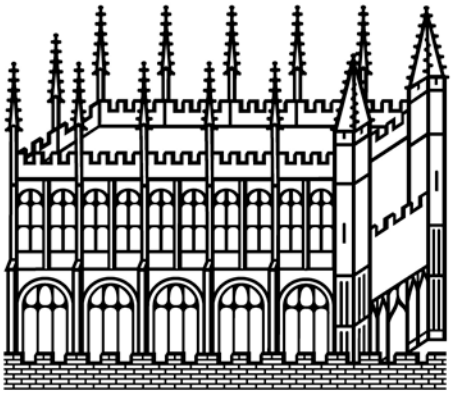

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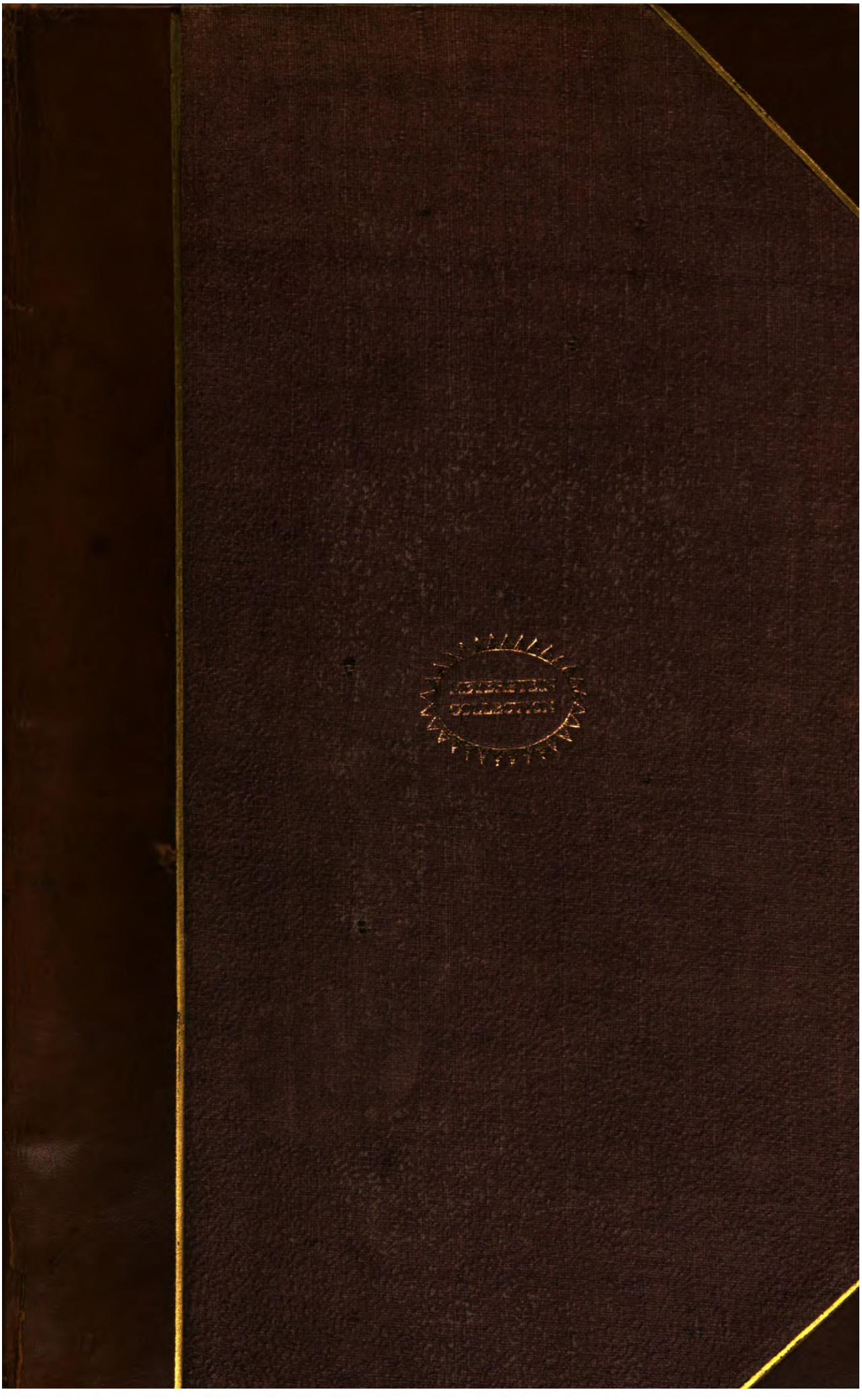

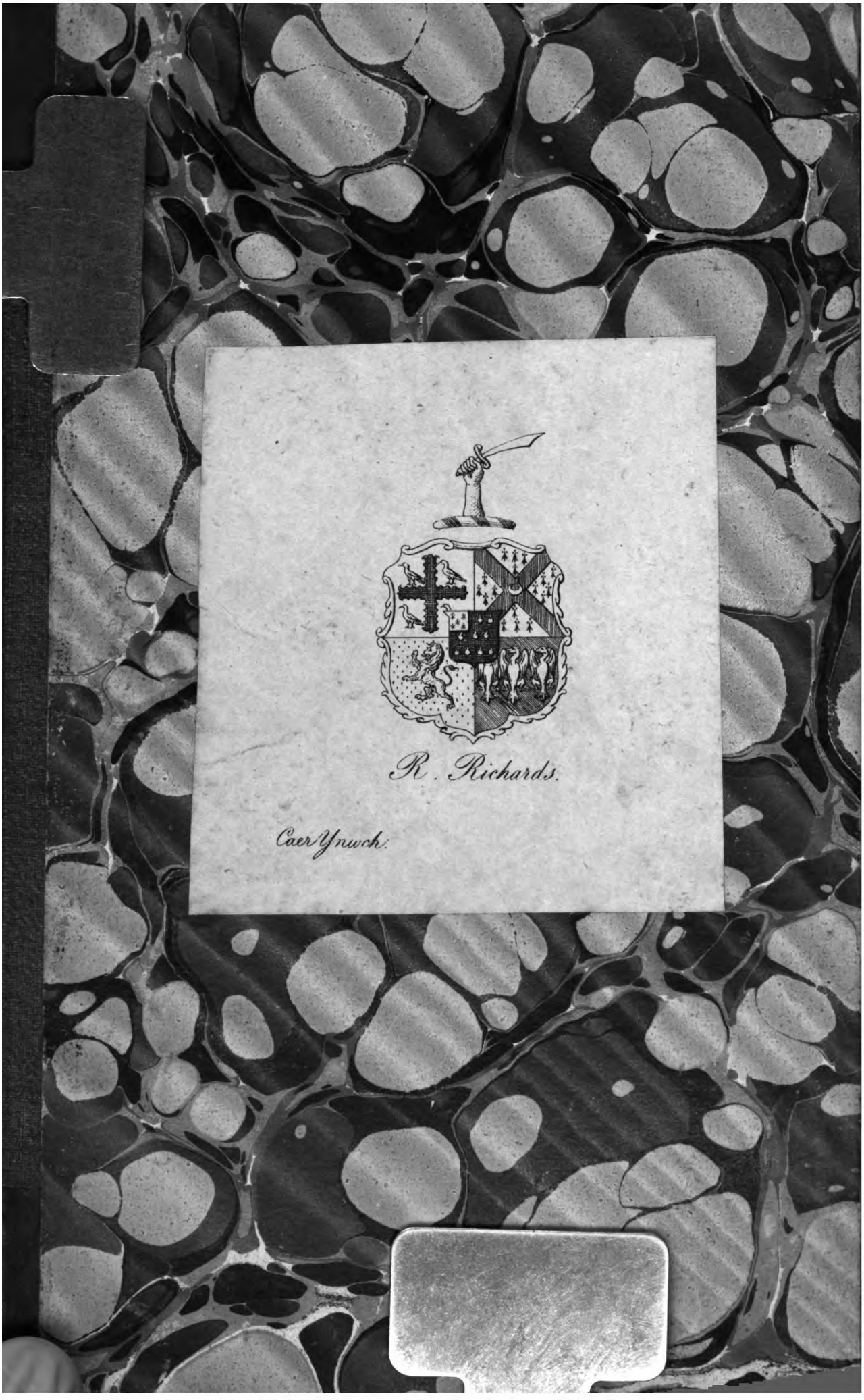
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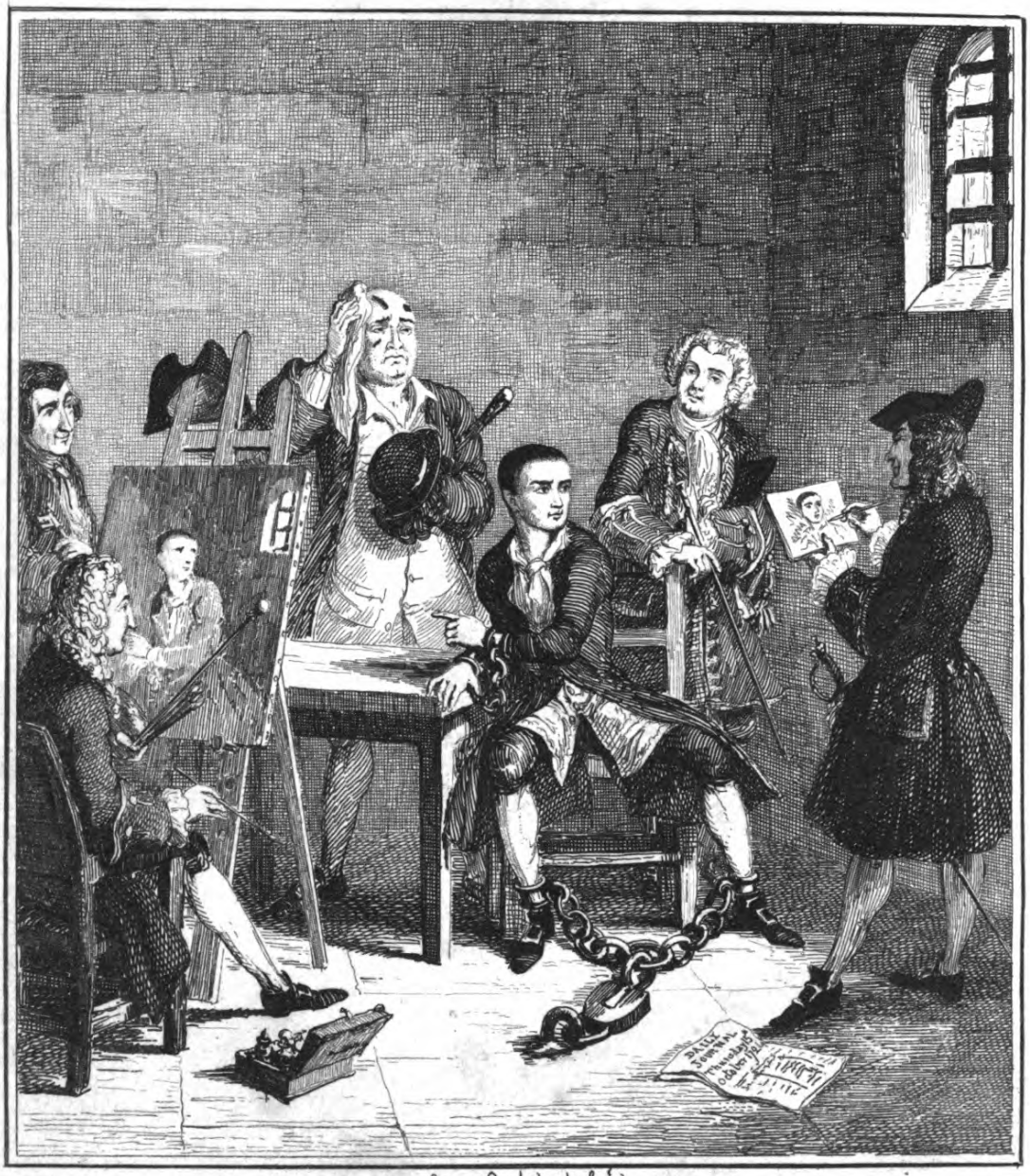

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Austin, the Turnkey . Figg, the Prize Fighter . Gay, the Poet .

Sir James Thornhill . JACK SHEPPARD . Hogarth .

JACK SHEPPARD.

A ROMANCE.

BY W. HARRISON AINSWORTH, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "ROOKWOOD," AND "CRICHTON."

"Upon my word, friend," said I, "you have almost made me long to try what a robber I should make." "There 's great art in it, if you did," quoth he. "Ah! but," said I, "there 's a great deal in being hanged."—*Life and Actions of Guzman D'Alfarache.*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

Epoch the Third, 1724.

THE PRISON BREAKER,

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JACK SHEPPARD.

Epoch the Third.

1724.

THE PRISON BREAKER.

CHAPTER XI.

DOLLIS HILL REVISITED.

About an hour after the occurrences at Newgate, the door of the small back-parlour already described at Dollis Hill was opened by Winifred, who, gliding noiselessly across the room, approached a couch, on which was extended a sleeping female, and, gazing anxiously at her pale careworn countenance, murmured, —"Heaven be praised! she still slumbers—slumbers peacefully. The opiate has done its duty. Poor thing! how beautiful she looks! but how like death!"

Deathlike, indeed, was the repose of the sleeper,—deathlike and deep. Its very calmness was frightful. Her lips were apart, but no breath seemed to issue from them; and, but for a slight—very slight palpitation of the

bosom, the vital principle might be supposed to be extinct. This lifeless appearance was heightened by the extreme sharpness of her features—especially the nose and chin,—and by the emaciation of her limbs, which was painfully distinct through her drapery. Her attenuated arms were crossed upon her breast; and her black brows and eye-lashes contrasted fearfully with the livid whiteness of her skin. A few short, dark locks, escaping from beneath her head-dress, showed that her hair had been removed, and had only been recently allowed to grow again.

"Poor Mrs. Sheppard!" sighed Winifred, as she contemplated the beautiful wreck before her,—"Poor Mrs. Sheppard! when I see her thus, and think of all she has endured, of all she may yet have to endure, I could almost pray for her release from trouble. I dare not reflect upon the effect that her son's fate,—if the efforts to save him are ineffectual,—may have upon her enfeebled frame, and still worse upon her mind. What a mercy that the blow

aimed at her by the ruffian, Wild, though it brought her to the brink of the grave, should have restored her to reason! Ah! she stirs."

As she said this, she drew a little aside, while Mrs. Sheppard heaved a deep sigh, and opened her eyes, which now looked larger, blacker, and more melancholy than ever.

"Where am I?" she cried, passing her hand across her brow.

"With your friends, dear Mrs. Sheppard," replied Winifred, advancing.

"Ah! you are there, my dear young lady," said the widow, smiling faintly; "when I first waken, I'm always in dread of finding myself again in that horrible asylum."

"You need never be afraid of that," returned Winifred, affectionately; "my father will take care you never leave him more."

"Oh! how much I owe him!" said the widow, with fervour, "for bringing me here, and removing me from those dreadful sights and sounds, that would have driven me distracted, even if I had been in my right mind.

And how much I owe *you*, too, dearest Winifred, for your kindness and attention. Without you I should never have recovered either health or reason. I can never be grateful enough. But, though *I* cannot reward you, Heaven will."

"Don't say anything about it, dear Mrs. Sheppard," rejoined Winifred, controlling her emotion, and speaking as cheerfully as she could; "I would do anything in the world for you, and so would my father, and so would Thames; but he *ought*, for he's your nephew, you know. We all love you dearly."

"Bless you! bless you!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, averting her face to hide her tears.

"I mustn't tell you what Thames means to do for you if ever he gains his rights," continued Winifred; "but I *may* tell you what my father means to do."

"He has done too much already," answered the widow. "I shall need little more."

"But, *do* hear what it is," rejoined Winifred; "you know I'm shortly to be united to

your nephew, — that is," she added, blushing, "when he can be married by his right name, for my father won't consent to it before."

"Your father will never oppose your happiness, my dear, I 'm sure," said Mrs. Sheppard; "but, what has this to do with me?"

"You shall hear," replied Winifred; "when this marriage takes place, you and I shall be closely allied, but my father wishes for a still closer alliance."

"I don't understand you," returned Mrs. Sheppard.

"To be plain, then," said Winifred, "he has asked me whether I have any objection to you as a mother."

"And what—what was your answer?" demanded the widow, eagerly.

"Can't you guess?" returned Winifred, throwing her arms about her neck. "That he couldn't choose any one so agreeable to me."

"Winifred," said Mrs. Sheppard, after a brief pause, during which she appeared overcome by her feelings,—"Winifred," she said, gently disengaging herself from the young

girl's embrace, and speaking in a firm voice, "you must dissuade your father from this step."

"How?" exclaimed the other. "Can you not love him?"

"Love him!" echoed the widow. "The feeling is dead within my breast. My only love is for my poor lost son. I can esteem him, regard him; but, love him as he *ought* to be loved — that I cannot do."

"Your esteem is all he will require," urged Winifred.

"He has it, and will ever have it," replied Mrs. Sheppard, passionately, — "he has my boundless gratitude and devotion. But I am not worthy to be any man's wife — far less *his* wife. Winifred, you are deceived in me. You know not what a wretched guilty thing I am. You know not in what dark places my life has been cast; with what crimes it has been stained. But the offences I *have* committed are venial in comparison with what I should commit were I to wed your father. No—no, it must never be."

"You paint yourself worse than you are, dear Mrs. Sheppard," rejoined Winifred kindly. "Your faults were the faults of circumstances."

"Palliate them as you may," replied the widow, gravely, "they *were* faults; and as such, cannot be repaired by a greater wrong. If you love me, do not allude to this subject again."

"I 'm sorry I mentioned it at all, since it distresses you," returned Winifred; "but, as I knew my father intended to propose to you, if poor Jack should be respited——"

"*If* he should be respited!" repeated Mrs. Sheppard, with startling eagerness. "Does your father doubt it? Speak! tell me?"

Winifred made no answer.

"Your hesitation convinces me he does," replied the widow. "Is Thames returned from London?"

"Not yet," replied the other; "but I expect him every minute. My father's chief fear, I must tell you, is from the baneful influence of Jonathan Wild."

"That fiend is ever in my path," exclaimed

Mrs. Sheppard, with a look, the wildness of which greatly alarmed her companion. "I cannot scare him thence."

"Hark!" cried Winifred, "Thames is arrived. I hear the sound of his horse's feet in the yard. Now you will learn the result."

"Heaven support me!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, faintly.

"Breathe at this phial," said Winifred.

Shortly afterwards,—it seemed an age to the anxious mother,—Mr. Wood entered the room, followed by Thames. The latter looked very pale, either from the effect of his wound, which was not yet entirely healed, or from suppressed emotion,—partly, perhaps, from both causes,—and wore his left arm in a sling.

"Well!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, raising herself, and looking at him as if her life depended upon the answer. "He is respited?"

"Alas! no," replied Thames, sadly. "The warrant for his execution is arrived. There is no further hope."

"My poor son!" groaned the widow, sinking backwards.

"Heaven have mercy on his soul!" ejaculated Wood.

"Poor Jack!" cried Winifred, burying her face in her lover's bosom.

Not a word was uttered for some time, nor any sound heard except the stifled sobs of the unfortunate mother.

At length, she suddenly started to her feet; and, before Winifred could prevent her, staggered up to Thames.

"When is he to suffer?" she demanded, fixing her large black eyes, which burnt with an insane gleam, upon him.

"On Friday," he replied.

"Friday!" echoed Mrs. Sheppard; "and to-day is Monday. He has three days to live. Only three days. Three short days. Horrible!"

"Poor soul! her senses are going again," said Mr. Wood, terrified by the wildness of her looks. "I was afraid it would be so."

"Only three days," reiterated the widow, "three short, short days,—and then all is over. Jonathan's wicked threat is fulfilled at last. The

gallows is in view—I see it with all its hideous apparatus!—ough!" and shuddering violently, she placed her hands before her, as if to exclude some frightful vision from her sight.

"Do not despair, my sweet soul," said Wood, in a soothing tone.

"Do not despair!" echoed Mrs. Sheppard, with a laugh that cut the ears of those who listened to it like a razor,—"Do not despair! And who or what shall give me comfort when my son is gone? I have wept till my eyes are dry,—suffered till my heart is broken,—prayed till the voice of prayer is dumb,—and all of no avail. He will be hanged—hanged—hanged. Ha! ha! What have I left but despair and madness? Promise me one thing, Mr. Wood," she continued, with a sudden change of tone, and convulsively clutching the carpenter's arm, "promise it me."

"Anything, my dear," replied Wood. "What is it?"

"Bury us together in one grave in Willesden churchyard. There is a small yew-tree west of the church. Beneath that tree let us

lie. In one grave, mind. Do you promise to do this?"

"Solemnly," rejoined the carpenter.

"Enough," said the widow, gratefully. "I must see him to-night."

"Impossible, dear Mrs. Sheppard," said Thames. "To-morrow I will take you to him."

"To-morrow will be too late," replied the widow, in a hollow voice, "I feel it will. I must go to-night, or I shall never behold him again. I must bless him before I die. I have strength enough to drag myself there, and I do not want to return."

"Be pacified, sweet soul," said Wood, looking meaningly at Thames; "you *shall* go, and I will accompany you."

"A mother's blessing on you," replied Mrs. Sheppard, fervently. "And now," she added, with somewhat more composure, "leave me, dear friends, I entreat, for a few minutes to collect my scattered thoughts — to prepare myself for what I have to go through — to pray for my son."

"Shall we do so?" whispered Winifred to her father.

"By all means," returned Wood; "don't delay an instant." And, followed by the young couple, who gazed wistfully at the poor sufferer, he hastily quitted the room, and locked the door after him.

Mrs. Sheppard was no sooner alone than she fell upon her knees by the side of the couch, and poured forth her heart in prayer. So absorbed was she by her passionate supplications, that she was insensible to anything passing around her, until she felt a touch upon her shoulder, and heard a well-known voice breathe in her ear—"Mother!"

She started at the sound as if an apparition had called her, screamed, and fell into her son's outstretched arms.

"Mother! dear mother!" cried Jack, folding her to his breast.

"My son! my dear, dear son!" returned Mrs. Sheppard, returning his embrace with all a parent's tenderness.

Jack was completely overcome. His chest

heaved violently, and big tears coursed rapidly down his cheeks.

"I don't deserve it," he said, at length; "but I would have risked a thousand deaths to enjoy this moment's happiness."

"And you must have risked much to obtain it, my love. I have scarcely recovered from the shock of hearing of your condemnation, when I behold you free!"

"Not two hours since," rejoined Jack, "I was chained down in the Condemned Hold in Newgate. With a small saw, conveyed to me a few days since by Thames Darrell, which I contrived to conceal upon my person, I removed a spike in the hatch, and, with the aid of some other friends, worked my way out. Having heard from Thames that you were better, and that your sole anxiety was about me, I came to give you the *first* intelligence of my escape."

"Bless you for it. But you will stay here?"

"I dare not. I must provide for my safety."

"Mr. Wood will protect you," urged Mrs. Sheppard.

"He has not the power — perhaps not the will to do so. And if he would, *I* would not subject him to the annoyance. The moment my escape is known, a large reward will be placed on my head. My dress, my person will be minutely described. Jonathan Wild and his blood-hounds, with a hundred others, incited by the reward, will be upon my track. Nay, for aught I know, some of them may even now have got scent of me."

"You terrify me," cried Mrs. Sheppard. "Oh! if this is the case, do not stay an instant. Fly! fly!"

"As soon as I can do so with safety, I will return, or send to you," said Jack.

"Do not endanger yourself on my account," rejoined his mother. "I am quite easy now; receive my blessing, my dear son; and if we never meet again, rest assured my last prayer shall be for you."

"Do not talk thus, dear mother," returned Jack, gazing anxiously at her pale counte-

nance, "or I shall not be able to quit you. You must live for me."

"I will try to do so," replied the widow, forcing a smile. "One last embrace. I need not counsel you to avoid those fatal courses which have placed you in such fearful jeopardy."

"You need not," replied Jack, in a tone of the deepest compunction. "And, oh! forgive me, though I can never forgive myself, for the misery I have caused you."

"Forgive you!" echoed his mother, with a look radiant with delight. "I have nothing to forgive. Ah!" she screamed, with a sudden change of manner; and pointing to the window, which Jack had left open, and at which a dark figure was standing, "there is Jonathan Wild!"

"Betrayed!" exclaimed Jack, glancing in the same direction. "The door!—the door!—death!" he added, as he tried the handle, "it is locked—and I am unarmed. Madman that I am to be so!"

"Help!" shrieked Mrs. Sheppard.

"Be silent," said Jonathan, striding deliberately into the room; "these cries will avail you nothing. Whoever answers them must assist me to capture your son. Be silent, I say, if you value his safety."

Awed by Jonathan's manner, Mrs. Sheppard repressed the scream that rose to her lips, and both mother and son gazed with apprehension at the heavy figure of the thieftaker, which, viewed in the twilight, seemed dilated to twice its natural size, and appeared almost to block up the window. In addition to his customary arms, Jonathan carried a bludgeon with a large heavy knob, suspended from his wrist by a loop; a favourite weapon, which he always took with him on dangerous expeditions, and which, if any information had been requisite, would have told Sheppard that the present was one of them.

"Well, Jack," he said, after a pause, "are you disposed to go back quietly with me?"

"You 'll ascertain that when you attempt to touch me," rejoined Sheppard, resolutely.

"My janizaries are within call," returned Wild. "I 'm armed; you are not."

"It matters not. You shall not take me alive."

"Spare him! spare him!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, falling on her knees.

"Get up, mother," cried Jack; "do not kneel to him. I wouldn't accept my life from him. I 've foiled him hitherto, and will foil him yet. And, come what will, I 'll balk him of the satisfaction of hanging me."

Jonathan raised his bludgeon, but controlled himself by a powerful effort.

"Fool!" he cried, "do you think I wouldn't have secured you before this if I hadn't some motive for my forbearance?"

"And that motive is fear," replied Jack contemptuously.

"Fear!" echoed Wild, in a terrible tone,—"fear! Repeat that word again, and nothing shall save you."

"Don't anger him, my dear son," implored the poor widow, with a look of anguish at Jack. "Perhaps he means well."

"Mad as you are, you're the more sensible of the two, I must say," rejoined Jonathan.

"Spare him!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, who fancied she had made some impression on the obdurate breast of the thieftaker, — "spare him! and I will forgive you, will thank you, will bless you. Spare him! spare him!"

"On one condition I *will* spare him," returned Wild; "on one condition only."

"What is it?" asked the poor woman.

"Either he or you must return with me," answered Jonathan.

"Take *me*, then," replied the widow. And she would have rushed to him, if she had not been forcibly withheld by her son.

"Do not go near him, mother," cried Jack; "do not believe him. There is some deep treachery hidden beneath his words."

"I *will* go," said Mrs. Sheppard, struggling to get free.

"Attend to me, Mrs. Sheppard," said Jonathan, looking calmly on at this distressing scene. "Attend to me, and do not heed him. I swear to you, solemnly swear to you, I will

save your son's life, nay more, will befriend him, will place him out of the reach of his enemies, if you consent to become my wife."

"Execrable villain!" exclaimed Jack.

"You hear that," cried Mrs. Sheppard; "he swears to save you."

"Well," replied her son; "and you spurn the proposal."

"No; she accepts it," rejoined Jonathan, triumphantly. "Come along, Mrs. Sheppard. I 've a carriage within call shall convey you swiftly to town. Come! come!"

"Hear me, mother," cried Jack, "and I will explain to you *why* the villain makes this strange and revolting proposal. He well knows that but two lives — those of Thames Darrell and Sir Rowland Trenchard, — stand between you and the vast possessions of the family. Those lives removed, — and Sir Rowland is completely in his power, the estates would be yours — HIS! if he were your husband. Now do you see his motive?"

"I see nothing but your danger," replied his mother, tenderly.

"Granted it were as you say, Jack," said Wild; — "and I sha'n't take the trouble to contradict you — the estates would be *yours* hereafter."

"Liar!" cried Jack. "Do you affect ignorance that I am a condemned felon, and can inherit nothing? But do not imagine that under any circumstances I would accept your terms. My mother shall never degrade herself by a connection with you."

"Degrade herself," rejoined Jonathan, brutally. "Do you think I would take a harlot to my bed, if it didn't suit my purposes to do so?"

"He says right," replied Mrs. Sheppard, distractedly. "I am only fit for such as him. Take me! take me!"

"Before an hour you shall be mine," said Jonathan advancing towards her.

"Back!" cried Jack fiercely: "lay a finger on her, and I will fell you to the ground. Mother! do you know what you do? Would you sell yourself to this fiend?"

"I would sell myself, body and soul, to

save you," rejoined his mother, bursting from his grasp.

Jonathan caught her in his arms.

"Come away!" he cried, with the roar of a demon.

This laugh and his looks alarmed her.

"It *is* the fiend!" she exclaimed, recoiling. "Save me! — save me!"

"Damnation!" vociferated Jonathan, savagely. "We've no time for any Bedlam scenes now. Come along, you mad jade. I'll teach you submission in time."

With this, he endeavoured to force her off; but, before he could accomplish his purpose, he was arrested, and his throat seized by Jack. In the struggle, Mrs. Sheppard broke from him, and filled the room with her shrieks.

"I'll now pay the debt I owe you," cried Jack, tightening his gripe till the thieftaker blackened in the face.

"Dog!" cried Wild, freeing himself by a powerful effort, and dealing Jack a violent blow with the heavy bludgeon, which knocked him backwards, "you are not yet a match for

Jonathan Wild. Neither you nor your mother shall escape me. But I must summon my janizaries." So saying, he raised a whistle to his lips, and blew a loud call; and, as this was unanswered, another still louder. "Confusion!" he cried; "something has happened. But I won't be cheated of my prize."

"Help! help!" shrieked Mrs. Sheppard, fleeing from him to the farthest corner of the room.

But it was of no avail. Jonathan again seized her, when the door was thrown open, and Thames Darrell, followed by Mr. Wood and several serving-men, all well armed, rushed into the room. A glance sufficed to show the young man how matters stood. He flew to the window, and would have passed his sword through the thieftaker's body, if the latter had not quickly interposed the person of Mrs. Sheppard, so that if the blow had been stricken she must have received it.

"Quilt! — Mendez! — Where are you?" vociferated Wild, sounding his whistle for the third time.

"You call in vain," rejoined Thames. "Your assistants are in my power. Yield, villain!"

"Never!" replied Jonathan.

"Put down your burthen, monster!" shouted Wood, pointing an immense blunderbuss at him.

"Take her," cried Jonathan; and, flinging the now inanimate body of the poor widow, who had fainted in the struggle, into the arms of Thames, he leapt through the window, and by the time the latter could consign her to Wood, and dart after him, he had disappeared.

"Pursue him," cried Thames to the attendants, "and see that he does not escape."

The order was promptly obeyed.

"Jack," continued Thames, addressing Sheppard, who had only just recovered from the blow, and regained his feet, "I don't ask *how* you came here, nor do I blame your rashness in doing so. Fortunately, ever since Wild's late murderous attack, the household has all been well armed. A postchaise seen in

the road first alarmed us. On searching the grounds, we found two suspicious-looking fellows in the garden, and had scarcely secured them, when your mother's cries summoned us hither, just in time to preserve her."

"Your arrival was most providential," said Jack.

"You must not remain here another instant," replied Thames. "My horse is at the door, saddled, with pistols in the holsters, — mount him and fly."

"Thames, I have much to say," said Jack, "much that concerns your safety."

"Not now," returned Thames, impatiently. "I cannot — will not suffer you to remain here."

"I will go, if you will consent to meet me at midnight near the old house in Wych Street," replied Jack. "By that time, I shall have fully considered a plan which occurs to me for defeating the schemes of your enemies."

"Before that time you will be captured, if you expose yourself thus," rejoined Thames. "However, I will be there. Farewell."

"Till midnight," replied Jack.

And imprinting a kiss upon his mother's cold lips, he left the room. He found the horse where Thames told him he would find him, mounted, and rode off across the fields in the direction of town.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WELL HOLE.

JONATHAN WILD'S first object, as soon as he had made good his retreat, was to ascertain what had become of his janizaries, and, if possible, to release them. With this view, he hurried to the spot where he had left the post-chaise, and found it drawn up at the road-side, the postilion dismounted, and in charge of a couple of farming-men. Advancing towards them, sword in hand, Jonathan so terrified the hinds by his fierce looks and determined manner, that, after a slight show of resistance, they took to their heels, leaving him master of the field. He then threw open the door of the vehicle, in which he found his janizaries with their arms pinioned, and, leaping into it, ordered the man to drive off. The postilion

obeyed, and dashed off as hard as his horses could gallop along the beautiful road leading to Neasdon and Willesden, just as the serving-men made their appearance. Arrived at the latter place, Jonathan, who, meanwhile, had contrived to liberate his attendants from their bonds, drew up at the Six Bells, and hiring a couple of horses, despatched his attendants in search of Jack Sheppard, while he proceeded to town. Dismissing the post-chaise at the Old Bailey, he walked to Newgate to ascertain what had occurred since the escape. It was just upon the stroke of nine as he entered the Lodge, and Mr. Austin was dismissing a host of inquirers who had been attracted thither by the news, — for it had already been extensively noised abroad. Some of these persons were examining the spot where the spike had been cut off; others the spike itself, now considered a remarkable object; and all were marvelling how Jack could have possibly squeezed himself through such a narrow aperture, until it was explained to them by Mr. Austin that the renowned housebreaker was of slender bodily

conformation, and therefore able to achieve a feat, which he, Mr. Austin, or any man of similar dimensions, would have found wholly impossible. Affixed to the wall, in a conspicuous situation, was a large placard, which, after minutely describing Sheppard's appearance and attire, concluded thus:—"*Whoever will discover or apprehend the above* JOHN SHEPPARD, *so that he be brought to justice, shall receive* ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS REWARD, *to be paid by* MR. PITT, *the keeper of Newgate.*"

This placard attracted universal attention. While Jonathan was conversing with Austin, from whom he took care to conceal the fact of his having seen Sheppard since his escape, Ireton entered the Lodge.

"Altogether unsuccessful, sir," said the chief turnkey, with a look of disappointment, not unmixed with apprehension, as he approached Wild. "I've been to all the flash cases in town, and can hear nothing of him or his wives. First, I went to Country Tom's, the Goat, in Long Lane. Tom swore he

hadn't set eyes on him since the trial. I next proceeded to Jenny Bunch's, the Ship, in Trig Lane — there I got the same answer. Then to the Feathers, in Drury Lane. Then to the Golden Ball, in the same street. Then to Martin's brandy-shop, in Fleet Street. Then to Dan Ware's, in Hanging Sword Court. Then to the Dean's Head, in St. Martin's Le Grand. And, lastly, to the Seven Cities o' Refuge, in the New Mint. And nowhere could I obtain the slightest information."

"Humph!" exclaimed Wild.

"Have you been more successful, sir?" ventured Ireton.

Jonathan shook his head.

"Mr. Shotbolt thinks he has a scheme that can't fail," interposed Austin; "but he wishes to know whether you 'll be as good as your word, in respect to the great reward you offered for Jack's capture."

"Have I ever broken my word in such matters, that he dares put the question?" rejoined Jonathan sternly. "Tell Mr. Shotbolt that if he, or any other person, takes Jack

Sheppard before to-morrow morning, I 'll double it. Do you hear?"

"I do, sir," replied Austin respectfully.

"Two hundred pounds, if he's lodged in Newgate before to-morrow morning," continued Wild. "Make it known among your friends." And he strode out of the place.

"Two hundred pounds!" exclaimed Ireton, "besides the governor's offer — that 's three hundred. I must go to work again. Keep a sharp look out, Austin, and see that we lose no one else. I should be sorry if Shotbolt got the reward."

"Devilish hard! I 'm not allowed a chance," grumbled Austin, as he was left alone. "However, some one *must* look after the gaol; and they 're all gone but me. It 's fortunate we 've no more Jack Sheppards, or I should stand but a poor chance. Well, I don't think they 'll any of 'em nab him, that 's one comfort."

