, and the ends of his cravat reached to his waist. He stalked gravely to the coach-door, pulled off his hat, and held it out above his head at arm’s length, cocking his little finger in the air at the same time, as some affected people do when they take a cup of tea: then drew his feet together, and made a low grave bow, and then put out his left hand. My uncle was just going to step forward, and shake it heartily, when he perceived that these attentions were directed not towards him, but to a young lady, who just then appeared at the foot of the steps, attired in an old-fashioned green velvet dress, with a long waist and stomacher. She had no bonnet on her head, gentlemen, which was muffled in a black silk hood, but she looked round for an

instant as she prepared to get into the coach, and such a beautiful face as she discovered my uncle had never seen—not even in a picture. She got into the coach, holding up her dress with one hand, and as my uncle always said with a round oath, when he told the story, he wouldn't have believed it possible that legs and feet could have been brought to such a state of perfection unless he had seen them with his own eyes.

“But in this one glimpse of the beautiful face, my uncle saw that the young lady had cast an imploring look upon him, and that she appeared terrified and distressed. He noticed too, that the young fellow in the powdered wig, notwithstanding his show of gallantry, which was all very fine and grand, clasped her tight by the wrist when she got in, and followed himself immediately afterwards. An uncommonly ill-looking fellow in a close brown wig, and a plum-coloured suit, wearing a very large sword and boots up to his hips, belonged to the party; and when he sat himself down next to the young lady, who shrunk into a corner at his approach, my uncle was confirmed in his original impression that something dark and mysterious was going forward, or, as he always said himself, that ‘there was a screw loose somewhere.’ It's quite surprising how quickly he made up his mind to help the lady at any peril, if she needed help.

“‘Death and lightning!’ exclaimed the young gentleman, laying his hand upon his sword, as my uncle entered the coach.

“‘Blood and thunder!’ roared the other gentleman. With this he whipped his sword out, and made a lunge at my uncle without further ceremony. My uncle had no weapon about him, but with great dexterity he snatched the ill-looking gentleman's three-cornered hat from his head, and receiving the point of his sword right through the crown, squeezed the sides together, and held it tight.

“‘Pink him behind,’ cried the ill-looking gentleman to his companion, as he struggled to regain his sword.

“‘He had better not,’ cried my uncle, displaying the heel of one of his shoes in a threatening manner. ‘I'll kick his brains out if he has any, or fracture his skull if he hasn't.’ Exerting all his strength at this moment, my uncle wrenched the ill-looking man's sword from his grasp, and flung it clean out of the coach-window, upon which the younger gentleman vociferated ‘Death and lightning!’ again, and laid his hand upon the hilt of his sword in a very fierce manner, but didn't draw it. Perhaps, gentlemen, as my uncle used to say, with a smile, perhaps he was afraid of alarming the lady.

“‘Now gentlemen,’ said my uncle, taking his seat deliberately, ‘I don't want to have any death with or without lightning in a lady's presence, and we have had quite blood and thundering enough for one journey; so if you please, we'll sit in our places like quiet insiders—here, guard, pick up that gentleman's carving knife.’

“As quickly as my uncle said the words, the guard appeared at the coach-window with the gentleman's sword in his hand. He held up his lantern, and looked earnestly in [my uncle's face as he handed it in, when by its light my uncle saw, to his great surprise, that an immense crowd of mail-coach guards swarmed round the

window, every one of whom had his eyes earnestly fixed upon him too. He had never seen such a sea of white faces and red bodies, and earnest eyes, in all his born days.

“ ‘This is the strangest sort of thing I ever had any thing to do with,’ thought my uncle—‘allow me to return you your hat, Sir.’

“The ill-looking gentleman received his three-cornered hat in silence—looked at the hole in the middle with an enquiring air, and finally stuck it on the top of his wig, with a solemnity the effect of which was a trifle impaired by his sneezing violently at the moment, and jerking it off again.

