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A

Living Picture of London,

FOR 1828,

AND

STRANGER'S GUIDE

THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE METROPOLIS;

SHEWING THE

FRAUDS, THE ARTS, THE SNARES AND WILES OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS OF ROGUES, THAT EVERY WHERE ABOUND;

WITH

SUITABLE ADMONITIONS, PRECAUTIONS, AND ADVICE HOW TO AVOID OR DEFEAT THEIR ATTEMPTS;

Interspersed with

SKETCHES OF COCKNEY MANNERS, LIFE, SOCIETY, AND CUSTOMS;

And supported throughout by numerous

CASES, ANECDOTES, AND PERSONAL ADVENTURES.

BY JON BEE, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF A DICTIONARY OF THE VARIETIES OF LIFE, &c.

To which is appended, the Author's former

"*HINTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE POLICE;*"

WITH

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS, FACTS, AND REMEDIES.

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PREFACE.

In the year 1818 I published a volume similar to the present, having the same objects, but differing in the manner of execution. That task was imposed upon me in consequence of some "Hints," which had been previously communicated to the public through the medium of a popular publication, at the instance of its Editor. Of both performances I have spoken at large in the *sixth chapter*, in which are introduced copious extracts from the last mentioned, explanations of my first inducement to think of such matters, and an apology for the guise assumed in composing the volume alluded to.

It was in the nature of that volume that its most practical parts should soonest become inutile; the facts therein adduced, and the deductions drawn, being applied to *improvement*, to the abatement of error, the annihilation of crime by precautions, and the correction of a mistaken policy—its pages would necessarily effect their own obsoleteness. The same will happen to this volume, also, in process of time; wherefore I entertain the idea of producing an-

other such at no distant period, in which the early parts will be condensed into simple precepts, to make room for enlarging upon other topics, which have been omitted altogether, or sketched much too slightly in the present—the black-legs, the highflyers, the *haut ton*, and the literatists, for example.

The *Critics*, I perceive, spoke in terms of approbation of the former volume. I am sure they did not ground their judgement so much on the style of execution as its practical utility; for it was uniformly ill done as to *letters*, by the frequent use of vulgarisms; and even now I have persisted in adopting the terms and phraseology *we* have, for the most part, heard applied to the business described, or that seemed to characterise the persons engaged; with what taste the reader must decide—I only looked to *effect*. But there were other *critics* than the periodically-printed self-appointed censors of literature, from whom I heard of commendations that were infinitely more gratifying to my mind: the voluntary uninfluenced praise of one magistrate would weigh more than volumes of monthly or quarterly lucubrations, even though he had not been himself the man of letters, a real English gentleman, a person of discernment and a sound

lawyer. Yet I never exchanged a word with him on the subject, chiefly on account of those very *commendations;* and I since discover, that he is much fonder of the emoluments of his *office*, than the trouble it engenders.

Should the careful reader meet with repetitions of the same facts, or of similar reflections, he must attribute these to the circumstance of more persons than one having been engaged in the collection and elucidation of the facts here brought together. On some occasions, the employment of the plural (WE) instead of the singular (I) has reference to the same circumstance; at others, it may be taken as the potent WE of concealed authorship. If the writer has any where spoken with apparent levity, he will not be suspected of deriding sufferings that are impersonal; nor, when he descends to describe any "very excellent trick" of dishonesty, or "charming mode of flooring" a victim, he apprehends he cannot be misunderstood as recommending either practice, by any one who has dipped into Swift's Advice to Servants, "over the left;" studied Fielding's Life of Jonathan Wild, *the great;* or partook of Beresford's happiness at "the Miseries of human life." Yet must it be conceded, that teaching by irony is like flogging *school-boys*

with liquorice-root, or inviting *a beau*, surcharged with trinkets, to the pleasures of an Old Bailey exhibition; from both which, even the leastwise would turn away if he could, however high the gratification might seem to the inflictors.

No fiction of the brain, no imaginary character, make any part of these pages, though I may not always hit the exact orthography of proper names; whereby offensive underlings of grovelling dispositions, may find holes to *creep*, as they are wont, from the censure of their own contracted circles; and although I may have adopted a popular cognomen instead of a christian name, or legal denomination, yet I protest against, as I utterly eschew, all attempts at teaching this most perilous of all worldly knowledge, by the machinery of "pretty novel" or "amusing narrative," to which some excellent cerebral writers of the present day seem fondly addicted;* those modern

* "Life in the West" is the very best of these, and supersedes an entire chapter which I had devoted to the subject. I had, also, for years acted strenuously and effectively against *the Hells*, as the reader may conclude upon consulting "the Annals of Sporting," *passim*, and No. 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 20, 39, particularly.

My chief antipathy against the scoundrels was, that they called themselves *sportsmen;* whence I infer the ruin

Bunyans, who couch whatever they write "under the similitude of a dream." Here and there, I find I have carried this plain-spoken, unvarnished openness of mine to the extremity, in the severe rebuke of some full-grown fool, or arrant actual knave, who stands at the head and foremost of his class. But I have no apology to make, *to them*, at any rate. In some few cases I am not sure that I did not intend to give pain; but then, this disposition has been amiably restricted to fitting objects: the censor of scoundrels, the expositor of villainies, cannot be supposed capable of being conciliated by the filthy pretensions of him who dares to expect complacencies that belong only to the virtuous; he even fancies too much when he hopes to escape with negation from the pen that is confessedly castigatory.

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they wrought they considered *sport*. Yet I could not see with what propriety the writer just cited could inveigh against "Crockford's subscription-house," though I could easily understand why the newspaper scribes should yelp at this or any such a place, that did not pay them for quietism. A handsome sum subscribed by each of twelve hundred gentlemen, including in that number many of the *Magnates* of the land, would be a good guarantee to unprejudiced minds, that legism would not prevail there, however it *might creep in* and get *kicked out*.

INDEX OF NAMES AND THINGS.

INDEX OF MATTERS.

ERRATA.

Page 52, for *impertinent* read *important*.
133, after *dozen*, insert *or a*.
165, for *Wiltshire* read *Shrewsbury*.

THE

STRANGER'S GUIDE,

AND

LIVING PICTURE OF LONDON.

CHAPTER I.

First Impressions on coming to London, with a general Glance at Town Life and Manners.

At his first entrance to *Town*, as London is termed when the *living part* of it is adverted to, *the Stranger* is impressed with the bustle and confusion that every where prevails; and, as he passes along towards the centre, he is utterly at a loss to account what all the apparent hub-bub and buz of voices, the runnings up and down, and crossings and jostlings, and rolling of vehicles among hardly-saved foot passengers can possibly portend. If he comes from a remote *borough*, he imagines it may be 'election-time' or *market-day;* is he from *a city*, perhaps 'tis assizes that causes such an access of people; and he no longer is bewildered at their number, when he recollects the many compara-

tively deserted places he has recently passed through in his journey up to Town. If our Stranger's mind be of a lively inquisitive nature, his imagination thus fills up the chasm that wonderment has created with ill-assorted suggestions, or he seeks to obtain information from his fellow-travellers, some of whom know as little of the passing scene as himself; whilst here and there one or two old stagers contrive to mislead his unsophisticated curiosity by lies, and call it *fun;* for 'tis "a d—d good joke to quiz the countryman." To this they add certain opprobrious epithets, according nicely with the measure and fruitfulness of their education, in the designations of *Johnny Raw, Greenhorn,* or *Youkel,* whereby they hope to lessen his pretensions to equality with themselves on the score of town-knowledge, and throw a shade over his endeavours to become enlightened at their expense. *Cockneys* of middling condition and minor acquirements, which constitute the bulk, are not communicative of useful information of any kind, unless they can enhance their own self-importance by the condescension; as far as regards the inquisitiveness of country-folks concerning *their city,* they are absolutely misintelligent, if not delusive, unless the party has some claim upon their patience and civility, or they hope to obtain public notice, or aggrandizement of some sort or other; and then they do not hesitate to walk bare-headed into the street for his accommodation, nor

withhold their beneficence in purse or table, or personal assistance, as the case may seem to demand. Herein lies the secret of those numberless subscriptions to annual or *occasional* purposes, the majority whereof may be purely philanthropic; but very nearly the half are extorted by example, the desire to appear munificent, and the certainty of being *advertised* in superior company, to which all emergents aspire. The 'people at Lloyd's' are here kept more immediately in view, who are, to a man, the "architects of their own fortunes."

Whether our Stranger arrive by water-conveyance or land-carriage, he will lie open to the danger of forming an undesirable acquaintance with some designing *fellow-traveller*, from the very circumstance of such abortive seeking after information on the road *up*, who will insinuate himself to his good graces by apparent disinterestedness. Such a "fellow," however, may be distinguished from a real *well-wisher*, by the quantity and volubility of his speech, and exacerbated professions, its delectable emptiness, and the absence of his *real address*, which may and should be put to the proof instantly; if fallacious, he will kick at the inquiry, if not so, then not. The great length and duration of a coasting voyage affords more opportunity for both species of deceit than the journey *per coach*, by which latter kind of conveyance the greater number, by far, of new arrivals take place. To these, therefore, in the

order set down, I shall first address the appropriate information as to their safe conduct, until the same observations apply equally to both. But, by whichever of these, or by whatever means he may reach London, or however long he may remain in it, he will never cease to feel the affectation of superior uppishness of the people among whom he sojourns concerning the affairs of *Town life*. Let this be granted them, whether indigenous or denizen, and they claim the same superiority in all other matters, but in some one or other naturally get beyond their depth. Test a cockney how you may, he never declares his non-knowledge on any topic whatever, if he be *thoroughbred;* but, as our stranger has already ascertained, no doubt, even before his arrival, will retort, by some *puzzler* of his own contrivance, or old saw borrowed from cockney-lore.

Hereby they hope to administer to their own self-love; and well were it for the stranger if such annoyances relax as the journey approaches its *finis*, or ceases upon his being set down at his inn. But here new evils await him, arising out of the same causes, *namely*, his *greenness*, and the superior cunning, with its attendant dishonesty, of those among whom he must now mix and make his way. Part of these aim to possess themselves of his property, either by some cajolery, overcharge, or overreaching; others by way of trade, and a few by direct unblushing robbery. Nor do these attempts wholly

subside, when his protracted residence in town no longer subjects him to the sinistrous charge of being a *green*, unknowing countryman, nor place him any more in the relatively disadvantageous situation of a raw, "fit only to be acted upon by those who consider themselves *brown* to every move upon *the board*" of actual life. But he will not wait long for his revenge; very many of those long resident inhabitants, who may have acquired a good portion of *town-knowledge*, as well as the all-keen *thorough-breds*, find themselves very often overmatched by the superiorly cunning devices of the dishonest part of the community: *personal robbery* occurs to both varieties, to the utter discomfiture of their uppish ideas, as often as to the new-comers; whilst their commercial concerns and other *fixed property* are so frequently invaded by the burglar, the night prowler, and the unfaithful servant or deluded menial, that the more liberal cockney, in advanced life, is free to confess that even he is "not sufficiently *up* to every thing which is passing in the world," nor thinks it always the best that can happen; and he now hearkens with uneasiness to precautions, that in early life he would deride as practical foolishness, and in the middle course of it scarcely believe necessary. Experience has effected this much for his improvement, who in the precociousness of a warm soil, thought less than nothing the value of all worldly know-

ledge but his own,—for it is of this alone we now speak.

The reader will already have discovered that we do but precede him by a very few years, and what we now teach, we once had to learn, like himself; closer observation, much painstaking, some leisure, and a taste for the thing, forming the only difference betwixt us. He will perceive the objects we have in view throughout the volume are, the guarding him against being plundered, in the first place (no mean attempt); in *the next*, how to avoid personal contamination and danger himself, and to enjoy in security the intercourse of friendship; *thirdly* and generally, we would show him how to form an estimate of men, manners, and opinions in this vast metropolis, particularly *the active part of it*, those whose actions operate in some way upon others; whereas, the unobservant *recluse*, unseen of his fellow mortals, for such there are *in Town;* the mere man of *fashion*, whose only circle is a butterfly meandring among the wo-begone *Bon ton* like himself; the unobtruding *eccentric* of sickly pursuits, and the useful, intellectual, unassuming *mechanic*, however rich, all these are but negations in our present scheme of exhibiting *Life;* since those descriptions of inerts have betaken themselves out of the course of events, and live but to a limited few; their circle is circumscribed in narrow space, and we shall not dare the pene-

tralia of their seclusion; but let an individual among them "come out" upon the stage of *actual Life*, he shall not seek notoriety in vain; *the press* will resound his name for a day, or immortalise his memory for a week:—does he ask more?—let him achieve it. Even the inactive *philanthropist* of retiring manners, must *do good* for its own sake, unheeded of our labours; since these are but worldly, his deeds of a more heavenly cast. Silent *melancholy* never can weigh in the scale of the man of the world; nor outrageous *madness* merit aught but pity, however well arranged; unless either, being religious, obtrude itself upon public notice, and endeavour to warp the public mind; or, being replete with schemes of ideal advantages, drag our youth to bleach their bones on the shores of Senegal, or bury myriads in the mines of Mexico, blast their hopes by the lightning of *Southern Africa*, or freeze the more hardy at the poles, unless they and their ships previously get squeezed, like nits, between immense icebergs. These are the cockney characters that require exposure and demand our execrations, if we can cease laughing at their fifty times exploded bubbles, and "proposals for forming joint-stock companies" for lunatic undertakings.

The first part of the ensuing pages is mainly adapted to the occasions of such persons as may be supposed anxiously solicitous of guarding their property from depredations, to whom its preservation is essential, and its loss an

event to be deplored; but as for the noble and the wealthy, to whom the exit of a trunk or two is no privation, the purloinment of a few hundreds is felt but as a flea-bite, and the stripping a town-residence of its *plate* can be remedied by a *stroke of the pen* upon Hammersley's, Coutts's, or Child's, and a verbal message to Rundall, these come in for a very small share of consideration in this volume; for they despise commiseration, and ought to find sufficient protection in the fealty of their retainers, the flunkies of the north and footmen of the south. What safer keeping can their *moveable personals* be committed to, than their numerous attendants of the valet genus,—faithful coachmen, grooms, out-riders and Swiss *avant couriers*, with the stately porter, grooms, stable-boys, and helpers, for watch over their *fixed property* in town-house, or metropolitan villa? Environed by a host like this, the magnates of the land need not dread the attacks of thieves, *at home*, or on *the road*; even though the high walls and deep areas of the mansion; the secure windows, gaol-like railings, and well-pannelled doors, guarded within by a peeping *Cerberus*, by day, and watched without by a sleepy *Charles*, at night, did not laugh to scorn the Quixotic attempts of every marauder, however daring; whilst the rapidity of their equipages, when journeying, set at nought the "stand and deliver" commands of that exceedingly rare creature, — a highwayman. It is

only when our nobles descend from their high estate, to mix with middle, ordinary, or common life, that we can hope to render the present work useful to their occasions. And these are neither few nor far between; nor exclude a near (very near) view and taste of the "varieties of life;" for our high-born gentry of the present day, have wisely cast aside the stiff manners and poker-back gait of the former age, and descended to personal investigation of the condition and means of living among the lower orders, and a little more:—* * * *. Thanks be to all "the saints" for this familiar intercourse, and its consequence, a due appreciation of the bents and inclinations, and amusements, and morality of the lower orders, which had been grossly misrepresented by *the elect* and the super-humane in "the houses" as well as "out of doors," and even in the streets.

On the contrary, isolated persons, on their first visit to town, to whom the loss of their little property is of great moment, if not ruin, lie most exposed to depredations of every kind, by being obliged to assort, during their sojournment with every description of characters, who look upon *the countryman* as fair game, and act accordingly as they may belong to the bad, good, or indifferent particles of society. The worst of these usually take advantage of the countenance they receive from the better disposed, and *the game* they make consists not in words alone: if they do not commit any direct

depredation on the stranger, no means of doing this seems readier than to *put up* some of their acquaintance to the most easy and safe manner of performing the same piece of disservice. On his part, the stranger endeavours to avoid the company of suspected persons, expresses a feverish anxiety to ascertain the true mode of discriminating the honest from the roguish part of mankind, and sometimes so bewilders himself with surmises, that he falls an easier prey in consequence; for the deluding rogues then operate upon his fears with exaggerated statements, false intelligence, and recommendations of deceitful security, adding hereto insidious advice, and counselling him to his destruction; all these are accompanied with the usual overstrained professions of friendship, honour, and disinterestedness, including offers of assistance, that turn out like the broken staff, and schemes of money-making, that are never realised. Most of these latter remarks apply to those visitors who come to London occasionally to vend their goods, whether manufactures or produce of the land: such people may be said to be always *green;* for, what they learn, at one such visit, they forget by the next; else the rogues devise new schemes to meet new emergencies, or the people our stranger has met, from year to year, may have fallen in the scale of opulence, of credit and of honesty, have entirely lost their caste in society, and become roguish through necessity. This is not meant

as an apology for abandonment of character, truly; but it is no less matter of fact, that such does too often happen: the "have beens," when vaunted, being the worst of creatures in commercial life or social intercourse.

CHAP. II.

Out-door Delinquencies.—Arrivals along Shore and at Inn Yards.—Strangers beset by Smashers.—Stage and Hackney Coachmen.—Street-walking.—Thieves, of several Kinds.—Women delude and rob.—Private Lodgings.

THE *fresh arrivals* in town by *water*, although the intercourse with every part by this method has greatly increased of late, are much less than a sight of the hourly bustle of disembarkation, from steamers, and sailing vessels, and Gravesend boats, and coasters, would induce the casual observer to imagine. Neither do the strangers, who adopt this mode of reaching London, subject their property to that reckless species of depredation, which environs the less temerarious *land traveller*, and pursues him from the moment of his arrival in the surburbs, until he reach his *resting place*, nor even then quits him entirely. Whereas, little danger, beyond the imposition of *watermen* and *porters*, is to be

feared along shore; the first mentioned adding a portion of abuse to their extortions, when opposed sturdily, and the latter kind of attendants enhancing their merits, and the price of their services inordinately at times; whilst the hackney-coachmen who may be called from the adjacent stands to carry the new comers to their final destinations, generally tack on a sixpence or two for trouble, extra luggage, and other undefined services, unless checked in their charges by the strangers' friends. Yet do watermen, porters, and hackneymen, plead in extenuation of their exactions, with some degree of reason, both precedent and example in every other trade and calling; they of the boats and wherries asserting, that the sousing overboard of their *fares*, and the loss of life that occasionally ensues their squabbles for customers, is not more disagreeable and destructive than the *practice of medicine* and its attendant consequences.

Much of the evil here complained of has been lately abated, but much remains to be done, and to be guarded against; yet nothing can be effectually achieved until *the steamers* run along the quay side and discharge their passengers over their bows and sterns, as practised by the Gravesend boats and others. Matters of this sort are better arranged at the Leith and Berwick Wharfs, at the bottom of Burr-street, where strangers also obtain ready and effectual protection after they get ashore; unless, indeed,

some who are headstrong, and think to be saving, traverse long distances with heavy luggage, borne along on men's backs, or upon inadequate vehicles; but, although such persons thus expose themselves to entire disrobement of their property, intelligence of a robbery under those circumstances is quite a rarity. So is any purloining at the Tower-stairs and at Billingsgate astonishingly infrequent, notwithstanding the lots of queer, jumbo-looking characters that always hang about the latter, and often show a nose at the former. We owe this to the vigilance of the Thames-Police, I believe, who are exemplarily assiduous and faithful in the performance of their duty.

Useful men, or living guides, who know town, may be hired at any public-house, or lodging-house, from London-bridge to Limehouse-hole, who act as Ciceroni to seamen mostly, showing them about to public places, particularly Newgate and the royal palaces, Nelson's monument, and the Admiralty; but devil a bridge or the Horse-guards affords them any delight. Those men have been for the most part in the naval or merchants' service, are vulgarly intelligent, but not to be trusted, unless very well known, and recommended before setting out. Most of them *lush* a good deal, and if those they take in charge get "three sheets in the wind," the guide will *luff up* and serve himself with odds and ends, as small change, snacks in a double-score reckoning, an umbrella, or a great coat.

Inn Yards, where coaches put up, and set down their passengers, on the contrary, are scenes of greatly variegated villainy. Smashing, robbery of parcels, some of exceeding great value, the cajoling of passengers into scrapes with game hackneymen, and other projects are still resorted to, and formerly was more extensively employed by the caddee, coachy, hanger-on, and more distinctly marked thief. If the travellers would be set down as they pass along, at some spot more conveniently situate near their friends' address, they had need look well after their luggage, and not only see that the whole is taken from the stage, but placed in the hackney-coach that is to carry them the remaining distance. Thieves of the most expert sort are always sneaking about at every such place, and those of the most finished education and gallant spirit attend the *coming in* of stage-coaches, mails, and even waggons, at the White-horse-Cellar, Elephant and Castle, Basing-house, and such like places of last stoppage, in and out. Indeed, the little public houses generally on the outskirts of town, and always one or two near the places just named, as well as along shore, are frequented by a very ordinary and desperate set; all of whom are constantly upon the sharp *look out*, seeking whom they may cheat, if they cannot rob; the innocent, the artless, and the unwary, are alike their prey, whom they seek to rob, to cajole into *play*, or to the purchase goods, deceit-

fully made up, provided such persons happen to stroll alone to such places in search of expected country folks who arrive on foot from their native villages. It would seem, that the very sight of a *countryman*, either youkel or joskin, adds sharpness to their appetite for plunder, especially if he brings his wife with him, because she must necessarily embarrass his operations; a single thief will watch the movements of such a pair for hours together, or through an entire day; and I have known two go upon the same scent, though unknown to each other, and when an explanation took place they joined, cordially, in hunting down their prey, agreeing to divide the booty; he who obtained what he now calls "the swagg," paying to his new pal an undefined share, which the thieves persist in calling their *regulars*, though nothing can be more uncertain than such divisions. Five or six, sometimes, receive unequal parts of these "reg'lars," though they may not have been "in it," nor even know exactly how, or where, the robbery has been effected.

Coachmen and *guards*, when setting down their fares in the streets, as before alluded to, often appear to me as if they, too, would pander to the designs of prowling thieves, by the utter carelessness with which they leave the luggage exposed to the wide world on some such occasions. "Let them, and all such scaly rips, take care of their own things," replied one of those coachmen to me, upon my remonstra-

ting with him, that a party of three, whom he had set down in Aldersgate-street some two hours before, had most assuredly lost one of their trunks there but for my looking on, and *spoiling* the attempts of two thieves, *Doughey* and *Bill Willis*, to carry it off; for all three had turned their backs upon their luggage to chaffer with coachy about giving him "a shilling for himself," among the party; in which munificent way, it seems, they had generously rewarded the care and attention of other coachmen further down the road. The party thus came up to town with a good character at their tails, which, doubtless, accompanied them to the house of their sojournment, and plagued them during every hour of it; for the hackneyman, who was, hereupon, called off the stand to "take up," received "the office" from the stage-coachman, that he had a scaly set to deal with, a recommendation to favour he would be sure to make the best use of, and convey it to the *abigail* (say) at the place of their destination. The northern coaches are not alone noted for bringing up such, "penny-wise and pound-foolish" passengers, as those whose case I have cited; all other parts of the kingdom produce examples of those who "take care of pence, and leave pounds to take care of themselves," to such an extreme, that they find strange volunteers, at times, in helping the old saw to disprove its own wisdom.