On quitting the Lodge, Wild repaired to his own habitation. Telling the porter that he would attend to the house himself, he bade him go in search of Jack Sheppard. There

was something in Jonathan's manner, as he issued this command, that struck the man as singular, and he afterwards recalled it. He, however, made no remark at the time, but instantly prepared to set out. As soon as he was gone, Jonathan went up stairs to the audience-chamber; and, sitting down, appeared for some time buried in reflection. The dark and desperate thoughts that were passing through his mind at this time will presently be shown. After a while, he raised his eyes; and, if their glance could have been witnessed at the moment, it could not have been easily forgotten. Muttering something to himself, he appeared to be telling upon his fingers the advantages and disadvantages of some scheme he had in contemplation. That he had resolved upon its execution, whatever it might be, was evident from his saying aloud,—

"I will do it. So good an opportunity may never occur again."

Upon this he arose, and paced the room hastily backwards and forwards, as if further arranging his plans. He then unlocked a

cabinet, opened a secret drawer; and, after ransacking its contents, discovered a paper he was in search of, and a glove. Laying these carefully aside, he restored the drawer to its place. His next occupation was to take out his pistols, examine the priming, and rub the flints. His sword then came in for his scrutiny: he felt at, and appeared satisfied with its edge. This employment seemed to afford him the highest satisfaction; for a diabolical grin — it cannot be called a smile — played upon his face all the time he was engaged in it. His sword done with, he took up the bludgeon; balanced it in his hand; upon the points of his fingers; and let it fall with a smash, intentionally, upon the table.

"After all," he said, "this is the safest weapon. No instrument I 've ever used has done me such good service. It *shall* be the bludgeon." So saying, he slung it upon his wrist.

Taking up a link, which was blazing beside him, he walked across the room; and touching a spring in the wall, a secret door flew open.

Beyond was a narrow bridge, crossing a circular building, at the bottom of which lay a deep well. It was a dark mysterious place, and what it was used for no one exactly knew; but it was called by those who had seen it the Well Hole. The bridge was protected on either side by a railing with banisters placed at wide intervals. Steps to aid the descent, which was too steep to be safe without them, led to a door on the opposite side. This door, which was open, Jonathan locked and took out the key. As he stood upon the bridge, he held down the light, and looked into the profound abyss. The red glare fell upon the slimy brick-work, and tinged the inky waters below. A slight cough uttered by Jonathan at the moment awakened the echoes of the place, and was returned in hollow reverberations. "There'll be a louder echo here presently," thought Jonathan. Before leaving the place he looked upwards, and could just discern the blue vault and pale stars of heaven through an iron grating at the top.

On his return to the room, Jonathan purposely left the door of the Well Hole ajar. Unlocking a cupboard, he then took out some cold meat and other viands, with a flask of wine, and a bottle of brandy, and began to eat and drink voraciously. He had very nearly cleared the board, when a knock was heard below, and descending at the summons, he found his two janizaries. They had both been unsuccessful. As Jonathan scarcely expected a more satisfactory result, he made no comment; but, ordering Quilt to continue his search, and not to return until he had found the fugitive, called Abraham Mendez into the house, and shut the door.

"I want you for the job I spoke of a short time ago, Nab," he said. "I mean to have no one but yourself in it. Come up stairs, and take a glass of brandy."

Abraham grinned, and silently followed his master, who, as soon as they reached the audience-chamber, poured out a bumper of spirits, and presented it to him. The Jew swallowed it at a draught.

"By my shoul!" he exclaimed, smacking his lips, "dat ish goot—very goot."

"You shall finish the bottle when the job's done," replied Jonathan.

"Vat ish it, Mishter Vild?" inquired Mendez. "Shir Rowland Trenchard's affair—eh?"

"That's it," rejoined Jonathan; "I expect him here every minute. When you've admitted him, steal into the room, hide yourself, and don't move till I utter the words, 'You've a long journey before you.' That's your signal."

"And a famoush goot shignal it ish," laughed Abraham. "He hash a long journey before him—ha! ha!"

"Peace!" cried Jonathan. "There's his knock. Go, and let him in. And mind you don't arouse his suspicions."

"Never fear — never fear," rejoined Abraham, as he took up the link, and left the room.

Jonathan cast a hasty glance around, to see that all was properly arranged for his purpose; placed a chair with its back to the door; dis-

posed the lights on the table so as to throw the entrance of the room more into shadow; and then flung himself into a seat to await Sir Rowland's arrival.

He had not to wait long. Enveloped in a large cloak, Sir Rowland stalked into the room, and took the seat assigned him; while the Jew, who received a private signal from Jonathan, set down the link near the entrance of the well-hole, and, having made fast the door, crept behind one of the cases.

Fancying they were alone, Sir Rowland threw aside his cloak, and produced a heavy bag of money, which he flung upon the table; and, when Wild had feasted his greedy eyes sufficiently upon its golden contents, he handed him a pocket-book filled with notes.

"You have behaved like a man of honour, Sir Rowland," said Wild, after he had twice told over the money. "Right to a farthing."

"Give me an acquittance," said Trenchard.

"It's scarcely necessary," replied Wild; "however, if you require it, certainly. There

it is. 'Received from Sir Rowland Trenchard, £15,000—Jonathan Wild: August 31st, 1724.' Will that do?"

"It will," replied Trenchard. "This is our last transaction together."

"I hope not," replied Wild.

"It is the last," continued the knight, sternly; "and I trust we may never meet again. I have paid you this large sum — not because you are entitled to it, for you have failed in what you undertook to do, but because I desire to be troubled with you no further. I have now settled my affairs, and made every preparation for my departure to France, where I shall spend the remainder of my days. And I have made such arrangements that at my decease tardy justice will be done my injured nephew."

"You have made no such arrangements as will compromise me, I hope, Sir Rowland?" said Wild, hastily.

"While I live you are safe," rejoined Trenchard; "after my death I can answer for nothing."

"'Sblood!" exclaimed Wild, uneasily. "This alters the case materially. When were you last confessed, Sir Rowland?" he added abruptly.

"Why do you ask?" rejoined the other haughtily.

"Because — because I'm always distrustful of a priest," rejoined Jonathan.

"I have just parted from one," said Trenchard.

"So much the worse," replied Jonathan, rising and taking a turn, as if uncertain what to do.

"So much the better," rejoined Sir Rowland. "He who stands on the verge of the grave, as I do, should never be unprepared."

"You 're strangely superstitious, Sir Rowland," said Jonathan, halting, and looking steadfastly at him.

"If I were so, I should not be here," returned Trenchard.

"How so?" asked Wild, curiously.

"I had a terrible dream last night. I thought my sister and her murdered husband

dragged me hither, to this very room, and commanded you to slay me."

"A terrible dream, indeed," said Jonathan thoughtfully. "But you mustn't indulge these gloomy thoughts. Let me recommend a glass of wine."

"My penance forbids it," said Trenchard, waving his hand. "I cannot remain here long."

"You will remain longer than you anticipate," muttered Wild.

"Before I go," continued Sir Rowland, "I must beg of you to disclose to me all you know relative to the parentage of Thames Darrell."

"Willingly," replied Wild. "Thinking it likely you might desire to have this information, I prepared accordingly. First, look at this glove. It belonged to his father, and was worn by him on the night he was murdered. You will observe that a coronet is embroidered on it."

"Ha!" exclaimed Trenchard, starting, "is he so highly born?"

"This letter will inform you," replied Wild, placing a document in his hand.

"What is this?" cried Sir Rowland. "I know the hand—ha! my friend! and I have murdered *him!* And my sister was thus nobly, thus illustriously wedded. O God! O God!"

And he appeared convulsed with agony.

"Oh! if I had known this," he exclaimed, "what guilt, what remorse might have been spared me!"

"Repentance comes too late when the deed 's done," returned Wild, bitterly.

"It is not too late to repair the wrong I have done my nephew," cried Trenchard. "I will set about it instantly. He shall have the estates. I will return to Manchester at once."

"You had better take some refreshment before you start," rejoined Wild. "*You 've a long journey before you.*'"

As the signal was given, the Jew, who had been some time in expectation of it, darted swiftly and silently behind Sir Rowland, and flung a cloth over his head, while Jonathan,

rushing upon him in front, struck him several quick and violent blows in the face with the bludgeon. The white cloth was instantly dyed with crimson; but, regardless of this, Jonathan continued his murderous assault. The struggles of the wounded man were desperate — so desperate, that in his agony he overset the table, and, in the confusion, tore off the cloth, and disclosed a face horribly mutilated, and streaming with blood. So appalling was the sight, that even the murderers — familiar as they were with scenes of slaughter, — looked aghast at it.

During this dreadful pause the wretched man felt for his sword. It had been removed from the scabbard by the Jew. He uttered a deep groan, but said nothing.

"Despatch him!" roared Jonathan.

Having no means of defence, Sir Rowland cleared the blood from his vision; and, turning to see whether there was any means of escape, he descried the open door behind him leading to the Well Hole, and instantly darted through it.

"As I could wish!" cried Jonathan. "Bring the light, Nab."

The Jew snatched up the link, and followed him.

A struggle of the most terrific kind now ensued. The wounded man had descended the bridge, and dashed himself against the door beyond it; but, finding it impossible to force his way further, he turned to confront his assailants. Jonathan aimed a blow at him, which, if it had taken place, must have instantly terminated the strife; but, avoiding this, he sprang at the thieftaker, and grappled with him. Firmly built, as it was, the bridge creaked in such a manner with their contending efforts, that Abraham durst not venture beyond the door, where he stood, holding the light, a horrified spectator of the scene. The contest, however, though desperate, was brief. Disengaging his right arm, Jonathan struck his victim a tremendous blow on the head with the bludgeon, that fractured his skull; and, exerting all his strength, threw

Jonathan Wild throwing Sir Rowland Trenchard down the well &c.

Jonathan Wild throwing Sir Rowland Trenchard down the well but

him over the rails, to which he clung with the tenacity of despair.

"Spare me!" he groaned, looking upwards. "Spare me!"

Jonathan, however, instead of answering him, searched for his knife, with the intention of severing his wrist. But not finding it, he had again recourse to the bludgeon, and began beating the hand fixed on the upper rail, until, by smashing the fingers, he forced it to relinquish its hold. He then stamped upon the hand on the lower banister, until that also relaxed its gripe.

Sir Rowland then fell.

A hollow plunge, echoed and re-echoed by the walls, marked his descent into the water.

"Give me the link," cried Jonathan.

Holding down the light, he perceived that the wounded man had risen to the surface, and was trying to clamber up the slippery sides of the well.

"Shoot him! shoot him! Put him out of hish mishery," cried the Jew.

"What's the use of wasting a shot?" rejoined Jonathan, savagely. "He can't get out."

After making several ineffectual attempts to keep himself above water, Sir Rowland sunk, and his groans, which had become gradually fainter and fainter, were heard no more.

"All 's over," muttered Jonathan.

"Shall ve go back to de other room?" asked the Jew. "I shall breathe more freely dere. Oh! Chrisht! de door's shut! It musht have schwung to during de schuffle!"

"Shut!" exclaimed Wild. "Then we're imprisoned. The spring can't be opened on this side."

"Dere's de other door!" cried Mendez, in alarm.

"It only leads to the fencing crib," replied Wild. "There's no outlet that way."

"Can't ve call for asshistanche?"

"And who'll find us, if we do?" rejoined Wild, fiercely. "But they *will* find the evidences of slaughter in the other room, — the

table upset, — the bloody cloth, — the dead man's sword, — the money, — and my memorandum, which I forgot to remove. Hell's curses! that after all my precautions I should be thus entrapped. It's all your fault, you shaking coward! and, but that I feel sure you 'll swing for your carelessness, I'd throw you into the well, too."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SUPPER AT MR. KNEEBONE'S.

Persuaded that Jack Sheppard would keep his appointment with Mr. Kneebone, and feeling certain of capturing him if he did so, Shotbolt, on quitting Newgate, hurried to the New Prison to prepare for the enterprise. After debating with himself for some time whether he should employ an assistant, or make the attempt alone, his love of gain overcame his fears, and he decided upon the latter plan. Accordingly, having armed himself with various weapons, including a stout oaken staff then ordinarily borne by the watch, and put a coil of rope and a gag in his pocket, to be ready in case of need, he set out, about ten o'clock, on the expedition.

Before proceeding to Wych Street, he called at the Lodge to see how matters were going on, and found Mrs. Spurling and Austin at their evening meal, with Caliban in attendance.

"Well, Mr. Shotbolt," cried the turnkey, "I 've good news for you. Mr. Wild has doubled his offer, and the governor has likewise proclaimed a reward of one hundred guineas for Jack's apprehension."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Shotbolt.

"Read that," rejoined Austin, pointing to the placard. "I ought to tell you that Mr. Wild's reward is conditional upon Jack's being taken before to-morrow morning. So I fear there 's little chance of any one getting it."

"You think so, eh?" chuckled Shotbolt, who was eagerly perusing the reward, and congratulating himself upon his caution; "you think so—ha! ha! Well, don't go to bed, that 's all."

"What for?" demanded the turnkey.

"Because the prisoner's arrival might disturb you—ha! ha!"

"I'll lay you twenty guineas you don't take him to-night," rejoined Austin.

"Done!" cried Shotbolt. "Mrs. Spurling, you're a witness to the bet. Twenty guineas, mind. I shan't let you off a farthing. Egad! I shall make a good thing of it."

"Never count your chickens till they're hatched," observed Mrs. Spurling, drily.

"*My* chickens are hatched, or, at least, nearly so," replied Shotbolt, with increased merriment. "Get ready your heaviest irons, Austin. I'll send you word when I catch him."

"You'd better send *him*," jeered the turnkey.

"So I will," rejoined Shotbolt; "so I will. If I don't, you shall clap me in the Condemned Hold in his stead. Good-b'ye, for the present — ha! ha!" And, laughing loudly at his own facetiousness, he quitted the Lodge.

"I'll lay my life he's gone on a fox-and-goose-chase to Mr. Kneebone's," remarked Austin, rising to fasten the door.

"I shouldn't wonder," replied Mrs. Spurl-

ing, as if struck by a sudden idea. And, while the turnkey was busy with the keys, she whispered to the black, "Follow him, Caliban. Take care he don't see you, — and bring me word where he goes, and what he does."

"Iss, missis," grinned the black.

"Be so good as to let Caliban out, Mr. Austin," continued the tapstress; "he 's only going on an errand."

Austin readily complied with her request. As he returned to the table, he put his finger to his nose; and, though he said nothing, he thought he had a much better chance of winning his wager.

Unconscious that his movements were watched, Shotbolt, meanwhile, hastened towards Wych Street. On the way, he hired a chair with a couple of stout porters, and ordered them to follow him. Arrived within a short distance of his destination, he came to a halt, and pointing out a dark court nearly opposite the woollen-draper's abode, told the chairman to wait there till they were summoned.

"I 'm a peace-officer," he added, "about to

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arrest a notorious criminal. He 'll be brought out at this door, and may probably make some resistance. But you must get him into the chair as fast as you can, and hurry off to Newgate."

"And what 'll we get for the job, yer hon'r?" asked the foremost chairman, who, like most of his tribe at the time, was an Irishman.

"Five guineas. Here 's a couple in hand."

"Faix, then, we 'll do it in style," cried the fellow. "Once in this chair, yer hon'r, and I 'll warrant he 'll not get out so aisily as Jack Sheppard did from the New Pris'n."

"Hold your tongue, sirrah," rejoined Shotbolt, not over-pleased by the remark, "and mind what I tell you. Ah! what 's that?" he exclaimed, as some one brushed hastily past him. "If I hadn't just left him, I could have sworn it was Mrs. Spurling's sooty imp, Caliban."

Having seen the chairmen concealed in the entry, Shotbolt proceeded to Mr. Kneebone's habitation, the shutters of which were closed,

and knocked at the door. The summons was instantly answered by a shop-boy.

"Is your master at home?" inquired the gaoler.

"He is," replied a portly personage, arrayed in a gorgeous yellow brocade dressing-gown, lined with cherry-coloured satin, and having a crimson velvet cap, surmounted by a gold tassel, on his head. "My name is Kneebone," added the portly personage, stepping forward. "What do you want with me?"

"A word in private," replied the other.

"Stand aside, Tom," commanded Kneebone. "Now, sir," he added, glancing suspiciously at the applicant, "your business?"

"My business is to acquaint you that Jack Sheppard has escaped, Mr. Kneebone," returned Shotbolt.

"The deuce he has! Why, it's only a few hours since I beheld him chained down with half a hundred weight of iron, in the strongest ward at Newgate. It's almost incredible. Are you sure you're not misinformed, sir?"

"I was in the Lodge at the time," replied the gaoler.

"Then, of course, you must know. Well, it 's scarcely credible. When I gave him an invitation to supper, I little thought he 'd accept it. But, egad! I believe he *will*."

"I 'm convinced of it," replied Shotbolt; "and it was on that very account I came here." And he proceeded to unfold his scheme to the woollen-draper.

"Well, sir," said Kneebone, when the other concluded, "I shall certainly not oppose his capture, but, at the same time, I 'll lend you no assistance. If he keeps *his* word, I 'll keep *mine*. You must wait till supper 's over."

"As you please, sir,—provided you don't let him off."

"That I 'll engage not to do. I 've another reason for supposing he 'll pay me a visit. I refused to sign a petition in his behalf to the Recorder; not from any ill-will to him, but because it was prepared by a person whom I particularly dislike — Captain Darrell."

"A very sufficient reason," answered the gaoler.

"Tom," continued Kneebone, calling to the shop-boy, "don't go home. I may want you. Light the lantern. And, if you hear any odd noise in the parlour, don't mind it."

"Not in the least, sir," replied Tom, in a drowsy tone, and with a look seeming to imply that he was too much accustomed to odd noises at night to heed them.

"Now, step this way, Mr. What 's-your-name?"

"Shotbolt, sir," replied the gaoler.

"Very well, Mr. Slipshod; follow me." And he led the way to an inner room, in the middle of which stood a table, covered with a large white cloth.

"Jack Sheppard knows this house, I believe, sir," observed Shotbolt.

"Every inch of it," replied the woollen-draper. "He *ought* to do, seeing that he served his apprenticeship in it to Mr. Wood, by whom it was formerly occupied. His name is carved upon a beam up stairs."

"Indeed!" said Shotbolt. "Where can I hide myself?" he added, glancing round the room in search of a closet.

"Under the table. The cloth nearly touches the floor. Give me your staff. It 'll be in your way."

"Suppose he brings Blueskin, or some other ruffian with him," hesitated the gaoler.

"Suppose he does. In that case I 'll help you. We shall be equally matched. You 're not afraid, Mr. Shoplatch."

"Not in the least," replied Shotbolt, creeping beneath the table; "there 's my staff. Am I quite hidden?"

"Not quite;—keep your feet in. Mind you don't stir till supper's over. I 'll stamp twice when we 've done."

"I forgot to mention there's a trifling reward for his capture," cried Shotbolt, popping his head from under the cloth. "If we take him, I don't mind giving you a share — say a fourth—provided you lend a helping hand."

"Curse your reward!" exclaimed Kneebone, angrily. "Do you take me for a thief-

catcher, like Jonathan Wild, that you dare to affront me by such a proposal?"

"No offence, sir," rejoined the gaoler, humbly. "I didn't imagine for a moment that you 'd accept it, but I thought it right to make you the offer."

"Be silent, and conceal yourself. I 'm about to ring for supper."

The woollen-draper's application to the bell was answered by a very pretty young woman, with dark Jewish features, roguish black eyes, sleek glossy hair, a trim waist, and a remarkably neat figure: the very model, in short, of a bachelor's housekeeper.

"Rachel," said Mr. Kneebone, addressing his comely attendant; "put a few more plates on the table, and bring up whatever there is in the larder. I expect company."

"Company!" echoed Rachel; "at this time of night?"

"Company, child," repeated Kneebone. "I shall want a bottle or two of sack, and a flask of usquebaugh."

"Anything else, sir?"

"No: — stay! you 'd better not bring up any silver forks or spoons."

"Why, surely you don't think your guests would steal them," observed Rachel, archly.

"They shan't have the opportunity," replied Kneebone. And, by way of checking his housekeeper's familiarity, he pointed significantly to the table.

"Who 's there?" cried Rachel. "I 'll see." And before she could be prevented, she lifted up the cloth, and disclosed Shotbolt. "Oh, Gemini!" she exclaimed. "A man!"

"At your service, my dear," replied the gaoler.

"Now your curiosity 's satisfied, child," continued Kneebone, "perhaps, you 'll attend to my orders."

Not a little perplexed by the mysterious object she had seen, Rachel left the room, and, shortly afterwards returned with the materials of a tolerably good supper; — to wit, a couple of cold fowls, a tongue, the best part of a sirloin of beef, a jar of pickles, and two small dishes of pastry. To these she added the wine

and spirits directed, and when all was arranged looked inquisitively at her master.

"I expect a very extraordinary person to supper, Rachel," he remarked.

"The gentleman under the table," she answered. "He *does* seem a very extraordinary person."

"No; another still more extraordinary."

"Indeed!—who is it?"

"Jack Sheppard."

"What! the famous housebreaker. I thought he was in Newgate."

"He's let out for a few hours," laughed Kneebone; "but he's going back again after supper."

"Oh, dear! how I should like to see him. I'm told he's so handsome."

"I'm sorry I can't indulge you," replied her master, a little piqued. "I shall want nothing more. You had better go to bed."

"It's no use going to bed," answered Rachel. "I shan't sleep a wink while Jack Sheppard's in the house."

"Keep in your own room, at all events," rejoined Kneebone.

"Very well," said Rachel, with a toss of her pretty head, "very well. I 'll have a peep at him, if I die for it," she muttered, as she went out.

Mr. Kneebone, then, sat down to await the arrival of his expected guest. Half an hour passed, but Jack did not make his appearance. The woollen-draper looked at his watch. It was eleven o'clock. Another long interval elapsed. The watch was again consulted. It was now a quarter past twelve. Mr. Kneebone, who began to feel sleepy, wound it up, and snuffed the candles.

"I suspect our friend has thought better of it, and won't come," he remarked.

"Have a little patience, sir," rejoined the gaoler.

"How are you off there, Shoplatch?" inquired Kneebone. "Rather cramped, eh?"

"Rather so, sir," replied the other, altering his position. "I shall be able to stretch my limbs presently — ha! ha!"

"Hush!" cried Kneebone, "I hear a noise without. He's coming."

The caution was scarcely uttered, when the door opened, and Jack Sheppard presented himself. He was wrapped in a laced roquelaure, which he threw off on his entrance into the room. It has been already intimated that Jack had an excessive passion for finery; and it might have been added, that the chief part of his ill-gotten gains was devoted to the embellishment of his person. On the present occasion, he appeared to have bestowed more than ordinary attention on his toilette. His apparel was sumptuous in the extreme, and such as was only worn by persons of the highest distinction. It consisted of a full-dress coat of brown flowered velvet, laced with silver; a waistcoat of white satin, likewise richly embroidered; shoes with red heels, and large diamond buckles; pearl-coloured silk stockings with gold clocks; a muslin cravat, or steenkirk, as it was termed, edged with the fine point lace; ruffles of the same material, and so ample as almost to hide the tips of his fin-

gers; and a silver-hilted sword. This costume, though somewhat extravagant, displayed his slight, but perfectly-proportioned figure to the greatest advantage. The only departure which he made from the fashion of the period, was in respect to the peruke — an article he could never be induced to wear. In lieu of it, he still adhered to the sleek black crop, which, throughout life, formed a distinguishing feature in his appearance. Ever since the discovery of his relationship to the Trenchard family, a marked change had taken place in Jack's demeanour and looks, which were so much refined and improved that he could scarcely be recognised as the same person. Having only seen him in the gloom of a dungeon, and loaded with fetters, Kneebone had not noticed this alteration: but he was now greatly struck by it. Advancing towards him, he made him a formal salutation, which was coldly returned.

"I am expected, I find," observed Jack, glancing at the well-covered board.

"You are," replied Kneebone. "When I

heard of your escape, I felt sure I should see you."

"You judged rightly," rejoined Jack; "I never yet broke an engagement with friend or foe--and never will."

"A bold resolution," said the woollen-draper. "You must have made some exertion to keep your present appointment. Few men could have done as much."

"Perhaps not," replied Jack, carelessly. "I would have done more, if necessary."

"Well, take a chair," rejoined Kneebone. "I've waited supper, you perceive."

"First, let me introduce my friends," returned Jack, stepping to the door.

"Friends!" echoed Kneebone, with a look of dismay. "My invitation did not extend to them."

Further remonstrance, however, was cut short by the sudden entrance of Mrs. Maggot and Edgeworth Bess. Behind them stalked Blueskin, enveloped in a rough great-coat, called—appropriately enough in this instance, —a wrap-rascal. Folding his arms, he placed

his back against the door, and burst into a loud laugh. The ladies were, as usual, very gaily dressed; and as usual, also, had resorted to art to heighten their attractions:—

> From patches, justly placed, they borrow'd graces,
> And with vermilion lacquer'd o'er their faces.

Edgeworth Bess wore a scarlet tabby negligée, — a sort of undress, or sack, then much in vogue,—which suited her to admiration, and upon her head had what was called a fly-cap, with richly-laced lappets. Mrs. Maggot was equipped in a light blue riding-habit, trimmed with silver, a hunting-cap and a flaxen peruke, and, instead of a whip, carried a stout cudgel.

For a moment, Kneebone had hesitated about giving the signal to Shotbolt, but, thinking a more favourable opportunity might occur, he determined not to hazard matters by undue precipitation. Placing chairs, therefore, he invited the ladies to be seated, and, paying a similar attention to Jack, began to help to the various dishes, and otherwise fulfil the duties of a host. While this was going on, Blueskin, seeing no notice whatever taken of him, cough-

ed loudly and repeatedly. But finding his hints totally disregarded, he, at length, swaggered up to the table, and thrust in a chair.

"Excuse me," he said, plunging his fork into a fowl, and transferring it to his plate. "This tongue looks remarkably nice," he added, slicing off an immense wedge, "excuse me—ho! ho!"

"You make yourself at home, I perceive," observed Kneebone, with a look of ineffable disgust.

"I generally do," replied Blueskin, pouring out a bumper of sack. "Your health, Kneebone."

"Allow me to offer you a glass of usquebaugh, my dear," said Kneebone, turning from him, and regarding Edgeworth Bess with a stare so impertinent, that even that not overdelicate young lady summoned up a blush.

"With pleasure, sir," replied Edgeworth Bess. "Dear me!" she added, as she pledged the amorous woollen-draper, "what a beautiful ring that is."

"Do you think so?" replied Kneebone,

taking it off, and placing it on her finger, which he took the opportunity of kissing at the same time; "wear it for my sake."

"Oh, dear!" simpered Edgeworth Bess, endeavouring to hide her confusion by looking steadfastly at her plate.

"You don't eat," continued Kneebone, addressing Jack, who had remained for some time thoughtful, and pre-occupied with his head upon his hand.

"The captain has seldom much appetite," replied Blueskin, who, having disposed of the fowl, was commencing a vigorous attack upon the sirloin. "I eat for both."

"So it seems," observed the woollen-draper, "and for every one else, too."

"I say, Kneebone," rejoined Blueskin, as he washed down an immense mouthful with another bumper, "do you recollect how nearly Mr. Wild and I were nabbing you in this very room, some nine years ago?"

"I do," replied Kneebone; "and now," he added, aside, "the case is altered. I'm nearly nabbing *you*."

"A good deal has occurred since then, eh, captain?" said Blueskin, nudging Jack.

"Much that I would willingly forget. Nothing that I desire to remember," replied Sheppard, sternly. "On that night,—in this room, —in your presence, Blueskin,— in yours Mr. Kneebone, Mrs. Wood struck me a blow which made me a robber."

"She has paid dearly for it," muttered Blueskin.

"She has," rejoined Sheppard. "But I wish her hand had been as deadly as yours. On that night,— that fatal night,—Winifred crushed all the hopes that were rising in my heart. On that night, I surrendered myself to Jonathan Wild, and became — what I am."

"On that night, you first met me, love," said Edgeworth Bess, endeavouring to take his hand, which he coldly withdrew.

"And me," added Mrs. Maggot tenderly.

"Would I had never seen either of you!" cried Jack, rising and pacing the apartment with a hurried step.

"Well, I'm sure Winifred could never

have loved you as well as I do," said Mrs. Maggot.

"*You!*" cried Jack, scornfully. "Do you compare *your* love—a love which all may purchase—with *hers?* No one has ever loved me."

"Except me, dear," insinuated Edgeworth Bess. "I 've been always true to you."

"Peace!" retorted Jack, with increased bitterness. "I 'm your dupe no longer."

"What the devil 's in the wind now, captain?" cried Blueskin, in astonishment.

"I 'll tell you," replied Jack, with forced calmness. "Within the last few minutes, all my guilty life has passed before me. Nine years ago, I was honest—was happy. Nine years ago, I worked in this very house—had a kind indulgent master, whom I robbed—twice robbed, at your instigation, villain; a mistress, whom you have murdered; a companion, whose friendship I have for ever forfeited; a mother, whose heart I have well-nigh broken. In this room was my ruin begun: in this room it should be ended."

"Come, come, don't take on thus, captain," cried Blueskin, rising and walking towards him. "If any one's to blame, it's me. I'm ready to bear it all."

"Can you make me, honest?" cried Jack. "Can you make me other than a condemned felon? Can you make me not Jack Sheppard?"

"No," replied Blueskin; "and I wouldn't if I could."

"Curse you!" cried Jack, furiously, — "curse you! — curse you!"

"Swear away, captain," rejoined Blueskin, coolly. "It'll ease your mind."

"Do you mock me?" cried Jack, levelling a pistol at him.

"Not I," replied Blueskin. "Take my life, if you're so disposed. You're welcome to it. And let's see if either of these women, who prate of their love for you, will do as much."

"This is folly," cried Jack, controlling himself by a powerful effort.

"The worst of folly," replied Blueskin,

returning to the table, and taking up a glass ; " and, to put an end to it, I shall drink the health of Jack Sheppard, the housebreaker, and success to him in all his enterprises. And now, let 's see who 'll refuse the pledge."

" *I* will," replied Sheppard, dashing the glass from his hand. " Sit down, fool ! "

" Jack," said Kneebone, who had been considerably interested by the foregoing scene, " are these regrets for your past life sincere ? "

" Suppose them so," rejoined Jack, " what then ? "

" Nothing — nothing," stammered Kneebone, his prudence getting the better of his sympathy. " I 'm glad to hear it, that 's all," he added, taking out his snuff-box, his never-failing resource in such emergencies. " It won't do to betray the officer," he muttered.

" Oh lud ! what an exquisite box ! " cried Edgeworth Bess. " Is it gold ? "

" Pure gold," replied Kneebone. " It was

given me by poor dear Mrs. Wood, whose loss I shall ever deplore."

"Pray, let me have a pinch?" said Edgeworth Bess, with a captivating glance. "I am so excessively fond of snuff."

The woollen-draper replied by gallantly handing her the box, which was instantly snatched from her by Blueskin, who, after helping himself to as much of its contents as he could conveniently squeeze between his thumb and finger, put it very coolly in his pocket.

The action did not pass unnoticed by Sheppard.

"Restore it," he cried, in an authoritative voice.

"O'ons! captain," cried Blueskin, as he grumblingly obeyed the command; "if you've left off business yourself, you needn't interfere with other people."

"I should like a little of that plum-tart," said Mrs. Maggot; "but I don't see a spoon."

"I'll ring for one," replied Kneebone, rising

accordingly; "but I fear my servants are gone to bed."

Blueskin, meanwhile, having drained and replenished his glass, commenced chaunting a snatch of a ballad :—

Once on a time, as I 've heard tell,
In Wych Street Owen Wood did dwell;
A carpenter he was by trade,
And money, I believe, he made.
With his foodle doo!

This carpenter he had a wife,
The plague and torment of his life,
Who, though she did her husband scold,
Loved well a woollen-draper bold.
With her foodle doo!

"I 've a toast to propose," cried Sheppard, filling a bumper. "You won't refuse it, Mr. Kneebone?"

"He 'd better not," muttered Blueskin.

"What is it?" demanded the woollen-draper, as he returned to the table, and took up a glass.

"The speedy union of Thames Darrell with Winifred Wood," replied Jack.

Kneebone's cheeks glowed with rage, and he

set down the wine untasted, while Blueskin resumed his song.

Now Owen Wood had one fair child,
Unlike her mother, meek and mild;
Her love the draper strove to gain,
But she repaid him with disdain.
With his foodle doo!

"Peace!" cried Jack.

But Blueskin was not to be silenced. He continued his ditty, in spite of the angry glances of his leader.

In vain he fondly urged his suit,
And, all in vain, the question put;
She answered,—"Mr. William Kneebone,
Of me, sir, you shall never be bone."
With your foodle doo!

"Thames Darrell has my heart alone,
A noble youth, e'en *you* must own;
And, if from him my love could stir,
Jack Sheppard I should much prefer!"
With his foodle doo!

"Do you refuse my toast?" cried Jack, impatiently.

"I do," replied Kneebone.

"Drink this, then," roared Blueskin. And pouring the contents of a small powder-flask

into a bumper of brandy, he tendered him the mixture.

At this juncture, the door was opened by Rachel.

"What did you ring for, sir?" she asked, eyeing the group with astonishment.

"Your master wants a few table-spoons, child," said Mrs. Maggot.

"Leave the room," interposed Kneebone, angrily.

"No, I shan't," replied Rachel, saucily. "I came to see Jack Sheppard, and I won't go till you point him out to me. You told me he was going back to Newgate after supper, so I mayn't have another opportunity."

"Oh! he told you that, did he?" said Blueskin, marching up to her, and chucking her under the chin. "I'll show you Captain Sheppard, my dear. There he stands. I'm his lieutenant,—Lieutenant Blueskin. We're two good-looking fellows, ain't we?"

"Very good-looking," replied Rachel. "But, where's the strange gentleman I saw under the table?"

"Under the table!" echoed Blueskin, winking at Jack. "When did you see him, my love?"

"A short time ago," replied the housekeeper, unsuspiciously.

"The plot's out!" cried Jack. And, without another word, he seized the table with both hands, and upset it; scattering plates, dishes, bottles, jugs, and glasses far and wide. The crash was tremendous. The lights rolled over, and were extinguished. And, if Rachel had not carried a candle, the room would have been plunged in total darkness. Amid the confusion, Shotbolt sprang to his feet, and levelling a pistol at Jack's head, commanded him to surrender; but, before any reply could be made, the gaoler's arm was struck up by Blueskin, who, throwing himself upon him, dragged him to the ground. In the struggle the pistol went off, but without damage to either party. The conflict was of short duration; for Shotbolt was no match for his athletic antagonist. He was speedily disarmed; and the rope and gag being found

upon him, were exultingly turned against him by his conqueror, who, after pinioning his arms tightly behind his back, forced open his mouth with the iron, and effectually prevented the utterance of any further outcries. While the strife was raging, Edgeworth Bess walked up to Rachel, and advised her, if she valued her life, not to scream or stir from the spot; a caution which the housekeeper, whose curiosity far outweighed her fears, received in very good part.

In the interim, Jack advanced to the woollen-draper, and regarding him sternly, thus addressed him:

"You have violated the laws of hospitality, Mr. Kneebone. I came hither as your guest. You have betrayed me."

"What faith is to be kept with a felon?" replied the woollen-draper, disdainfully.

"He who breaks faith with his benefactor may well justify himself thus," answered Jack. "I have not trusted you. Others who have done, have found you false."

"I don't understand you," replied Kneebone, in some confusion.

"You soon shall," rejoined Sheppard. "Where are the packets committed to your charge by Sir Rowland Trenchard?"

"The packets!" exclaimed Kneebone, in alarm.

