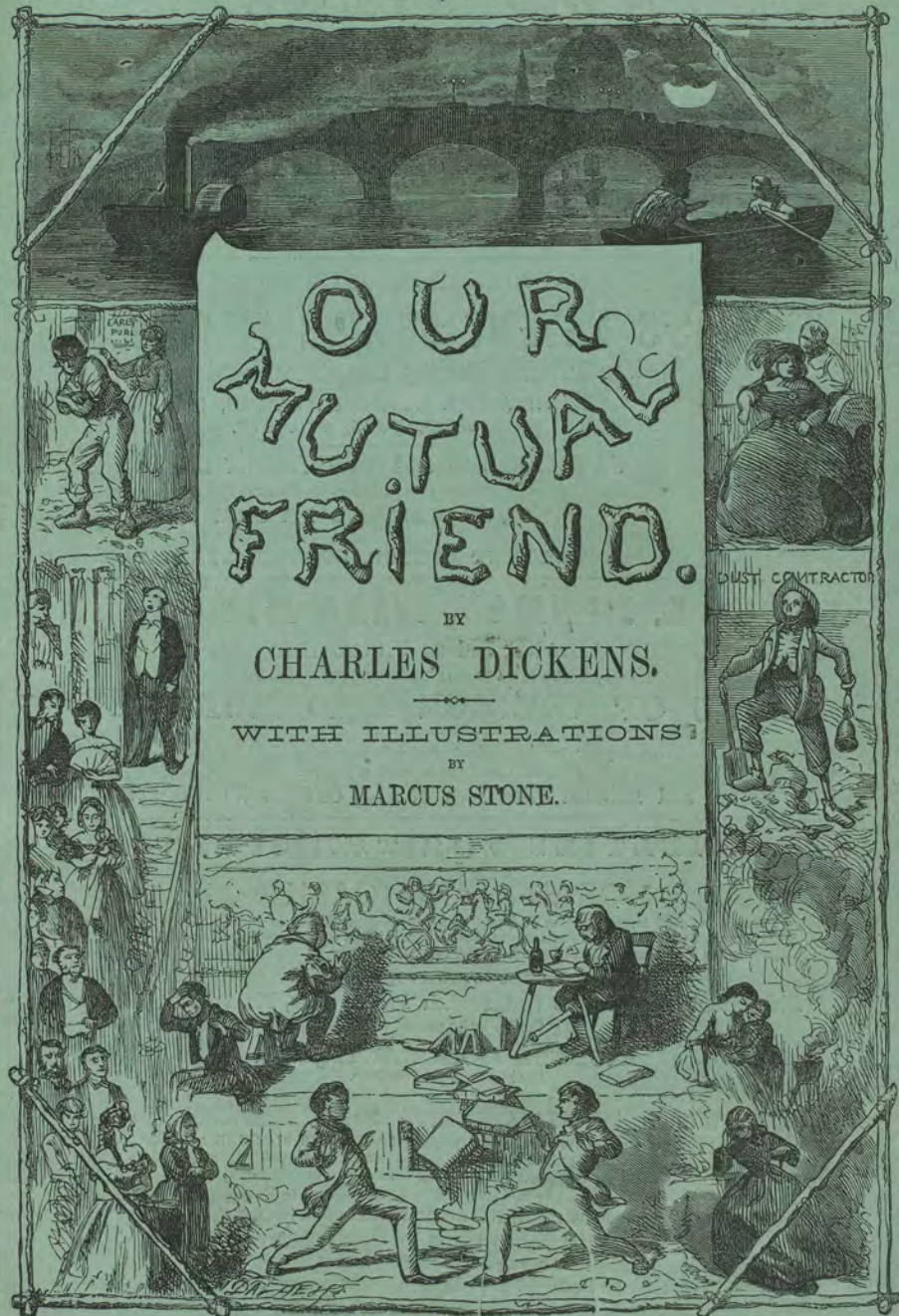


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1860 . . .	449,241 16 2 . .	15,079 17 10	1863 . . .	752,546 18 10 . .	24,069 12 8
1861 . . .	521,101 17 0 . .	16,627 18 0			

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1862.

PRIZE MEDAL.

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Table Forks, per dozen	1 10 0	1 18 0	1 10 0	2 8 0	3 0 0
Dessert Forks	1 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 15 0	2 2 0
Table Spoons	1 10 0	1 18 0	1 10 0	2 8 0	3 0 0
Dessert Spoons	1 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 15 0	2 2 0
Tea Spoons	0 12 0	0 18 0	0 18 0	1 3 6	1 10 0

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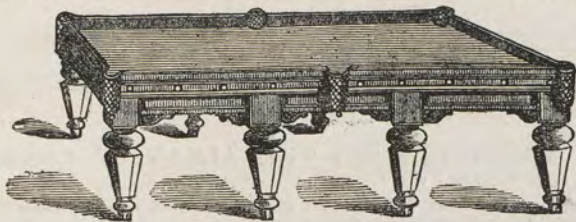
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CORRECTED RECIPE FOR  
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To two teaspoonsful of BROWN AND POLSON'S CORN FLOUR, mixed with two table-spoonsful of cold water, add half-pint of boiling milk and water (equal quantities); boil for seven minutes, and sweeten very slightly. It should be when warm about the thickness of cream.

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	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
12 Table Forks ....	1 13 0	2 0 0	2 4 0	2 10 0
12 Table Spoons ...	1 13 0	2 0 0	2 4 0	2 10 0
12 Dessert Forks ...	1 4 0	1 10 0	1 12 0	1 15 0
12 Dessert Spoons ...	1 4 0	1 10 0	1 12 0	1 15 0
12 Tea Spoons ...	16 0	1 0 0	1 2 0	1 5 0
6 Egg Spoons, } gilt bowls. }	10 0	12 0	12 0	13 6
2 Sauce Ladies ...	6 0	8 0	8 0	9 0
1 Gravy Spoon ...	6 6	9 0	10 0	11 6
2 Salt Spoons, } gilt bowls. }	3 4	4 0	4 0	4 6
1 Mustard Spoon, } gilt bowl. }	1 8	2 0	2 0	2 3
1 Pair Sugar Tongs	2 6	3 6	3 6	4 0
1 Pair Fish Carvers	1 4 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
1 Butter Knife ...	2 6	4 0	5 6	6 0
1 Soup Ladle ...	10 0	12 0	16 0	17 0
1 Sugar Sifter ...	3 3	4 6	4 6	5 0
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>9 19 9</b>	<b>12 9 0</b>	<b>13 9 6</b>	<b>14 17 3</b>

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Ditto, with silver ferules ...	40 0	33 0	12 0
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Knives and Forks per dozen.			
White bone handles .....	11 0	8 6	2 0
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An Assortment of TABLE CUTLERY, all warranted, in one lot  
**W. S. BURTON**  
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LBS.	Table Knives			Dinner Knives		
	per doz.	per doz.	per doz.	per doz.	per doz.	per doz.
12	12	0	8	12	0	8
15	0	11	0	15	0	11
18	0	14	0	18	0	14
24	0	17	0	24	0	17
30	0	20	0	30	0	20
36	0	23	0	36	0	23
42	0	26	0	42	0	26
48	0	29	0	48	0	29
54	0	32	0	54	0	32
60	0	35	0	60	0	35
66	0	38	0	66	0	38
72	0	41	0	72	0	41
78	0	44	0	78	0	44
84	0	47	0	84	0	47
90	0	50	0	90	0	50

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**GREENS**—Sieves of the above  
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**COOKS**. They contain and  
stones, maps, chimney-pipe  
ironmongery as used in a  
er for various, namely, hamp  
of workmanship. Right size  
£3 10s. to £20 10s.; from 10  
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variable ornaments, from 2 1/2  
from 2 1/2 to 2 1/2; 10s. each  
2 1/2 to 2 1/2. The **BURTON** cut  
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Water, Hobbs, Stone,  
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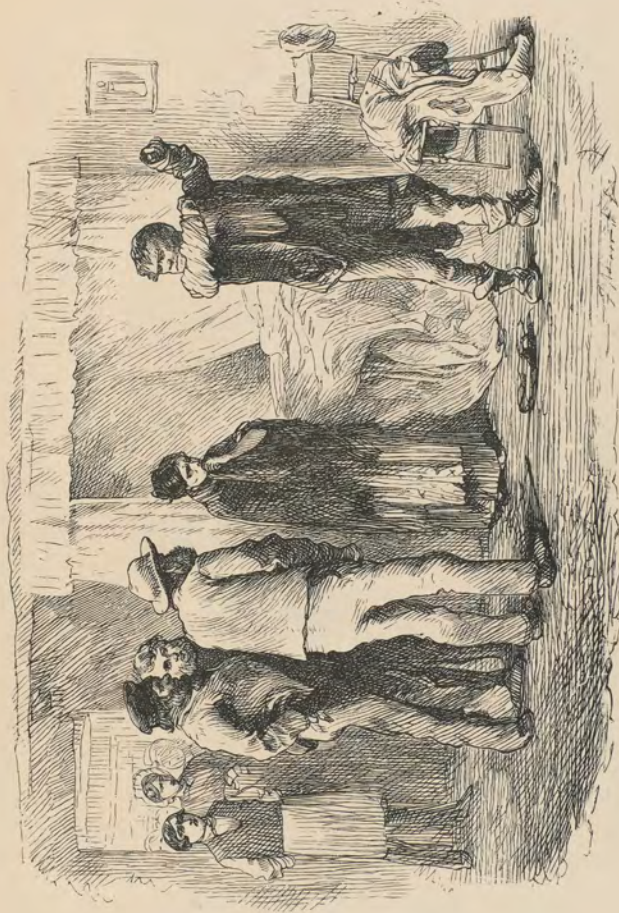
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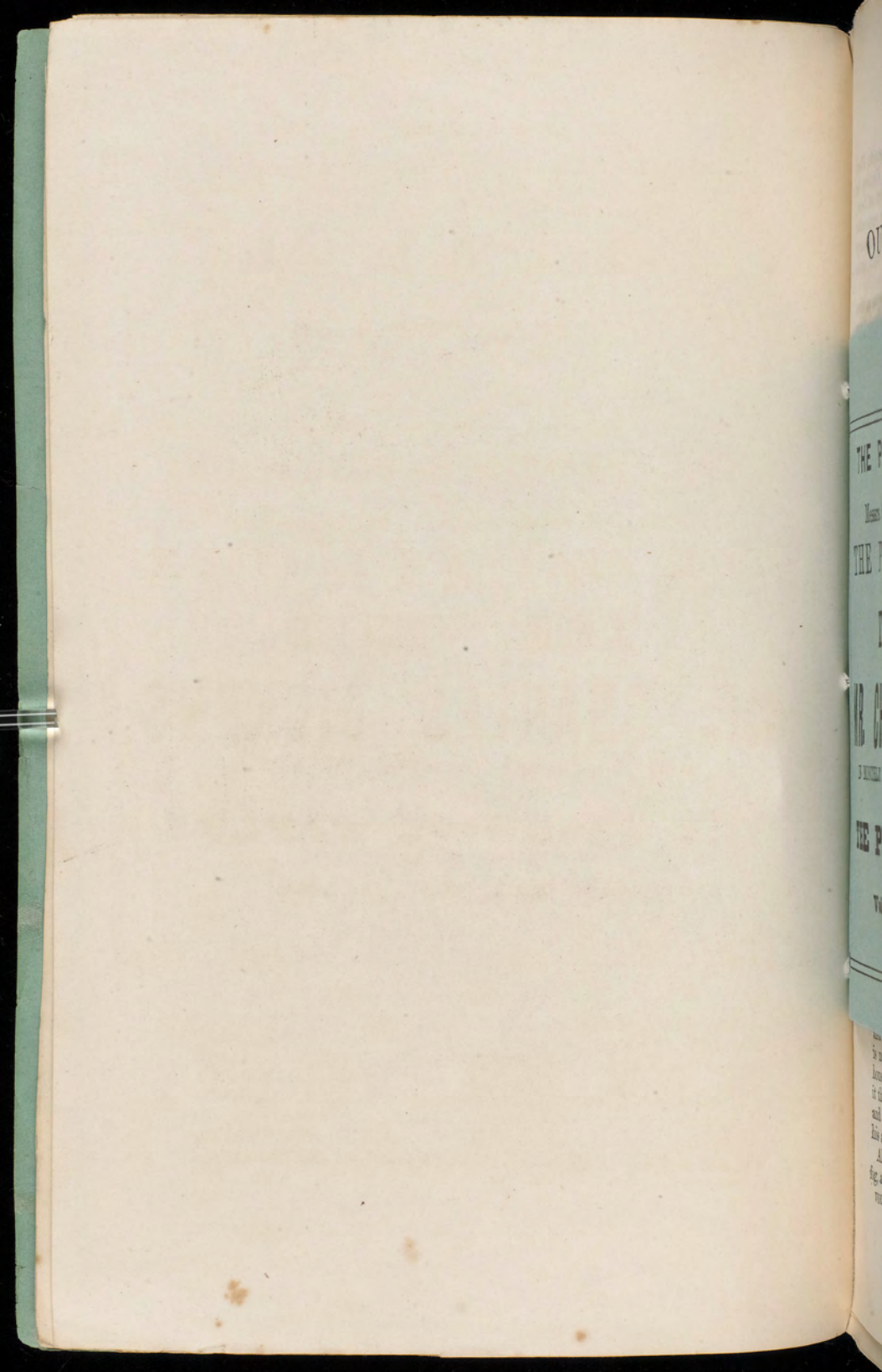
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THE PICKWICK PAPERS

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Volume One on March the 30th.

