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Per doz.
Wines per Gallon:
Port | 12s. to 14s. per gallon. |
Sherry | 13s. to 15s. per gallon. |
Cape | 7s. to 8s. per quarter pipe |
Beaujolais, 8s. per dozen. Hampers, 1s. per dozen.

TO EPICURES.

CROSSE and BLACKWELL'S celebrated SOROTO SAUCE for Fish, Game, Steaks, Made Dishes, &c. CROSSE and BLACKWELL'S FLORENCE CREAM for Salads, Lobsters, &c. DINMORE'S ESSENCE OF SMOKED MEAT for every description of boiled and fried Fish. DINMORE'S SHRIMP PASTE, a superior delicacy for Breakfast, Sandwiches, &c.—The above to be had at most modern Venders throughout the Kingdom, and wholesale at their manufacturing, 11, King-Street, Soho.

PIERCE'S ECONOMICAL RADIATING STOVE-GRATE MANUFACTORY, No. 5, JERMYN-STREET, REGENT-STREET. The Nobility and Gentry are most respectfully solicited to examine a variety of new and elegant Stove Grates upon whose so much approved Radiating Principle, from his own Designs, being the real Manufacturer of them. These Stoves combine the useful and ornamental, blending Economy with Comfort display a cheerful Fire and a clean Hearth—less materially the consumption of Fuel—diffuse a genial Warmth throughout the Apartment, and are adapted for general use. They retain the Heat many hours after the Fire is out—are executed in every style of Architecture—Greek, Egyptian, and Elizabethan, and Gothic, agreeable to all.

W. P. has a great expressly made for the Cure of Smoky Chimneys, and will guarantee its success. He invites attention to his Improved Method of Heating with Hot Water; also to the Domestic Pure Warm-Air Safety Store, for Churches, Mansions, Houses, Galleries, Exchange-Halls, &c., with Pure Air, which may be seen in daily use at his Show Rooms and Manufacturing Establishment, as well as an extensive assortment of Fenders, Fire-irons, Ranges, Boilers, Patent Smoke-Jacks, Hot Plates, Broiling Plates, and other articles of Kitchen requisites, with the latest improvements. Balls of every description, viz., Hot, Cold, Vapour, Douche, Shower, Leg, and Sponge; also Jekyll's Portable Baths. W. Pierce, Locksmith, Bell-Hanger, &c, 5, JERMYN STREET, REGENT STREET.

STONG GLASS,
For Conservatories, Manufacturers, and first-rate Buildings.
CROWN AND SHEET WINDOW GLASS WAREHOUSE, 32, HIGH HOLBORN.

CLAUDEV and BOURCHIER proceeding to call the attention of Noblemen, Gentlemen, Builders, and the Public, requiring glass for the above or any other purposes, to their SHEET GLASS, quite a new manufacture in this country, the price of which is very little higher than Crown Glass, although having more than double its strength, and which will, consequently very much more effectually resist hail, strong winds, and other causes of breakage.

Crown Window Glass of the most approved manufacture. Fitted Glass, which serves as a blind, although it admits more light than any other sort of glass, suited for offices, sky lights, interior and passage-doors, &c.
Painted, stained, engraved and ornamental glass for windows of churches, dwelling-houses, &c.

DRAWING-ROOM STOVES.
EVANS'S STOVE-GRATE MANUFACTORY, 33, KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON BRIDGE (established 1818). The Nobility and Gentry are respectfully invited to inspect the largest STOCK of DRAWING-ROOM and other STOVES in the Kingdom, the whole being of new and elegant Designs and superior Workmanship, comprising the Gothic, Grecian, Egyptian, and Elizabethan Orders, and adapted to the mansion or the cottage. Also, KITCHEN STOVES, on the most approved construction, with or without steam apparatus, and every article of Furnishing Ironmongery, on the lowest terms.
nder Feet.—Ladies and Gentlemen who have tender Feet, Corns, Blisters, or Gout, will find great relief by wearing the Pananus-Corium, or LEATHER CLOTH BOOTS and SHOES. They possess the following advantages over Shoes made of Leather, and the materials hitherto used:

1. They never pain the feet—in summer or winter; they are soft, easy, and elastic.
2. They fit well, and never press uncomfortably on corns and blisters.
3. They show a brilliant surface, high polish, and never crack.
4. In the hottest weather they do not draw the feet.

J. SPARKS HALL, 368, REGENT STREET, PORTLAND PLACE, LONDON.

N.B. Ladies and Gentlemen in the country may be fitted by sending a paper pattern but or shoe. Price same as leather.

LABERN'S BOTANIC CREAM.

By appointment, patronised by her Most Gracious Majesty, celebrated for strengthening and promoting the growth of Hair, and completely freeing it from Scurf.—Sold by the Proprietor, H. Labern, Perfumer to her Majesty, 48, Judd Street, Brunswick Square, in pots, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 5s. each, and by all Perfumers and Medicine Vendors. Beware of counterfeit. Ask for "Labern's Botanic Cream."

THE MECHIAN DRESSING-CASE.

The most portable ever invented, only six and three quarter inches long, three and a quarter wide, and three-fourths of an inch deep, the size of a pocket-book, contains one pair of Mechi's ivory-handle peculiar steel razors, his magic strop and comb, badger-hair shaving-brush, his patent castellated tooth-brush, and a neat nail-brush; price only 2s. 6d. The same with hair-brush and soap dish, 3s. To military men, and as a steam-boat or travelling companion, this invention must prove invaluable, the articles therein being all of the first quality. An immense variety of other Dressing-Cases, for both Gentlemen and Ladies, either in fancy woods or leather, at all prices, from 2s. to 20 guineas. At Mechi's Cutlery and Dressing-Case Manufactory, 4, Leadenhall-street, London, four doors from Cornhill. An extensive stock of Leather Writing Cases, Work Boxes, Baratelle Tables, Razors, Razor Strops, Sheffield Plate G&gt;uch, Tea-Trays, Tea-Caddies, &c., cheaper than any house in London. Every article warranted, money returned if not approved.

SPLENDID REAL SHEFFIELD PLATE.

LITHOGRAPHY.

A T. S. STRAKER'S Lithographic Establishment, 3, GEORGE YARD, LOMBARD STREET, LONDON.

Drawings, Maps, Plans, Elevations, Fac-Similes, and Writings, of every description, are executed in the best Style, with the utmost Expedition, and on the most moderate Terms. STRAKER'S LITHOGRAPHIC PRESSES

To receive a Stone 8 by 14 Inches 6s. 4d. by 18 by 24 2s. 6d., 10 by 24. 4d. 3os.; 20 by 36 6d.

12s. larger Piece in the same proportion.

Stones and every Material and Instrument used in the Art on the lowest Terms for Cash—Stones on Hire, and forwarded to any Part of the Kingdom.—Country and Foreign Orders promptly attended to.

T. COX SAVORY,

WORKING SILVERSMITH, GOLDSMITH, AND WATCHMAKER,

47, Cornhill, (Seven doors from Gracechurch Street,) London.
GLASS SHADES,
For the Preservation of Clocks, Artificial Flowers, Busts, Alabaster Ornaments, Birds, Minerals, Surgical Models, Chemical Preparations, &c. 

THE MANUFACTURE OF GLASS SHADES has lately been introduced into this country; they may now be obtained of all dimensions (either Round, Oval, or Square), at very moderate prices, at CLAUDET & ROUTHTON'S GLASS SHADE WAREHOUSE, 63, HIGH HOLBORN.

N.B. Sent, safely packed, to all parts of the country.

PREVENTION OF THE TEETH.
- CAMPHORATED MAGNESIA TOOTH-POWDER. This highly beneficient dentifrice is prepared on principles which most tend to the preservation of the Teeth, upon the most careful attention to their nature and structure, and to the causes of their becoming discoloured and decayed. It prevents the formation of tartar, with the great advantage that it removes from the Teeth extraneous substances only, without having any action whatever on the enamel; so that by its continued use the enamel is preserved, and the Teeth will retain their natural white and brilliant surface, so characteristic of their beauty. Prepared only by P. GRIGNON, Chemist, 174, Regent Street, opposite Burlington Street, London.

For DECAYED TEETH, or unhealthy Gums, GRIGNON'S CAMPHORATED CHLORIDE LOTION, prepared with Myrrh and Orge, is very strongly recommended. Its excellent qualities are owing to its highly-purifying or corrective power, by which it promotes a healthy condition, and greatly retards the progress of decay. Independently of its benefit, its use is always a great luxury, from its purifying, sweetening, and very agreeable effect on the mouth and breath.

DEAF PERSONS are informed that Dr. Scott's VOICE CONDUCTORS are worn with the same ease as Spectacles; and the moment they are put on, release the winter from Deafness. They can be worn under Caps, Bonnets, and Hats; are therefore equally available at Church or in Public Assemblies. In private life the gratification of hearing conversation by this means, is highly appreciated by all Deaf Persons.—369, Strand.

To be procured only of Wm. Pine, superintendent of Dr. Scott's Medical Repository, 369, Strand, 3 doors from Exeter Hall.

HOSIERY.
POPE and Co. have removed from 28, Friday Street, to 4, Waterloo Place, Post Stalls.

THEY continue to manufacture every description of HOSIERY, in the old-fashioned substantial manner, the greatest attention being paid to Elasticity and Durability.—Orders and Patterns to be forwarded to 4, Waterloo Place, or to their manufactory, Mount Street, Nottingham.

DISTORTION OF THE SPINE.—Mrs. HART, the late Widow and Successor of Mr. CALLAM, respectfully begs to announce that she continues the application of her much-approved Support for the Assistance and Cure of DISTORTED SPINES, which has received the patronage of her Majesty the Queen Dowager, and is recommended by Sir Astley Cooper, Mr. Keate, Dr. Davies, Dr. Ashwell, and several gentlemen of the Faculty.

Mrs. HART manufactures a new and peculiar description of Ladies' Stays, to improve the Figure and conceal Deformity in Adults; Leg Irons of every description; Trusses for Hernia; Back Boards and Collars; Laced Stockings; Kace Caps; every description of Bandage; Reclining Boards; Crutches; Dumb Bells; Belts for Congenital and Pregnancy; Lumbar Belts, &c.

Address, Mrs. Hart, 57, Great Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, four doors from the Freemason's Tavern.

TRAVELLING AND HUNTING MAPS.
MOUNTED IN CASES ADAPTED TO THE WAISTCOAT POCKET, 1s. 6d. EACH

MAPS OF THE ENGLISH COUNTIES, ENGRAVED BY SYDNEY HALL.
WITH THE MAIL AND COACH ROADS CORRECTLY COLOURED.

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 186, STRAND.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY:
BY "BOZ."

ADVERTISEMENTS WILL BE INSERTED IN THE MONTH'S NUMBER OF THIS POPULAR PERIODICAL ON THE FOLLOWING TERMS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
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<td>Prospectuses, &amp;c., of which 32,000 are required, not exceeding</td>
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PLATE.—A. B. SAVORY and SONS, Manufacturing Silversmiths, 14, Cornhill, London, opposite the Bank of England. The best wrought Silver Spoons and Forks, Fiddle Pattern, 7s. 2d. per ounce; the King’s Pattern, 7s. 4d. per ounce. The following are the weights recommended, but the articles may be had lighter or heavier, at the same price per ounce:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Spoons/Forks</th>
<th>Cwt.</th>
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<td>1 Sugar Tongs</td>
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A Pamphlet containing detailed lists of the prices of various patterns of Silver Spoons and Forks, Silver Tea and Coffee Services, and of the different articles of Plated Ware, may be had on application, free of cost, or will be sent into the country in answer to a paid letter.

The Plate Rooms of the Establishment, which are extensive, contain a choice selection of Silver Plate, Plated Goods, and every article requisite to service.

ENGLISH GOLD WATCHES.—A. B. SAVORY & SONS, Watchmakers, No. 9, Cornhill, London, opposite the Bank of England, submit for selection a very large STOCK of GOLD WATCHES, the whole of which are made and finished under the careful inspection of experienced workmen on their own premises, and each warranted for correct performance.

SIZE FOR LADIES.

Fine Vertical Watches, jewelled, in engine-turned gold cases, and gold dials, warranted ........................................ £10 10 0
Fine Vertical Watches, jewelled, with double-backed engine-turned gold cases, and gold dials, warranted ........................................ £12 12 0
Patent Detached Lever Watches, jewelled in four holes, with double-backed gold cases, and gold dials, warranted ........................................ £14 14 0

SIZE FOR GENTLEMEN.