"It is useless to deny it," replied Jack. "You were watched to-night by Blueskin. You met Sir Rowland at the house of a Romish priest, Father Spencer. Two packets were committed to your charge, which you undertook to deliver, — one to another priest, Sir Rowland's chaplain, at Manchester,—the other to Mr. Wood. Produce them!"

"Never!" replied Kneebone.

"Then, by Heaven! you are a dead man!" replied Jack, cocking a pistol, and pointing it deliberately at his head. "I give you one minute for reflection. After that time, nothing shall save you."

There was a brief, breathless pause. Even Blueskin looked on with anxiety.

"It is past," said Jack, placing his finger on the trigger.

"Hold!" cried Kneebone, flinging down the packets; "they are nothing to me."

"But they are everything to me," cried Jack, stooping to pick them up. "These packets will establish Thames Darrell's birth, win him his inheritance, and procure him the hand of Winifred Wood."

"Don't be too sure of that," rejoined Kneebone, snatching up the staff, and aiming a blow at his head, which was fortunately warded off by Mrs. Maggot, who promptly interposed her cudgel.

"Defend yourself!" cried Jack, drawing his sword.

"Leave his punishment to me, Jack," said Mrs. Maggot. "I've the Bridewell account to settle."

"Be it so," replied Jack, putting up his blade. "I've a good deal to do. Show him no quarter, Poll. He deserves none."

"And shall find none," replied the Amazon. "Now, Mr. Kneebone," she added, drawing

up her magnificent figure to its full height, and making the heavy cudgel whistle through the air, "look to yourself."

"Stand off, Poll," rejoined the woollen-draper; "I don't want to hurt you. It shall never be said that I raised my arm willingly against a woman."

"I 'll forgive you all the harm you do me," rejoined the Amazon. "What! you still hesitate! Will that rouse you, coward?" And she gave him a smart rap on the head.

"Coward!" cried Kneebone. "Neither man nor woman shall apply that term to me. If you forget your sex, jade, I must forget mine."

With this, he attacked her vigorously in his turn.

It was a curious sight to see how this extraordinary woman, who, it has been said, was not less remarkable for the extreme delicacy of her features, and the faultless symmetry of her figure, than for her wonderful strength and agility, conducted herself in the present encounter; with what dexterity she parried every blow aimed against her by her adversary,

whose head and face, already marked by various ruddy streams, showed how successfully her own hits had been made; — how she drew him hither and thither, now leading him on, now driving him suddenly back; harassing and exhausting him in every possible way, and making it apparent that she could at any moment put an end to the fight, and only delayed the finishing stroke to make his punishment the more severe.

Jack, meanwhile, with Blueskin's assistance, had set the table once more upon its legs, and placing writing materials, which he took from a shelf, upon it, made Shotbolt, who was still gagged, but whose arms were for the moment unbound, sit down before them.

"Write as I dictate," he cried, placing a pen in the gaoler's hand and a pistol to his ear.

Shotbolt nodded in token of acquiescence, and emitted an odd guttural sound.

"Write as follows," continued Jack. "'I have succeeded in capturing Jack Sheppard. The reward is mine. Get all ready for his reception. In a few minutes after the delivery

of this note he will be in Newgate.' Sign it," he added, as, after some further threats, the letter was indited according to his dictation, "and direct it to Mr. Austin. That 's well. And, now, to find a messenger."

"Mr. Kneebone's man is in the shop," said Rachel; "he'll take it."

"Can I trust him?" mused Jack. "Yes; he 'll suspect nothing. Give him this letter, child, and bid him take it to the Lodge at Newgate without loss of time. Blueskin will go with you,—for fear of a mistake."

"You might trust me," said Rachel, in an offended tone; "but never mind."

And she left the room with Blueskin, who very politely offered her his arm.

Meanwhile, the combat between Kneebone and Mrs. Maggot had been brought to a termination. When the woollen-draper was nearly worn out, the Amazon watched her opportunity, and hitting him on the arm, disabled it.

"That 's for Mrs. Wood," she cried, as the staff fell from his grasp.

"I 'm at your mercy, Poll," rejoined Kneebone, abjectly.

"That 's for Winifred," vociferated the Amazon, bringing the cudgel heavily upon his shoulder.

"Damnation!" cried Kneebone.

"That 's for myself," rejoined Mrs. Maggot, dealing him a blow, which stretched him senseless on the floor.

"Bravo, Poll!" cried Jack, who having again pinioned Shotbolt, was now tracing a few hasty lines on a sheet of paper. "You 've given him a broken head, I perceive."

"He 'll scarcely need a plaister," replied Mrs. Maggot, laughing. "Here, Bess, give me the cord, and I 'll tie him to this chest of drawers. I don't think he 'll come to himself too soon. But it 's best to be on the safe side."

"Decidedly so," replied Edgeworth Bess; "and I 'll take this opportunity, while Jack's back is turned,—for he 's grown so strangely particular,—of easing him of his snuff-box. Perhaps," she added, in a whisper, as she ap-

propriated the before-named article, "he has a pocket-book."

"Hush!" replied Mrs. Maggot; "Jack will hear you. We 'll come back for that by and by, and the dressing-gown."

At this moment, Rachel and Blueskin returned. Their momentary absence seemed to have worked wonders; for now the most perfect understanding appeared to subsist between them.

"Have you sent off the note?" inquired Jack.

"We have, captain," replied Blueskin. "I say *we*, because Miss Rachel and I have struck up a match. Shall I bring off anything?" he added, looking eagerly round.

"No," replied Jack, peremptorily.

Having now sealed his letter, Sheppard took a handkerchief, and tying it over Shotbolt's face, so as completely to conceal the features, clapped his hat upon his head, and pushed it over his brows. He, next, seized the unlucky gaoler, and forced him along, while Blueskin

expedited his movements by administering a few kicks behind.

When they got to the door, Jack opened it, and, mimicking the voice of the gaoler, shouted, "Now, my lads, all's ready!"

"Here we are," cried the chairmen, hurrying out of the court with their swinging vehicle, "where is he?"

"Here," replied Sheppard, dragging out Shotbolt by the collar, while Blueskin pushed him behind, and Mrs. Maggot held up a lantern, which she found in the shop. "In with him!"

"Ay — ay, yer hon'r," cried the foremost chairman, lending a helping hand. "Get in wid ye, ye villin!"

And, despite his resistance, Shotbolt was thrust into the chair, which was instantly fastened upon him.

"There, he's as safe as Jack Sheppard in the Condemned Hould," laughed the man.

"Off with you to Newgate!" cried Jack, "and don't let him out till you get inside the

Jack Sheppard tracking Charlotte the Jew's.

George Cruikshank

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Lodge. There 's a letter for the head turnkey, Mr. Ireton. D'ye hear."

"Yes, yer hon'r," replied the chairman, taking the note.

"What are you waiting for?" asked Jack, impatiently.

"The gen'l'man as hired us," replied the chairman.

"Oh! he 'll be after you directly. He 's settling an account in the house. Lose no time. The letter will explain all."

The chair was then rapidly put in motion, and speedily disappeared.

"What 's to be done next?" cried Blueskin, returning to Rachel, who was standing with Edgeworth Bess near the door.

"I shall go back and finish my supper," said Mrs. Maggot.

"And so shall I," replied Edgeworth Bess.

"Stop a minute," cried Jack, detaining his mistresses. "Here we part,—perhaps for ever. I 've already told you I 'm about to take a long journey, and it 's more than probable I shall never return."

"Don't say so," cried Mrs. Maggot. "I should be perfectly miserable if I thought you in earnest."

"The very idea is dreadful," whimpered Edgeworth Bess.

"Farewell!" cried Jack, embracing them. "Take this key to Baptist Kettleby. On seeing it, he'll deliver you a box, which it will unlock, and in which you'll find a matter of fifty guineas and a few trinkets. Divide the money between you, and wear the ornaments for my sake. But, if you've a spark of love for me, don't meddle with anything in that house."

"Not for worlds!" exclaimed both ladies together.

"Farewell!" cried Jack, breaking from them, and rushing down the street.

"What shall we do, Poll?" hesitated Edgeworth Bess.

"Go in, to be sure, simpleton," replied Mrs. Maggot, "and bring off all we can. I know where everything valuable is kept. Since Jack has left us, what does it matter whether he's pleased or not?"

At this moment, a whistle was heard.

"Coming!" cried Blueskin, who was still lingering with Rachel. "The captain's in such a desperate hurry, that there's no time for love-making. Adieu! my charmer. You'll find those young ladies extremely agreeable acquaintances. Adieu!"

And, snatching a hasty kiss, he darted after Jack.

The chair, meanwhile, with its unhappy load, was transported at a brisk pace to Newgate. Arrived there, the porters thundered at the massive door of the Lodge, which was instantly opened — Shotbolt's note having been received just before. All the turnkeys were assembled. Ireton and Langley had returned from a second unsuccessful search; Marvel had come thither to bid good-night to Mrs. Spurling; Austin had never quitted his post. The tapstress was full of curiosity; but she appeared more easy than the others. Behind her stood Caliban, chuckling to himself, and grinning from ear to ear.

"Well, who'd have thought of Shotbolt

beating us all in this way!" said Ireton. "I'm sorry for old Newgate that another gaol should have it. It's infernally provoking."

"Infernally provoking!" echoed Langley.

"Nobody has so much cause for complaint as me," growled Austin. "I've lost my wager."

"Twenty pounds," rejoined Mrs. Spurling. "I witnessed the bet."

"Here he is!" cried Ireton, as the knocking was heard without. "Get ready the irons, Caliban."

"Wait a bit, massa," replied the grinning negro,—"lilly bit—see all right fust."

By this time, the chair had been brought into the Lodge.

"You've got him?" demanded Ireton.

"Safe inside," replied the chairman, wiping the heat from his brow; "we've run all the way."

"Where's Mr. Shotbolt?" asked Austin.

"The gen'l'man'll be here directly. He was detained. T'other gen'l'man said the letter 'ud explain all."

"Detained!" echoed Marvel. "That's odd. But, let's see the prisoner."

The chair was then opened.

"Shotbolt! by ——" cried Austin, as the captive was dragged forth. "I've won, after all."

Exclamations of wonder burst from all. Mrs. Spurling bit her lips to conceal her mirth. Caliban absolutely crowed with delight.

"Hear the letter," said Ireton, breaking the seal. "'*This is the way in which I will serve all who attempt to apprehend me.*' It is signed JACK SHEPPARD."

"And, so Jack Sheppard has sent back Shotbolt in this pickle," said Langley.

"So it appears," replied Marvel. "Untie his arms, and take off that handkerchief. The poor fellow's half smothered."

"I guess what share you've had in this," whispered Austin to Mrs. Spurling.

"Never mind," replied the tapstress. "You've won your wager."

Half an hour after this occurrence, when it had been sufficiently laughed at and discussed;

when the wager had been settled, and the chairman dismissed with the remaining three guineas, which Shotbolt was compelled to pay; Ireton arose, and signified his intention of stepping across the street to inform Mr. Wild of the circumstance.

"As it 's getting late, and the porter may be gone to bed," he observed; "I 'll take the passkey, and let myself in. Mr. Wild is sure to be up. He never retires to rest till daybreak—if at all. Come with me, Langley, and bring the lantern."

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW JACK SHEPPARD WAS AGAIN CAPTURED.

Jack Sheppard, after whistling to Blueskin, hurried down a short thoroughfare leading from Wych Street to the back of Saint Clement's Church, where he found Thames Darrell, who advanced to meet him.

"I was just going," said Thames. "When I parted from you at Mr. Kneebone's door, you begged me to await your return here, assuring me you would not detain me five minutes. Instead of which, more than half an hour has elapsed."

"You won't complain of the delay when I tell you what I've done," answered Jack. "I've obtained two packets, containing letters from Sir Rowland Trenchard, which I've no

doubt will establish your title to the estates. Take them, and may they prove as serviceable to you as I desire."

"Jack," replied Thames, greatly moved, "I wish I could devise any means of brightening your own dark prospects."

"That's impossible," replied Jack. "I am utterly lost."

"Not utterly," rejoined the other.

"Utterly," reiterated Jack, gloomily,—"as regards all I hold dear. Listen to me, Thames. I'm about to leave this country for ever. Having ascertained that a vessel sails for France from the river at daybreak to-morrow morning, I have secured a passage in her, and have already had the few effects I possess, conveyed on board. Blueskin goes with me. The faithful fellow will never leave me."

"Never, while I've breath in my body, captain," rejoined Blueskin, who had joined them. "England or France, London or Paris, it's all one to me, so I've you to command me."

"Stand out of earshot," rejoined his leader. "I'll call you when you're wanted."

And Blueskin withdrew.

"I cannot but approve the course you are about to take, Jack," said Thames, "though on some accounts I regret it. In after years you can return to your own country — to your friends."

"Never," replied Sheppard bitterly. "My friends need not fear my return. They shall hear of me no more. Under another name, — not my own hateful one, — I will strive to distinguish myself in some foreign service, and win myself a reputation, or perish honourably. But I will never — never return."

"I will not attempt to combat your resolution, Jack," returned Thames, after a pause. "But I dread the effect your departure may have upon your poor mother. Her life hangs upon a thread, and this may snap it."

"I wish you hadn't mentioned her," said Jack, in a broken voice, while his whole frame shook with emotion. "What I do is for the best, and I can only hope she may have

strength to bear the separation. You must say farewell to her, for I cannot. I don't ask you to supply my place — for that is, perhaps, impossible. But, be like a son to her."

"Do not doubt me," replied Thames, warmly pressing his hand.

"And now, I 've one further request," faltered Jack; "though I scarcely know how to make it. It is to set me right with Winifred. Do not let her think worse of me than I deserve, — or even so ill. Tell her, that more than once, when about to commit some desperate offence, I have been restrained by her gentle image. If hopeless love for her made me a robber, it has also saved me many a crime. Will you tell her that?"

"I will," replied Thames, earnestly.

"Enough," said Jack, recovering his composure. "And now, to your own concerns. Blueskin, who has been on the watch all night, has dogged Sir Rowland Trenchard to Jonathan Wild's house; and, from the mysterious manner in which he was admitted by the thief-taker's confidential servant, Abraham Mendez,

and not by the regular porter, there is little doubt but they are alone, and probably making some arrangements prior to our uncle's departure from England."

"Is he leaving England?" demanded Thames, in astonishment.

" He sails to-morrow morning in the very vessel by which I start," replied Jack. " Now, if as I suspect, — from the documents just placed in your possession,—Sir Rowland meditates doing you justice after his departure, it is possible his intentions may be frustrated by the machinations of Wild, whose interest is obviously to prevent such an occurrence, unless we can surprise them together, and, by proving to Sir Rowland that we possess the power of compelling a restitution of your rights, force the other treacherous villain into compliance. Jonathan, in all probability, knows nothing of these packets; and their production may serve to intimidate him. Will you venture?"

" It is a hazardous experiment," said Thames, after a moment's reflection; " but I will make

it. You must not, however, accompany me, Jack. The risk I run is nothing to yours."

"I care for no risk, provided I can serve you," rejoined Sheppard. "Besides, you'll not be able to get in without me. It won't do to knock at the door, and Jonathan Wild's house is not quite so easy of entrance as Mr. Wood's."

"I understand," replied Thames; "be it as you will."

"Then, we'll lose no more time," returned Jack. "Come along, Blueskin."

Starting at a rapid pace in the direction of the Old Bailey, and crossing Fleet Bridge, "for oyster tubs renowned," the trio skirted the right bank of the muddy stream until they reached Fleet Lane, up which they hurried. Turning off again on the left, down Seacoal Lane, they arrived at the mouth of a dark, narrow alley, into which they plunged; and, at the farther extremity found a small yard, overlooked by the blank walls of a large gloomy habitation. A door in this house

opened upon the yard. Jack tried it, and found it locked.

"If I had my old tools with me, we'd soon master this obstacle," he muttered. "We shall be obliged to force it."

"Try the cellar, captain," said Blueskin, stamping upon a large board in the ground. "Here's the door. This is the way the old thief brings in all his heavy plunder, which he stows in out-of-the-way holes in his infernal dwelling. I've seen him often do it."

While making these remarks, Blueskin contrived, by means of a chisel which he chanced to have about him, to lift up the board, and, introducing his fingers beneath it, with Jack's assistance speedily opened it altogether, disclosing a dark hole, into which he leapt.

"Follow me, Thames, cried Jack, dropping into the chasm.

They were now in a sort of cellar, at one end of which was a door. It was fastened inside. But, taking the chisel from Blueskin, Jack quickly forced back the bolt.

As they entered the room beyond, a fierce growl was heard.

"Let me go first," said Blueskin; "the dogs know me. Soho! boys." And, walking up to the animals, which were chained to the wall, they instantly recognised him, and suffered the others to pass without barking.

Groping their way through one or two dark and mouldy-smelling vaults, the party ascended a flight of steps, which brought them to the hall. As Jack conjectured, no one was there; and, though a lamp was burning on a stand, they decided upon proceeding without it. They then swiftly mounted the stairs, and stopped before the audience-chamber. Applying his ear to the keyhole, Jack listened, but could detect no sound. He, next cautiously tried the door, but found it fastened inside.

"I fear we 're too late," he whispered to Thames. "But, we 'll soon see. Give me the chisel, Blueskin." And, dexterously applying the implement, he forced open the lock.

They then entered the room, which was perfectly dark.

"This is strange," said Jack, under his breath. "Sir Rowland must be gone. And yet, I don't know. The key 's in the lock, on the inner side. Be on your guard."

"I am so," replied Thames, who had followed him closely.

"Shall I fetch the light, captain?" whispered Blueskin.

"Yes," replied Jack. "I don't know how it is," he added in a low voice to Thames, as they were left alone, "but I 've a strange foreboding of ill. My heart fails me. I almost wish we hadn't come."

As he said this, he moved forward a few paces, when, finding his feet glued to the ground by some adhesive substance, he stooped to feel what it was, but instantly withdrew his hand, with an exclamation of horror.

"God in heaven!" he cried, "the floor is covered with blood. Some foul murder has been committed? The light! — the light!"

Astounded at his cries, Thames sprang towards him. At this moment, Blueskin appeared with the lamp, and revealed a horrible spec-

tacle,—the floor deluged with blood,—various articles of furniture upset,—papers scattered about,—the murdered man's cloak, trampled upon and smeared with gore,—his hat, crushed and similarly stained,—his sword,—the ensanguined cloth,—with several other ghastly evidences of the slaughterous deed. Further on, there were impressions of bloody footsteps along the floor.

"Sir Rowland is murdered!" cried Jack, as soon as he could find a tongue.

"It is plain he has been destroyed by his perfidious accomplice," rejoined Thames. "Oh God! how fearfully my father is avenged!"

"True," replied Jack, sternly; "but we have our uncle to avenge. What's this?" he added, stooping to pick up a piece of paper lying at his feet — it was Jonathan's memorandum. "This is the explanation of the bloody deed."

"Here's a pocket-book full of notes, and a heavy bag of gold," said Blueskin, examining the articles on the floor.

"The sum which incited the villain to the murder," replied Jack. "But he can't be far off. He must be gone to dispose of the body. We shall have him on his return."

"I'll see where these footsteps lead to," said Blueskin, holding the light to the floor. "Here are some more papers, captain."

"Give them to me," replied Jack. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "a letter, beginning 'dearest Aliva,' — that 's your mother's name, Thames."

"Let me see it," cried Thames, snatching it from him. "It *is* addressed to my mother," he added, as his eye glanced rapidly over it, "and by my father. At length, I shall ascertain my name. Bring the light this way — quick! I cannot decipher the signature."

Jack was about to comply with the request, when an unlooked-for interruption occurred. Having traced the footsteps to the wall, and perceiving no outlet, Blueskin elevated the lamp, and discovered marks of bloody fingers on the boards.

"He must have gone this way," muttered Blueskin. "I 've often heard of a secret door

in this room, though I never saw it. It must be somewhere hereabouts. Ah !" he exclaimed, as his eye fell upon a small knob in the wall, "there 's the spring !"

He touched it, and the door flew open.

The next moment, he was felled to the ground by Jonathan Wild, who sprang into the room, followed by Abraham bearing the link. A single glance served to show the thieftaker how matters stood. From the slight sounds that had reached him in his place of confinement, he was aware that some persons had found their way to the scene of slaughter, and in a state of the most intense anxiety awaited the result of their investigation, prepared for the worst. Hearing the spring touched, he dashed through on the instant, and struck down the person who presented himself, with his bludgeon. On beholding the intruders, his fears changed to exultation, and he uttered a roar of satisfaction as he glared at them, which could only be likened to the cry of some savage denizen of the plains.

On his appearance, Jack levelled a pistol

at his head. But his hand was withheld by Thames.

"Don't fire," cried the latter. "It is important not to slay him. He shall expiate his offences on the gibbet. You are my prisoner, murderer."

"*Your* prisoner!" echoed Jonathan, derisively. "You mistake,—you are mine. And so is your companion,—the convict Sheppard."

"Waste not another word with him, Thames," cried Jack. "Upon him!"

"Yield, villain, or die!" shouted Thames, drawing his sword, and springing towards him.

"There's my answer!" rejoined Wild, hurling the bludgeon at him, with such fatal effect, that striking him on the head it brought him instantly to the ground.

"Ah! traitor!" cried Jack, pulling the trigger of his pistol.

"Anticipating this, Wild avoided the shot by suddenly ducking his head. He had a narrow escape, however; for, passing within

an inch of him, the bullet buried itself deeply in the wall.

Before he could fire a second shot, Jack had to defend himself from the thieftaker, who, with his drawn hanger, furiously assaulted him. Eluding the blow, Jack plucked his sword from the scabbard, and a desperate conflict began.

"Pick up that blade, Nab," vociferated Wild, finding himself hotly pressed, "and stab him. I won't give him a chance."

"Cowardly villain!" cried Jack, as the Jew, obeying the orders of his principal, snatched up the weapon of the murdered man, and assailed him. "But I 'll yet disappoint you."

And springing backwards, he darted suddenly through the door.

"After him," cried Wild; "he mustn't escape. Dead or alive, I 'll have him. Bring the link."

And, followed by Abraham, he rushed out of the room.

Just as Jack got half way down the stairs, and Wild and the Jew reached the upper land-

ing, the street-door was opened by Langley and Ireton, the latter of whom carried a lantern.

"Stop him!" shouted Jonathan from the stair-head, "stop him! It's Jack Sheppard!"

"Give way!" cried Jack fiercely. "I'll cut down him who opposes me."

The head turnkey, in all probability, would have obeyed. But, being pushed forward by his subordinate officer, he was compelled to make a stand.

"You'd better surrender quietly, Jack," he cried; "you've no chance."

Instead of regarding him, Jack glanced over the iron banisters, and measured the distance. But the fall was too great, and he abandoned the attempt.

"We have him!" cried Jonathan, hurrying down the steps. "He can't escape."

As this was said, Jack turned with the swiftness of thought, and shortening his sword, prepared to plunge it into the thieftaker's heart. Before he could make the thrust, however, he

was seized behind by Ireton, who flung himself upon him.

"Caught!" shouted the head-turnkey. "I give you joy of the capture, Mr. Wild," he added, as Jonathan came up, and assisted him to secure and disarm the prisoner. "I was coming to give you intelligence of a comical trick played by this rascal, when I find him here — the last place, I own, where I should have expected to find him."

"You 've arrived in the very nick of time," rejoined Jonathan; "and I 'll take care your services are not overlooked."

"Mr. Ireton," cried Jack, in accents of the most urgent entreaty. "Before you take me hence, I implore you — if you would further the ends of justice — search this house. One of the most barbarous murders ever committed has just been perpetrated by the monster Wild. You will find proofs of the bloody deed in his room. But go thither at once, I beseech you, before he has time to remove them."

"Mr. Ireton is welcome to search every room in my house if he pleases," said Jonathan,

in a tone of bravado. "As soon as we 've conveyed you to Newgate, I 'll accompany him."

"Mr. Ireton will do no such thing," replied the head-turnkey. "Bless your soul! d' ye think I 'm to be gammoned by such nonsense. Not I. I 'm not quite such a green-horn as Shotbolt, Jack, whatever you may think."

"For mercy's sake go up stairs," implored Sheppard. "I have not told you half. There 's a man dying—Captain Darrell. Take me with you. Place a pistol at my ear, and shoot me, if I 've told you false."

"And, what good would that do?" replied Ireton, sarcastically. "To shoot you would be to lose the reward. You act your part capitally, but it won't do."

"Won't you go?" cried Jack passionately. "Mr. Langley, I appeal to you. Murder, I say, has been done! Another murder will be committed if you don't prevent it. The blood will rest on your head. Do you hear me, sir? Won't you stir?"

"Not a step," replied Langley, gruffly.

"Off with him to Newgate!" cried Jonathan.

"Ireton, as you captured him, the reward is yours. But I request that a third may be given to Langley."

"It shall be, sir," replied Ireton, bowing. "Now come along, Jack."

"Miscreants!" cried Sheppard, almost driven frantic by the violence of his emotions; "you're all in league with him."

"Away with him!" cried Jonathan. "I 'll see him fettered myself. Remain at the door, Nab," he added, loitering for a moment behind the others, "and let no one in, or out."

Jack, meanwhile, was carried to Newgate. Austin could scarcely credit his senses when he beheld him. Shotbolt, who had in some degree recovered from the effects of his previous mortification, was thrown into an ecstacy of delight, and could not sufficiently exult over the prisoner. Mrs. Spurling had retired for the night. Jack appealed to the new auditors, and again detailed his story, but with no better success than heretofore. His statement was treated with derision. Having seen him heavily

ironed, and placed in the Condemned Hold, Jonathan recrossed the street.

He found Abraham on guard as he had left him.

"Has any one been here?" he asked.

"No von," replied the Jew.

"That 's well," replied Wild, entering the house, and fastening the door. "And now to dispose of our dead. Why, Nab, you shake as if you 'd got an ague?" he added, turning to the Jew, whose teeth chattered audibly.

"I haven't quite recovered the fright I got in the Vell-Hole," replied Abraham.

On returning to the audience-chamber, Jonathan found the inanimate body of Thames Darrell lying where he had left it; but, on examining it, he remarked that the pockets were turned inside out, and had evidently been rifled. Startled by this circumstance, he looked around, and perceived that the trap-door,—which has been mentioned as communicating with a secret staircase,—was open. He, next, discovered that Blueskin was gone; and, pursuing his scrutiny, found that he had carried

off all the bank-notes, gold, and letters,—including, what Jonathan himself was not aware of,—the two packets which he had abstracted from the person of Thames. Uttering a terrible imprecation, Jonathan snatched up the link, and hastily descended the stairs, leaving the Jew behind him. After a careful search below, he could detect no trace of Blueskin. But, finding the cellar-door open, concluded he had got out that way.

Returning to the audience-chamber in a by-no-means enviable state of mind, he commanded the Jew to throw the body of Thames into the Well-Hole.

"You musht do dat shob yourself, Mishter Vild," rejoined Abraham, shaking his head. "No pripe shall indushe me to enter dat horrid plashe again."

"Fool!" cried Wild, taking up the body, "what are you afraid of? After all," he added, pausing, "he may be of more use to me alive than dead."

Adhering to this change of plan, he ordered Abraham to follow him, and, descending the

secret stairs once more, carried the wounded man into the lower part of the premises. Unlocking several doors, he came to a dark vault, that would have rivalled the gloomiest cell in Newgate, into which he thrust Thames, and fastened the door.

"Go to the pump, Nab," he said, when this was done, "and fill a pail with water. We must wash out those stains up stairs, and burn the cloth. Blood, they say, won't come out. But I never found any truth in the saying. When I've had an hour's rest, I'll be after Blueskin."

CHAPTER XV.

HOW BLUESKIN UNDERWENT THE PEINE FORTE ET DURE.

As soon as it became known, through the medium of the public prints on the following day, that Jack Sheppard had broken out of prison, and had been again captured during the night, fresh curiosity was excited, and larger crowds than ever flocked to Newgate, in the hope of obtaining admission to his cell; but by the governor's express commands, Wild having privately counselled the step, no one was allowed to see him. A question next arose whether the prisoner could be executed under the existing warrant,—some inclining to one opinion, some to another. To settle the point, the governor started to Windsor, delegating his trust in the interim to Wild, who took advantage of his brief rule to adopt the

harshest measures towards the prisoner. He had him removed from the Condemned Hold, stripped of his fine apparel, clothed in the most sordid rags, loaded with additional fetters, and thrust into the Stone Hold,—already described as the most noisome cell in the whole prison. Here, without a glimpse of daylight; visited by no one except Austin at stated intervals, who neither answered a question nor addressed a word to him; fed upon the worst diet, literally mouldy bread and ditch-water; surrounded by stone walls; with a flagged floor for his pillow, and without so much as a blanket to protect him from the death-like cold that pierced his frame,—Jack's stout heart was subdued, and he fell into the deepest dejection, ardently longing for the time when even a violent death should terminate his sufferings. But it was not so ordered. Mr. Pitt returned with intelligence that the warrant was delayed, and, on taking the opinion of two eminent lawyers of the day, Sir William Thomson and Mr. Serjeant Raby, it was decided that it must be proved in a regular and judicial

manner that Sheppard was the identical person who had been convicted and had escaped, before a fresh order could be made for his execution; and that the matter must, therefore, stand over until the next sessions, to be held at the Old Bailey in October, when it could be brought before the court.

The unfortunate prisoner, meanwhile, who was not informed of the respite, languished in his horrible dungeon, and, at the expiration of three weeks, became so seriously indisposed that it was feared he could not long survive. He refused his food,—and even when better provisions were offered him, rejected them. As his death was by no means what Jonathan desired, he resolved to remove him to a more airy ward, and afford him such slight comforts as might tend to his restoration, or at least keep him alive until the period of execution. With this view, Jack was carried—for he was no longer able to move without assistance—to a ward called the Castle, situated over the gateway on the western side, in what was considered the strongest part of the gaol. The walls were of

immense thickness; the small windows double-grated and unglazed; the fire-place was without a grate; and a barrack-bed, divided into two compartments, occupied one corner. It was about twelve feet high, nine wide, and fourteen long; and was approached by double doors each six inches thick. As Jack appeared to be sinking fast, his fetters were removed, his own clothes were returned to him, and he was allowed a mattress and a scanty supply of bed-linen. Mrs. Spurling attended him as his nurse, and, under her care, he speedily revived. As soon as he became convalescent, and all fears of his premature dissolution were at an end, Wild recommenced his rigorous treatment. The bedding was removed; Mrs. Spurling was no longer allowed to visit him; he was again loaded with irons; fastened by an enormous horse-padlock to a staple in the floor; and only allowed to take repose in a chair. A single blanket constituted his sole covering at night. In spite of all this, he grew daily better and stronger, and his spirits revived. Hitherto, no visiters had been permitted to see him. As the time

when his identity had to be proved approached, this rigour was, in a trifling degree, relaxed, and a few persons were occasionally admitted to the ward, but only in the presence of Austin. From none of these could Jack ascertain what had become of Thames, or learn any particulars concerning the family at Dollis Hill, or of his mother. Austin, who had been evidently schooled by Wild, maintained a profound silence on this head. In this way, more than a month passed over. October arrived; and in another week the court would be sitting at the Old Bailey.

One night, about this time, just as Austin was about to lock the great gate, Jonathan Wild and his two janizaries entered the Lodge with a prisoner bound hand and foot. It was Blueskin. On the cords being removed, he made a desperate spring at Wild, bore him to the ground, clutched at his throat, and would, infallibly, have strangled him, if the keepers had not all thrown themselves upon him, and by main force torn him off. His struggles were so violent, that, being a man of tremendous

strength, it was some time before they could master him, and it required the combined efforts of all the four partners to put him into irons. It appeared from what he said that he had been captured when asleep, — that his liquor had been drugged, — otherwise, he would never have allowed himself to be taken alive. Wild, he asserted, had robbed him of a large sum of money, and till it was restored he would never plead.

"We'll see that," replied Jonathan. "Take him to the Bilbowes. Put him in the stocks, and there let him sleep off his drunken fit. Whether he pleads or not, he shall swing with his confederate, Jack Sheppard."

At this allusion to his leader, a shudder passed through Blueskin's athletic frame.

"Where is he?" he cried. "Let me see him. Let me have a word with him, and you may take all the money."

Jonathan made no answer, but motioned the partners to take him away.

As soon as Blueskin was removed, Wild intimated his intention of visiting the Castle.

He was accompanied by Ireton and Austin. The massive door was unlocked, and they entered the cell. What was their surprise to find it vacant, and the prisoner gone! Jonathan could scarcely believe his eyes. He looked fiercely and inquiringly from one to the other of his companions; but, though both of them were excessively frightened, neither appeared guilty. Before a word could be said, however, a slight noise was heard in the chimney, and Jack with his irons on descended from it. Without betraying the slightest confusion, or making a single remark, he quietly resumed his seat.

"Amazement!" cried Wild. "How has he unfastened his padlock? Austin, it must be owing to your negligence."

"My negligence, Mr. Wild," said the turnkey, trembling in every joint. "I assure you, sir, when I left him an hour ago, it was locked. I tried it myself, sir. I 'm as much astonished as you. But I can't account for it!"

"At all events, you shall answer for it," thundered Wild, with a bitter imprecation.

"He's not to blame," said Jack, rising. "I opened the padlock with this crooked nail, which I found in the floor. If you had arrived ten minutes later, or if there hadn't been an iron bar in the chimney, that hindered my progress, I should have been beyond your reach."

"You talk boldly," replied Wild. "Go to the Iron Hold, Austin, and tell two of the partners to bring another padlock of the largest size, and the heaviest handcuffs they can find. We'll try whether he'll get loose again."

Sheppard said nothing, but a disdainful smile curled his lips.

Austin departed, and presently afterwards returned with the two subordinate officers, each of whom wore a leathern apron round his waist, and carried a large hammer. As soon as the manacles were slipped over the prisoner's wrists, and the new padlock secured to the staple, they withdrew.

"Leave me alone with him a moment," said Jonathan. And the gaolers also retired.

"Jack," said Wild, with a glance of malignant

triumph, "I will now tell you what I have done. All my plans have succeeded. Before a month has elapsed, your mother will be mine. The Trenchard estates will likewise be mine, for Sir Rowland is no more, and the youth, Thames, will never again see daylight. Blueskin, who had evaded me with the papers and the money, is a prisoner here, and will perish on the same gallows as yourself. My vengeance is completely gratified."

Without waiting for a reply, but darting a malevolent look at the prisoner, he quitted the cell, the door of which was instantly double-locked and bolted.

"I've not quite done yet," said Jonathan, as he joined the turnkeys. "I should like to see whether Blueskin is a little more composed. I've a question to ask him. Give me the keys and the light. I'll go alone."

So saying, he descended a short spiral staircase, and, entering a long stone gallery, from which several other passages branched, took one of them, and after various turnings — for he was familiar with all the intricacies of the

prison — arrived at the cell of which he was in search. Selecting a key from the heavy bunch committed to him by Austin, he threw open the door, and beheld Blueskin seated at the back of the small chamber, handcuffed, and with his feet confined in a heavy pair of stocks. He was asleep when Jonathan entered, and growled at being disturbed. But, as soon as he perceived who it was, he roused himself, and glared fiercely at the intruder from under his bent brows.

"What do you want?" he asked, in a gruff voice.

"I want to know what you 've done with the rest of the notes — with the gold — and the papers you took away from my room!" rejoined Wild.

"Then you 'll never know more than this," retorted Blueskin, with a grin of satisfaction;— "they 're in a place of safety, where *you* 'll never find 'em, but where somebody else *will*, and that before long."

"Hear me, Blueskin," said Jonathan, restraining his choler. "If you 'll tell me where

to look for these things, and I *do* find them, I 'll set you free. And you shall have a share of the gold for yourself."

"I 'll tell you what I 'll do," rejoined the other. "Set Captain Sheppard free, and when I hear he 's safe, — not before, — I 'll put the money and papers into your possession, and some other matters, too, that you know nothing about."