“ ‘All right!’ cried the guard with the lantern, mounting into his little seat behind. Away they went. My uncle peeped out of the coach-window as they emerged from the yard, and observed that the other mails, with coachmen, guards, horses, and passengers complete, were driving round and round in circles, at a slow trot of about five miles an hour. My uncle burnt with indignation, gentlemen. As a commercial man, he felt that the mail bags were not to be trifled with, and he resolved to memorialise the Post-office upon the subject, the very instant he reached London.

“At present, however, his thoughts were occupied with the young lady who sat in the furthest corner of the coach, with her face muffled closely in her hood: the gentleman with the sky blue coat sitting opposite to her, and the other man in the plum-coloured suit, by her side, and both watching her intently. If she so much as rustled the folds of her hood, he could hear the ill-looking man clap his hand upon his sword, and tell by the other’s breathing (it was so dark he couldn’t see his face) that he was looking as big as if he were going to devour her at a mouthful. This roused my uncle more and more, and he resolved, come what come might, to see the end of it. He had a great admiration for bright eyes, and sweet faces, and pretty legs and feet; in short he was fond of the whole sex. It runs in our family, gentlemen—so am I.

“Many were the devices which my uncle practised to attract the lady’s attention, or at all events, to engage the mysterious gentlemen in conversation. They were all in vain; the gentlemen wouldn’t talk, and the lady didn’t dare. He thrust his head out of the coach-window at intervals, and bawled out to know why they didn’t go faster. But he called till he was hoarse—nobody paid the least attention to him. He leant back in the coach, and thought of the beautiful face, and the feet and legs. This answered better; it wiled away the time, and kept him from wondering where he was going to, and how it was he found himself in such an odd situation. Not that this would have worried him much any way—he was a mighty, free and easy, roving, devil-may-care sort of person, was my uncle, gentlemen.

“All of a sudden the coach stopped. ‘Hallo!’ said my uncle. ‘What’s in the wind now?’

“ ‘Alight here,’ said the guard, letting down the steps.

“ ‘Here!’ cried my uncle.

“ ‘Here,’ rejoined the guard.

“ ‘I’ll do nothing of the sort,’ said my uncle.

“ ‘Very well—then stop where you are,’ said the guard.

“ ‘I will,’ said my uncle.

“ ‘Do,’ said the guard.

“The other passengers had regarded this colloquy with great attention; and finding that my uncle was determined not to alight, the younger man squeezed past him, to hand the lady out. At this moment the ill-looking man was inspecting the hole in the crown of his three-cornered hat. As the young lady brushed past, she dropped one of her gloves into my uncle’s hand, and softly whispered with her lips, so close to his face that he felt her warm breath on his nose, the single word, ‘Help!’ Gentlemen, my uncle leaped out of the coach at once with such violence that it rocked on the springs again.

“ ‘Oh! you’ve thought better of it, have you?’ said the guard, when he saw my uncle standing on the ground.

“My uncle looked at the guard for a few seconds, in some doubt whether it wouldn’t be better to wrench his blunderbuss from him, fire it in the face of the man with the big sword, knock the rest of the company over the head with the stock, snatch up the young lady, and go off in the smoke. On second thoughts, however, he abandoned this plan as being a shade too melo-dramatic in the execution, and followed the two mysterious men, who, keeping the lady between them, were now entering an old house in front of which the coach had stopped. They turned into the passage, and my uncle followed.

“Of all the ruinous and desolate places my uncle had ever beheld, this was the most so. It looked as if it had once been a large house of entertainment, but the roof had fallen in, in many places, and the stairs were steep, rugged, and broken. There was a huge fire-place in the room into which they walked, and the chimney was blackened with smoke, but no warm blaze lighted it up now. The white feathery dust of burnt wood was still strewed over the hearth, but the stove was cold, and all was dark and gloomy.

“ ‘Well,’ said my uncle as he looked about him, ‘A mail travelling at the rate of six miles and a half an hour, and stopping for an indefinite time at such a hole as this, is rather an irregular sort of proceeding I fancy. This shall be made known; I’ll write to the papers.’

“My uncle said this in a pretty loud voice, and in an open unreserved sort of manner, with the view of engaging the two strangers in conversation if he could. But neither of them took any more notice of him than whispering to each other, and scowling at him as they did so. The lady was at the further end of the room, and once she ventured to wave her hand, as if beseeching my uncle’s assistance.