Patent Detached Lever Watches, jewelled in four holes, seconds, and double-backed gold cases, warranted ........................................ £14 14 0
Patent Detached Lever Watches, capped, jewelled in six holes, seconds, double-backed gold cases and enamel dials, warranted. £17 17 0
Patent Detached Lever Watches, capped, jewelled in six holes, seconds, double-backed gold cases and gold dials, warranted ........................................ £21 0 0

Either of the Gentlemen’s Watches may be had in gold hunting cases for £3 3s. each extra.

N. B. Second-hand Watches purchased in exchange.
Newman Noggs leaves the house in the empty house.
Nicholas astonishes Mr. Squeers and family.
CHAPTER XI.

MR. NEWMAN NOGGS INDUCES MRS. AND MISS NICKLEBY INTO THEIR NEW DWELLING IN THE CITY.

Miss Nickleby's reflections as she wended her way homewards, were of that desponding nature which the occurrences of the morning had been sufficiently calculated to awaken. Her uncle's was not a manner likely to dispel any doubts or apprehensions she might have formed in the outset, neither was the glimpse she had had of Madame Mantalini's establishment by any means encouraging. It was with many gloomy forebodings and misgivings, therefore, that she looked forward with a heavy heart to the opening of her new career.

If her mother's consolations could have restored her to a pleasanter and more enviable state of mind, there were abundance of them to produce the effect. By the time Kate reached home, the good lady had called to mind two authentic cases of milliners who had been possessed of considerable property, though whether they had acquired it all in business, or had had a capital to start with, or had been lucky and married to advantage, she could not exactly remember. However, as she very logically remarked, there must have been some young person in that way of business who had made a fortune without having anything to begin with, and that being taken for granted, why should not Kate do the same? Miss La Creevy, who was a member of the little council, ventured to insinuate some doubts relative to the probability of Miss Nickleby's arriving at this happy consummation in the compass of an ordinary lifetime; but the good lady set that question entirely at rest, by informing them that she had a presentiment on the subject—a species of second-sight with which she had been in the habit of dwelling every argument with the deceased Mr. Nickleby, and in nine cases and three-quarters out of every ten, determining it the wrong way.

"I am afraid it is an unhealthy occupation," said Miss La Creevy. "I recollect getting three young milliners to sit to me when I first began to paint, and I remember that they were all very pale and sickly."

"Oh! that's not a general rule, by any means," observed Mrs. Nickleby; "for I remember as well as if it was only yesterday, employing one that I was particularly recommended to, to make me a scarlet cloak at the time when scarlet cloaks were fashionable, and she had a very red face—a very red face, indeed."

"Perhaps she drank," suggested Miss La Creevy.

"I don't know how that may have been," returned Mrs. Nickleby; "but I know she had a very red face, so your argument goes for nothing.

In this manner, and with like powerful reasoning, did the worthy matron meet every little objection that presented itself to the new scheme of the morning. Happy Mrs. Nickleby! A project had to be new, and it came home to her mind brightly varnished and gilded as a glittering toy.
This question disposed of, Kate communicated her uncle's desire about the empty house, to which Mrs. Nickleby assented with equal readiness, characteristically remarking, that on the fine evenings it would be a pleasant amusement for her to walk to the west-end to fetch her daughter home; and no less characteristically forgetting, that there were such things as wet nights and bad weather to be encountered in almost every week of the year.

"I shall be sorry—truly sorry to leave you, my kind friend," said Kate, on whom the good feeling of the poor miniature-painter had made a deep impression.

"You shall not shake me off, for all that," replied Miss La Creevy, with as much spriteliness as she could assume. "I shall see you very often, and come and hear how you get on; and if in all London, or all the wide world besides, there is no other heart that takes an interest in your welfare, there will be one little lonely woman that prays for it night and day."

With this the poor soul, who had a heart big enough for Gog, the guardian genius of London, and enough to spare for Magog to boot, after making a great many extraordinary faces which would have secured her an ample fortune, could she have transferred them to ivory or canvass, sat down in a corner, and had what she termed "a real good cry."

But no crying, or talking, or hoping, or fearing, could keep off the dreaded Saturday afternoon, or Newman Noggs either; who, punctual to his time, limped up to the door and breathed a whiff of cordial gin through the keyhole, exactly as such of the church clocks in the neighbourhood as agreed among themselves about the time, struck five.

Newman waited for the last stroke, and then knocked.

"From Mr. Ralph Nickleby," said Newman, announcing his errand when he got up stairs with all possible brevity.

"We shall be ready directly," said Kate. "We have not much to carry, but I fear we must have a coach."

"I'll get one," replied Newman.

"Indeed you shall not trouble yourself," said Mrs. Nickleby.

"I will," said Newman.

"I can't suffer you to think of such a thing," said Mrs. Nickleby.

"You can't help it," said Newman.

"Not help it!"

"No. I thought of it as I came along; but didn't get one, thinking you mightn't be ready. I think of a great many things. Nobody can prevent that."

"Oh yes, I understand you, Mr. Noggs," said Mrs. Nickleby. "Our thoughts are free, of course. Everybody's thoughts are their own, clearly."

"They wouldn't be if some people had their way," muttered Newman. "Well, no more they would, Mr. Noggs, and that's very true," rejoined Mrs. Nickleby. "Some people, to be sure, are such—how's your master?"

Newman darted a meaning glance at Kate, and replied with a strong emphasis on the last word of his answer, that Mr. Ralph Nickleby was well, and sent his—love.
"I am sure we are very much obliged to him," observed Mrs. Nickleby.

"Very," said Newman. "I'll tell him so."

It was no very easy matter to mistake Newman Noggs after having once seen him, and as Kate, attracted by the singularity of his manner (in which on this occasion, however, there was something respectful and even delicate, notwithstanding the abruptness of his speech), looked at him more closely, she recollected having caught a passing glimpse of that strange figure before.

"Excuse my curiosity," she said, "but did I not see you in the coach-yard on the morning my brother went away to Yorkshire?"

Newman cast a wistful glance on Mrs. Nickleby, and said "No," most unblushingly.

"No!" exclaimed Kate, "I should have said so anywhere."

"You'd have said wrong," rejoined Newman. "It's the first time I've been out for three weeks. I've had the gout."

Newman was very, very far from having the appearance of a gouty subject, and so Kate could not help thinking; but the conference was cut short by Mrs. Nickleby's insisting on having the door shut lest Mr. Noggs should take cold, and further persisting in sending the servant girl for a coach, for fear he should bring on another attack of his disorder. To both conditions Newman was compelled to yield. Presently the coach came; and, after many sorrowful farewells, and a great deal of running backwards and forwards across the pavement on the part of Miss La Creevy, in the course of which the yellow turban came into violent contact with sundry foot passengers, it (that is to say the coach, not the turban) went away again with the two ladies and their luggage inside; and Newman—despite all Mrs. Nickleby's assurances that it would be his death—on the box beside the driver.

They went into the City, turning down by the river side; and after a long and very slow drive, the streets being crowded at that hour with vehicles of every kind, stopped in front of a large old dingy house in Thames Street, the door and windows of which were so bespattered with mud, that it would have appeared to have been uninhabited for years.

The door of this deserted mansion Newman opened with a key which he took out of his hat—in which, by-the-bye, in consequence of the dilapidated state of his pockets he deposited everything, and would most likely have carried his money if he had had any—and the coach being discharged, he led the way into the interior of the mansion.

Old and gloomy and black in truth it was, and sullen and dark were the rooms once so bustling with life and enterprise. There was a wharf behind, opening on the Thames. An empty dog-kennel, some bones of animals, fragments of iron hoops and staves of old casks, lay strewn about, but no life was stirring there. It was a picture of cold, silent decay.

"This house depresses and chills one," said Kate, "and seems as if some blight had fallen on it. If I were superstitious, I should be almost inclined to believe that some dreadful crime had been perpetrated within these old walls, and that the place had never prospered since. How frowning and dark it looks!"
“Lord, my dear,” replied Mrs. Nickleby, “don’t talk in that way, or you’ll frighten me to death.”

“IT is only my foolish fancy, mama,” said Kate, forcing a smile.

“Well, then, my love, I wish you would keep your foolish fancy to yourself, and not wake up my foolish fancy to keep it company,” retorted Mrs. Nickleby. “Why didn’t you think of all this before—you are so careless—we might have asked Miss La Creevy to keep us company, or borrowed a dog, or a thousand things—but it always was the way, and was just the same with your poor dear father. Unless I thought of everything”—This was Mrs. Nickleby’s usual commencement of a general lamentation, running through a dozen or so of complicated sentences addressed to nobody in particular, and into which she now launched until her breath was exhausted.

Newman appeared not to hear these remarks, but preceded them to a couple of rooms on the first floor, which some kind of attempt had been made to render habitable. In one were a few chairs, a table, an old hearth-rug, and some faded baize; and a fire was ready laid in the grate. In the other stood an old tent bedstead, and a few tatty articles of chamber furniture.

“Well, my dear,” said Mrs. Nickleby, trying to be pleased, “now isn’t this thoughtful and considerate of your uncle? Why, we should not have had anything but the bed we bought yesterday to lie down upon, if it hadn’t been for his thoughtfulness.”

“Well, indeed,” replied Kate, looking round.

Newman Noggs did not say that he had hunted up the old furniture they saw, from attic or cellar; or that he had taken in the halfpenny-worth of milk for tea that stood upon a shelf, or filled the rusty kettle on the hob, or collected the wood-chips from the wharf, or begged the coals. But the notion of Ralph Nickleby having directed it to be done tickled his fancy so much, that he could not refrain from cracking all his ten fingers in succession, at which performance Mrs. Nickleby was rather startled at first, but supposing it to be in some remote manner connected with the gout, did not remark upon.

“We need detain you no longer, I think,” said Kate.

“Is there nothing I can do?” asked Newman.

“Nothing, thank you,” rejoined Miss Nickleby.

“Perhaps my dear, Mr. Noggs would like to drink our healths,” said Mrs. Nickleby, fumbling in her reticule for some small coin.

“I think, mama,” said Kate hesitating, and remarking Newman’s averted face, “you would hurt his feelings if you offered it.”

Newman Noggs, bowing to the young lady more like a gentleman than the miserable wretch he seemed, placed his hand upon his breast, and, pausing for a moment, with the air of a man who struggles to speak but is uncertain what to say, quitted the room.

As the jarring echoes of the heavy house-door closing on its latch reverberated dismally through the building, Kate felt half tempted to call him back, and beg him to remain a little while; but she was ashamed to own her fears, and Newman Noggs was on his road homewards.
CHAPTER XII.

WHEREBY THE READER WILL BE ENABLED TO TRACE THE FURTHER COURSE OF MISS FANNY SQUEERS'S LOVE, AND TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER IT RAN SMOOTHLY OR OTHERWISE.

It was a fortunate circumstance for Miss Fanny Squeers, that when her worthy papa returned home on the night of the small tea-party, he was what the initiated term "too far gone" to observe the numerous tokens of extreme vexation of spirit which were plainly visible in her countenance. Being, however, of a rather violent and quarrelsome mood in his cups, it is not impossible that he might have fallen out with her, either on this or some imaginary topic, if the young lady had not, with a foresight and prudence highly commendable, kept a boy up on purpose to bear the first brunt of the good gentleman's anger; which having vented itself in a variety of kicks and cuffs, subsided sufficiently to admit of his being persuaded to go to bed; which he did with his boots on, and an umbrella under his arm.

The hungry servant attended Miss Squeers in her own room according to custom, to curl her hair, perform the other little offices of her toilet, and administer as much flattery as she could get up for the purpose; for Miss Squeers was quite lazy enough (and sufficiently vain and frivolous withal) to have been a fine lady, and it was only the arbitrary distinctions of rank and station which prevented her from being one.

"How lovely your hair do curl to-night, Miss!" said the handmaid. "I declare if it isn't a pity and a shame to brush it out!"

"Hold your tongue," replied Miss Squeers wrathfully.

Some considerable experience prevented the girl from being at all surprised at any outbreak of ill-temper on the part of Miss Squeers. Having a half perception of what had occurred in the course of the evening, she changed her mode of making herself agreeable, and proceeded on the indirect tack.

"Well, I couldn't help saying, miss, if you was to kill me for it," said the attendant, "that I never see anybody look so vulgar as Miss Price this night."

Miss Squeers sighed, and composed herself to listen.

"I know it's very wrong in me to say so, miss," continued the girl, delighted to see the impression she was making, "Miss Price being a friend of yours and all; but she do dress herself out so, and go in such a manner to get noticed, that—oh—well, if people only saw themselves."