193, PICCADILLY.

and Co. was not the liveliest object even in Saint Mary Axe—which is not a very lively spot—with a sobbing gaslight in the counting-house window, and a burglarious stream of fog creeping in to strangle it through the keyhole of the main door. But the light went out, and the main door opened, and Riah came forth with a bag under his arm.

Almost in the act of coming out at the door, Riah went into the fog, and was lost to the eyes of Saint Mary Axe. But the eyes of

THE PEOPLES PICKWICK  
THE PEOPLES HISTORY  
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# OUR MUTUAL FRIEND.

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## CHAPTER I.

### LODGERS IN QUEER STREET.

It was a foggy day in London, and the fog was heavy and dark. Animate London, with smarting eyes and irritated lungs, was blinking, wheezing, and choking; inanimate London was a sooty spectre, divided in purpose between being visible and invisible, and so being wholly neither. Gaslights flared in the shops with a haggard and unblest air, as knowing themselves to be night-creatures that had no business abroad under the sun; while the sun itself, when it was for a few moments dimly indicated through circling eddies of fog, showed as if it had gone out and were collapsing flat and cold. Even in the surrounding country it was a foggy day, but there the fog was grey, whereas in London it was, at about the boundary line, dark yellow, and a little within it brown, and then browner, and then browner, until at the heart of the City—which call Saint Mary Axe—it was rusty-black. From any point of the high ridge of land northward, it might have been discerned that the loftiest buildings made an occasional struggle to get their heads above the foggy sea, and especially that the great dome of Saint Paul's seemed to die hard; but this was not perceivable in the streets at their feet, where the whole metropolis was a heap of vapour charged with muffled sound of wheels, and enfolded a gigantic catarrh.

At nine o'clock on such a morning, the place of business of Pubsey and Co. was not the liveliest object even in Saint Mary Axe—which is not a very lively spot—with a sobbing gaslight in the counting-house window, and a burglarious stream of fog creeping in to strangle it through the keyhole of the main door. But the light went out, and the main door opened, and Riah came forth with a bag under his arm.

Almost in the act of coming out at the door, Riah went into the fog, and was lost to the eyes of Saint Mary Axe. But the eyes of

this history can follow him westward, by Cornhill, Cheapside, Fleet Street, and the Strand, to Piccadilly and the Albany. Thither he went at his grave and measured pace, staff in hand, skirt at heel; and more than one head, turning to look back at his venerable figure already lost in the mist, supposed it to be some ordinary figure indistinctly seen, which fancy and the fog had worked into that passing likeness.

Arrived at the house in which his master's chambers were on the second floor, Riah proceeded up the stairs, and paused at Fascination Fledgeby's door. Making free with neither bell nor knocker, he struck upon the door with the top of his staff, and, having listened, sat down on the threshold. It was characteristic of his habitual submission, that he sat down on the raw dark staircase, as many of his ancestors had probably sat down in dungeons, taking what befell him as it might befall.

After a time, when he had grown so cold as to be fain to blow upon his fingers, he arose and knocked with his staff again, and listened again, and again sat down to wait. Thrice he repeated these actions before his listening ears were greeted by the voice of Fledgeby, calling from his bed, "Hold your row!—I'll come and open the door directly!" But, in lieu of coming directly, he fell into a sweet sleep for some quarter of an hour more, during which added interval Riah sat upon the stairs and waited with perfect patience.

At length the door stood open, and Mr. Fledgeby's retreating drapery plunged into bed again. Following it at a respectful distance, Riah passed into the bed-chamber, where a fire had been sometime lighted, and was burning briskly.

"Why, what time of night do you mean to call it?" inquired Fledgeby, turning away beneath the clothes, and presenting a comfortable rampart of shoulder to the chilled figure of the old man.

"Sir, it is full half-past ten in the morning."

"The deuce it is! Then it must be precious foggy?"

"Very foggy, sir."

"And raw, then?"

"Chill and bitter," said Riah, drawing out a handkerchief, and wiping the moisture from his beard and long grey hair as he stood on the verge of the rug, with his eyes on the acceptable fire.

With a plunge of enjoyment, Fledgeby settled himself afresh.

"Any snow, or sleet, or slush, or anything of that sort?" he asked.

"No, sir, no. Not quite so bad as that. The streets are pretty clean."

"You needn't brag about it," returned Fledgeby, disappointed in his desire to heighten the contrast between his bed and the streets. "But you're always bragging about something. Got the books there?"

"They are here, sir."

"All right. I'll turn the general subject over in my mind for a minute or two, and while I'm about it you can empty your bag and get ready for me."

With another comfortable plunge, Mr. Fledgeby fell asleep again.

The old man, having obeyed his directions, sat down on the edge of a chair, and, folding his hands before him, gradually yielded to the influence of the warmth, and dozed. He was roused by Mr. Fledgeby's appearing erect at the foot of the bed, in Turkish slippers, rose-coloured Turkish trousers (got cheap from somebody who had cheated some other somebody out of them), and a gown and cap to correspond. In that costume he would have left nothing to be desired, if he had been further fitted out with a bottomless chair, a lantern, and a bunch of matches.

"Now, old 'un!" cried Fascination, in his light railery, "what dodgery are you up to next, sitting there with your eyes shut? You ain't asleep. Catch a weasel at it, and catch a Jew!"

"Truly, sir, I fear I nodded," said the old man.

"Not you!" returned Fledgeby, with a cunning look. "A telling move with a good many, I dare say, but it won't put *me* off my guard. Not a bad notion though, if you want to look indifferent in driving a bargain. Oh, you are a doctor!"

The old man shook his head, gently repudiating the imputation, and suppressed a sigh, and moved to the table at which Mr. Fledgeby was now pouring out for himself a cup of steaming and fragrant coffee from a pot that had stood ready on the hob. It was an edifying spectacle, the young man in his easy chair taking his coffee, and the old man with his grey head bent, standing awaiting his pleasure.

"Now!" said Fledgeby. "Fork out your balance in hand, and prove by figures how you make it out that it ain't more. First of all, light that candle."

Riah obeyed, and then taking a bag from his breast, and referring to the sum in the accounts for which they made him responsible, told it out upon the table. Fledgeby told it again with great care, and rang every sovereign.

"I suppose," he said, taking one up to eye it closely, "you haven't been lightening any of these; but it's a trade of your people's, you know. *You* understand what sweating a pound means; don't you?"

"Much as you do, sir," returned the old man, with his hands under opposite cuffs of his loose sleeves, as he stood at the table, deferentially observant of the master's face. "May I take the liberty to say something?"

"You may," Fledgeby graciously conceded.

"Do you not, sir—without intending it—of a surety without intending it—sometimes mingle the character I fairly earn in your employment, with the character which it is your policy that I should bear?"

"I don't find it worth my while to cut things so fine as to go into the inquiry," Fascination coolly answered.

"Not in justice?"

"Bother justice!" said Fledgeby.

"Not in generosity?"

"Jews and generosity!" said Fledgeby. "That's a good connexion! Bring out your vouchers, and don't talk Jerusalem palaver."

The vouchers were produced, and for the next half-hour Mr. Fledgeby concentrated his sublime attention on them. They and the accounts were all found correct, and the books and the papers resumed their places in the bag.

"Next," said Fledgeby, "concerning that bill-broking branch of the business; the branch I like best. What queer bills are to be bought, and at what prices? You have got your list of what's in the market?"

"Sir, a long list," replied Riah, taking out a pocket-book, and selecting from its contents a folded paper, which, being unfolded, became a sheet of foolscap covered with close writing.

"Whew!" whistled Fledgeby, as he took it in his hand. "Queer Street is full of lodgers just at present! These are to be disposed of in parcels; are they?"

"In parcels as set forth," returned the old man, looking over his master's shoulder; "or the lump."

"Half the lump will be waste-paper, one knows beforehand," said Fledgeby. "Can you get it at waste-paper price? That's the question."

Riah shook his head, and Fledgeby cast his small eyes down the list. They presently began to twinkle, and he no sooner became conscious of their twinkling, than he looked up over his shoulder at the grave face above him, and moved to the chimney-piece. Making a desk of it, he stood there with his back to the old man, warming his knees, perusing the list at his leisure, and often returning to some lines of it, as though they were particularly interesting. At those times he glanced in the chimney-glass to see what note the old man took of him. He took none that could be detected, but, aware of his employer's suspicions, stood with his eyes on the ground.

Mr. Fledgeby was thus amiably engaged when a step was heard at the outer door, and the door was heard to open hastily. "Hark! That's your doing, you Pump of Israel," said Fledgeby; "you can't have shut it." Then the step was heard within, and the voice of Mr. Alfred Lammle called aloud, "Are you anywhere here, Fledgeby?" To which Fledgeby, after cautioning Riah in a low voice to take his cue as it should be given him, replied, "Here I am!" and opened his bedroom door.

"Come in!" said Fledgeby. "This gentleman is only Pubsey and Co. of Saint Mary Axe, that I am trying to make terms for an unfortunate friend with in a matter of some dishonoured bills. But really Pubsey and Co. are so strict with their debtors, and so hard to move, that I seem to be wasting my time. Can't I make *any* terms with you on my friend's part, Mr. Riah?"

"I am but the representative of another, sir," returned the Jew in a low voice. "I do as I am bidden by my principal. It is not my capital that is invested in the business. It is not my profit that arises therefrom."

"Ha ha!" laughed Fledgeby. "Lammle?"

"Ha ha!" laughed Lammle. "Yes. Of course. We know."

"Devilish good, ain't it, Lammle?" said Fledgeby, unspeakably amused by his hidden joke.

"Always the same, always the same!" said Lammle. "Mr. —"

"Riah, Pubsey and Co. Saint Mary Axe," Fledgeby put in, as he wiped away the tears that trickled from his eyes, so rare was his enjoyment of his secret joke.

"Mr. Riah is bound to observe the invariable forms for such cases made and provided," said Lammle.

"He is only the representative of another!" cried Fledgeby. "Does as he is told by his principal! Not his capital that's invested in the business. Oh, that's good! Ha ha ha ha!" Mr. Lammle joined in the laugh and looked knowing; and the more he did both, the more exquisite the secret joke became for Mr. Fledgeby.