The particular coachman I have alluded to

did not quite merit the disadvantageous opinion which I had formed of him, and certainly entertained of his character for the space (as I have said) of two hours; for I had followed him to his inn, and place of *putting-up*, and eyed him over, and touted his goings on for a long time before I *opened* upon him, as above. But in the next degree to the crime of pandering to the designs of prowlers, this coachman certainly did *favour* the attempt, and knew that he was throwing a booty in their way. Had those well-known thieves effected their intentions—and I almost lament my stagging them—this very coachman might possibly (I thought) have been found at their haunt in the evening, taking a quiet glass of ale at the bar, with the real intention of applying for his share of the booty—or *regulars*. A continued service of six or seven years down to the present moment, and "nothing broke that cannot be mended," is good *presumption*, but no *proof*, that he is "*all correct* as a biddy." For we who live up and down with an eye to such facts, feel a dozen such cases flitting across the recollection, of much longer services on the box terminating with the Old Bailey *inquiry*, and many more but little short of it. Little *Buywort* was never suspected from the moment he first mounted the box to the one in which he left it to become a book-keeper, when the small packet was "missing" from the Cross Keys last year; and respecting the many lost

bankers' parcels of the period just passed, it is no argument to say that the conductors of the unfortunate vehicles have not got rich by the *jobs;* for the booty, though large, was so divided and subdivided among many, that not more than two or three *sacked* the swagg to any sensible amount. Do we not see the Crowther, the Ally Sanders, the Tom Clarke, just in the same state as when that rig first began? Then again, why was not a description published of the persons of the more than suspected passengers per the robbed mails? However, on these subjects I shall dilate in the sequel. As a set-off for this potent argument as to the unchanged condition of the suspected persons, we may adduce that of a most flourishing coach-proprietor of the present day, whom we recollect, a few years since, a buyer of any goods from any body, not void of of-*fence!* in White Cross-street; but do not mean to infer that "once a rogue always a rogue" is applicable to the present case, nor that "an evil doer" has *no right* to amend his ways; very far from it. Even that chief of sinners, *Ikey Solomons,* might have reformed, though the chances were always against such a consummation of his fencing career.

But we shall come to speak more of those characters—the conductors of our coaches, a few pages further down, and of another great proprietor, who formerly *drove* and *shouldered* with the proprietors, *his* employers of a former

day, but now so thoroughly reformed as to sit in the *lower house* of representatives of the city parliament. Meantime, be it recollected our stranger requires our paternal care.

Smashing is the first depredation to which strangers are exposed upon *setting foot* in London, and consists in passing bad money, or pretending that you yourself have paid base coin to *the smasher*, who unblushingly insists upon your exchanging his base stuff for good money. The practice is not so rife these latter years as before the issue of the present coinage, but an inundation of false pieces, at times, occasions the evil to break out afresh most extensively, and we then hear of deluded poor persons detected in passing false half crowns, shillings, and sixpences, who suffer the law, without the chance of escape. But the reproach that the original offenders, coiners and *putters forth* by wholesale, elude punishment no longer holds good, since the detection and execution of the family of Greenwich coiners, the branch at Vauxhall, one very substantial manufacturer at Birmingham, and other minor scions of the destructive deceit elsewhere.

Without particularising any one description of characters at the inns, who would be more likely than another to practise this particular species of cheatery, I shall be justified in saying *they are all liable*—coachmen, guards, clerks, and waiters, to be themselves imposed upon; and although not *guilty*, are, neverthe-

less, likely to pass bad money. The original evil of its introduction to the yards arises with certain fellows, who always hover about, assuming to be extremely *useful* to the proprietors, in procuring them customers from other inns, for which service they demand a shilling, or two shillings, according to the value of the fare they *bring*. They acquire the name of *caddees* from all the people of the yard, when spoken of *behind their backs*, with some such feeling as ministers of state speak of spies, deserters, and informers to the life. Others of these hangers-on, job or sell certain articles, *under the rose*, pretending to smuggle, if not really so, and are thus well prepared for disseminating base money, as for robbing, purloining, and *putting up* others to the more extensive subtraction of bankers' parcels, and other such fearful practices. According to the phrase, nothing seems to be too hot or too heavy for them.

Indeed, the great number and variety of depredators about those inns, would lead the casual observer to conclude, that rogues of every species had gathered together, and were tolerated to despoil him of his property. On this topic, an indignant writer, of the last age, thus strongly commences his satire.—

> "London! the needy villains' genial home,
> The *Common shore* of Paris and of Rome,
> With eager thirst, by Folly or by Fate,
> Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.
> Forgive my transports on a theme like this,
> I cannot bear a French metropolis."

Smashing extends to the publishing and setting forth, as good, base imitations of Bank of England notes, another of those offences which has considerably abated since I formerly wrote on this subject; so much is this the fact, that for some time the philanthropist pleased himself with the dream that the Bank prosecutor's hands were stayed, and his occupation gone. But *pound notes* re-issued, and the wreck of life again commenced. One of the *caddee* tribe of useful men, named *James Law*, was brought up to Hatton-garden office, January 28, 1818, charged with passing bad notes, at the *Swan* with two Necks, Lad-lane. One of the clerks from this establishment stated that "*Law* had been in the habit, for four years preceding, of procuring customers to go by their coaches, for which he received a pecuniary reward." To this information Mr. John Lees, of the Bank, added, that "there was scarcely a coach-office in town but forged notes had been passed off, and brought in to the Bank." The culprit had a very youthful appearance, but doubtless had long deserved his hard fate, if any offender ever did forfeit life justly for this crime against commerce. His successor in the post of *caddee*, Tom W———, who still sticks to it, *we* have seen "passing his evenings," pleasantly, for months together, in company of street-thieves, whom he, doubtless, "put up" to the place where, and manner of committing robberies—so his wife often told the party: he had the nick

name of "the squire," whence I infer, he would do a little in *fencing* the stolen property. Yet Tom does not *get fat* on it.

But a more striking case of a *caddee smasher* is that of *George Meacock*, who for many years hung about the Queen's Head, at the corner of St. John-street, Clerkenwell, and was also a "general dealer," *i. e.* bought goods of *any body*, upon the sly, and smuggled bandanas to a good extent. George Meacock! Every body knew him, he was a noticeable body, and if people did not notice him, why he noticed them, by hallooing after them, "if he might take the liberty to wish one good night," or good morning, or any other good-for-nothing wish. *Meacock* was esteemed rich, and demanded the right of shaking folks by the hand, whom he might observe passing daily, to and fro, out of the city. Yet was George Meacock hanged for the same offence, to the great astonishment and edification of all porters, waiters, and helpers, in that quarter of town. He preceded *Law* by above a year; and smashed in *coin* as well as *screens* or *screeves*, as he usually flashed it for Bank-looking paper. With him, half-crowns were *half-bulls*, and shillings "smooth whites," now *smooth* no longer.

More cases are unnecessary; and, although, not happening so frequently any where, yet is the practice continued. Then, let me ask, how can the honester part of those who are engaged about inns and yards avoid coming in

contact, and partaking in the corruption, while they are daily in the habit of seeing so many others actively employed in such nefarious transactions, and sometimes becoming the unwilling instruments of their designs? To what extent this particular crime may be carried, with such means at their disposal, only remains to be guessed at, since there is no probability of coming at any thing like an accurate calculation; and the number of years the grosser offenders are suffered to carry on their trade *with impunity*, operates as an incitement to the yet uncontaminated to join in speculating their necks againt a few pounds of lucre, and the gratifications attendant upon the brief enjoyment of a *superabundance*. That they have "more money than they know what to do with" is a common saying regarding those waiters, clerks, caddees, &c. about inn-yards, any sceptical reader may prove, by attending two or three evenings at *the tap*, or other adjacent *gin shop*, where he shall find them vieing with each other, as to which shall spend most money, in playing at cards, &c. Poor *Bill Kemble* was a melancholy instance how far this recklessness of this order of people may be influenced by example, though he was cut off too soon after his misfortunes to be driven upon positively dishonest courses.

Not only must the *newcomer* be upon his guard against *bad money*, but he should also be prepared to meet with and defeat the less subtle

depredators, who would purloin his boxes, or other property on his way to the place of his final destination. As soon as a coach enters an inn-yard, it is usually beset by persons who either *actually* expect friends to arrive by it, or *pretend* they do, together with a few of those idle fellows, before described as hanging about constantly; and they all contribute to lull suspicion asleep, by an apparent independence of each others' movements, the veriest thief among them taking the least notice of the objects to be plundered. He receives *the hint* for this purpose from another, who having watched the moment *of going to work*, and given *the office*, moves off to the outer gate, or farther off, to assist in the escape, or obstruct pursuit. The usual plan is, when the passengers' things lie about confusedly, some waiting to be taken into the booking-office, some making way towards the tavern, others for a hackney-coach, and one or two not knowing whither they would go, nor making inquiry for a place of shelter from sun or snow, from wind and rain, until they find none in company but themselves and the sharpers; then the latter become officious, offering their services, either of information or help. This some among them will usually perform, with as much faithfulness as good looking after will compel, but always making a good deal of fuss, by moving the *things* about, new tying them and exchanging a few words with the most active thief, to keep him in counte-

nance, and further his ultimate views. This latter, assuming much simplicity, then asks unmeaning questions, or makes an impudent remark, to prove himself quite at his ease with the helpers or, perhaps, with one of the passengers, as if familiar and well known to each other; then turning about with a smile (always *a smirk*,) he takes up some box or package before the owners' face, if need be, which he pretends to carry towards the house, or to the scales, as the case may happen, where such articles should be taken, still keeping near to and talking *at* some one, if he do not bawl aloud, as if announcing his "coming, coming," or giving a command, as "Fakenham, Faken-ham, Buckenham, here, in half an hour, I tell ye. Vhy don't you attend to the lady and call her a coach!" Meanwhile, casting his eyes about, to ascertain that the coast is clear of officers and stagging coves, he bolts off in double quick time, takes fairly to his heels, and making a double turn round two corners, according to the direction of his companion stationed outside, and in less than two minutes he is ascertained to have been seen running in a quite contrary direction to that by which he started off.

Scarcely ever does it happen that a pursuit is set up, the party robbed being either *struck comical* at the boldness of the manœuvre, or more commonly believing that the lost article has made its way to the proper part of the

premises. But should any join in the chase, upon this or any similar occasion, some of the com-rogues run against the foremost, *full butt*, knock out their wind, *down them*, or fight away at the head and pit of the stomach, which they know how to reach after a feint or two; some of these accomplices also carry a *chiv*, or knife.

The "hangers on," whatever their objects of gain may be, as they fill no stated post, obtain no salary by week or day, and are originally unknown to any accredited person about the premises, farther than as messengers to coachmen, to waiters and clerks, helpers to ostlers, or attendants upon the *delivery carts*, and, finally, as caddees, may ever be considered as very ready tools in the hands of more designing, more practised thieves; though they, themselves, be not already tainted characters, ere they adopt the degrading employ of understrappers to underlings, and submit to the beck and command of exceeding rude, if not coarse, elements of civilized life. Botany-bay must be a paradise of *service* compared to this, unless the sufferers find consolation in performing any duty with pleasure, however penible it may be, if the employment but bring them *among horses*. In this respect, they are not outdone by the groom who lay on a dungheap all night, that he might see a certain horse go out in the morning; nor by gentlemen of the turf, who lose their health by night watching, during spring, the exercises of three-year olds, that are entered

to run races in the summer. Indeed, if we were to drive the investigation to its utmost, we should find that mankind are the same in every age and every clime, differing only as to circumstance, situation, and refinement. The Arab sleeps with his horse, and will part with his mares at no price, whatever; whilst in the settlements of the *Rio Plata*, whoever rides a mare gets hooted through the streets. On the Steppes of Russia the fools are mad enough to eat *horse flesh* of the worst description, whilst in England we give the best to our canine, until they *run mad;* and then for remedy we "dip them in the ocean," as Yorick would the wig, until the curl becomes extinct with life, for there is no other cure.

To the practices and necessities of the coachmen and guards' *private trade*, we owe the increasing number and fresh supply of hangers-on, whose first business has been the performing fetch-and-carry services for those *knights of the whip*. They have, it is well known, the tolerated privilege of taking up and setting down odds and ends on *own account*, much in the way of the India Company's carrier servants. That they abuse it, is not within my purpose to assert; but that they bring articles that require secrecy is not to be denied; this begets the necessity of having confidants ready to hand off the packages; and the persons so engaged *hang about* the inn-yards, until the horn, or Köhler, or keyed bugle, announces the ap-

proach of their employer. When the latter brings nothing that requires his aid, the attendant *hanger-on* finds his services dispensed with, for the present, and he *lends a hand* to any other employer, or offers himself to whoever may require such help. When this may be the conveyance of luggage for passengers, in what does he differ from the fellow whom we described just now as running off with it? Why, truly, that he has delivered his charge faithfully, and when he goes next to his station an old arrant thief, who *hangs on* at the same yard, puts into his head the facility with which he might convert "the things" to his own use, and no *stink* made about it at all. But, little occasion had he for this hint, probably; for long, long, ere this, has he heard of *things* having been "missed from the yard," the enumeration of which made his mouth water, and caused his mother to exclaim *woundily* when he told her of it *a-sunday*, and called forth a longing bleat from his sisters at the *old woman's* comment on the beauty of each article, and made his *Poll's* eyes to glisten as she "vondered vhat could have become of them 'ere nice vons:" why, the man is half a rogue already who has no barrier betwixt him and such enticements; how much less so is a half-grown youth, of whom this genus of thief is composed, for the most part?

And when, at length, our hitherto honest youth begins to *nibble* for himself, while the

passengers alight, as before described, do the coach-conductors, his employers, find themselves in a condition to check him? He, who is "down as a hammer" to their misdoings, fears no check from a quarter on which he has the means of retorting so severely, aye, and of retaliating too. Can he forget, so soon, with what assiduity he hung about the tap-room, day after day, to hand off what might be dropped in there, either of contraband, or of country produce, that he hears is never intended to be paid for? How many score times has he not stood at the end of some avenue, or corner of the gateway, to catch hold, with an energetic adroitness only known to *street-business*, of whatever might be dropped from the coach-tail, with a view to *do* the coach-proprietors, the *revenue*, the right owners, or, with less guilt, the game squirearchy? Reciprocity thus begets fellow feeling.

For the purpose of facilitating those operations, almost every guard has a particular *tune* adapted to each kind of service, known and recognised by those of his acquaintance to whom the intelligence of his approach may be considered precious; to which end the recent improvements upon their wind instruments afford great facilities, and some among them, it must be confessed, execute many excellent airs, under the instructions of a *professor* of the *art of stage-bugling*,—a very big chap, of Little Britain, with small eyes and large mouth, a capacious chest, and a voice that, if it anywise re-

semble his instruments, is admirably calculated to bid Boreas "be quiet," and lull the south-wester to rest. Even before "the march of intellect" soothed the breast of *the professor* with music, this recognition of sounds upon the old *tin horns* was very common. Many years ago, I have sat down at the Swan, in Skinner-street, when several coaches were expected, and oft, incontinently, did Farmer John, the landlord, remark, "here comes such an one!" In a few minutes, "Jemmy is in first to night; the Boston is late, don't you think so, eh?" with other such notices, showing his great familiarity with the tunes played by the respective performers. From the *White* Swan, I journeyed to him with the *two necks*, seven times, at least, latterly; and there, again, was the same observation of mine verified. And lo! I journeyed once more, afar off, and heard the horns, and the shout "run Jack, run out and pick up *so-and-so's* hamper; for here's a pig coming this time." In this manner giving facility to the concealment of ill-gotten articles of life, to say no more. This particular pig, I found the bringer "did not know when he should pay for:" it might weigh nine stone, was divided into fore and hind quarters, contrary to the usual practice with *porkers*, and came without a head, as many *people* do. We cannot be too particular in depositions of this nature.

Probably, in the preceding paragraph, I committed an error in mentioning "revenue;" but feeling too stiff upon the subject to *erase*,

and being too proud to *retract*, I must *explain*: nor am I the only person in London, by many, who having done wrong, at one hour (or page) of his eventful history, in the next page repented, and would amend it, *if he could*. At the time it was written, I had my attention fixed upon the traffic carried on in *silk goods*, of French produce from the southern coast, and of India handkerchiefs, from every quarter where these could be landed. No "revenue," it is true, was ever derived by imposition of a tax upon the article; they were *prohibited* altogether, and afforded no *direct revenue*, so no fraud could be charged upon the act of smuggling it; but all descriptions of foreign silk goods were seized, whenever met with, sold at the Custom-house sales, and the produce carried to credit of accompt; and the idea of smuggling is so placed in contraposition with the public revenue, that the lapse would be very likely to occur to a writer of more accuracy than Jon Bee pretends to be. But the particular anecdote, which superinduced that charge against the *conductors of coaches*, may as well be told, as matter of historical illustration: it does not stand alone, and should the present administration make room for the old bigotry in commercial polity to return, as seems not at all impossible, then may trade receive anew its old prohibitory shackles, and smuggling recommence with ruinous vigour, to the discomfiture of Spi-

talfields, and starvation of Macclesfield and other localities.

In the year 1815, the Glasgow coach brought up one hundred and twenty pieces of India handkerchiefs, weekly, forty in a bundle, "Company's goods," which gives the weight of each package, at thirty-nine pounds, nearly. No one could imagine how such an article could come from that quarter; nor is it our present business or inclination to inquire; but apprehend, that a very large lot had been sent thither, coastwise, from London. This fun lasted some time; and I thought it pleasant to see "the hanger-on" of the *coach-conductor* scamper away with the square bundle, of a morning, usually from the corner of Little Britain, but not always depositing the load at the same place. What is more (as matter of history, still) I bought a bundle of these from Thomas Thomas, the agent, whom his friends dubbed "knight of the long stomach," from his gastronomic properties; but I never saw the principal person, and the price paid was a little more than two pounds the piece. Under existing circumstances, great precautions seemed necessary, but whether as to my cheque for the amount, or my fidelity in another respect, is uncertain; but they compelled me to stop dinner, amidst a *pell-mellish* set, at one Sukey's, a widow woman, apparently, until all the goods then in the dining-room had changed

owners, and vanished from the premises. In fact, the Custom-house people did search there next day, *without success.*

From all this exposure, the reader must be aware, that persons so employed are not trustworthy with his luggage, and that he would do well to see after it with his own eyes; for, if he permit one of those officious *hangers-on* to meddle with it, no opportunity will slip by unimproved, though the coachman and guard stand near him the while. These men are not checks sufficiently strong upon the rogue, since he is himself *down* to so many of their tricks, such as "shouldering," and *smashing*, and "ringing the changes," that they dare not interfere.

Shouldering, among coachmen and guards, is that species of cheating their employers in which they take the *fares* and pocket them, generally of such passengers as they overtake on the road, or who come across the country to the main road, and are not put down in the *way-bill;* but it not unfrequently happens, that they take passengers throughout the whole line of their route, even when the proprietors have scarcely one inside for themselves, to pay for horse-keep, turnpikes, and wear and tear of coaches. Some years since, a disappointed old character frequently amused the lookers-on at Lad-lane, by charging a certain *great man* there, with shouldering to a great excess, stating particularly one instance when they were together, *conducting* the same coach, *not one* of six in-

side passengers were put down upon the way-bill; "we shouldered the whole!!" exclaimed *Senex*, "and when I wanted to give the proprietors only *one*, by way of decency, what does the *big one*, but collars me for my pains, and calls me all the b——— that he could lay his tongue to; and, now, when I only shouldered *one out of six* of his, what does my gentleman, but gives me *turn-ups* for it." By the way, *Travellers* by stage-coaches, should always take care to see themselves *booked*, as in cases of accident, or loss, they cannot recover damages against the proprietors without it; besides that, the paying a driver a *cad's price*, is like buying stolen goods, and encouraging servants to rob their employers.

Coachmen and *guards*, whom I have designated, in one word, "conductors," from the French, though there is nothing in France like them, or their horses, or their vehicles, vary a good deal in character; yet one distinguishing vein runs through the entire genus: they are opinionated to excess, regarding *horses*, *harness*, and *drags*, incontrollable while *on the road*, and, whether *off* or *on*, not a *shy-cock* among the whole generation of jarveys is to be met with; and, notwithstanding what has been said, are honest men, as times go; many of them of strict character, and some become proprietors, and then, whatever may have happened, "defy the world to say black is the white of my eye." But inexperienced persons

may as well be told, that whoever vaunts his honesty over-much is ill to be entrusted with property; neither is that cockney a man of sterling ability who constantly brings all his parts into play, as we too often notice, in all the concerns of *Town Life;* the desire to appear "chief muck of the crib," pervades all classes, from the stable door to the bench and pictured room, over which Gog and Magog stand sentry. So, whichever among the *hangers on* is the most talkative, garrulous, or impudent, is ever the least honest; hard, evil, and flippant words, being meant to cover correspondent bad acts: the same remark applies forcibly to all employed persons, *indoors* as well as out, great and small, rich and poor, individually, or in the great *public assemblies.*

Complaints against the *conductors* of stage-coaches, to be just, should divide them into two or more classes, one of which stands aloof from any imputation of dishonesty—if all might not originally so stand, until accident or a wrong course of evil ways render the second set more than suspect. But the practices of *shouldering* just described, doing the *natives* on the *road,* out of articles of life, which they bring up to *Town* to dispose of, the dealing in contraband goods, and a number of other out-of-the-way methods of "*earning* an honest penny," adopted by this class, to say nothing of the expressed wish to appear over cunning, bring many of them to "take care of things" for which no immediate

owner is at hand, much too readily. And every moralist knows, that the feelings once blunted by any illegal pursuit, or degrading occupation, leaves their owner open to the fascinations or the dishonour of another species of villany, and then another, until, at length, the quality of the crime is no longer an object of consideration, or its extent cause of solicitude, unless it be for the means of concealment. *Poaching* and *the sale* of game, for example, though, in itself, no more a crime than breathing the fresh air, or dealing in game cocks, or any other provender, nevertheless, infuses into the mind a notion of transgressing a highly penal statute, and leaves an impress on the *perpetrator* of his having deserved ill of his fellow men, whom he shuns *by day*, lest their prying eyes review every action of his life too scrupulously even for perfect man to bear, to say nothing of the contaminated and self-accusing. Whether for this, or any other venial offence, we may observe that whenever a coach *conductor*, either guard or actual driver, (for one of the qualifications of a *guard* is, that he, himself, be *capable* of "taking charge of the horses," upon emergency,) so accused, is once put off a coach, he never recovers his station again, but becomes a cast off ripp, and never handles the reins again but as mounted cadger over the stones, or, at farthest, "takes a pair of plates" for coach or chariot, or a single number for a *cab*.

Coach proprietors are exceedingly careful

whom they put upon their coach-boxes, and the mail-guards are *weeded* for the very least offence that includes stain of character. Poor old Fris, who drove the north country mail for eleven years, has been off the *box* nearly three years, only because a sixpenny parcel was missing, *unaccountably;* and, though it was, subsequently, recovered, and *found its way* to the right owner, he is not likely to be put on again by the same parties. The celebrated *Jack Roach* was many years a mail-guard from Newpassage to Carmarthen, but was *put off* through female intemperance, and is succeeded by a tradesman, retired down *hill* from Newgate-market, who fell enamoured of a *life among the horses. Jacobs*, who spent the best years of a long life on the *Teddington* coach, *lost his seat* for an alleged act of *shouldering* the whole lot. Young Robson, young Moody, and half-a-score darling youths of worthy fathers, lost their coaches through sexual improprieties, and now drive *the drum* over the stones, or take hard *jobs* over bad roads and during inclement seasons, *casually*. But the pen tires in quoting cases in proof of adversities and dark shades of character. He who wields it for the public good, would conduct his cause extremely ill if he did not adduce, at least, one case out of the many that crowd his memory, of a direct contrary tendency to the foregoing.

In the winter of 1825, by the merest chance in the world, a gentleman, who was about to

reward a stage-coachman for restoring a lost package, containing one hundred and forty pounds in money, stumbled against *Jon Bee*;—at least the sum was so stated by *Mr. Lane*, of the Red Lion, Bull-and-Mouth-street, w ere the transaction took place, and where the coachman, a very remarkably stout, well-built, six-foot west countryman, awaited the appointment to receive *the reward*. Ten pounds were paid him, with thanks; and I had the curiosity, according to my fashion, to bestow an hour on ascertaining how he would behave upon the occasion towards a crowd of coachmen there assembled, as is usual. His conduct was that of a stoic: he regained his chair, took his grog charily, and the fact of this payment, which had transpired at the bar, would have remained unknown to the company probably, but for another *treasure-trove* circumstance, though perfectly dissimilar, that had recently occurred on the Northern road.