"What do you mean, Phil?" asked Miss Squeers, looking in her own little glass, where, like most of us, she saw—not herself, but the reflection of some pleasant image in her own brain. "How you talk!"

"Talk, miss! It's enough to make a Tom cat talk French grammar, only to see how she tosses her head," replied the handmaid.

"She does toss her head," observed Miss Squeers, with an air of abstraction.
"So vain, and so very—very plain," said the girl.

"Poor ’Tilda!" sighed Miss Squeers, compassionately.

"And always laying herself out so to get to be admired," pursued the servant. "Oh dear! It’s positive indecent."

"I can’t allow you to talk in that way, Phib," said Miss Squeers. "’Tilda’s friends are low people, and if she don’t know any better, it’s their fault, and not hers."

"Well, but you know, miss," said Phoebe, for which name "Phib" was used as a patronising abbreviation, "if she was only to take copy by a friend—oh! if she only knew how wrong she was, and would but set herself right by you, what a nice young woman she might be in time!"

"Phib," rejoined Miss Squeers, with a stately air, "it’s not proper for me to hear these comparisons drawn; they make ’Tilda look a coarse improper sort of person, and it seems unfriendly in me to listen to them. I would rather you dropped the subject, Phib; at the same time I must say, that if ’Tilda Price would take pattern by somebody—not me particularly—"

"Oh yes; you miss," interposed Phib.

"Well, me Phib, if you will have it so," said Miss Squeers. "I must say that if she would, she would be all the better for it."

"So somebody else thinks, or I am much mistaken," said the girl mysteriously.

"What do you mean?" demanded Miss Squeers.

"Never mind, miss," replied the girl; "I know what I know, that’s all."

"Phib," said Miss Squeers dramatically, "I insist upon your explaining yourself. What is this dark mystery? Speak."

"Why, if you will have it, miss, it’s this," said the servant girl. "Mr. John Browdie thinks as you think; and if he wasn’t too far gone to do it creditable, he’d be very glad to be off with Miss Price, and on with Miss Squeers."

"Gracious Heavens!" exclaimed Miss Squeers, clasping her hands with great dignity. "What is this?"

"Truth, ma’am, and nothing but truth," replied the artful Phib.

"What a situation!" cried Miss Squeers; "on the brink of unconsciously destroying the peace and happiness of my own ’Tilda. What is the reason that men fall in love with me, whether I like it or not, and desert their chosen intendeds for my sake!"

"Because they can’t help it, miss," replied the girl; "the reason’s plain." (If Miss Squeers were the reason, it was very plain.)

"Never let me hear of it again," retorted Miss Squeers. "Never; do you hear? ’Tilda Price has faults—many faults—but I wish her well, and above all I wish her married; for I think it highly desirable—most desirable from the very nature of her failings—that she should be married as soon as possible. No, Phib. Let her have Mr. Browdie. I may pity him, poor fellow; but I have a great regard for ’Tilda, and only hope she may make a better wife than I think she will."

With this effusion of feeling Miss Squeers went to bed.

Spite is a little word; but it represents as strange a jumble of feelings and compound of discords, as any polysyllable in the language. Miss
Squeers knew as well in her heart of hearts, that what the miserable serving girl had said was sheer coarse lying flattery, as did the girl herself; yet the mere opportunity of venting a little ill-nature against the offending Miss Price, and affecting to compassionate her weaknesses and foibles, though only in the presence of a solitary dependant, was almost as great a relief to her spleen as if the whole had been gospel truth. Nay more, We have such extraordinary powers of persuasion when they are excited over ourselves, that Miss Squeers felt quite high-minded and great after her noble renunciation of John Browdie's hand, and looked down upon her rival with a kind of holy calmness and tranquillity, that had a mighty effect in soothing her ruffled feelings.

This happy state of mind had some influence in bringing about a reconciliation; for when a knock came at the front door next day, and the Miller's daughter was announced, Miss Squeers betook herself to the parlour in a Christian frame of spirit perfectly beautiful to behold.

"Well, Fanny," said the Miller's daughter, "you see I have come to see you, although we had some words last night."

"I pity your bad passions, Tilda," replied Miss Squeers; but I bear no malice. I am above it."

"Don't be cross, Fanny," said Miss Price. "I have come to tell you something that I know will please you."

"What may that be, Tilda?" demanded Miss Squeers; screwing up her lips, and looking as if nothing in earth, air, fire, or water, could affect her the slightest gleam of satisfaction.

"This," rejoined Miss Price. "After we left here last night, John and I had a dreadful quarrel."

"That doesn't please me," said Miss Squeers—relaxing into a smile though.

"Lor! I wouldn't think so bad of you as to suppose it did," rejoined her companion. "That's not it."

"Oh!" said Miss Squeers, relapsing into melancholy. "Go on."

"After a great deal of wrangling and saying we would never see each other any more," continued Miss Price, "we made it up, and this morning John went and wrote our names down to be put up for the first time next Sunday, so we shall be married in three weeks, and I give you notice to get your frock made."

There was mingled gall and honey in this intelligence. The prospect of the friend's being married so soon was the gall, and the certainty of her not entertaining serious designs upon Nicholas was the honey. Upon the whole, the sweet greatly preponderated over the bitter, so Miss Squeers said she would get the frock made, and that she hoped Tilda might be happy, though at the same time she didn't know, and would not have her build too much upon it, for men were strange creatures, and a great many married women were very miserable, and wished themselves single again with all their hearts; to which condolences Miss Squeers added equally calculated to raise her friend's spirits and promote her cheerfulness of mind.

"But come now, Fanny," said Miss Price, "I want to have a word or two with you about young Mr. Nickleby."
"He is nothing to me," interrupted Miss Squeers, with hysterical symptoms. "I despise him too much!"

"Oh, you don't mean that, I am sure?" replied her friend, "Confess, Fanny; don't you like him now?"

Without returning any direct reply Miss Squeers all at once fell into a paroxysm of spiteful tears, and exclaimed that she was a wretched, neglected, miserable, castaway.

"I hate everybody," said Miss Squeers, "and I wish that everybody was dead—that I do."

"Dear, dear!" said Miss Price, quite moved by this avowal of misanthropical sentiments. "You are not serious, I am sure."

"Yes, I am," rejoined Miss Squeers, tying tight knots in her pocket-handkerchief and clenching her teeth. "And I wish I was dead too. There."

"Oh! you'll think very differently in another five minutes," said Matilda. "How much better to take him into favour again, than to hurt yourself by going on in that way; wouldn't it be much nicer now to have him all to yourself on good terms, in a company-keeping, love-making, pleasant sort of manner?"

"I don't know but what it would," sobbed Miss Squeers. "Oh! Tilda, how could you have acted so mean and dishonourable! I wouldn't have believed it of you if anybody had told me."

"Heyday!" exclaimed Miss Price, giggling. "One would suppose I had been murdering somebody at least."

"Very night as bad," said Miss Squeers passionately.

"And all this because I happen to have enough of good looks to make people civil to me," cried Miss Price. "Persons don't make their own faces, and it's no more my fault if mine is a good one than it is other people's fault if theirs is a bad one."

"Hold your tongue," shrieked Miss Squeers, in her shrillest tone; "or you'll make me slap you, Tilda, and afterwards I should be sorry for it."

It is needless to say that by this time the temper of each young lady was in some slight degree affected by the tone of the conversation, and that a dash of personality was infused into the altercation in consequence. Indeed the quarrel, from slight beginnings, rose to a considerable height, and was assuming a very violent complexion, when both parties, falling into a great passion of tears, exclaimed simultaneously, that they had never thought of being spoken to in that way, which exclamations, leading to a remonstrance, gradually brought on an explanation, and the upshot was that they fell into each other's arms and vowed eternal friendship; the occasion in question, making the fifty-second time of repeating the same impressive ceremony within a twelvemonth.

Perfect amicability being thus restored, a dialogue naturally ensued upon the number and nature of the garments which would be indispensable for Miss Price's entrance into the holy state of matrimony; when Miss Squeers clearly showed that a great many more than the miller could, or would, afford were absolutely necessary, and could not decently be dispensed with. The young lady then, by an easy digression, led the discourse to her own wardrobe, and after recounting its
principal beauties at some length, took her friend up stairs to make inspection thereof. The treasures of two drawers and a closet having been displayed, and all the smaller articles tried on, it was time for Miss Price to return home, and as she had been in raptures with all the frocks, and had been stricken quite dumb with admiration of a new pink scarf, Miss Squeers said in high good humour, that she would walk part of the way with her for the pleasure of her company; and off they went together, Miss Squeers dilating; as they walked along, upon her father's accomplishments, and multiplying his income by ten, to give her friend some faint notion of the vast importance and superiority of her family.

It happened that that particular time, comprising the short daily interval which was suffered to elapse between what was pleasantly called the dinner of Mr. Squeers's pupils and their return to the pursuit of useful knowledge, was precisely the hour when Nicholas was accustomed to issue forth for a melancholy walk, and to brood, as he sauntered listlessly through the village, upon his miserable lot. Miss Squeers knew this perfectly well, but had perhaps forgotten it, for when she caught sight of that young gentleman advancing towards them, she evinced many symptoms of surprise and consternation, and assured her friend that she "felt fit to drop into the earth."

"Shall we turn back, or run into a cottage?" asked Miss Price.

"He don't see us yet."

"No," Tilda," replied Miss Squeers, "it is my duty to go through with it, and I will."

As Miss Squeers said this in the tone of one who has made a high moral resolution, and was besides taken with one or two chokes and catchings of breath, indicative of feelings at a high pressure, her friend made no farther remark, and they bore straight down upon Nicholas, who, walking with his eyes bent upon the ground, was not aware of their approach until they were close upon him; otherwise he might perhaps have taken shelter himself.

"Good morning," said Nicholas, bowing and passing by.

"He is going," murmured Miss Squeers. "I shall choke, Tilda."

"Come back, Mr. Nickleby, do," cried Miss Price, affecting alarm at her friend's threat, but really actuated by a malicious wish to hear what Nicholas would say; "come back, Mr. Nickleby." Mr. Nickleby came back, and looked as confused as might be, as he inquired whether the ladies had any commands for him.

"Don't stop to talk," urged Miss Price, hastily; "but support her on the other side. How do you feel now, dear?"

"Better," sighed Miss Squeers, laying a beaver bonnet of reddish brown with a green veil attached, on Mr. Nickleby's shoulder. "This foolish faintness!"

"Don't call it foolish, dear," said Miss Price, her bright eye dancing with merriment as she saw the perplexity of Nicholas; "you have no reason to be ashamed of it. It's those who are too proud to come round again without all this to-do, that ought to be ashamed."

"You are resolved to fix it upon me, I see," said Nicholas, smiling; "although I told you last night it was not my fault."
"There; he says it was not his fault, my dear," remarked the wicked Miss Price. "Perhaps you were too jealous or too hasty with him? He says it was not his fault, you hear; I think that's apology enough."

"You will not understand me," said Nicholas. "Pray dispense with this jesting, for I have no time, and really no inclination, to be the subject or promotor of mirth just now."

"What do you mean?" asked Miss Price, affecting amazement.

"Don't ask him, Tilda," cried Miss Squeers; "I forgive him."

"Dear me," said Nicholas, as the brown bonnet went down on his shoulder again, "this is more serious than I supposed; allow me. Will you have the goodness to hear me speak?"

Here he raised up the brown bonnet, and regarding with most unfeigned astonishment a look of tender reproach from Miss Squeers, shrank back a few paces to be out of the reach of the fair burden, and went on to say—

"I am very sorry—truly and sincerely sorry—for having been the cause of any difference among you last night. I reproach myself most bitterly for having been so unfortunate as to cause the dissension that occurred, although I did so, I assure you, most unwittingly and heedlessly."

"Well; that's not all you have got to say surely," exclaimed Miss Price as Nicholas paused.

"I fear there is something more," stammered Nicholas with a half smile, and looking towards Miss Squeers, "it is a most awkward thing to say—but the very mention of such a supposition makes one look like a puppy—still—may I ask if that lady supposes that I entertain any—in short does she think that I am in love with her?"

"Delightful embarrassment," thought Miss Squeers, "I have brought him to it at last. Answer for me, dear," she whispered to her friend.

"Does she think so?" rejoined Miss Price; "of course she does."

"She does!" exclaimed Nicholas with such energy of utterance as might have been for the moment mistaken for rapture.

"Certainly," replied Miss Price.