"However," said that fascinating gentleman, wiping his eyes again, "if we go on in this way, we shall seem to be almost making game of Mr. Riah, or of Pubsey and Co. Saint Mary Axe, or of somebody: which is far from our intention. Mr. Riah, if you would have the kindness to step into the next room for a few moments while I speak with Mr. Lammle here, I should like to try to make terms with you once again before you go."

The old man, who had never raised his eyes during the whole transaction of Mr. Fledgeby's joke, silently bowed and passed out by the door which Fledgeby opened for him. Having closed it on him, Fledgeby returned to Lammle, standing with his back to the bedroom fire, with one hand under his coat-skirts, and all his whiskers in the other.

"Halloa!" said Fledgeby. "There's something wrong!"

"How do you know it?" demanded Lammle.

"Because you show it," replied Fledgeby in unintentional rhyme.

"Well then; there is," said Lammle; "there *is* something wrong; the whole thing's wrong."

"I say!" remonstrated Fascination very slowly, and sitting down with his hands on his knees to stare at his glowering friend with his back to the fire.

"I tell you, Fledgeby," repeated Lammle, with a sweep of his right arm, "the whole thing's wrong. The game's up."

"What game's up?" demanded Fledgeby, as slowly as before, and more sternly.

"THE game. OUR game. Read that."

Fledgeby took a note from his extended hand and read it aloud. "Alfred Lammle, Esquire. Sir: Allow Mrs. Podsnap and myself to express our united sense of the polite attentions of Mrs. Alfred Lammle and yourself towards our daughter, Georgiana. Allow us also, wholly to reject them for the future, and to communicate our final desire that the two families may become entire strangers. I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant, JOHN PODSNAP." Fledgeby looked at the three blank sides of this note, quite as long and earnestly as at the first expressive side, and then looked at Lammle, who responded with another extensive sweep of his right arm.

"Whose doing is this?" said Fledgeby.

"Impossible to imagine," said Lammle.

"Perhaps," suggested Fledgeby, after reflecting with a very discontented brow, "somebody has been giving you a bad character."

"Or you," said Lammle, with a deeper frown.

Mr. Fledgeby appeared to be on the verge of some mutinous expressions, when his hand happened to touch his nose. A certain remembrance connected with that feature operating as a timely warning, he took it thoughtfully between his thumb and forefinger, and pondered; Lammle meanwhile eyeing him with furtive eyes.

"Well!" said Fledgeby. "This won't improve with talking about. If we ever find out who did it, we'll mark that person. There's nothing more to be said, except that you undertook to do what circumstances prevent your doing."

"And that you undertook to do what you might have done by this time, if you had made a prompter use of circumstances," snarled Lammle.

"Hah! That," remarked Fledgeby, with his hands in the Turkish trousers, "is matter of opinion."

"Mr. Fledgeby," said Lammle, in a bullying tone, "am I to understand that you in any way reflect upon me, or hint dissatisfaction with me, in this affair?"

"No," said Fledgeby; "provided you have brought my promissory note in your pocket, and now hand it over."

Lammle produced it, not without reluctance. Fledgeby looked at it, identified it, twisted it up, and threw it into the fire. They both looked at it as it blazed, went out, and flew in feathery ash up the chimney.

"Now, Mr. Fledgeby," said Lammle, as before; "am I to understand that you in any way reflect upon me, or hint dissatisfaction with me, in this affair?"

"No," said Fledgeby.

"Finally and unreservedly no?"

"Yes."

"Fledgeby, my hand."

Mr. Fledgeby took it, saying, "And if we ever find out who did this, we'll mark that person. And in the most friendly manner, let me mention one thing more. I don't know what your circumstances are, and I don't ask. You have sustained a loss here. Many men are liable to be involved at times, and you may be, or you may not be. But whatever you do, Lammle, don't—don't—don't, I beg of you—ever fall into the hands of Pubsey and Co. in the next room, for they are grinders. Regular flayers and grinders, my dear Lammle," repeated Fledgeby with a peculiar relish, "and they'll skin you by the inch, from the nape of your neck to the sole of your foot, and grind every inch of your skin to tooth-powder. You have seen what Mr. Riah is. Never fall into his hands, Lammle, I beg of you as a friend!"

Mr. Lammle, disclosing some alarm at the solemnity of this affectionate adjuration, demanded why the devil he ever should fall into the hands of Pubsey and Co.?

"To confess the fact, I was made a little uneasy," said the candid Fledgeby, "by the manner in which that Jew looked at you when he heard your name. I didn't like his eye. But it may have been the heated fancy of a friend. Of course if you are sure that you have no



personal security out, which you may not be quite equal to meeting, and which can have got into his hands, it must have been fancy. Still, I didn't like his eye."

The brooding Lammle, with certain white dints coming and going in his palpitating nose, looked as if some tormenting imp were pinching it. Fledgeby, watching him with a twitch in his mean face which did duty there for a smile, looked very like the tormentor who was pinching.

"But I mustn't keep him waiting too long," said Fledgeby, "or he'll revenge it on my unfortunate friend. How's your very clever and agreeable wife? She knows we have broken down?"

"I showed her the letter."

"Very much surprised?" asked Fledgeby.

"I think she would have been more so," answered Lammle, "if there had been more go in *you*?"

"Oh!—She lays it upon me, then?"

"Mr. Fledgeby, I will not have my words misconstrued."

"Don't break out, Lammle," urged Fledgeby, in a submissive tone, "because there's no occasion. I only asked a question. Then she don't lay it upon me? To ask another question."

"No, sir."

"Very good," said Fledgeby, plainly seeing that she did. "My compliments to her. Good-bye!"

They shook hands, and Lammle strode out pondering. Fledgeby saw him into the fog, and, returning to the fire and musing with his face to it, stretched the legs of the rose-coloured Turkish trousers wide apart, and meditatively bent his knees, as if he were going down upon them.

"You have a pair of whiskers, Lammle, which I never liked," murmured Fledgeby, "and which money can't produce; you are boastful of your manners and your conversation; you wanted to pull my nose, and you have let me in for a failure, and your wife says I am the cause of it. I'll bowl you down. I will, though I have no whiskers," here he rubbed the places where they were due, "and no manners, and no conversation!"

Having thus relieved his noble mind, he collected the legs of the Turkish trousers, straightened himself on his knees, and called out to Riah in the next room, "Halloa, you sir!" At sight of the old man re-entering with a gentleness monstrously in contrast with the character he had given him, Mr. Fledgeby was so tickled again, that he exclaimed, laughing, "Good! Good! Upon my soul it is uncommon good!"

"Now, old 'un," proceeded Fledgeby, when he had had his laugh out, "you'll buy up these lots that I mark with my pencil—there's a tick there, and a tick there, and a tick there—and I wager two-pence you'll afterwards go on squeezing those Christians like the Jew you are. Now, next you'll want a cheque—or you'll say you want it, though you've capital enough somewhere, if one only knew where, but you'd be peppered and salted and grilled on a gridiron before you'd own to it—and that cheque I'll write."

When he had unlocked a drawer and taken a key from it to open

another drawer, in which was another key that opened another drawer, in which was another key that opened another drawer, in which was the cheque book; and when he had written the cheque; and when, reversing the key and drawer process, he had placed his cheque book in safety again; he beckoned the old man, with the folded cheque, to come and take it.

"Old 'un," said Fledgeby, when the Jew had put it in his pocket-book, and was putting that in the breast of his outer garment; "so much at present for my affairs. Now a word about affairs that are not exactly mine. Where is she?"

With his hand not yet withdrawn from the breast of his garment, Riah started and paused.

"Oho!" said Fledgeby. "Didn't expect it! Where have you hidden her?"

Showing that he was taken by surprise, the old man looked at his master with some passing confusion, which the master highly enjoyed.

"Is she in the house I pay rent and taxes for in Saint Mary Axe?" demanded Fledgeby.

"No, sir."

"Is she in your garden up atop of that house—gone up to be dead, or whatever the game is?" asked Fledgeby.

"No, sir."

"Where is she then?"

Riah bent his eyes upon the ground, as if considering whether he could answer the question without breach of faith, and then silently raised them to Fledgeby's face, as if he could not.

"Come!" said Fledgeby. "I won't press that just now. But I want to know this, and I will know this, mind you. What are you up to?"

The old man, with an apologetic action of his head and hands, as not comprehending the master's meaning, addressed to him a look of mute inquiry.

"You can't be a gallivanting dodger," said Fledgeby. "For you're a 'regular pity the sorrows,' you know—if you *do* know any Christian rhyme—'whose trembling limbs have borne him to'—*et cetera*. You're one of the Patriarchs; you're a shaky old card; and you can't be in love with this Lizzie?"

"O, sir!" expostulated Riah. "O, sir, sir, sir!"

"Then why," retorted Fledgeby, with some slight tinge of a blush, "don't you out with your reason for having your spoon in the soup at all?"

"Sir, I will tell you the truth. But (your pardon for the stipulation) it is in sacred confidence; it is strictly upon honor."

"Honor too!" cried Fledgeby, with a mocking lip. "Honor among Jews. Well. Cut away."

"It is upon honor, sir?" the other still stipulated, with respectful firmness.

"Oh, certainly. Honor bright," said Fledgeby.

The old man, never bidden to sit down, stood with an earnest hand laid on the back of the young man's easy chair. The young man

sat looking at the fire with a face of listening curiosity, ready to check him off and catch him tripping.

"Cut away," said Fledgeby. "Start with your motive."

"Sir, I have no motive but to help the helpless."

Mr. Fledgeby could only express the feelings to which this incredible statement gave rise in his breast, by a prodigiously long derisive sniff.

"How I came to know, and much to esteem and to respect, this damsel, I mentioned when you saw her in my poor garden on the house-top," said the Jew.

"Did you?" said Fledgeby, distrustfully. "Well, Perhaps you did, though."

"The better I knew her, the more interest I felt in her fortunes. They gathered to a crisis. I found her beset by a selfish and ungrateful brother, beset by an unacceptable wooer, beset by the snares of a more powerful lover, beset by the wiles of her own heart."

"She took to one of the chaps then?"

"Sir, it was only natural that she should incline towards him, for he had many and great advantages. But he was not of her station, and to marry her was not in his mind. Perils were closing round her, and the circle was fast darkening, when I—being as you have said, sir, too old and broken to be suspected of any feeling for her but a father's—stepped in, and counselled flight. I said, 'My daughter, there are times of moral danger when the hardest virtuous resolution to form is flight, and when the most heroic bravery is flight.' She answered, she had had this in her thoughts; but whither to fly without help she knew not, and there were none to help her. I showed her there was one to help her, and it was I. And she is gone."

"What did you do with her?" asked Fledgeby, feeling his cheek.

"I placed her," said the old man, "at a distance;" with a grave smooth outward sweep from one another of his two open hands at arm's length; "at a distance—among certain of our people, where her industry would serve her, and where she could hope to exercise it, unassailed from any quarter."

Fledgeby's eyes had come from the fire to notice the action of his hands when he said "at a distance." Fledgeby now tried (very unsuccessfully) to imitate that action, as he shook his head and said, "Placed her in that direction, did you? Oh you circular old dodger!"

With one hand across his breast and the other on the easy chair, Riah, without justifying himself, waited for further questioning. But, that it was hopeless to question him on that one reserved point, Fledgeby, with his small eyes too near together, saw full well.

"Lizzie," said Fledgeby, looking at the fire again, and then looking up. "Humph, Lizzie. You didn't tell me the other name in your garden atop of the house. I'll be more communicative with you. The other name's Hexam."

Riah bent his head in assent.

"Look here, you sir," said Fledgeby. "I have a notion I know

something of the inveigling chap, the powerful one. Has he anything to do with the law?"

"Nominally, I believe it his calling."

"I thought so. Name anything like Lightwood?"

"Sir, not at all like."

"Come, old 'un," said Fledgeby, meeting his eyes with a wink, "say the name."

"Wrayburn."