“At length the two strangers advanced a little, and the conversation began in earnest.

“ ‘You don’t know this is a private room; I suppose, fellow,’ said the gentleman in sky-blue.

“ ‘No I do not, fellow,’ rejoined my uncle. ‘Only if this is a private room specially ordered for the occasion, I should think the public room must be a *very* comfortable one;’ with this, my uncle sat himself down in a high-backed chair and took such an accurate measure of the gentleman with his eyes, that Tiggin and Welps could have supplied

him with printed calico for a suit, and not an inch too much or too little, from that estimate alone.

“ ‘Quit this room,’ said both the men together, grasping their swords.

“ ‘Eh?’ said my uncle, not at all appearing to comprehend their meaning.

“ ‘Quit the room, or you are a dead man,’ said the ill-looking fellow with the large sword, drawing it at the same time and flourishing it in the air.

“ ‘Down with him!’ said the gentleman in sky-blue, drawing his sword also, and falling back two or three yards. ‘Down with him!’ The lady gave a loud scream.

“ Now, my uncle was always remarkable for great boldness and great presence of mind. All the time that he had appeared so indifferent to what was going on, he had been looking slyly about for some missile or weapon of defence, and at the very instant when the swords were drawn, he espied standing in the chimney corner, an old basket-hilted rapier in a rusty scabbard. At one bound, my uncle caught it in his hand, drew it, flourished it gallantly above his head, called aloud to the lady to keep out of the way, hurled the chair at the man in sky-blue, and the scabbard at the man in plum-colour, and taking advantage of the confusion, fell upon them both, pell-mell.

“ Gentlemen, there is an old story—none the worse for being true—regarding a fine young Irish gentleman, who being asked if he could play the fiddle, replied he had no doubt he could, but he couldn’t exactly say for certain, because he had never tried. This is not inapplicable to my uncle and his fencing. He had never had a sword in his hand before, except once when he played Richard the Third at a private theatre, upon which occasion it was arranged with Richmond that he was to be run through from behind without shewing fight at all; but here he was, cutting and slashing with two experienced swordsmen, thrusting, and guarding, and poking, and slicing, and acquitting himself in the most manful and dexterous manner possible, although up to that time he had never been aware that he had the least notion of the science. It only shows how true the old saying is, that a man never knows what he can do, till he tries, gentlemen.

“ The noise of the combat was terrific, each of the three combatants swearing like troopers, and their swords clashing with as much noise as if all the knives and steels in Newport market were rattling together at the same time. When it was at its very height, the lady, to encourage my uncle most probably, withdrew her hood entirely from her face, and disclosed a countenance of such dazzling beauty, that he would have fought against fifty men to win one smile from it and die. He had done wonders before, but now he began to powder away like a raving mad giant.

“ At this very moment, the gentleman in sky-blue turning round, and seeing the young lady with her face uncovered, vented an exclamation of rage and jealousy; and turning his weapon against her beautiful bosom, pointed a thrust at her heart which caused my uncle to utter a cry of apprehension that made the building ring. The lady

stepped lightly aside, and snatching the young man's sword from his hand before he had recovered his balance, drove him to the wall, and running it through him and the panneling up to the very hilt, pinned him there hard and fast. It was a splendid example. My uncle, with a loud shout of triumph and a strength that was irresistible, made his adversary retreat in the same direction, and plunging the old rapier into the very centre of a large red flower in the pattern of his waist-coat, nailed him beside his friend; there they both stood, gentlemen, jerking their arms and legs about in agony, like the toy-shop figures that are moved by a piece of packthread. My uncle always said afterwards, that this was one of the surest means he knew of, for disposing of an enemy; but it was liable to one objection on the ground of expense, inasmuch as it involved the loss of a sword for every man disabled.

"'The mail, the mail!' cried the lady, running up to my uncle and throwing her beautiful arms round his neck; 'we may yet escape.'