"If Mr. Nickleby has doubted that, Tilda," said the blushing Miss Squeers in soft accents, "he may set his mind at rest. His sentiments are reciproc—"

"Stop," cried Nicholas hurriedly; "pray hear me. This is the grossest and wildest delusion, the completest and most signal mistake, that ever human being laboured under or committed. I have scarcely seen the young lady half a dozen times, but if I had seen her sixty times, or am destined to see her sixty thousand, it would be and will be precisely the same. I have not one thought, wish, or hope, connected with her unless it be—and I say this, not to hurt her feelings, but to impress her with the real state of my own—unless it be the one object dear to my heart as life itself, of being one day able to turn my back upon this accursed place, never to set foot in it again or to think of it—even think of it—but with loathing and disgust."

With this particularly plain and straight-forward declaration, which he made with all the vehemence that his indignant and excited feelings
Nicholas Nickleby.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

107

could bring to bear upon it, Nicholas slightly bowed, and waiting to hear no more, retreated.

But poor Miss Squeers! Her anger, rage, and vexation; the rapid succession of bitter and passionate feelings that whirled through her mind, are not to be described. Refused! refused by a teacher picked up by advertisement at an annual salary of five pounds payable at indefinite periods, and "found," in food and lodging like the very boys themselves; and this too in the presence of a little chit of a miller's daughter of eighteen, who was going to be married in three weeks' time to a man who had gone down on his very knees to ask her! She could have choked in right good earnest at the thought of being so humbled.

But there was one thing clear in the midst of her mortification, and that was that she hated and detested Nicholas with all the narrowness of mind and littleness of purpose worthy a descendant of the house of Squeers. And there was one comfort too; and that was, that every hour in every day she could wound his pride and goad him with the infliction of some slight, or insult, or deprivation, which could not but have some effect on the most insensible person, and must be acutely felt by one so sensitive as Nicholas. With these two reflections uppermost in her mind, Miss Squeers made the best of the matter to her friend by observing, that Mr. Nickleby was such an odd creature, and of such a violent temper, that she feared she should be obliged to give him up; and parted from her.

And here it may be remarked, that Miss Squeers having bestowed her affections (or whatever it might be that in the absence of anything better represented them) on Nicholas Nickleby, had never once seriously contemplated the possibility of his being of a different opinion from herself in the business. Miss Squeers reasoned that she was prepossessing and beautiful, and that her father was master and Nicholas man, and that her father had saved money and Nicholas had none, all of which seemed to her conclusive arguments why the young man should feel only too much honoured by her preference. She had not failed to recollect, either, how much more agreeable she could render his situation if she were his friend, and how much more disagreeable if she were his enemy; and doubtless, many less scrupulous young gentlemen than Nicholas would have encouraged her extravagance had it been only for this very obvious and intelligible reason. However, he had thought proper to do otherwise, and Miss Squeers was outrageous.

"Let him see," said the irritated young lady when she had regained her own room, and eased her mind by committing an assault on Phib, "if I don't set mother against him a little more when she comes back."

It was scarcely necessary to do this, but Miss Squeers was as good as her word; and poor Nicholas, in addition to bad food, dirty lodgement, and the being compelled to witness one dull unvarying round of squalid misery, was treated with every special indignity that malice could suggest, or the most grasping cupidity put upon him.

Nor was this all. There was another and deeper system of annoy-
ance which made his heart sink, and nearly drove him wild by its
injustice and cruelty.

The wretched creature, Smike, since the night Nicholas had spoken
kindly to him in the school-room, had followed him to and fro with an
ever restless desire to serve or help him, anticipating such little wants
as his humble ability could supply, and content only to be near him.
He would sit beside him for hours looking patiently into his face, and
a word would brighten up his care-worn visage, and call into it a
passing gleam even of happiness. He was an altered being; he had an
object now, and that object was to show his attachment to the only
person—that person a stranger—who had treated him, not to say with
kindness, but like a human creature.

Upon this poor being all the spleen and ill-humour that could not
be vented on Nicholas were unceasingly bestowed. Drudgery would
have been nothing—he was well used to that. Buffetings inflicted
without cause would have been equally a matter of course, for to them
also he had served a long and weary apprenticeship; but it was no
sooner observed that he had become attached to Nicholas, than stripes
and blows, stripes and blows, morning, noon, and night, were his only
portion. Squeers was jealous of the influence which his man had so
soon acquired, and his family hated him, and Smike paid for both.
Nicholas saw it, and ground his teeth at every repetition of the savage
and cowardly attack.

He had arranged a few regular lessons for the boys, and one night as
he paced up and down the dismal school-room, his swollen heart almost
bursting to think that his protection and countenance should have
increased the misery of the wretched being whose peculiar destitution
had awakened his pity, he paused mechanically in a dark corner where
sat the object of his thoughts.

The poor soul was poring hard over a tattered book with the traces
of recent tears still upon his face, vainly endeavouring to master some
task which a child of nine years old, possessed of ordinary powers,
could have conquered with ease, but which to the addled brain of the
crushed boy of nineteen was a scaled and hopeless mystery. Yet
there he sat, patiently coming the page again and again, stimulated
by no boyish ambition, for he was the common jest and scoff even
of the uncouth objects that congregated about him, but inspired by
the one eager desire to please his solitary friend.

Nicholas laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"I can't do it," said the dejected creature, looking up with bitter
disappointment in every feature. "No, no."

"Do not try," replied Nicholas.

The boy shook his head, and closing the book with a sigh, looked va-
cantly round, and laid his head upon his arm. He was weeping.

"Do not for God's sake," said Nicholas, in an agitated voice; "I
cannot hear to see you."

"They are more hard with me than ever," sobbed the boy.

"I know it," rejoined Nicholas. "They are."

"But for you," said the outcast, "I should die. They would kill
me; they would, I know they would."
"You will do better, poor fellow," replied Nicholas, shaking his head mournfully, "when I am gone."

" Gone!" cried the other, looking intently in his face.

"Softly!" rejoined Nicholas. " Yes."

"Are you going?" demanded the boy, in an earnest whisper.

"I cannot say," replied Nicholas, "I was speaking more to my own thoughts than to you."

"Tell me," said the boy imploringly. "Oh do tell me, will you go—will you?"

"I shall be driven to that at last!" said Nicholas. "The world is before me, after all."

"Tell me," urged Smike, "is the world as bad and dismal as this place?"

"Heaven forbid," replied Nicholas, pursuing the train of his own thoughts, "its hardest, coarsest toil, were happiness to this."

"Should I ever meet you there?" demanded the boy, speaking with unusual wildness and volubility.

"Yes," replied Nicholas, willing to soothe him.

"No, no!" said the other, clasping him by the hand. "Should I—should I—tell me that again. Say I should be sure to find you."

"You would," replied Nicholas, with the same humane intention, "and I would help and aid you, and not bring fresh sorrow on you as I have done here."

The boy caught both the young man's hands passionately in his, and hugging them to his breast, uttered a few broken sounds which were unintelligible. Squeers entered at the moment, and he shrunk back into his old corner.

CHAPTER XIII.

NICHOLAS VARIES THE MONOTONY OF DOTHBOYS HALL BY A MOST VIGOROUS AND REMARKABLE PROCEEDING, WHICH LEADS TO CONSEQUENCES OF SOME IMPORTANCE.

The cold feeble dawn of a January morning was stealing in at the windows of the common sleeping-room, when Nicholas, raising himself upon his arm, looked among the prostrate forms which on every side surrounded him, as though in search of some particular object.

It needed a quick eye to detect from among the huddled mass of sleepers, the form of any given individual. As they lay closely packed together, covered, for warmth's sake, with their patched and ragged clothes, little could be distinguished but the sharp outlines of pale faces, over which the sombre light shed the same dull heavy colour, with here and there a gaunt arm thrust forth: its thinness hidden by no covering, but fully exposed to view in all its shrunken ugliness. There were some who, lying on their backs with upturned faces and clenched hands, just visible in the leaden light, bore more the
aspect of dead bodies than of living creatures, and there were others coiled up into strange and fantastic postures, such as might have been taken for the uneasy efforts of pain to gain some temporary relief, rather than the freaks of slumber. A few—and these were among the youngest of the children—slept peacefully on with smiles upon their faces, dreaming perhaps of home; but ever and again a deep and heavy sigh, breaking the stillness of the room, announced that some new sleeper had awakened to the misery of another day, and, as morning took the place of night, the smiles gradually faded away with the friendly darkness which had given them birth.

Dreams are the bright creatures of poem and legend, who sport on earth in the night season, and melt away in the first beam of the sun, which lights grim care and stern reality on their daily pilgrimage through the world.

Nicholas looked upon the sleepers, at first with the air of one who gazes upon a scene which, though familiar to him, has lost none of its sorrowful effect in consequence, and afterwards, with a more intense and searching scrutiny, as a man who would miss something his eye was accustomed to meet, and had expected to rest upon. He was still occupied in this search, and had half risen from his bed in the eagerness of his quest, when the voice of Squeers was heard calling from the bottom of the stairs.

"Now then," cried that gentleman, "are you going to sleep all day, up there—"

"You lazy hounds?" added Mrs. Squeers, finishing the sentence, and producing at the same time a sharp sound like that which is occasioned by the lacing of stays.

"We shall be down directly, Sir," replied Nicholas.

"Down directly!" said Squeers. "Ah! you had better be down directly, or I'll be down upon some of you in less. Where's that Smike?"

Nicholas looked hurriedly round again, but made no answer.

"Smike!" shouted Squeers.

"Do you want your head broke in a fresh place, Smike?" demanded his amiable lady in the same key.

Still there was no reply, and still Nicholas stared about him, as did the greater part of the boys who were by this time roused.

"Confound his impudence," muttered Squeers, rapping the stair-rail impatiently with his cane. "Nickleby."

"Well, Sir."

"Send that obstinate scoundrel down; don't you hear me calling?"

"He is not here, Sir," replied Nicholas.

"Don't tell me a lie," retorted the schoolmaster. "He is."

"He is not," retorted Nicholas angrily, "don't tell me one."

"We shall soon see that," said Mr. Squeers, rushing up stairs. "I'll find him I warrant you."

With which assurance Mr. Squeers bounded into the dormitory, and swinging his cane in the air ready for a blow, darted into the corner where the lean body of the drudge was usually stretched at night. The cane descended harmlessly upon the ground. There was nobody there.
What does this mean?” said Squeers, turning round with a very pale face. “Where have you hid him?”

“I have seen nothing of him since last night,” replied Nicholas.

“Come,” said Squeers, evidently frightened, though he endeavoured to look otherwise, “you won’t save him this way. Where is he?”

“At the bottom of the nearest pond for aught I know,” rejoined Nicholas in a low voice, and fixing his eyes full on the master’s face.

“D—n you, what do you mean by that?” retorted Squeers in great perturbation. And without waiting for a reply, he inquired of the boys whether any one among them knew anything of their missing schoolmate.

There was a general hum of anxious denial, in the midst of which one shrill voice was heard to say (as, indeed, everybody thought)—

“Please, Sir, I think Smike’s run away, Sir.”

“Ha!” cried Squeers, turning sharp round; “Who said that?”

“Tomkins, please Sir,” rejoined a chorus of voices. Mr. Squeers made a plunge into the crowd, and at one dive caught a very little boy habituated still in his night gear, and the perplexed expression of whose countenance as he was brought forward, seemed to intimate that he was as yet uncertain whether he was about to be punished or rewarded for the suggestion. He was not long in doubt.

“You think he has run away, do you, Sir?” demanded Squeers.

“Yes, please Sir,” replied the little boy.

“And what, Sir,” said Squeers, catching the little boy suddenly by the arms and whisking up his drapery in a most dexterous manner, “what reason have you to suppose that any boy would want to run away from this establishment? Eh, Sir?”

The child raised a dismal cry by way of answer, and Mr. Squeers, throwing himself into the most favourable attitude for exercising his strength, beat him till the little urchin in his writhings actually rolled out of his hands, when he mercifully allowed him to roll away as he best could.

“There,” said Squeers. “Now if any other boy thinks Smike has run away, I shall be glad to have a talk with him.”

There was of course a profound silence, during which, Nicholas showed his disgust as plainly as looks could show it.

“Well, Nickleby,” said Squeers, eyeing him maliciously. “You think he has run away, I suppose?”

“I think it extremely likely,” replied Nicholas, in a very quiet manner.

“Oh, you do, do you?” sneered Squeers. “Maybe you know he has?”

“I know nothing of the kind.”

“Ho! didn’t tell you he was going, I suppose, did he?” sneered Squeers.