"By Jupiter!" cried Fledgeby. "That one, is it? I thought it might be the other, but I never dreamt of that one! I shouldn't object to your baulking either of the pair, dodger, for they are both conceited enough; but that one is as cool a customer as ever I met with. Got a beard besides, and presumes upon it. Well done, old 'un! Go on and prosper!"

Brightened by this unexpected commendation, Riah asked were there more instructions for him?

"No," said Fledgeby, "you may toddle now, Judah, and grope about on the orders you have got." Dismissed with those pleasing words, the old man took his broad hat and staff, and left the great presence: more as if he were some superior creature benignantly blessing Mr. Fledgeby, than the poor dependent on whom he set his foot. Left alone, Mr. Fledgeby locked his outer door, and came back to his fire.

"Well done you!" said Fascination to himself. "Slow, you may be; sure, you are!" This he twice or thrice repeated with much complacency, as he again dispersed the legs of the Turkish trousers and bent the knees.

"A tidy shot that, I flatter myself," he then soliloquised. "And a Jew brought down with it! Now, when I heard the story told at Lammle's, I didn't make a jump at Riah. Not a bit of it; I got at him by degrees." Herein he was quite accurate; it being his habit, not to jump, or leap, or make an upward spring, at anything in life, but to crawl at everything.

"I got at him," pursued Fledgeby, feeling for his whisker, "by degrees. If your Lammles or your Lightwoods had got at him anyhow, they would have asked him the question whether he hadn't something to do with that gal's disappearance. I knew a better way of going to work. Having got behind the hedge, and put him in the light, I took a shot at him and brought him down plump. Oh! It don't count for much, being a Jew, in a match against me!"

Another dry twist in place of a smile, made his face crooked here.

"As to Christians," proceeded Fledgeby, "look out, fellow-Christians, particularly you that lodge in Queer Street! I have got the run of Queer Street now, and you shall see some games there. To work a lot of power over you and you not know it, knowing as you think yourselves, would be almost worth laying out money upon. But when it comes to squeezing a profit out of you into the bargain, it's something like!"

With this apostrophe Mr. Fledgeby appropriately proceeded to divest himself of his Turkish garments, and invest himself with

Christian attire. Pending which operation, and his morning ablutions, and his anointing of himself with the last infallible preparation for the production of luxuriant and glossy hair upon the human countenance (quacks being the only sages he believed in besides usurers), the murky fog closed about him and shut him up in its sooty embrace. If it had never let him out any more, the world would have had no irreparable loss, but could have easily replaced him from its stock on hand.

## CHAPTER II.

## A RESPECTED FRIEND IN A NEW ASPECT.

In the evening of this same foggy day when the yellow window-blind of Pubsey and Co. was drawn down upon the day's work, Riah the Jew once more came forth into Saint Mary Axe. But this time he carried no bag, and was not bound on his master's affairs. He passed over London Bridge, and returned to the Middlesex shore by that of Westminster, and so, ever wading through the fog, waded to the doorstep of the dolls' dressmaker.

Miss Wren expected him. He could see her through the window by the light of her low fire—carefully banked up with damp cinders that it might last the longer and waste the less when she was out—sitting waiting for him in her bonnet. His tap at the glass roused her from the musing solitude in which she sat, and she came to the door to open it; aiding her steps with a little crutch-stick.

"Good evening, godmother!" said Miss Jenny Wren.

The old man laughed, and gave her his arm to lean on.

"Won't you come in and warm yourself, godmother?" asked Miss Jenny Wren.

"Not if you are ready, Cinderella, my dear."

"Well!" exclaimed Miss Wren, delighted. "Now you ARE a clever old boy! If we gave prizes at this establishment (but we only keep blanks), you should have the first silver medal, for taking me up so quick." As she spake thus, Miss Wren removed the key of the house-door from the keyhole and put it in her pocket, and then bustlingly closed the door, and tried it as they both stood on the step. Satisfied that her dwelling was safe, she drew one hand through the old man's arm and prepared to ply her crutch-stick with the other. But the key was an instrument of such gigantic proportions, that before they started Riah proposed to carry it.

"No, no, no! I'll carry it myself," returned Miss Wren. "I'm awfully lopsided, you know, and stowed down in my pocket it'll trim the ship. To let you into a secret, godmother, I wear my pocket on my high side, o' purpose."

With that they began their plodding through the fog.

"Yes, it was truly sharp of you, godmother," resumed Miss Wren with great approbation, "to understand me. But, you see, you are so like the fairy godmother in the bright little books! You

look so unlike the rest of people, and so much as if you had changed yourself into that shape, just this moment, with some benevolent object. Boh!" cried Miss Jenny, putting her face close to the old man's. "I can see your features, godmother, behind the beard."

"Does the fancy go to my changing other objects too, Jenny?"

"Ah! That it does! If you'd only borrow my stick and tap this piece of pavement—this dirty stone that my foot taps—it would start up a coach and six. I say! Let's believe so!"

"With all my heart," replied the good old man.

"And I'll tell you what I must ask you to do, godmother. I must ask you to be so kind as give my child a tap, and change him altogether. O my child has been such a bad, bad child of late! It worries me nearly out of my wits. Not done a stroke of work these ten days. Has had the horrors, too, and fancied that four copper-coloured men in red wanted to throw him into a fiery furnace."

"But that's dangerous, Jenny."

"Dangerous, godmother? My bad child is always dangerous, more or less. He might"—here the little creature glanced back over her shoulder at the sky—"be setting the house on fire at this present moment. I don't know who would have a child, for my part! It's no use shaking him. I have shaken him till I have made myself giddy. 'Why don't you mind your Commandments and honor your parent, you naughty old boy?' I said to him all the time. But he only whimpered and stared at me."

"What shall be changed, after him?" asked Riah in a compassionately playful voice.

"Upon my word, godmother, I am afraid I must be selfish next, and get you to set me right in the back and the legs. It's a little thing to you with your power, godmother, but it's a great deal to poor weak aching me."

There was no querulous complaining in the words, but they were not the less touching for that.

"And then?"

"Yes, and then—you know, godmother. We'll both jump up into the coach and six and go to Lizzie. This reminds me, godmother, to ask you a serious question. You are as wise as wise can be (having been brought up by the fairies), and you can tell me this: Is it better to have had a good thing and lost it, or never to have had it?"

"Explain, god-daughter."

"I feel so much more solitary and helpless without Lizzie now, than I used to feel before I knew her." (Tears were in her eyes as she said so.)

"Some beloved companionship fades out of most lives, my dear," said the Jew,—“that of a wife, and a fair daughter, and a son of promise, has faded out of my own life—but the happiness was.”

"Ah!" said Miss Wren thoughtfully, by no means convinced, and chopping the exclamation with that sharp little hatchet of hers; "then I tell you what change I think you had better begin with,

godmother. You had better change Is into Was and Was into Is, and keep them so."

"Would that suit your case? Would you not be always in pain then?" asked the old man tenderly.

"Right!" exclaimed Miss Wren with another chop. "You have changed me wiser, godmother.—Not," she added with the quaint hitch of her chin and eyes, "that you need be a very wonderful godmother to do that deed."

Thus conversing, and having crossed Westminster Bridge, they traversed the ground that Riah had lately traversed, and new ground likewise; for, when they had recrossed the Thames by way of London Bridge, they struck down by the river and held their still foggier course that way.

But previously, as they were going along, Jenny twisted her venerable friend aside to a brilliantly-lighted toy-shop window, and said: "Now look at 'em! All my work!"

This referred to a dazzling semicircle of dolls in all the colours of the rainbow, who were dressed for presentation at court, for going to balls, for going out driving, for going out on horseback, for going out walking, for going to get married, for going to help other dolls to get married, for all the gay events of life.

"Pretty, pretty, pretty!" said the old man with a clap of his hands. "Most elegant taste!"

"Glad you like 'em," returned Miss Wren, loftily. "But the fun is, godmother, how I make the great ladies try my dresses on. Though it's the hardest part of my business, and would be, even if my back were not bad and my legs queer."

He looked at her as not understanding what she said.

"Bless you, godmother," said Miss Wren, "I have to scud about town at all hours. If it was only sitting at my bench, cutting out and sewing, it would be comparatively easy work; but it's the trying-on by the great ladies that takes it out of me."

"How, the trying-on?" asked Riah.

"What a mooney godmother you are, after all!" returned Miss Wren. "Look here. There's a Drawing Room, or a grand day in the Park, or a Show, or a Fête, or what you like. Very well. I squeeze among the crowd, and I look about me. When I see a great lady very suitable for my business, I say 'You'll do, my dear!' and I take particular notice of her, and run home and cut her out and baste her. Then another day, I come scudding back again to try on, and then I take particular notice of her again. Sometimes she plainly seems to say, 'How that little creature is staring!' and sometimes likes it and sometimes don't, but much more often yes than no. All the time I am only saying to myself, 'I must hollow out a bit here; I must slope away there;' and I am making a perfect slave of her, with making her try on my doll's dress. Evening parties are severer work for me, because there's only a doorway for a full view, and what with hobbling among the wheels of the carriages and the legs of the horses, I fully expect to be run over some night. However, there I have 'em, just the same. When they go bobbing into the hall from the carriage, and catch a glimpse of my little

physiognomy poked out from behind a policeman's cape in the rain, I dare say they think I am wondering and admiring with all my eyes and heart, but they little think they're only working for my dolls! There was Lady Belinda Whitrose. I made her do double duty in one night. I said when she came out of the carriage, 'You'll do, my dear!' and I ran straight home and cut her out and basted her. Back I came again, and waited behind the men that called the carriages. Very bad night too. At last, 'Lady Belinda Whitrose's carriage! Lady Belinda Whitrose coming down!' And I made her try on—oh! and take pains about it too—before she got seated. That's Lady Belinda hanging up by the waist, much too near the gas-light for a wax one, with her toes turned in."

When they had plodded on for some time nigh the river, Riaha asked the way to a certain tavern called the Six Jolly Fellowship Porters. Following the directions he received, they arrived, after two or three puzzled stoppages for consideration, and some uncertain looking about them, at the door of Miss Abbey Potterson's dominions. A peep through the glass portion of the door revealed to them the glories of the bar, and Miss Abbey herself seated in state on her snug throne, reading the newspaper. To whom, with deference, they presented themselves.

Taking her eyes off her newspaper, and pausing with a suspended expression of countenance, as if she must finish the paragraph in hand before undertaking any other business whatever, Miss Abbey demanded, with some slight asperity: "Now then, what's for you?"

"Could we see Miss Potterson?" asked the old man, uncovering his head.

"You not only could, but you can and you do," replied the hostess.

"Might we speak with you, madam?"

By this time Miss Abbey's eyes had possessed themselves of the small figure of Miss Jenny Wren. For the closer observation of which, Miss Abbey laid aside her newspaper, rose, and looked over the half-door of the bar. The crutch-stick seemed to entreat for its owner leave to come in and rest by the fire; so, Miss Abbey opened the half-door, and said, as though replying to the crutch-stick: "Yes, come in and rest by the fire."

"My name is Riaha," said the old man, with courteous action, "and my avocation is in London city. This, my young companion——"

"Stop a bit," interposed Miss Wren. "I'll give the lady my card." She produced it from her pocket with an air, after struggling with the gigantic door-key which had got upon the top of it and kept it down. Miss Abbey, with manifest tokens of astonishment, took the diminutive document, and found it to run concisely thus:—

MISS JENNY WREN,  
DOLLS' DRESSMAKER.

*Dolls attended at their own residences.*



"Lud!" exclaimed Miss Potterson, staring. And dropped the card. "We take the liberty of coming, my young companion and I, madam," said Riah, "on behalf of Lizzie Hexam."

Miss Potterson was stooping to loosen the bonnet-strings of the dolls' dressmaker. She looked round rather angrily, and said: "Lizzie Hexam is a very proud young woman."