"'May!' said my uncle; 'why, my dear, there's nobody else to kill, is there?' My uncle was rather disappointed, gentlemen, for he thought a little quiet bit of love-making would be agreeable after the slaughtering, if it were only to change the subject.

"'We have not an instant to lose here,' said the young lady. 'He (pointing to the young gentleman in sky blue) is the only son of the powerful Marquess of Filletoville.'

"'Well then, my dear, I'm afraid he'll never come to the title,' said my uncle, looking coolly at the young gentleman as he stood fixed up against the wall, in the cockchaffer fashion I have described. 'You have cut off the entail, my love.'

"'I have been torn from my home and friends by these villains,' said the young lady, her features glowing with indignation. 'That wretch would have married me by violence in another hour.'

"'Confound his impudence!' said my uncle, bestowing a very contemptuous look on the dying heir of Filletoville.

"'As you may guess from what I have seen,' said the young lady, 'the party are prepared to murder me if you appeal to any one for assistance. If their accomplices find us here, we are lost. Two minutes hence may be too late. The mail!—and with these words, overpowered by her feelings and the exertion of sticking the young Marquess of Filletoville, she sunk into my uncle's arms. My uncle caught her up, and bore her to the house-door. There stood the mail with four long-tailed flowing-maned black horses, ready harnessed; but no coachman, no guard, no ostler even, at the horses' heads.

"Gentlemen, I hope I do no injustice to my uncle's memory, when I express my opinion, that although he was a bachelor, he *had* held some ladies in his arms before this time; I believe indeed, that he had rather a habit of kissing barmaids, and I know, that in one or two instances, he had been seen by credible witnesses, to hug a landlady in a very perceptible manner. I mention the circumstance, to show what a very uncommon sort of person this beautiful young lady must have been to have affected my uncle in the way she did; he used to say, that as her long dark hair trailed over his arm, and her beautiful dark eyes fixed themselves upon his face when she recovered, he felt so strange

and nervous, that his legs trembled beneath him. But who can look in a sweet soft pair of dark eyes, without feeling queer? I can't, gentlemen. I am afraid to look at some eyes I know, and that's the truth of it.

“‘You will never leave me,’ murmured the young lady.

“‘Never,’ said my uncle. And he meant it too.

“‘My dear preserver!’ exclaimed the young lady. ‘My dear, kind brave preserver!’

“‘Don't,’ said my uncle, interrupting her.

“‘Why?’ enquired the young lady.

“‘Because your mouth looks so beautiful when you speak,’ rejoined my uncle, ‘that I am afraid I shall be rude enough to kiss it.’

“The young lady put up her hand as if to caution my uncle not to do so, and said—no, she didn't say anything—she smiled. When you are looking at a pair of the most delicious lips in the world, and see them gently break into a roguish smile—if you are very near them, and nobody else by—you cannot better testify your admiration of their beautiful form and colour than by kissing them at once. My uncle did so, and I honour him for it.

“‘Hark!’ cried the young lady, starting. ‘The noise of wheels and horses.’

“‘So it is,’ said my uncle, listening. He had a good ear for wheels and the trampling of hoofs, but there appeared to be so many horses and carriages rattling towards them at a distance, that it was impossible to form a guess at their number. The sound was like that of fifty breaks, with six blood cattle in each.

“‘We are pursued!’ cried the young lady, clasping her hands. ‘We are pursued. I have no hope but in you.’

“There was such an expression of terror in her beautiful face, that my uncle made up his mind at once. He lifted her into the coach, told her not to be frightened, pressed his lips to hers once more, and then advising her to draw up the window to keep the cold air out, mounted to the box.

“‘Stay, love,’ cried the young lady.

“‘What's the matter?’ said my uncle, from the coach-box.

“‘I want to speak to you,’ said the young lady; ‘only a word—only one word, dearest.’

“‘Must I get down?’ enquired my uncle. The lady made no answer, but she smiled again. Such a smile, gentlemen!—it beat the other one all to nothing. My uncle descended from his perch in a twinkling.