“He didn’t tell you he was going, I suppose, did he?” sneered Squeers.

“He did not,” replied Nicholas; “I am very glad he did not, for it would then have been my duty to have warned you in time.”

“Which no doubt you would have been devilish sorry to do,” said Squeers in a taunting fashion.

“I should, indeed,” replied Nicholas. “You interpret my feelings with great accuracy.”
Mrs. Squeers had listened to this conversation from the bottom of the stairs, but now losing all patience, she hastily assumed her night-jacket and made her way to the scene of action.

"What's all this here to do?" said the lady, as the boys fell off right and left to save her the trouble of clearing a passage with her brawny arms. "What on earth are you a talking to him for, Squeery!"

"Why, my dear," said Squeers, "the fact is, that Smike is not to be found."

"Well, I know that," said the lady, "and where's the wonder? If you get a parcel of proud-stomached teachers that set the young dogs a rebelling, what else can you look for? Now, young man, you just have the kindness to take yourself off to the school-room, and take the boys off with you, and don't you stir out of there till you have given them over, or you and I may fall out in a way that'll spoil your beauty, handsome as you think yourself, and so I tell you."

"Indeed!" said Nicholas, smiling.

"Yes; and indeed and indeed again, Mister Jackanapes," said the excited lady; "and I wouldn't keep such as you in the house another hour if I had my way."

"Nor would you, if I had mine," replied Nicholas. "Now, boys."

"Ah! Now boys," said Mrs. Squeers, mimicking, as nearly as she could, the voice and manner of the usher. "Follow your leader, boys, and take pattern by Smike if you dare. See what he'll get for himself when he is brought back, and mind I tell you that you shall have as bad, and twice as bad, if you so much as open your mouths about him."

"If I catch him," said Squeers, "I'll only stop short of flaying him alive, I give you notice, boys."

"If you catch him," retorted Mrs. Squeers contemptuously, "you are sure to; you can't help it, if you go the right way to work. Come, away with you!"

With these words, Mrs. Squeers dismissed the boys, and after a little light skirmishing with those in the rear who were pressing forward to get out of the way, but were detained for a few moments by the throng in front; succeeded in clearing the room, when she confronted her spouse alone.

"He is off," said Mrs. Squeers. "The cow-house and stable are locked up, so he can't be there; and he's not down stairs anywhere, for the girl has looked. He must have gone York way, and by a public road too."

"Why must he?" inquired Squeers.

"Stupid!" said Mrs. Squeers angrily. "He hadn't any money, had he?"

"Never had a penny of his own in his whole life, that I know of," replied Squeers.

"To be sure," rejoined Mrs. Squeers, "and he didn't take anything to eat with him, that I'll answer for. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" cried Squeers.

"Then of course," said Mrs. S., "he must beg his way, and he could do that nowhere but on the public road."
"That's true," exclaimed Squeers, clapping his hands.

"True! Yes; but you would never have thought of it for all that, if I hadn't said so," replied his wife. "Now, if you take the chaise and go one road, and I borrow Swallows's chaise, and go the other, what with keeping our eyes open and asking questions, one or other of us is pretty certain to lay hold of him."

The worthy lady's plan was adopted and put in execution without a moment's delay. After a very hasty breakfast, and the prosecution of some inquiries in the village, the result of which seemed to show that he was on the right track, Squeers started forth in the pony-chaise, intent upon discovery and vengeance. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Squeers, arrayed in the white top-coat, and tied up in various shawls and handkerchiefs, issued forth in another chaise and another direction, taking with her a good-sized bludgeon, several odd pieces of strong cord, and a stout labouring man: all provided and carried upon the expedition with the sole object of assisting in the capture, and (once caught) ensuring the safe custody of the unfortunate Smike.

Nicholas remained behind in a tumult of feeling, sensible that whatever might be the upshot of the boy's flight, nothing but painful and deplorable consequences were likely to ensue from it. Death from want and exposure to the weather was the best that could be expected from the protracted wandering of so poor and helpless a creature, alone and unfriended, through a country of which he was wholly ignorant. There was little, perhaps, to choose between this fate and a return to the tender mercies of the Yorkshire school, but the unhappy being had established a hold upon his sympathy and compassion, which made his heart ache at the prospect of the suffering he was destined to undergo. He lingered on in restless anxiety, picturing a thousand possibilities, until the evening of next day, when Squeers returned alone and unsuccessful.

"No news of the scamp," said the schoolmaster, who had evidently been stretching his legs, on the old principle, not a few times during the journey. "I'll have consolation for this out of somebody, Nickleby, if Mrs. Squeers don't hunt him down, so I give you warning."

"It is not in my power to console you, Sir," said Nicholas. "It is nothing to me."

"Isn't it?" said Squeers in a threatening manner. "We shall see!"

"We shall," rejoined Nicholas.

"Here's the pony run right off his legs, and me obliged to come home with a hack cob, that'll cost fifteen shillings besides other expenses," said Squeers; "who's to pay for that, do you hear?"

Nicholas shrugged his shoulders and remained silent.

"I'll have it out of somebody I tell you," said Squeers, his usual harsh, crafty manner changed to open bullying. "None of your whining vapourings here, Mr. Puppy, but be off to your kennel, for it's past your bed-time. Come. Get out."

Nicholas bit his lip and knit his hands involuntarily, for his fingers tingled to avenge the insult, but remembering that the man was drunk, and that it could come to little but a noisy brawl, he contented
himself with darting a contemptuous look at the tyrant, and walked as majestically as he could up stairs, not a little nettled however to observe that Miss Squeers and Master Squeers, and the servant girl, were enjoying the scene from a snug corner; the two former indulging in many edifying remarks about the presumption of poor upstarts; which occasioned a vast deal of laughter, in which even the most miserable of all miserable servant girls joined, while Nicholas, stung to the quick, drew over his head such bedclothes as he had, and sternly resolved that the out-standing account between himself and Mr. Squeers should be settled rather more speedily than the latter anticipated.

Another day came, and Nicholas was scarcely awake when he heard the wheels of a chaise approaching the house. It stopped. The voice of Mrs. Squeers was heard, and in exultation, ordering a glass of spirits for somebody, which was in itself a sufficient sign that something extraordinary had happened. Nicholas hardly dared to look out of the window, but he did so, and the very first object that met his eyes was the wretched Smike; so bedabbled with mud and rain, so haggard and worn, and wild, that, but for his garments being such as no scarecrow was ever seen to wear, he might have been doubtful, even then, of his identity.

"Lift him out," said Squeers, after he had literally feasted his eyes in silence upon the culprit. "Bring him in; bring him in."

"Take care," cried Mrs. Squeers, as her husband proffered his assistance. "We tied his legs under the apron and made 'em fast to the chaise, to prevent his giving us the slip again."

With hands trembling with delight, Squeers unloosed the cord, and Smike, to all appearance more dead than alive, was brought into the house and securely locked up in a cellar, until such time as Mr. Squeers should deem it expedient to operate upon him in presence of the assembled school.

Upon a hasty consideration of the circumstances, it may be matter of surprise to some persons, that Mr. and Mrs. Squeers should have taken so much trouble to repose themselves of an incumbrance of which it was their wont to complain so loudly; but their surprise will cease when they are informed that the manifold services of the drudge, if performed by anybody else, would have cost the establishment some ten or twelve shillings per week in the shape of wages; and furthermore, that all runaways were, as a matter of policy, made severe examples of at Dotheboys Hall, inasmuch as in consequence of the limited extent of its attractions there was but little inducement, beyond the powerful impulse of fear, for any pupil provided with the usual number of legs and the power of using them, to remain.

The news that Smike had been caught and brought back in triumph, ran like wild-fire through the hungry community, and expectation was on tiptoe all the morning. On tiptoe it was destined to remain, however, until afternoon; when Squeers, having refreshed himself with his dinner, and further strengthened himself by an extra libation or so, made his appearance (accompanied by his amiable partner) with a countenance of portentous import, and a fearful instrument of flagellation, strong,
supple, wax-ended, and new—in short, purchased that morning expressly for the occasion.

"Is every boy here?" asked Squeers, in a tremendous voice.

Every boy was there, but every boy was afraid to speak; so Squeers glared along the lines to assure himself, and every eye drooped and every head cowered down as he did so.

"Each boy keep his place," said Squeers, administering his favourite blow to the desk, and regarding with gloomy satisfaction the universal start which it never failed to occasion. "Nickleby, to your desk, Sir."

It was remarked by more than one small observer, that there was a very curious and unusual expression in the usher's face, but he took his seat without opening his lips in reply; and Squeers casting a triumphant glance at his assistant and a look of most comprehensive despotism on the boys, left the room, and shortly afterwards returned dragging Smike by the collar—or rather by that fragment of his jacket which was nearest the place where his collar would have been, had he boasted such a decoration.

In any other place the appearance of the wretched, jaded, spiritless object would have occasioned a murmur of compassion and remonstrance. It had some effect even there; for the lookers-on moved uneasily in their seats, and a few of the boldest ventured to steal looks at each other, expressive of indignation and pity.

They were lost on Squeers, however, whose gaze was fastened on the luckless Smike as he inquired, according to custom in such cases, whether he had anything to say for himself.

"Nothing, I suppose?" said Squeers, with a diabolical grin.

Smike glanced round, and his eye rested for an instant on Nicholas, as if he had expected him to intercede; but his look was riveted on his desk.

"Have you anything to say?" demanded Squeers again: giving his right arm two or three flourishes to try its power and suppleness.

"Stand a little out of the way, Mrs. Squeers, my dear; I've hardly got room enough."

"Spare me, Sir," cried Smike.

"Oh! that's all, is it?" said Squeers. "Yes, I'll flog you within an inch of your life, and spare you that."

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed Mrs. Squeers, "that's a good 'un."

"I was driven to do it," said Smike faintly; and casting another imploring look about him.

"Driven to do it, were you?" said Squeers. "Oh! it wasn't your fault; it was mine, I suppose—oh?"

"A nasty, ungrateful, pig-headed, brutish, obstinate, sneaking dog," exclaimed Mrs. Squeers, taking Smike's head under her arm, and administering a cuff at every epithet; "what does he mean by that?"

"Stand aside, my dear," replied Squeers. "We'll try and find out."

Mrs. Squeers being out of breath with her exertions, complied. Squeers caught the boy firmly in his grip; one desperate cut had fallen on his body—he was wincing from the lash and uttering a scream of pain—it was raised again, and again about to fall—when Nicholas
Nickleby suddenly starting up, cried "Stop!" in a voice that made the rafters ring.

"Who cried stop?" said Squeers, turning savagely round.

"I," said Nicholas, stepping forward. "This must not go on."

"Must not go on!" cried Squeers, almost in a shriek.

"No!" thundered Nicholas.

Aghast and stupefied by the boldness of the interference, Squeers released his hold of Smike, and falling back a pace or two, gazed upon Nicholas with looks that were positively frightful.

"I say must not," repeated Nicholas, nothing daunted; "shall not. I will prevent it."

Squeers continued to gaze upon him, with his eyes starting out of his head; but astonishment had actually for the moment bereft him of speech.

"You have disregarded all my quiet interference in the miserable lad's behalf," said Nicholas; "returned no answer to the letter in which I begged forgiveness for him, and offered to be responsible that he would remain quietly here. Don't blame me for this public interference. You have brought it upon yourself; not I."

"Sit down, beggar!" screamed Squeers, almost beside himself with rage, and seizing Smike as he spoke.

"Wretch," rejoined Nicholas, fiercely, "touch him at your peril! I will not stand by and see it done; my blood is up, and I have the strength of ten such men as you. Look to yourself, for by Heaven I will not spare you, if you drive me on."

"Stand back," cried Squeers, brandishing his weapon.

"I have a long series of insults to avenge," said Nicholas, flushed with passion; "and my indignation is aggravated by the dastardly cruelties practised on helpless infancy in this foul den. Have a care; for if you do raise the devil within me, the consequences shall fall heavily upon your own head."

He had scarcely spoken when Squeers, in a violent outbreak of wrath and with a cry like the howl of a wild beast, spat upon him, and struck him a blow across the face with his instrument of torture, which raised up a bar of livid flesh as it was inflicted. Smarting with the agony of the blow, and concentrating into that one moment all his feelings of rage, scorn, and indignation, Nicholas sprang upon him, wrested the weapon from his hand, and, pinning him by the throat, beat the ruffian till he roared for mercy.