"She would be so proud," returned Riah, dexterously, "to stand well in your good opinion, that before she quitted London for——"

"For where, in the name of the Cape of Good Hope?" asked Miss Potterson, as though supposing her to have emigrated.

"For the country," was the cautious answer,—*"she made us promise to come and show you a paper, which she left in our hands for that special purpose. I am an unserviceable friend of hers, who began to know her after her departure from this neighbourhood. She has been for some time living with my young companion, and has been a helpful and a comfortable friend to her. Much needed, madam,"* he added, in a lower voice. "Believe me; if you knew all, much needed."

"I can believe that," said Miss Abbey, with a softening glance at the little creature.

"And if it's proud to have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts," Miss Jenny struck in, flushed, "she is proud. And if it's not, she is not."

Her set purpose of contradicting Miss Abbey point blank, was so far from offending that dread authority, as to elicit a gracious smile. "You do right, child," said Miss Abbey, "to speak well of those who deserve well of you."

"Right or wrong," muttered Miss Wren, inaudibly, with a visible hitch of her chin, "I mean to do it, and you may make up your mind to *that*, old lady."

"Here is the paper, madam," said the Jew, delivering into Miss Potterson's hands the original document drawn up by Rokesmith, and signed by Riderhood. "Will you please to read it?"

"But first of all," said Miss Abbey, "—did you ever taste shrub, child?"

Miss Wren shook her head.

"Should you like to?"

"Should if it's good," returned Miss Wren.

"You shall try. And, if you find it good, I'll mix some for you with hot water. Put your poor little feet on the fender. It's a cold, cold night, and the fog clings so." As Miss Abbey helped her to turn her chair, her loosened bonnet dropped on the floor. "Why, what lovely hair!" cried Miss Abbey. "And enough to make wigs for all the dolls in the world. What a quantity!"

"Call *that* a quantity?" returned Miss Wren. "Poof! What do you say to the rest of it?" As she spoke, she untied a band, and the golden stream fell over herself and over the chair, and flowed down to the ground. Miss Abbey's admiration seemed to increase her perplexity. She beckoned the Jew towards her, as she reached down the shrub-bottle from its niche, and whispered:

"Child, or woman?"

"Child in years," was the answer; "woman in self-reliance and trial."

"You are talking about Me, good people," thought Miss Jenny, sitting in her golden bower, warming her feet. "I can't hear what you say, but *I* know your tricks and your manners!"

The shrub, when tasted from a spoon, perfectly harmonizing with Miss Jenny's palate, a judicious amount was mixed by Miss Potter-son's skilful hands, whereof Riah too partook. After this preliminary, Miss Abbey read the document; and, as often as she raised her eyebrows in so doing, the watchful Miss Jenny accompanied the action with an expressive and emphatic sip of the shrub and water.

"As far as this goes," said Miss Abbey Potterson, when she had read it several times, and thought about it, "it proves (what didn't much need proving) that Rogue Riderhood is a villain. I have my doubts whether he is not the villain who solely did the deed; but I have no expectation of those doubts ever being cleared up now. I believe I did Lizzie's father wrong, but never Lizzie's self; because when things were at the worst I trusted her, had perfect confidence in her, and tried to persuade her to come to me for a refuge. I am very sorry to have done a man wrong, particularly when it can't be undone. Be kind enough to let Lizzie know what I say; not forgetting that if she will come to the Porters, after all, by-gones being by-gones, she will find a home at the Porters, and a friend at the Porters. She knows Miss Abbey of old, remind her, and she knows what-like the home, and what-like the friend, is likely to turn out. I am generally short and sweet—or short and sour, according as it may be and as opinions vary—" remarked Miss Abbey, "and that's about all I have got to say, and enough too."

But before the shrub and water was sipped out, Miss Abbey bethought herself that she would like to keep a copy of the paper by her. "It's not long, sir," said she to Riah, "and perhaps you wouldn't mind just jotting it down." The old man willingly put on his spectacles, and, standing at the little desk in the corner where Miss Abbey filed her receipts and kept her sample phials (customers' scores were interdicted by the strict administration of the Porters), wrote out the copy in a fair round character. As he stood there, doing his methodical penmanship, his ancient scribe-like figure intent upon the work, and the little dolls' dressmaker sitting in her golden bower before the fire, Miss Abbey had her doubts whether she had not dreamed those two rare figures into the bar of the Six Jolly Fellowships, and might not wake with a nod next moment and find them gone.

Miss Abbey had twice made the experiment of shutting her eyes and opening them again, still finding the figures there, when, dream-like, a confused hubbub arose in the public room. As she started up, and they all three looked at one another, it became a noise of clamouring voices and of the stir of feet; then all the windows were heard to be hastily thrown up, and shouts and cries came floating into the house from the river. A moment more, and Bob Gliddery came clattering along the passage, with the noise of all the nails in his boots condensed into every separate nail.

"What is it?" asked Miss Abbey.

"It's summut run down in the fog, ma'am," answered Bob. "There's ever so many people in the river."

"Tell 'em to put on all the kettles!" cried Miss Abbey. "See that the boiler's full. Get a bath out. Hang some blankets to the fire. Heat some stone bottles. Have your senses about you, you girls down stairs, and use 'em."

While Miss Abbey partly delivered these directions to Bob—whom she seized by the hair, and whose head she knocked against the wall, as a general injunction to vigilance and presence of mind—and partly hailed the kitchen with them—the company in the public room, jostling one another, rushed out to the causeway, and the outer noise increased.

"Come and look," said Miss Abbey to her visitors. They all three hurried to the vacated public room, and passed by one of the windows into the wooden verandah overhanging the river.

"Does anybody down there know what has happened?" demanded Miss Abbey, in her voice of authority.

"It's a steamer, Miss Abbey," cried one blurred figure in the fog.

"It always is a steamer, Miss Abbey," cried another.

"Them's her lights, Miss Abbey, wot you see a-blinking yonder," cried another.

"She's a-blowing off her steam, Miss Abbey, and that's what makes the fog and the noise worse, don't you see?" explained another.

Boats were putting off, torches were lighting up, people were rushing tumultuously to the water's edge. Some man fell in with a splash, and was pulled out again with a roar of laughter. The drags were called for. A cry for the life-buoy passed from mouth to mouth. It was impossible to make out what was going on upon the river, for every boat that put off sculled into the fog and was lost to view at a boat's length. Nothing was clear but that the unpopular steamer was assailed with reproaches on all sides. She was the Murderer, bound for Gallows Bay; she was the Manslaughterer, bound for Penal Settlement; her captain ought to be tried for his life; her crew ran down men in row-boats with a relish; she mashed up Thames lightermen with her paddles; she fired property with her funnels; she always was, and she always would be, wreaking destruction upon somebody or something, after the manner of all her kind. The whole bulk of the fog teemed with such taunts, uttered in tones of universal hoarseness. All the while, the steamer's lights moved spectrally a very little, as she lay-to, waiting the upshot of whatever accident had happened. Now, she began burning blue-lights. These made a luminous patch about her, as if she had set the fog on fire, and in the patch—the cries changing their note, and becoming more fitful and more excited—shadows of men and boats could be seen moving, while voices shouted: "There!" "There again!" "A couple more strokes a-head!" "Hurrah!" "Look out!" "Hold on!" "Haul in!" and the like. Lastly, with a few tumbling clots of blue fire, the night closed in dark again, the wheels of the steamer were heard revolving, and her lights glided smoothly away in the direction of the sea.

It appeared to Miss Abbey and her two companions that a considerable time had been thus occupied. There was now as eager a set towards the shore beneath the house as there had been from it; and it was only on the first boat of the rush coming in that it was known what had occurred.

"If that's Tom Tootle," Miss Abbey made proclamation, in her most commanding tones, "let him instantly come underneath here."

The submissive Tom complied, attended by a crowd.

"What is it, Tootle?" demanded Miss Abbey.

"It's a foreign steamer, miss, run down a wherry."

"How many in the wherry?"

"One man, Miss Abbey."

"Found?"

"Yes. He's been under water a long time, Miss; but they've grappled up the body."

"Let 'em bring it here. You, Bob Gliddery, shut the house-door and stand by it on the inside, and don't you open till I tell you. Any police down there?"

"Here, Miss Abbey," was official rejoinder.

"After they have brought the body in, keep the crowd out, will you? And help Bob Gliddery to shut 'em out."

"All right, Miss Abbey."

The autocratic landlady withdrew into the house with Riah and Miss Jenny, and disposed those forces, one on either side of her, within the half-door of the bar, as behind a breastwork.

"You two stand close here," said Miss Abbey, "and you'll come to no hurt, and see it brought in. Bob, you stand by the door."

That sentinel, smartly giving his rolled shirt-sleeves an extra and a final tuck on his shoulders, obeyed.

Sound of advancing voices, sound of advancing steps. Shuffle and talk without. Momentary pause. Two peculiarly blunt knocks or pokes at the door, as if the dead man arriving on his back were striking at it with the soles of his motionless feet.

"That's the stretcher, or the shutter, whichever of the two they are carrying," said Miss Abbey, with experienced ear. "Open, you Bob!"

Door opened. Heavy tread of laden men. A halt. A rush. Stoppage of rush. Door shut. Baffled hoots from the vexed souls of disappointed outsiders.

"Come on, men!" said Miss Abbey; for so potent was she with her subjects that even then the bearers awaited her permission. "First floor."

The entry being low, and the staircase being low, they so took up the burden they had set down, as to carry that low. The recumbent figure, in passing, lay hardly as high as the half door.

Miss Abbey started back at sight of it. "Why, good God!" said she, turning to her two companions, "that's the very man who made the declaration we have just had in our hands. That's Riderhood!"

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SAME RESPECTED FRIEND IN MORE ASPECTS THAN ONE.

IN sooth, it is Riderhood and no other, or it is the outer husk and shell of Riderhood and no other, that is borne into Miss Abbey's first-floor bedroom. Supple to twist and turn as the Rogue has ever been, he is sufficiently rigid now; and not without much shuffling of attendant feet, and tilting of his bier this way and that way, and peril even of his sliding off it and being tumbled in a heap over the balustrades, can he be got up stairs.

"Fetch a doctor," quoth Miss Abbey. And then, "Fetch his daughter." On both of which errands, quick messengers depart.

The doctor-seeking messenger meets the doctor halfway, coming under convoy of police. Doctor examines the dank carcase, and pronounces, not hopefully, that it is worth while trying to reanimate the same. All the best means are at once in action, and everybody present lends a hand, and a heart and soul. No one has the least regard for the man; with them all, he has been an object of avoidance, suspicion, and aversion; but the spark of life within him is curiously separable from himself now, and they have a deep interest in it, probably because it is life, and they are living and must die.

In answer to the doctor's inquiry how did it happen, and was anyone to blame, Tom Tootle gives in his verdict, unavoidable accident and no one to blame but the sufferer. "He was slinking about in his boat," says Tom, "which slinking were, not to speak ill of the dead, the manner of the man, when he come right athwart the steamer's bows and she cut him in two." Mr. Tootle is so far figurative, touching the dismemberment, as that he means the boat, and not the man. For, the man lies whole before them.

Captain Joey, the bottle-nosed regular customer in the glazed hat, is a pupil of the much-respected old school, and (having insinuated himself into the chamber, in the execution of the important service of carrying the drowned man's neck-kerchief) favours the doctor with a sagacious old-scholastic suggestion that the body should be hung up by the heels, "sim'lar," says Captain Joey, "to mutton in a butcher's shop," and should then, as a particularly choice manœuvre for promoting easy respiration, be rolled upon casks. These scraps of the wisdom of the captain's ancestors are received with such speechless indignation by Miss Abbey, that she instantly seizes the Captain by the collar, and without a single word ejects him, not presuming to remonstrate, from the scene.

There then remain, to assist the doctor and Tom, only those three other regular customers, Bob Glamour, William Williams, and Jonathan (family name of the latter, if any, unknown to mankind), who are quite enough. Miss Abbey having looked in to make sure that nothing is wanted, descends to the bar, and there awaits the result, with the gentle Jew and Miss Jenny Wren.