Coming up with his coach a few days before, it seems, one of the drivers present perceived a watch, with its appendages, *lying on the road*. "Hold fast the reins," said he to the gentleman on the box; this the latter refused to do, at the same moment alighting, and picking it up. A squabble of words ensued for its possession, but eventually the right owner regained his property without *an acknowledgement* in cash, and the driver waxed exceeding wroth on the present occasion, abused the honest west

countryman, (off the Exeter coach, a good way down,) insinuated that he was not uniformly honest, and eventually called him a fool for the pains he had taken to "*give up*" such a dollop of swag for *ten quid* only. The mode of explaining himself, as much as the matter of his argument against the west countryman, bore ample proof how he would have acted in that other affair of the *watch-finding*, if his *passenger* had not rescued it out of his claws.

Short stage and *hackney coachmen.* The remarks just made as to blunted feelings and loss of *caste,* in offending coachmen, applies more forcibly to *short stagers* and hackney-coach-drivers, the latter of whom are the "turned-off characters" recently spoken of, whilst a few are "returned *lags.*" Of course, our stranger, any more than the long resident in town, will entrust no property to their care out of sight, seeing that it is scarcely safe while under the eyes of the owner. The *Greenwich* and *Paddington* drivers chiefly come under the censure here bestowed with too much mildness; though hemmed in by the rules and regulations of magistrates, kept in order by special constables in the city, circumscribed in their aberrations by their numerous customers' denunciations, occasionally thrashed or thrashing their offended *fares*, and sustaining the merited frowns of aldermen, expense of law-suits, and prosecutions without end, yet does the same incontrollable conduct continue; bickerings and

abuse never cease, *coach-races* occur daily, and the danger incurred by passengers at every *turn* into or out of the city, is hourly experienced, publicly reprobated, and still remains without remedy as without hope of amelioration.

Let none imagine that too much attention has been bestowed upon the subject of stages, mails, coaches, and their *conductors*, retainers, and followers. Taken altogether, they are of immense import to persons in active life, not only as mere "leather conveniences," but actually necessary to the purposes of intercourse as well as pleasure. *Paddington* has been mentioned; the passage to and from *the city* hourly exceeds calculation. At this place, in 1798, three carriages were more than sufficient for the purposes of its inhabitants, and these might run twice a day; at present, however, in *summer-time*, seventy-coaches, running four or five times a day, find full employment; this includes a final turn to the right to *Kilburn*, and on the left to *Bayswater;* both places, however, employ coaches that do not come under the description of *Paddingtons*. Besides these, and the numerous stages that *run* to places within a day's march per day, the number of *four-horse* stages to and from distant towns would stagger a foreigner with disbelief. At Paris, according to Galignani, (p. 539,) "thirty *diligences* depart or arrive every day;" whereas, at London, that number run to Brighton alone in summer, and come back the same day. An average of one hundred of the first

class of stages start from London daily throughout the year. Is it then to be wondered at that in so vast a number of persons, the originally fair character is sometimes found tripping, or that "holding the ribands in style" is ill calculated to work reformation in the already contaminated erring nature of man?

Whenever a handkerchief, a shawl, gloves, or other small article, is left in the coach, the fact may be ascertained by any *curioso* watching the movements of *Jarvy* awhile, when he will be seen to take off his hat, and place it in the coach-bottom; then, holding the door tight behind him, he deposits the article *found* in the poll of his hat, which he thereupon puts on his head, not to restore the goods, certainly, for when *had up*, he insists that the very next fare he took up must have taken away the article. Hence, the observer is justified in concluding that whatever coachman *manœuvres* his coach-door is at *no good;* the hackneyman, on discharging his *fare*, keeps open his door to prevent his number from being seen; whilst the stage-coachman keeps his door tight against his back, the better to conceal what he is at. When any thing has been *done*, the landlord of the *tap*, or "watering house," the next barber's shop, poulterer's, or cobbler's stall, is the place to *inquire* what is become of the lost things, generally speaking; but such persons seldom *split;* indeed, they durst not, lest they incur the split sconce, or some retaliation equally convincing.

Persons who may at any time be *down* to what is passing on such occasions may place themselves in a condition to reveal the fact to the right owner, by making a memorandum of the number of the coach—its destination, colour, hour of occurrence, or other particulars, and communicating the same the next days, provided the owner should advertise or apply at the Hackney-coach-office. This may be considered as *nosing*, by the rogues; but what man of strong mind cares for such fellows or their slangery when a benefit is to be conferred?

Every one knows (and their employers feel the truth of it) that hackney-coachmen invariably share with their masters in large proportions. Those often find good prizes in their coaches, by people carelessly leaving their boxes or parcels behind, in the hurry to meet their friends; or, what is more general, those who take out their papers, money, pocket-book, &c. to look over in a hackney-coach, in order, as they think, to save time, too often leave some part behind them; or else, by the motion of the coach, these get jostled out of their hands, or off the seats. At no time has a hackneyman been known to restore to its rightful owner such things as may have been so left, 'at the earliest opportunity,' nor at all voluntarily, unless a *handsome* reward is offered.

By the way, the number of a hackney-coach should be always noted the moment it is *called* (or *ordered*); and in so "calling" them, as

well as every word that is said to the coachman, a certain air of command or authority should be kept up. This holds them to their tethers; tells them they have no green-horn to deal with, and deters them from extorting too much for the fare. If a person, kindly or hesitatingly, gives his orders, the coachman and attendant-*waterman* pass the word "Johnny Raw," with a wink of the eye; or, if it be a lady, they protract the sound of "Ma'am" to her;—thus, "yes, M-a-a-m," and "no, M-a-a-r-m."

When a coach is called from the stand, the *waterman* opens the door as it draws near you, in order to prevent the number, which hangs on it, from obtruding itself on your notice: at *setting down*, the coachman, with the same view, keeps open the door whilst he gets paid, especially if there be a dispute; but, if he *twigs* something left behind, he bangs the steps or the door, so as to make the horses move on a step or two; he then halloos at them with who-o-o; swears a good peal of oaths at them, to intimidate his customers, and then resumes the dispute, if convenient.

If a hackney-coachman be a smasher, or dealer in bad silver, he endeavours to set down his fares (by night) in a dark place, if possible, in total disregard of your orders, and generally quarrels with his horses, should he be obliged to take them by the heads,—which quarrel is sometimes meant to be addressed to his customers. He most frequently "throws off," or

talks to his horses of "the precious good-looking load they have been *dragging:*" "no great shakes; I'll bet a pound of my *own money,*" he will say, while pretending to make the animals stand still; and if you supervent his attempts at smashing, he mounts his box, with the observation—"You knows about as much as *I* do, *mastee;*" but if you reply sharply, rebuking his impertinence, he does not hesitate to charge you with crime, by inuendo, as "Vhere did you come from, I vonder!" making a motion as if you had come from a prison; and adding, "you'll soon be *bowled out,* I'll pound it." Such is a fair sample of the conduct of the far greater number of hackney-coachmen; whilst some have been known sadly to maltreat their fares, women as well as men, driving them about from place to place, in order to run up a large demand; though it must be allowed that they themselves often *get done* out of their just demands, by drunken, foolish, or mad persons, who know not whither to drive, nor what they are driving at. The SMASHING part of the affair the hackneyman manages somewhat after this form—a bad shilling or two, or a half-crown, is placed in the left hand between the fingers, or first finger and thumb, and the hand closed upon them: he has taken them from his pocket, and the operation is performed while he tries hard at the coach-door to let you out, or lets down the glass. Should "the fare" want change for a sovereign, the result is no longer

doubtful: three or four shillings, *at least*, "come to his share." But the chiefest ingenuity is, to persuade you that you yourself have tendered bad money to poor Jarvis; who, after turning your money over and over, and perhaps taking a trial upon the stones, declares they *ring bad*, and you must change them for good ones. If you appear tolerably "*soft*," and will "stand it," he perhaps refuses these also, after having "rung the *changes*" once more. This is called "a double do;" and then, lest the transaction may have been "stagged" by some impertinent by-stander, or *a trap*, he mounts his box, and drives away with the utmost precipitancy.

Mark! Whenever a hackney-coachman thus drives off in a great hurry, rely upon it something is the matter; in which case, he does not pull up at the *next* coach-stand, but drives past it, "standing for no repairs," as to the law in that case.

Every one should be apprized, the moment they arrive in town, or rather before they *enter it*, of the absolute necessity there is of "taking down the number" of a hackney-coach as soon as it is called, agreeably to the advice before given. Servants ought to have this salutary precaution impressed on their minds when they are hired, and frequently afterwards, by way of exercise; as also that, whenever any company comes to the door of their masters in a hackney-coach, they should then, also, set down in their memories, if not in chalk, ink, or

pencil, what number it bears. For this purpose, *and others*, let a slate hang behind the front door with a pencil pendant, and a hand ever ready to seize and use the end on't. If a reward were paid for extra vigilance when any thing might be recovered by those means, the effect would be to add to the general stimulus all over Town.

WALKING THE STREETS,

Properly, as a means of avoiding molestation, and to be performed pleasantly, is an acquisition of no small importance. It is effected most securely by affecting an ease or knowingness, which deters imposition in a great degree. I spoke higher up of assuming an air of authority in giving orders to hackney-coachmen; no less serviceable is it to *appear* like a thorough-bred cockney in your gait and manner; perhaps by placing the hat a little awry, and with an unconcerned stare, penetrating the wily countenances of the rogues, you attain one more chance, at least, of escaping the snares that are always laid to entrap the countryman or new comer. These latter are easily recognized by their provincial gait, dialect, and cut of their clothes; by the interest they take in the commonest occurrences imaginable, and a broad stare of astonishment at every thing they chance to see. All these peculiarities attract attention, and raises the cupidity of the dishonest, who soon proceed to action nefariously. Such men

attract the attention of passers-by of *every* degree; and, it would be surprising indeed, if the knavish part of the community did not endeavour to profit by the want of knowledge apparent in our *Johnny Newcome*, or *Raw*, as such men are aptly called. He is followed for miles, sometimes for an entire day, or more, by a string of pickpockets or highway robbers, until they can find an opportunity to *do* him. It came out on the examination of Sethard, for robbing A. Anderson, that he and his companions had followed their victim from the water-side to Mincing-lane, where he received his pay; thence to *the Hercules*, in Leadenhall-street, where the foolish man counted over his money; thence to Snow-hill, and back again to the corner of St. Martin's-le-Grand, where they hustled and robbed him of near seventy pounds, the hard earnings of twenty years' perils at sea; and all this by broad day-light!

This rogue was seized by *Jon Bee, ipse*, in Paternoster-row, about 1803, after some desperate up-and-down work, safely lodged in prison, prosecuted to conviction, (with the aid of Mr. Kirby, the bookseller there,) and transported. In a little time he returned, however, was taken and tried for a new crime, and executed. This case is adverted to in a subsequent chapter.

Walking the streets has been reduced to a system in London; every one taking the right hand of another, whereby confusion is avoided;

thus, if you walk from St. Paul's corner, by Bow-church, towards the Royal Exchange, you will be entitled to take the wall of those you *meet*, all the way; whereas, if you cross over to the Newgate-street side you must walk upon the kirb-stone. The contrary mode is a sure indication of a person being a stranger, or living at the outskirts of town, and is certain of attracting attention to his awkwardness, a thing always to be avoided. A pickpocket will hustle such an one against his accomplice in the day-time; the stranger will be irritated no doubt, and express his indignation, which will be the better for the rogues: in a half-minute's altercation, they get the best of the jaw, because the loudest and most impudent;—a *sparring* ensues, in which he who pretends to support the stranger to the ways of town, draws him of his pocket-book, or his watch, if he has either, a fact they take care to ascertain beforehand. *Money* in the *breeches*-pockets can only be come at in a crowd, or by *flooring* the victim; the former of which is most usually, but the latter very seldom, performed in the day-time. A good preventive against this drawing the loose money from a pocket, in the day-time especially, is to carry something *stiff* upon it, as a pair of spectacles, a short memorandum-book, or the like; of either of which the present capaciousness of breeches-pockets admit most conveniently. When, however, the thief has opportunity, he carries off these

latter also, after repeated visits to the pockets.

From all this, the reader will see the necessity of cautiously, yet energetically, pursuing his way, without dread or doubt; since it is better to walk a little out of the right path, than run the risk of being *directed* wrong: to steer clear of assemblages in the streets, by going round them, or in default, pressing rather *rudely* through them, staring the most forward steadily in the face; whereby you become the *assailant*, if I may be allowed the term, and add one more chance of steering clear of danger, by a bold measure. Out of this practice of *taking the right* of all you meet, arises a good practical manœuvre, which may be played off upon any hanger-on who would wish to walk cheek-by-jowl with you through the streets. He may be shook off by your walking briskly, so as the current of people may flow against him, as well as by your cutting sharply by them as they come on in succession; the intruder is thus left behind wherever the pavement may be crowded, particularly if you meet the current and take the kirb-stone. Jew pedlars, and other itinerant venders of their wares, are also thus easily tired of the "follow him up." If your way lies through narrow streets, where the foot-pavement admits of two persons only, you and your companions should walk singly through these and all such narrow passages, and be sure to take the right side.

Frequently it happens that the low inhabitants of such places occupy the pavement, and you must take the road, in a dirty state, probably, or *insist* upon a "gangway, gangway, here!" in authoritative, sound tones. If they be connected with thieves, they stand there in order to pick a quarrel and have a *row*, or to smooth you down as you pass through them.

Finally, as a general direction for *walking the streets*, let me enjoin the reader always to prefer these to *lanes*, and these again to narrow *alleys* and passages, especially by night; notwithstanding the *new lights* recently thrown upon their corners and crannies by the gas makers, some of them are still dangerous from this very circumstance, seldom shorten your *time*, though they may the *way*, are always rendered disagreeable by the continual jostle of passengers, and the danger that you may be thrown off your guard, or allure thieves by *apparent weakness*. I have known the gas to be extinguished by thieves for the purpose of robbery; and much confusion of persons, with its attendant congregation of thieves, takes place when alterations or repairs are going on in alleys, frequently—Bell-alley for instance, and its ramifications, in which two thousand inhabitants find domicile.

Even better-frequented thoroughfares, *by day*, present dangers unceasing to foot-passengers, by reason of the great traffic carried on through them a-foot, and by wheel-carriage. With re-

gard to one great route, this objection lies now as it did a century ago; viz Thames-street, Aldgate Butcher's Row, all Ratcliffe-highway, the Seven Dials, and the lower parts of Westminster, from *the Abbey* to Tothillfields, are every one of them to be avoided by delicate persons of either sex.

PICKING OF POCKETS.

This way of obtaining the property of others is certainly the most genteel, profitable, and alluring of any, because it requires some degree of ingenuity to exercise it properly, and a great deal of address and firmness to get off without detection. Professors of the art are admired for their dexterity by every one but the immediate losers, and people in general laugh at the droll way in which the sufferers relate how they were *done*. "I have myself," Bill Perry relates, "enjoyed the consternation of two friends, just as they found out that one of them had lost his *reader* or *tattler*;—to see the vacant stare of the one, and the broad grin of the other, was to me as high fun, almost, as the actual possession of the property: even magistracy itself seldom looks half so glum upon a predatory marauder of this order as he does upon a night robber, a housebreaker, or a highwayman. Whenever the prosecution is brought up to the point of conviction, the prosecutor always leans to the side of mercy, and then the *capital* is 'taken off:' one never hears

of a pickpocket being hung, at least, when no *violence* is used, for then the offence becomes 'highway robbery.' Before the year 1821, those *street-robbers* who hustled or floored their victims escaped capital punishment; but Baron Garrow caused one of these to be indicted capitally, and expressed the determination of the judges to visit all such cases, in future, with the highest sentence of the law. Some were hung forthwith; and, in 1826, two of the Bethnal-green gang (Bishop and Houghton by name) were ordered for execution, a sentence that was afterwards, through mistaken lenity and the subsequent exhibition of certain impertinent depositions, commuted to transportation —whence one escaped. Three hung for it.

"*Lagging* is the worst the *diver* can come to. Lucky dog that I was in adopting so safe, so genteel, and such a productive part of the calling! Whatever may be said of it, now I have given over the pursuit, I must say I have done a violence to my taste, as an amusement, however good the relinquishment may be as to morals. If the opportunity were to arrive of choosing again, I scarcely know which line of conduct I should take: but, having so taken it, I am determined to be sincere, and I mean to be a little more particular in the details of this my favourite pursuit than upon other topics, although these are all collected out of the mouths of each of the first in his profession, living or dead, at home and *abroad*."

Notwithstanding police-officers constantly patrol the streets, or ought to do so, yet they suffer well-known thieves to mix in the crowds that assemble around print-shops, and other showy exhibitions of goods. If a horse tumbles, or a woman faints, away they run, to increase the crowd and the confusion; they create a bustle, and try over the pockets of unsuspecting persons; till, at length, having marked out one, the accomplice shoves him hard up against other persons, (usually some of the gang,) who naturally repress the intrusion. Thus wedged in, they next hit him on the head with a stick, when he, to save his hat, or to resent the insult, lifts up his arms; a third or a fourth, still farther behind, gives one more shove, rams his flat hand hard against the belly of the person marked out to be *done*, and pulls out his watch. If it be his pocket-book they are *after*, they lift up the skirts of his coat, to come at his inside pocket, but, should it lie on his breast, then the rogue, who is next to the victim, seizes his collar behind, and drags until the buttons give way or there is space enough between the coat and the body for the accomplice to thrust in his arm.

So situated, it is clear that every other pocket must be liable to a visit, the breeches not excepted. As he in the rear is generally a *short* man, or a boy, he thrusts in underneath the arms of the accomplices, who make room

for him on purpose, and he is thus enabled to pick two or three pockets at leisure, especially in large crowds; such as a *boxing-match* or my *Lord Mayor's show.* Upon the last-mentioned occasion, the chief place for the *sport* is Ludgate-hill, though the whole range from Blackfriars to Guildhall affords a fine harvest, from the moment *my lord* takes water to his return home, and particularly *during* those two operations. On that day the gangs assemble regularly, and enter the city at various points. For many years the practice has been to station two women of good stout growth near the place of operation, who receive the few stray articles that may be picked up before the grand rush is made, when they join in, and increase the confusion. Some ten or twelve men, mostly carrying sticks, are attached to these women, and act in concert on one side of the hill, while a gang similarly composed take the other side, and numerous smaller detachments, and single independent rogues, are strewed about in all directions.

As the procession advances, the main object is, of course, to create a bustle, and, if possible, a bit of a fight. They, therefore, enclose between them a few people of respectable appearance, and press them forward rudely; those in front resent this, pretending to be offended, and thrust back those next to them; the sticks *go to work* upon the heads, and the

accomplice, embracing his fellow, reaches round at the fob or pockets of the victim, whose hands are employed in protecting his head or hat.

The trunk-maker's corner was for many years the spot for making a good stand, and the articles stolen used to walk up the Old Bailey to Whetstone-park-corner, to Cloth-fair, to Smithfield, to Charter-house-lane, according as the resort might be. But things of this nature change in a course of years, for the very circumstance of this present exposure must, of necessity, compel alteration, to prevent detection. Yet again, on consideration, this is not so certain, since, upon some occasions, there are not a greater set of fools in the world than your hackneyed thieves: they have been known to throw themselves in the way of certain detection, or to stand, like the silly penguin, to be knocked down, when, at the same time, a good run for it would have preserved them in safety.

Should a street thief take to his heels, and be easily distinguished from his followers, it is not always advisable to *stop* him; unless, indeed, you are fond of a bit of a *spree*, or admire being in trouble, as is exemplified in Mr. Bee's adventure, alluded to in New Monthly Magazine, for June, 1817, page 309, signed "A Constant Reader," and detailed more at large in a succeeding chapter of this volume. What is more, they can mostly fight a bit, and some are armed with knives, which they do not hesitate to use in a scuffle.

Strangers and silly persons, who are the chief objects with the pickpockets, are not better known by their first appearance than from the ill-advised custom of *asking the way* of stragglers, and standing gaping at the *names* of the streets, as if in doubt which road to take. This being a sure indication that he is at a loss, and of course confused, such a person is, perhaps, accosted, and misdirected into some street or lane more adapted to the robbers' purpose; and being there met again, or overtaken, by one, two, or three others, he is either *hustled*, or his *pockets neatly picked*, or, if it be night, *knocked down* with a bludgeon. Therefore, it is recommendable that no one should ask his way in the streets, but in decent shops, or, at most, of persons carrying small parcels, which indicate they are shopmen or porters: thieves do not go about encumbered in that manner, at least not hitherto, but they might possibly adopt it hereafter, from this hint, as the best method of *catching flats*. Never ask your road of a gentleman in appearance: if he be a real one, he either will not condescend to answer, or, more probably, does not know any more than yourself; and for a better reason—that thieves frequently go well-dressed, especially pickpockets; good *toggery* being considered a necessary qualification for his calling, without which the *diver* could not possibly mix in genteel company, nor approach such in the streets.

When the unwary stranger is seeking out the

way he should go, he looks about, inquisitively, for the names of the streets, and which, perhaps, have been told to him in the low cockney slummery manner, that agrees in nothing with the inscription itself. This incertitude of the *right road* to his place of destination is occasioned by the course of instruction he has received as to the means of finding it as much as to the manner; for example, our stranger being in St. Paul's-Church-yard would fain inquire his way to Temple-bar, let us suppose. He has taken the precaution to ask at *a shop*, we allow, or the joke would be none, and there receives for answer, from a *good-looking* sort of man, that "he must go round *St. Paul's*, down *Ludgate-street*, and through *Fleet-street*," which is all *quite correct*, but, at the same time, very puzzling, for he is thus put upon gaping about at the corners of streets for all those *names*, or asking over again: whereas, he ought to have been told to "go round the corner and keep strait onward until he came to an archway, *which is the Bar*." Some thorough-bred cockneys laugh outright at any one who should inquire for so obvious a point as *Temple-bar*; and I recollect, when a youth, receiving the pity of two or three shopmen in Marybone-street for not knowing *Vigo-lane*: "Ah, poor fellow, you see how *raw* he is! he means Wigo-lane, at the bottom of *Glassus*-street, all the while;" and, instantly, to the justice of this sage remark the others cordially assented. But

the day of retribution is passed, both as regards *it* and *them*: *Vigo*-lane is *evanished*, *Glass-house*-street curtailed, and the shop that sheltered the three *warments* razed to the ground, to make room for the carriage-way of Regent-street.

As to the mere mechanical part of walking the streets, whether the reader adopt a stick or umbrella, *everlasting*, raining or shining, lame or lazy, or that he trust to *nature's stumps*, I will not descant, the subject being a point below my aim; as is the long-contended dispute of thick and thin clothing, attendant rheums, gout, and phthisis; but I may, without compromising the dignity of my task, observe, that a circuitous walk of some dozen or two yards, is a labour well bestowed of an evening, if *the walker* thereby evades dirty, troublesome, offensive by-lanes and alleys. John Gay's *trivial* remark on this head being quite in point, the reader had better read him:—

> Who would of Watling-street the dangers share,
> When the broad pavement of Cheapside is near?
> Or, who that rugged street would traverse o'er,
> That stretches, O Fleet ditch! from thy black shore
> To the Tower's moated walls? Here steams ascend
> That, in mixed fumes, the wrinkled nose offend.

If, however, the *street-walker's* taste lies in exploring the secluded dingy paths of wretchedness, he cannot hope to enjoy the treat in the *walks* just cited; Fleet-ditch being covered by Bridge-street, Blackfriars, and Watling-street

greatly improved *in quality*, though increased nothing *in size*, during the lapse of a century.