The boys—with the exception of Master Squeers, who, coming to his father's assistance, harassed the enemy in the rear—moved not hand or foot; but Mrs. Squeers, with many shrieks for aid, hung on to the tail of her partner's coat and endeavoured to drag him from his infuriated adversary; while Miss Squeers, who had been peeping through the key-hole in expectation of a very different scene, darted in at the very beginning of the attack, and after launching a shower of inkstands at the usher's head, beat Nicholas to her heart's content, animating herself at every blow with the recollection of his having refused her proffered love, and thus imparting additional strength to an arm which (as she took after her mother in this respect) was at no time one of the weakest.
Nicholas, in the full torrent of his violence, felt the blows no more than if they had been dealt with feathers; but becoming tired of the noise and uproar, and feeling that his arm grew weak besides, he threw all his remaining strength into half-a-dozen finishing cuts, and flung Squeers from him with all the force he could muster. The violence of his fall precipitated Mrs. Squeers completely over an adjacent form, and Squeers, striking his head against it in his descent, lay at his full length on the ground, stunned and motionless.

Having brought affairs to this happy termination, and ascertained to his thorough satisfaction that Squeers was only stunned, and not dead (upon which point he had had some unpleasant doubts at first), Nicholas left his family to restore him, and retired to consider what course he had better adopt. He looked anxiously round for Smike as he left the room, but he was nowhere to be seen.

After a brief consideration he packed up a few clothes in a small leathern valise, and finding that nobody offered to oppose his progress, marched boldly out by the front-door, and shortly afterwards struck into the road which led to Greta Bridge.

When he had cooled sufficiently to be enabled to give his present circumstances some little reflection, they did not appear in a very encouraging light, for he had only four shillings and a few pence in his pocket, and was something more than two hundred and fifty miles from London, whither he resolved to direct his steps, that he might ascertain, among other things, what account of the morning’s proceedings Mr. Squeers transmitted to his most affectionate uncle.

Lifting up his eyes, as he arrived at the conclusion that there was no remedy for this unfortunate state of things, he beheld a horsemann coming towards him, whom, on his nearer approach, he discovered, to his infinite chagrin, to be no other than Mr. John Browdie, who, clad in cords and leather leggings, was urging his animal forward by means of a thick ash stick, which seemed to have been recently cut from some stout sapling.

"I am in no mood for more noise and riot," thought Nicholas, "and yet, do what I will, I shall have an altercation with this honest blockhead, and perhaps a blow or two from yonder staff.

In truth there appeared some reason to expect that such a result would follow from the encounter, for John Browdie no sooner saw Nicholas advancing, than he reined in his horse by the footpath, and waited until such time as he should come up; looking meanwhile very sternly between the horse’s ears at Nicholas, as he came on at his leisure.

"Servant, young gentleman," said John.

"Yours," said Nicholas.

"Well; we ha’ met at last," observed John, making the stirrup ring under a smart touch of the ash stick.

"Yes," replied Nicholas, hesitating. "Come," he said, frankly, after a moment’s pause, "we parted on no very good terms the last time we met; it was my fault, I believe; but I had no intention of offending you, and no idea that I was doing so. I was very sorry for it afterwards. Will you shake hands?"

"Shake hands!" cried the good-humoured Yorkshireman; "ah!
that I weel;" at the same time he bent down from the saddle, and
gave Nicholas's fist a huge wrench; "but wa'at be the matther wi' thy
feace, mun? it be all brokken loike."  

"It is a cat," said Nicholas, turning scarlet as he spoke,—"a blow;
but I returned it to the giver, and with good interest too."  

"No, did'ee though?" exclaimed John Browdie. "Weel deane,
I loike 'un for that."  

"The fact is," said Nicholas, not very well knowing how to make
the avowal, "the fact is, that I have been ill-treated."  

"Noa!" interposed John Browdie, in a tone of compassion; for he
was a giant in strength and stature, and Nicholas very likely in his
eyes seemed a mere dwarf; "dean't say that."  

"Yes, I have," replied Nicholas, "by that man Squeers, and I have
beaten him soundly, and am leaving this place in consequence."  

"What!" cried John Browdie, with such an ecstatic shout, that the
horse quite shied at it. "Beatten the schoolmeaster! Ho! ho! ho! ho!
Beatten the schoolmeaster! I who ever heard o' the loike o' that noo!
Giv' us thee hond agean, youngster. Beatten a schoolmeaster! Dang
it, I loove thee for't."  

With these expressions of delight, John Browdie laughed and laughed
again—so loud that the echoes far and wide sent back nothing but
jovial peals of merriment—and shook Nicholas by the hand meanwhile
no less heartily. When his mirth had subsided, he inquired what
Nicholas meant to do; on his informing him, to go straight to London,
he shook his head doubtfully, and inquired if he knew how much the
coaches charged to carry passengers so far.  

"No, I do not," said Nicholas; "but it is of no great consequence
to me, for I intend walking."  

"Gang awa' to Lunnum aboot!" cried John, in amazement.  

"Every step of the way," replied Nicholas, "I should be many
steps further on by this time, and so good bye."  

"Nay noo," replied the honest countryman, reinsing in his impatient
horse, "stan' still, tellse. Hoo much cash hast thee gotten?"  

"Not much," said Nicholas, colouring, "but I can make it enough.
Where's there's a will there's a way, you know."  

John Browdie made no verbal answer to this remark, but putting
his hand in his pocket, pulled out an old purse of soiled leather, and
insisted that Nicholas should borrow from him whatever he required
for his present necessities.  

"Deean't be afeard, mun," he said; "tak' eneaf to carry thee whoam.
Thee'll pay me yon day, a' warrant."  

Nicholas could by no means be prevailed upon to borrow more than
a sovereign, with which loan Mr. Browdie, after many entreaties that
he would accept of more (observing, with a touch of Yorkshire caution,
that if he didn't spend it all he could put the surplus by, till he had an
opportunity of remitting it carriage free), was fain to content himself.

"Tak' that bit o' timber to help thee on wi', mun," he added, pressing
his stick on Nicholas, and giving his hand another squeeze; "keep
a good hart, and bless thee. Beatten a schoolmeaster! 'Cod its the
best thing a've heerd this twenty year!"
So saying, and indulging, with more delicacy than could have been expected from him, in another series of loud laughs, for the purpose of avoiding the thanks which Nicholas poured forth, John Browdie set spurs to his horse, and went off at a smart canter, looking back from time to time as Nicholas stood gazing after him; and waving his hand cheerily, as if to encourage him on his way. Nicholas watched the horse and rider until they disappeared over the brow of a distant hill, and then set forward on his journey.

He did not travel far that afternoon, for by this time it was nearly dark, and there had been a heavy fall of snow, which not only rendered the way toilsome, but the track uncertain and difficult to find after daylight, save by experienced wayfarers. He lay that night at a cottage, where beds were let at a cheap rate to the more humble class of travellers, and rising betimes next morning, made his way before night to Boroughbridge. Passing through that town in search of some cheap resting-place, he stumbled upon an empty barn within a couple of hundred yards of the road side; in a warm corner of which he stretched his weary limbs, and soon fell asleep.

When he awoke next morning, and tried to recollect his dreams, which had been all connected with his recent sojourn at Dothelby Hall, he sat up, rubbed his eyes, and stared—not with the most composed countenance possible—at some motionless object which seemed to be stationed within a few yards in front of him.

"Strange!" cried Nicholas; "can this be some lingering creation of the visions that have scarcely left me! It cannot be real—and yet I—I am awake. Smike?"

The form moved, rose, advanced, and dropped upon its knees at his feet. It was Smike indeed.

"Why do you kneel to me?" said Nicholas, hastily raising him.

"To go with you—anywhere—everywhere—to the world's end—to the churchyard grave," replied Smike, clinging to his hand. "Let me, oh do let me. You are my home—my kind friend—take me with you, pray."

"I am a friend who can do little for you," said Nicholas, kindly.

"How came you here?"

He had followed him, it seemed; had never lost sight of him all the way; had watched while he slept, and when he halted for refreshment; and had feared to appear before, lest he should be sent back. He had not intended to appear now, but Nicholas had awakened more suddenly than he looked for, and he had no time to conceal himself.

"Poor fellow!" said Nicholas, "your hard fate denies you any friend but one, and he is nearly as poor and helpless as yourself."

"May I—may I go with you?" asked Smike, timidly. "I will be your faithful hard-working servant, I will, indeed. I want no clothes," added the poor creature, drawing his rags together; "these will do very well. I only want to be near you."

"And you shall," cried Nicholas. "And the world shall deal by you as it does by me, till one or both of us shall quit it for a better. Come."

With these words he strapped his burden on his shoulders, and taking his stick in one hand, extended the other to his delighted charge, and so they passed out of the old barn together.
CHAPTER XIV.

HAVING THE MISFORTUNE TO TREAT OF NONE BUT COMMON PEOPLE, IS NECESSARILY OF A MEAN AND VULGAR CHARACTER.

In that quarter of London in which Golden Square is situated, there is a by-gone, faded, tumble-down street, with two irregular rows of tall meagre houses, which seem to have stared each other out of countenance years ago. The very chimneys appear to have grown dismal and melancholy, from having had nothing better to look at than the chimneys over the way. Their tops are battered, and broken, and blackened with smoke; and here and there some taller stack than the rest, inclining heavily to one side, and topping over the roof, seems to meditate taking revenge for half a century's neglect, by crushing the inhabitants of the garrets beneath.

The fowls who peck about the kennels, jerking their bodies hither and thither with a gait which none but town fowls are ever seen to adopt, and which any country cock or hen would be puzzled to understand, are perfectly in keeping with the crazy habitations of their owners. Dingy, ill-plumed, drowsy flutterers, sent, like many of the neighbouring children, to get a livelihood in the streets, they hop from stone to stone in forlorn search of some hidden eatable in the mud, and can scarcely raise a croak among them. The only one with anything approaching to a voice is an aged bantam at the baker's, and even he is hoarse in consequence of bad living in his last place.

To judge from the size of the houses, they have been at one time tenanted by persons of better condition than their present occupants, but they are now let off by the week in floors or rooms, and every door has almost as many plates or bell-handles as there are apartments within. The windows are for the same reason sufficiently diversified in appearance, being ornamented with every variety of common blind and curtain that can easily be imagined, while every doorway is blocked up and rendered nearly impassable by a motley collection of children and porter pots of all sizes, from the baby in arms and the half-pint pot, to the full-grown girl and half-gallon can.

In the parlour of one of these houses, which was perhaps a thought dirtier than any of its neighbours; which exhibited more bell-handles, children, and porter pots, and caught in all its freshness the first gust of the thick black smoke that poured forth night and day from a large brewery hard by, hung a bill announcing that there was yet one room to let within its walls, although on what story the vacant room could be—regard being had to the outward tokens of many lodgers which the whole front displayed, from the mangle in the kitchen-window to the flower-pots on the parapet—it would have been beyond the power of a calculating boy to discover.

The common stairs of this mansion were bare and carpetless; but a curious visitor who had to climb his way to the top, might have
observed that there were not wanting indications of the progressive poverty of the inmates, although their rooms were shut. Thus the first-floor lodgers, being flush of furniture, kept an old mahogany table—real mahogany—on the landing-place outside, which was only taken in when occasion required. On the second story the spare furniture dwindled down to a couple of old deal chairs, of which one, belonging to the back room, was shorn of a leg and bottomless. The story above boasted no greater excess than a worm-eaten wash-tub: and the garret landing-place displayed no costlier articles than two crippled pitchers, and some broken blacking-bottles.

It was on this garret landing-place that a hard-featured square-faced man, elderly and shabby, stopped to unlock the door of the front attic, into which, having surmounted the task of turning the rusty key in its still more rusty wards, he walked with the air of its legal owner.

This person wore a wig of short, coarse, red hair, which he took off with his hat, and hung upon a nail. Having adopted in its place a dirty cotton nightcap, and groped about in the dark till he found a remainnt of candle, he knocked at the partition which divided the two garrets, and inquired in a loud voice whether Mr. Noggs had got a light.

The sounds that came back were stifled by the lath and plaster, and it seemed moreover as though the speaker had uttered them from the interior of a mug or other drinking vessel; but they were in the voice of Newman, and conveyed a reply in the affirmative.

"A nasty night, Mr. Noggs," said the man in the night-cap, stepping in to light his candle.

"Does it rain?" asked Newman.

"Does it?" replied the other pettishly. "I am wet through."

"It doesn't take much to wet you and me through, Mr. Crowl," said Newman, laying his hand upon the lappel of his threadbare coat.

"Well; and that makes it the more vexatious," observed Mr. Crowl, in the same pettish tone.