If you are not gone for good, Mr. Riderhood, it would be something

to know where you are hiding at present. This flabby lump of mortality that we work so hard at with such patient perseverance, yields no sign of you. If you are gone for good, Rogue, it is very solemn, and if you are coming back, it is hardly less so. Nay, in the suspense and mystery of the latter question, involving that of where you may be now, there is a solemnity even added to that of death, making us who are in attendance alike afraid to look on you and to look off you, and making those below start at the least sound of a creaking plank in the floor.

Stay! Did that eyelid tremble? So the doctor, breathing low, and closely watching, asks himself.

No.

Did that nostril twitch?

No.

This artificial respiration ceasing, do I feel any faint flutter under my hand upon the chest?

No.

Over and over again No. No. But try over and over again, nevertheless.

See! A token of life! An indubitable token of life! The spark may smoulder and go out, or it may glow and expand, but see! The four rough fellows, seeing, shed tears. Neither Riderhood in this world, nor Riderhood in the other, could draw tears from them; but a striving human soul between the two can do it easily.

He is struggling to come back. Now, he is almost here, now he is far away again. Now he is struggling harder to get back. And yet—like us all, when we swoon—like us all, every day of our lives when we wake—he is instinctively unwilling to be restored to the consciousness of this existence, and would be left dormant, if he could.

Bob Gliddery returns with Pleasant Riderhood, who was out when sought for, and hard to find. She has a shawl over her head, and her first action, when she takes it off weeping, and curtsies to Miss Abbey, is to wind her hair up.

"Thank you, Miss Abbey, for having father here."

"I am bound to say, girl, I didn't know who it was," returns Miss Abbey; "but I hope it would have been pretty much the same if I had known."

Poor Pleasant, fortified with a sip of brandy, is ushered into the first-floor chamber. She could not express much sentiment about her father if she were called upon to pronounce his funeral oration, but she has a greater tenderness for him than he ever had for her, and crying bitterly when she sees him stretched unconscious, asks the doctor, with clasped hands: "Is there no hope, sir? O poor father! Is poor father dead?"

To which the doctor, on one knee beside the body, busy and watchful, only rejoins without looking round: "Now, my girl, unless you have the self-command to be perfectly quiet, I cannot allow you to remain in the room."

Pleasant, consequently, wipes her eyes with her back-hair, which is in fresh need of being wound up, and having got it out of the way, watches with terrified interest all that goes on. Her natural

woman's aptitude soon renders her able to give a little help. Anticipating the doctor's want of this or that, she quietly has it ready for him, and so by degrees is intrusted with the charge of supporting her father's head upon her arm.

It is something so new to Pleasant to see her father an object of sympathy and interest, to find any one very willing to tolerate his society in this world, not to say pressingly and soothingly entreating him to belong to it, that it gives her a sensation she never experienced before. Some hazy idea that if affairs could remain thus for a long time it would be a respectable change, floats in her mind. Also some vague idea that the old evil is drowned out of him, and that if he should happily come back to resume his occupation of the empty form that lies upon the bed, his spirit will be altered. In which state of mind she kisses the stony lips, and quite believes that the impassive hand she chafes will revive a tender hand, if it revive ever.

Sweet delusion for Pleasant Riderhood. But they minister to him with such extraordinary interest, their anxiety is so keen, their vigilance is so great, their excited joy grows so intense as the signs of life strengthen, that how can she resist it, poor thing! And now he begins to breathe naturally, and he stirs, and the doctor declares him to have come back from that inexplicable journey where he stopped on the dark road, and to be here.

Tom Tootle, who is nearest to the doctor when he says this, grasps the doctor fervently by the hand. Bob Glamour, William Williams, and Jonathan of the no surname, all shake hands with one another round, and with the doctor too. Bob Glamour blows his nose, and Jonathan of the no surname is moved to do likewise, but lacking a pocket handkerchief abandons that outlet for his emotion. Pleasant sheds tears deserving her own name, and her sweet delusion is at its height.

There is intelligence in his eyes. He wants to ask a question. He wonders where he is. Tell him.

"Father, you were run down on the river, and are at Miss Abbey Potterson's."

He stares at his daughter, stares all around him, closes his eyes, and lies slumbering on her arm.

The short-lived delusion begins to fade. The low, bad, unimpressible face is coming up from the depths of the river, or what other depths, to the surface again. As he grows warm, the doctor and the four men cool. As his lineaments soften with life, their faces and their hearts harden to him.

"He will do now," says the doctor, washing his hands, and looking at the patient with growing disfavour.

"Many a better man," moralizes Tom Tootle with a gloomy shake of the head, "ain't had his luck."

"It's to be hoped he'll make a better use of his life," says Bob Glamour, "than I expect he will."

"Or than he done afore," adds William Williams.

"But no, not he!" says Jonathan of the no surname, clinching the quartette.

They speak in a low tone because of his daughter, but she sees that they have all drawn off, and that they stand in a group at the other end of the room, shunning him. It would be too much to suspect them of being sorry that he didn't die when he had done so much towards it, but they clearly wish that they had had a better subject to bestow their pains on. Intelligence is conveyed to Miss Abbey in the bar, who reappears on the scene, and contemplates from a distance, holding whispered discourse with the doctor. The spark of life was deeply interesting while it was in abeyance, but now that it has got established in Mr. Riderhood, there appears to be a general desire that circumstances had admitted of its being developed in anybody else, rather than that gentleman.

"However," says Miss Abbey, cheering them up, "you have done your duty like good and true men, and you had better come down and take something at the expense of the Porters."

This they all do, leaving the daughter watching the father. To whom, in their absence, Bob Glidderly presents himself.

"His gills looks rum; don't they?" says Bob, after inspecting the patient.

Pleasant faintly nods.

"His gills 'll look rummer when he wakes; won't they?" says Bob.

Pleasant hopes not. Why?

"When he finds himself here, you know," Bob explains. "Cause Miss Abbey forbid him the house and ordered him out of it. But what you may call the Fates ordered him into it again. Which is rumness; ain't it?"

"He wouldn't have come here of his own accord," returns poor Pleasant, with an effort at a little pride.

"No," retorts Bob. "Nor he wouldn't have been let in, if he had."

The short delusion is quite dispelled now. As plainly as she sees on her arm the old father, unimproved, Pleasant sees that everybody there will cut him when he recovers consciousness. "I'll take him away ever so soon as I can," thinks Pleasant with a sigh; "he's best at home."

Presently they all return, and wait for him to become conscious that they will all be glad to get rid of him. Some clothes are got together for him to wear, his own being saturated with water, and his present dress being composed of blankets.

Becoming more and more uncomfortable, as though the prevalent dislike were finding him out somewhere in his sleep and expressing itself to him, the patient at last opens his eyes wide, and is assisted by his daughter to sit up in bed.

"Well, Riderhood," says the doctor, "how do you feel?"

He replies gruffly, "Nothing to boast on." Having, in fact, returned to life in an uncommonly sulky state.

"I don't mean to preach; but I hope," says the doctor, gravely shaking his head, "that this escape may have a good effect upon you, Riderhood."

The patient's discontented growl of a reply is not intelligible; his



daughter, however, could interpret, if she would, that what he says is, he "don't want no Poll-Parrotin'."

Mr. Riderhood next demands his shirt; and draws it on over his head (with his daughter's help) exactly as if he had just had a Fight.

"Warn't it a steamer?" he pauses to ask her.

"Yes, father."

"I'll have the law on her, bust her! and make her pay for it."

He then buttons his linen very moodily, twice or thrice stopping to examine his arms and hands, as if to see what punishment he has received in the Fight. He then doggedly demands his other garments, and slowly gets them on, with an appearance of great malevolence towards his late opponent and all the spectators. He has an impression that his nose is bleeding, and several times draws the back of his hand across it, and looks for the result, in a pugilistic manner, greatly strengthening that incongruous resemblance.

"Where's my fur cap?" he asks in a surly voice, when he has shuffled his clothes on.

"In the river," somebody rejoins.

"And warn't there no honest man to pick it up? O' course there was though, and to cut off with it arterwards. You are a rare lot, all on you!"

Thus, Mr. Riderhood: taking from the hands of his daughter, with special ill-will, a lent cap, and grumbling as he pulls it down over his ears. Then, getting on his unsteady legs, leaning heavily upon her, and growling "Hold still, can't you? What! You must be a staggering next, must you?" he takes his departure out of the ring in which he has had that little turn-up with Death.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### A HAPPY RETURN OF THE DAY.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilfer had seen a full quarter of a hundred more anniversaries of their wedding day than Mr. and Mrs. Lammle had seen of theirs, but they still celebrated the occasion in the bosom of their family. Not that these celebrations ever resulted in anything particularly agreeable, or that the family was ever disappointed by that circumstance on account of having looked forward to the return of the auspicious day with sanguine anticipations of enjoyment. It was kept morally, rather as a Fast than a Feast, enabling Mrs. Wilfer to hold a sombre darkling state, which exhibited that impressive woman in her choicest colours.

The noble lady's condition on these delightful occasions was one compounded of heroic endurance and heroic forgiveness. Lurid indications of the better marriages she might have made, shone athwart the awful gloom of her composure, and fitfully revealed the cherub as a little monster unaccountably favoured by Heaven, who had possessed himself of a blessing for which many of his superiors

had sued and contended in vain. So firmly had this his position towards his treasure become established, that when the anniversary arrived, it always found him in an apologetic state. It is not impossible that his modest penitence may have even gone the length of sometimes severely reproving him for that he ever took the liberty of making so exalted a character his wife.

As for the children of the union, their experience of these festivals had been sufficiently uncomfortable to lead them annually to wish, when out of their tenderest years, either that Ma had married somebody else instead of much-teased Pa, or that Pa had married somebody else instead of Ma. When there came to be but two sisters left at home, the daring mind of Bella on the next of these occasions scaled the height of wondering with droll vexation "what on earth Pa ever could have seen in Ma, to induce him to make such a little fool of himself as to ask her to have him."

The revolving year now bringing the day round in its orderly sequence, Bella arrived in the Boffin chariot to assist at the celebration. It was the family custom when the day recurred, to sacrifice a pair of fowls on the altar of Hymen; and Bella had sent a note beforehand, to intimate that she would bring the votive offering with her. So, Bella and the fowls, by the united energies of two horses, two men, four wheels, and a plum-pudding carriage dog with as uncomfortable a collar on as if he had been George the Fourth, were deposited at the door of the parental dwelling. They were there received by Mrs. Wilfer in person, whose dignity on this, as on most special occasions, was heightened by a mysterious toothache.

"I shall not require the carriage at night," said Bella. "I shall walk back."

The male domestic of Mrs. Boffin touched his hat, and in the act of departure had an awful glare bestowed upon him by Mrs. Wilfer, intended to carry deep into his audacious soul the assurance that, whatever his private suspicions might be, male domestics in livery were no rarity there.

"Well, dear Ma," said Bella, "and how do you do?"

"I am as well, Bella," replied Mrs. Wilfer, "as can be expected."

"Dear me, Ma," said Bella; "you talk as if one was just born!"

"That's exactly what Ma has been doing," interposed Lavvy, over the maternal shoulder, "ever since we got up this morning. It's all very well to laugh, Bella, but anything more exasperating it is impossible to conceive."

Mrs. Wilfer, with a look too full of majesty to be accompanied by any words, attended both her daughters to the kitchen, where the sacrifice was to be prepared.

"Mr. Rokesmith," said she, resignedly, "has been so polite as to place his sitting-room at our disposal to-day. You will therefore, Bella, be entertained in the humble abode of your parents, so far in accordance with your present style of living, that there will be a drawing-room for your reception as well as a dining-room. Your papa invited Mr. Rokesmith to partake of our lowly fare. In excusing himself on account of a particular engagement, he offered the use of his apartment."