“‘What is it, my dear?’ said my uncle, looking in at the coach window. The lady happened to bend forward at the same time, and my uncle thought she looked more beautiful than she had done yet. He was very close to her just then, gentlemen, so he really ought to know.

“‘What is it, my dear?’ said my uncle.

“‘Will you never love any one but me—never marry any one beside?’ said the young lady.

“My uncle swore a great oath that he never would marry any body

else, and the young lady drew in her head, and pulled up the window. He jumped upon the box, squared his elbows, adjusted the ribands, seized the whip which lay on the roof, gave one flick to the off leader, and away went the four long-tailed, flowing-maned black horses, at fifteen good English miles an hour, with the old mail coach behind them—whew! how they tore along!

“But the noise behind grew louder. The faster went the old mail, the faster came the pursuers—men, horses, dogs, were leagued in the pursuit. The noise was frightful, but above all rose the voice of the young lady, urging my uncle on, and shrieking ‘faster! faster!’

“They whirled past the dark trees as feathers would be swept before a hurricane. Houses, gates, churches, haystacks, objects of every kind they shot by, with a velocity and noise like roaring waters suddenly let loose. But still the noise of pursuit grew louder, and still my uncle could hear the young lady wildly screaming ‘faster! faster!’

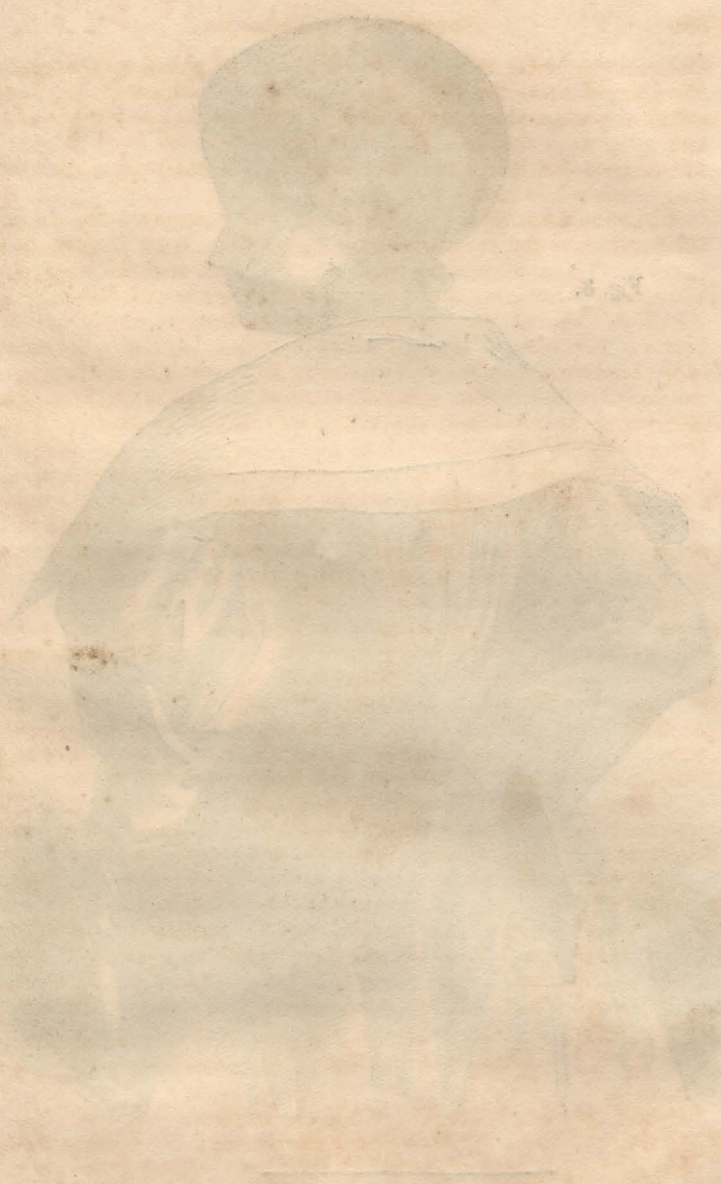
“My uncle plied whip and rein, and the horses flew onward till they were white with foam; and yet the noise behind increased, and yet the young lady cried ‘faster! faster!’ My uncle gave a loud stamp upon the boot in the energy of the moment, and—found that it was grey morning, and he was sitting in the wheelwright’s yard on the box of an old Edinburgh mail, shivering with the cold and wet, and stamping his feet to warm them! He got down, and looked eagerly inside for the beautiful young lady—alas! there was neither door nor seat to the coach—it was a mere shell.