Uttering a low querulous growl, the speaker, whose harsh countenance was the very epitome of selfishness, raked the scanty fire nearly out of the grate, and, emptying the glass which Noggs had pushed towards him, inquired where he kept his coals.

Newman Noggs pointed to the bottom of a cupboard, and Mr. Crowl, seizing the shovel, threw on half the stock, which Noggs very deliberately took off again without saying a word.

"You have not turned saving at this time of day, I hope?" said Crowl.

Newman pointed to the empty glass, as though it were a sufficient refutation of the charge, and briefly said that he was going down stairs to supper.

"To the Kenwrigses?" asked Crowl.

Newman nodded assent.

"Think of that now!" said Crowl. "If I didn't—thinking that you were certain not to go, because you said you wouldn't—tell Kenwigs I couldn't come, and make up my mind to spend the evening with you."

"I was obliged to go," said Newman. "They would have me."

"Well; but what's to become of me?" urged the selfish man, who
never thought of anybody else. "It's all your fault. I'll tell you what—I'll sit by your fire till you come back again."

Newman cast a despairing glance at his small store of fuel, but not having the courage to say no, a word which in all his life he never could say at the right time, either to himself or any one else, gave way to the proposed arrangement, and Mr. Crowl immediately went about making himself as comfortable with Newman Noggs's means, as circumstances would admit of his being.

The lodgers to whom Crowl had made allusion under the designation of "the Kenwigses," were the wife and olive branches of one Mr. Kenwigs, a turner in ivory, who was looked upon as a person of some consideration on the premises, inasmuch as he occupied the whole of the first floor, comprising a suite of two rooms. Mrs. Kenwigs, too, was quite a lady in her manners, and of a very genteel family, having an uncle who collected a water-rate; besides which distinction, the two eldest of her little girls went twice a week to a dancing school in the neighbourhood, and had flaxen hair tied with blue ribands hanging in luxuriant pigtails down their backs, and wore little white trousers with frills round the ankles—for all of which reasons and many more, equally valid but too numerous to mention, Mrs. Kenwigs was considered a very desirable person to know, and was the constant theme of all the gossips in the street, and even three or four doors round the corner at both ends.

It was the anniversary of that happy day on which the church of England as by law established, had bestowed Mrs. Kenwigs upon Mr. Kenwigs, and in grateful commemoration of the same, Mrs. Kenwigs had invited a few select friends to cards and supper in the first floor, and put on a new gown to receive them in, which gown, being of a flaming colour and made upon a juvenile principle, was so successful that Mr. Kenwigs said the eight years of matrimony and the five children seemed all a dream, and Mrs. Kenwigs younger and more blooming than the very first Sunday he kept company with her.

Beautiful as Mrs. Kenwigs looked when she was dressed though, and so stately that you would have supposed she had a cook and housemaid at least, and nothing to do but order them about, she had had a world of trouble with the preparations; more indeed than she, being of a delicate and genteel constitution, could have sustained, had not the pride of housewifery upheld her. At last, however, all the things that had to be got together were got together, and all the things that had to be got out of the way were got out of the way, and everything was ready, and the collector himself having promised to come, fortune smiled upon the occasion.

The party was admirably selected. There were first of all Mr. Kenwigs and Mrs. Kenwigs, and four olive Kenwigses who sat up to supper, firstly, because it was but right that they should have a treat on such a day; and secondly, because their going to bed in presence of the company, would have been inconvenient, not to say improper. Then there was the young lady who had made Mrs. Kenwigs's dress, and who—it was the most convenient thing in the world—living in the two-pair back, gave up her bed to the baby, and got a little girl to watch it. Then, to match this young lady, was a young...
man, who had known Mr. Kenwigs when he was a bachelor, and was much esteemed by the ladies, as bearing the reputation of a rake. To these were added a newly-married couple, who had visited Mr. and Mrs. Kenwigs in their courtship, and a sister of Mrs. Kenwigs's, who was quite a beauty; besides whom, there was another young man supposed to entertain honourable designs upon the lady last mentioned, and Mr. Noggs, who was a genteel person to ask, because he had been a gentleman once. There were also an elderly lady from the back parlour, and one more young lady, who, next to the collector, perhaps was the great lion of the party, being the daughter of a theatrical fireman, who “went on” in the pantomime, and had the greatest turn for the stage that was ever known, being able to sing and recite in a manner that brought the tears into Mrs. Kenwigs's eyes. There was only one drawback upon the pleasure of seeing such friends, and that was, that the lady in the back parlour, who was very fat, and turned of sixty, came in a low book-muslin dress and short kid gloves, which so exasperated Mrs. Kenwigs, that that lady assured her visitor in private, that if it hadn't happened that the supper was cooking at the back-parlour grate at that moment, she certainly would have requested its representative to withdraw.

“My dear,” said Mr. Kenwigs, “wouldn't it be better to begin a round game?”

“Kenwigs, my dear,” returned his wife, “I am surprised at you. Would you begin without my uncle?”

“I forgot the collector,” said Kenwigs; “oh no, that would never do.”

“He's so particular,” said Mrs. Kenwigs, turning to the other married lady, “that if we began without him, I should be out of his will for ever.”

“Dear!” cried the married lady.

“You've no idea what he is,” replied Mrs. Kenwigs; “and yet as good a creature as ever breathed.”

“The kindest-hearted man that ever was,” said Kenwigs.

“It goes to his heart, I believe, to be forced to cut the water off when the people don't pay,” observed the bachelor friend, intending a joke.

“George,” said Mr. Kenwigs, solemnly, “none of that, if you please.”

“It was only my joke,” said the friend, abashed.

“George,” rejoined Mr. Kenwigs, “a joke is a very good thing—a very good thing—but when that joke is made at the expense of Mrs. Kenwigs's feelings, I set my face against it. A man in public life expects to be spoken at—it is the fault of his elevated situtation, not of himself. Mrs. Kenwigs's relation is a public man, and that he knows, George, and that he can bear; but putting Mrs. Kenwigs out of the question (if I could put Mrs. Kenwigs out of the question on such an occasion as this), I have the honour to be connected with the collector by marriage; and I cannot allow these remarks in my—”

Mr. Kenwigs was going to say “house,” but he rounded the sentence with “apartments.”
At the conclusion of these observations, which drew forth evidences of acutc feeling from Mrs. Kenwigs, and had the intended effect of impressing the company with a deep sense of the collector's dignity, a ring was heard at the bell.

"That's him," whispered Mr. Kenwigs, greatly excited, "Morleena, my dear, run down and let your uncle in, and kiss him directly you get the door open. Hem! Let's be talking."

Adopting Mr. Kenwigs's suggestion, the company spoke very loudly, to look easy and unembarrassed; and almost as soon as they had begun to do so, a short old gentleman, in drabs and gaiters, with a face that might have been carved out of lignum vitae, for anything that appeared to the contrary, was led playfully in by Miss Morleena Kenwigs, regarding whose uncommon Christian name it may be here remarked that it was invented and composed by Mrs. Kenwigs previous to her first lying-in, for the special distinction of her eldest child, in case it should prove a daughter.

"Oh uncle, I am so glad to see you," said Mrs. Kenwigs, kissing the collector affectionately on both cheeks. "So glad."

"Many happy returns of the day, my dear," replied the collector, returning the compliment.

Now this was an interesting thing. Here was a collector of water-rates without his book, without his pen and ink, without his double knock, without his intimidation, kissing—actually kissing—an agreeable female, and leaving taxes, summonses, notices that he had called, or announcements that he would never call again for two quarters due, wholly out of the question. It was pleasant to see how the company looked on, quite absorbed in the sight, and to behold the nods and winks with which they expressed their gratification at finding so much humanity in a tax-gatherer.

"Where will you sit, uncle?" said Mrs. Kenwigs, in the full glow of family pride, which the appearance of her distinguished relation occasioned.

"Anywheres, my dear," said the collector, "I am not particular."

Not particular! What a meek collector. If he had been an author, who knew his place, he couldn't have been more humble.

"Mr. Lillyvick," said Kenwigs, addressing the collector, "some friends here, sir, are very anxious for the honour of—thank you—Mr. and Mrs. Cutler, Mr. Lillyvick."

"Proud to know you, Sir," said Mr. Cutler, "I've heard of you very often." These were not mere words of ceremony; for Mr. Cutler, having kept house in Mr. Lillyvick's parish, had heard of him very often indeed. His attention in calling had been quite extraordinary.

"George, you know, I think, Mr. Lillyvick," said Kenwigs; "lady from down stairs—Mr. Lillyvick, Mr. Sneakes—Mr. Lillyvick. Miss Green—Mr. Lillyvick. Mr. Lillyvick. Miss Petowker of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. Very glad to make two public characters acquainted. Mrs. Kenwigs, my dear, will you sort the counters?"

Mrs. Kenwigs, with the assistance of Newman Noggs, (who, as he performed sundry little acts of kindness for the children at all times and seasons, was humoured in his request to be taken no notice of, and was merely spoken to as he was doing it) presented to the company, which was led very well by the person of whom the collector was in possession, to Mr. Kenwigs's and Miss Morleena's great delight and satisfaction.

Very well, in conclusion, to the company, as they were summarily entertained, by a sumptuous meal of cold meats and vegetables, served in the best manner, there was a great many satirical sentiments, with his usually very rapid dialogue. After a great dinner, the company were again entertained with his usual egotistic and sarcastic, yet often very happy, ribaldry.
was merely spoken about in a whisper as the decayed gentleman), did as he was desired, and the greater part of the guests sat down to speculation, while Newman himself, Mrs. Kenwigs, and Miss Petowker of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, looked, after the supper-table.

While the ladies were thus busying themselves, Mr. Lillyvick was intent upon the game in progress, and as all should be fish that comes to a water-collector's net, the dear old gentleman was by no means scrupulous in appropriating to himself the property of his neighbours, which, on the contrary, he abstracted whenever an opportunity presented itself, smiling good-humouredly all the while, and making so many condescending speeches to the owners, that they were delighted with his amiability, and thought in their hearts that he deserved to be Chancellor of the Exchequer at least.

After a great deal of trouble, and the administration of many slaps on the head to the infant Kenwigs, whereof two of the most rebellious were summarily banished, the cloth was laid with great elegance, and a pair of boiled fowls, a large piece of pork, apple-pie, potatoes and greens, were served; at sight of which the worthy Mr. Lillyvick vented a great many witticisms, and plucked up amazingly, to the immense delight and satisfaction of the whole body of admirers.

Very well and very fast the supper went off; no more serious difficulties occurring than those which arose from the incessant demand for clean knives and forks, which made poor Mrs. Kenwigs wish more than once that private society adopted the principle of schools, and required that every guest should bring his own knife, fork, and spoon, which doubtless would be a great accommodation in many cases, and to no one more so than to the lady and gentleman of the house, especially if the school-principle were carried out to the full extent, and the articles were expected, as a matter of delicacy, not to be taken away again.

Everybody having eaten everything, the table was cleared in a most alarming hurry, and with great noise; and the spirits, whereat the eyes of Newman Noggs glistened, being arranged in order with water both hot and cold, the party composed themselves for conviviality, Mr. Lillyvick being stationed in a large arm-chair by the fire-side, and the four little Kenwigses disposed on a small form in front of the company with their flaxen tails towards them, and their faces to the fire; an arrangement which was no sooner perfected than Mrs. Kenwigs was overpowered by the feelings of a mother, and fell upon the left shoulder of Mr. Kenwigs dissolved in tears.

"They are so beautiful," said Mrs. Kenwigs, sobbing.

"Oh, dear," said all the ladies, "so they are, it's very natural you should feel proud of that; but don't give way, don't."

"I can—not help it, and it don't signify," sobbed Mrs. Kenwigs; "oh! they're too beautiful to live, much too beautiful."

On hearing this alarming presentiment of their being doomed to an early death in the flower of their infancy, all four little girls raised a hideous cry, and, burying their heads in their mother's lap simultaneously, screamed until the eight flaxen tails vibrated again: Mrs. Kenwigs meanwhile clapping them alternately to her bosom with atti-
tudes expressive of distraction, which Miss Petowker herself might have copied.

At length the anxious mother permitted herself to be soothed into a more tranquil state, and the little Kenwiges being also composed, were distributed among the company, to prevent the possibility of Mrs. Kenwigs being again overcome by the blaze of their combined beauty. Which done, the ladies and gentlemen united in prophesying that they would live for many, many years, and that there was no occasion at all for Mrs. Kenwigs to distress herself: which in good truth there did not appear to be, the loveliness of the children by no means justifying her apprehensions.