The close observer may always discover in the dress of the genteel pickpocket some want of unity, or shabby article, as a rusty hat, or the boot-tops in bad order, or a dirty shirt and cravat. He may come at the same conclusion by noticing an article of the fellow's dress, which has been made at the top of the mode, some long while before the other parts of his clothes, together with similar attempts to appear the would-be gentleman of *ton*. Mr. Pullen was, however, an exception to this general rule: the neatness and uniformity of his rigging, from top to toe, his cleanliness, the mild smirk of his red face, and at length, his age, contributed to render him as truly respectable looking a pickpocket as we shall ever find again. A curious proof how far this feeling regarding Mr. Pullen was carried will be learnt from the following anecdote.

Mr. Pullen found occasion to go into a public house at some part of town distant from his usual haunts. He was here in close conversation with two strange gentlemen, when the master of the house touted his customer, beckoned him out, and gave him *leave of absence*. "I shall go instantly,—but my cane and gloves lie in that corner," replied Mr. Pullen. To this Boniface objected, ordered him to "*evacuate* the premises," without *the goods*, and proceeded to acts of violence; the two strangers inter-

fered, protected "the respectable looking old gentleman," as they called him, disbelieving the landlord's information, which they attributed either to a hoax or to malice, and all three went off in triumph to another house. What is more, they handed him along, arm-in-arm, between them, and he could scarcely get liberty to speak a word to a nice, crummy young woman, who seemed surprised and interested at his situation. "He wished to send home a message by her," he said; but the two boobies would not *lose sight* of him, and did but just loosen their hold for the purpose. The interview was abridged by their intrusion; and, with the use of a little force, the fair frail one was permitted to pursue her way.

But what a melo-drama! not long after, being in a public house, one of the strangers lost his pocket-book, "soon after he had occupied his present seat," as he said, and the other a small packet of less value. They suspected their new acquaintance, and he was searched by consent, but nothing was found upon him, though the packet was discovered under a chair, at a distant part of the room. As none of the parties had gone out, they were the more puzzled, the more they thought how it could have been lost. The fact is, briefly, that *the female* just spoken of carried it off; the loser having been mistaken in saying he had felt it since he entered the room;—this ought to be a warning to people, how cautious they

should be in stating *unnecessary particulars* too hastily, on the impression of the moment.

Here was a very *neat* and *clean* job done, and all safe and right; and is that sort of practice which, for distinction's sake, is termed "picking of pockets," simply; though hustling, and knocking down, or tripping up are the same thing, but practised with more violence. We will, therefore, describe all those methods as carried on against single persons.

The pickpocket, who does the thing "neatly," as the phrase is, goes alone; or, at most, two go together. His intention is not to use violence, and he even avoids being *felt* at work, for which reason the law has made it *capital* felony to execute his task so adroitly as not to be discovered *in the act of taking;* notwithstanding which law, he always endeavours to incur the highest crime, while the judge as invariably apportions to him the lesser punishment.

For the accomplishment of his purpose, he walks the crowded streets, and tries the pockets of various passers by; till, at length, he finds the situation of the *pocket-book,*—which has been the favourite aim ever since the extensive circulation of Bank-notes. If it occupies the outer coat-pocket, the task is easy: he dips his hand into the pocket, spreading his fingers to keep open the top, and with the forefinger and thumb draws it forth. Sometimes, out it comes easily, which will be the case if

not near so large as the pocket; but should it stick, or hang by something else, the rogue *stands no repairs*, but pulls away by main force.

During the first part of the operation, and previously, he has walked a step or two cheek-by-jowl with the person to be robbed; he looks about, smiling, to take off the attention of those who may be near behind, as if they were acquaintance, and the thing a mere matter of course and familiarity. A thin worn-out great-coat, flowing open, is an excellent screen to hide the operations that may be carrying on within its folds; and shabby pick-pockets cannot be better known, generally speaking, than by this sort of half-genteel, worn-out frock coat, that twines and twists about the legs of every man they meet, and thus imparts the dirt with which it may be charged. But fashions change, even whilst we write: the dandy-cut coat will soon vanish. A lower order of pickpockets, hustlers, and street-pads, have long been known by the blue-coat and trousers with gilt buttons, that were so general among them, it seemed the livery of their *caste*. Blue is a favourite colour with vulgar fellows of every grade; but became general with this class upon the robbery of a warehouse, at the corner of Sambrook-court, Basinghall-street, several years ago, when the whole stock was stolen, and *the blues* got into the hands (clutches) of a game tailor. Another denota-

tion of pickpockets is that they wear no gloves, possession of one being the highest aim they take in this supernecessary article of dress.

If the article to be *drawn* is heavy, and its weight might be instantly missed by the bearer, the thief presses equally hard upon the edge of the pocket, or stoops a little to take hold of the bottom, gives a jirk, steps upon the heel, or jostles against the person *done;* then seems to beg pardon, and runs. For the inside skirt coat-pocket, he lifts up the skirt or tail, and out comes the pocket-book. Should a button impede the way out, a little knife fastened to the hand, soon removes that obstacle. Therefore, mark, reader! whenever you are jostled against, or your heel is trodden upon, you may *suspect* that person, and consider him who is nearest to you on the other side as having already robbed you.

Two are much safer to get off than one, as the second keeps a good look-out, or walking behind, covers the operation from being touted, and he it is that goes off with the prize, having received it from him who first took it. This one, being next to the victim, if seized, as is most likely, kicks up a row, and uses the most disgusting language; or, in quite other tones, offers to pursue him who has gone off; but, in fact, in pursuing, throws obstacles in the way of others; for, should he come up with, and overtake him in the hands of justice, they together fight away, if possible, to effect an escape;

sometimes dropping the thing stolen; at other times it gets handed to a confederate, who perhaps has the audacity to claim the property as his own.

Many women are as expert as men, and these always have one or two of them at hand, upon great occasions, as I said before. They are furnished with a species of pocket, which completely encircles their bodies, coming down half way to the knees; if the wearer be somewhat stout and bulky, it is clear she can conceal a good deal. Besides, if she be searched upon suspicion, the articles will traverse from before to behind, and back again, with a very small quantity of dextrousness; and she would thus elude discovery by any *ordinary* scrutiny of her person. The same sort of pocket is used in *shop-lifting*,—which see.

Women who *walk the streets* at night are invariably pickpockets; and I see no reason to set down those who by day entice the men into their dens, as any thing better. An intolerable nuisance long prevailed of harlots sitting by day at their windows, and inviting the unwary to their salacious embraces. Punishment now awaits the practice, and we rejoice to say it has been abated. Modest females, their parents and guardians, will hence perceive the extreme danger of indulging the whim of staring at impudent men passengers, who do not hesitate to speak occasionally to females they never saw before. Such as stand at the

corners of lanes and courts, inviting men to stop, are clumsy hands, but contrive to pick up a good harvest occasionally: they rob indiscriminately every article of dress, knocking off the silly (perhaps drunken) man's hat in the street, with which the accomplice runs away; at other times they will take off his cravat, while bestowing upon him their salacious caresses. A brooch, or shirt-pin, is constantly made good prize of, but should the deluded man enter one of those pestiferous abodes, which are so numerous in this metropolis, the loss of all he has is inevitable.

It is recommended over again not to suffer yourself to be stopped in the streets, even by a *handsome* woman, though that should be by day. They have great nimbleness of fingers, and convey away your property while talking you into a silly passion for their persons.

Although it seems brutish to rebuke a woman who should press against you in a crowd, in a church, at an auction, or in the streets, yet this should be done. At the Rev. Rowland Hill's meeting-house, for example, the women attend as well as the men pickpockets; they are found amongst the crowd of a procession to St. Paul's, at every lord mayor's show, and in fact at every collection of people. Such women amuse you with asking silly questions; perhaps, she will complain to you of some man who is pressing her behind, while one of her accomplices rifles your pockets in the mean time, from

behind another accomplice, who keeps his arms up so as to prevent yours from defending your property. Perhaps she seizes your arm, as if for protection, but in fact, to keep you from using it. Aye, she seizes both arms if that be deemed necessary, with the strength of manhood.

One very *excellent* trick for a woman to perform is to turn round quick upon the gentleman to be robbed, and running hard against him, endeavour to touch him in the wind, pretending herself to be very much hurt. Her accomplices are behind, and improve upon the *accident* by embracing the victim; and the hindermost is generally the thief, who hands off the property. It must be present to every one's mind, that when a person is hit upon the belly, or pit of the stomach—and those women are taught how to place their blows—he will naturally bend from the effects of the blow: at that moment it is he loses his watch, a *dive* is made into his breeches-pocket, and both are drawn; and if the lady's hurt is very bad, (that is, well *played off,)* his pocket-book goes to wreck also.

This same trick of turning round is also practised by two or three men; and a *good* method was for one of them to stoop suddenly down, whereby the person to be robbed comes wholly, or in part, to the ground; then, during the struggle to recover himself, or the efforts of the accomplice to *assist* him insidiously, the job is usually effected undetected.

Ladies who press to the windows of drapers' shops are fine game. When they wore pockets with hoops, scarcely any operation in all the light fingered trade was easier than the *dive*, or putting in one's hand; afterwards on the disuse of the hoop, the thing was performed by a short fellow, or boy, getting between the legs of the accomplice (a tall one) and spreading the petticoats, cut off the pockets, with a knife attached to the hand.

The practice of *cutting* pockets is much lessened of late years, why, I know not for certain; but apprehend the fear of incurring the penalty of Lord Ellenborough's act, by cutting too deep, may have had its effect; and since there are several methods of achieving the same thing, there could be no possible reason why the safest should not be adopted. Any other course of proceeding would be foolish, to say no worse of it. A high-tempered small blade, set in a ring for the middle finger, or the thumb, was a much more ingenious contrivance than the common penknife, or the sliding blade; because the right hand could be employed in cutting, and *grabbing* the money at one and the same time, whilst the left might be engaged, no less usefully, in bothering his *gob*. Lower down, I have introduced the case of my friend Mr. Maunder, who was cut with some such instrument severely. This latter manœuvre is nothing more than placing the flat hand (back or palm) over the mouth (or *gob*) of a victim who is likely to *sing out;*

at the same time taking care that it should seem to him the effect of accident, not capable of being reckoned uncivil, if the business should come to a *patter*. In all mobs where there is not sufficient noise to drown the voice, this bothering the *gob* is invariably had recourse to; the fellow might otherwise call out "pick-pockets," or some such *stuff*, when he felt the things going from his person, an event always to be deprecated.

One observation, on the foregoing exposition of Bill Perry, may not be inaptly made here. Notwithstanding the generally received notion that pickpockets are an innocent race of mortals, who merely purloin a little of your pelf, yet nothing can be more contrary to the real fact. No means of escape would be left untried, in case of detection, even although that should cost the life of an individual or two. They are invariably taught boxing, *scientifically*, women as well as men; I mean so far as how to place a blow or two with the *happiest* effect. Indeed, picking of pockets frequently assumes the character of footpad robbery, having all its characteristic features, of force, and violence of conduct, on the part of the perpetrators. Since this was written the Judges have condemned the offenders, capitally, as noticed at page 52. This brings me to speak of that next species of robbery, by those who are appropriately termed *Scamps*, called

HUSTLING,

Which is performed in various ways, as suits the actual situation of both parties, but always by several together. Higher up, I described the way in which the persons to be *done* are crammed together, in order to be robbed, (page 53). The next degree of violence is that where the arms are seized from behind by one, whilst the other *frisks* the pockets of their contents. Just the same end is obtained by picking an instant quarrel, and collaring the victim, the thieves pull him forward; while he is thus upon the stoop, the accomplice takes a *dive* into his pockets, handing off whatever he may find to a third accomplice, who perhaps has been making free use of his stick promiscuously over the heads of all parties. Another plan is to seize him by the collar of the coat behind, and pull him backwards: he must be a rum customer, indeed, if he gets over this and a dig in the guts in front; for, having lost wind, he will not recover it again until his property is irrecoverable.

A more daring hustle is, where a person being run against violently, as if by accident, and his arms kept down forcibly, while the accomplice, pretending to take "the gentleman's" part, draws either his watch, money, or book. More cannot well be done in an instant thing like this. Should the pair come down *whop*, it is far better for the theives' purpose; they both get up, pardon

is begged, and they part as quickly as possible. The sufferer, in adjusting his dress and recovering his *wind* then first discovers he has been robbed. Those who give preference to this mode of *do* are of the secondary sort of thieves, not at all to be considered *clever*, but ferocious; they mostly wear short jackets, (at least *one* of them,) the better to effect escape by running, the cloth being made smooth, if not slippery, with grease, &c.: their operations seldom commence until dusk; they never attack other than *single* persons; and the fall of the year is the most prolific in this sort of crime.

If this be not "foot-pad robbery," I know not what is; the only difference seems to lie in that the robber *demands* the property in one case, in the other he takes it *without asking*. The genuine decent pickpocket, who does the trick in a neat way, deems himself insulted in being classed with those, as well as with the description of street robbers noticed below: he decries the use of violence upon the person robbed, unless it be in self-defence, and to make his escape.

Bill Soames, *Conkey Beau*, and *Pullen*, were the most expert divers of the time just gone by; but that was a mistake of *the reporters*, which stated that those persons acted in concert, or headed a gang. Each of these looked upon the others as interlopers, or rivals in the trade of picking pockets; and each acted separately, particularly the latter, whom I never saw *in*

company, unless for a moment, with a female. *Conkey* had occasion for one pal after he became too well known, and so had Soames, probably; Bill had, also, several women under his tuition, and I once heard him explain to two of them how it was they had failed *to draw*, in a case that had just happened, through inexpertness. He exemplified the manner of doing the trick several times, to my great edification, and then they all returned into the house again, the Bear and Staff tap, drinking ale till all was blue. By the way, two weeks after this affair, Soames got nabbed for stealing a dirty silk handkerchief, in Newgate-street: and was sentenced to seven years transportation. He hung too much about *the city*, latterly, for they would not permit him to walk the streets at the *west-end*, nor sit in a public house scarcely; so of the other two, there was no peace for them any where, but in holes and corners.

Women not only pick pockets, but hustle at night, while bestowing their unasked for caresses, adroitly entering your pockets, should you come in contact with them. A short lass, and a tall or big one, are best adapted to this business: the former forcibly contending with the latter the promised enjoyment, seizes you round the middle, lasciviously, when the business is done neatly; she hands over the things to her companion, who moves off instantly, while the other keeps you in tow until the booty is out of reach, and then she becomes uneasy until she

herself is safely out of your sight. But should you charge the watchman with her person, you would not recover the property, and the charge falls to the ground as a matter of course. I have frequently known *both* women brought in and searched, but nothing was found upon them; in such cases they have a third accomplice, but generally the stolen things have been deposited in some *nook* or *corner* conveniently situated, near where the transaction took place—such as the interstices of window shutters, for Bank-notes: or the broken corner of the same,—holes are previously dug in the mortar of walls for the express purpose,—very often the deposit is made upon the ledges where window-shutters are stowed away by day. Such are the contrivances of those wretches who prowl the streets to take advantage of silly men.

A practice formerly prevailed, that has now diminished greatly, of women *standing* at the ends of courts and alleys, to entice tipsy and unwary men into corners, the better to rob them. This kind of depredation is now confined to bye-streets and lanes, or in the more frequented places they prowl up and down under patronage of the watchman, who takes his share of the booty, or "reg'lars;" and I am old enough to recollect, in so public a place as facing the North-door of Saint Paul's, three or four old harridans, including the wife of the watch-house-keeper, nightly took their stand, with commensurate *good luck*, at the coming out of the play-

houses, on a lord mayor's night, and *poco poco* every night, in the years 1796—1800.

Hence, the unknowing reader will readily conclude, that when any dishonest practice by such women comes before the constable of the night, he should not suffer a watchman to go out *alone*, after he has heard the charge, in which the *scene of action* is of course pointed out; as he would *take care* of the property himself, and you might ascertain that he had met with it, by his becoming extremely jolly, not to say impudent, in his answers,—among other things, affecting to doubt "whether you ever had so much about you."

In some watch-houses, St. Luke's for example, they have a small nook, or room, in which they search strumpets accused of street robbery from the person. The searching is invariably performed by the watchman and the constable of the night, who is usually one of the hired sort; and they, together, with the ready assent of the thief, seek to secrete the property stolen, by keeping out from participation not only the person robbed but any other spectator.

Forceps, or blunt scissors, are sometimes found on searching thieves, that are well adapted to drawing forth loose notes from a close breeches-pocket. In the autumn of 1818, a fellow was detected using a very ingeniously contrived pair, that performed well upon a buttoned pocket. The recurrence is not, however, very frequent of such an instrument, nor would

it be employed, I apprehend, by any but thick fingered fellows, or by those who have the forefinger too short for picking pockets.

TRIPPING UP

The persons to be robbed, is the next degree of force employed in street depredation; and is performed either with a stick, which is thrust between the legs, by kicking up the heels, or lastly, by fastening a rope to some post or doorway. Of these, the latter is fallen into disuse. One step farther in violence, is the mode of KNOCKING DOWN, termed *flooring*, with fist, or elbow, applied to the pit of the stomach, or a bludgeon at the head. This latter is seldom or ever heard of in our *streets*, but both are practised with extreme ferocity, at the out-skirts, leading to the adjacent towns. So strong and active are the patrol at present, however, that robberies never occur at the hours and places of *their* being on the watch; but then I lament to say, that the arrangements of double patrol in particular, *moving* about only for a few hours, leave open certain periods and places to the choice of the rogues, who know the patrols' duty as well as they themselves, when they can escape with impunity. Even the appearance of "a strong body of the patrol," at a spot that is much infested, defeats its own purpose, by reason of its very strength of *appearance*; at least, such an array contributes little to lessen crime in the aggregate, nor that little beyond

the ground it actually covers for a short time. Chapter VII. is devoted to suggestions for a remedy in this and several other cases.

Boys will throw themselves down flat before persons they design to make prey of; and the accomplice pressing forward from behind, precipitates you over the former, who in rising up draws out your watch with the utmost facility. Or, you may be *eased* of your money with as little difficulty, while thus bent down, let the fob be ever so tight. When the urchins lie down behind, and the victim is pushed in front, the case is not altered a whit. People waiting together for stage coaches in the street are often times thus annoyed; or, in *winter time*, when the ground may be slippery, they contrive that the dangerous part alone shall be crossed by unwary passengers. At night, these same little rogues perform the part of *link-boys*, in foggy weather, or when an accident happens to gas or oil lamps, or in front of devastations by fire, &c. These are very likely to act in partnership with thieves. How he will enact his part may be gathered from the link-boy experience of a whole century:—

"Though thou art tempted by the link boy's call,
Yet trust him not along the lonely wall;
In the mid-way he'll quench the flaming brand,
And share thy booty with the pilfering band."

Or else, according to the disasters of Dibdin's hero:—

"The link boy lighted us *clean* in the *mud*,
Wiped his heels in the ladies' aprons,—
With 'your honour, take care,' Oh d— his little blood,
With his chip chow."

When women slip down in the street, or faint away (alack) I would advise gentlemen to think twice before they lend assistance to recover any such "lost mutton;" for, notwithstanding she may possibly turn out what she now *appears to be* (a very respectable person), yet the thieves are so numerous, and constantly upon the alert every where, that it is about twenty to one your officiousness will be rewarded by some *do* or other, in the end. Sometimes it happens that the lady, herself, *draws* the soft hearted philanthrope, she having been pushed down, or tripped up and robbed, (make believe,) by one of her own fellows; moreover, this sort of women know how to run plump against such gentlemen [they are good judges of physiognomy], then scramble about as if killed by the collision, and down they go, pulling after them their would-be protector. Looking over again the last few lines, I am apprehensive the advice here given is likely to produce a more misanthropic turn to the minds of my readers, who may be up and down the bustling part of this little world; but there is no help for the "dear creatures," who are "in the habit of fainting," but to keep at home, and leave the *fainting* and tumbling about our streets to the female pickpockets.

Should a lady, under one's own protection, meet with an accident in the streets, as a slip of the foot, or a complete splashing of mud, &c. take especial care what persons, women or men, lend their assistance in repairing the misfortune. However honest hitherto, it is a great chance but that some one or other among them may find opportunity to be upon *the do*, probably for the very first time in their lives, especially if *the times* are bad.

Various are the *means*, and perplexing the contrivances of the dishonest, to come at the property of the unsuspecting and unguarded. The manner of "bringing down" their victim the more securely to rob him, has been effected by numerous stratagems, some assuming to be the effect of accident, and none of them recurring often. Forty years ago, great fear was entertained by *new-comers* of falling into trapdoors, in the streets, and the opinion was too general and deep rooted not to leave on us the impression that that villany had been in practice, though not now relied upon by those monsters who make prey of their fellow creatures' bodies and goods. How often do we not read advertisements and placards of persons "lost," or "left his home, a gent." or "missing, from her friends, in ——," all which proclaim that some *body* has been *unaccountably* subtracted; but where it is to be found, even the nearest and dearest friends do not venture to guess, though the bare announcement conveys a sur-

mise as to the why and the wherefore. Some lost persons are not known to the advertisers: "If the young man, who brought a letter of recommendation, from York, on the 10th of last month, will call again, &c." proves that, either in despair, or in despite of his reception, he has thrown himself *away*, and that his assumed friends, in town, have been roused by his natural ones, in the country. But, allowing as liberally as we can for the interests taken by the connexions of "the lost," for their recovery, of whose *latent kindness* we seldom hear the result, yet the number of persons *lost*, after whom few inquire and none will advertise, of whom if some do think 'tis with no wish for their recovery, must be triple-fold, and infuse appalling thoughts and gloomy notions, that bid us beware of straying along unknown ways or doubtful paths, amid less doubtful dwellings. The stern moralist, who knew the *ways of Town* as well as any man who ever lived, tells us, with a fearful admonition, to

> Prepare for death, if here at night you roam,
> And sign your will before you sup from home.

Mighty, though the changes in manners be since, seventy years ago, those lines were written, and different as are the morals of the present age compared with that,—aye, as differing as the metamorphoses of our triple metropole, yet the danger to life is not lessened, whilst property is increased in amount as well as its

in security. If the history of the times proves that the moralist was then fully justified in his caustic advice, no less so in our own is precaution necessary as to whither we direct our steps, not only at "supper time," but all day long, and every day of the week.

Not four years have elapsed since the Probert, Thurtell, and Hunt conspiracy to entice people into lone houses, for their destruction, was partially practised, discovered, and punished, though two other lost *bodies* are still unaccounted for. We notice, with affright, the number of children that are constantly placarded as "lost;" nor does the few that we hear are recovered console us in the least, for many are subtracted and disposed of we hear not how: one, of a few months old, was found in a privy, in Bagnio-court; and about that period (*circa* 1810), the same happened to a sailor, in Angel-alley, (rookery,) Moorfields; concerning neither of whom could the jury *find* whence or whither. "Found dead" is a most unsatisfactory verdict; since, without this fact being already known, the coroner would not have summoned them together. Persons *going* astray, though they deserve punishment, ought not to forfeit life, therefore; one was thrown out of window, near St. Catharine-street, in the year 1826, and, since then, another hung himself (?) in despair and drunkenness, at another brothel, near the former. Another estray, more appropriately fortunate, having wandered out of the

right path of life, "up the City-road, into a bad house, in Collingwood-street, was there attacked with *small pox*, before morning, and confined ten days." By the way, he is the only full grown sensualist I ever yet heard of being *recovered* by dint of advertisement and *per force* of a ten pound note; and must consider it as money ill bestowed. Upon a casual glance at the inmates, and the horrid aspect of the superintendant beldame, who can doubt that this variolous subject would never have *come to light* again, but for the circumstance of his having been *viewed in* to the pestilential den, by certain adverse brothellers in the same pestilent neighbourhood. *Date*, 1825, Summer.