"Impracticable dolt!" exclaimed Jonathan, furiously. "Do you think I 'd part with the sweetest morsel of revenge on those terms? No! But I 'll have the secret out of you by other means."

So saying, he violently shut and locked the door.

About ten days after this interview, Blueskin, having been indicted by Wild for several robberies, and true bills found against him, was placed at the bar of the Old Bailey to be arraigned; when he declared that he would not plead to the indictment, unless the sum of five hundred pounds, taken from him by Jonathan Wild, was first restored

to him. This sum, claimed by Wild under the statute 4th and 5th of William and Mary, entitled "*An act for encouraging the apprehending of Highwaymen*," was granted to him by the court.

As Blueskin still continued obstinate, the judgment appointed to be executed upon such prisoners as stood mute, was then read. It was as follows, and, when uttered, produced a strong effect upon all who heard it, except the prisoner, who, in no respect, altered his sullen and dogged demeanour.

"Prisoner at the bar," thus ran the sentence, "you shall be taken to the prison from whence you came, and put into a mean room, stopped from the light; and shall there be laid on the bare ground, without any litter, straw, or other covering, and without any garment. You shall lie upon your back; your head shall be covered; and your feet shall be bare. One of your arms shall be drawn to one side of the room, and the other arm to the other side; and your legs shall be served in the like manner. Then, there shall be laid upon your body as much iron, or

stone as you can bear, and more. And the first day, you shall have three morsels of barley bread, without any drink; and the second day, you shall be allowed to drink as much as you can, at three times, of the water that is next to the prison-door, except running-water, without any bread. And this shall be your diet till you die."

"Prisoner at the bar," continued the clerk of the court, "he against whom this judgment is given, forfeits his goods to the king."

An awful silence prevailed throughout the court. Every eye was fixed upon the prisoner. But, as he made no answer, he was removed.

Before the full sentence was carried into execution, he was taken into a small room adjoining the court. Here Marvel, the executioner, who was in attendance, was commanded by Wild to tie his thumbs together, which he did with whipcord so tightly, that the string cut to the bone. But, as this produced no effect, and did not even elicit a groan, the prisoner was carried back to Newgate.

The Press Room, to which Blueskin was conveyed on his arrival at the gaol, was a small square chamber, walled and paved with stone. In each corner stood a stout square post reaching to the ceiling. To these a heavy wooden apparatus was attached, which could be raised or lowered at pleasure by pullies. In the floor were set four ring-bolts, about nine feet apart. When the prisoner was brought into this room, he was again questioned; but, continuing contumacious, preparations were made for inflicting the torture. His great personal strength being so well known, it was deemed prudent by Marvel to have all the four partners, together with Caliban, in attendance. The prisoner, however, submitted more quietly than was anticipated. He allowed his irons and clothes to be taken off without resistance. But just as they were about to place him on the ground, he burst from their hold, and made a desperate spring at Jonathan, who was standing with his arms folded near the door watching the scene. The attempt was unsuccessful. He was instantly overpowered, and stretched

upon the ground. The four men fell upon him, holding his arms and legs, while Caliban forced back his head. In this state, he contrived to get the poor black's hand into his mouth, and nearly bit off one of his fingers before the sufferer could be rescued. Meanwhile, the executioner had attached strong cords to his ankles and wrists, and fastened them tightly to the iron rings. This done, he unloosed the pulley, and the ponderous machine, which resembled a trough, slowly descended upon the prisoner's breast. Marvel, then, took two iron weights, each of a hundred pounds, and placed them in the press. As this seemed insufficient, after a lapse of five minutes, he added another hundred weight. The prisoner breathed with difficulty. Still, his robust frame enabled him to hold out. After he had endured this torture for an hour, at a sign from Wild another hundred weight was added. In a few minutes, an appalling change was perceptible. The veins in his throat and forehead swelled and blackened; his eyes protruded from their sockets, and stared wildly; a

thick damp gathered on his brow; and blood gushed from his mouth, nostrils, and ears.

"Water!" he gasped.

The executioner shook his head.

"Do you submit?" interrogated Wild.

Blueskin answered by dashing his head violently against the flagged floor. His efforts at self-destruction were, however, prevented.

"Try fifty pounds more," said Jonathan.

"Stop!" groaned Blueskin.

"Will you plead?" demanded Wild, harshly.

"I will," answered the prisoner.

"Release him," said Jonathan. "We have cured his obstinacy, you perceive," he added to Marvel.

"I *will* live," cried Blueskin, with a look of the deadliest hatred at Wild, "to be revenged on you."

And, as the weights were removed, he fainted.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW JACK SHEPPARD'S PORTRAIT WAS PAINTED.

EARLY in the morning of Thursday, the 15th of October, 1724, the door of the Castle was opened by Austin, who, with a look of unusual importance, announced to the prisoner that four gentlemen were shortly coming up with the governor to see him, — "four *such* gentlemen," he added, in a tone meant to impress his auditor with a due sense of the honour intended him, "as you don't meet every day."

"Is Mr. Wood among them?" asked Jack, eagerly.

"Mr. Wood! — no," replied the turnkey. "Do you think I'd take the trouble to announce *him*? These are persons of consequence, I tell you."

"Who are they?" inquired Sheppard.

"Why, first," rejoined Austin, "there's Sir James Thornhill, historical painter to his Majesty, and the greatest artist of the day. Those grand designs in the dome of St. Paul's are his work. So is the roof of the state-room at Hampton Court Palace, occupied by Queen Anne, and the Prince of Denmark. So is the chapel of All Souls at Oxford, and the great hall at Blenheim, and I don't know how many halls and chapels besides. He's now engaged on the hall at Greenwich Hospital."

"I've heard of him," replied Jack, impatiently. "Who are the others?"

"Let me see. There's a friend of Sir James — a young man, an engraver of masquerade tickets and caricatures, — his name I believe is Hogarth. Then, there's Mr. Gay, the poet, who wrote the 'Captives,' which was lately acted at Drury Lane, and was so much admired by the Princess of Wales. And, lastly, there's Mr. Figg, the noted prize-fighter, from the New Amphitheatre in Marylebone Fields."

"Figg's an old friend of mine," rejoined Jack; "he was my instructor in the small sword and back sword exercise. I'm glad he's come to see me."

"You don't inquire what brings Sir James Thornhill here?" said Austin.

"Curiosity, I suppose," returned Jack, carelessly.

"No such thing," rejoined the gaoler; "he's coming on business."

"On what business, in the name of wonder?" asked Sheppard.

"To paint your portrait," answered the gaoler.

"My portrait!" echoed Jack.

"By desire of his Majesty," said the gaoler, consequentially. "He has heard of your wonderful escapes, and wishes to see what you're like. There's a feather in your cap! No housebreaker was ever so highly honoured before."

"And have my escapes really made so much noise as to reach the ear of royalty?" mused

Jack. "I have done nothing — nothing to what I *could* do — to what I *will* do!"

"You 've done quite enough," rejoined Austin; "more than you 'll ever do again."

"And then to be taken thus, in these disgraceful bonds!" continued Jack, "to be held up as a sight for ever!"

"Why, how else would you be taken?" exclaimed the gaoler, with a coarse laugh. "It's very well Mr. Wild allowed you to have your fine clothes again, or you might have been taken in a still more disgraceful garb. For my part, I think those shackles extremely becoming. But, here they are."

Voices being heard at the door, Austin flew to open it, and admitted Mr. Pitt, the governor, a tall pompous personage, who, in his turn, ushered in four other individuals. The first of these, whom he addressed as Mr. Gay, was a stout, good-looking, good-humoured man, about thirty-six, with a dark complexion, an oval face, fine black eyes, full of fire and sensibility, and twinkling with roguish hu-

mour — an expression fully borne out by the mouth, which had a very shrewd and sarcastic curl. The poet's appearance altogether was highly prepossessing. With a strong tendency to satire, but without a particle of malice or ill-nature in its display, Gay, by his strokes of pleasantry, whether in his writings or conversation, never lost a friend. On the contrary, he was a universal favourite, and numbered amongst his intimate acquaintances the choicest spirits of the time,—Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, and "all the better brothers." His demeanour was polished; his manners singularly affable and gentle; and he was remarkable for the generosity of his temper. In worldly matters Gay was not fortunate. Possessed, at one time, of a share in the South Sea stock, he conceived himself worth twenty thousand pounds. But, on the bursting of that bubble, his hopes vanished with it. Neither did his interest,—which was by no means inconsiderable,—nor his general popularity, procure him the preferment he desired. A constant attendant at court, he had the mortifi-

cation to see every one promoted but himself, and thus bewails his ill-luck.

> Places, I found, were daily given away,
> And yet no friendly gazette mentioned Gay.

The prodigious success of the "Beggars' Opera," which was produced about four years after the date of this history, rewarded him for all his previous disappointments, though it did not fully justify the well-known epigram, alluding to himself and the manager, and "make Gay *rich*, and Rich *gay*." At the time of his present introduction, his play of "The Captives," had just been produced at Drury Lane, and he was meditating his "Fables," which were published two years afterwards.

Behind the poet came Sir James Thornhill. The eminent painter had handsome, expressive features, an aquiline nose, and a good deal of dignity in his manner. His age was not far from fifty. He was accompanied by a young man of about seven-and-twenty, who carried his easel, set it in its place, laid the canvass upon it, opened the paint box, took out the

brushes and palette, and, in short, paid him the most assiduous attention. This young man, whose features, though rather plain and coarse, bore the strongest impress of genius, and who had a dark grey, penetrating eye, so quick in its glances that it seemed to survey twenty objects at once, and yet only to fasten upon one, bore the honoured name of William Hogarth. Why he paid so much attention to Sir James Thornhill may be explained anon.

The rear of the party was brought up by a large, powerfully-built man, with a bluff, honest, but rugged countenance, slashed with many a cut and scar, and stamped with that surly, sturdy, bull-dog-like look, which an Englishman always delights to contemplate, because he conceives it to be characteristic of his countrymen. This formidable person, who was no other than the renowned Figg, the "Atlas of the sword," as he is termed by Captain Godfrey, had removed his hat and "skull covering," and was wiping the heat from his bepatched and close-shaven pate. His shirt

also was unbuttoned, and disclosed a neck like that of an ox, and a chest which might have served as a model for a Hercules. He had a flattish, perhaps, it should be called, a *flattened* nose, and a brown, leathern-looking hide, that seemed as if it had not unfrequently undergone the process of tanning. Under his arm he carried a thick, knotted crab-stick. The above description of

> —— the great Figg, by the prize-fighting swains
> Sole monarch acknowledged of Mary'bone plains—

may sound somewhat tame by the side of the glowing account given of him by his gallant biographer, who asserts that "there was a majesty shone in his countenance, and blazed in his actions, beyond all I ever saw;" but it may, possibly, convey a more accurate notion of his personal appearance. James Figg was the most perfect master of self-defence of his day. Seconded by his strength and temper, his skill rendered him invincible, and he is reputed never to have lost a battle. His imperturbable demeanour in the fight has been

well portrayed by Captain Godfrey, who here condescends to lay aside his stilts. "His right leg bold and firm, and his left, which could hardly ever be disturbed, gave him a surprising advantage, and struck his adversary with despair and panic. He had a peculiar way of stepping in, in a parry; knew his arm, and its just time of moving; put a firm faith in that, and never let his opponent escape. He was just as much a greater master than any other I ever saw, as he was a greater judge of time and measure." Figg's prowess in a combat with Sutton has been celebrated by Dr. Byrom, — a poet of whom his native town, Manchester, may be justly proud; and his features and figure have been preserved by the most illustrious of his companions on the present occasion,—Hogarth,—in the levée in the "Rake's Progress," and in "Southwark Fair."

On the appearance of his visiters, Sheppard arose, — his gyves clanking heavily as he made the movement,—and folding his arms, so far as his manacles would permit him, upon his

breast, steadily returned the glances fixed upon him.

"This is the noted house-breaker and prison-breaker, gentlemen," said Mr. Pitt, pointing to the prisoner.

"Odd's life!" cried Gay, in astonishment; "is this slight-made stripling Jack Sheppard? Why, I expected to see a man six foot high at the least, and as broad across the shoulders as our friend Figg. This is a mere boy. Are you sure you haven't mistaken the ward, Mr. Pitt?"

"There is no mistake, sir," rejoined the prisoner, drawing himself up. "I am Jack Sheppard."

"Well, I never was more surprised in my life," said the poet, — "never!"

"He 's just the man *I* expected to see," observed Hogarth, who, having arranged everything to Thornhill's satisfaction, had turned to look at the prisoner, and was now, with his chin upon his wrist, and his elbow supported by the other hand, bending his keen grey eyes upon him, "just the man! Look at that

light, lithe figure, — all muscle and activity, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon it. In my search after strange characters, Mr. Gay, I've been in many odd quarters of our city — have visited haunts frequented only by thieves — the Old Mint, the New Mint, the worst part of St. Giles's, and other places — but I've nowhere seen any one who came up so completely to my notion of a first-rate house-breaker as the individual before us. Wherever I saw him, I should pick him out as a man designed by nature to plan and accomplish the wonderful escapes he has effected."

As he spoke, a smile crossed Sheppard's countenance.

"He understands me, you perceive," said Hogarth.

"Well, I won't dispute your judgment in such matters, Mr. Hogarth," replied Gay. "But I appeal to you, Sir James, whether it isn't extraordinary that so very slight a person should be such a desperate robber as he is represented — so young, too, for such an *old* offender. Why, he can scarcely be twenty."

"I am one-and-twenty," observed Jack.

"One-and-twenty, ah!" repeated Gay. "Well, I'm not far from the mark."

"He is certainly extremely youthful-looking and very slightly made," said Thornhill, who had been attentively studying Sheppard's countenance. "But I agree with Hogarth, that he is precisely the person to do what he has done. Like a thorough-bred racer, he would sustain twice as much fatigue as a person of heavier mould. Can I be accommodated with a seat, Mr. Pitt?"

"Certainly, Sir James, certainly," replied the governor. "Get a chair, Austin."

While this order was obeyed, Figg, who had been standing near the door, made his way to the prisoner, and offered him his huge hand, which Jack warmly grasped.

"Well, Jack," said the prize-fighter, in a rough, but friendly voice, and with a cut-and-thrust abrupt manner peculiar to himself; "how are you, lad, eh? Sorry to see you here. Wouldn't take my advice. Told you how it would be. One mistress enough to ruin

a man,—two, the devil. Laughed at me, then. Laugh on the wrong side of your mouth, now."

"You 're not come here to insult me, Mr. Figg?" said Jack, peevishly.

"Insult you! not I;" returned Figg. "Heard of your escapes. Everybody talking of you. Wished to see you. Old pupil. Capital swordsman. Shortly to be executed. Come to take leave. Trifle useful?" he added, slipping a few gold pieces into Jack's hand.

"You are very kind," said Jack, returning the money; "but I don't require assistance."

"Too proud, eh?" rejoined the prizefighter. "Won't be under an obligation."

"There you 're wrong, Mr. Figg," replied Jack, smiling; "for, before I 'm taken to Tyburn, I mean to borrow a shirt for the occasion from you."

"Have it, and welcome," rejoined Figg. "Always plenty to spare. Never bought a shirt in my life, Mr. Gay," he added, turning to the poet. "Sold a good many, though."

"How do you manage that, Mr. Figg?" asked Gay.

"Thus," replied the prize-fighter. "Proclaim a public fight. Challenge accepted. Fifty pupils. Day before, send round to each to borrow a shirt. Fifty sent home. All superfine holland. Wear one on the stage on the following day. Cut to pieces — slashed — bloodied. Each of my scholars thinks it his own shirt. Offer to return it to each in private. All make the same answer—'d—n you, keep it.'"

"An ingenious device," laughed Gay.

Sir James Thornhill's preparations being completed, Mr. Pitt desired to know if he wanted anything further, and being answered in the negative, he excused himself on the plea that his attendance was required in the court at the Old Bailey, which was then sitting, and withdrew.

"Do me the favour to seat yourself, Jack?" said Sir James. "Gentlemen, a little further off, if you please."

Sheppard immediately complied with the

painter's request; while Gay and Figg drew back on one side, and Hogarth on the other. The latter took from his pocket a small note-book and pencil.

"I 'll make a sketch, too," he said. "Jack Sheppard's face is well worth preserving."

After narrowly examining the countenance of the sitter, and motioning him with his pencil into a particular attitude, Sir James Thornhill commenced operations; and, while he rapidly transferred his lineaments to the canvass, engaged him in conversation, in the course of which he artfully contrived to draw him into a recital of his adventures. The *ruse* succeeded almost beyond his expectation. During the narration Jack's features lighted up, and an expression, which would have been in vain looked for in repose, was instantly caught and depicted by the skilful artist. All the party were greatly interested by Sheppard's history — especially Figg, who laughed loud and long at the escape from the Condemned Hold. When Jack came to speak of Jonathan Wild, his countenance fell.

"We must change the subject," remarked Thornhill, pausing in his task; "this will never do."

"Quite right, Sir James," said Austin. "We never suffer him to mention Mr. Wild's name. He never appears to so little advantage as when speaking of him."

"I don't wonder at it," rejoined Gay.

Here Hogarth received a private signal from Thornhill to attract Sheppard's attention.

"And so you 've given up all hope of escaping, eh, Jack?" remarked Hogarth.

"That 's scarcely a fair question, Mr. Hogarth, before the gaoler," replied Jack. "But I tell you frankly, and Mr. Austin may repeat it if he pleases to his master, Jonathan Wild,—I have *not*."

"Well said, Jack," cried Figg. "Never give in."

"Well," observed Hogarth, "if, fettered as you are, you contrive to break out of this dungeon, you 'll do what no man ever did before."

A peculiar smile illuminated Jack's features.

"There it is!" cried Sir James, eagerly. "There's the exact expression I want. For the love of Heaven, Jack, don't move! — Don't alter a muscle, if you can help it."

And, with a few magical touches, he stamped the fleeting expression on the canvass.

"I have it too!" exclaimed Hogarth, busily plying his pencil. "Gad! it's a devilish fine face when lit up."

"As like as life, sir," observed Austin, peeping over Thornhill's shoulder at the portrait. "As like as life."

"The very face," exclaimed Gay, advancing to look at it; — "with all the escapes written in it."

"You flatter me," smiled Sir James. "But, I own, I think it *is* like."

"What do you think of *my* sketch, Jack?" said Hogarth, handing him the drawing.

"It's like enough, I dare say," rejoined Sheppard. "But it wants something *here*." And he pointed significantly to the hand.

"I see," rejoined Hogarth, rapidly sketching a file, which he placed in the hands of the

picture. "Will that do?" he added, returning it.

"It's better," observed Sheppard, meaningly. "But you've given me what I don't possess."

"Hum!" said Hogarth, looking fixedly at him. "I don't see how I can improve it."

"May I look at it, sir?" said Austin, stepping towards him.

"No," replied Hogarth, hastily effacing the sketch. "I'm never satisfied with a first attempt."

"Egad, Jack," said Gay, "you should write your adventures. They would be quite as entertaining as the histories of Guzman D'Alfarache, Lazarillo de Tormes, Estevanillo Gonzalez, Meriton Latroon, or any of my favourite rogues, — and far more instructive."

"You had better write them for me, Mr. Gay," rejoined Jack.

"If you'll write them, I'll illustrate them," observed Hogarth.

"An idea has just occurred to me," said Gay, "which Jack's narrative has suggested.

I 'll write an opera, the scene of which shall be laid altogether in Newgate, and the principal character shall be a highwayman. I 'll not forget your two mistresses, Jack."

" Nor Jonathan Wild, I hope," interposed Sheppard.

" Certainly not," replied Gay. " I 'll gibbet the rascal. But I forget," he added, glancing at Austin ; " it 's high treason to speak disrespectfully of Mr. Wild in his own domain."

" I hear nothing, sir," laughed Austin.

" I was about to add," continued Gay, " that my opera shall have no music except the good old ballad tunes. And we 'll see whether it won't put the Italian opera out of fashion, with Cutzoni, Senesino, and the ' divine' Farinelli at its head."

" You 'll do a national service, then," said Hogarth. " The sums lavished upon those people are perfectly disgraceful, and I should be enchanted to see them hooted from the stage. But I 've an idea as well as you, grounded in some measure upon Sheppard's story. I 'll take two apprentices, and depict

their career. One, by perseverance and industry shall obtain fortune, credit, and the highest honours; while the other by an opposite course, and dissolute habits, shall eventually arrive at Tyburn."

"Your's will be nearer the truth, and have a deeper moral, Mr. Hogarth," remarked Jack, dejectedly. "But if my career were truly exhibited, it must be as one long struggle against destiny in the shape of—"

"Jonathan Wild," interposed Gay. "I knew it. By the by, Mr. Hogarth, didn't I see you last night at the ridotto with Lady Thornhill and her pretty daughter?"

"Me? — no, sir," stammered Hogarth, colouring. And he hazarded a wink at the poet over the paper on which he was sketching. Luckily, Sir James was so much engrossed by his own task, that both the remark and gesture escaped him.

"I suppose I was mistaken," returned Gay. "You've been quizzing my friend Kent, I perceive, in your Burlington Gate."

"A capital caricature that," remarked

Thornhill, laughing. "What does Mr. Kent say to it?"

"He thinks so highly of it, that he says if he had a daughter he would give her to the artist," answered Gay, a little maliciously.

"Ah!" exclaimed Sir James.

"'Sdeath!" cried Hogarth, aside to the poet. "You 've ruined my hopes."

"Advanced them rather," replied Gay, in the same tone. "Miss Thornhill's a charming girl. *I* think a wife a needless incumbrance, and mean to die a bachelor. But, if I were in your place, I know what I 'd do—"

"What — what would you do?" asked Hogarth, eagerly.

"Run away with her," replied Gay.

"Pish!" exclaimed Hogarth. But he afterwards acted upon the suggestion.

"Good b'ye, Jack," said Figg, putting on his hat. "Rather in the way. Send you the shirt. Here, turnkey. Couple of guineas to drink Captain Sheppard's speedy escape. Thank him, not me, man. Give this fellow

the slip, if you can, Jack. If not, keep up your spirits. Die game."

"Never fear," replied Jack. "If I get free, I'll have a bout with you at all weapons. If not, I'll take a cheerful glass with you at the City of Oxford, on my way to Tyburn."

"Give you the best I have in either case," replied Figg. Good-b'ye!" And with a cordial shake of the hand he took his departure.

Sir James Thornhill, then, rose.

"I won't trouble you further, Jack," he remarked. "I've done all I can to the portrait here. I must finish it at home."

"Permit me to see it, Sir James?" requested Jack. "Ah!" he exclaimed, as the painting was turned towards him. "What would my poor mother say to it?"

"I was sorry to see that about your mother, Jack," observed Hogarth.

"What of her?" exclaimed Jack, starting up. "Is she dead?"

"No — no," answered Hogarth. "Don't

alarm yourself. I saw it this morning in the Daily Journal — an advertisement, offering a reward——"

"A reward!" echoed Jack. "For what?"

"I had the paper with me. 'Sdeath! what can I have done with it? Oh! here it is," cried Hogarth, picking it from the ground. "I must have dropped it when I took out my note-book. There's the paragraph. "*Mrs. Sheppard left Mr. Wood's house at Dollis Hill on Tuesday'* — that's two days ago, — '*hasn't been heard of since.'*"

"Let me see," cried Jack, snatching the paper, and eagerly perusing the advertisement. "Ah!" he exclaimed, in a tone of anguish. "She has fallen into the villain's hands."

"What villain?" cried Hogarth.

"Jonathan Wild, I'll be sworn," said Gay.

"Right! — right!" cried Jack, striking his fettered hands against his breast. "She is in his power, and I am here, chained hand and foot, unable to assist her."

"I could make a fine sketch of him now," whispered Hogarth to Gay.

"I told you how it was, Sir James," said Austin, addressing the knight, who was preparing for his departure, "he attributes every misfortune that befals him to Mr. Wild."

"And with some justice," replied Thornhill, drily.

"Allow me to assist you, Sir James," said Hogarth.

"Many thanks, sir," replied Thornhill, with freezing politeness; "but I do not require assistance."

"I tell you what, Jack," said Gay, "I 've several urgent engagements this morning; but I 'll return to-morrow, and hear the rest of your story. And, if I can render you any service, you may command me."

"To-morrow will be too late," said Sheppard, moodily.

The easel and palette having been packed up, and the canvass carefully removed by Austin, the party took leave of the prisoner, who was so much abstracted that he scarcely noticed their departure. Just as Hogarth got to the door, the turnkey stopped him.

"You have forgotten your knife, Mr. Hogarth," he observed, significantly.

"So I have," replied Hogarth, glancing at Sheppard.

"I can do without it," muttered Jack.

The door was then locked, and he was left alone.

At three o'clock, on the same day, Austin brought up Jack's provisions, and, after carefully examining his fetters, and finding all secure, told him if he wanted anything further he must mention it, as he should not be able to return in the evening, his presence being required elsewhere. Jack replied in the negative, and it required all his mastery over himself to prevent the satisfaction which this announcement afforded him from being noticed by the gaoler.

With the usual precautions, Austin then departed.

"And now," cried Jack, leaping up, "for an achievement, compared with which all I have yet done shall be as nothing!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE IRON BAR.

JACK SHEPPARD's first object was to free himself from his handcuffs. This he accomplished by holding the chain that connected them firmly between his teeth, and squeezing his fingers as closely together as possible, succeeded in drawing his wrists through the manacles. He next twisted the heavy gyves round and round, and partly by main strength, partly by a dexterous and well-applied jerk, snapped asunder the central link by which they were attached to the padlock. Taking off his stockings, he then drew up the basils as far as he was able, and tied the fragments of the broken chain to his legs, to prevent them from clanking, and impeding his future exertions.

Jack's former attempt to pass up the chimney, it may be remembered, was obstructed by an iron bar. To remove this obstacle it was necessary to make an extensive breach in the wall. With the broken links of the chain, which served him in lieu of more efficient implements, he commenced operations just above the chimney-piece, and soon contrived to pick a hole in the plaster.

He found the wall, as he suspected, solidly constructed of brick and stone; and with the slight and inadequate tools which he possessed, it was a work of infinite labour and skill to get out a single brick. That done, however, he was well aware the rest would be comparatively easy, and as he threw the brick to the ground, he exclaimed triumphantly, "The first step is taken — the main difficulty is overcome."

Animated by this trifling success, he proceeded with fresh ardour, and the rapidity of his progress was proclaimed by the heap of bricks, stones, and mortar which before long covered the floor. At the expiration of

an hour, by dint of unremitting exertion, he had made so large a breach in the chimney, that he could stand upright in it. He was now within a foot of the bar, and introducing himself into the hole, speedily worked his way to it.

Regardless of the risk he incurred from some heavy stone dropping on his head or feet, — regardless also of the noise made by the falling rubbish, and of the imminent danger which he consequently ran of being interrupted by some of the gaolers, should the sound reach their ears, he continued to pull down large masses of the wall, which he flung upon the floor of the cell.

Having worked thus for another quarter of an hour without being sensible of fatigue, though he was half stifled by the clouds of dust which his exertions raised, he had made a hole about three feet wide, and six high, and uncovered the iron bar. Grasping it firmly with both hands, he quickly wrenched it from the stones in which it was mortised, and leapt to the ground. On examination

it proved to be a flat bar of iron, nearly a yard in length, and more than an inch square. "A capital instrument for my purpose," thought Jack, shouldering it, "and worth all the trouble I have had in procuring it."

While he was thus musing, he fancied he heard the lock tried. A chill ran through his frame, and, grasping the heavy weapon with which chance had provided him, prepared to strike down the first person who should enter the cell. After listening attentively for a short time without drawing breath, he became convinced that his apprehensions were groundless, and, greatly relieved, sat down upon the chair to rest himself and prepare for further efforts.

Acquainted with every part of the gaol, Jack well knew that his only chance of effecting an escape must be by the roof. To reach it would be a most difficult undertaking. Still it *was* possible, and the difficulty was only a fresh incitement.

The mere enumeration of the obstacles that

existed would have deterred any spirit less daring than Sheppard's from even hazarding the attempt. Independently of other risks, and of the chance of breaking his neck in the descent, he was aware that to reach the leads he should have to break open six of the strongest doors of the prison. Armed, however, with the implement he had so fortunately obtained, he did not despair of success.

"My name will only be remembered as that of a robber," he mused; "but it shall be remembered as that of a bold one: and this night's achievement, if it does nothing else, shall prevent me from being classed with the common herd of depredators."

Roused by this reflection, filled with the deepest anxiety for his mother, and burning to be avenged upon Jonathan Wild, he grasped the iron bar, which, when he sat down, he had laid upon his knees, and stepped quickly across the room. In doing so, he had to clamber up the immense heap of bricks and rubbish which now littered the floor, amounting almost

to a cartload, and reaching up nearly to the top of the chimney-piece.

"Austin will stare," thought Jack, "when he comes here in the morning. It will cost them something to repair their stronghold, and take them more time to build it up again than I have taken to pull it down."

Before proceeding with his task, he considered whether it would be possible to barricade the door; but, reflecting that the bar would be an indispensable assistant in his further efforts, he abandoned the idea, and determined to rely implicitly on that good fortune which had hitherto attended him on similar occasions.

Having once more got into the chimney, he climbed to a level with the ward above, and recommenced operations as vigorously as before. He was now aided with a powerful implement, with which he soon contrived to make a hole in the wall.

"Every brick I take out," cried Jack, as fresh rubbish clattered down the chimney, "brings me nearer my mother."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RED ROOM.

The ward into which Jack was endeavouring to break was called the Red Room, from the circumstance of its walls having once been painted in that colour; all traces of which had, however, long since disappeared. Like the Castle, which it resembled in all respects except that it was destitute even of a barrack-bedstead, the Red Room was reserved for state-prisoners, and had not been occupied since the year 1716, when the gaol, as has before been mentioned, was crowded by the Preston rebels.

Having made a hole in the wall sufficiently large to pass through, Jack first tossed the bar into the room, and then crept after it. As soon as he had gained his feet, he glanced

round the bare blank walls of the cell, and, oppressed by the musty, close atmosphere, exclaimed, "I'll let a little fresh air into this dungeon. They say it hasn't been opened for eight years — but I won't be eight years in getting out of it."

In stepping across the room, some sharp point in the floor pierced his foot, and stooping to examine it, he found that the wound had been inflicted by a long rusty nail, which projected from the boards. Totally disregarding the pain, he picked up the nail, and reserved it for future use. Nor was he long in making it available.

On examining the door, he found it secured by a large rusty lock, which he endeavoured to pick with the nail he had just acquired; but all his efforts proving ineffectual, he removed the plate that covered it with the bar, and with his fingers contrived to draw back the bolt.

Opening the door he then stepped into a dark narrow passage, leading, as he was well aware, to the chapel. On the left there were doors communicating with the King's Bench

The Castle .

The Red Room .

Door of the Red Room .

A door between the Red Room & the Chapel .

George Cruikshank

The Escape. No. 1.

The Red Room

Geo. Cruikshank

Door of the Red Room

Arrival between the Red Door & the Bed

The Escape. N.1.

Ward and the Stone Ward, two large holds on the Master Debtors' side. But Jack was too well versed in the geography of the place to attempt either of them. Indeed, if he had been ignorant of it, the sound of voices which he could faintly distinguish, would have served as a caution to him.

Hurrying on, his progress was soon checked by a strong door, several inches in thickness, and nearly as wide as the passage. Running his hand carefully over it in search of the lock, he perceived to his dismay that it was fastened on the other side. After several vain attempts to burst it open, he resolved, as a last alternative, to break through the wall in the part nearest to the lock. This was a much more serious task than he anticipated. The wall was of considerable thickness, and built altogether of stone; and the noise he was compelled to make in using the heavy bar, which brought sparks with every splinter he struck off, was so great, that he feared it must be heard by the prisoners on the Debtors' side. Heedless, however, of the consequences, he pursued his task.

Half an hour's labour, during which he was obliged more than once to pause to regain breath, sufficed to make a hole wide enough to allow a passage for his arm up to the elbow. In this way he was able to force back a ponderous bolt from its socket; and, to his unspeakable joy, found that the door instantly yielded.

Once more cheered by daylight, he hastened forward, and entered the chapel.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHAPEL.

Situated at the upper part of the south-east angle of the gaol, the chapel of Old Newgate was divided on the north side into three grated compartments, or pens as they were termed, allotted to the common debtors and felons. In the north-west angle, there was a small pen for female offenders, and, on the south, a more commodious inclosure appropriated to the master-debtors and strangers. Immediately beneath the pulpit stood a large circular pew where malefactors under sentence of death sat to hear the condemned sermon delivered to them, and where they formed a public spectacle to the crowds, which curiosity generally attracted on those occasions.

To return. Jack had got into one of the pens at the north side of the chapel. The enclosure by which it was surrounded was about twelve feet high; the under part being composed of oaken planks, the upper of a strong iron grating, surmounted by sharp iron spikes. In the middle there was a gate. It was locked. But Jack speedily burst it open with the iron bar.

Clearing the few impediments in his way, he soon reached the condemned pew, where it had once been his fate to sit; and extending himself on the seat endeavoured to snatch a moment's repose. It was denied him, for as he closed his eyes — though but for an instant — the whole scene of his former visit to the place rose before him. There he sat as before, with the heavy fetters on his limbs, and beside him sat his three companions, who had since expiated their offences on the gibbet. The chapel was again crowded with visiters, and every eye — even that of Jonathan Wild who had come thither to deride him, — was fixed upon him. So perfect was the illusion, that he could almost fancy he heard the solemn voice of the

ordinary warning him that his race was nearly run, and imploring him to prepare for eternity. From this perturbed state he was roused by thoughts of his mother, and fancying he heard her gentle voice urging him on to fresh exertion, he started up.

On one side of the chapel there was a large grated window, but, as it looked upon the interior of the gaol, Jack preferred following the course he had originally decided upon to making any attempt in this quarter.

Accordingly, he proceeded to a gate which stood upon the south, and guarded the passage communicating with the leads. It was grated and crested with spikes, like that he had just burst open, and thinking it a needless waste of time to force it, he broke off one of the spikes, which he carried with him for further purposes, and then climbed over it.

A short flight of steps brought him to a dark passage, into which he plunged. Here he found another strong door, making the fifth he had encountered. Well aware that the doors in this passage were much stronger than

those in the entry he had just quitted he was neither surprised nor dismayed to find it fastened by a lock of unusual size. After repeatedly trying to remove the plate, which was so firmly screwed down that it resisted all his efforts, and vainly attempting to pick it with the spike and nail; he, at length, after half an hour's ineffectual labour, wrenched off the box by means of the iron bar, and the door, as he laughingly expressed it, "became his humble servant."

But this difficulty was only overcome to be succeeded by one still greater. Hastening along the passage he came to the sixth door. For this he was prepared; but he was not prepared for the almost insurmountable obstacles which it presented. Running his hand hastily over it, he was startled to find it one complicated mass of bolts and bars. It seemed as if all the precautions previously taken were here accumulated. Any one less courageous than himself would have abandoned the attempt from a conviction of its utter hopelessness; but, though it might for a mo-

ment damp his ardour, it could not deter him.

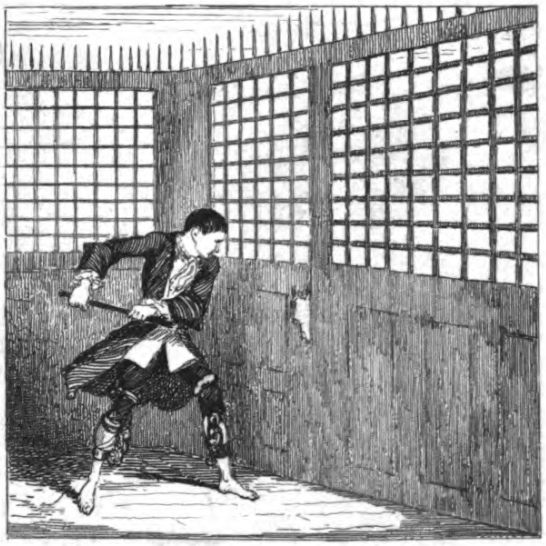
Once again, he passed his hand over the surface and carefully noted all the obstacles. There was a lock, apparently more than a foot wide, strongly plated, and girded to the door with thick iron hoops. Below it a prodigiously large bolt was shot into the socket, and, in order to keep it there, was fastened by a hasp, and further protected by an immense padlock. Besides this, the door was crossed and recrossed by iron bars, clenched by broad-headed nails. An iron fillet secured the socket of the bolt and the box of the lock to the main post of the doorway.