Bella happened to know that he had no engagement out of his own room at Mr. Boffin's, but she approved of his staying away. "We should only have put one another out of countenance," she thought, "and we do that quite often enough as it is."

Yet she had sufficient curiosity about his room, to run up to it with the least possible delay, and make a close inspection of its contents. It was tastefully though economically furnished, and very neatly arranged. There were shelves and stands of books, English, French, and Italian; and in a portfolio on the writing-table there were sheets upon sheets of memoranda and calculations in figures, evidently referring to the Boffin property. On that table also, carefully backed with canvas, varnished, mounted, and rolled like a map, was the placard descriptive of the murdered man who had come from afar to be her husband. She shrank from this ghostly surprise, and felt quite frightened as she rolled and tied it up again. Peeping about here and there, she came upon a print, a graceful head of a pretty woman, elegantly framed, hanging in the corner by the easy chair. "Oh, indeed, sir!" said Bella, after stopping to ruminate before it. "Oh, indeed, sir! I fancy I can guess whom you think *that's* like. But I'll tell you what it's much more like—your impudence!" Having said which she decamped: not solely because she was offended, but because there was nothing else to look at.

"Now, Ma," said Bella, reappearing in the kitchen with some remains of a blush, "you and Lavvy think magnificent me fit for nothing, but I intend to prove the contrary. I mean to be Cook to-day."

"Hold!" rejoined her majestic mother. "I cannot permit it. Cook, in that dress!"

"As for my dress, Ma," returned Bella, merrily searching in a dresser-drawer, "I mean to apron it and towel it all over the front; and as to permission, I mean to do without."

"You cook?" said Mrs. Wilfer. "You, who never cooked when you were at home?"

"Yes, Ma," returned Bella; "that is precisely the state of the case."

She girded herself with a white apron, and busily with knots and pins contrived a bib to it, coming close and tight under her chin, as if it had caught her round the neck to kiss her. Over this bib her dimples looked delightful, and under it her pretty figure not less so. "Now, Ma," said Bella, pushing back her hair from her temples with both hands, "what's first?"

"First," returned Mrs. Wilfer solemnly, "if you persist in what I cannot but regard as conduct utterly incompatible with the equipage in which you arrived—"

("Which I do, Ma.")

"First, then, you put the fowls down to the fire."

"To—be—sure!" cried Bella; "and flour them, and twirl them round, and there they go!" sending them spinning at a great rate. "What's next, Ma?"

"Next," said Mrs. Wilfer with a wave of her gloves, expressive of abdication under protest from the culinary throne, "I would recom-

mend examination of the bacon in the saucepan on the fire, and also of the potatoes by the application of a fork. Preparation of the greens will further become necessary if you persist in this unseemly demeanour."

"As of course I do, Ma."

Persisting, Bella gave her attention to one thing and forgot the other, and gave her attention to the other and forgot the third, and remembering the third was distracted by the fourth, and made amends whenever she went wrong by giving the unfortunate fowls an extra spin, which made their chance of ever getting cooked exceedingly doubtful. But it was pleasant cookery too. Meantime Miss Lavinia, oscillating between the kitchen and the opposite room, prepared the dining-table in the latter chamber. This office she (always doing her household spiriting with unwillingness) performed in a startling series of whisks and bumps; laying the table-cloth as if she were raising the wind, putting down the glasses and salt-cellars as if she were knocking at the door, and clashing the knives and forks in a skirmishing manner suggestive of hand-to-hand conflict.

"Look at Ma," whispered Lavinia to Bella when this was done, and they stood over the roasting fowls. "If one was the most dutiful child in existence (of course on the whole one hopes one is), isn't she enough to make one want to poke her with something wooden, sitting there bolt upright in a corner?"

"Only suppose," returned Bella, "that poor Pa was to sit bolt upright in another corner."

"My dear, he couldn't do it," said Lavvy. "Pa would loll directly. But indeed I do not believe there ever was any human creature who could keep so bolt upright as Ma, or put such an amount of aggravation into one back! What's the matter, Ma? Ain't you well, Ma?"

"Doubtless I am very well," returned Mrs. Wilfer, turning her eyes upon her youngest born, with scornful fortitude. "What should be the matter with Me?"

"You don't seem very brisk, Ma," retorted Lavvy the bold.

"Brisk?" repeated her parent, "Brisk? Whence the low expression, Lavinia? If I am uncomplaining, if I am silently contented with my lot, let that suffice for my family."

"Well, Ma," returned Lavvy, "since you will force it out of me, I must respectfully take leave to say that your family are no doubt under the greatest obligations to you for having an annual toothache on your wedding day, and that it's very disinterested in you, and an immense blessing to them. Still, on the whole, it is possible to be too boastful even of that boon."

"You incarnation of sauciness," said Mrs. Wilfer, "do you speak like that to me? On this day, of all days in the year? Pray do you know what would have become of you, if I had not bestowed my hand upon R. W., your father, on this day?"

"No, Ma," replied Lavvy, "I really do not; and, with the greatest respect for your abilities and information, I very much doubt if you do either."

Whether or no the sharp vigour of this sally on a weak point of Mrs. Wilfer's entrenchments might have routed that heroine for the time, is rendered uncertain by the arrival of a flag of truce in the person of Mr. George Sampson: bidden to the feast as a friend of the family, whose affections were now understood to be in course of transference from Bella to Lavinia, and whom Lavinia kept—possibly in remembrance of his bad taste in having overlooked her in the first instance—under a course of stinging discipline.

"I congratulate you, Mrs. Wilfer," said Mr. George Sampson, who had meditated this neat address while coming along, "on the day." Mrs. Wilfer thanked him with a magnanimous sigh, and again became an unresisting prey to that inscrutable toothache.

"I am surprised," said Mr. Sampson feebly, "that Miss Bella condescends to cook."

Here Miss Lavinia descended on the ill-starred young gentleman with a crushing supposition that at all events it was no business of his. This disposed of Mr. Sampson in a melancholy retirement of spirit, until the cherub arrived, whose amazement at the lovely woman's occupation was great.

However, she persisted in dishing the dinner as well as cooking it, and then sat down, bibless and apronless, to partake of it as an illustrious guest: Mrs. Wilfer first responding to her husband's cheerful "For what we are about to receive—" with a sepulchral Amen, calculated to cast a damp upon the stoutest appetite.

"But what," said Bella, as she watched the carving of the fowls, "makes them pink inside, I wonder, Pa! Is it the breed?"

"No, I don't think it's the breed, my dear," returned Pa. "I rather think it is because they are not done."

"They ought to be," said Bella.

"Yes, I am aware they ought to be, my dear," rejoined her father, "but they—ain't."

So, the gridiron was put in requisition, and the good-tempered cherub, who was often as un-cherubically employed in his own family as if he had been in the employment of some of the Old Masters, undertook to grill the fowls. Indeed, except in respect of staring about him (a branch of the public service to which the pictorial cherub is much addicted), this domestic cherub discharged as many odd functions as his prototype; with the difference, say, that he performed with a blacking-brush on the family's boots, instead of performing on enormous wind instruments and double-basses, and that he conducted himself with cheerful alacrity to much useful purpose, instead of foreshortening himself in the air with the vaguest intentions.

Bella helped him with his supplemental cookery, and made him very happy, but put him in mortal terror too by asking him when they sat down at table again, how he supposed they cooked fowls at the Greenwich dinners, and whether he believed they really were such pleasant dinners as people said? His secret winks and nods of remonstrance, in reply, made the mischievous Bella laugh until she choked, and then Lavinia was obliged to slap her on the back, and then she laughed the more.

But her mother was a fine corrective at the other end of the table; to whom her father, in the innocence of his good-fellowship, at intervals appealed with: "My dear, I am afraid you are not enjoying yourself?"

"Why so, R. W.?" she would sonorously reply.

"Because, my dear, you seem a little out of sorts."

"Not at all," would be the rejoinder, in exactly the same tone.

"Would you take a merry-thought, my dear?"

"Thank you. I will take whatever you please, R. W."

"Well, but my dear, do you like it?"

"I like it as well as I like anything, R. W." The stately woman would then, with a meritorious appearance of devoting herself to the general good, pursue her dinner as if she were feeding somebody else on high public grounds.

Bella had brought dessert and two bottles of wine, thus shedding unprecedented splendour on the occasion. Mrs. Wilfer did the honors of the first glass by proclaiming: "R. W. I drink to you."

"Thank you, my dear. And I to you."

"Pa and Ma!" said Bella.

"Permit me," Mrs. Wilfer interposed, with outstretched glove.

"No. I think not. I drank to your papa. If, however, you insist on including me, I can in gratitude offer no objection."

"Why, Lor, Ma," interposed Lavvy the bold, "isn't it the day that made you and Pa one and the same? I have no patience!"

"By whatever other circumstance the day may be marked, it is not the day, Lavinia, on which I will allow a child of mine to pounce upon me. I beg—nay, command!—that you will not pounce. R. W., it is appropriate to recall that it is for you to command and for me to obey. It is your house, and you are master at your own table. Both our healths!" Drinking the toast with tremendous stiffness.

"I really am a little afraid, my dear," hinted the cherub meekly, "that you are not enjoying yourself?"

"On the contrary," returned Mrs. Wilfer, "quite so. Why should I not?"

"I thought, my dear, that perhaps your face might——"

"My face might be a martyrdom, but what would that import, or who should know it, if I smiled?"

And she did smile; manifestly freezing the blood of Mr. George Sampson by so doing. For that young gentleman, catching her smiling eye, was so very much appalled by its expression as to cast about in his thoughts concerning what he had done to bring it down upon himself.

"The mind naturally falls," said Mrs. Wilfer, "shall I say into a reverie, or shall I say into a retrospect? on a day like this."

Lavvy, sitting with defiantly folded arms, replied (but not audibly), "For goodness' sake say whichever of the two you like best, Ma, and get it over."

"The mind," pursued Mrs. Wilfer in an oratorical manner, "naturally reverts to Papa and Mamma—I here allude to my parents—at a period before the earliest dawn of this day. I was considered tall;

perhaps I was. Papa and Mamma were unquestionably tall. I have rarely seen a finer woman than my mother; never than my father."

The irrepressible Lavvy remarked aloud, "Whatever grandpapa was, he wasn't a female."

"Your grandpapa," retorted Mrs. Wilfer, with an awful look, and in an awful tone, "was what I describe him to have been, and would have struck any of his grandchildren to the earth who presumed to question it. It was one of mamma's cherished hopes that I should become united to a tall member of society. It may have been a weakness, but if so, it was equally the weakness, I believe, of King Frederick of Prussia." These remarks being offered to Mr. George Sampson, who had not the courage to come out for single combat, but lurked with his chest under the table and his eyes cast down, Mrs. Wilfer proceeded, in a voice of increasing sternness and impressiveness, until she should force that skulker to give himself up. "Mamma would appear to have had an indefinable foreboding of what afterwards happened, for she would frequently urge upon me, 'Not a little man. Promise me, my child, not a little man. Never, never, never, marry a little man!' Papa also would remark to me (he possessed extraordinary humour), 'that a family of whales must not ally themselves with sprats.' His company was eagerly sought, as may be supposed, by the wits of the day, and our house was their continual resort. I have known as many as three copper-plate engravers exchanging the most exquisite sallies and retorts there, at one time." (Here Mr. Sampson delivered himself captive, and said, with an uneasy movement on his chair, that three was a large number, and it must have been highly entertaining.) "Among the most prominent members of that distinguished circle, was a gentleman measuring six feet four in height. *He was not an engraver.*" (Here Mr. Sampson said, with no reason whatever, Of course not.) "This gentleman was so obliging as to honor me with attentions which I could not fail to understand." (Here Mr. Sampson murmured that when it came to that, you could always tell.) "I immediately announced to both my parents that those attentions were misplaced, and that I could not favour his suit. They inquired was he too tall? I replied it was not the stature, but the intellect was too lofty. At our house, I said, the tone was too brilliant, the pressure was too high, to be maintained by me, a mere woman, in every-day domestic life. I well remember mamma's clasping her hands, and exclaiming 'This will end in a little man!'" (Here Mr. Sampson glanced at his host and shook his head with despondency.) "She afterwards went so far as to predict that it would end in a little man whose mind would be below the average, but that was in what I may denominate a paroxysm of maternal disappointment. Within a month," said Mrs. Wilfer, deepening her voice, as if she were relating a terrible ghost story, "within a month, I first saw R. W. my husband. Within a year, I married him. It is natural for the mind to recall these dark coincidences on the present day."