Many, very many, are the full grown persons (men) who have been advertised as "LOST," irrecoverably so, as I found upon repeated inquiries after them for the purposes of this book; but the reader will, at once, feel how impossible it would be, and supernecessary too, to record every such case in a volume designed for the pocket. Who, of any long standing about Town, has not heard of the burning down of the brothel in Chandos-street, *circa* 1809, in which a certain clergyman was consumed, with much property about him; to come at which, his female companion was more than suspected of having set fire to the curtains, and then left him to the chance of getting away, herself affrighted at the deed she had done!

Forcible subtraction sometimes takes place. I was once an eye witness of such a violation, as regarded a woman of the town, but without the means, or perhaps the inclination, just then, to interfere effectually. This happened about August or September, 1807, in Bridge-street, Blackfriars; the perpetrators, about ten in number, were all Jews, one of whom claimed her as his wife: the hour, eleven and a quarter, not many paces from Fleet-street. This same woman and another had been remarked by the inhabitants of Ludgate-hill, in the dress of quakers, for about three years before; but a short time previous to her catastrophe, this one had become gaudy and cumbrous in her attire as well as big in her person. As usual, she picked pockets, was had up more than once, and on one occasion had thrown the blame on a Jew fellow, her protector or husband, as I afterwards learned. They, therefore, formed a strong party to carry her off, and this they effected, though the watchman looked on, by forcing her into a coach, after a hard struggle and much *smothered shrieking* that ceased in the coach, as if she were gagged. She was never seen more on the pavement!

A moderate degree of circumspection only is requisite to keep out of most of those *finishing scrapes.* For example sake: we have no doubt that more than once we were marked out for destruction or some grievous bodily injury, which it required no conjuration to avoid.

Every page of this book, or any thing of the sort, would be likely to call up a foe in some detected offender or other. In the case of the malefactor, *Sethard*, of *Bethenal-green*, detected and captured by the same hand that holds this pen, and alluded to at pages 47 and 55, the threats of his gang were distinct and intelligible; but those gentry have other fish to fry, generally, notwithstanding we believed them sincere, and *armed accordingly*, especially during dark nights: they might, if agreeable, see the *stick* at any time, and hear the *pistols* every evening at closing the doors; sure indications, these, of a bloody warm reception, whenever they might come up to the *sticking* pitch, be it said without a pun, as 'tis without irreverence. Another, and more recent case, arose out of an article emitted by this pen, and well known to the community of scribes about Town, entitled, "*Mrs. Fubbs.*" Poor Jack B——t took it so much to heart, that he took the writer to task, lingually, in no measured terms; but finding this made little *impression*, he would needs send a pressing invitation to what he calls a "*Chiveau*," or merry dinner. Neither did this avail him; as a misgiving flitted across the mind, that *accidents* might happen, besides that the company was not appropriate. Moreover, we should ever submit to a common-sense rule, in such cases: "Never give a chance away," is a good maxim of John Cope's, and fit to be stored up in the mind of every man in Town, whether versed in

its wicked ways or not. Nor would any man in his senses, under any circumstances, except drunkenness or temporary delusion, do otherwise, it is presumed; but when, at any time, he has so far forgot himself as to get into bad clutches, a good and efficacious mode of preventing ulterior fatal mischief will be found in setting up the pretence, that some overweening friend had watched you into the very company of whom you are actually in dread for your life. Fear of detection, in case crime be contemplated, keeps the rogues in check; the *small pox* subject, just spoken of, would never have emerged alive, but that he had been "viewed in" as before observed. Men recover their understandings, as it were, by a single glimpse, under the worst circumstances; but if they really retain no cunning whatever under the influence of liquor, they are no longer worthy of friendship or care in this life: where are the *leading strings* to be bought of sufficient length and strength to guide a full grown fool to his grave?

I rely much upon receiving attention to what is here advanced for his instruction and safeguard, and presume that every man has fortitude and courage to a certain degree; else he had better never go abroad alone, or out of the beaten track, never stir without his nurse by day, nor appear abroad after dark. With those qualities, however, he cannot well come to harm. *For example*, every body knows, or

will be told shortly, what danger attends traversing the outskirts of town at the northern and eastern outlets. Yet did one of our family walk three nights a-week between Homerton and London, during a whole winter and spring, without experiencing interruption of any sort. Sometimes he performed his task an hour after the patrol had *gone off* duty; and this, although he always traversed the garden-lanes, and crossed over fields, without other arms than a stick, or any light, natural or artificial, for the greater number of times. The reader would do well not to follow the example generally, seeing that this gentleman, in addition to much personal courage, was withal so well skilled in the art of manual defence, as to seek an encounter rather than avoid it;* although the well-known *havidge* called "Haggerstone," lies but a short distance from the path. Of this place it is a sufficient character to tell, that the constables dared not enter it, to execute a warrant, in the usual way by two or three, but were compelled to augment their numbers, in

* I could not help thinking this rather "fool-hardy:" though every gentleman should be prepared to defend himself *at arms*, he ought not to seek encounter. In October, 1805, Turpin, the pipe-maker, was attacked, near the Rosemary-branch, by a footpad, armed with a knife. It was eleven, and the place solitary; but, at the order to "stop," the pipe-maker threw away his stick and set-to with his fists. At close quarters he caught a *cut* across the left breast, and might have *paid forfeit*, had the fellow "stood up" to his man.

order to overcome a stout repulse; and yet the place could not muster above forty men, about a third of whom might deserve a *middling* good character. Alas, the day! what *improvements* are we not destined to suffer? Since the foregoing lines were written, the cupidity of builders has induced them to hem in the obnoxious spot with new streets, to abridge the extent of their wooden huts, and to erect a fine gothic church facing their pigsties! The remote consequences of which must stare our authorities in the face; namely, the annihilation of the pestiferous neighbourhood, and loss of caste to its night-work inhabitants. Already did the thieves, who usually and as it were legitimately congregate hereabout, betake themselves to depredate on Cambridge-heath and on Hackney-road, when the "Bethnal-green-gang" rendered themselves formidable by numerous malefactions, but were broken up in the midst of fancied impunity, at Michaelmas, 1826. To this fact I alluded higher up, (page 18,) and now request the reader to keep in mind that, notwithstanding the ancient Haggerstone may pass away, similarly disposed persons will assemble, with the same views and the same hopes, at other spots, that may seem to offer their persons a temporary security.

To proceed with the mode of do—when the victim is *floored,* and his wind well knocked out of him, imprecations and oaths, and threats of vengeance, in case of resistance, imme-

diately follow, accompanied by a most active ransack for the property, while they cover his mouth, kneel on his body, or beat him, or *cut* him, as the case seems to them to require. The voice is generally in an under tone, or a kind of vociferated whisper; and many of these fellows are really so savage that they will inflict further punishment, if dissatisfied with the booty they may find. Sometimes a laugh is set up, loud enough to drown the cries of the victim, at others they pretend to be friends "helping the drunken man upon his legs." They assume that some runaway hath done the deed, and they do but assist him in his trouble. At any rate this was the case in the sanguinary attack on Mr. Robert Maunder, of Mile-end, under the Grove there; the very fellow (*Row* or *Rowl*) who first knocked him down, pretended that he only had "taken the old gentleman's part," and this with so much coolness and apparent candour as nearly to deceive Mr. Watson, of the Bank, who had promptly crossed over to his assistance. "*You* was the person who knocked me down," repeated Mr. Maunder, and the fellow then escaped. He was soon after taken, however, tried, and sentenced to be hung, and though he would not *split* on his accomplices, three in number, got off with transportation, contrary to my wishes. While on the ground, though deprived of *wind*, Mr. Maunder defended his breast-coat-pocket and preserved his property at the expense

of much beating about the head, ribs, &c. and having a forefinger nearly severed from his hand, by means of the small blade fastened to a ring, as described at page 34; all this while the prostrate old gentleman busily fought, crying out "thieves, murder," as loud as his various injuries permitted.

Not to leave the same district, it will be remembered that in those same fields, beyond "Haggerstone," did *Kiddy Harris* and his gang attempt to murder the servant-girl, whose master they had robbed in Spitalfields, because she could recognise one of the villains whom she had *stagged* at Shoreditch-church, and dodged as far as the *Cat-and-mutton*-fields, whence they dragged her to a pond and threw her over the rail. Since *Kiddy's* death on the gallows, his *lot* have taken up abode in Angel-alley, Bishopsgate without, I observe.

The reader, especially if he be a stranger to the ways of town, should not ramble about in lanes, or by-ways, especially at dusk; and the less so, if he is conscious his appearance is such as to promise an easy conquest or a good booty. Therefore, people should never carry *much property* into such situations, nor seem puzzled at the route they should take, nor *show* their distrust at the appearance of the rogues, but stare them in the face, as if for the purpose of recognition.

Now as to these, and all other personal robberies, *out of doors*, I would advise a sort of

knowing circumspection, on which I made some remarks before. Suppose, for a moment, that you were to bustle through the crowd in the streets, shoving about the people; thus, in order to avoid the pickpockets, assuming yourself to be one, to all external appearance? It is not probable you would be attacked by them, upon the old and sure principle, that *dog* will not eat *dog*. So, if you stare them well in the face (not sheepishly), eye them downwards, *twig* the shabbiest part of their dress,—and, if a *row* is begun, you join in the phrases used, as "go it;" "*now*, d—n his eyes;" "what are *you* at?" "now for it;" "go it my jumbo!" repeating, whatever may be said upon the occasion, you would certainly increase the chances of getting clear. This phrase is what I always repeat: "The *chances* only of getting clear of their clutches" are increased by following these precautions; for no one can be at a certainty; as I have known a police officer (Handcock, of Hatton-garden, in 1813) to be stopped and robbed on the highway, when well-armed, and an eminent magistrate who had his pocket picked at the theatre, during the O.P. row.

As one test of the truth of what I have said, you may invariably discover in the person whose pocket has been picked *while walking singly*, something that points him out as a proper object of attack: he is easily to be found out as an *unknowing* one; he is either a silly looking chap, or an unwieldy one, or a manifest

new-come, or a *flat*, with his watch-chain and seals and the fogle, hanging temptingly forth. In making this distinction of walking *singly*, I beg to claim the full force of the word; for, as to picking pockets in a crowd, it is quite a different sort of matter,—there, every body goes to wreck. The reader of any discernment, then, will see the propriety of keeping out of crowds; for in them nothing can help him, but strength to get to the outer verge as soon as possible; and that will scarcely be in his power, if he is wedged in by eight or ten desperadoes, who keep ramming him up whilst carefully concealing their faces.

Need a word be said of the necessity of keeping the handkerchief concealed, if you mean to preserve it? An outside or slip pocket, in which the handkerchief is visible, is sure to part with its contents at noon-day, even, though you should not walk half the length of the Strand. The *simple* hanging out this inviting flag of flatness would be most likely to bring its owner into further trouble; as so careless a mode of placing the handkerchief marks him out to *all persons* for one of the *unknowing* ones, he would be followed and further pilfered, as certainly as that he has a nose. "No, (said Sir Peter Laurie, at Guildhall, this April, 1827,) I shall not send a man to prison for taking a handkerchief from one of these slip-pockets," and the prisoner was discharged.

Walking, from the time of dusk to that of

the patrol's coming on duty, a little before or a little after, is more replete with danger as the *times* are worse. Men who only rob occasionally are thereby driven to desperation; and they then sally forth to commit depredations on the persons of the unwary, which we, upon mature reflection, (after detection of the offenders,) frequently consider to partake in a small degree of insanity. Their necessities blind their judgements on such occasions; they mistake the object, and get into trouble, from which they are released only by a *hempen habeas corpus*. Such a mistake may be compared to the old story of "catching a tartar."

Therefore, it is advisable, to keep a good look out, and especially avoid fellows who are running hard, or who follow you step by step for any length of way. Pull up all at once, regard the motions of the foe, and resolve upon a stout resistance, if you are likely to obtain help in *a minute's* space, by calling out while you parry the blows, or the endeavour to get you down. If help is not at hand, so as to come up to your assistance in that time, you had better give it in with a good grace, and submit to your fate; for they will but increase their brutality as you rise in your opposition —in case they are not interrupted, or likely to be.

But mark this: provided you make good use of your lungs, as did Mr. Maunder, noticed at page 86, and also make a decent stir

before you get *touched* with hand or stick, I'll *pound* them to *bolt* in a jiffy; for those sort of gentry have a maxim, "never to give a chance away;" and most of them are rank cowards; they, on such occasions, put a question to themselves, and that is, "*Which* is to be off the first?" since he that remains to the last is likeliest to be taken, and when any one is thus left to his fate he is said to be "put in the hole" by his companions.

These statements are exemplified often: First, the robbery of Capt. Partridge, near the Shepherd and Shepherdess, now the Eagle-tavern, by three bakers (1816), one of whom proposed to murder him, because he made so much noise, is a proof of one part of the above proposition; for, although the place is much frequented, yet no one was nigh enough to alarm them from their purpose. These fellows were named Segrim, Moore, and Ball, the latter of whom became *approver* of evidence for the King, and the first two were hung. It seems they had seen Capt. Partridge draw forth his money at the Blue Anchor, Bethnal-green, and followed him thence to the City-road—the fool! I had almost called him a *knave* as well as fool; for he thereby made three *tolerably* honest fellows rogues, and sent two of them to the gallows. Secondly, another part of the above statement was proved under our own observation while yet we were writing it (January, 1818). A Mr. John Field, cloth-presser, of Addle-street, City, was

followed from the meeting-house in Moorfields, along London-wall, by two of a gang who inhabit thereabout: they were short and stout; Mr. F. being a little lame in one leg, gave them good reason to expect an easy conquest, as his appearance did a good booty. At the turning into Basinghall-street, (no one at that moment coming up it,) one of the rogues ran up to Mr. Field, pushed a leg between his, and brought him to the ground; instantly putting his hand into his waistcoat-pocket, he had but just time to extract a few shillings, when his accomplice became alarmed at the vociferations of the prostrate gentleman (though he already knelt upon him)—and ran away. They could not be overtaken, nor was the occurrence known beyond the circle of his own friends. It was an operation of about half a minute.

Here it will be noted that the *end of a street* was chosen; and hence it may be concluded that such would be always preferred, even though I did not know that *tactic* before-hand. Indeed, it will scarcely be expected that I should adduce instances, or proofs, of any proposition I lay down, seeing that every word comes from actual experience, either personally, or by immediate information from the real actors in the scenes I describe. Well, then, I have to inform you, Reader, that the corner, or opposite the corner of a lane, or other avenue, is always fixed upon by the knowing ones; and the moment is that in which they come to take

a glance down it, to see that it is clear of interruption. Sometimes an accomplice runs on before, to find the turning that will suit the purpose; he then goes into it a yard or two, and turns about just in time to contribute his assistance to the plundering; perhaps to receive into his arms the victim who has been knocked towards him, and to complete the *flooring* of the unfortunate person.

Few such cases are brought before the magistrates, by reason of the utter inability of the sufferers to give any account of the persons; but I repeat it, they happen oftener than would readily be supposed. On that account it is, I have dwelt upon particulars so long, in order that my readers may learn to avoid the dangers that thus surround them. To which permit me to add, — let them look out sharp upon hearing a whistling or calling, even although the latter should be but a person's name, (man or woman,) or, the former the ingenious imitation of the black-bird's call to its mate. Very late at night, and in lonely situations, the adopting a whistle that resembles the thieves' is a puzzle for them not easily unravelled. The fag-end of a song is a preferable signal sometimes; though the words may not be appropriate, they convey a meaning previously agreed upon, and are as intelligible to each other as Greek to a Greek, or the sign and countersign to the guard that visits a military out-post.

If two persons are in company, it is the safest

method, at late hours and in dangerous places, to walk at some distance from each other, say, from six to eight yards; it would require double numbers to attack both at once, besides the chance there would be of one of you running away and making a *row*, if both attacks did not take place simultaneously. Moreover, strangers to town in particular, should be careful not to let others know what money or valuables they carry about them; and the town-bred knowing ones, too, had better profit by the advice, and not submit to be drawn of their secret by the offers of preposterous wagers, the usual method of coming at a knowledge of the contents of their pockets. I verily *believe* some street robberies proceed from this very cause, and are perpetrated by the supposed friends or companions of the sufferers themselves, who probably commit no other offence during their lives.

In these, and still more doubtful terms, I formerly spoke of the probability of apparent friends robbing the drunken and too-confiding bearers of money: even whilst we print, we *make room* for a fresh proof: one *Densham* dines with *Watkins* and a party at the King's Head, Kent-street, and, while he is sleeping, his *friends* steal his pocket-book with £300 contents: three find bail.

At this distance of time (nine years) it is impossible to recollect the precise cause of these doubts operating on my mind; but apprehend I must have fixed my thoughts too

intensely upon the robberies of *large sums of money*, unaccountable by any other means, but never sufficiently proved against any one. The drunkenness, the stupidity, the late hours, that contributed towards the loss must have been brought about by assumed friends; and who so likely as these to take advantage of their own doings, though these may not have been put in practice with previously dishonest views? Numerous cases fell within my knowledge in which none but the companions of his last night's spree could be charged with the taking the drunkard's money, either by force or stratagem; hence I should advise that, in all such cases of *loss*, the parties in company should give a good account of themselves and of each other, noting always that the most talkative is the most guilty. The conviction of Tuck, the (respectable-looking) Finchley landlord, for easing the tax-gatherer of his load of *notes*, opened the eyes of the undiscerning, and conduced to the discovery of several similar cases, including restoration of the property in several others. Yet is the landlord of a public-house, of respectable aspect, a good depository, *for the night*, of any property a heedless chap may carry about him: his licenses, his beneficial lease, and the publicity of his person are good assurances to you that he will not bolt for a hundred or two; taking good care, however, to count over the sum left, and to obtain a written memorandum of the amount; for very

few can refrain from nibbling, to pay themselves beforehand (like *other* bankers) for commission, agency, and clerkship. I have known the thing to be done, without the possibility of the injured party having the power to *help himself*.

Of all rent-collectors, Charles Stubbs was, perhaps, the most *flashing* cove with his money that ever came under animadversion; and the more remarkable he, inasmuch as his careful Westmorland father contrived to make Charley *an attorney*, the better to guard his large property in Lottery-insurance-place! But Stubbs was not an even-tempered fool: he did not *always* lose blunt by "flashing his screeves;" for, at his Michaelmas collection, 1825, finding himself and companion declared drunk and noisy in the vicinity of the Charter-house, they deposited the total in the hands of Cy Davis, at the Fox and Anchor; and, after getting sober and groping their fobs, found Cy's memorandum, and all was *made right* again next morning; but *the fool* "never stood a mag's worth."

Another rent-collector, still less wise, but seven years before that period, *Michell* by name, of Camden-town, had completed a day's audit among his tenants near Crawford-street, when he would needs take a parting glass or two with one *Collis*, a *house-letter*, who was a trading constable, general dealer, and something besides—inscrutable but profitable. In order to evince his gratitude to his employer, after many suitable parleys, he calls a coach,

into which he thrusts "Master Michell, that he may go home safe with his money." He would have gone with him, but he had doubts "people might say that he wanted *some of it;*" so, to avoid that imputation, he contrives, whilst dragging the drunken man into the coach, to draw the *whole* of the *rent*, and his watch also. He denied the fact; but the waiter's sharp eyes *touted* the transaction; and, upon application at the constable's house, the identical watch was found, but no cash. Shortly after this, Mr. Collis got a few weeks' incarceration for being *in* some similar job, including malversation of his office of constable.

Although I again disclaim to treat of those offences and evils that have ceased, yet we should be guilty of a dereliction of duty were we to omit noticing the better defined (cavalier)

HIGHWAYMEN,

That, upon very rare occasions, start up in the neighbourhood of this metropolis. Indeed, so seldom are they *now* heard of, compared to what they were formerly, that the mention of this offence will appear mere *bagatelle* to most of our readers after all the apologies we can offer. It was a mistaken notion of Mr. Barrington that they receive intelligence from the ostlers and other attendants at inns, or introduced themselves into the company of travellers, of whom they *wormed* out the secret of their property, its amount, and the hour they meant

to take the road, &c. Whatever might have once been the case, I will venture to say no such thing has happened within forty years last past.

No, no; they *chance it*, when they *do* go out. Else, how came Joe Haines to attack the Bow-street officers, in the Green-lanes, at Hounslow? If he had intelligence at all of three traps being in the post-chaise, he made precious bad use of it. He was shot in the thigh, and afterward taken, and hanged in chains. That event took place in 1797; and, since that time, we have heard of about four highwaymen only; the most prominent of which was the robbery of the Leeds mail, by Huffey White, near Kettering; and another, nearer home, of a young city traveller, who, having lost his employer's money at Doncaster-races, stopped some people on Finchley-common, to make up his deficiencies, and was pursued by the *horse patrol* (Highgate to Barnet) as far as Kentish-town, where he was taken.

Persons who travel with a good deal of property, if they mean to preserve it, should provide fire-arms, at all events, taking care that they are in primest order for firing; for, it will be easy to foresee, that a *flash in the pan* would bring certain death. No time remains for new priming when a desperate fellow holds a pistol at your head. You should also make up your mind to *do execution*, if put to the test: dalliance with *edge tools*, in such cases,

would be fatal. To this mistaken notion, Mr. Fryer sacrificed his life in White Conduit-fields (1798): having *thrown out his tuck*, and failing to *use* it, the footpad shot him dead! This is a practical lesson for you, even though I did not know beforehand what was likely to take place, in almost every possible extremity. Two men were hung for this crime, innocently, at Newgate, by having set up an alibi they could not *prove*, though true. They had been admitted to bail, on acount of the uncertainty of Miss Fryer, the principal witness, as to their identity; but, upon the trial, she had been better *davised*, and repeatedly asseverated she was now positive. After he is well-versed in those preliminary *steps*, to the enjoyment of *town-life*, and can find his way about tolerably, still keeping his skin whole, and his property safe from street-pilferers, our *stranger*, who would render his sojourn more permanent, next looks about for domestic comforts, in

QUARTERS, OR LODGINGS,

Or *apartments*, as they variously term the resting places, at which strangers *put up* and abide, during a temporary stay in *town*, according to the taste, the dignity, or pursuit in *life*, of the persons concerned. *Tradesmen*, and your semi-military characters, employ the *first*, because they want the cook; the second, is a term adapted to *single men*, who require but *to lodge;* ladies and families demand of their

male protectors, "apartments," to be sure, and plague them with the fitness of the thing, even though *price* should be no object: numberless are the stipulations previously entered into, by the latter description of visitors, whilst the former, too commonly leave these unsettled, nestle themselves down in the first place, and "make things comfortable" afterwards. The negotiations are sometimes begun and carried on, much after the manner of a besieged town, from whose walls the *white flag* is displayed, yet is the garrison cautious of surprise, though resolved to yield possession. Moreover, the *flag*, or placard, is not always distinct enough for the besiegers; "other conveniences" being very dubious, is *objected to*, and requires explanations: whilst a *soiled bill* conveys a well-founded doubt of the sincerity of those within; as does "a first *and* second floor to let," give reason to believe, that the comforts derived from silent slumbers will be very much abridged by the "people above stairs." Those of the attic, who *prefer* airy situations, without deigning to explain why, look down with astonishment, at the airs of self-importance assumed by the groundlings at the base. "Why do you write up "*A partment* to let?" asked one who desiderated something *snug*, but not gaudy; "because I have only one room unoccupied," replied a very precise old lady, who appeared like a retired schoolmistress, fond of new readings and singularity.

As many applicants entertain various odd notions regarding their accommodations, so are the settled inhabitants chargeable with *innocent peculiarities*, many of them, which considerably annoy persons of moderate habits: numerous dogs or cats, or a solitary one that seeks your acquaintance, or booby children that show their *samplers*, and require "the gentleman" to correct their *tasks*, are none of them desirable to strangers, whose taste may not consist in coveting the acquaintance of "another man's ass, nor his ox," nor any thing else, unless he command the attendance of either, and would pay for any services required of them. In this respect, the professed "lodging-house" keepers, who charge you with every kind of service, and proportion their demands by the quantity of trouble given, are much preferable to those exercising another trade, or eking out a living by the hire of their apartments. The former adapt themselves to all the occasions of their customers, without hesitation, charging them therefore; whereas some among the latter, entertain ideas of controlling their inmates, either by whispering soft rebuke, or hinting how they themselves managed *formerly;* inveigh against the playhouse, can see no *good* in going to a picture-gallery, hope you go to church, present you with a subscription-paper for building a chapel, and if they belong to "the Home-missionary-society," preach at you an exhortation to leave off your old ways, and put on the "new man."