“Of course my uncle knew very well that there was some mystery in the matter, and that everything had passed exactly as he used to relate it. He remained staunch to the great oath he had sworn to the beautiful young lady: refusing several eligible landladies on her account, and died a bachelor at last. He always said what a curious thing it was that he should have found out, by such a mere accident as his clambering over the palings, that the ghosts of mail-coaches and horses, guards, coachmen, and passengers, were in the habit of making journeys regularly every night; he used to add that he believed he was the only living person who had ever been taken as a passenger on one of these excursions; and I think he was right, gentlemen—at least I never heard of any other.”

“I wonder what these ghosts of mail-coaches carry in their bags,” said the landlord, who had listened to the whole story with profound attention.

“The dead letters of course,” said the Bagman.

“Oh, ah—to be sure,” rejoined the landlord. “I never thought of that.”



The great difference produced in the posture of this Child by the application of the Breast-Spina Band, did not arise from its actually stretching the spine, or any other particular tissues, as some might suppose, but was simply the result of taking up the displaced bones of the feet, and bringing them nearer to their natural position, which was

Fig. 3.



The great difference produced in the height of this Child by the application of the "Patent Spine Support," did not arise from violently stretching the spine, or any other painful process, as some might suppose, but was simply the result of lifting up the displaced bones of the back, and bringing them nearer to their natural position, which was



Fig. 1

Fig. 1. represents the appearance of a little Girl 7 years of age, in whom the deforming process commenced at the age of 15 months. At the time of taking the drawing she had been under Mr. Amesbury's care about 4 months, and had greatly improved in form, strength, and health.

Fig. 2. shows the appearance of the Child a week after the application of Mr. Amesbury's "Patent Spine Support," by which she was immediately raised *one inch and three quarters*.

Fig. 2.



Fig. 3. represents the Child as she appeared dressed, over the "Patent Spine Support," six weeks after its first application. In the course of the six weeks she has been raised *three inches and a quarter*; and consequently now stands, with the assistance of the "Patent Spine Support," *three inches and a quarter taller* than she was six weeks ago, when it was first applied; and upwards of *two inches and a half taller* than at that time, without the "Patent Spine Support," or any other aid. The circumference of the chest, over the protuberance formed by the curvature in the spine, has now diminished about three inches. The Child, before she came under Mr. Amesbury's care, was always weak and suffering, but she is now strong and healthy.

accomplished in a manner imperceptible to the patient. In this way the depth of the curves was diminished, the spine elongated, and the patient rendered taller. By the peculiar action of the "Patent Spine Support," the displaced bones are, as it were, propped up and supported under all the varying positions of the body, whether the person be placed in the standing, lying, or any other posture, or exercising himself in the open air, or otherwise. Hence it will be seen that the long confinement in the inclined or horizontal position which has been had recourse to, and considered by many to be necessary in the treatment of these cases, may now be discontinued, and all its attendant evils consequently avoided.

If the curves are considerable, and the displaced bones have not become strongly fixed in their unnatural position, the difference produced in the height of the person by the proper application of the "Patent Spine Support" is at once very great; but where the bones have become fixed in their new position, and altered in form, as is commonly the case in persons above 20 years of age, the effect is more gradual; but the difference produced, even in such persons, is often very striking.

The Child represented in the drawings is the daughter of Mr. Turner, a respectable tradesman who has resided in Crescent Place, Burton Crescent, about 25 years; and who, in consequence of the great benefit which his child has experienced, was himself desirous that her case should be published with his name. For further particulars of this case, and for others illustrative of Mr. Amesbury's treatment in stiffness, weakness, or deformity of the Spine, Chest, and Limbs,—*see*

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