Nothing disheartened by this survey, Jack set to work upon the lock, which he attacked with all his implements;—now attempting to pick it with the nail; — now to wrench it off with the bar: but all without effect. He not only failed in making any impression, but seemed to increase the difficulties, for after an hour's toil he had broken the nail and slightly bent the iron bar.

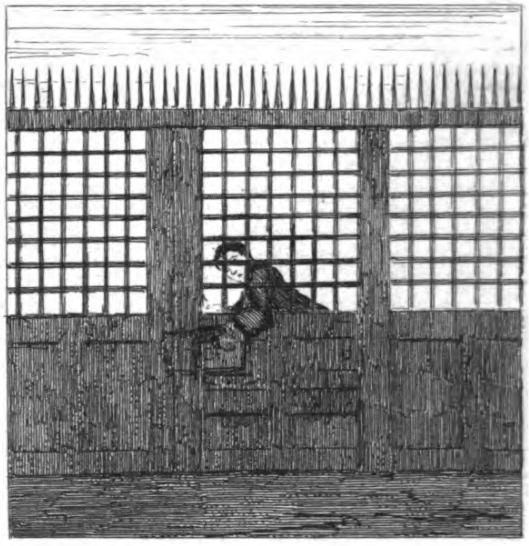
Completely overcome by fatigue, with strained muscles, and bruised hands; streaming with perspiration, and with lips so parched that he would gladly have parted with a treasure if he had possessed it for a draught of water; he sank against the wall, and while in this state was seized with a sudden and strange alarm. He fancied that the turnkeys had discovered his flight and were in pursuit of him,— that they had climbed up the chimney, — entered the Red Room, — tracked him from door to door, and were now only detained by the gate which he had left unbroken in the chapel. He even thought he could detect the voice of Jonathan, urging and directing them.

So strongly was he impressed with this idea, that grasping the iron bar with both hands, he dashed it furiously against the door, making the passage echo with the blows.

By degrees, his fears vanished, and hearing nothing, he grew calmer. His spirits revived, and encouraging himself with the idea that the present impediment, though the greatest, was



Door going into the Chapel .



Door leading out of the Chapel .

First door between the Chapel & the leads .

George Cruikshank

Second door in the same passage .

The Escape. N.º 2

the last, he set himself seriously to consider how it might best be overcome.

On reflection, it occurred to him that he might, perhaps, be able to loosen the iron fillet; a notion no sooner conceived than executed. With incredible labour, and by the aid of both spike and nail, he succeeded in getting the point of the bar beneath the fillet. Exerting all his energies, and using the bar as a lever, he forced off the iron band, which was full seven feet high, seven inches wide, and two thick, and which brought with it in its fall the box of the lock, and the socket of the bolt, leaving no further hinderance.

Overjoyed beyond measure at having vanquished this apparently-insurmountable obstacle, Jack darted through the door.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LEADS.

Ascending a short flight of steps, Jack found at the summit a door, which being bolted in the inside he speedily opened.

The fresh air, which blew in his face, greatly revived him. He had now reached what was called the Lower Leads,—a flat, covering a part of the prison contiguous to the gateway, and surrounded on all sides by walls about fourteen feet high. On the north stood the battlements of one of the towers of the gate. On this side a flight of wooden steps, protected by a hand-rail, led to a door opening upon the summit of the prison. This door was crested with spikes, and guarded on the right by a

bristling semi-circle of spikes. Hastily ascending these steps, Jack found the door, as he anticipated, locked. He could have easily forced it, but preferred a more expeditious mode of reaching the roof which suggested itself to him. Mounting the door he had last opened, he placed his hands on the wall above, and quickly drew himself up.

Just as he got on the roof of the prison, St. Sepulchre's clock struck eight. It was instantly answered by the deep note of St. Paul's; and the concert was prolonged by other neighbouring churches. Jack had thus been six hours in accomplishing his arduous task.

Though nearly dark, there was still light enough left to enable him to discern surrounding objects. Through the gloom he distinctly perceived the dome of St. Paul's, hanging like a black cloud in the air; and nearer to him he remarked the golden ball on the summit of the College of Physicians, compared by Garth to a "gilded pill." Other towers and spires — St. Martin's on Ludgate-hill, and Christchurch in Newgate-street, were also distinguishable. As

he gazed down into the courts of the prison, he could not help shuddering, lest a false step might precipitate him below.

To prevent the recurrence of any such escape as that just described, it was deemed expedient, in more recent times, to keep a watchman at the top of Newgate. Not many years ago, two men, employed on this duty, quarrelled during the night, and in the morning their bodies were found stretched upon the pavement of the yard beneath.

Proceeding along the wall, Jack reached the southern tower, over the battlements of which he clambered, and crossing it, dropped upon the roof of the gate. He then scaled the northern tower, and made his way to the summit of that part of the prison which fronted Giltspur-street. Arrived at the extremity of the building, he found that it overlooked the flat-roof of a house which, as far as he could judge in the darkness, lay at a depth of about twenty feet below.

Not choosing to hazard so great a fall, Jack turned to examine the building, to see whether

any more favourable point of descent presented itself, but could discover nothing but steep walls, without a single available projection. As he looked around, he beheld an incessant stream of passengers hurrying on below. Lights glimmered in the windows of the different houses; and a lamplighter was running from post to post on his way to Snow Hill.

Finding it impossible to descend on any side, without incurring serious risk, Jack resolved to return for his blanket, by the help of which he felt certain of accomplishing a safe landing on the roof of the house in Giltspur-street.

Accordingly, he began to retrace his steps, and pursuing the course he had recently taken, scaling the two towers, and passing along the wall of the prison, he descended by means of the door upon the Lower Leads. Before he re-entered the prison, he hesitated, from a doubt whether he was not fearfully increasing his risk of capture; but, convinced that he had no other alternative, he went on.

During all this time, he had never quitted the iron bar, and he now grasped it with

the firm determination of selling his life dearly, if he met with any opposition. A few seconds sufficed to clear the passage, through which it had previously cost him more than two hours to force his way. The floor was strewn with screws, nails, fragments of wood and stone, and across the passage lay the heavy iron fillet. He did not disturb any of this litter, but left it as a mark of his prowess.

He was now at the entrance of the chapel, and striking the door over which he had previously climbed a violent blow with the bar, it flew open. To vault over the pews was the work of a moment; and having gained the entry leading to the Red Room he passed through the first door; his progress being only impeded by the pile of broken stones, which he himself had raised.

Listening at one of the doors leading to the Master Debtor's side, he heard a loud voice chanting a Bacchanalian melody, and the boisterous laughter that accompanied the song, convinced him that no suspicion was entertained in this quarter. Entering the Red

Room, he crept through the hole in the wall, descended the chimney, and arrived once more in his old place of captivity.

How different were his present feelings compared with those he had experienced on quitting it. *Then*, though full of confidence, he half doubted his power of accomplishing his designs. *Now*, he *had* achieved them, and felt assured of success. The vast heap of rubbish on the floor had been so materially increased by the bricks and plaster thrown down in his attack upon the wall of the Red Room, that it was with some difficulty he could find the blanket, which was almost buried beneath the pile. He next searched for his stockings and shoes, and when found, put them on.

While he was thus employed, his nerves underwent a severe shock. A few bricks, dislodged probably by his last descent, came clattering down the chimney, and as it was perfectly dark, gave him the notion that some one was endeavouring to force an entrance into the room.

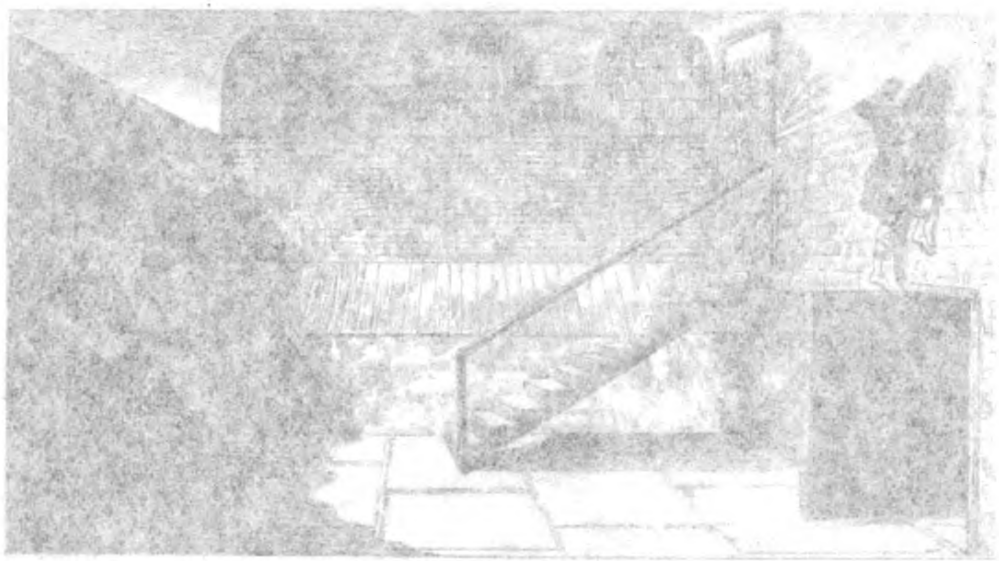
But these fears, like those he had recently

experienced, speedily vanished, and he prepared to return to the roof, congratulating himself that owing to the opportune falling of the bricks, he had in all probability escaped serious injury.

Throwing the blanket over his left arm and shouldering the iron bar, he again clambered up the chimney; regained the Red Room; hurried along the first passage; crossed the Chapel; threaded the entry to the Lower Leads; and, in less than ten minutes after quitting the Castle, had reached the northern extremity of the prison.

Previously to his descent he had left the nail and spike on the wall, and with these he fastened the blanket to the stone coping. This done, he let himself carefully down by it, and having only a few feet to drop, alighted in safety.

Having now fairly got out of Newgate for the second time, with a heart throbbing with exultation, he hastened to make good his escape. To his great joy he found a small garret-door in the roof of the opposite house



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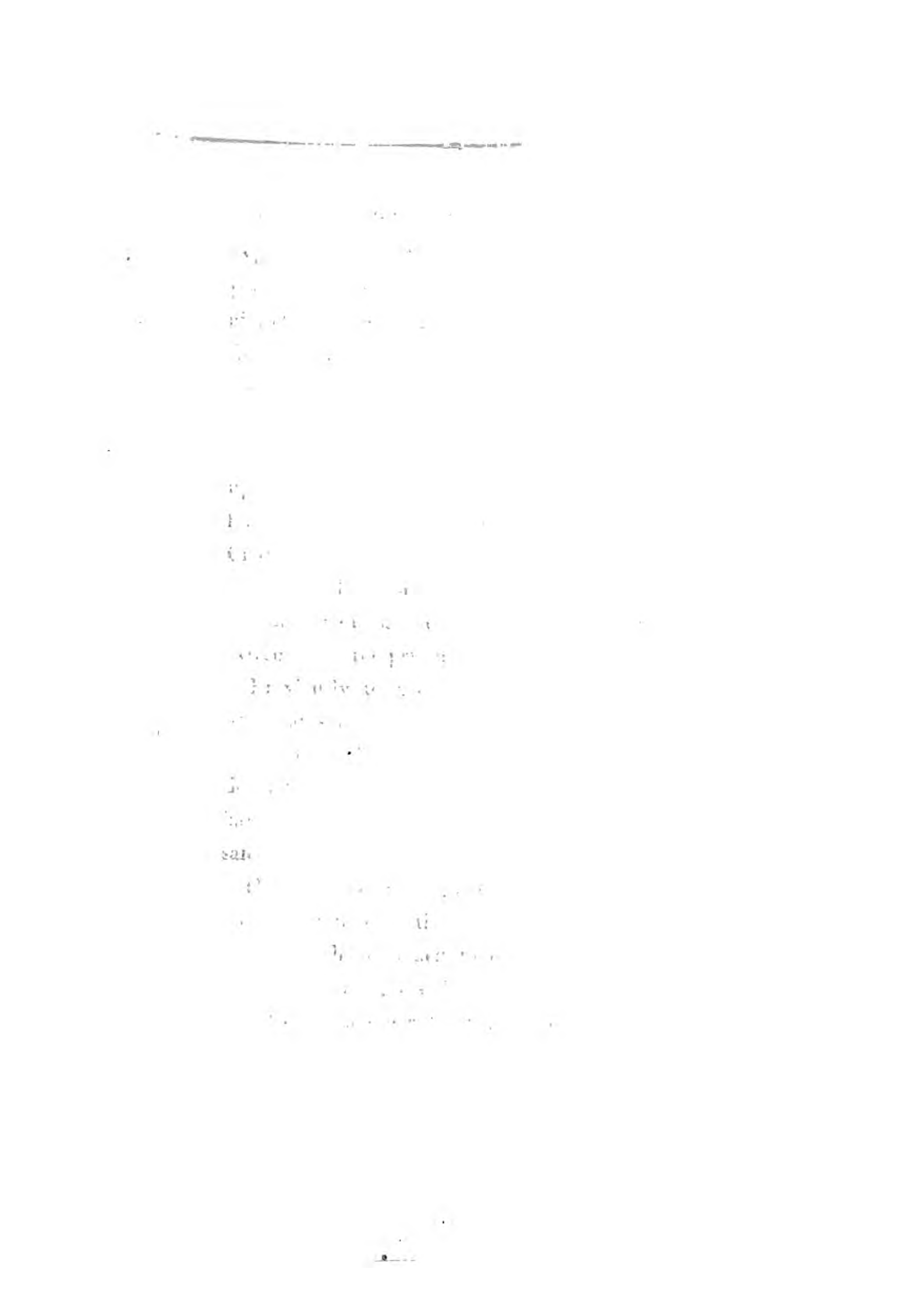
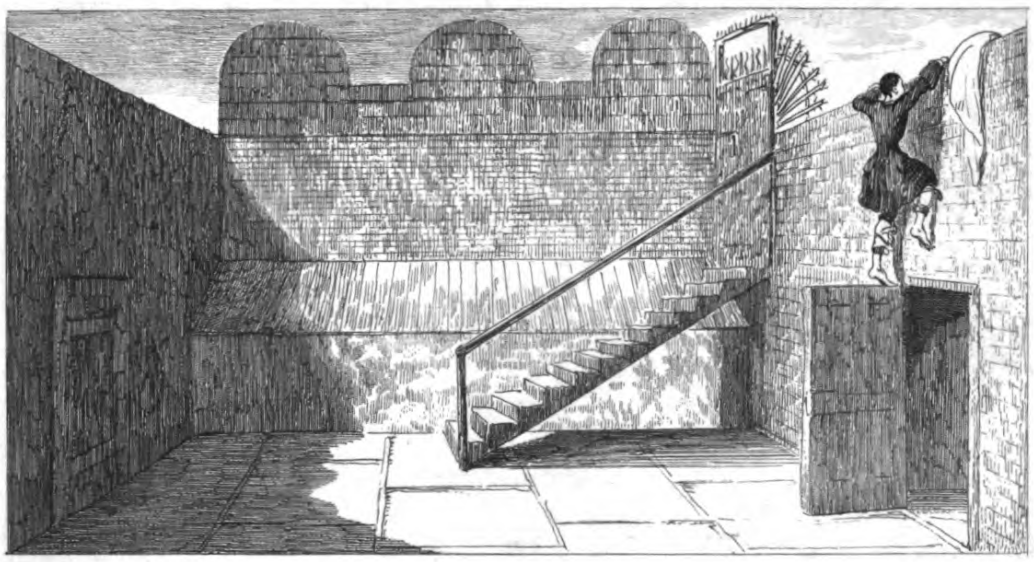




Lower Leads.

The Highest leads and the leads of the Turners house.

open. He entered it; crossed the room, in which there was only a small truckle-bed, over which he stumbled; opened another door and gained the stair-head. As he was about to descend his chains slightly rattled. "Oh, lud! what 's that?" exclaimed a female voice, from an adjoining room. "Only the dog," replied the rough tones of a man.

Securing the chain in the best way he could, Jack then hurried down two pair of stairs, and had nearly reached the lobby, when a door suddenly opened, and two persons appeared, one of whom held a light. Retreating as quickly as he could, Jack opened the first door he came to, entered a room, and searching in the dark for some place of concealment, fortunately discovered a skreen, behind which he crept.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHAT BEFEL JACK SHEPPARD IN THE TURNER'S HOUSE.

Jack was scarcely concealed when the door opened, and the two persons of whom he had caught a glimpse below entered the room. What was his astonishment to recognise in the few words they uttered the voices of Kneebone and Winifred! The latter was apparently in great distress, and the former seemed to be using his best efforts to relieve her anxiety.

"How very fortunate it is," he observed, "that I happened to call upon Mr. Bird, the turner, to give him an order this evening. It was quite an unexpected pleasure to meet you and your worthy father."

"Pray cease these compliments," returned

Winifred, "and, if you have any communication to make, do not delay it? You told me just now that you wished to speak a few words to me in private, concerning Thames Darrell, and for that purpose I have left my father below with Mr. Bird and have come hither. What have you got to say?"

"Too much," replied Kneebone, shaking his head; "sadly too much."

"Do not needlessly alarm me, I beseech you," replied Winifred. "Whatever your intelligence may be I will strive to bear it. But do not awaken my apprehensions, unless you have good cause for so doing? — What do you know of Thames?—Where is he?"

"Don't agitate yourself, dearest girl," rejoined the woollen-draper; "or I shall never be able to commence my relation."

"I am calm—perfectly calm," replied Winifred. "Pray, make no further mystery; but tell me all without reserve."

"Since you require it, I must obey," replied Kneebone; "but prepare yourself for a terrible shock."

"For mercy's sake, go on!" cried Winifred.

"At all hazards then you shall know the truth," replied the woollen-draper, in a tone of affected solicitude, — "but are you really prepared?"

"Quite — quite!" replied Winifred. "This suspense is worse than torture."

"I am almost afraid to utter it," said Kneebone; "but Thames Darrell is murdered."

"Murdered!" ejaculated Winifred.

"Basely and inhumanly murdered, by Jack Sheppard and Blueskin," continued Kneebone.

"Oh! no — no — no," cried Winifred, "I cannot believe it. You must be misinformed, Mr. Kneebone. Jack may be capable of much that is wicked, but he would never lift his hand against his friend, — of that I am assured."

"Generous girl!" cried Jack from behind the skreen.

"I have proofs to the contrary," replied Kneebone. "The murder was committed after the robbery of my house by Sheppard and

his accomplices. I did not choose to mention my knowledge of this fact to your worthy father; but you may rely on its correctness."

"You were right not to mention it to him," rejoined Winifred, "for he is in such a state of distress at the mysterious disappearance of Mrs. Sheppard, that I fear any further anxiety might prove fatal to him. And yet I know not — for the object of his visit here to-night was to serve Jack, who, if your statement is correct, which I cannot however for a moment believe, does not deserve his assistance."

"You may rest assured he does not," rejoined Kneebone, emphatically, "but I am at a loss to understand in what way your father proposes to assist him."

"Mr. Bird, the turner, who is an old friend of our's, has some acquaintance with the turnkeys of Newgate," replied Winifred, "and by his means my father hoped to convey some implements to Jack, by which he might effect another escape."

"I see," remarked Kneebone. "This must be prevented," he added to himself.

"Heaven grant you may have been wrongly informed with respect to Thames!" exclaimed Winifred; "but, I beseech you, on no account to mention what you have told me to my poor father. He is not in a state of mind to bear it."

"Rely on me," rejoined Kneebone. "One word before we part, adorable girl — only one," he continued, detaining her. "I would not venture to renew my suit while Thames lived, because I well knew your affections were fixed upon him. But now that this bar is removed, I trust I may, without impropriety, urge it."

"No more of this," said Winifred, angrily. "Is this a season to speak on such a subject?"

"Perhaps not," rejoined the woollen-draper; "but the uncontrollable violence of my passion must plead my excuse. My whole life shall be devoted to you, beloved girl. And when you reflect how much at heart your poor mother, whose loss we must ever deplore,

had our union, you will, I am persuaded, no longer refuse me."

"Sir!" exclaimed Winifred.

"You will make me the happiest of mankind," cried the woollen-draper, falling on his knees, and seizing her hand, which he devoured with kisses.

"Let me go," cried Winifred. "I disbelieve the whole story you have told me."

"By heaven!" cried Kneebone, with increasing fervour, "it is true — as true as my affection for you."

"I do not doubt it," retorted Winifred, scornfully; "because I attach credit neither to one nor the other. If Thames *is* murdered, you are his assassin. Let me go, sir."

The woollen-draper made no answer, but hastily starting up, bolted the door.

"What do you mean?" cried Winifred in alarm.

"Nothing more than to obtain a favourable answer to my suit," replied Kneebone.

"This is not the way to obtain it," said Winifred, endeavouring to reach the door.

"You shall not go, adorable girl," cried Kneebone, catching her in his arms, "till you have answered me. You must—you shall be mine."

"Never," replied Winifred. "Release me instantly, or I will call my father."

"Do so," replied Kneebone; "but remember the door is locked."

"Monster!" cried Winifred. "Help! help!"

"You call in vain," returned Kneebone.

"Not so," replied Jack, throwing down the skreen. "Release her instantly, villain!"

Both Winifred and her suitor started at this sudden apparition. Jack, whose clothes were covered with dust, and whose face was deathly pale from his recent exertion, looked more like a phantom than a living person.

"In the devil's name, is that you, Jack?" ejaculated Kneebone.

"It is," replied Sheppard. "You have uttered a wilful and deliberate falsehood in asserting that I have murdered Thames, for

whom you well know I would lay down my life. Retract your words instantly, or take the consequences."

"What should I retract, villain?" cried the woollen-draper, who at the sound of Jack's voice had regained his confidence. "To the best of my belief, Thames Darrell has been murdered by you."

"A lie!" exclaimed Jack in a terrible tone. And before Kneebone could draw his sword, he felled him to the ground with the iron bar.

"You have killed him," cried Winifred in alarm.

"No," answered Jack, approaching her, "though, if I had done so, he would have merited his fate. You do not believe his statement?"

"I do not," replied Winifred. "I could not believe you capable of so foul a deed. But oh! by what wonderful chance have you come hither so seasonably?"

"I have just escaped from Newgate," replied Jack; "and am more than repaid for

the severe toil I have undergone, in being able to save you. But tell me," he added with much anxiety, "has nothing been heard of Thames since the night of my former escape?"

"Nothing whatever," answered Winifred. "He left Dollis Hill at ten o'clock on that night, and has not since returned. My father has made every possible inquiry, and offered large rewards; but has not been able to discover the slightest trace of him. His suspicions at first fell upon you. But he has since acquitted you of any share in it."

"Oh, heaven!" exclaimed Jack.

"He has been indefatigable in his search," continued Winifred, "and has even journeyed to Manchester. But though he visited Sir Rowland Trenchard's seat, Asheton Hall, he could gain no tidings of him, or of his uncle, Sir Rowland, who, it seems, has left the country."

"Never to return," remarked Jack, gloomily. "Before to-morrow morning I will ascertain what has become of Thames, or perish in the

attempt. And now tell me what has happened to my poor mother?"

"Ever since your last capture, and Thames's mysterious disappearance, she has been dreadfully ill," replied Winifred; "so ill, that each day was expected to be her last. She has also been afflicted with occasional returns of her terrible malady. On Tuesday night, she was rather better, and I had left her for a short time, as I thought, asleep on the sofa in the little parlour of which she is so fond——"

"Well," exclaimed Jack.

"On my return, I found the window open, and the room vacant. She was gone."

"Did you discover any trace of footsteps?" inquired Jack eagerly.

"There were some marks near the window; but whether recently made or not could not be ascertained," replied Winifred.

"Oh God!" exclaimed Jack, in a tone of the bitterest anguish. "My worst fears are realized. She is in Wild's power."

"I ought to add," continued Winifred, "that one of her shoes was picked up in the

garden, and that prints of her feet were discovered along the soft mould; whether made in flying from any one, or from rushing forth in distracted terror, it is impossible to say. My father thought the latter. He has had the whole country searched; but hitherto without success."

"I know *where* she will be found, and *how*," rejoined Jack with a shudder.

"I have something further to tell you," pursued Winifred. "Shortly after your last visit to Dollis Hill, my father was one evening waylaid by a man, who informed him that he had something to communicate respecting Thames, and had a large sum of money, and some important documents to deliver to him, which would be given up, provided he would undertake to procure your liberation."

"It was Blueskin," observed Jack.

"So my father thought," replied Winifred; "and he therefore instantly fired upon him. But though the shot took effect, as was evident from the stains on the ground, the villain escaped."

"Your father did right," replied Jack, with some bitterness. "But if he had not fired that shot, he might have saved Thames, and possessed himself of papers which would have established his birth, and his right to the estates of the Trenchard family."

"Would you have had him spare my mother's murderer?" cried Winifred.

"No, no," replied Jack. "And yet — but it is only part of the chain of ill-luck that seems wound around me. Listen to me, Winifred."

And he hastily related the occurrences in Jonathan Wild's house.

The account of the discovery of Sir Rowland's murder filled Winifred with alarm; but when she learnt what had befallen Thames — how he had been stricken down by the thief-taker's bludgeon, and left for dead, she uttered a piercing scream, fainted, and would have fallen, if Jack had not caught her in his arms.

Jack had well-nigh fallen too. The idea that he held in his arms the girl whom he had

once so passionately loved, and for whom he still retained an ardent but hopeless attachment, almost overcame him. Gazing at her with eyes blinded with tears, he imprinted one brotherly kiss upon her lips. It was the first — and the last!

At this juncture, the handle of the door was tried, and the voice of Mr. Wood was heard without, angrily demanding admittance.

"What's the matter?" he cried. "I thought I heard a scream. Why is the door fastened? Open it directly?"

"Are you alone?" asked Jack, mimicking the voice of Kneebone.

"What for?" demanded Wood. "Open the door, I say, or I 'll burst it open."

Carefully depositing Winifred on a sofa, Jack then extinguished the light, and, as he unfastened the door, crept behind it. In rushed Mr. Wood, with a candle in his hand, which Jack instantly blew out, and darted down stairs. He upset some one — probably Mr. Bird,—who was rushing up-stairs, alarmed by Mr. Wood's cries: but, regardless of this, he darted along

a passage, gained the shop, and passed through an open door into the street.

And thus he was once more free, having effected one of the most wonderful escapes ever planned or accomplished.

CHAPTER XXII.

FAST AND LOOSE.

About seven o'clock on the same night, Jonathan Wild's two janizaries, who had been for some time in attendance in the hall of his dwelling at the Old Bailey, were summoned to the audience-chamber. A long and secret conference then took place between the thief-taker and his myrmidons, after which they were severally dismissed.

Left alone, Jonathan lighted a lamp, and, opening the trap-door, descended the secret stairs. Taking the opposite course from that which he had hitherto pursued when it has been necessary to attend him in his visits to the lower part of his premises, he struck into a narrow passage on the right, which he tracked

till he came to a small door, like the approach to a vault. Unlocking it, he entered the chamber, which by no means belied its external appearance.

On a pallet in one corner lay a pale emaciated female. Holding the lamp over her rigid but beautiful features, Jonathan, with some anxiety, placed his hand upon her breast to ascertain whether the heart still beat. Satisfied with his scrutiny, he produced a pocket-flask, and taking off the silver cup with which it was mounted, filled it with the contents of the flask, and then seizing the thin arm of the sleeper, rudely shook it. Opening her large black eyes, she fixed them upon him for a moment with a mixture of terror and loathing, and then averted her gaze.

"Drink this," cried Jonathan, handing her the cup. "You 'll feel better after it."

Mechanically raising the potion to her lips, the poor creature swallowed it without hesitation.

"Is it poison?" she asked.

"No," replied Jonathan, with a brutal

laugh. "I 'm not going to get rid of you just yet. It 's gin—a liquor you used to like. You 'll find the benefit of it by and by. You 've a good deal to go through to-night."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mrs. Sheppard, "are you come to renew your terrible proposals?"

"I 'm come to execute my threats," replied Wild. "To-night you shall be my wedded wife."

"I will die first," replied Mrs. Sheppard.

"You may die *afterwards* as soon as you please," retorted Jonathan; "but live till then you *shall*. I 've sent for the priest."

"Mercy!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, vainly trying to discover a gleam of compassion in the thieftaker's inexorable countenance,—"Mercy! mercy!"

"Pshaw!" rejoined Jonathan. "You should be glad to be made an honest woman."

"Oh! let me die," groaned the widow. "I have not many days,—perhaps, not many hours to live. But kill me rather than commit this outrage."

"That wouldn't answer my purpose," re-

plied Jonathan, savagely. "I didn't carry you off from old Wood to kill you, but to wed you."

"What motive can you have for so vile a deed?" asked Mrs. Sheppard.

"You know my motive well enough," answered Jonathan. "However, I 'll refresh your memory. I once might have married you for your beauty, — now I marry you for your wealth."

"My wealth," replied Mrs. Sheppard. "I have nothing."

"You are heiress to the Trenchard property," rejoined Jonathan, "one of the largest estates in Lancashire."

"Not while Thames Darrell and Sir Rowland live."

"Sir Rowland is dead," replied Jonathan, gloomily. "Thames Darrell only waits my mandate to follow him. Before our marriage there will be no life between you and the estates."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mrs. Sheppard.

"Look here," cried Jonathan, stooping down

and taking hold of a ring in the floor, with which by a great effort he raised up a flag. "In this pit," he added, pointing to the chasm below, "your brother is buried. Here your nephew will speedily be thrown."

"Horrible!" cried Mrs. Sheppard, shuddering violently. "But your dreadful projects will recoil on your own head. Heaven will not permit the continuance of such wickedness as you practise."

"I'll take my chance," replied Jonathan, with a sinister smile. "My schemes have succeeded tolerably well hitherto."

"A day of retribution will assuredly arrive," rejoined Mrs. Sheppard.

"Till then, I shall remain content," returned Wild. "And now, Mrs. Sheppard, attend to what I'm about to say to you. Years ago, when you were a girl and in the bloom of your beauty, I loved you."

"Loved me! *You!*"

"I loved you," continued Jonathan, "and struck by your appearance, which seemed above your station, inquired your history, and

found you had been stolen by a gipsey in Lancashire. I proceeded to Manchester, to investigate the matter further, and when there ascertained, beyond a doubt, that you were the eldest daughter of Sir Montacute Trenchard. This discovery made, I hastened back to London to offer you my hand, but found you had married in the mean time a smock-faced, smooth-tongued carpenter named Sheppard. The important secret remained locked in my breast, but I resolved to be avenged. I swore I would bring your husband to the gallows,—would plunge you in such want, such distress, that you should have no alternative but the last frightful resource of misery,—and I also swore, that if you had a son he should share the same fate as his father."

"And terribly you have kept your vow," replied Mrs. Sheppard.

"I have," replied Jonathan. "But I am now coming to the point which most concerns you. Consent to become my wife, and do not compel me to have recourse to violence to effect my purpose, and I will spare your son."

Mrs. Sheppard looked fixedly at him, as if she would penetrate the gloomy depths of his soul.

"Swear that you will do this," she cried.

"I swear it," rejoined Jonathan, readily.

"But what is an oath to you!" cried the widow, distrustfully. "You will not hesitate to break it, if it suits your purpose. I have suffered too much from your treachery. I will not trust you."

"As you please," replied Jonathan, sternly. "Recollect you are in my power. Jack's life hangs on your determination."

"What shall I do?" cried Mrs. Sheppard, in a voice of agony.

"Save him," replied Jonathan. "You *can* do so."

"Bring him here, — let me see him — let me embrace him—let me be assured that he is safe, and I am your's. I swear it."

"Hum!" exclaimed Jonathan.

"You hesitate — you are deceiving me."

"By my soul, no," replied Jonathan, with affected sincerity. "You shall see him to-morrow."

"Delay the marriage till then. I will never consent till I see him."

"You ask impossibilities," replied Jonathan, sullenly. "All is prepared. The marriage cannot—shall not be delayed. You must be mine to-night."

"Force shall not make me your's till Jack is free," replied the widow, resolutely.

"An hour hence, I shall return with the priest," replied Jonathan, striding towards the door.

And, with a glance of malignant exultation, he quitted the vault, and locked the door.

"An hour hence, I shall be beyond your malice," said Mrs. Sheppard, sinking backwards upon the pallet.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LAST MEETING BETWEEN JACK SHEPPARD AND HIS MOTHER.

After escaping from the turner's house, Jack Sheppard skirted St. Sepulchre's church, and hurrying down Snow Hill, darted into the first turning on the left. Traversing Angel Court, and Green Arbour Court, — celebrated as one of Goldsmith's retreats, — he speedily reached Seacoal Lane, and pursuing the same course, which he and Thames had formerly taken, arrived at the yard at the back of Jonathan's habitation.

A door, it may be remembered, opened from Wild's dwelling into this yard. Before he forced an entrance, Jack tried it, and, to his great surprise and delight, found it unfastened. Entering the house, he found himself in a narrow passage leading to the

back stairs. He had not taken many steps when he perceived Quilt Arnold in the upper gallery, with a lamp in his hand. Hearing a noise below, Quilt called out, supposing it occasioned by the Jew. Jack hastily retreated, and taking the first means of concealment that occurred to him, descended the cellar steps.

Quilt, meanwhile, came down, examined the door, and finding it unfastened, locked it with a bitter imprecation on his brother-janizary's carelessness. This done, he followed the course which Jack had just taken. As he crossed the cellar, he passed so near to Jack who had concealed himself behind a piece of furniture that he almost touched him. It was Jack's intention to have knocked him down with the iron bar; but he was so struck with the janizary's looks, that he determined to spare him till he had ascertained his purpose. With this view, he suffered him to pass on.

Quilt's manner, indeed, was that of a man endeavouring to muster up sufficient resolution for the commission of some desperate crime. He halted, — looked fearfully around, — stopped

again, and exclaimed aloud, "I don't like the job; and yet it must be done, or Mr. Wild will hang me." With this, he appeared to pluck up his courage, and stepped forward more boldly.

"Some dreadful deed is about to be committed, which I may perhaps prevent," muttered Jack to himself. "Heaven grant I may not be too late!"

Followed by Jack Sheppard, who kept sufficiently near him to watch his proceedings, and yet not expose himself, Quilt unlocked one or two doors which he left open, and after winding his way along a gloomy passage, arrived at the door of a vault. Here he set down the lamp, and took out a key, and as he did so the expression of his countenance was so atrocious, that Jack felt assured he was not wrong in his suspicions.

By this time, the door was unlocked, and drawing his sword, Quilt entered the cell. The next moment, an exclamation was heard in the voice of Thames. Darting forward at this sound, Jack threw open the door, and beheld

Quilt kneeling over Thames, whose hands and feet were bound with cords, and about to plunge his sword into his breast. A blow from the iron bar instantly stretched the ruffian on the floor. Jack then proceeded to liberate the captive from his bondage.

"Jack!" exclaimed Thames. "Is it you?"

"It is," replied Sheppard, as he untied the cords. "I might return the question. Were it not for your voice, I don't think I should know you. You are greatly altered."

Captivity had, indeed, produced a striking alteration in Thames. He looked like the shadow of himself — thin, feeble, hollow-eyed — his beard unshorn — nothing could be more miserable.

"I have never been out of this horrible dungeon since we last met," he said; "though how long ago that is, I scarcely know. Night and day have been alike to me."