Here and there exist a few strenuous *Whitfieldites*, who believe they promote their cause by behaving rude in their extreme fervor, and if their *hearer* thinks ill of their impertinence, and quits, they console themselves with having suffered in a good cause:—most sectarians seem fond of making proselytes, in this or any similar manner. Those strangers, who come to town, already consigned to some given place of inmatecy, where they may find the fire lighted, and all other preparations for their comforts, ready cut and dried, stand in little need of our present advice; whilst those, who are content to reside at inns, at a "house for travellers," who come up to sell their wares, or, perhaps, to *buy*, will find their cases taken under consideration in other parts of the volume. But some of both these classes may find reason to change their mode of residence, and can take no harm by noting the best means of improving by such an alteration.

Our highest order of gentry and nobility, who do not maintain town-establishments, have "town-hotels" and Sabloniers to *reside* at, and would disdain to hear or read of any plan by which they might save a hundred or two, during their annual visit. What, though they lose *all* they bring to London; honour, health, and social habits? a half-year's retirement to the country, and calling over the rent-roll of their farmer-flats, sets all to rights again. Not so, the Birmingham tool-maker, or Yorkshire clothier;

every ten pounds deducted from his hard-earnings, straitens by so much his already narrow means of making the two-ends meet. And if the fact were not so, what man, with the spirit of an Englishman, would tacitly assent to be polled, sheared, and laughed at by the sharks of town? Lodging-house-keepers, nor those who let out their best apartments, in order to enjoy the *attic air*, are to be stigmatised as sharks, however; but that constant disposition in the town-breds to overcharge and overreach *countrymen*, which was noticed in pages 11–15, as pertaining to sharpers, extends, in some slight degree, into every avocation and calling; the disposition pervades entire classes or trades, in some few cases. Who would take *lodgings*, or the more genteel *apartments*, at a furniture-broker's, or a clothes-salesman, for example, without first insuring his neck, and making his last will and testament; for, most assuredly, he runs little risk of making a formal last dying-speech. More honour does not exist among the traders of any town in the civilized world than constantly sways the great majority of Londoners; but we must except from this concession those who administer to the immediate calls of *the countryman* newly arrived. Those among them who do not avail themselves of this assumed privilege, and they are few indeed, act under the persuasion that their *best policy* lies in a totally different course of proceeding, and rightly too.

As to the exorbitant charges made for lodgings, to persons newly come to Town, the waiters, and other persons about the inns, are mostly to blame; they expect a gratuity for the recommendation, and this is charged upon the stranger, threefold. The plan of taking lodgings or apartments, by any one intending to remain in town some time (say a week) is most desirable on many accounts, which may all be summed up in few words; viz. the irregularity that a public-house superinduces in persons of sober habits, and the entire subversion of his commercial views, in one who is already a free liver. Either description of persons should seek out a *private house* to reside in, examine himself the premises and neighbourhood, and make stipulations for the supply of his comforts, his conveniences, and occasions, leaving nought to after explanations. The terms of payment should be short, unless his luggage be large; his manners need not be repulsive, but if he indulge in familiarity, and is young, he will have *some part* of the family on his back; expenses and cozening follow. Although some well-conditioned fellows do not care a brass farthing about the honesty of their lodgers, they do like vastly to know every tittle about the stranger's business, manufactory, mode of life, &c. as the case may be. If he remain long at his lodgings, impertinence is thereby engendered, unless he adroitly give

them to understand, he can recommend to them future visitors in abundance: a view to mammon sways their future conduct.

No doubt, the masters of inns and their dependants can, if they will, recommend to good and appropriate places for private living, and *always* do this when thronged with company; but in cases of slack trade, they are most unlikely to do so faithfully, because they would, thereby, be cutting their own throats. No: let the stranger make inquiries of tradespeople in the neighbourhood, where his business chiefly lies; of the butcher, baker, greengrocer, perhaps at some evening assembly of smoke-a-pipe citizens, where some member of the C. C. may nightly fumigate his constituents into good humour, and smoke their politics with his "blow-my-dickey" exclamations. The barbers' shops, where the master does not shave for the minor sum of three-halfpence a phiz, are well adapted to furnish the desired information; and having instituted the requisite investigation *here* and *there*, he may communicate the fact to the innkeeper, or his factotum, and these may then be consulted with advantage. They will now be induced to impart good, and valuable, and genuine information, purely out of opposition. Should the stranger arrive in the city, per coach, he will find many a neat, little secluded nook of a court, or "No thoroughfare" place, where such temporary accommodation may be obtained. Should his

occasions require a longer stay, and, consequently, fresher air than these afford; should his *affairs* "require seclusion" in his habits awhile, he will ascend towards the country, on the *north*, where such are to be found in profusion, and of all degrees. In the *fields* of Islington, now covered with houses, he, whose reason for sojourning among us may be attributed to the first mentioned or general cause, will find great variety to suit his taste; but he, alas, who is forced from his home, through adverse circumstances, during the six weeks working of his ruined prospects (?), will find safe seclusion and bodily impunity about Bethnal-green, or the ill-frequented old town of non-wise persons, at Hoxton. Bridegrooms, who receive the first commands of their brides, as to whereabout they shall spend the honeymoon, when the lady fixes her earliest longings on London, its *sights*, its playhouses, and its pleasures, take up with first-floors or almost entire houses, in one or other of the numerous streets that sprout from the Strand, and dip their tails in the Thames's floating-tide. These being but a step or two from the theatres, and little more from any other public exhibition, seem most eligible for those of our present class, who would "come up to town to see a bit of life," whether wedded or not: but higher orders of people, with the same views, who keep a coach, take up their temporary abodes in the streets that issue out of the *great squares*, where

we leave them to lavish their pelf, and to languish in luxury: stars like these shine outside our economical orbit.

Speaking of the lodging-houses lying *out* of the Strand, we may say that they are chiefly under the direction of ancient servants of families, as butlers, cooks, coachmen, housemaids, and others, grown old *in service*, with tavern-keepers out of business, and here and there the relict of some tradesman; a few of them are offshoots from neighbouring hotels, who recommend all their superabundant customers who may desiderate privacy, to these establishments; but it is not to be concealed, that here and there among these lodging-house-keepers, we may find some few who should be guarded against. The wiles and lures that some ancient females know how to direct, most unerring to their aim, and to render conducive to their own profit, would be securely put in practice, at a lodging-house of all others, laid out for the reception of *single men;* and I have known *one such*, that was placed under the superintendance of a staid female, whose previous establishment, in Covent-garden, became a house of call for high-flying cyprians, who were in the habit of calling upon her, for the self-same purposes as our outward-bound traders touch at Madeira, namely, "to take in wine, to *wood* and water, and put themselves under convoy of men of war," if such did lie in the *road*. For "wood," reader, consult Slang Dictionary,

instamment, or the similarity will not hold good to the desired extent. George Colman, the *younger*, shed o'er this whole matter good illustration, in his story of the *fat gentleman*, who took lodgings at a baker's, and got a nice berth over the oven; where he was discovered, after a six-months' baking, by one of the faculty, *going away*, till he became quite crusty. The fourth line of the exordium is particularly applicable to our present purpose.

Whoe'er 's been in London, that overgrown place,
Has seen "Lodgings to Let," stare him full in the face;
Some are well and let dearly, whilst some, 'tis well known,
Suit better, by far, when they're *let alone*.

CHAP. III.

Out-door Delinquencies of the more subtle Kinds.—Sharpers.—Barkers at Sale-shops.—Mock Auctions. — Duffers. — Ring-droppers. — Gamblers.—Swindlers, or General Dealers.—False Accusers.—Bloodhounds, or Entrappers.

SHARPERS, strictly of the *out-door genus*, and whom our stranger in town is likeliest to meet with in his peregrinations, are the subtle characters we come next to discuss, in the order here set down. And truly, some among them are fearful fellows to deal with, and equally as

vicious, and quite as numerous, as the more bold, open, and hardy villains; for, in what consists the difference between losing one's property by a pickpocket, and that other mode of its changing hands under the semblance of trade? Not a jot. What signifies it to the sufferer, whether he be knocked down by the bludgeon of a thief, or run the risk of his life through the machinations of false accusers? Both aim at his money, and both cringe to him for their lives, when these become forfeited, since none but rank cowards, when they have resolved to turn rogues, would so conduct their crimes. But forgiveness in this, as in many other cases, is an offence against the well-being of society, according to the true civic creed.

Let our stranger be as wary of downright thieves as we may favourably suppose these instructions have made him, he is still liable to fall into the clutches of more refined rogues, whose dexterities are mostly confined to the tongue, and making wrong appear the better reason. *Mock-auctions* and "selling-off" shops are not the only pests where *barkers* are kept at the doors to invite unwary passengers to "walk in, walk in, sale just begun," with full mouthed garrulity and hoarse tones, the joint effects of gin and long exposure to practise in the open air. Furniture-brokers in Moorfields for male, and Cranbourn-alley, for female barkers, have long been renowned as the nurseries of either sex, if they are not looked up to

as the "finishing schools" for this species of humbug. Although few absolute strangers find occasion to purchase household furniture of the first mentioned, or caps and cloaks of the latter, yet do we frequently discover that some soft cockneyised country folks, induced by those lintel-post asseverators of super-excellence, really "walk in," and bargain, and buy goods that were made but *to sell;* something like those of Peter Pindar's razor-man, whose wares at thirteen for eighteen-pence were not made to shave.

"Sirrah, I tell you, you're a knave,
To cry up razors that wo'n't shave.
'No,' (said the razor-man,) 'I'm not a knave;
As for the razors you have bought
Upon my soul, I never thought
They would shave——well!
For they were made, aye, every blade——to sell.'"

Yet, what better can persons expect, who submit to importunities that are redoubled in proportion to the grossness of the imposition, and hearken to protestations of cheapness that are most fervent, when farthest removed from truth? Even the coarseness and vulgarity of such a proceeding, by assumed *shopkeepers*, are good assurance of intended imposture. Happily, the places where those disgraceful scenes chiefly lie are somewhat remote from general resort: *Rosemary-lane, Seven-dials,* and *Field-lane,* neither attract casual visitors, nor lie in great thoroughfares, from any one noted point to another; though *Houndsditch* is certainly

obnoxious to the long-shore people of the East, wending their way to the North and West, by the shortest route, and *Moorfields* is still accessible to an immense population, in their footway to and from the City. All those *barkers* obstruct the passengers' way, and some lay hands on your shoulders, whilst the Jews of *Russell-court* and of *Holywell-street*, Strand, are not only enabled by their situation to *interrupt* a greater number of persons, but, in addition to all other annoyances, hurl abuse, scurrility, and threats at those who refuse to become purchasers of their base apparel or ricketty furniture. What is to be done with such fellows when they lay fast hold of your person, backed as they are by several more of their crew? Would you thrash away at the obtruders? this must be undertaken at a disadvantage of five to one. In the years 1824-5-6, the extreme insolence of the *Holywell-street barkers* received several checks before the magistrates at *Bow-street*, and of one of them before his own door, in the shape of a sound licking. Thus, this circumcised havidge is just now reduced to *comparative* civility, though their numbers compel you, at every score paces, to walk into the kennel; and persons of keen olfactory nerves get offended in that particular by this sort of forced contact of the doubtfully clean observers of the Pentateuch.

"Hands off!" will not always procure relaxation of their claws, though it never failed us, at the expense of a base imputation, however;

as "never you toutsh a lawyer, *Ikey*, acause you knows vhy," — touching the cravat, an 'twere made of *hemp*.

"Hands off!" repeated we, upon another occasion, (there were two of us,) "hands off!" "Well, I'm sure!" (said the lousy rascal,) "I did not hurt the gentlemans." "No; no *hurt*, vermin only are *troublesome*." Even Jews have the grace, now-a-day, to feel when they are suspected of contamination: he *capped* us next day! and that in silence!!

If the shopkeepers who keep *barkers* rob you in their dealings, which is very likely; if they intimidate you into a purchase, as sometimes happens; if they abuse you with scurrilous and prosecutable epithets, which they employ abundantly—do not *threaten*, but go at once with your complaint to the next *police-office;* be clear and energetic, and circumspect in your charge, particularising the first accostment of *the barker*, and you cannot fail to obtain redress, restitution of your moneys, and a free passage whilst your image remains imprinted on their minds. But do not pass along the same thoroughfare *at night* for a long season afterwards; unless you mean to become a "lost gentleman," or one who "left his home," unaccountably in any other way than as *sausage-meat;* for the *Jewish people* are little forgetful of their persecutions, now as of old, any thing in Mr. De Blossiers Tovey *(Angliæ Judaicæ)* to the contrary notwithstanding.

Barking barbers do not enter into our speculation concerning nefarious beings, the masters mostly performing this out-door portion of the coparceny, *when it is performed*, and having nought more in view than to planish the muzzles of bristly handicraftsmen, by means of frequent admonitions, that here they will "Shave, y'r honour!" at three halfpence per chin. 'Tis too much to say, that any man ever did lose his life in barber's shop, within the bills of mortality—dread name! although we overheard certain strange stories in Paris—gaunt residence of raw-head and bloody-bones—about hogs' puddings and mince-meat being served out by a friseur's adjunct, about 1825. *Pour la fin, on voiait dans sa caverne vuide, l'osseux* remains of bodies that required no shaving when living. Sixteen years are past since any of us last heard Dove, at Holborn-bars, sticking his fists in his fat ribs, for the treble purpose of exhibiting the angular kimbo, of easing the action of his diaphragm, and of supporting the *full respectability* of his portal, crying, at half-minute intervals, the first word as high as A flat in alto, the other two in D below, that waxed a diapazon, ere night closed his labour, or his amusement, "SHAVE, Y'R HONOUR!"

Has he no successor? no imitator left, in all this close-shaving metropolis? Are all *the Doves* dead, indeed! and no pigeon left to fill the excision thus inflicted upon decent society?

Returning from this excursion, to the brokers

of Moorfields, who are *barkers* to a man, and the best dressed importunates of the whole class, let us see what was *Bill Perry's* practice, before *his* reformation, when they dragged him, per force, into their well-stocked warehouses. "I scarcely know what to recommend to my reader in such cases, for he would not like, perhaps, to follow my example. When those fellows were showing me from room to room, and dragging me up stairs and down, I used to manage so as to carry off *portable articles*, as ink-bottles, plated cruet-stands, small tea-caddies, and such like sort of little things, as would easily squeeze flat, and stow away beneath my *gaberdine*." I may, however, repeat what I have said elsewhere, and that is, "knock the man down, or, indeed, the woman, who dares to touch you with the hands; should you wish to decline this, at least, huff the offender with 'hands off, fellow!'"

MOCK AUCTIONS.

So far as the barkers are concerned, these pests of the *mercantile world* obtained notice a few pages back with their "Walk in!" Having so walked in, such *made* up auctions are easily distinguished from real ones, notwithstanding they assume all the external marks of genuineness, even up to advertising in the newspapers, and being held in the house of a person lately gone away, or absolutely dead. They are called *mock* auctions, because no intention exists

of selling under certain prices, previously fixed upon; which, although not high, is invariably too much for the quality of the goods—which are again of a very inferior cast. And they are further known, by the anxiety evinced to show the goods to strangers the moment they enter; by the overstrained panegyrics bestowed upon every thing put up; by the exacerbated vocabulary of the auctioneer, who endeavours to jest, to bully, and to jaw you into a purchase, asking you, in a petulant way, what you offer for this, that, and the other? All night auctions are of this sort; the seller having purchased the goods for the express purpose of *auctioning them off*, often pushing the price exorbitantly beyond the real value; asseverating that the manufacturer never will be paid, and increasing his earnestness the more he lies, in order to keep up the delusion.

Sometimes, though the sale has not begun when you enter, they will immediately commence business, and perhaps one among them will pretend to make a purchase; not only so, he will even pay down the money, so that this is likely to induce you to make a bidding. An equally deep manœuvre is the offer to take back, or exchange, the articles under sale, for others, in a day, a week, or ten days. This is more particularly the case with *watches;* but if you do so take them back, you pay through the nose for the exchange, and you find out too late you had better have taken Dr. Johnson's advice,

and dealt "at a *stately* shop, at once, where it would not be worth their while to take you in for a pound or two, at the expense of their reputation."

On the other hand, it is not to be denied, that many bargains are met with at auctions of even the worst sort; and more especially was this the case during the late years of distressed trade, when manufacturers and 'large holders of goods' were in the habit of *raising the wind* by sending their property to be sold for what it would fetch at the "manufacturers' salesmen's" auction, be that much or little. But here double destruction awaited them, in manner and form following. On all such occasions, as much money in advance is required as can be obtained, and is complied with to some extent; but this being ever insufficient for the pressing necessities of the seller, which increase in the exact ratio that prices fall, the auctioneer proposes to give his "own acceptances" at once for the sum total; which done, to render the matter still worse, he incites the deluded man to go on making more goods and more, to an immense amount. Before the *bills* become due, the acceptor decamps, the MART (as such places are still called) changes hands, once or twice, into the possession of his coadjutors, and after undergoing other transmogrifications, it is at length shut up, whilst the deluded vender goes to a prison to learn the particulars of his own undoing, and to lament over his folly or

his misfortunes. In the prison, probably, he meets with one or other of the parties to his undoing, who had acted as clerk, adjunct, or partner in the fraudful *concern*, who is there serving out his time under the "Insolvent Act,"—termed "taking the benefit."

This was precisely as it happened at the famous *mart*, outside Temple-bar, kept by little *Williams*. His history would prove highly instructive: he had been a traveller for Major Blundell, opened *a warehouse* in Newgate-street, and moved to *Picket-street*, as a retailer, but soon converted the premises to *a mart*. Here he did "the natives" for the third time, transferring his effects to one or other of his colleagues. Among his finishing feats, may be reckoned his taking in a poor fellow for a thousand *silk hats*, and a foreigner for twice the number of *chip* ones; a Yorkshireman for a great quantity of *second* broad cloths, another clothier for kerseymeres and pelisse-cloths, and other people for butts of stout, beer, and pipes of wine, which he bottled off, and caroused over, until all burnt blue. All this, to say nothing of linen-drapery, which assumed to be the staple commodity at Williams's *mart*.

Goods so bought, the most casual observer will see, were easy of sale, though there might be but just so many people in town as required such articles, and would take them off. Accordingly, the silk hats were sold at three shillings each less than the invoice-prices; the

cloths in somewhat the same proportion, and *the wine* was bartered away to one Jeremy, in Holborn, for his old-fashioned stock of drapery, but the value was afterwards recovered by the assignees of Tom Williams by an action at law. After Williams's retreat, one *Martial* made an abortive attempt to continue *the fun*, as *Dick Futner* used to term it; but *Martial* failed, for want of that *gumption*, or decidedly rogues' tricks, which is necessary to the performance of *great* actions. After this exposition of the non-intention to pay the original manufacturer, who can doubt that great bargains were to be had, while "the fun" lasted, upon the principle of "cheap *come*, cheap *go?*" But, then, for careful people, to whom saving might be an object, the time taken up in attending the hourly lounge, the danger of being induced to buy super-necessary articles, [that are always *total loss*,] the circumspection indispensable on the part of the purchasers, to avoid being deceived in the articles *they do want*, altogether contribute to render bargain-hunting, at the very best of *mock auctions*, dangerously experimental. Hereby is disproved the old housewives' adage, which holds that "a penny saved is a penny got." Hundreds have found out the futility of the pursuit, yet are numbers daily seen in attendance near the same neighbourhood, and at other mock-auctions all over town, that start up occasionally, and "hold on the *uneven* tenour of their way," for a longer or

shorter period, according to the success of their dupery, as practised on buyers and sellers alike.

Generally speaking, all *continuous auctions* are cheats—nay, universally so, if we substitute the word deceptions for cheats, whether held by *day* or by *night*. If we excepted aught from this malediction, it would be the sales of *printed books*, especially of second-hand books; old, erudite, or classical scholars, without previous introduction, find no means of personally inspecting the stores of our booksellers, as formerly, when their shops presented an *arrangement* little superior to the modern *book-stall*, though ranged tier above tier, on flat railings. Thus, a hundred years since, John Gay sings:

> The bookseller, whose shop's an open square,
> Foresees the tempest, and with early care
> Of learning strips *the rails*.

Men of genius, those of studious habits, the student just risen from his desk, the ardent reader, cormorant of books, and the lounger who would *kill time*, all frequent "sales of books," of whatever kind, and love to roam through the well-stocked library wherever access is unobstructed. For the most part, unblest with affluence, they dread to *ask* the price of an unmarked article, lest the wary bookseller, taking advantage of their preference, enhance the price of his commodity, in expectation of having the best at chaffering for its

real value. But the practice, began by *Tom Osborne*, (A.D. 1749,) in the sale of his large remainder collection, near Gray's Inn garden-gate, hath obtained in our day a wider range, by the "auctioning-off" of *modern books* also. True, it offers to persons less *recherchée*, to mere idlers, the ready means of supplying themselves with food for the mind; and, although the species of learning acquired in this desultory manner, is far removed from desirable knowledge in the *present possessors*, as rendering them querulous, invariably argumentative, and repulsively self-important, has produced upon the rising generation better habits of acquiring enlarged intellect, and more accurate modes of thinking than characterized their parents; who are dropping or have dropped into the silent tomb, full of civic garrulity, with the memory of hustings' oratory, and turbulent politics of one or the other extreme. The task might be pleasant, and would certainly be instructive, to pursue an extensive investigation into the history of the rise and progress of the present extended *taste for reading*, if the inquiry were carried no further; upon *us* it devolves as a duty to give at least a luminous sketch, since *London* was the chief theatre of its maturation.*

* During the quarter of a century that this change in the aggregate of mind was working itself out, the prognoses, and the corresponding symptoms of its approach, called forth the astonishment of all men, and acquired the admiration of some, whilst others deprecated the "march of

Pulpit eloquence soon felt its influence, the commonest transactions were conducted with

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intellect," as if it had been the march of *Attila* to the plains of *Champagne*, or the approach of the one-eyed general to those of *Cannæ*. The latter, the active *intolerants*, were long time the most numerous party in the land: they already held the purse-strings of the nation, became possessed of the chief places of profit, of influence, and of church-government; whereby they constantly attracted to their ranks, also, the most enlightened of the other, or liberal party, because these placed no delight in riches; and their best politicians were usually too poor to be honest, as regarded abstract questions, whence arise the *practices* of government. What followed, or accompanied, those sears upon public feelings, the Bute influence over the royal mind, with the privy chamber appointment of succeeding high-prerogative administrations, but the arbitrary Scottish taxation of America, upon the advice of a wire-drawn, Glasgow-taught, writer on trade, *Adam Smith* by name, which produced war and the loss of thirteen flourishing colonies, with as many hundred miles of sea coast, which, (like the house that Jack built,) in its course entailed on us debt, and heaps of misery and almost ruin; that produced the general ferment of Europe, and engrafted shame on all its monarchs or their servants; that overloaded us with taxes, whilst the perpetrators inhumanly increased the weight by *jumping-up* themselves; that nearly lost us *India*, ruined our manufactures, banished awhile our specie, and filled the country with distress and the lamentation of *all ranks*, including among the latter, the battened harpies themselves, the harshest croakers being those who had most recently risen from the puddle!