Mr. Sampson at length released from the custody of Mrs. Wilfer's eye, now drew a long breath, and made the original and striking remark

that there was no accounting for these sort of presentiments. R. W. scratched his head and looked apologetically all round the table until he came to his wife, when observing her as it were shrouded in a more sombre veil than before, he once more hinted, "My dear, I am really afraid you are not altogether enjoying yourself?" To which she once more replied, "On the contrary, R. W. Quite so."

The wretched Mr. Sampson's position at this agreeable entertainment was truly pitiable. For, not only was he exposed defenceless to the harangues of Mrs. Wilfer, but he received the utmost contumely at the hands of Lavinia; who, partly to show Bella that she (Lavinia) could do what she liked with him, and partly to pay him off for still obviously admiring Bella's beauty, led him the life of a dog. Illuminated on the one hand by the stately graces of Mrs. Wilfer's oratory, and shadowed on the other by the checks and frowns of the young lady to whom he had devoted himself in his destitution, the sufferings of this young gentleman were distressing to witness. If his mind for the moment reeled under them, it may be urged, in extenuation of its weakness, that it was constitutionally a knock-knee'd mind and never very strong upon its legs.

The rosy hours were thus beguiled until it was time for Bella to have Pa's escort back. The dimples duly tied up in the bonnet-strings and the leave-taking done, they got out into the air, and the cherub drew a long breath as if he found it refreshing.

"Well, dear Pa," said Bella, "the anniversary may be considered over."

"Yes, my dear," returned the cherub, "there's another of 'em gone."

Bella drew his arm closer through hers as they walked along, and gave it a number of consolatory pats. "Thank you, my dear," he said, as if she had spoken; "I am all right, my dear. Well, and how do you get on, Bella?"

"I am not at all improved, Pa."

"Ain't you really though?"

"No, Pa. On the contrary, I am worse."

"Lor!" said the cherub.

"I am worse, Pa. I make so many calculations how much a year I must have when I marry, and what is the least I can manage to do with, that I am beginning to get wrinkles over my nose. Did you notice any wrinkles over my nose this evening, Pa?"

Pa laughing at this, Bella gave him two or three shakes.

"You won't laugh, sir, when you see your lovely woman turning haggard. You had better be prepared in time, I can tell you. I shall not be able to keep my greediness for money out of my eyes long, and when you see it there you'll be sorry, and serve you right for not being warned in time. Now, sir, we entered into a bond of confidence. Have you anything to impart?"

"I thought it was you who was to impart, my love."

"Oh! did you indeed, sir? Then why didn't you ask me, the moment we came out? The confidences of lovely women are not to be slighted. However, I forgive you this once, and look here, Pa; that's"—Bella laid the little forefinger of her right glove on her lip,



and then laid it on her father's lip—"that's a kiss for you. And now I am going seriously to tell you—let me see how many—four secrets. Mind! Serious, grave, weighty secrets. Strictly between ourselves."

"Number one, my dear?" said her father, settling her arm comfortably and confidentially.

"Number one," said Bella, "will electrify you, Pa. Who do you think has?"—she was confused here in spite of her merry way of beginning—"has made an offer to me?"

Pa looked in her face, and looked at the ground, and looked in her face again, and declared he could never guess.

"Mr. Rokesmith."

"You don't tell me so, my dear!"

"Mis—ter Roke—smith, Pa," said Bella separating the syllables for emphasis. "What do you say to *that*?"

Pa answered quietly with the counter-question, "What did *you* say to that, my love?"

"I said No," returned Bella sharply. "Of course."

"Yes. Of course," said her father, meditating.

"And I told him why I thought it a betrayal of trust on his part, and an affront to me," said Bella.

"Yes. To be sure. I am astonished indeed. I wonder he committed himself without seeing more of his way first. Now I think of it, I suspect he always has admired you though, my dear."

"A hackney coachman may admire me," remarked Bella, with a touch of her mother's loftiness.

"It's highly probable, my love. Number two, my dear?"

"Number two, Pa, is much to the same purpose, though not so preposterous. Mr. Lightwood would propose to me, if I would let him."

"Then I understand, my dear, that you don't intend to let him?"

Bella again saying, with her former emphasis, "Why, of course not!" her father felt himself bound to echo, "Of course not."

"I don't care for him," said Bella.

"That's enough," her father interposed.

"No, Pa, it's *not* enough," rejoined Bella, giving him another shake or two. "Haven't I told you what a mercenary little wretch I am? It only becomes enough when he has no money, and no clients, and no expectations, and no anything but debts."

"Hah!" said the cherub, a little depressed. "Number three, my dear?"

"Number three, Pa, is a better thing. A generous thing, a noble thing, a delightful thing. Mrs. Boffin has herself told me, as a secret, with her own kind lips—and truer lips never opened or closed in this life, I am sure—that they wish to see me well married; and that when I marry with their consent they will portion me most handsomely." Here the grateful girl burst out crying very heartily.

"Don't cry, my darling," said her father, with his hand to his eyes; "it's excusable in me to be a little overcome when I find that my dear favourite child is, after all disappointments, to be so provided for and so raised in the world; but don't *you* cry, don't *you*

cry. I am very thankful I congratulate you with all my heart, my dear." The good soft little fellow, drying his eyes, here, Bella put her arms round his neck and tenderly kissed him on the high road, passionately telling him he was the best of fathers and the best of friends, and that on her wedding-morning she would go down on her knees to him and beg his pardon for having ever teased him or seemed insensible to the worth of such a patient, sympathetic, genial, fresh young heart. At every one of her adjectives she redoubled her kisses, and finally kissed his hat off, and then laughed immoderately when the wind took it and he ran after it.

When he had recovered his hat and his breath, and they were going on again once more, said her father then: "Number four, my dear?"

Bella's countenance fell in the midst of her mirth. "After all, perhaps I had better put off number four, Pa. Let me try once more, if for never so short a time, to hope that it may not really be so."

The change in her, strengthened the cherub's interest in number four, and he said quietly: "May not be so, my dear? May not be how, my dear?"

Bella looked at him pensively, and shook her head.

"And yet I know right well it is so, Pa. I know it only too well."

"My love," returned her father, "you make me quite uncomfortable. Have you said No to anybody else, my dear?"

"No, Pa."

"Yes to anybody?" he suggested, lifting up his eyebrows.

"No, Pa."

"Is there anybody else who would take his chance between Yes and No, if you would let him, my dear?"

"Not that I know of, Pa."

"There can't be somebody who won't take his chance when you want him to?" said the cherub, as a last resource.

Why, of course not, Pa," said Bella, giving him another shake or two.

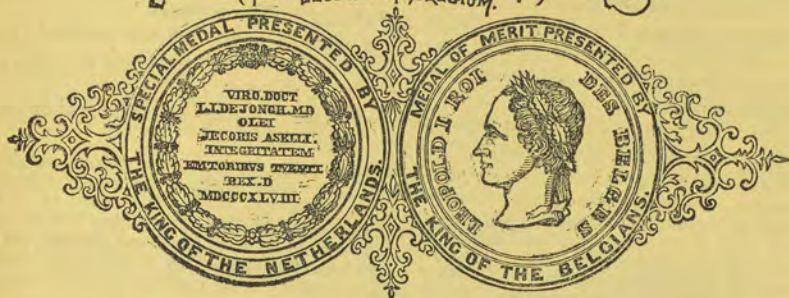
"No, of course not," he assented. "Bella, my dear, I am afraid I must either have no sleep to-night, or I must press for number four."

"Oh, Pa, there is no good in number four! I am so sorry for it, I am so unwilling to believe it, I have tried so earnestly not to see it, that it is very hard to tell, even to you. But Mr. Boffin is being spoilt by prosperity, and is changing every day."

"My dear Bella, I hope and trust not."

"I have hoped and trusted not too, Pa; but every day he changes for the worse, and for the worse. Not to me—he is always much the same to me—but to others about him. Before my eyes he grows suspicious, capricious, hard, tyrannical, unjust. If ever a good man were ruined by good fortune, it is my benefactor. And yet, Pa, think how terrible the fascination of money is! I see this, and hate this, and dread this, and don't know but that money might make a much worse change in me. And yet I have money always in my thoughts and my desires; and the whole life I place before myself is money, money, money, and what money can make of life!"

**DR. DE JONGH'S**  
(KNIGHT OF THE ORDER OF)  
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## LIGHT-BROWN COD LIVER OIL.

*Prescribed by the most eminent Medical Men as the safest, speediest, and most effectual remedy for*

**CONSUMPTION, CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA, COUGHS,  
GENERAL DEBILITY, RHEUMATISM, GOUT, DISEASES OF THE SKIN,  
RICKETS, INFANTILE WASTING, AND ALL SCROFULOUS AFFECTIONS.**

THE invariable purity, palatableness, speedy efficacy, and consequent economy of this unrivalled preparation, have obtained for it the general approval and unqualified confidence of the Medical Profession, and, notwithstanding the active and in too many instances unscrupulous opposition of interested dealers, an unprecedented amount of public patronage.

The immeasurable therapeutic superiority of Dr. DE JONGH'S Cod Liver Oil over every other variety is incontestably established by the recorded opinions of the most distinguished Physicians and Surgeons in all parts of the world. In numberless instances, where other kinds of Cod Liver Oil had been long and copiously administered with little or no benefit, Dr. DE JONGH'S Oil has produced almost immediate relief, arrested disease, and restored health.

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Dr. WAUDBY, late Physician to the Hereford Infirmary, bears the following high testimony to its efficacy from his own personal experience:—

"I can take Dr. DE JONGH'S Oil without difficulty or dislike, and with as little inconvenience as water alone. Not only in my own case, but in many others I have seen, it has caused an improvement of chest symptoms, and an increase of weight, so soon and so lastingly, as to be quite remarkable. I believe Dr. DE JONGH'S Oil to be the most valuable remedy we possess for chronic and constitutional disease."

Dr. HITCHMAN, of Liverpool, Author of "A Manual of Phthisis," observes:—

"Having extensively prescribed Dr. DE JONGH'S Light Brown Cod Liver Oil for a long series of years in cases of Consumption, I deem it but an act of justice to record my emphatic testimony in favour of its superior merits as a preventive of EMACIATION, and generally as an excellent restorative in DEBILITY and DISEASES OF THE CHEST."

[TURN OVER.]

# ASTHMA—CHRONIC BRONCHITIS—COUGHS.

In averting attacks of *Asthma*, and mitigating the symptoms of this distressing malady, the peculiar anti-spasmodic properties of Dr. DE JONGH's Light-Brown Cod Liver Oil have been remarkably manifested.

Dr. DE JONGH's Oil has also been prescribed with marked and unvarying success in the treatment of *Chronic Bronchitis*, *Dry Cough*, and *Humid or Winter Cough*.

It effectually corrects the morbid action and deposits of the mucous surfaces of the throat and bronchial tubes, and speedily allays the irritation which provokes frequent and prolonged coughing.

The actual benefit derived in a most severe case of chronic cough and laryngeal irritation is thus conclusively stated by ARTHUR CRIDLAND, Esq., M.R.C.S. :—

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"It is therefore with much pleasure I beg to add my testimony to the excellent results attendant on Dr. DE JONGH's Oil."

*From innumerable medical and scientific opinions of the highest character in commendation of Dr. DE JONGH's LIGHT-BROWN COD LIVER OIL, the following are selected :—*

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