"Six weeks have elapsed since that fatal night," replied Jack. "During the whole of that time I have been a close prisoner in Newgate, whence I have only just escaped."

"Six weeks!" exclaimed Thames, in a melancholy tone. "It seems like six long months to me."

"I do not doubt it," returned Jack; "none but those who have experienced it can understand the miseries of imprisonment."

"Do not speak of it," rejoined Thames, with a look of horror. "Let us fly from this frightful place."

"I will conduct you to the outlet," replied Jack; "but I cannot leave it till I have ascertained whether my mother also is a prisoner here."

"I can answer that," replied Thames. "She is. The monster, Wild, when he visited my dungeon last night, told me, to add to my misery, that she occupied a cell near me."

"Arm yourself with that ruffian's weapons," replied Jack, "and let us search for her."

Thames complied. But he was so feeble, that it seemed scarcely possible he could offer any effectual resistance in case of an attack.

"Lean on me," said Jack.

Taking the light, they then proceeded along

the passage. There was no other door in it, and Jack therefore struck into another entry which branched off to the right. They had not proceeded far when a low moan was heard.

"She is here," cried Jack, darting forward.

A few steps brought him to the door of the vault in which his mother was immured. It was locked. Jack had brought away the bunch of keys which he had taken from Quilt Arnold, but none of them would open it. He was therefore obliged to use the iron bar, which he did with as much caution as circumstances would permit. At the first blow, Mrs. Sheppard uttered a piercing scream.

"Wretch!" she cried, "you shall not force me to your hateful purpose. I will never wed you. I have a weapon—a knife—and if you attempt to open the door, will plunge it to my heart."

"Oh God!" exclaimed Jack, paralysed by her cries. "What shall I do? If I persist, I shall destroy her."

"Get hence," continued Mrs. Sheppard, with

a frenzied laugh. "You shall never behold me alive."

"Mother!" cried Jack, in a broken voice. "It is your son."

"It is false," cried Mrs. Sheppard. "Think not to deceive me, monster. I know my son's voice too well. He is in Newgate. Hence!"

"Mother! dear mother!" cried Jack, in a voice, the tones of which were altered by his very anxiety to make them distinct, "listen to me. I have broken from prison, and am come to save you."

"It is *not* Jack's voice," rejoined Mrs. Sheppard. "I am not to be deceived. The knife is at my breast. Stir a foot, and I strike."

"Oh heavens!" cried Jack, driven to his wits' end. "Mother — dear mother! Once again, I beseech you to listen to me. I am come to rescue you from Wild's violence. I must break open the door. Hold your hand for a moment."

"You have heard my fixed determination, villain," cried Mrs. Sheppard. "I know my life is valuable to you, or you would not spare

it. But I will disappoint you. Get you gone. Your purposes are defeated."

"Footsteps are approaching," cried Thames. "Heed her not. It is but a wild threat."

"I know not how to act," exclaimed Jack, almost driven to desperation.

"I hear you plotting with your wicked associates," cried Mrs. Sheppard. "I have baffled you."

"Force the door," said Thames, "or you will be too late."

"Better she die by her own hand, than by that monster's," cried Jack, brandishing the bar. "Mother, I come to you."

With this, he struck the door a heavy blow.

He listened. There was a deep groan, and the sound of a fall within.

"I have killed her," exclaimed Jack, dropping the bar,—"by your advice, Thames. Oh God! pardon me."

"Do not delay," cried Thames. "She may yet be saved. I am too weak to aid you."

Jack again seized the bar, and, dashing it furiously against the door, speedily burst it open.

The unfortunate woman was stretched upon the floor, with a bloody knife in her hand.

"Mother!" cried Jack, springing towards her.

"Jack!" she cried, raising her head. "Is it you?"

"It is," replied her son. "Oh! why would you not listen to me?"

"I was distracted," replied Mrs. Sheppard, faintly.

"I have killed you," cried Jack, endeavouring to staunch the effusion of blood from her breast. "Forgive—forgive me!"

"I have nothing to forgive," replied Mrs. Sheppard. "I alone am to blame."

"Can I not carry you where you can obtain help?" cried Jack in an agony of distress.

"It is useless," replied Mrs. Sheppard: "nothing can save me. I die happy—quite happy in beholding you. Do not remain with me. You may fall into the hands of your enemy. Fly! fly!"

"Do not think of me, mother, but of yourself," cried Jack, in an agony of tears.

"You have always been far dearer to me

than myself," replied Mrs. Sheppard. "But I have one last request to make. Let me lie in Willesden churchyard."

"You shall—you shall," answered Jack."

"We shall meet again ere long, my son," cried Mrs. Sheppard, fixing her glazing eyes upon him.

"Oh God! she is dying," exclaimed Jack in a voice suffocated by emotion. "Forgive me—oh, forgive me!"

"Forgive you—bless you!" she gasped.

A cold shiver ran through her frame, and her gentle spirit passed away for ever.

"Oh, God! that I might die too," cried Jack, falling on his knees beside her.

After the first violent outbreak of grief had in some degree subsided, Thames addressed him.

"You must not remain here," he said. "You can render no further service to your poor mother."

"I can avenge her," cried Jack in a terrible tone.

"Be ruled by me," returned Thames. "You will act most in accordance with her

wishes, could she dictate them, by compliance. Do not waste time in vain regrets, but let us remove the body, that we may fulfil her last injunctions."

After some further arguments, Jack assented to this proposal.

"Go on first with the light," he said. "I will bear the body." And he raised it in his arms.

Just as they reached the end of the passage, they heard the voices of Jonathan and the Jew in Thames's late place of confinement. Wild had evidently discovered the body of Quilt Arnold, and was loudly expressing his anger and astonishment.

"Extinguish the light," cried Jack; "turn to the left. Quick! Quick!"

The order was only just given in time. They had scarcely gained the adjoining cellar when Jonathan and the Jew rushed past in the direction of the vault.

"Not a moment is to be lost," cried Jack: "follow me."

So saying, he hurried up stairs, opened the

back door, and was quickly in the yard. Having ascertained that Thames was at his heels, he hurried with his ghastly burthen down Seacoal-lane.

"Where are you going?" cried Thames, who, though wholly disencumbered, was scarcely able to keep up with him.

"I know not — and care not," replied Jack.

At this moment, a coach passed them, and was instantly hailed by Thames.

"You had better let me convey her to Dollis Hill," he said.

"Be it so," replied Jack.

Luckily it was so dark, and there was no lamp near, that the man did not notice the condition of the body, which was placed in the vehicle by the two young men.

"What will you do?" asked Thames.

"Leave me to my fate," rejoined Jack. "Take care of your charge."

"Doubt me not," replied Thames.

"Bury her in Willesden churchyard, as she requested, on Sunday," said Jack. "I will be there at the time."

So saying, he closed the door.

The coachman having received his order, and being offered an extra fare if he drove quickly, set off at full speed.

As Jack departed, a dark figure, emerging from behind a wall, rushed after him.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PURSUIT.

After running to some distance down Sea-coal-lane, Jack stopped to give a last look at the vehicle which was bearing away the remains of his beloved and ill-fated mother. It was scarcely out of sight, when two persons, whom he instantly recognized as Jonathan and Abraham Mendez, turned the corner of the street, and made it evident from their shouts, that they likewise perceived him.

Starting off at a rapid pace, Jack dashed down Turnagain-lane, skirted the eastern bank of Fleet-ditch, crossed Holborn Bridge, and began to ascend the neighbouring hill. By the time he had reached St. Andrew's Church, his pursuers had gained the bridge, and the atten-

tion of such passengers as crowded the streets was attracted towards him by their vociferations. Amongst others, the watchman whose box was placed against the churchyard wall, near the entrance to Shoe-lane, rushed out and sprung his rattle, which was immediately answered by another rattle from Holborn-bars.

Darting down Field-lane, Jack struck into a labyrinth of streets on the left; but though he ran as swiftly as he could, he was not unperceived. His course had been observed by the watchman, who directed Wild which way to take.

"It is Jack Sheppard, the noted housebreaker," cried Jonathan, at the top of his sonorous voice. "He has just broken out of Newgate. After him! A hundred pounds to the man who takes him."

Sheppard's name operated like magic on the crowd. The cry was echoed by twenty different voices. People ran out of their shops to join the pursuit; and, by the time Wild had got into Field-lane, he had a troop of fifty persons at his heels — all eager to assist in the capture.

"Stop thief!" roared Jonathan, who perceived the fugitive hurrying along a street towards Hatton Garden. "It is Sheppard—Jack Sheppard—stop him!" And his shouts were reiterated by the pack of blood-hounds at his heels.

Jack, meanwhile, heard the shouts, and, though alarmed by them, held on a steady course. By various twistings and turnings, during all which time his pursuers, who were greatly increased in numbers, kept him in view, he reached Gray's-Inn-lane. Here he was hotly pursued. Fatigued by his previous exertions, and incumbered by his fetters, he was by no means—though ordinarily remarkably swift of foot—a match for his foes, who were fast gaining upon him.

At the corner of Liquorpond-street stood the old Hampstead coach-office; and, on the night in question, a knot of hostlers, waggoners, drivers, and stable-boys was collected in the yard. Hearing the distant shouts, these fellows rushed down to the entrance of the court, and arrived there just as Jack passed it. "Stop

thief!" roared Jonathan. "Stop thief" clamoured the rabble behind.

At no loss to comprehend that Jack was the individual pointed out by these outcries, two of the nearest of the group made a dash at him. But Jack eluded their grasp. A large dog was then set at him by a stable-boy; but, striking the animal with his faithful iron-bar, he speedily sent him yelping back. The two hostlers, however, kept close at his heels; and Jack, whose strength began to flag, feared he could not hold much longer. Determined, however, not to be taken with life, he held on.

Still keeping ahead of his pursuers, he ran along the direct road, till the houses disappeared and he got into the open country. Here he was preparing to leap over the hedge into the fields on the left, when he was intercepted by two horsemen, who, hearing the shouts, rode up and struck at him with the butt-ends of their heavy riding-whips. Warding off the blows as well as he could with the bar, Jack struck both the horses on the head, and the animals plunged so violently, that they

not only prevented their riders from assailing him, but also kept off the hostlers; and, in the confusion that ensued, Jack managed to spring over the fence, and shaped his course across the field in the direction of Sir John Oldcastle's.

The stoppage had materially lessened the distance between him and his pursuers, who now amounted to more than a hundred persons, many of whom carried lanterns and links. Ascertaining that it was Sheppard of whom this concourse was in pursuit, the two horsemen leapt the hedge, and were presently close upon him. Like a hare closely pressed, Jack attempted to double, but the device only brought him nearer his foes, who were crossing the field in every direction, and rending the air with their shouts. The uproar was tremendous — men yelling — dogs barking, — but above all was heard the stentorian voice of Jonathan, urging them on. Jack was so harassed that he felt half inclined to stand at bay.

While he was straining every sinew, his foot

slipped, and he fell, head foremost, into a deep trench, which he had not observed in the dark. This fall saved him, for the horsemen passed over him. Creeping along quickly on his hands and knees, he found the entrance to a covered drain, into which he crept. He was scarcely concealed when he heard the horsemen, who perceived they had overshot their mark, ride back.

By this time, Jonathan and the vast mob attending him, had come up, and the place was rendered almost as light as day by the links.

"He must be somewhere hereabouts," cried one of the horsemen, dismounting. "We were close upon him when he suddenly disappeared."

Jonathan made no answer, but snatching a torch from a bystander, jumped into the trench, and commenced a diligent search. Just as he had arrived at the mouth of the drain, and Jack felt certain he must be discovered, a loud shout was raised from the further end of the field that the fugitive was

caught. All the assemblage, accompanied by Jonathan, set off in this direction, when it turned out that the supposed housebreaker was a harmless beggar, who had been found asleep under a hedge.

Jonathan's vexation at the disappointment was expressed in the bitterest imprecations, and he returned as speedily as he could to the trench. But he had now lost the precise spot; and thinking he had examined the drain, turned his attention to another quarter.

Meanwhile, the excitement of the chase had in some degree subsided. The crowd dispersed in different directions, and most fortunately a heavy shower coming on, put them altogether to flight. Jonathan, however, still lingered. He seemed wholly insensible to the rain, though it presently descended in torrents, and continued his search as ardently as before.

After occupying himself thus for the best part of an hour, he thought Jack must have given him the slip. Still, his suspicions were

so strong, that he ordered Mendez to remain on guard near the spot all night; and, by the promise of a large reward, induced two other men to keep him company.

As he took his departure, he whispered to the Jew: "Take him dead or alive; but if we fail now, and you heard him aright in Seacoal Lane, we are sure of him at his mother's funeral on Sunday."

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW JACK SHEPPARD GOT RID OF HIS IRONS.

About an hour after this, Jack ventured to emerge from his place of concealment. It was still raining heavily, and profoundly dark. Drenched to the skin, — in fact, he had been lying in a bed of muddy water, — and chilled to the very bone, he felt so stiff, that he could scarcely move.

Listening attentively, he fancied he heard the breathing of some one near him, and moved cautiously in the opposite direction. In spite of his care, he came in contact with a man, who, endeavouring to grasp him, cried, in the voice of Mendez, "Who goes dere? Shpeak! or I fire!"

No answer being returned, the Jew instantly

discharged his pistol, and though the shot did no damage, the flash discovered Sheppard. But as the next moment all was profound darkness, Jack easily managed to break away from them.

Without an idea where he was going, Jack pursued his way through the fields; and, as he proceeded, the numbness of his limbs in some degree wore off, and his confidence returned. He had need of all the inexhaustible energy of his character to support him through his toilsome walk over the wet grass, or along the slippery ploughed land. At last, he got into a lane, but had not proceeded far when he was again alarmed by the sound of a horse's tread.

Once more breaking through the hedge he took to the fields. He was now almost driven to despair. Wet as he was, he felt if he lay down in the grass, he should perish with cold; while, if he sought a night's lodging in any asylum, his dress, stained with blood and covered with dirt, would infallibly cause him to be secured and delivered into the hands

of justice. And then the fetters, which were still upon his legs: — how was he to get rid of them?

Tired and dispirited, he still wandered on. Again returning to the main road, he passed through Clapton; and turning off on the left, arrived at the foot of Stamford Hill. He walked on for an hour longer, till he could scarcely drag one leg after another. At length, he fell down on the road, fully expecting each moment would prove his last.

How long he continued thus he scarcely knew; but just before dawn, he managed to regain his legs, and, crawling up a bank, perceived he was within a quarter of a mile of Tottenham. A short way off in the fields he descried a sort of shed or cow-house, and thither he contrived to drag his weary limbs. Opening the door, he found it littered with straw, on which he threw himself, and instantly fell asleep.

When he awoke it was late in the day, and raining heavily. For some time he could not stir, but felt sick and exhausted. His legs

were dreadfully swelled; his hands bruised; and his fetters occasioned him intolerable pain. His bodily suffering, however, was nothing compared with his mental anguish. All the events of the previous day rushed to his recollection; and though he had been unintentionally the cause of his mother's death, he reproached himself as severely as if he had been her actual murderer.

"Had I not been the guilty wretch I am," he cried, bursting into an agony of tears, "she would never have died thus."

This strong feeling of remorse having found a natural vent, in some degree subsided, and he addressed himself to his present situation. Rousing himself, he went to the door. It had ceased raining, but the atmosphere was moist and chill, and the ground deluged by the recent showers. Taking up a couple of large stones which lay near, Jack tried to beat the round basils of the fetters into an oval form, so as to enable him to slip his heels through them.

While he was thus employed a farming man

came into the barn. Jack instantly started to his feet, and the man, alarmed at his appearance, ran off to a neighbouring house. Before he could return, Jack had made good his retreat; and, wandering about the lanes and hedges, kept out of sight as much as possible.

On examining his pockets, he found about twenty guineas in gold, and some silver. But how to avail himself of it was the question, for in his present garb he was sure to be recognised. When night fell, he crept into the town of Tottenham. As he passed along the main thoroughfare, he heard his own name pronounced, and found that it was a hawker, crying a penny history of his escapes. A crowd was collected round the fellow, who was rapidly disposing of his stock.

"Here 's the full, true, and particular account of Jack Sheppard's last astonishing and never-to-be-forgotten escape from the Castle of Newgate," bawled the hawker, "with a print of him taken from the life, showing the manner how he was shackled and handcuffed. Only

one penny — two copies — two pence — thank you, sir. Here 's the —"

"Let me have one," cried a servant maid, running across the street, and in her haste forgetting to shut the door, — "here 's the money. Master and missis have been talking all day long about Jack Sheppard, and I 'm dying to read his life."

"Here you have it, my dear," returned the hawker. "Sold again!"

"If you don't get back quickly, Lucy," observed a bystander, "Jack Sheppard will be in the house before you."

This sally occasioned a general laugh.

"If Jack would come to my house, I 'd contrive to hide him," remarked a buxom dame. "Poor fellow! I 'm glad he has escaped."

"Jack seems to be a great favourite with the fair sex," observed a smirking grocer's apprentice.

"Of course," rejoined the bystander, who had just spoken, and who was of a cynical turn, — "the greater the rascal, the better they like him."

"Here 's a particular account of Jack's many robberies and escapes," roared the hawker,—"how he broke into the house of his master, Mr. Wood, at Dollis Hill —"

"Let me have one," said a carpenter, who was passing by at the moment,—"Mr. Wood was an old friend of mine — and I recollect seeing Jack when he was bound 'prentice to him."

"A penny, if you please, sir," said the hawker.—"Sold again! Here you have the full, true, and particular account of the barbarous murder committed by Jack Sheppard and his associate, Joseph Blake, *alias* Blueskin, upon the body of Mrs. Wood —"

"That 's false!" cried a voice behind him.

The man turned at the exclamation, and so did several of the bystanders; but they could not make out who had uttered it.

Jack, who had been lingering near the group, now walked on.

In the middle of the little town stood the shop of a Jew dealer in old clothes. The owner was at the door unhooking a few arti-

cles of wearing apparel which he had exposed outside for sale. Amongst other things, he had just brought down an old laced bavaroy, a species of surtout much worn at the period.

"What do you want for that coat, friend?" asked Jack, as he came up.

"More than you 'll pay for it, friend," snuffled the Jew.

"How do you know that?" rejoined Jack. "Will you take a guinea for it?"

"Double that sum might tempt me," replied the Jew; "it 's a nobleman's coat, upon my shoul!"

"Here 's the money," replied Jack, taking the coat.

"Shall I help you on with it, sir?" replied the Jew, becoming suddenly respectful.

"No," replied Jack.

I half suspect this is a highwayman, thought the Jew; he 's so ready with his cash. "I 've some other things inside, sir, which you might wish to buy, — some pistols."

Jack was about to comply; but not liking the man's manner, he walked on.

Further on, there was a small chandler's shop, where Jack observed an old woman seated at the counter, attended by a little girl. Seeing provisions in the window, Jack ventured in and bought a loaf. Having secured this, — for he was almost famished, — he said that he had lost a hammer and wished to purchase one. The old woman told him she had no such article to dispose of, but recommended him to a neighbouring blacksmith.

Guided by the glare of the forge, which threw a stream of ruddy light across the road, Jack soon found the place of which he was in search. Entering the workshop, he found the blacksmith occupied in heating the tire of a cart-wheel. Suspending his labour on Jack's appearance, the man demanded his business. Making up a similar story to that which he had told the old woman, he said he wanted to purchase a hammer and a file."

The man looked hard at him.

"Answer me one question first?" he said; "I half suspect you're Jack Sheppard."

"I am," replied Jack, without hesitation; for he felt assured from the man's manner that he might confide in him.

"You're a bold fellow, Jack," rejoined the blacksmith. "But you've done well to trust me. I'll take off your irons — for I guess that's the reason why you want the hammer and file — on one condition."

"What is it?"

"That you give 'em to me."

"Readily."

Taking Jack into a shed behind the workshop, the smith in a short time freed him from his fetters. He not only did this, but supplied him with an ointment which allayed the swelling of his limbs, and crowned all by furnishing him with a jug of excellent ale.

"I'm afraid, Jack, you'll come to the gallows," observed the smith; "but if you do, I'll go to Tyburn to see you. But I'll never part with your irons."

Noticing the draggled condition Jack was in, he then fetched him a bucket of water,

with which Jack cleansed himself as well as he could, and thanking the honest smith, who would take nothing for his trouble, left the shop.

Having made a tolerably good meal upon the loaf, overcome by fatigue, Jack turned into a barn in Stoke Newington, and slept till late in the day, when he awakened much refreshed. The swelling in his limbs had also subsided. It rained heavily all day, so he did not stir forth.

Towards night, however, he ventured out, and walked on towards London. When he arrived at Hoxton, he found the walls covered with placards offering a reward for his apprehension, and he everywhere appeared to be the general subject of conversation. From a knot of idlers at a public-house, he learnt that Jonathan Wild had just ridden past, and that his setters were scouring the country in every direction.

Entering London, he bent his way towards the west-end; and having some knowledge of a second-hand tailor's shop in Rupert Street,

proceeded thither, and looked out a handsome suit of mourning, with a sword, cloak, and hat, and demanded the price. The man asked twelve guineas, but after a little bargaining, he came down to ten.

Taking his new purchase under his arm, Jack proceeded to a small tavern in the same street, where, having ordered dinner, he went to a bedroom to attire himself. He had scarcely completed his toilet, when he was startled by a noise at the door, and heard his own name pronounced in no friendly accents. Fortunately, the window was not far from the ground; so opening it gently, he dropped into a back-yard, and from thence got into the street.

Hurrying down the Haymarket, he was arrested by a crowd who were collected round a street-singer. Jack paused for a moment, and found that his own adventures formed the subject of the ballad. Not daring, however, to listen to it, he ran on.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW JACK SHEPPARD ATTENDED HIS MOTHER'S FUNERAL.

THAT night Jack walked to Paddington, and took up his quarters at a small tavern called the Wheatsheaf, near the green. On the next morning — Sunday — the day on which he expected his mother's funeral to take place, he set out along the Harrow Road.

It was a clear, lovely, October morning. The air was sharp and bracing, and the leaves which had taken their autumnal tints were falling from the trees. The road which wound by Westbourne Green, gave him a full view of the hill of Hampstead with its church, its crest of houses, and its villas peeping from out the trees.

Jack's heart was too full to allow him to derive any pleasure from this scene; so he

strolled on without raising his eyes till he arrived at Kensal Green. Here he obtained some breakfast, and mounting the hill turned off into the fields on the right. Crossing them, he ascended an eminence, which, from its singular shape, seems to have been the site of a Roman encampment, and which commands a magnificent prospect.

Leaning upon a gate he looked down into the valley. It was the very spot from which his poor mother had gazed after her vain attempt to rescue him at the Mint; but, though he was ignorant of this, her image was alone present to him. He beheld the grey tower of Willesden Church, embosomed in its grove of trees, now clothed in all the glowing livery of autumn. There was the cottage she had inhabited for so many years,—in those fields she had rambled,—at that church she had prayed. And he had destroyed all this. But for him she might have been alive and happy. The recollection was too painful, and he burst into an agony of tears.

Aroused by the sound of the church bells,

he resolved, at whatever risk, to attend Divine service. With this view, he descended the hill, and presently found a footpath leading to the church. But he was destined to have every tide of feeling awakened — every wound opened. The path he had selected conducted him to his mother's humble dwelling. When she occupied it, it was neatness itself; the little porch was overrun with creepers — the garden trim and exquisitely kept. Now, it was a wilderness of weeds. The glass in the windows was broken — the roof unthatched — the walls dilapidated. Jack turned away with an aching heart. It seemed an emblem of the ruin he had caused.

As he proceeded, other painful reminiscences were aroused. At every step he seemed to be haunted by the ghost of the past. There was the stile on which Jonathan had sat, and he recollected distinctly the effect of his mocking glance — how it had hardened his heart against his mother's prayer. "O God!" he exclaimed, " I am severely punished."

He had now gained the high road. The

villagers were thronging to church. Rounding the corner of a garden wall, he came upon his former place of imprisonment. Some rustic hand had written upon the door "JACK SHEPPARD'S CAGE;" and upon the wall was affixed a large placard describing his person, and offering a reward for his capture. Muffling up his face, Jack turned away; but he had not proceeded many steps when he heard a man reading aloud an account of his escapes from a newspaper.

Hastening to the church, he entered it by the very door near which his first crime had been committed. His mother's scream seemed again to ring in his ears, and he was so deeply affected that, fearful of exciting attention, he was about to quit the sacred edifice, when he was stopped by the entrance of Thames, who looked pale as death, with Winifred leaning on his arm. They were followed by Mr. Wood in the deepest mourning.

Shrinking involuntarily back into the farthest corner of the seat, Jack buried his face in his hands. The service began. Jack who had not

been in a place of worship for many years was powerfully affected. Accidentally raising his eyes, he saw that he was perceived by the family from Dollis Hill, and that he was an object of the deepest interest to them.

As soon as the service was over, Thames contrived to approach him, and whispered, "Be cautious, — the funeral will take place after evening service."

Jack would not hazard a glance at Winifred; but, quitting the church, got into an adjoining meadow, and watched the party slowly ascending the road leading to Dollis Hill. At a turn in the road, he perceived Winifred looking anxiously towards him, and when she discovered him, she waved her hand.

Returning to the churchyard, he walked round it; and on the western side, near a small yew-tree discovered a new-made grave.

"Whose grave is this?" he inquired of a man who was standing near it.

"I can't say," answered the fellow; "but I 'll inquire from the sexton, William Morgan. Here, Peter," he added to a curly-headed lad,

who was playing on one of the grassy tombs, "ask your father to step this way."

The little urchin set off, and presently returned with the sexton.

"It 's Mrs. Sheppard's grave, — the mother of the famous housebreaker," said Morgan, in answer to Jack's inquiry; — "and it 's well they let her have Christian burial after all — for they say she destroyed herself for her son. The crowner's 'quest sat on her yesterday — and if she hadn't been proved out of her mind, she would have been buried at four lane-ends."

Jack could stand no more. Placing a piece of money in Morgan's hands, he hurried out of the churchyard.

"By my soul," said the sexton, "that 's as like Jack Sheppard as any one I ever seed i' my born days."

Hastening to the Six Bells, Jack ordered some refreshment, and engaged a private room, where he remained till the afternoon absorbed in grief.

Meantime, a change had taken place in the

weather. The day had become suddenly overcast. The wind blew in fitful gusts, and scattered the yellow leaves from the elms and horsechestnuts. Roused by the bell tolling for evening service, Jack left the house. On reaching the churchyard, he perceived the melancholy procession descending the hill. Just then, a carriage drawn by four horses, drove furiously up to the Six Bells; but Jack was too much absorbed to take any notice of it.

At this moment, the bell began to toll in a peculiar manner, announcing the approach of the corpse. The gate was opened; the coffin brought into the churchyard; and Jack, whose eyes were filled with tears, saw Mr. Wood and Thames pass him, and followed at a foot's pace behind them.

Meanwhile, the clergyman, bareheaded and in his surplice, advanced to meet them. Having read the three first verses of the impressive service appointed for the burial of the dead, he returned to the church, whither the coffin was carried through the south-western door, and placed in the centre of the aisle—

Mr. Wood and Thames taking their places on either side of it, and Jack at a little distance behind.

Jack had been touched in the morning, but he was now completely prostrated. In the midst of the holy place, which he had formerly profaned, lay the body of his unfortunate mother, and he could not help looking upon her untimely end as the retributive vengeance of Heaven for the crime he had committed. His grief was so audible, that it attracted the notice of some of the bystanders, and Thames was obliged to beg him to control it. In doing this, he chanced to raise his eyes and half fancied he beheld, shaded by a pillar at the extremity of the western aisle, the horrible countenance of the thieftaker.

Before the congregation separated, the clergyman descended from the pulpit; and, followed by the coffin-bearers and mourners, and by Jack at a respectful distance, entered the churchyard.

The carriage, which it has been mentioned drove up to the Six Bells, contained four per-

sons,—Jonathan Wild, his two janizaries, and his porter, Obadiah Lemon. As soon as they had got out, the vehicle was drawn up at the back of a tree near the cage. Having watched the funeral at some distance, Jonathan fancied he could discern the figure of Jack; but not being quite sure, he entered the church. He was daring enough to have seized and carried him off before the whole congregation, but he preferred waiting.

Satisfied with his scrutiny, he returned, despatched Abraham and Obadiah to the north-west corner of the church, placed Quilt behind a buttress near the porch, and sheltered himself behind one of the mighty elms.

The funeral procession had now approached the grave, around which many of the congregation, who were deeply interested by the sad ceremonial, had gathered. A slight rain fell at the time; and a few leaves, caught by the eddies, whirled around. Jonathan mixed with the group, and, sure of his prey, abided his time.

The clergyman, meanwhile, proceeded with

the service, while the coffin was deposited at the brink of the grave.

Just as the attendants were preparing to lower the corpse into the earth, Jack fell on his knees beside the coffin, uttering the wildest exclamations of grief, reproaching himself with the murder of his mother, and invoking the vengeance of heaven on his own head.

A murmur ran through the assemblage, by several of whom Jack was recognised. But such was the violence of his grief, — such the compunction he exhibited, that all but one looked on with an eye of compassion. That person advanced towards him.

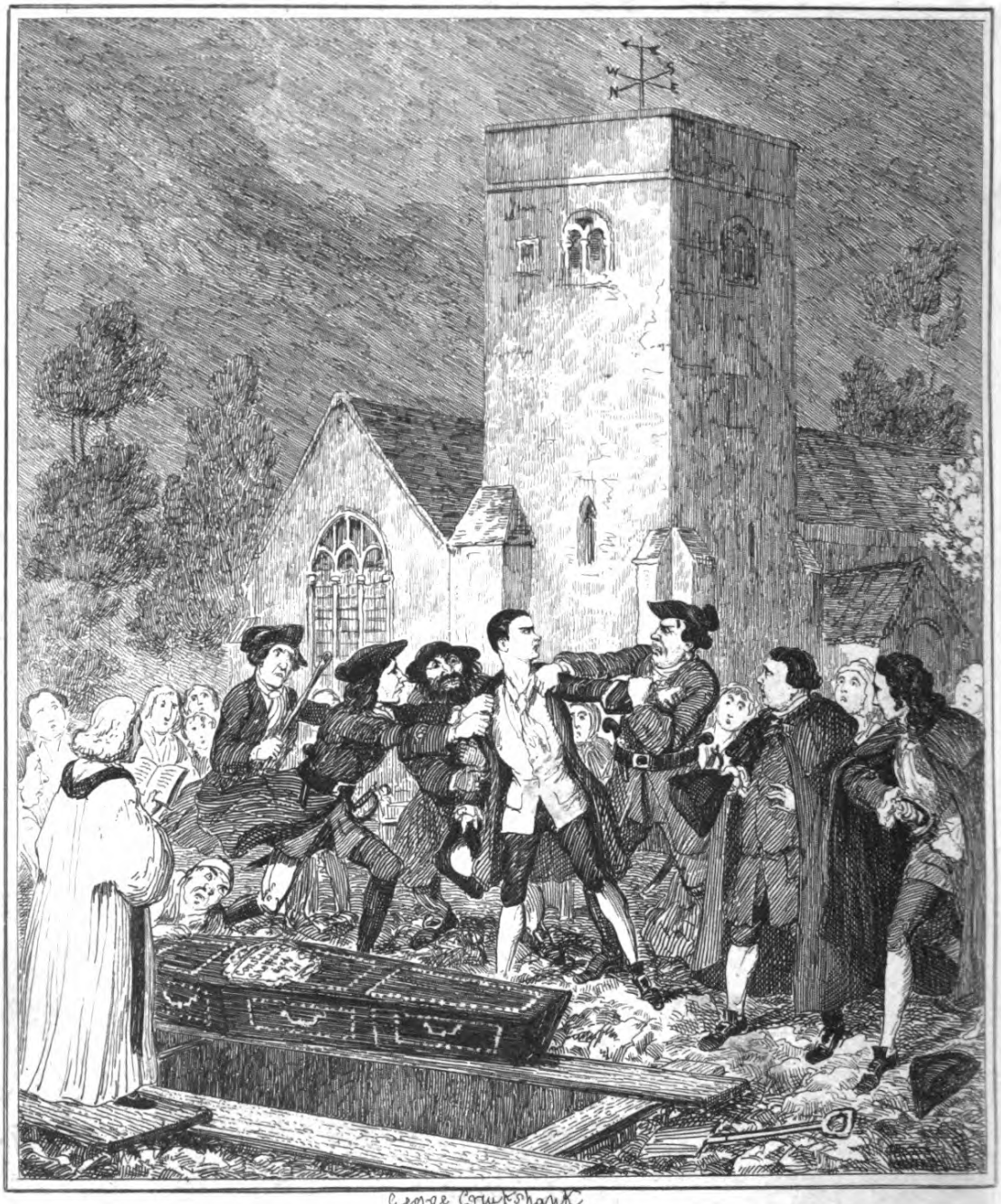
"I have killed her," cried Jack.

"You have," rejoined Jonathan, laying a forcible grasp on his shoulder. "You are my prisoner."

Jack started to his feet; but before he could defend himself, his right arm was grasped by the Jew who had silently approached him.

"Hell-hounds!" he cried; "release me!"

At the same moment, Quilt Arnold rushed forward with such haste, that, stumbling



Jonathan Wild seizing Jack Sheppard at
the Bells in Church Lane in Willesden Church yard.

over William Morgan, he precipitated him into the grave.

"Wretch!" cried Jack. "Are you not content with the crimes you have committed,—but you must carry your villany to this point. Look at the poor victim at your feet."

Jonathan made no reply, but ordered his myrmidons to drag the prisoner along.

Thames, meanwhile, had drawn his sword, and was about to rush upon Jonathan; but he was withheld by Wood.

"Do not shed more blood," cried the carpenter.

Groans and hoots were now raised by the crowd, and there was an evident disposition to rescue. A small brickbat was thrown, which struck Jonathan in the face.

"You shall not pass," cried several of the crowd.

"I knew his poor mother, and for her sake I'll not see this done," cried John Dump.

"Slip on the handcuffs," cried the thief-taker. "And now let's see who'll dare to

oppose me. I am Jonathan Wild. I have arrested him in the King's name."

A deep indignant groan followed.

"Let me see the earth thrown over her," implored Jack; "and take me where you please."

"No," thundered Wild.

"Allow him that small grace," cried Wood.

"No, I tell you," rejoined Jonathan, shouldering his way out of the crowd.

"My mother,—my poor mother!" exclaimed Jack.

But, in spite of his outcries and resistance, he was dragged along by Jonathan and his janizaries.

At the eastern gate of the church-yard stood the carriage with the steps lowered. The mob pursued the thieftaker and his party all the way, and such missiles as could be collected were hurled at them. They even threatened to cut the traces and take off the wheels from the carriage. The Jew got in first. The prisoner was then thrust in by Quilt. Before Jonathan followed he turned to face his assailants.

"Back!" he cried fiercely. "I am an officer in the execution of my duty. And he who opposes me in it shall feel the weight of my hand."

He then sprung into the coach, the door of which was closed by Obadiah, who mounted the box.

"To Newgate," cried Jonathan, putting his head out of the window.

A deep roar followed this order, and several missiles were launched at the vehicle, which was driven off at a furious pace.

And while her son was reconveyed to prison the body of the unfortunate Mrs. Sheppard was committed to the earth.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HOW JACK SHEPPARD WAS BROUGHT BACK TO NEWGATE.

Jack Sheppard's escape from Newgate on the night of the 15th of October was not discovered till the following morning; for although the intelligence was brought by several parties to the Lodge in the course of the night, Austin, who was the officer in attendance, paid no attention to them.

After pursuing the fugitive as before related, Jonathan Wild returned to his own habitation, where he was occupied during the remainder of the night with Quilt Arnold and Obadiah Lemon in removing everything which, in case of a search, might tend to criminate him. Satisfied in this respect, he flung himself into a chair, for his iron frame seldom required the indul-

gence of a bed, and sought an hour's repose before he began the villanies of another day.