In the midst of this conflict of opinions, and struggle for power, or for existence, observant people saw without astonishment, that the *spirit of inquiry* was gone forth, in its most searching form, and discussion was at its height, embodied in suggestions of charlatan remedies,

systematic regard to precision, and tavern discussions partook of the *oræ forensica*, if not of pomposity. None would lag who felt sufficiently ambition's sway: all *read*, in some manner or other, *se defensio*, as 'twere, and the accumulation of little libraries on every floor,

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of proposals for a more beneficial and less expensive mode of administering the affairs of the nation, in speculating upon new sources of wealth, improvements in manufactures, machinery, gas, steam, and discoveries in art and science. Though inquiry was upon the full alert, the mind did not expand in proportion to its activity: though books increased in number, their *quality* was generally of the most mawky nature; projects abounded, schemes addled the heads of a few, patents *passed* in regimental array, and people required to be told what all this note of preparation and din of execution meant. The number of new books published annually, which, in 1788, did not amount to three hundred, in 1808, exceeded eight hundred different works; the mode of publication in small portions, which had obtained from the days of Benjamin Martin and Smollett, in small numbers, not exceeding two or three thousand each work, at most, so increased about the latter *year*, that two obscure individuals procured sale for at least two hundred and fifty thousand copies of a two-guinea publication, besides numerous other works from the same press, and many other presses moving with the same activity. All these works now under consideration *came out* in sixpenny portions, and when the cheap supply of substantial books, for various reasons assigned in the text, fell short of the demand, this facile mode of obtaining expensive works, became the parent of a still more extensive means of diffusing the marrow of the best books, that were selected and culled without mercy, and republished in portions of two-pence or three-pence each, to the amount, at one time, of forty-three distinct *titles* weekly. Their *authors* are noticed farther down.

and in every lodging, marked *the clerk* of studious habits above his fellows, the plodding *journeyman* of comparatively extensive reading, and the *mechanic* determined to excel his predecessors in quantity if not in the digestion. The advancement of many from these classes to civic honours, or at any rate to the gaze and admiration of parish auditory, or of charitable subscriptions, gave an impulse to the *reading mania* that was at once natural and striking. Hence, the desire of spreading *substantial* authors increased at a wonderful rate, and like the accumulation of a sand-bank, reproduced itself; the flimsy novelists and hackneyed "histories" were abandoned, when the sales of books numerously and rapidly succeeded each other *throughout the country:* no other goods were so transmitted for auction sales, whence we infer that printed books alone are the legitimate objects of such a mode as that wherein the articles seldom were pronounced "gone," or actually sold, under *cost price.* This, it must be conceded, partook, in an essential manner, of the character of *Mock-auctions;* but then the *book-auctioneer* was furnished with numerous *copies* of the same work, and if he procured a fair price for a few, the residue might *go* for what they would fetch, and thus *great bargains* in this line were often obtained. It is true, that some (indeed a great proportion) of the articles of such "stocks" deserved no better fate, being the refuse of certain great booksellers' ware-

houses, or the *remainders* of such large *editions* as the public disdained to "take off" by the usual methods of announcement, of puff, and *purchased panegyric. Old John Stockdale* was a great adventurer in this line, after he had tried on several other modes of dispensing learning he could not possess, and he was followed or preceded by many others, with like qualifications. In the transmission of large stocks of such "remainders," from the publishing booksellers, or their heirs, to ferretting booksellers, who disseminated their purchases, it is a remarkable fact, that none but the most ignorant of their own body, interlopers, made any figure as "trade-auctioneers:" if any one more intelligent, as to spelling the titles aright, or other clerical denotation, endeavoured to direct their *internal sales,* "the trade" coalesced in this, though in no other general measure whatever, to kick him out; a *King*, a *Hone*, a *Rider*, or a *Taylor*, they eschewed as beings of another order.

Exploded learning, mistaken notions, false doctrines, or, at least, *rejected literature*, that was so promulged could operate no good, but gratify the craving appetite for reading, that is destined never to be satiated. At length, the owners of large prime stocks withheld them, extensive publishers neither died or run away, but the shoals of new publications, at *high prices*, still went on, amidst the universal cry of "shame" at the extravagance of authors and

cupidity of book-publishers. This outcry gave rise, as seemed inevitable, to a fresh shoal of authors* of a third and fourth rate, as to talent

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* They were of all orders and every degree, from him who could just mark out, in other publications, the more striking and interesting passages, according to his own taste, to the higher class who assumed to criticise upon an author, to make a remark on his beauties or incongruities, or to act the simple part of *an usher*, who undertakes to introduce a favourite to the public; several among them were barbers, and three house-painters out of employment, many handicraftsmen, and one really a chimney-sweeper's boy. Nor any disparagement either, provided these persons conducted their new affairs with moderation, which was not the case: they had been embued too strongly with the "exploded literature" alluded to in the text; they inflated themselves with the airs supposed to belong to great or exquisite genius; their productions, therefore, fell to the ground in myriads, and were succeeded by others; and when they ventured to write what they might *think*, or sat down to think upon what they should write—flatulency, vapour, assumption, borrowed plumes, base imitation, denoted all their productions. *Critics* treated them with entire neglect, or caustically noticed their "best got up things," with appalling brevity; *the authors* retaliated with *personal abuse*, for they believed themselves infallible, and attributed their hard fate to envy: as a rebutter, their tormenters termed them theirs' *Caco-fogo* style, unknown to any but themselves. Some of them prudently retired to their original avocations, whilst others keep the field in various shapes and with varied fortune, as they do with accusations and recriminations without number; the result whereof has been repeated exposure of gross venality, corruption, and utter incapacity for

and school learning; nor endowed with integrity sufficient to acknowledge their originals,

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their newly assumed employments, before the courts of law, in the shape of twopenny damages

Of the rival twopenny publications some half a dozen were concocted, successively, by a junto of wrongheads, meeting together over their cups at the little coffee-shop in St. Martin's Court, Ludgate; where the party daily held a literary *conversazione*, in distant imitation of those at 'the Chapter,' or those others recorded with tedious minuteness, by *James Boswell*, the jackal of *Sam. Johnson*. Those projectors, however, are vanished all into thin, thin air, some of them literally dead, whilst most of *the shoal* expiated their offences into K. B. or C. P., by compromise, or by "a declaration in Chancery." It was pleasant enough to see the ineffable coxcombry of one of these, as in a "Mirror," whining under the effects of hot salt-water baths, in the Summer of 1824 and 1825: "Will our readers bear with *us* one more week at Brighton?" "Still the heat and *ennui* detain *us* from the press." And who should this *us* be, of all the world, but a tiny pressman, who, finding his "Mirror" reflect 13,000 ways at once, under good management, had the temerity to become his own editor, until the refraction then dismounted to a quarter that *number*. Thus proving, that the publisher, who becomes his own editor has a fool for his publisher. Another, a *republisher* of other persons' property, after being tired and *retired*, *threatened* to publish "No. 1. price 6*d*. Memoirs of Mr. Thomas Dolby, late publisher &c. written by himself." It *goes on* to describe—(he says) "the *difficulties* in the way of his education." Yes, yes; difficulty enough, no doubt; absolute *impediments;* sad lets, hindrances insurmountable; and, in striving to overleap these, the soft and innumerable adventurers stumble and break the necks of their hopes, and drag down confiding simplicity and "female relations" along with them.

or to keep their "hands and pens" from pilfering and stealing the property of other publishers than their employers.

Notwithstanding I mean to pursue the subject of those and similar *literatists*, under a separate head, I could not refrain from the propriety of pushing this exposition so far, evidently arising, as this mockery does, out of another, *viz, mock-auctions;* for those sell *themselves* to the best bidder as these do their goods, as often as they can find purchasers, at equally unmerited prices too, and their *productions* are as factitiously got up as the razors before alluded to, with the additional fact, that the materials are clandestinely obtained.

Mock-auctions of furniture are frequently held at the auctioners' own rooms, are regularly advertised, and never fail to attract companies, part of which are hired persons—women as well as men, at a poor daily stipend: those for general purposes now existing, in addition to the beforementioned outside Temple-bar, may be found *nightly* in St. Martin's le Grand, above Holborn-bars, in Ludgate-*street*, and Leicester-square; whilst that which went on for several years at the corner of Water-lane, Fleet-street, has ceased for the present; as hath, for two years, the daily *mockery* near Queen-street, in Cheapside, where Mr. Knockemdown has a mote in his *eye* as well as in his *good name*, whilst he bore invariably the farina of wheat on his mean

top. Nearly opposite, also, recently surceased a nightly rig in such books as are adverted to at page 124, or were manufactured for the *knock-out*, together with unseemly caricatures. Of these abandoned money-making projects, it is good to observe, that grace enough prevailed to induce so much concession to public opinion, and the monitions of the bench at Guildhall.

Duffers and *Buffers*, both belong to the same *species* of keen traders, the latter being a novel *genus* arising out of the former; and although these seem to have passed away with the new circumstances attending our free-trade system, yet as the principles that dictated this line of policy may probably give way to the old arbitrary impolitic acts of exclusion and prohibition, we expect the return of *buffing* at no distant period; for the supporters of coercion and proscription, and lovers of starched morals, only retire from our sight awhile to return again with fresh vigour.

Duffers were anciently packmen, vendors of linen goods chiefly, invariably north countrymen, *with us* calling themselves "tradesmen;" and if they took up a station any where, keeping a warehouse or depository for their goods—they assumed to be "merchants," forsooth, and gave themselves airs. We knew *Jordaine* well: he was a Glasgowman, and the most successful of *duffers* in modern times; he incontinently despatched several of his helpmates to

various points;* these, of course, had to work up-hill, and were much upon a par with our present itinerant vendors of *pack* goods, who are mostly Irishmen, from the north; they become extremely importunate to do business with all they meet, and are found very troublesome to middling housekeepers, on the outskirts of Town, all of whom they cajole with pretended bargains. And what, although they be really so, have they not a dozen other methods of *taking-in* their customers, that all border upon the dishonest—if smashing and pilfering be not among these misdoings! They "ring the changes," too, much in the manner of the *buffers*, in which respect they nearly assimilate, if they were not varieties of the same, or the very same persons. In the City, their resort has been the Falcon, in Falcon-square; in the Borough, at certain lodging-houses, near the back of Union-street Police-office; in Westminster, they are more scattered, but wherever they ply for trade, or call in for custom,

* He "cut up" at ten thousand pounds, was a free liver, but never *duffed it* in the streets of London, so far as I could ascertain: neither did Donaldson; he, who when his very aged sire affectionately addressed him with the familiar "dear *Jemmy*," threatened to withdraw the old man's weekly pittance of twelve shillings, as the only means of expiating his ire. Ask *Will. White*, of Wood-street, about it: yet the fellow pretended to be a Scotchman, affected to be a London tradesman, and sometimes wrote up "merchant."

become very great nuisances to all decent housekeepers who may chance to deal with them but once. In this latter respect they come again, under full consideration in Chapter IV. where we intend to speak of other *walking tradesmen*, who come within the meaning of the Hawker's and Pedlar's Law.

*Buffers** are a refinement upon the foregoing, or rather an abasement, according as the operations of the latter may be viewed, or suffered, by the party passing an opinion. They *work* in the streets, up and down; were alluded to higher up, (page 128); and, notwithstanding the opinion I formerly gave of the buffers, I must allow that the case of *Dick Bowers* and his set goes a great way to shake it; as does also the fact of my having seen one of the Westminster set in company of a street thief, on the very day of the latter being let loose from a six-months' incarceration in Cold-Bath-fields prison. Both instances coming together, within two months, makes the matter look queer. However, these

* The term "buffer" is derived from the practice which once prevailed of carrying Bandanas, Sarsnets, French stockings, and other contraband goods, next their shirts; so, as they were obliged to undress in order to come at the goods, or, in other words, to strip to the skin, or *buff*, they obtained the name of *buffers*. When Mr. Barrington did his "Spy," they might, and probably did, carry their goods always about them, and show them in the streets; now, however, they carry on trade in a more genteel manner, leaving a *pack* at some public-house, near where they mean to ply for customers.

chaps are not all rogues, in the strict meaning of the word—they only sell readily to the *best advantage.* If they can persuade you an article is better than it actually is, you have nothing to complain of—every tradesman will do the same. The chief objection to them lies in their *mode of operations,* of which we shall speak presently, and in their overstrained recommention of their goods. As in every other species of cheatery, they look out for the unknowing, or silly, to whom, walking up with *demure phiz* and interesting air, they announce the pleasing intelligence that they have on sale (as may suit your appearance) " an excellent piece of corduroy, just sufficient for a breeches piece," —or " some real India muslin, just brought home by a relation, enough for two gowns, at the price of one;" or, " what would you think of some beautiful French silk stockings as cheap as cotton, and ten times as strong? Sir, there are two or three pieces of *real* India handkerchiefs, fine wear, that will last your life-time; and always look well, never wear out: One is yellow—one is chocolate,—one is ———. What a pity! Only just now I sold a *country* gentleman,—your size,—a beautiful fine waistcoat piece (describing the one you wear)—full size, genteel, fast colours, never wear out, at—what d'ye think?" (then he starts out with a sum just half its value)—" Down there, Sir; yes, Sir, at that house with the grapes out, and chequers on, I'll show you

such things as you never saw. Very well worth your notice, Sir; no harm done, though you should not buy. I have a glass of grog in there, half drank; just step in and look at them." Then, partly by persuasion, partly by force, he hands along his customer to a dark back room, where probably he exhibits some really good articles, if he has a judge of them to deal with, but taking care to "ring the changes" upon wrapping them up, on the event of a purchase. If you insist upon having the piece chosen, they take it away by force: for this was *Dick Bowers* transported; the article, Irish linen.

A master-piece of the game is, where his confederate comes in, and begins a conversation with his brother buffer. At the first, quite strangers to each other, the comer-in proposes to withdraw, through bashfulness, but is *ordered* to stay by the confederate, perhaps asked to partake of drink; for all which kindness he seems much obliged, and expresses his thanks *clumsily*. At length, more emboldened, he introduces a word or two in favour of the goods, magnifies their value, recommends a purchase, and all at once recollects having bought some article or other he now wears, of such another man. The two knaves join in the description of that man; both agree in the particulars, and in his character for honesty, shake hands and drink together.

Not less frequently, real tradesmen, living in the neighbourhood, who frequent the same

house, good naturedly (or with a worse motive) join in the recommendation of the article to be sold, and the delusion is then complete—the stranger is thus taken in with the aid of those who ought to be his protectors. Should you ultimately refuse to purchase, you must put up with a great deal of abuse, provocations to lay wagers, and to fight, or go through with the quarrel by contending against fearful odds. Whatever money you produce never returns to your pockets again; the landlord is sure to take part against you, "for the credit of his house;" and all present will declare themselves ready to swear that you have perpetrated such infernal things as in fact you never once so much as thought of. Those buffers, being very merry facetious fellows, with good conversational abilities, never fail to ingratiate themselves with the *company* who frequent the adjoining "parlour," and, therefore they soon obtain the lingual help of some smoke-a-pipe person present, who will, if you "kick," or "run restive" at their insinuations, carry much farther their charges against character. What would you think of being asked, in an authoritative tone, by one who employs some dozen score of workmen, "I say, when were you upon the highway last?" Such a charge is scarcely bearable, though prudence dictates that you should not resent the affront as you ought. I have witnessed this piece of rudeness treated in both ways of resentment; either by rebutter or by silent indignation, and think

the latter preferable for the majority of persons; for if you can fight the whole party, and ultimately go before a magistrate, all the evidence is against you; the only obstacle to this last step being the presumption that the buffer is a real smuggler, when the landlord *puts a stopper* on legal proceedings, and the buffer bolts.

From this exposition, the reader will perceive the extreme danger of suffering himself to be goaded into the purchase of any article whatsoever in the street: they are invariably cheats who attempt to vend articles of wear in such a flying manner. The shortest way with all such casual *cattle* is to decline the least particle of conversation with them; and if they place a finger on your arm to stop your progress—peremptorily bid them "hands off;" or, if you have sufficient strength—knock them into the kennel—a severe, intelligible, and most appropriate rebuke. People may talk of a "rap over the knuckles" as they like, but there is nothing like a rap in the mouth of a saucy fellow, or in the eyes of an impudent one—as suits your fancy; though when his hand is laid on your sleeve, good opportunity presents itself for a real rap on the knuckles with your stick.

Sharpers of several other qualities than those daily prowl the streets, for the purpose of inducing unwary countrymen to part with their money, under one pretence or another; those which come nearest the *buffers* in their manner of approach, and who are frequently the very buffers themselves, "out of goods," are *gamblers at*

cards, dominos, or shaking in the hat, and chalking under the hat; or they provoke strangers to play at some *casual* game, or excite *wagers*, all which we come to take into consideration in the ensuing pages. Meanwhile, we may observe, while passing along, that *the sharpers*, who mean to make prey of strangers, usually ascertain from what part of the country he may come, when some of the crew pretend to know it well, get into conversation, and entice the novice into a public-house to drink. He is not asked any questions directly, in words at length, but by inuendo or sidewise, as "Wiltshire, I presume, eh?" "I come from that part, *nearly*, myself." "No, (answers the countryman,) I'se Glo'ster" "Adso! why I'd a countryman of yours talking to me here just now, in there. [They *approach the public-house*, where sits the *pal.*] Oh, Falsby; I say, here you double-Gloster, here's another of your countrymen; now, what do you mean to treat him upon?"

"*Treat!* why, any thing, if he knows Glostershire as well as I do." [*They drink.*] "Do you know Stroud?" why, "I'm *a maker*." "Know it, ah! my good fellow, and Painswick, and Dursley, and Ci'ncester, and Prestbury, right well; why, I'd a capsize down that devil of a hill, running after the Berkeley hounds; lay five weeks at the Bell; sold my 200 guinea horse for a mere song; [*Stranger smiles*]: 'tis true, by G—; I've spent ten thousand pounds,

notwithstanding my present appearance: why, I've got an odd fifty left; look here! [shows flimsies], you should not laugh at folks you don't know: I'll bet five pounds I produce a hundred in twenty minutes, and that you can't show ten pounds in half an hour." "Done!" "Done!" "Stake."

The money betted is put into the hands of the first person, the stranger produces his money, they examine it, and in passing from hand to hand, it vanishes; or, at best, *flash notes*, not worth a straw, are returned to the witless wagerer, and whilst he is examining his new acquisition, the active members of the party move off in quick time, leaving one, an assumed dolt, apparently a stranger, to confuse the loser with surmises, about their coming back in a minute! "Why, 'tis only a little joke, they be very well known hereabout; ask the landlord, that's your best way." All this while the sharpers are making the best of their way, though one may be a *little lame*, and whilst the landlord is being quested, the third rogue also *runs off*. If the countryman does not bring out his money in this manner, two rogues hide under a hat, or contrive some other play, and a third bets our stranger against the winner, who immediately becomes the loser; but these, with other in-door tricks, into which persons may fall, who are not exactly *strangers*, or may not be *picked up* in the streets, belong to Chapter IV.

RING-DROPPERS

Is the general term for those rogues who, in like manner with the last, pick up soft-looking people in the streets, by pretending to stoop down and find some valuable commodity, close to their feet, which they generously propose to share with the person to be *done*. As the article so troven, most commonly assumed to be a *gold ring*, the term "ring-dropping" has been extended to the whole series of frauds, which consists in finding supposed valuable articles, wrapped up with a bill of parcels, stating their prices at very high sums. Formerly, the same species of tricksters, for a similar reason, had the title of "guinea-droppers," employing, no doubt, the false or counterfeit coin of that time. In 1727, we read of them as infructuously carrying on their knaves' tricks at night:—

> Who can the various city frauds recite,
> With all the petty rapines of the night?
> Who now the *guinea-droppers'* bait regards,
> Trick'd by the sharper's dice, or juggler's cards?
> As soon the *sharper* pounces upon his "find."

As soon as the *sharper* pounces upon his "find," he cries "adzooks; no halves, 'tis all my own." "No," remarks a bystander, one of the crew, "No, part of it, be whatever it may, belongs to this young fellow, and he can demand half; you *follow him up*, young man, and I'll go with you and see you righted." Not

unfrequently, this third person comes in for his third share; but is content to take some half-a-dozen shillings, for his quota of a parcel of trinkets, perhaps, that contains an invoice, with printed head and receipt for as many pounds. At the public-house, all these previously arranged proofs are laid forth, with appropriate comments, a call for drink, mutual pledges, &c. The receipt has a regular stamp, with the name of some popular jeweller, to support the validity of the transaction, and the intrinsic value of the goods, which may consist of gold seals, gold necklace, brooch, shirt-pin, bracelets, &c. &c. either of which stands the proof of acids, and which the sharpers artfully send out to purchase at a druggist's, and for better assurance, the dupe is sent along with the messenger. This test being applied, and the *gold proved*, the dupe now takes to the goods, giving whatever money he may possess at the time, to the amount of *half* the invoice, (if possible,) or a *third*; but if this cannot be obtained, a fourth is adopted, or less, and then, even then, he finds himself swindled; for, upon submitting his bargain to better judges, he finds the internal or body of his *God-send* is *base metal*, of the same ductibility as the gold employed, and over which the thin gold has been spread, at the flatting-mill, previous to its being cut out and worked up into form. *Gold trinkets* such as these form a series of articles of great consumption in London, and on board ships out-

ward-bound, among seamen, who may have received their "three months' advance on board," or silly passengers, who imagine they shall find ready sale, and new dupes "across the Bay," or on the other side the Atlantic! who will *take in* all they say for gospel, and look upon their *glittering toys* as gold. Here, mark, reader! the metal we have been speaking of is not the ordinary "jewellers' gold," so called, of which various small articles, such as those enumerated and others, are manufactured, nor the imitative-gold, called *petit-or* (or *little gold)*, but real gold, equal to standard, that lies thin as leaf-gold upon the surface of thick brass. All over town, are goods of this description pressed upon the acceptance of strangers, by Jews, Jewish shopkeepers, and itinerant vendors; but deal not with such trashy-tradesmen, nor any where for articles *apparently gold*, unless the shopkeeper *warrants* the metal to be gold, before a witness, or makes out a *bill-of-parcels*, in which the same is expressed *at length*, when this becomes your guarantee, or warranty against imposition. Any deception in this respect, being punishable by the statute, the purchaser may rest tolerably secure that he possesses the genuine metal: the larger articles, as watchcases, &c. must be stamped with the usual Hall-mark, as having paid the duty.

Of the first-mentioned, or *deceptious gold* articles, that will stand *the test*, it remains to

be told that, in the year 1819-20, an entire family of manufacturers, in Clerkenwell, contrived to palm off, upon the wary pawnbrokers, all over town, a great number of chains for the neck, (then much in vogue,) at thrice their real value. The *pawnees* took umbrage at being over-reached, and joined in the prosecution of the *pawners*. The main point left for the jury to decide turned upon the words used at the time of pawning: Did the prisoners say they had brought "chains of gold" or not? "that was the question." The pawnbrokers' "duplicates," their *assistants*, for the most part, swore *hard*, of course, that they did thus misrepresent; but in the midst of the argument, up jumped "Coke upon Littleton," with the discovery that the pawns were still liable to redemption, the twelve months allowed by law being yet unexpired, and *the Williamses* went free. Women, as well as men, become dupes of the ring-droppers' arts, occasionally, and then a single *ring*, or a diamond shirt-*pin*, is employed as the bait.

GAMBLERS' CARDS OF ADDRESS,

As well as those of high-flyer prostitutes, at the west-end of town, are frequently put into the hands of well-dressed gentlemen; the former, in the streets, the parks, or at coffee-houses; the latter description mostly at the theatres, but, occasionally, in the streets, or at pastrycooks, or orange-shops, at which they may call in to rest or refresh.