"This day eight year," said Mr. Kenwigs, after a pause. "Dear me—ah!"

This reflection was echoed by all present, who said "Ah!" first, and "dear me" afterwards.

"I was younger then," tittered Mrs. Kenwigs.

"No," said the collector.

"Certainly not," added everybody.

"I remember my niece," said Mr. Lillyvick, surveying his audience with a grave air; "I remember her, on that very afternoon when she first acknowledged to her mother a partiality for Kenwigs. "Mother,' she says, 'I love him.'"

"'Adore him,' I said, uncle," interposed Mrs. Kenwigs.

"'Love him,' I think, my dear," said the collector, firmly.

"Perhaps you are right, uncle," replied Mrs. Kenwigs, submissively.

"I thought it was 'adore.'"

"'Love,' my dear," retorted Mr. Lillyvick. "'Mother, she says, 'I love him.' 'What do I hear?' cries her mother; and instantly falls into strong convulsions."

A general exclamation of astonishment burst from the company.

"Into strong convulsions," repeated Mr. Lillyvick, regarding them with a rigid look. "Kenwigs will excuse my saying, in the presence of friends, that there was a very great objection to him, on the ground that he was beneath the family, and would disgrace it. You remember that, Kenwigs?"

"Certainly," replied that gentleman, in no way displeased at the reminiscence, inasmuch as it proved beyond all doubt what a high family Mrs. Kenwigs came of.

"I shared in that feeling," said Mr. Lillyvick: "perhaps it was natural; perhaps it wasn't."

A gentle murmur seemed to say, that in one of Mr. Lillyvick's station the objection was not only natural, but highly praiseworthy.

"I came round to him in time," said Mr. Lillyvick. "After they were married, and there was no help for it, I was one of the first to say that Kenwigs must be taken notice of. The family did take notice of him in consequence, and on my representation; and I am bound to say—and proud to say—that I have always found him a very honest, well-behaved, upright, respectable sort of man. Kenwigs, shake hands."

"I am proud to do it, Sir," said Mr. Kenwigs.
“So am I, Kenwigs,” rejoined Mr. Lillyvick.

“A very happy life I have led with your niece, Sir,” said Kenwigs.

“It would have been your own fault if you had not, Sir,” remarked Mr. Lillyvick.

“Morleena Kenwigs,” cried her mother, at this crisis, much affected, “kiss your dear uncle.”

The young lady did as she was requested, and the three other little girls were successively hoisted up to the collector’s countenance, and subjected to the same process, which was afterwards repeated by the majority of those present.

“Oh dear, Mrs. Kenwigs,” said Miss Petowker, “while Mr. Noggs is making that punch to drink happy returns in, do let Morleena go through that figure dance before Mr. Lillyvick.”

“No, no, my dear,” replied Mrs. Kenwigs, “it will only worry my uncle.”

“It can’t worry him, I am sure,” said Miss Petowker. “You will be very much pleased, won’t you, Sir?”

“That I am sure I shall,” replied the collector, glancing at the punch mixer.

“Well then, I’ll tell you what,” said Mrs. Kenwigs, “Morleena shall do the steps, if uncle can persuade Miss Petowker to recite us the Blood-Drinker’s Burial afterwards.”

There was a great clapping of hands and stamping of feet at this proposition, the subject whereof gently inclined her head several times, in acknowledgment of the reception.

“You know,” said Miss Petowker, reproachfully, “that I dislike doing anything professional in private parties.”

“Oh, but not here?” said Mrs. Kenwigs. “We are all so very friendly and pleasant, that you might as well be going through it in your own room; besides, the occasion—”

“I can’t resist that,” interrupted Miss Petowker, “anything in my humble power I shall be delighted to do.”

Mrs. Kenwigs and Miss Petowker had arranged a small *programme* of the entertainments between them, of which this was the prescribed order, but they had settled to have a little pressing on both sides, because it looked more natural. The company being all ready, Miss Petowker hummed a tune, and Morleena danced a dance, having previously had the soles of her shoes chalked with as much care as if she were going on the tight-robe. It was a very beautiful figure, comprising a great deal of work for the arms, and was received with unbounded applause.

“If I was blessed with a—a child—” said Miss Petowker, blushing, “of such genius as that, I would have her out at the Opera instantly.”

Mrs. Kenwigs sighed and looked at Mr. Kenwigs, who shook his head, and observed that he was doubtful about it.

“Kenwigs is afraid,” said Mrs. K.

“What of?” enquired Miss Petowker, “not of her failing?”

“Oh no,” replied Mrs. Kenwigs, “but if she grew up what she is now,—only think of the young dukes and marquisses.”

“Very right,” said the collector.
“Still,” submitted Miss Petowker, “if she has a proper pride in herself, you know—”

“There’s a good deal in that,” observed Mrs. Kenwigs, looking at her husband.

“I only know—” faltered Miss Petowker,—“it may be no rule to be sure—but I have never found any inconvenience or unpleasantness of that sort.”

Mr. Kenwigs, with becoming gallantry, said that settled the question at once, and that he would take the subject into his serious consideration: this being resolved upon, Miss Petowker was entreated to begin the Blood-Drinker’s Burial, to which end, that young lady let down her back hair, and taking up her position at the other end of the room, with the bachelor friend posted in a corner, to rush out at the cue “in death expire,” and catch her in his arms when she died raving mad, went through the performance with extraordinary spirit, and to the great terror of the little Kenwigses, who were all but frightened into fits.

The ecstacies consequent upon the effort had not yet subsided, and Newman (who had not been thoroughly sober at so late an hour for a long long time,) had not yet been able to put in a word of announcement that the punch was ready, when a hasty knock was heard at the room-door, which elicited a shriek from Mrs. Kenwigs, who immediately divined that the baby had fallen out of bed.

“Who is that?” demanded Mr. Kenwigs, sharply.

“Don’t be alarmed, it’s only me,” said Crowl, looking in, in his nightcap. “The baby is very comfortable, for I peeped into the room as I came down, and it’s fast asleep, and so is the girl; and I don’t think the candle will set fire to the bed-curtain, unless a draught gets into the room—it’s Mr. Noggs that’s wanted.”

“Me!” cried Newman, much astonished.

“Why it is a queer hour, isn’t it?” replied Crowl, who was not best pleased at the prospect of losing his fire; “and they are queer-looking people, too, all covered with rain and mud. Shall I tell them to go away?”

“No,” said Newman, rising. “People? How many?”

“Two,” rejoined Crowl.

“Want me? By name?” asked Newman.

“By name,” replied Crowl. “Mr. Newman Noggs, as pat as need be.”

Newman reflected for a few seconds, and then hurried away, muttering that he would be back directly. He was as good as his word; for in an exceedingly short time he burst into the room, and seizing, without a word of apology or explanation, a lighted candle and tumbler of hot punch from the table, darted away like a madman.

“What the deuce is the matter with him!” exclaimed Crowl, throwing the door open. “Hark! Is there any noise above?”

The guests rose in great confusion, and, looking in each other’s faces with much perplexity and some fear, stretched their necks forward, and listened attentively.
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ON QUACKERY.—Quackery has been defined as "a mean, bad act in physic—deceit." Let us just ask whether we are to consider the system practised by the majority of the Faculty as answering the definition above quoted.

To administer a medicine, the properties of which they know little, perhaps nothing—to prescribe (although in infinitesimal doses) a poison, by way of experiment, upon a fellow creature—to extend the suffering of human nature, by what may be termed nostrums or specific, and thus retard the progress of nature—and for what? Is it the interest of science? is it to "allay the sufferings which man is heir to?" No! it is not, then, for personal advancement?

To give restoratives to-day which are nullified and neutralized by the treatment of the morrow—to play with the fears and perplexities of the votaries and deluded hypochondriac, calculated to distress and harass their already deciliated frames—to further entice by further abstraction of the stream of existence—to repel simplicity, and extend the arm of fellowship to the propounders of the most absurd and metaphorical doctrines—may tend, and forcibly tend, to convulse the sentient portions of the community in what direction the practice of empiricism and ignorance, directed of every particle of sound medical and philosophical foundation, may be found. Also! sanctioned by a diploma, too frequently obtained without the proper test of the possession of sound medical and scientific knowledge on the part of the individual, thus extending to such individual the power of injuring a credulous and unwise public. Yet let men be valued according to the ability and merit evinced; let freedom of action, and, above all, freedom of practice, be generally allowed and directed of prejudice; and the public will at once have a means, and a certain means, of judging whether simplicity of medical practice, or that bordering on necromancy, is to be considered as most acceptable.

Previously to the Christian era, man was as subject to disease as he is at present: had our forefathers recourse to mineral poisons? Most assuredly not. Refer to the sacred volume, and you will find that the age of man was prolonged by means of the simples of the fields. Our forefathers knew not of the poisonous ingredients which are administered in the present day, yet they "slept with their fathers" in the vigour of their strength, and closed lives of aged simplicity with calmness and resigning peace.

Why, then, let it be asked, should the march of science in modern times exclude simplicity in alleviating the sufferings of that great machine—the human frame—which has known no abatement from man's first creation. Among the various arguments that have been advanced in support of the Hygeian theory of medicine, several have doubted the power of one medicine possessing the attribute of curing all disease. Let them but reflect and consider that there is but little wonder in this universal being deposited in different organs in different individuals, thus apparently creating a multitude of diseases, taking on directly different forms, and affording different symptoms, but one and all still arising from the same source—impurity of what Plato terms "the pabulum, or, food of the flesh." This being allowed (and it is anticipated it cannot be denied or controverted by legitimate argument), where lies the absurdity of concocting a vegetable remedy, effusively as a depurative of that food, in a state of disease? And surely the fashionable practicians, who are accustomed to the present day to declare a medicine as not only the best, but the only medicine possessed of the property of curing all disease, or of bordering on necromancy, are to be considered as most acceptable.

In conclusion, let it be remembered, that such is the practice adopted under the Hygeian theory of medicine, from which principles, be it remembered, thousands have experienced that which ordinary practices failed to afford—the restoration to health after years of suffering.—British College of Health, New Road, May 21, 1836.

Another Letter from Lady Sophia Grey, confirmatory of the truth of the Hygeian Practice.

St. Albans, Oct. 30th, 1837.

SIR,—I have received your letter dated the 20th of this month, and can assure you that it will ever give me real pleasure to do anything that may benefit your noble cause. I have not the least objection to your publishing what I said at the end of my letter—that to your medicines, through the mercy of Heaven, I attribute the wonderful improvement, almost restoration of my health; and that from having taken it for three years in large quantities—even up to 50 pills—at it is a convincing proof it is not dangerous, and it never weakens the digestion, but strengthens it, as before I think that I had a very bad digestion, and after taking calomel before I could take solid meat. I now rarely ever want medicines, and when I do, one pill is sufficient. A gentleman lately come from Paris informs me that you live there, and are greatly patronized. In short, justice seems done you in every country but your own. I remain, Sir, your sincerely obliged,

S. GREY.

CAUTION.

Whereas spurious imitations of my Medicines are now in circulation, I, James Morison, the Hygeian, hereby give notice, That I am in nowise connected with the following Medicines purporting to be mine, and sold under the various names of "Dr. Morrison's Pills," "The Hygeian Pills," "The Improved Vegetable Universal Pills," "The Original Morrison's Pills," as compounded by the late Mr. Most," "The Original Hygeian Vegetable Pills," "The Original Morrison's Pills," &c. &c.

That my Medicines are prepared only at the British College of Health, Hamilton Place, King's Cross, and sold by the General Agents to the British College of Health and their Sub-Agents, and that as Chemist or Druggist is authorized to buy of the amounts. None can be genuine without the words "Morison's Universal Medicines" are engraved on the Government Stamps, in white letters upon a red ground.—In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand.

British College of Health, New Road, April 20, 1838.

JAMES MORISON, the Hygeian.

The following is a list of the principal Depots where the Medicines may be had in London:—Medical Dispensary Office, 369, Strand; Mr. Field, Blackfriars, E9, Quadrant, Regent Street; Mr. Lofte, City Agent, Park Place, Milne End; Mr. Hall, 12, Randall's End, Holborn; Mr. Hedges, 63, Hatton Garden, W.C.; Mr. Hall, 10, Hat Court, Holborn; Western Branch, 72, Edgeware Road; Messrs. Hannay and Co., Perfumers, 63, Oxford Street, corner of Wells Street; Mr. Cowell, 22, Terrace, Pinners; British College of Health, Hamilton Place, King's Cross; and of their Sub-Agents.

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