He was aroused from his slumber, about six o'clock, by the return of Abraham Mendez, who, not choosing to confess that Jack had eluded his vigilance, contented himself with stating that he had kept watch till day-break, when he had carefully searched the field, and, finding no trace of him, had thought it better to return.

This information was received by Jonathan with a lowering brow. He comforted himself, however, with the certainty which he felt of capturing his prey on the Sunday. His breakfast despatched, which he ate with a wolfish appetite, he walked over to Newgate, chuckling as he went at the consternation which his appearance would create amongst the turnkeys.

Entering the Lodge, the first person he beheld was Austin, who was only just up, and whose toilette appeared scarcely completed. A glance satisfied Jonathan that the turnkey was not aware of the prisoner's escape; and he resolved

not to destroy what he considered a good jest, by a premature disclosure of it.

"You are out betimes this morning, Mr. Wild," observed Austin, as he put on his coat, and adjusted his minor bob. "Something fresh on hand, I suppose?"

"I 'm come to inquire after Jack Sheppard," returned Jonathan.

"Don't alarm yourself about him, sir," replied Austin. "He 's safe enough, I assure you."

"I should like to satisfy myself on that score," rejoined Wild, drily.

"So you shall, sir," replied Austin, who at this moment recollected, with some uneasiness, the applications at the lodge-door during the night. "I hope you don't imagine anything has gone wrong, sir."

"It matters not what I think," replied Wild. "Come with me to the Castle."

"Instantly, sir," replied Austin; "instantly. Here, Caliban, attend to the door, and keep the wicket locked till I return. D'ye hear. Now, sir."

Taking the keys, he led the way, followed

by Jonathan, who chuckled internally at the shock that awaited the poor fellow.

The door was opened, and Austin entered the cell, when he absolutely recoiled before the spectacle he beheld, and could scarcely have looked more alarmed if the prison had tumbled about his ears. Petrified and speechless, he turned an imploring look at Wild, who was himself filled with astonishment at the pile of rubbish lying before him.

"'Sdeath!" cried Jonathan, staring at the breach in the wall. "Some one *must* have assisted him. Unless he has dealings with the devil, he could never have done this alone."

"I firmly believe he *has* dealings with the devil," replied Austin, trembling from head to foot. "But, perhaps, he has not got beyond the room above. It 's as strong, if not stronger, than this. I 'll see."

So saying, he scrambled over the rubbish, and got into the chimney. But though the breach was large enough to admit him below, he could not squeeze his bulky person through the aperture into the Red Room.

"I believe he's gone," he said, returning to Jonathan. "The door's open, and the room empty."

"You believe—you *know* it," replied Jonathan, fixing one of his sternest and most searching glances upon him. "Nothing you can say to the contrary will convince me that you have not been accessory to his flight."

"I, sir!—I swear—"

"Tush!" interrupted Jonathan, harshly. "I shall state my suspicions to the governor. Come down with me to the Lodge directly. All further examinations must be conducted in the presence of proper witnesses."

With these words, he strode out of the room, darted down the stone stairs, and, on his arrival at the Lodge, seized the rope of the great bell communicating with the interior of the prison, which he rang violently. As this was never done, except in some case of great emergency, the application was instantly answered by all the other turnkeys, by Marvel, the four partners, and Mrs. Spurling. Nothing could exceed the dismay of these personages when

they learnt why they had been summoned. All seemed infected with Austin's terrors except Mrs. Spurling, who did not dare to exhibit her satisfaction otherwise than by privately pinching the arm of her expected husband.

Headed by Jonathan, all the turnkeys then repaired to the upper part of the gaol, and, approaching the Red Room by a circuitous route, several doors were unlocked, and they came upon the scene of Jack's exploits. Stopping before each door, they took up the plates of the locks, examined the ponderous bolts, and were struck with the utmost astonishment at what they beheld.

Arriving at the chapel, their wonder increased. All the gaolers declared it utterly impossible he could have accomplished his astonishing task unaided; but who had lent him assistance was a question they were unable to answer. Proceeding to the entry to the Lower Leads, they came to the two strong doors, and their surprise was so great at Jack's marvellous performance, that they could scarcely

persuade themselves that human ingenuity could have accomplished it.

"Here 's a door," remarked Ireton, when he got to that nearest the leads, "which I could have sworn would have resisted anything. I shall have no faith in future in bolts and bars."

Mounting the roof of the prison, they traced the fugitive's course to the further extremity of the building, where they found his blanket attached to the spike, proving that he escaped in that direction.

After severely examining Austin, and finding it proved, on the testimony of his fellow-gaolers, that he could not have aided Jack in his flight, Jonathan retracted his harsh sentence, and even went so far as to say that he would act as mediator between him and the governor.

This was some satisfaction to the poor fellow, who was dreadfully frightened, as indeed he might well be, it being the opinion of the gaolers and others who afterwards examined the place, that Jack had accomplished, single-handed, in a few hours, and, as far as it could

be ascertained, with imperfect implements, what it would have taken half a dozen men several days, provided with proper tools, to effect. In their opinion a hundred pounds would not repair the damage done to the prison.

As soon as Jack's escape became known, thousands of persons flocked to Newgate to behold his workmanship; and the gaolers reaped an abundant harvest from their curiosity.

Jonathan, meanwhile, maintained profound secrecy as to his hopes of capturing the fugitive; and when Jack was brought back to Newgate on the Sunday evening, his arrival was wholly unexpected.

At a little after five, on that day, four horses dashed round the corner of the Old Bailey, and drew up before the door of the Lodge. Hearing the stoppage, Austin rushed out, and could scarcely believe his eyes when he beheld Jack Sheppard in the custody of Quilt Arnold and Abraham Mendez.

Jack's recapture was speedily made known to all the officers of the gaol, and the Lodge

was instantly crowded. The delight of the turnkeys was beyond all bounds; but poor Mrs. Spurling was in a state of distraction and began to abuse Jonathan so violently that her future husband was obliged to lay forcible hands upon her and drag her away.

By Wild's command the prisoner was taken to the Condemned Hold, whither he was followed by the whole posse of officers and by the partners; two of whom carried large hammers and two the fetters. There was only one prisoner in the ward. He was chained to the ground, but started up at their approach. It was Blueskin. When he beheld Jack he uttered a deep groan.

"Captain," he cried, in a voice of the bitterest anguish, "have these dogs again hunted you down? If you hadn't been so unlucky, I should have been with you before to-morrow night."

Jack made no answer, nor did he even cast his eyes upon his follower. But Jonathan, fixing a terrible look upon him, cried,

"Ha! say you so? You must be looked

to. My lads," he continued, addressing the partners; "when you've finished this job give that fellow a fresh set of darbies. I suspect he has been at work upon those he has on."

"The link of the chain next the staple is sawn through," said Ireton, stooping to examine Blueskin's fetters.

"Search him and iron him afresh;" commanded Jonathan. "But first let us secure Sheppard. We'll then remove them both to the Middle Stone Hold, where a watch shall be kept over them night and day till they're taken to Tyburn. As they're so fond of each other's society they shan't part company even on that occasion, but shall swing from the same tree."

"You'll never live to see that day," cried Blueskin, fixing a menacing look upon him.

"What weight are these irons?" asked Jonathan, coolly addressing one of the partners.

"More than three hundred weight, sir," replied the man. "They're the heaviest set we have,—and were forged expressly for Captain Sheppard."

"They 're not half heavy enough," replied Wild. "Let him be handcuffed, and doubly ironed on both legs; and when we get him into the Stone Ward, he shall not only be chained down to the ground, but shall have two additional fetters running through the main links, fastened on each side of him. We 'll see whether he 'll get rid of his new bonds?" he added with a brutal laugh, which was echoed by the bystanders.

"Mark me," said Jack, sternly; "I have twice broken out of this prison in spite of all your precautions. And were you to load me with thrice the weight of iron you have ordered you should not prevent my escaping a third time."

"That 's right, captain," cried Blueskin. "We 'll give them the slip yet, and hang that butcherly thieftaker upon his own gibbet."

"Be silent dog," cried Jonathan. And with his clenched hand he struck him a violent blow in the face.

For the first time, perhaps, in his life, he repented of his brutality. The blow was

scarcely dealt, when, with a bound like that of a tiger, Blueskin sprang upon him. The chain, which had been partially cut through, snapped near the staple. Before any assistance could be rendered by the gaolers, who stood astounded, Blueskin had got Wild in his clutches. His strength has been described as prodigious; but now, heightened by his desire for vengeance, it was irresistible. Jonathan, though a very powerful man, was like an infant in his gripe. Catching hold of his chin, he bent back the neck, while with his left hand he pulled out a clasp knife, which he opened with his teeth, and grasping Wild's head with his arm, notwithstanding his resistance, cut deeply into his throat. The folds of a thick muslin neckcloth in some degree protected him, but the gash was desperate. Blueskin drew the knife across his throat a second time, widening and deepening the wound; and wrenching back the head to get it into a more favourable position, would infallibly have severed it from the trunk, if the officers, who by this time had recovered from

their terror, had not thrown themselves upon him, and withheld him.

"Now 's your time," cried Blueskin, struggling desperately with his assailants and inflicting severe cuts with his knife. "Fly, captain — fly!"

Aroused to a sense of the possibility of escape, Jack, who had viewed the deadly assault with savage satisfaction, burst from his captors and made for the door. Blueskin fought his way towards it, and exerting all his strength, cutting right and left as he proceeded, reached it at the same time. Jack, in all probability, would have escaped, if Langley, who was left in the Lodge, had not been alarmed at the noise and rushed thither. Seeing Jack at liberty, he instantly seized him, and a struggle commenced.

At this moment, Blueskin came up, and kept off the officers with his knife. He used his utmost efforts to liberate Jack from Langley, but closely pressed on all sides, he was not able to render any effectual assistance.

"Fly!" cried Jack; "escape if you can; don't mind me."

Casting one look of anguish at his leader, Blueskin then darted down the passage.

The only persons in the lodge were Mrs. Spurling and Marvel. Hearing the noise of the scuffle, the tapstress, fancying it was Jack making an effort to escape, in spite of the remonstrances of the executioner, threw open the wicket. Blueskin therefore had nothing to stop him. Dashing through the open door, he crossed the Old Bailey, plunged into a narrow court on the opposite side of the way, and was out of sight in a minute, baffling all pursuit.

On their return, the gaolers raised up Jonathan, who was weltering in his blood, and who appeared to be dying. Efforts were made to staunch his wounds and surgical assistance sent for.

"Has he escaped?" asked the thieftaker, faintly.

"Blueskin," said Ireton.

"No — Sheppard?" rejoined Wild.

"No, no, sir," replied Ireton. "He's here."

"That's right," replied Wild, with a ghastly smile. "Remove him to the Middle Stone

Hold, — watch over him night and day, do you mind?"

"I do, sir."

"Irons — heavy irons — night and day."

"Depend upon it, sir."

"Go with him to Tyburn, — never lose sight of him till the noose is tied. Where's Marvel?"

"Here, sir," replied the executioner.

"A hundred guineas if you hang Jack Sheppard. I have it about me. Take it, if I die."

"Never fear, sir," replied Marvel.

"Oh! that I could live to see it," gasped Jonathan. And with a hideous expression of pain, he fainted.

"He's dead," exclaimed Austin.

"I am content," said Jack. "My mother is avenged. Take me to the Stone Room. Blueskin, you are a true friend."

The body of Jonathan was then conveyed to his own habitation, while Jack was taken to the Middle Stone Room, and ironed in the manner Wild had directed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WHAT HAPPENED AT DOLLIS HILL.

"At length this tragedy is at an end," said Mr. Wood, as, having seen the earth thrown over the remains of the unfortunate Mrs. Sheppard, he turned to quit the churchyard. "Let us hope that, like her who 'loved much,' her sins are forgiven her."

Without another word, and accompanied by Thames, he then took his way to Dollis Hill in a state of the deepest depression. Thames did not attempt to offer him any consolation, for he was almost as much dejected. The weather harmonized with their feelings. It rained slightly, and a thick mist gathered in the air, and obscured the beautiful prospect.

On his arrival at Dollis Hill, Mr. Wood

was so much exhausted that he was obliged to retire to his own room, where he continued for some hours overpowered by grief. The two lovers sat together, and their sole discourse turned upon Jack and his ill-fated mother.

As the night advanced, Mr. Wood again made his appearance in a more composed frame of mind, and, at his daughter's earnest solicitation, was induced to partake of some refreshment. An hour was then passed in conversation as to the possibility of rendering any assistance to Jack; in deploring his unhappy destiny; and in the consideration of the course to be pursued in reference to Jonathan Wild.

While they were thus occupied, a maid-servant entered the room, and stated that a person was without who had a packet for Captain Darrell, which must be delivered into his own hands. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of Wood and Winifred, Thames instantly followed the domestic, and found a man, with his face muffled up, at the door, as she had described. Somewhat alarmed at his appearance, Thames laid his hand upon his sword.

"Fear nothing, sir," said the man, in a voice which Thames instantly recognised as that of Blueskin. "I am come to render you a service. There are the packets which my captain hazarded his life to procure for you, and which he said would establish your right to the estates of the Trenchard family. There are also the letters which were scattered about Wild's room after the murder of Sir Rowland. And there," he added, placing in his hands a heavy bag of money, and a pocket-book, "is a sum little short of fifteen thousand pounds."

"How have you procured these things?" asked Thames, in the utmost astonishment.

"I carried them off on the fatal night when we got into Wild's house, and you were struck down," replied Blueskin. "They have ever since been deposited in a place of safety. You have nothing more to fear from Wild."

"How so?" asked Thames.

"I have saved the executioner a labour, by cutting his throat," replied Blueskin. "And, may I be cursed if I ever did anything in

my whole life which gave me so much satisfaction."

"Almighty God! is this possible?" exclaimed Thames.

"You will find it true," replied Blueskin. "All I regret is, that I failed in liberating the captain. If he had got off, they might have hanged me, and welcome."

"What can be done for him?" cried Thames.

"That's not an easy question to answer," rejoined Blueskin. "But I shall watch night and day about Newgate, in the hope of getting him out. He wouldn't require my aid, but before I stopped Jonathan's mouth, he had ordered him to be doubly-ironed, and constantly watched. And, though the villain can't see his orders executed, I've no doubt some one else will."

"Poor Jack!" exclaimed Thames. "I would sacrifice all my fortune — all my hopes — to liberate him."

"If you're in earnest," rejoined Blueskin, "give me that bag of gold. It contains a

thousand pounds; and, if all other schemes fail, I 'll engage to free him on the way to Tyburn."

"May I trust you?" hesitated Thames.

"Why did I not keep the money when I had it?" returned Blueskin, angrily. "Not a farthing of it shall be expended except in the captain's service."

"Take it," replied Thames.

"You have saved his life," replied Blueskin. "And now, mark me. You owe what I have done for you, to him, not to me. Had I not known that you and your affianced bride are dearer to him than life, I should have used this money to secure my own safety. Take it, and take the estates, in Captain Sheppard's name. Promise me one thing before I leave you."

"What is it?" asked Thames.

"If the captain *is* taken to Tyburn, be near the place of execution—at the end of the Edgeware Road."

"I will."

"In case of need you will lend a helping hand?"

"Yes—yes."

"Swear it!"

"I do."

"Enough!" rejoined Blueskin. And he departed, just as Wood, who had become alarmed by Thames's long absence, made his appearance with a blunderbuss in his hand.

Hastily acquainting him with the treasures he had unexpectedly obtained, Thames returned to the room to apprize Winifred of his good fortune. The packets were hastily broken open; and, while Wood was absorbed in the perusal of the despatch addressed to him by Sir Rowland, Thames sought out, and found the letter which he had been prevented from finishing on the fatal night at Jonathan Wild's. As soon as he had read it, he let it fall from his grasp.

Winifred instantly picked it up.

"You are no longer Thames Darrell," she said, casting her eyes rapidly over it; "but the Marquis de Chatillon."

"My father was of the blood-royal of France," exclaimed Thames.

"Eh-day! what's this?" cried Wood,

looking up from beneath his spectacles. "Who — who is the Marquis de Chatillon?"

"Your adopted son, Thames Darrell," answered Winifred.

"And the Marchioness is your daughter," added Thames.

"Oh, Lord!" ejaculated Wood. "My head fairly turns round. So many distresses — so many joys coming at the same time are too much for me. Read that letter, Thames — my lord marquis, I mean. Read it, and you'll find that your unfortunate uncle, Sir Rowland, surrenders to you all the estates in Lancashire. You've nothing to do but to take possession."

"What a strange history is mine!" said Thames. "Kidnapped, and sent to France by one uncle, it was my lot to fall into the hands of another,—my father's own brother, the Marshal Gaucher de Chatillon; to whom, and to the Cardinal Dubois, I owed all my good fortune."

"The ways of Providence are inscrutable," observed Wood.

"When in France, I heard from the Marshal that his brother had perished in London

on the night of the Great Storm. It was supposed he was drowned in crossing the river, as his body had never been found. Little did I imagine at the time that it was my own father to whom he referred."

"I think I remember reading something about your father in the papers," observed Wood. "Wasn't he in some way connected with the Jacobite plots?"

"He was," replied Thames. "He had been many years in this country before his assassination took place. In this letter, which is addressed to my ill-fated mother, he speaks of his friendship for Sir Rowland, whom it seems he had known abroad; but entreats her to keep the marriage secret for a time, for reasons which are not fully developed."

"And so Sir Rowland murdered his friend," remarked Wood. "Crime upon crime."

"Unconsciously, perhaps," replied Thames. "But, be it as it may, he is now beyond the reach of earthly punishment."

"But Wild still lives," cried Wood.

"He, also, has paid the penalty of his

offences," returned Thames. "He has fallen by the hand of Blueskin, who brought me these packets."

"Thank God for that!" cried Wood, heartily. "I could almost forgive the wretch the injury he did me in depriving me of my poor dear wife — No, not quite *that*," he added, a little confused.

"And now," said Thames, (for we must still preserve the name,) "you will no longer defer my happiness."

"Hold!" interposed Winifred, gravely. "I release you from your promise. A carpenter's daughter is no fit match for a peer of France."

"If my dignity must be purchased by the loss of you, I renounce it," cried Thames. "You will not make it valueless in my eyes," he added, catching her in his arms, and pressing her to his breast.

"Be it as you please," replied Winifred. "My lips would belie my heart were I to refuse you."

"And now, father, your blessing — your consent?" cried Thames.

"You have both," replied Wood, fervently. "I am too much honoured — too happy in the union. Oh! that I should live to be father-in-law to a peer of France! What would my poor wife say to it, if she could come to life again? Oh, Thames! — my lord marquis, I mean — you have made me the happiest — the proudest of mankind."

Not many days after this event, on a bright October morning, the bells rang a merry peal from the old grey tower of Willesden church. All the village was assembled in the church-yard. Young and old were dressed in their gayest apparel; and it was evident from the smiles that lighted up every countenance, from the roguish looks of the younger swains, and the demure expression of several pretty rustic maidens, that a ceremony, which never fails to interest all classes,—a wedding,—was about to take place.

At the gate opening upon the road leading to Dollis Hill were stationed William Morgan and John Dump. Presently, two carriages dashed down the hill, and drew up before it.

From the first of these alighted Thames, or, as he must now be styled, the Marquis de Chatillon. From the second descended Mr. Wood—and after him came his daughter.

The sun never shone upon a lovelier couple than now approached the altar. The church was crowded to excess by the numbers eager to witness the ceremony; and as soon as it was over the wedded pair were followed to the carriage, and the loudest benedictions uttered for their happiness.

In spite of the tumultuous joy which agitated him, the bridegroom could not prevent the intrusion of some saddening thoughts, as he reflected upon the melancholy scene which he had so recently witnessed in the same place.

The youthful couple had been seated in the carriage a few minutes when they were joined by Mr. Wood, who had merely absented himself to see that a public breakfast, which he had ordered at the Six Bells for all who chose to partake of it, was in readiness. He likewise gave directions that in the after part of the day a whole bullock should be roasted on

the green and distributed, together with a barrel of the strongest ale.

In the evening, a band of village musicians, accompanied by most of the young inhabitants of Willesden, strolled out to Dollis Hill, where they formed a rustic concert under the great elm before the door. Here they were regaled with another plentiful meal by the hospitable carpenter, who personally superintended the repast.

These festivities, however, were not witnessed by the newly-married pair, who had departed immediately after the ceremony for Manchester.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOW JACK SHEPPARD WAS TAKEN TO WESTMINSTER HALL.

Loaded with the heaviest fetters, and constantly watched by two of the gaolers' assistants, who neither quitted him for a single moment, nor suffered any visiter to approach him, Jack Sheppard found all attempts to escape impracticable.

He was confined in the Middle Stone Ward, a spacious apartment, with good light and air, situated over the gateway on the western side, and allotted to him, not for his own convenience, but for that of the keepers, who, if he had been placed in a gloomier or more incommodious dungeon, would have necessarily had to share it with him.

Through this, his last trial, Jack's spirits never deserted him. He seemed resigned but

cheerful, and held frequent and serious discourses with the ordinary, who felt satisfied of his sincere penitence. The only circumstance which served to awaken a darker feeling in his breast was, that his implacable foe Jonathan Wild had survived the wound inflicted by Blueskin, and was slowly recovering.

As soon as he could be moved with safety, Jonathan had himself transported to Newgate, where he was carried into the Middle Ward, that he might feast his eyes upon his victim. Having seen every precaution taken to ensure his safe custody, he departed, muttering to himself, "I shall yet live to see him hanged — I shall live to see him hanged."

Animated by his insatiate desire of vengeance, he seemed to gain strength daily, — so much so, that within a fortnight after receiving his wound he was able to stir abroad.

On Thursday, the 12th of November, after having endured nearly a month's imprisonment, Jack Sheppard was conveyed from Newgate to Westminster Hall. He was placed in a coach, handcuffed, and heavily fettered, and

guarded by a vast posse of officers to Temple Bar, where a fresh relay of constables escorted him to Westminster.

By this time, Jack's reputation had risen to such a height with the populace, — his exploits having become the universal theme of discourse, that the streets were almost impassable for the crowds collected to obtain a view of him. The vast area in front of Westminster Hall was thronged with people, and it was only by a vigorous application of their staves that the constables could force a passage for the vehicle. At length, however, the prisoner was got out, when such was the rush of the multitude that several persons were trampled down, and received severe injuries.

Arrived in the Hall, the prisoner's handcuffs were removed, and he was taken before the Court of King's Bench. The record of his conviction at the Old Bailey sessions was then read; and as no objection was offered to it, the Attorney-General moved that his execution might take place on Monday next. Upon this, Jack earnestly and

eloquently addressed himself to the bench, and besought that a petition which he had prepared to be laid before the King might be read. This request, however, was refused; and he was told that the only way in which he could entitle himself to his Majesty's clemency would be by discovering who had abetted him in his last escape; the strongest suspicions being entertained that he had not effected it alone.

Sheppard replied by a solemn assertion, "that he had received no assistance except from Heaven."—An answer for which he was immediately reprimanded by the court. It having been stated that it was wholly impossible he could have removed his irons in the way he represented, he offered, if his handcuffs were replaced, to take them off in the presence of the court. The proposal, however, was not acceded to; and the Chief Justice Powis, after enumerating his various offences and commenting upon their heinousness, awarded sentence of death against him for the following Monday.

As Jack was removed, he noticed Jonathan Wild at a little distance from him, eyeing him with a look of the most savage satisfaction. The thieftaker's throat was bound up with thick folds of linen, and his face had a ghastly and cadaverous look, which communicated an undefinable and horrible expression to his glances.

Meanwhile, the mob outside had prodigiously increased, and had begun to exhibit some disposition to riot. The coach in which the prisoner had been conveyed was already broken to pieces, and the driver was glad to escape with life. Terrific shouts were raised by the rabble, who threatened to tear Wild in pieces if he showed himself.

Amid this tumult, several men armed with tremendous bludgeons, with their faces besmeared with grease and soot, and otherwise disguised, were observed to be urging the populace to attempt a rescue. They were headed by an athletic-looking, swarthy-featured man, who was armed with a cutlass, which he waved over his head to cheer on his companions.

These desperadoes had been the most active in demolishing the coach, and now, being supported by the rabble, they audaciously approached the very portals of the ancient Hall. The shouts, yells, and groans which they uttered, and which were echoed by the concourse in the rear, were perfectly frightful.

Jonathan, who with the other constables had reconnoitred this band, and recognised in its ringleader, Blueskin, commanded the constables to follow him, and made a sally for the purpose of seizing him. Enfeebled by his wound, Wild had lost much of his strength, though nothing of his ferocity and energy,—and fiercely assailing Blueskin, he made a desperate but unsuccessful attempt to apprehend him.

He was, however, instantly beaten back; and the fury of the mob was so great that it was with difficulty he could effect a retreat. The whole force of the constables, gaolers and others was required to keep the crowd out of the Hall. The doors were closed and barricaded, and the mob threatened to burst

them open if Jack was not delivered to them.

Things now began to wear so serious an aspect that a messenger was secretly despatched to the Savoy for troops, and in half an hour a regiment of the guards arrived, who by dint of great exertion succeeded in partially dispersing the tumultuous assemblage. Another coach was then procured, in which the prisoner was placed.

Jack's appearance was hailed with the loudest cheers, but when Jonathan followed and took a place beside him in the vehicle, determined, he said, never to lose sight of him, the abhorrence of the multitude was expressed by execrations, hoots, and yells of the most terrific kind. So dreadful were these shouts as to produce an effect upon the hardened feelings of Jonathan, who shrank out of sight.

It was well for him that he had taken his place by Sheppard, as regard for the latter alone prevented the deadliest missiles being hurled at him. As it was, the mob went on

alternately hooting and huzzaing as the names of Wild and Sheppard were pronounced, while some individuals, bolder than the rest, thrust their faces into the coach-window, and assured Jack that he should never be taken to Tyburn.

"We 'll see that, you yelping hounds!" rejoined Jonathan, glaring fiercely at them.

In this way, Jack was brought back to Newgate, and again chained down in the Middle Ward.

It was late before Jonathan ventured to his own house, where he remained up all night, and kept his janizaries and other assistants well armed.

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW JONATHAN WILD'S HOUSE WAS BURNT DOWN.

THE day appointed for the execution was now close at hand, and the prisoner, who seemed to have abandoned all hopes of escape, turned his thoughts entirely from worldly considerations.

On Sunday, he was conveyed to the chapel, through which he had passed on the occasion of his great escape, and once more took his seat in the Condemned Pew. The Rev. Mr. Purney, the ordinary, who had latterly conceived a great regard for Jack, addressed him in a discourse, which, while it tended to keep alive his feelings of penitence, was calculated to afford him much consolation. The chapel was crowded to excess. But here,—even here, the

demon was suffered to intrude, and Jack's thoughts were distracted by Jonathan Wild, who stood at a little distance from him, and kept his bloodthirsty eyes fixed on him during the whole of the service.

On that night, an extraordinary event occurred, which convinced the authorities that every precaution must be taken in conducting Jack to Tyburn, — a fact of which they had been previously made aware, though scarcely to the same extent, by the riotous proceedings near Westminster Hall. About nine o'clock, an immense mob collected before the Lodge at Newgate. It was quite dark; but as some of the assemblage carried links, it was soon ascertained to be headed by the same party who had mainly incited the former disturbance. Amongst the ringleaders was Blueskin, whose swarthy features and athletic figure were easily distinguished. Another was Baptist Kettleby, and a third, in a Dutch dress, was recognized by his grizzled beard as the skipper, Van Galgebrok.

Before an hour had elapsed, the concourse

was fearfully increased. The area in front of the gaol was completely filled. Attempts were made upon the door of the Lodge; but it was too strong to be forced. A cry was then raised by the leaders to attack Wild's house, and the fury of the mob was instantly directed to that quarter. Wrenched from their holds, the iron palisades in front of the thief-taker's dwelling were used as weapons to burst open the door.

While this was passing, Jonathan opened one of the upper windows, and fired several shots upon the assailants. But though he made Blueskin and Kettleby his chief marks, he missed both. The sight of the thieftaker increased the fury of the mob to a fearful degree. Terrific yells rent the air. The heavy weapons thundered against the door; and it speedily yielded to their efforts.

"Come on, my lads!" vociferated Blueskin, "we 'll unkennel the old fox."

As he spoke, several shots were fired from the upper part of the house, and two men fell mortally wounded. But this only incensed the assailing party the more. With a drawn cutlass

in one hand and a cocked pistol in the other, Blueskin rushed up stairs. The landing was defended by Quilt Arnold and the Jew. The former was shot by Blueskin through the head, and his body fell over the banisters. The Jew, who was paralysed by his companion's fate, offered no resistance, and was instantly seized.

"Where is your accursed master?" demanded Blueskin, holding the sword to his throat.

The Jew did not speak, but pointed to the audience-chamber. Committing him to the custody of the others, Blueskin, followed by a numerous band, darted in that direction. The door was locked; but, with the bars of iron, it was speedily burst open. Several of the assailants carried links, so that the room was a blaze of light. Jonathan, however, was nowhere to be seen.

Rushing towards the entrance of the well-hole, Blueskin touched the secret spring. He was not there. Opening the trap-door, he then descended to the vaults — searched each cell, and every nook and corner separately. Wild had escaped.

Robbed of their prey, the fury of the mob became ungovernable. At length, at the end of a passage, next to the cell where Mrs. Sheppard had been confined, Blueskin discovered a trap-door which he had not previously noticed. It was instantly burst open, when the horrible stench that issued from it convinced them that it must be a receptacle for the murdered victims of the thief-taker.

Holding a link into the place, which had the appearance of a deep pit, Blueskin noticed a body richly dressed. He dragged it out, and perceiving, in spite of the decayed frame, that it was the body of Sir Rowland Trenchard, commanded his attendants to convey it up stairs—an order which was promptly obeyed.

Returning to the audience-chamber, Blueskin had the Jew brought before him. The body of Sir Rowland was then laid on the large table. Opposite to it was placed the Jew. Seeing from the threatening looks of his captors, that they were about to wreak their vengeance upon him, the miserable wretch

besought mercy in abject terms, and charged his master with the most atrocious crimes. His relation of the murder of Sir Rowland petrified even his fierce auditors.

One of the cases in Jonathan's museum was now burst open, and a rope taken from it. In spite of his shrieks, the miserable Jew was then dragged into the well-hole, and the rope being tied round his neck, he was launched from the bridge.

The vengeance of the assailants did not stop here. They broke open the entrance into Jonathan's store-room — plundered it of everything valuable—ransacked every closet, drawer, and secret hiding-place, and stripped them of their contents. Large hoards of money were discovered, gold and silver plate, cases of watches, and various precious articles. Nothing, in short, portable or valuable was left. Old implements of housebreaking were discovered; and the thieftaker's most hidden depositories were laid bare.

The work of plunder over, that of destruction commenced. Straw and other combustibles

being collected, were placed in the middle of the audience-chamber. On these were thrown all the horrible contents of Jonathan's museum, together with the body of Sir Rowland Trenchard. The whole was then fired, and in a few minutes the room was in a blaze. Not content with this, the assailants set fire to the house in half-a-dozen other places; and the progress of the flames was rapid and destructive.

Meanwhile, the object of all this fearful disturbance had made his escape to Newgate, from the roof of which he witnessed the destruction of his premises. He saw the flames burst from the windows, and perhaps in that maddening spectacle suffered torture equivalent to some of the crimes he had committed.

While he was thus standing, the flames of his house, which made the whole street as light as day, and ruddily illumined the faces of the mob below, betrayed him to them, and he was speedily driven from his position by a shower of stones and other missiles.

The mob now directed their attention to

Newgate; and, from their threats, appeared determined to fire it. Ladders, paviours' rams, sledge-hammers, and other destructive implements were procured, and, in all probability, their purpose would have been effected, but for the opportune arrival of a detachment of the guards, who dispersed them, not without some loss of life.

Several prisoners were taken, but the ringleaders escaped. Engines were brought to play upon Wild's premises, and upon the adjoining houses. The latter were saved; but of the former nothing but the blackened stone walls were found standing on the morrow.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PROCESSION TO TYBURN.

The noise of this disturbance did not fail to reach the interior of the prison. In fact, the reflection of the flames lighted up the ward in which Jack Sheppard was confined.

The night before his execution was therefore passed in a most anxious state of mind; nor was his uneasiness allayed by the appearance of Jonathan Wild, who, after he had been driven from the roof of the gaol, repaired to the Middle Stone Ward in a fit of ungovernable passion, to vent his rage upon the prisoner, whom he looked upon as the cause of the present calamity. Such was his fury, that if he had not been restrained by the presence of the two turnkeys, he might perhaps have an-

ticipated the course of justice, by laying violent hands upon his victim.

After venting his wrath in the wildest manner, and uttering the most dreadful execrations, Jonathan retired to another part of the prison, where he passed the night in consultation with the governor, as to the best means of conveying the prisoner securely to Tyburn. Mr. Pitt endeavoured to dissuade him from attending in person, representing the great risk he would incur from the mob, which was certain to be assembled. But Jonathan was not to be deterred.

"I have sworn to see him hanged," he said, "and nothing shall keep me away — nothing, by ——."

By Wild's advice, the usual constabulary force was greatly augmented. Messengers were despatched to all the constables and head-boroughs to be in attendance, — to the sheriffs to have an extraordinary number of their officers in attendance,—and to the Savoy, to obtain the escort of a troop of grenadier-guards. In short, more preparations were made than if a state criminal was about to be executed.

The morning of Monday the 16th of November 1724 at length dawned. It was a dull, foggy day, and the atmosphere was so thick and heavy, that, at eight o'clock, the curious who arrived near the prison could scarcely discern the tower of St. Sepulchre's church.

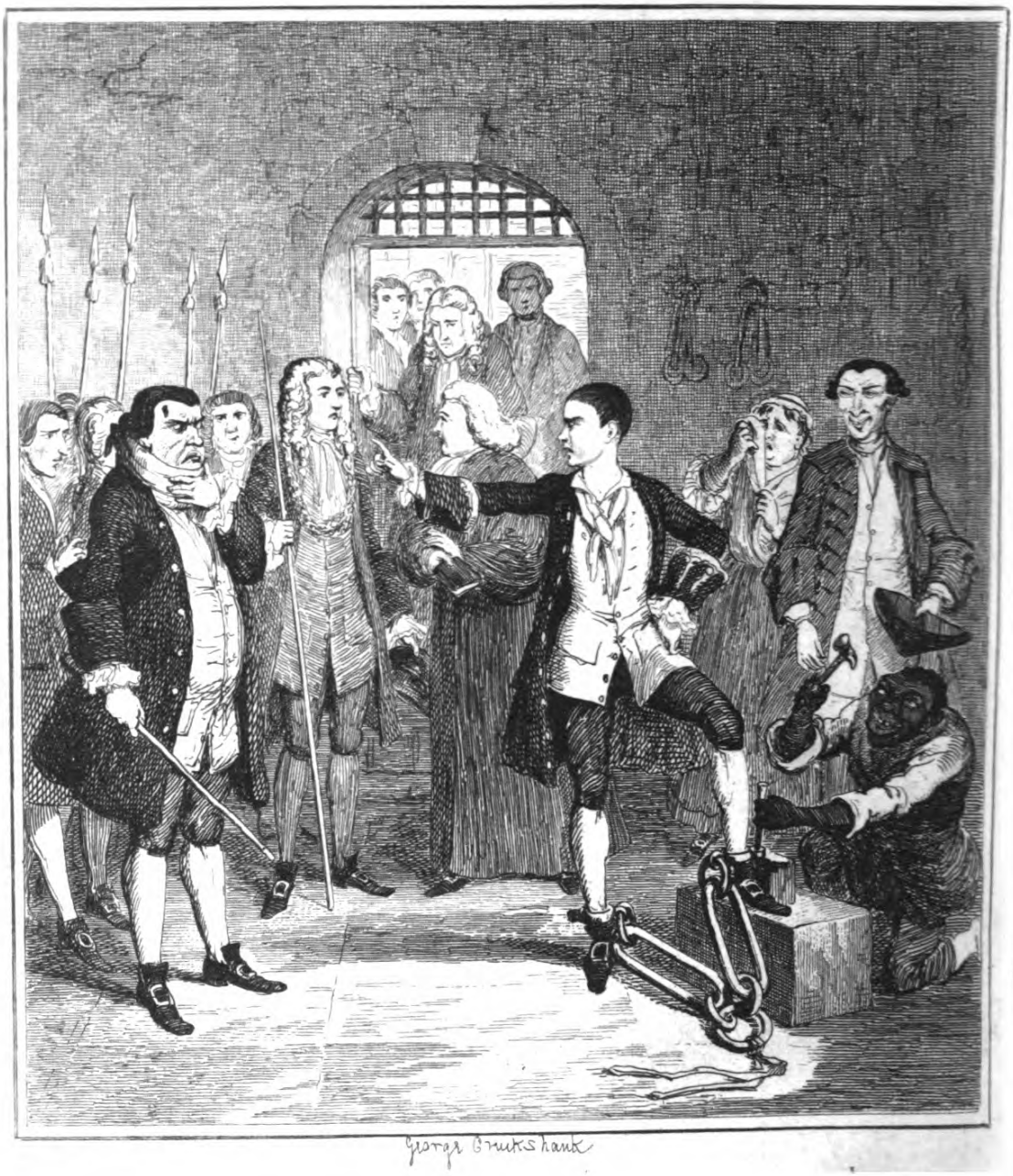
By and by the tramp of horses' feet was heard slowly ascending Snow Hill, and presently a troop of grenadier guards rode into the area facing Newgate. These were presently joined by a regiment of foot. A large body of the constables of Westminster next made their appearance, the chief of whom entered the Lodge, where they were speedily joined by the civic authorities. At nine o'clock, the sheriffs arrived, followed by their officers and javelin-men.

Meantime, the Stone Hall was crowded by all the inmates of the gaol, debtors, felons, turnkeys, and officers who could obtain permission to witness the ceremony of the prisoner's irons being struck off. Caliban, who, through the interest of Mr. Ireton, was appointed to the office, stood with a hammer in one hand, and a punch in the other, near the great stone block,

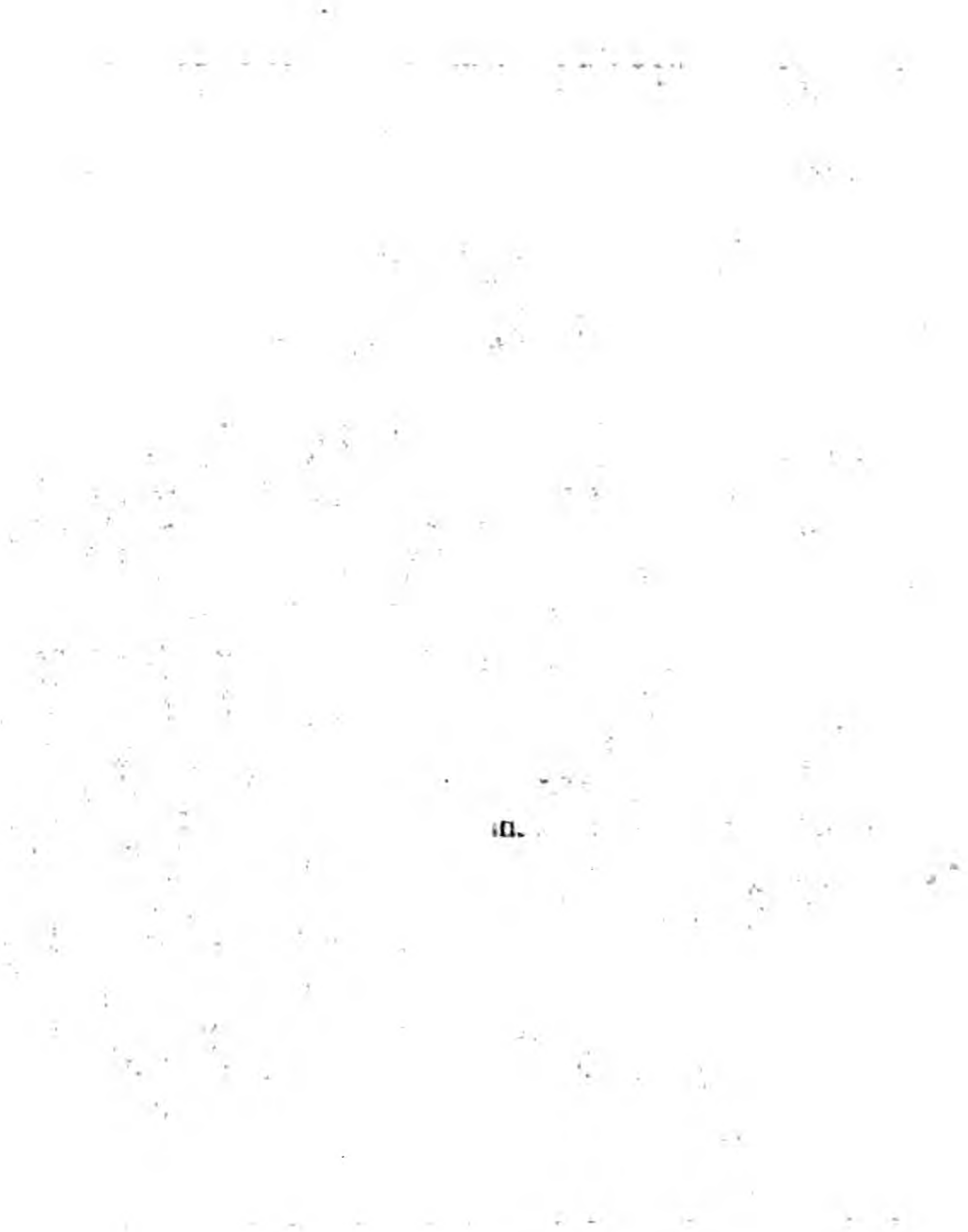
ready to fulfil his duty. Close behind him stood the tall gaunt figure of Marvel, with his large bony hands, his scraggy neck, and ill-favoured countenance. Next to the executioner stood his wife — the former Mrs. Spurling. Mrs. Marvel held her handkerchief to her eyes, and appeared in great distress. But her husband, whose deportment to her was considerably changed since the fatal knot had been tied, paid no attention whatever to her grief.

At this moment, the bell of Newgate began to toll, and was answered by another bell from St. Sepulchre's. The great door of the Stone Hall was thrown open, and the sheriffs, preceded by the javelin-men, entered the room. They were followed by Jonathan, who carried a stout stick under his arm, and planted himself near the stone. Not a word was uttered by the assemblage; but a hush of expectation reigned throughout.

Another door was next opened, and, preceded by the ordinary, with the sacred volume in his hand, the prisoner entered the room. Though encumbered by his irons, his step was firm, and



Jack Sheppard's irons knocked off on the day he was
at Newgate.



his demeanour dignified. His countenance was pale as death, but not a muscle quivered; nor did he betray the slightest appearance of fear. On the contrary, it was impossible to look at him without perceiving that his resolution was unshaken.

Advancing with a slow firm step to the stone-block he placed his left foot upon it, drew himself up to his full height, and fixed a look so stern upon Jonathan, that the thief-taker quailed before it.

The black, meantime, began to ply his hammer, and speedily unriveted the chains. The first stroke appeared to arouse all the vindictive passions of Jonathan. Fixing a ferocious and exulting look upon Jack Sheppard, he exclaimed,

"At length, my vengeance is complete."

"Wretch!" cried Jack, raising his hand in a menacing manner, "your triumph will be short-lived. Before a year has expired, you will share the same fate."

"If I do, I care not," rejoined Wild; "I shall have lived to see you hanged."

"O Jack, dear, dear Jack!" cried Mrs. Marvel, who was now quite dissolved in tears, "I shall never survive this scene."

"Hold your tongue, hussy!" cried her husband gruffly. "Women ought never to show themselves on these occasions, unless they can behave themselves properly."

"Farewell, Jack," cried twenty voices.

Sheppard looked round, and exchanged kindly glances with several of those who addressed him.

"My limbs feel so light, now that my irons are removed," he observed with a smile, "that I am half inclined to dance."

"You'll dance upon nothing, presently," rejoined Jonathan, brutally.

"Farewell for ever," said Jack, extending his hand to Mrs. Marvel.

"Farewell!" blubbered the executioner's wife, pressing his hand to her lips. "Here are a pair of gloves and a nosegay for you. Oh dear!—oh dear! Be careful of him," she added to her husband, "and get it over quickly, or never expect to see me again."

"Peace, fool!" cried Marvel, angrily. "Do you think I don't know my own business?"

Austin and Langley then advanced to the prisoner, and, twining their arms round his, led him down to the Lodge, whither he was followed by the sheriffs, the ordinary, Wild, and the other officials.

Meantime, every prepararation had been made outside for his departure. At the end of two long lines of foot-guards stood the cart with a powerful black horse harnessed to it. At the head of the cart was placed the coffin. On the right were several mounted grenadiers: on the left, some half dozen javelin-men. Soldiers were stationed at different points of the street to keep off the mob, and others were riding backwards and forwards to maintain an open space for the passage of the procession.

The assemblage which was gathered together was almost countless. Every house-top, every window, every wall, every projection, had its occupants. The wall of St. Sepulchre's church was covered—so was the tower. The concourse extended along Giltspur-street as far

as Smithfield. No one was allowed to pass along Newgate-street, which was barricaded and protected by a strong constabulary force.

The first person who issued from the Lodge was Mr. Marvel, who proceeded to the cart, and took his seat upon the coffin. The hangman is always an object of peculiar detestation to the mob, a tremendous hooting hailed his appearance, and both staves and swords were required to preserve order.

A deep silence, however, now prevailed, broken only by the tolling of the bells of Newgate and St. Sepulchre's. The mighty concourse became for a moment still. Suddenly, such a shout as has seldom smitten human ears rent the air. "He comes!" cried a thousand voices, and the shout ascended to Smithfield, descended to Snow Hill, and told those who were assembled on Holborn Hill that Sheppard had left the prison.

Between the two officers, with their arms linked in his, Jack Sheppard was conducted to the cart. He looked around, and as he heard that deafening shout,—as he felt the in-

fluence of those thousand eyes fixed upon him, — as he listened to the cheers, all his misgivings — if he had any — vanished, and he felt more as if he were marching to a triumph, than proceeding to a shameful death.

Jack had no sooner taken his place in the cart, than he was followed by the ordinary, who seated himself beside him, and, opening the book of prayer, began to read aloud. Excited by the scene, Jack, however, could pay little attention to the good man's discourse, and was lost in a whirl of tumultuous emotions.

The cavalcade was now put slowly in motion. The horse-soldiers wheeled round and cleared a path: the foot closed in upon the cart. Then came the javelin-men, walking four abreast, and, lastly, a long line of constables, marching in the same order.

The procession had just got into line of march, when a dreadful groan, mixed with yells, hootings, and execrations, was heard. This was occasioned by Jonathan Wild, who was seen to mount his horse and join the train. Jonathan, however, paid no sort of at-

tention to this demonstration of hatred. He had buckled on his hanger, and had two brace of pistols in his belt, as well as others in his holsters.

By this time, the procession had reached the west end of the wall of St. Sepulchre's church, where, in compliance with an old custom, it halted. By the will of Mr. Robert Dow, merchant tailor, it was appointed that the sexton of St. Sepulchre's should pronounce a solemn exhortation upon every criminal on his way to Tyburn, for which office he was to receive a small stipend. As soon as the cavalcade stopped, the sexton advanced, and, ringing a handbell, pronounced the following admonition.

"*All good people pray heartily unto God for this poor sinner, who is now going to take his death, for whom this great bell doth toll.*

"*You who are condemned to die, repent with lamentable tears. Ask mercy of the Lord for the salvation of your own soul, through the merits of the death and passion of Jesus Christ, who now sits at the right hand*

of God, to make intercession for you, if you penitently return to him. The Lord have mercy upon you!"

This ceremony concluded, the cavalcade was again put in motion.

Slowly descending Snow-Hill, the train passed on its way, attended by the same stunning vociferations, cheers, yells, and outcries, which had accompanied it on starting from Newgate. The guards had great difficulty in preserving a clear passage without resorting to severe measures, for the tide, which poured upon them behind, around, in front, and at all sides, was almost irresistible. The houses on Snow-Hill were thronged, like those in the Old Bailey. Every window, from the ground-floor to the garret had its occupant, and the roofs were covered with spectators. Words of encouragement and sympathy were addressed to Jack, who, as he looked around, beheld many a friendly glance fixed upon him.

In this way, they reached Holborn Bridge. Here a little delay occurred. The passage

was so narrow that there was only sufficient room for the cart to pass, with a single line of foot-soldiers on one side; and, as the walls of the bridge were covered with spectators, it was not deemed prudent to cross it till these persons were dislodged.

While this was effected, intelligence was brought that a formidable mob was pouring down Field Lane, the end of which was barricaded. The advanced guard rode on to drive away any opposition, while the main body of the procession crossed the bridge, and slowly toiled up Holborn Hill.

The entrance of Shoe Lane, and the whole line of the wall of St. Andrew's church, the bell of which was tolling, was covered with spectators. Upon the steps leading to the gates of the church stood two persons whom Jack instantly recognised. These were his mistresses, Poll Maggot and Edgeworth Bess. As soon as the latter beheld him, she uttered a loud scream, and fainted. She was caught by some of the bystanders, who offered her every assistance in their power. As to Mrs. Mag-

got, whose nerves were more firmly strung, she contented herself with waving her hand affectionately to her lover, and encouraging him by her gestures.

While this was taking place, another and more serious interruption occurred. The advanced guard had endeavoured to disperse the mob in Field Lane, but were not prepared to meet with the resistance they encountered. The pavement had been hastily picked up, and heaped across the end of the street, upon which planks, barrels, and other barricades, were laid. Most of the mob were armed with pikes, staves, swords, muskets, and other weapons, and offered a most desperate resistance to the soldiery, whom they drove back with a shower of paving-stones.

The arrival of the cart at the end of Field Lane, appeared the signal for an attempt at rescue. With a loud shout, and headed by a powerfully-built man, with a face as black as that of a mulatto, and armed with a cutlass, the rabble leapt over the barricades, and rushed towards the vehicle. An immediate

halt took place. The soldiers surrounded the cart, drew their swords, and by striking the rioters first with the blunt edge of their blades, and afterwards with the sharp points, succeeded in driving them back.

Amid this skirmish Jonathan greatly distinguished himself. Drawing his hanger he rode amongst the crowd, trampled upon those most in advance, and made an attempt to seize their leader, in whom he recognised Blueskin.

Baffled in their attempt, the mob uttered a roar, such as only a thousand angry voices can utter, and discharged a volley of missiles at the soldiery. Stones and brickbats were showered on all sides, and Mr. Marvel was almost dislodged from his seat on the coffin by a dead dog, which was hurled against him, and struck him in the face.

At length, however, by dealing blows right and left with their swords, and even inflicting severe cuts on the foremost of the rabble, the soldiers managed to gain a clear course, and to drive back the assailants: who, as they retreated behind the barricades, shouted in

tones of defiance, " To Tyburn ! to Tyburn ! "

The object of all this tumult, meanwhile, never altered his position, but sat back in the cart, as if resolved not to make even a struggle to regain his liberty.

The procession now wound its way, without further interruption, along Holborn. Like a river swollen by many currents, it gathered force from the various avenues that poured their streams into it. Fetter Lane, on the left, Gray's Inn, on the right, added their supplies. On all hands Jack was cheered, and Jonathan hooted.

At length, the train approached St. Giles's. Here, according to another old custom, already alluded to, a criminal taken to execution was allowed to halt at a tavern, called the Crown, and take a draught from St. Giles's bowl, " as his last refreshment on earth." At the door of this tavern, which was situated on the left of the street, not more than a hundred yards distant from the church, the bell of which began to toll as soon as the procession

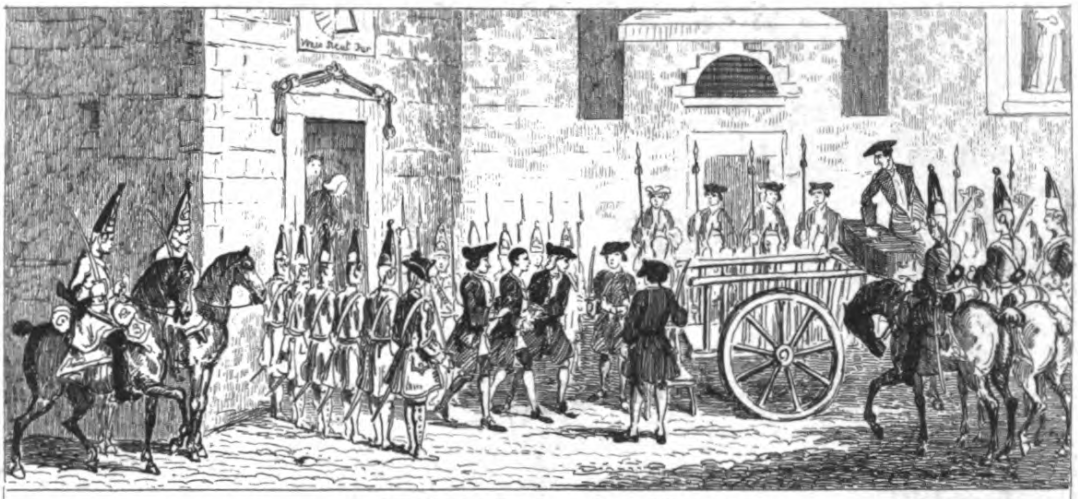
came in sight, the cart drew up, and the whole cavalcade halted. A wooden balcony in one of the adjoining houses was thronged with ladies, all of whom appeared to take a lively interest in the scene, and to be full of commiseration for the criminal, not, perhaps, unmixed with admiration of his appearance. Every window in the public house was filled with guests; and, as in the case of St. Andrew's, the church-yard wall of St. Giles's was lined with spectators.

A scene now ensued, highly characteristic of the age, and the occasion. The doleful procession at once assumed a festive character. Many of the soldiers dismounted, and called for drink. Their example was immediately imitated by the officers, constables, javelin-men, and other attendants; and nothing was to be heard but shouts of laughter and jesting,—nothing seen but the passing of glasses, and the emptying of foaming jugs. Mr. Marvel, who had been a little discomposed by the treatment he had experienced on Holborn Hill, very composedly filled and lighted his pipe.

One group at the door attracted Jack's at-

The procession of Jack Sheppard from Newgate to Tyburn.

ght, the cart drew up, and the whole halted. A wooden balcony in one ning houses was thronged with ladies, which appeared to take a lively interest scene, and to be full of commiseration criminal, not perhaps unmixed with of his appearance. Every window public-house was filled with guests; and, the case of St. Andrew's, the church-yard of St. Giles's was lined with spectators. were next assisted, highly characteristic of and the occasion. The doleful pro- had now assumed a festive character. nothing was to be ad jesting,—no of glasses, and the Mr. Marvel, who ed by the treatment Holborn Hill, very d his pipe. attracted Jack's at-



Jack Sheppard taken from Newgate.

Blueskin attempting to Rescue Jack Sheppard on Holborn Hill.

Jack Sheppard dandling from the St Giles's Pound

George Cruikshank

tention, inasmuch as it was composed of several of his old acquaintances — Mr. Kneebone, Van Galgebrok, and Baptist Kettleby—all of whom greeted him cordially. Besides these, there was a sturdy-looking fellow, whom he instantly recognised as the honest blacksmith who had freed him from his irons at Tottenham.

"I am here, you see," said the smith.

"So I perceive," replied Jack.

At this moment, the landlord of the Crown, a jovial-looking stout personage, with a white apron round his waist, issued from the house, bearing a large wooden bowl filled with ale, which he offered to Jack, who instantly rose to receive it. Raising the bowl in his right hand, Jack glanced towards the balcony, in which the group of ladies were seated, and begged to drink their healths; he then turned to Kneebone and the others, who extended their hands towards him, and raised it to his lips. Just as he was about to drain it, he encountered the basilisk glance of Jonathan Wild, and paused.

"I leave this bowl for you," he cried, returning it to the landlord untasted.

"Your father said so before you," replied Jonathan, malignantly; "and yet it has tarried thus long."

"You will call for it before six months are passed," rejoined Jack, sternly.

Once again the cavalcade was in motion, and winding its way by St. Giles's church, the bell of which continued tolling all the time, passed the pound, and entered Oxford Road, or, as it was then not unfrequently termed, Tyburn Road. After passing Tottenham Court Road, very few houses were to be seen on the right hand, and opposite Wardour Street it was open country.

The crowd now dispersed amongst the fields, and thousands of persons were seen hurrying towards Tyburn as fast as their legs could carry them, leaping over hedges, and breaking down every impediment in their course.

Besides those who conducted themselves more peaceably, the conductors of the procession noticed with considerable uneasiness, large bands of men armed with staves, bludgeons, and other weapons, who were flying across the field in the same direction. As

it was feared that some mischief would ensue, Wild volunteered, if he were allowed a small body of men, to ride forward to Tyburn, and keep the ground clear until the arrival of the prisoner.

This suggestion being approved, was instantly acted upon, and the thieftaker, accompanied by a body of the grenadiers, rode forward.

The train, meantime, had passed Mary-le-bone Lane, when it again paused for a moment, at Jack's request, near the door of a public house called the City of Oxford.

Scarcely had it come to a halt, when a stalwart man shouldered his way, in spite of their opposition, through the lines of soldiery to the cart, and offered his large horny hand to the prisoner.

"I told you I would call to bid you farewell, Mr. Figg," said Jack.

"So you did," replied the prize-fighter. "Sorry you're obliged to keep your word. Heard of your last escape. Hoped you'd not be retaken. Never sent for the shirt."

"I didn't want it," replied Jack; "but who are those gentlemen?"

"Friends of yours," replied Figg; "come to see you;—Sir James Thornhill, Mr. Hogarth, and Mr. Gay. They send you every good wish."

"Offer them my hearty thanks," replied Jack, waving his hand to the group, all of whom returned the salutation. "And now, farewell, Mr. Figg! In a few minutes, all will be over."

Figg turned aside to hide the tears that started to his eyes,—for the stout prize-fighter, with a man's courage, had a woman's heart,—and the procession again set forward.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

TYBURN was now at hand. Over the sea of heads arose a black and dismal object. It was the gallows. Jack, whose back was towards it, did not see it; but he heard, from the pitying exclamations of the crowd, that it was in view. This circumstance produced no further alteration in his demeanour except that he endeavoured to abstract himself from the surrounding scene, and bend his attention to the prayers which the ordinary was reciting.

Just as he had succeeded in fixing his attention, it was again shaken, and he was almost unnerved by the sight of Mr. Wood, who was standing at the edge of a raised platform, anxiously waving his hand to him.

Jack instantly sprang to his feet, and as his guards construed the motion into an attempt

to escape, several of them drew their swords and motioned to him to sit down. But Jack did not heed them. His looks were fixed on his old benefactor.

"God in heaven bless you, unhappy boy!" cried Wood, bursting into tears, "God bless you!"

Jack extended his hand towards him, and looked anxiously for Thames; but he was nowhere to be seen. A severe pang shot through Jack's heart, and he would have given worlds if he possessed them to have seen his friend once more. The wish was vain: and, endeavouring to banish every earthly thought, he addressed himself deeply and sincerely to prayer.

While this was passing, Jonathan had ridden back to Marvel to tell him that all was ready, and to give him his last instructions.

"You 'll lose no time," said the thieftaker. "A hundred pounds if you do it quickly."

"Rely on me," rejoined the executioner, throwing away his pipe, which was just finished.

A deep dread calm, like that which precedes a thunder-storm, now prevailed amongst the

assemblage. The thousand voices which a few moments before had been so clamorous were now hushed. Not a breath was drawn. The troops had kept a large space clear around the gallows. The galleries adjoining it were crowded with spectators, — so was the roof of a large tavern, then the only house standing at the end of the Edgware Road, — so were the trees, — the walls of Hyde Park, — a neighbouring barn, a shed, — in short, every available position.

The cart, meantime, had approached the fatal tree. The guards, horse and foot, and constables formed a wide circle round it to keep off the mob. It was an awful moment — so awful, that every other feeling except deep interest in the scene seemed suspended.

At this terrible juncture, Jack maintained his composure, — a smile played upon his face before the cap was drawn over it, — and the last words he uttered were, "My poor mother! I shall soon join her!" The rope was then adjusted, and the cart began to move.

The next instant, he was launched into eternity!

Scarcely had he been turned off a moment, when a man with swarthy features leapt into the cart with an open clasp-knife in his hand, and, before he could be prevented, severed the rope, and cut down the body. It was Blueskin. His assistance came too late. A ball from Wild's pistol passed through his heart, and a volley of musketry poured from the guards lodged several balls in the yet breathing body of his leader.

Blueskin, however, was not unattended. A thousand eager assistants pressed behind him. Jack's body was caught, and passed from hand to hand over a thousand heads, till it was far from the fatal tree.

The shouts of indignation—the frightful yells now raised baffle description. A furious attack was made on Jonathan, who, though he defended himself like a lion, was desperately wounded, and would inevitably have perished if he had not been protected by the guards, who were obliged to use both swords and fire-arms upon the mob in his defence. He was at length rescued from his assailants,—rescued to perish, seven months

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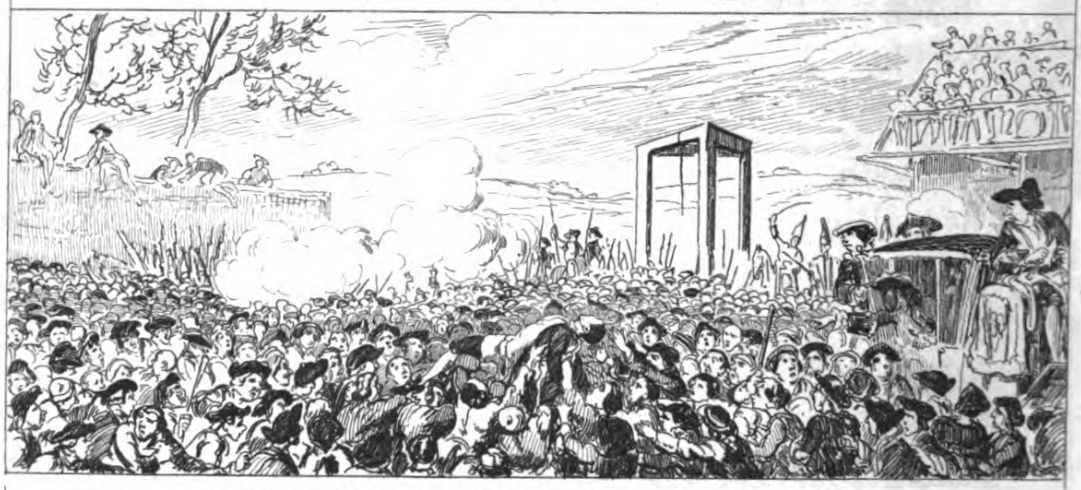
Jack Sheppard's Farewell to Mr. Wood.

Blueskin cutting down Jack Sheppard.



The body of Jack Sheppard carried off by the Mob.

George Cruikshank

The Last Scene.

George Cruikshank

The Last Scene.

afterwards, with every ignominy, at the very gibbet to which he had brought his victim.

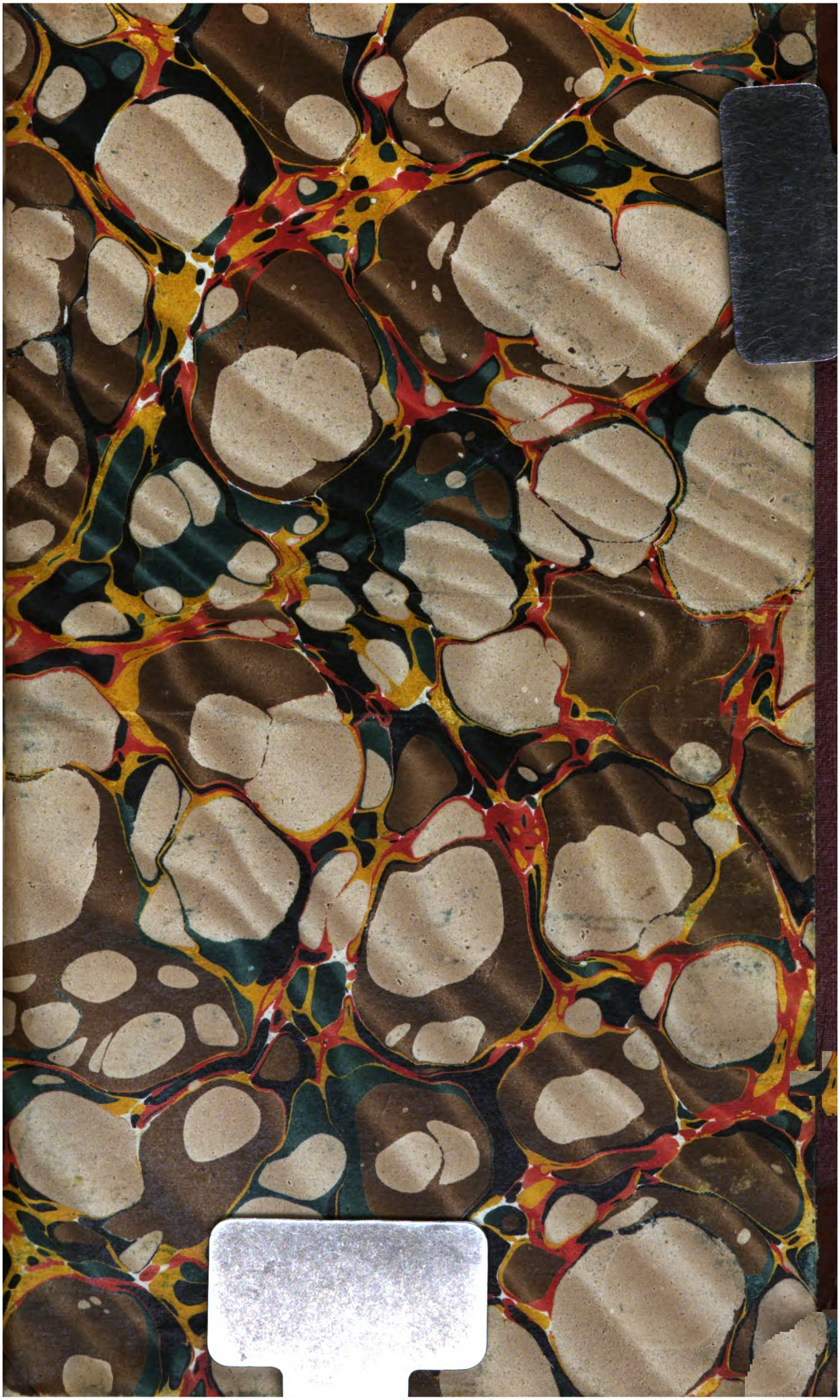
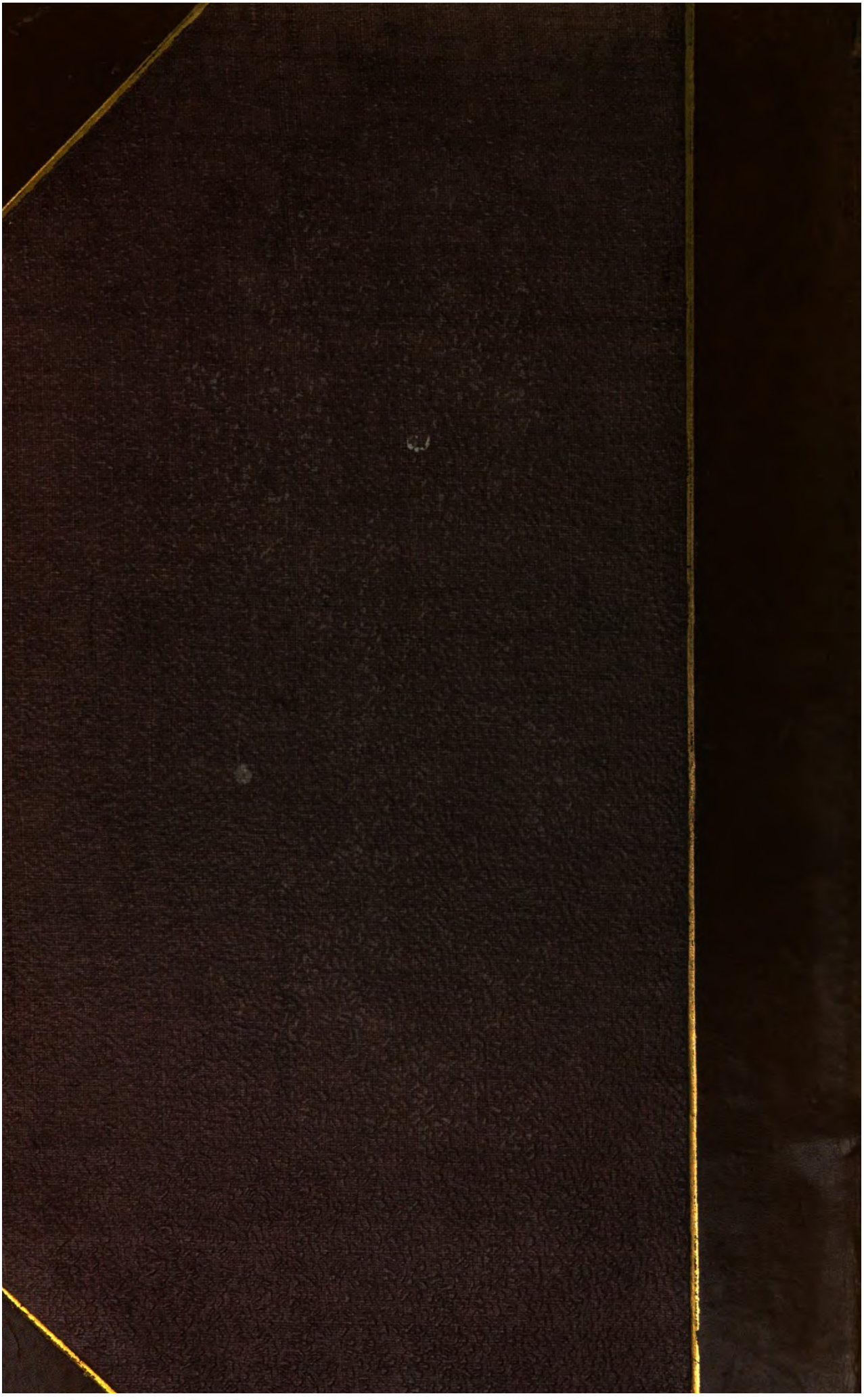
The body of Jack Sheppard, meanwhile, was borne along by that tremendous host, which rose and fell like the waves of the ocean, until it approached the termination of the Edgware Road.

At this point a carriage with servants in sumptuous liveries was stationed. At the open door stood a young man in a rich garb with a mask on his face, who was encouraging the mob by words and gestures. At length, the body was brought towards him. Instantly seizing it, the young man placed it in the carriage, shut the door, and commanded his servants to drive off. The order was promptly obeyed, and the horses proceeded at a furious pace along the Edgware Road.

Half an hour afterwards the body of Jack was carefully examined. It had been cut down before life was extinct, but a ball from one of the soldiers had pierced his heart.

Thus died Jack Sheppard.

That night a grave was dug in Willesden churchyard, next to that in which Mrs. Shep-

pard had been interred. Two persons, besides the clergyman and sexton, alone attended the ceremony. They were a young man and an old one, and both appeared deeply affected. The coffin was lowered into the grave, and the mourners departed. A simple wooden monument was placed over the grave, but without any name or date. In after years, some pitying hand supplied the inscription, which ran thus —

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