Formerly, when black-legs practised their arts at night only, fit season for such a scene, the danger to be apprehended for novices need be entertained for those alone who kept *late hours;* but they change their operations wofully in this respect, laying about them, now-a-day, to entrap the unwary idler by the noon-day sun, when his suspicions may be supposed least awake. Upon the most casual occasions, or after some impertinent interference, invented for the purpose, as the beauty of your dog, admiration of your horse, assistance in supposed trouble, or pretended recognition, or in a mail-coach, or at *the races,* a most charmingly well-dressed, very fine spoken sort of a gentleman, whose education at school (by the way) has generally been "neglected," expresses a wish to pass a pleasant hour with you, to take a bottle of wine, that is always at your service, where *the speaker* is a "subscriber" and now and then joins in *the play.* Hereupon he produces a well-executed card, with a remark respecting the master: "Frank is a very good sort of a fellow, on my honour, a perfect gentleman, I assure you; you have only to produce *the card,* and if I should not be there, he will be glad to see you, mention my name. *See* this at the back of it. I shall be there every day, during those hours, till Sunday se'nnight, when I go to the Newmarket Second Meeting."

Upon looking at the card, you read "Une, deux, cinque, every day, 12 to 4—6 to 11, at

No. * *, Bury-street, St. James's." Whilst you ruminate on this, or answer syllabically to his proposals, the pander goes on,—

"A few of the subscribers take cards in the ante-rooms, and up-stairs, some play hazard, at times." "Let them, I admire nothing like *roulette*. *La roulette* is the thing to my taste; for why, I always won at it. You do not seem conversant in the *new play?* I assure you, on my honour, 'tis one of the most charming *elegant'st* games, quite fair for all parties: —from the French, oh, ah, eh!—Half-past five! I'm too slow, what are you! right! just in time; I'll introduce you *now*, if no prior engagement?—we'll ride down Piccadilly." Should the intended dupe hearken or even hesitate a moment, he is done for, *as sure as fate*. Let him refuse the proffered civility in a peremptory manner; quit, a little, his former suavity; keep the card in his hand, rather than place it in his pocket; better return it back to *the leg*, offence or no offence; or else, *preferably*, throw it indignantly from him. Any other course than one of these, will cost him all his loose cash, now, all his disposable property, in process of time, and a good deal of peace of mind, until he devolves into a black-leg himself. How this will be brought about, he may learn in the sequel, when he comes to read of those so-called *hells*, to one of which *the card* invites him for the first time.

SWINDLERS, OR GENERAL DEALERS.

These are of two sorts, or rather the same persons and their associates, under two different aspects. 1st. Those who obtain goods, under false pretences, of town-resident shopkeepers, as well as of the minor manufacturers, who visit town *occasionally*, to vend their goods; and, 2dly, those who sell goods of any description, in detail, about from house to house, and in public-houses, where newly-come persons may lodge during their visit, or casually sojourn for refreshment. *Shabby swindlers*, who order home goods and change for a sovereign, then way-lay the messenger and obtain both, as Parson *Nightingale* served *Parsons*, the bookseller, rightfully belong to another page of this volume; as do those who take fine houses, and order in goods on credit, which they convert into money for their subsistence, or to live a short life and a merry one, joyously: master, mistress, coachman, cook, being all in the mess, upon equal terms; as was the case with *Daffy Swinton*, subsequently hung, and more recently, of the *pseudo* De Courcy Ireland, now in the county prison for debtors. It is worthy of remark, that *De Courci* (as he sometimes wrote) and his *coachman* are both located in the same large room, where the latter is *head-man*, so never condescends to speak to his kind master. Och, bad luck to the warm-hearted sons of Ould *Erin*, when the mole-hills become *Mountains*, and the *varlets* forget

their former low situations. Note, Reader, the due march of events: *De Courci* is since *quodded* for coining.

Birmingham goods and broad-cloths constitute two extensive articles for jobbing-off in the manner just alluded to, among the shopkeepers; and some of the bringers of such goods would recollect old customers and former dealers, with whom they have hitherto done business, and to whom they apply to take off their present stocks; perhaps, in vain; for times alter, or they would chaffer for greater bargains: or the vendor inquires after any unfavourable reports "as to credit," or something happens, or is insinuated, as to those old purchasers, and a better market, so as to render the assistance of an agent, or *useful man*, necessary. He it is, of whom we now come to speak; for he "does business" for the countryman, and, ultimately, *does his business for him*, in four instances out of five. These are the species of *countrymen*, to whom I alluded at an early page (10), as continuing *always green*, notwithstanding their frequent trips to Town.

One of the commonest manœuvres of the agent is, to procure for his *country friend*, a purchaser, as rotten and unprincipled as himself, whom he recommends in vivid terms, as "one of the surest paymasters in the market, as the times go." Ultimately, those two worthies go *snacks*, that is not an equal division; but the *least-wise* agent, is usually fobbed-off

with a very small share, when he lets into the secret another or two of his own confraternity. who threaten the purchaser into a further *bonus*, by way of hush-money. He usually pays the expenses of two or three carousals, and also treats, incontinently, to *glasses* and *pots*, until the eve of his commercial finale.

Frequently it has happened, that the countryman remained so long in town, that he is compelled to make a forced sale for cash, which he does at a great loss, and the agent who transacts this business seldom brings back the *whole money*, nor shows himself for a day or two, having, meantime, *laid out* (detained) part for himself: he subtracts part of the proceeds in the same manner, when the harassed vendor is persuaded to *pawn* a piece or two of cloth: then Sam *le* Barber, an *able* man, or a *Proctor* look out for a *Purser*, who advances the cash, with a *ticket*, implying equity of redemption, and places the goods on the shelves of his London-wall, for twelve months. *Cotterell* was long-time esteemed a very good "uncle," by Clarke, and those just mentioned; but "'tis not every body that chooses to carry an end of cloth to *Watling-street*, right across Cheapside; no, none but smutty *Sam* would condescend so to run in the face of *the trade*:" he would go further, and do more: an Oxford-street jaunt, or taking off *a cut* of two or three yards, were neither difficult or uncommon operations with him, who, from his dress, or undress, obtains the

olfactory suspicion of "Smutty-linen," whilst he held a face beyond doubt in that respect.

Yet Sam gave his advice with apparent candour, and some knowledge, at times; for he understood trap, had taken his *degrees*, walked the *Bench*, and been aboard the *Fleet*.

"Selling out-and-out is better by half, if you do make a sacrifice, than placing your goods in *Joe-pardy*;" and straightway, with this impression, they sought "the warehousemen," a species of jobbers who buy *every thing* that comes to hand, if that transaction can rightly be termed *buying*, by which the articles *brought in* change owners at a ruinous depression. These general-dealer-*warehousemen* are very rogues, to a man. I have treated them as *receivers* of stolen goods, in a subsequent page, which they acknowledge, unblushingly, to be a just description of their *trade*.

Such are the characters, in species and individually, into whose hands or clutches the stranger visitant is likely to fall, who resorts to *London* to sell his goods. No matter how wary, however circumspect he be, those kind of gentry usually prove an over-match for him, if he stand much in need of the *needful*, as "half cash, half bill" (the most fascinating kind of offer) is no uncommon proposal, when *the bill* is never intended to be paid. Further details of the practices of the warehousemen, or purchasers of goods, "no matter how obtained," belong to a subsequent chapter. I

have entered as far into the tricks of agents as may serve to guard the new-comer against casualties; and as he himself will most likely take up his quarters in *the city* proper, he will discover the chief resorts of those ever-ready, *at all*, agents whom we have been considering to be in the Aldersgate and Cripplegate Wards, about Basinghall-street, and Aldermanbury; if they spread themselves farther about town, this is intended for more certain seclusion, and to avoid interruption.

Travelling tradesmen, vendors of goods, are but the seconds, or counterpart, of the preceding, and but for the difference of their manners and connexions, might be classed with *the duffers*. Great variety of goods, or "general articles," are carried about by them from house to house, and, of course, to public-houses or other places of resort. One word of advice is alone sufficient for the entire class:—deal not with them; for the single circumstance of your being *a stranger* is sufficient to raise their cupidity. Let the cockneys deal with them that like it; they, probably, may match tolerably well with the runabouts, who knock at their doors a score times a day, and keep their old wives a-gate, answering to their *calls* when they should be getting the dinner ready.

FALSE ACCUSERS.

Whether false or true, the accusation of crime against another, with a view to extort

"hush-money," is equally liable to recoil upon the head (*quære*, neck!) of the accuser, because he does not thereby further the ends of justice, but his own profit. This is one of the reasons, and the damnable frequency of such accusations another, that has induced me to sift the subject a little finer than suits my general purpose; the hope of being serviceable in distinguishing the true from the false accusation, my motive. "Neither shall justice be sold" is one of the clauses of *Magna-charta;* and the King, who is the general accuser, (by fiction of law,) will suffer no man to do that in his name which he cannot do himself, or by his accredited servants: all who transgress in this particular are guilty of greater crime, if the accusation be true, than if it be false, for they then *sell justice;* whereas, if money be obtained by *false accusation*, the offence is simply *highway-robbery;* to effect which, the victim has been put in fear of his life, as much as if the accuser had placed a pistol to his head, and left him to guess whether it might be loaded or not.

False, or at best unfounded, accusation may be employed beneficially at times; but then it resembles the murder of a criminal in the streets; the irregularity of the act of retribution seems sanctioned by the previous evil conduct of the sufferer, only justice has not taken its due course, nor legal conviction had, nor a cool even-handed judicial example been set to the surrounding awe-struck populace. For

example: soon after an extensive robbery, the police-officers being upon the *look out*, espy a known thief in the distance, dressed out in *new toggery*; top-boots, a shining hat, and new bandana fogle, being among the first longings of a booty-laden thief. One of *the party*, affecting lameness, or "taking it leisurely," crosses over, with eyes fixed upon the gaudy wretch, calling at him, "Holloa! Mr. Spriggins, you've been in the *good thing*, there, of Lord Matterface's plate, eh?" looking one way, hard and sharp, as for a more apt assistant, whilst the well-practised thief bolts off *per contra*; where, let me presume, another officer is planted to receive the fugitive, with *open arms* or elevated half-hanger. On investigation, the prisoner exculpates himself from the particular charge of "Lord Matterface's plate," but the *personal search* of "my kiddy" proves that the accusation of the officer, though false, was not altogether *wrong*. In this case, the end sanctifies the means, unless we extend to "reputed thieves" the same delicacy of treatment which we carefully bestow upon honest men. Briefly speaking, all *reputed thieves*, upon all occasions of appearing in crowded neighbourhoods, or at late hours, should be stopped and searched, if the operation be not too troublesome, or repugnant to the officers feelings.

Bastardy is among the least criminal, at the same time that it is the most common of the false charges brought against pedestrian gentlemen, who "live about Town;" the *first*, be-

cause some ground usually exists (however *trivial* it be) for the accusation; and 'tis, moreover, among the most ancient of its class, excepting only that for high treason, if we may believe the vivid *Picture of London*, drawn by Mr. Humphrey Mill, in 1640.*

"He'd told his name, his place, that he was rich,
Unto this whore: and now her fingers itch
To handle some of 's gold: she rubs her *neyes*,
Hangs down her head, and blubbers out, and cryes
She's half undone. Her belly now doth swell,
For she's *with child* by him: she loves him well,
And would not have him shamed; give her relief,
She'll free him from't, and still conceal her grief."

In this case, the imposition extended to the palming a real child of another mother upon the "wealthy gentleman;" but sometimes the imposition is laid no more profoundly than that wayward habiliment the *stays*, and ends in 'couching these of their protuberance after fleecing the cull of a few pounds, and putting him in fear of the parish overseers, and their myrmidons of the *brass-bound castor*. Scarcely a *bon vivan* upon Town but has sustained this trick at some time or other, or stood the gracious hint that "'tis really so and so." Before he begins to pay, he had better consult some one more knowing in physiological prognosis than himself, in order to distinguish the mockery from the reality: if it turn out an *actual conception*, then has he *other fish to fry* than

* Entitled "A Night's Search," in a series of very fair poetical sketches, fifty in number, mostly applied to the same evil ways of life.

studying precautionary precepts in a *book*, for he has evidently gone *upon the wrong scent.* However, I am free to allow that the *bulb* exhibited may be the reality, and yet the man be wrongly charged therewith—basely, sometimes; then, he should be careful of committing himself before a second person, or of being frightened out of money; for, if the harlot has fallen into the keep of knowing hands, they, together, find three or four, or more fathers for it, all of whom pay "hush-money." Be the case how it may, never hearken to a suggestion about the probability of a "miscarriage;" for there are some who go about to procure such, and who would not hesitate to turn about upon you and insist that the base suggestion of crime was your own: you must pay dearly for secrecy in this case also. Some years since, a certain Doctor Roberton bolted off to Holland, on such a charge, *viz. fœto pungens*, that was tolerably well established by the depositions of Miss P. and her mother —poor creatures! One scarcely knows whether most to pity or to blame confiding woman, when she is so far precipitated from her sphere as to add to single sexual aberration the deadly sin of unprovoked murder, though at the instance and with the assistance, too, of the very man-monster who, like Leviathan, seduces her into one sin but to betray her into another.

That offender was yet young in his profes-

sion, it is apprehended, and, thank Heaven, but little inured to practice, having but just published his inaugural treatise "*de pars generatione*" when he effected his escape; but he left behind him older and more practised villains, some of whom have escaped, alas, to their long homes, without hanging, as they ought, in terrorem of their fellows. "At the blue lamp, in St. Paul's Church-yard, ladies, whose situations require temporary seclusion, may be accommodated and safely del——," we were told in almost every daily paper, for years before and since Roberton's misadventure. This fellow of *the lamp* we once saw *on business*, as the trade-phrase goes; to this "beauty without paint," (which should have been WHITE,) and his equally *jaune*, but more obesious wife, in 1798, we had occasion to apply, respecting a *large way* female just put under his care—*by letter*, from Southampton. The reverend and highly-gifted writer thereof, unused to the ways of town, had been seduced by the advertisement and the publicity of the situation, to forward one of his *unfortunate* domestics, per coach, to this place, and directed his correspondents in London to supply the *needful* for her accouchment. Small instruction could be derived from the particulars of the interview, further than the fact of extorting four score pounds for *seclusion* in a small house, in a stinking corner, in possession of a smouchy-talking pair, full of cajolery—the

male (— factor) inquiring, with malign aspect, whether the lady was to be "delivered or relieved!" Commentary on such a proposal is useless; its villainy is apparent as 'tis appalling; and the immediate course adopted in this particular case may be guessed at. "Dere is not harm in de question"—he insidiously observed, in a foreign accent, though the scoundrel could speak as good English as any blackguard in the streets—"for de lady have not say."

To be sure not; nor any one for her. For, as soon as the topic were broached, a fine display of fleecing would have commenced—in the shape of "hush-money."

For some such imputed crime did a set of miscreants, in 1817, safely rob, to a good amount, a certain Lord T———d, of whose ancestors' game *cocks* a curious story is extant, as to their being "all of one mind;" but which assurance of his *feeder* is further said to have miserably failed when put to the test.

Other impositions, in great variety, and some extremely ingenious, with much novelty in them, occur from time to time, of which the stealing, or *patronizing*, a baby, by a barren wife, is by no means uncommon — without at all adverting to those cases in which children have been beguiled away for sake of the clothes, or stolen by beggars as a means of exciting charity. Sometimes (as of old), the better to impose upon *the cully*, a child is *borrowed* from some neighbouring poor woman,

and the mother herself hired as its wet nurse; when the putative father has to maintain the legal father and all his family, to the second and third generation of vipers; and if any of the scions thereof be thievishly inclined—as usually happens, they *put up* some of their acquaintance to way-lay and rob the dupe, or to enter his premises by night, for they have set him down in their minds for "a good flat."

Accusation of *crime* of the most revolting nature was very frequent at one time of day; in some cases, with small appearance of truth on the face of the charge; in others, subsequent disclosures justified the first allegation, in great measure, if not to the full; but it is not to be denied, that many persons living respectably in society are found unceasingly accusatory on one lamentable propensity in others, and do much moral harm by *general censure*, as they also inflict unmerited pain by particular allusions. If there be any truth in the averment, why not fix the crime specifically at once? Why prefer to whiffle away the fair fame of individuals, or censure the whole age in such a manner as to prepare it for the most disgusting results? The great prevalence of the crime, or rather the disposition to make it a topic of conversation, calls for enlargement, a little out of its place, with the hope of abating both the one and the other subject of complaint. Allowing, for a moment, that those censors are neither corrupt or mistaken, by what motives

are they actuated who spread a belief that they are accurately conversant in such diabolical matters as the whole practice of British society belies in their teeth? How would those wholesale slanderers of the age drop down upon their own shameful hearts, if they were asked whether they would be considered apologists, or simply as general accusers, or as the actual depositaries of a hateful secret that they now wish to propagate and teach to a willing audience? Do any among them seek to subtract from individual guilt by generalizing the charge? In fine, let us be told why is the abominable subject ever mooted? For we mainly attribute the spread of this as well as many other crimes of a secret nature to the familiar every-day conversations that are held in taverns, in drinking parties, and other mixed assemblages of the young, the vicious, and the inexperienced, where no thorough-bred cockney would be considered a novice, and the vilest souls take the lead of all tongues, and not-unfrequently out-talk themselves.

Whilst inflicting this rebuke, I hesitate not to aver that a great portion of the flimsy, the emollient, and the foreign-taught among us, are sadly imbued with this revolting propensity. Then, let them be sought out, and punished in a manner suitable to their deserts; but let our ears be no more nauseated with surmise and conjectures, with inuendo and hint; let the parties whose taste lies that way employ their

leisure in *acting* for the furtherance of justice, rather than in talking with little discretion and without regard to the common decencies of life and the feelings of others. How this kind of interference is to be set about, we hesitate to advise, and disdain to write down; but following the more appropriate course of *guide* and safeguard, we may usefully quote the heads of a few cases connected with this topic, the last of which, in point of time, excited the foregoing reflections. That they prove something both ways, is no objection to either, in the views we have taken of the lamentable subject. It is in the nature of some crimes to reproduce others of their own kind, unpunished murder, for example, or the gaudy impunity of an undetected robber; in the case under consideration, the indiscreet expository anathemas of the expurgators before alluded to superinduce the pryings of curiosity, and seem to call for the accusatory aid of the venal.

Early in July, 1827, a soldier accused a wretch of making proposals to him, infamously non-natural, and also alleged that another of the same stamp had offered him "hush-money," on his "kicking up a bubbery" at the public-house, where it happened—the above Chandos-street, in St. Martin's Lane. The matter came on at Bow-street, before *Sir Richard Birnie*, when *B——n*, the landlord, attended to prove the whole a malicious affair, only contrived to extort money. An accusation made singly, and

thus met by direct denial, could not be supported, though the soldier's statement by itself might be sufficient for a grand jury to find a true bill. Sir Richard Birnie asked B——n, if this were the first accusation of the sort that had been made concerning the company frequenting his ——— and ———. *B——n* admitted that "some such a charge had once before been talked about." Whereat we were surprised to hear the persons present express their conviction that the soldier's charge was thus primarily corroborated; than which conclusion none could be more untenable, for he might have been excited to make this charge in consequence of the first accusation having met his ears, and not the less so because that one also concerned *a soldier*. *Sir Richard* next inquired if *B——n* kept any *female* servants? "None," replied the wretch: man cook, man waiter and chamberlain, argues a profoundly bad taste, not only in the landlord of a pothouse that is the resort of soldiers and persons who hesitate to avow their avocations in life—but, also, at those superior hotels and taverns, in which assemble the magnates of the land, against whom the breath of slander has never raised its pestilence, much less the mere 'licensed victualler,' like the culprit-looking *B——n*, whose trade hung upon the magistrate's admonition—"take care of your license!" A threat, by the way, that has been

often hastily fulminated against less guilty offenders thanthis B——n.

"I have visited your *parlour*," observed the magistrate, with good tact for his office, though displaying a bad taste; "and shall be there again shortly," added he, to show his pertinacity in making personal observations. And he was right too; for nothing is like looking closely after your *employees*, especially when the underlings have been distinctly charged with malversation of their office. Not only so, but direct contravention of the powers entrusted to them has been carried home to officers in numerous instances.

Such a "visit" should have been paid to the Barley-mow, in the Strand, when recently a nest of similar sinners were taken, convicted, and imprisoned, upon the evidence of two inferior officers only, one of whom we *know* to have been murderously deficient in oath-veracity, nigh twenty years ago, when life was at stake, and taken: let us hope that the visit *was* so paid, and nothing left to chance, or the much-dreaded *per juramenta!* but herein we anticipate our subject.——

False accusations and *true ones* rendered nugatory, by the extortion of hush-money, for this particular offence, have been but too numerous of late years in the metropolis. In Dublin, however, a man accused the Bishop of Clogher, a scion of a noble and ancient race, publicly,

and without attempting extortion; but he was, nevertheless convicted upon the Bishop's evidence, amidst his own re-assertions of the original imputation and the outcry of a crowded court: the *press* (all *orange* as it was) joined its execrations to the public indignation, and the man (one Byrne), according to the taste of the times, was flogged severely, for "benefit of clergy." This particular member of the cloth took no warning, it seems, by this *miraculous* perversion of the punishment due to his crimes; for, after a few years, he repeated the same offence in Westminster, was detected *in flagrante delictu*, but got off for a comparatively small sum, paid by way of *bail for his appearance;* but which *appearance* he never did intend to make, and, in fact, he betook himself off to Paris, the Boulevards among,—fit place for such a Jocelyn-monster.

Just so it happened to a soldier of the —— regiment of Foot-guards, whose nickname of *Nancy Cooper* designated his character, as the givers of it considered; but he, unlike poor Byrne, did not survive to see the disgrace of his prosecutor. Nancy was hanged at Newgate-door, for accusing a certain gentleman, in the Strand, of a beastly offence, said to have been committed in St. James's Park. Now, this wretch might have spoken the truth, in both his *cases;* namely, that which conferred upon him his Nanny-title, as well as that which cost him his *last fling;* but by his demand for *hush-*

money, he *flung* his life away, about the year 1802 or 1803.

Differing somewhat in the result was the case of Goodman and Fisher, who were condemned to death, for extorting hush-money from one *Jones*, a publican, living in the neighbourhood of Broadway, Blackfriars, *under pretence* that he had taken improper liberties with the person of one of them, whilst viewing the caricature-shop of John Fairburn, there, and for which offence, they alleged, he merited prosecution. Similar accusations had been preferred against other wretches for their *male*-practices at this very spot; and the eyes of the neighbours being naturally directed towards the frequenters of this caricature exhibition, this *Jones* was recognised by the neighbours, as one who daily loitered among the throng *remarkably* long and suspiciously. After the capital conviction of the offenders, those people came forward to attest to the last mentioned fact, and Mr. Smith, the pork-butcher, next door, among the rest, assisted in making those representations to the Secretary-of-State, whereby sentence was respited, and finally commuted to transportation for life.

Out of the foregoing "cases" a reasonable person may fashion his *rule of life*, in the event of any such occurrence, should it happen to himself to be so falsely accused; add to which the advice of the late Sir John Sylvester, our not very refined, but strong-minded Recorder,

upon such an accuser coming to give evidence before him, he rebuked the witness with "why did you not give the fellow in charge at the first application for hush-money? *Terrified!* I say terrified! why, I should have knocked him down at once." That is to say, presuming upon his innocence, a position we always take for granted, when the accuser of the crime has sought to extort money as the price of his silence, unless (like this witness) the demand has been complied with by him more than once. But, in the particular instance where those words were used, we had subsequent reason to believe the imputation was not wholly without foundation; and I am sorry to add my reluctant assent to the general sentiment, that some cause, however slight, always exists to lay the party under suspicion. The habit of *frequenting* such company as lie under suspicion, or where they tolerate queer practices (to give them no worse name) without rebuke, or in despite of the admonitions of some grave personage, is quite enough to bring a man's reputation to book; at least, he cannot complain, though one of the fellows present in any such general or mixed company accosts him with the bitterly familiar recollection that "they had met together before at so and so," naming the undoubted inferno. Here is the groundwork of the evil, in its least objectionable form; vulgar fellows, and vile ones, always assuming familiarity with every one whom they may hap-

pen to have met underneath the same cieling, or travelled by the same conveyance, though *Meum* were stowed in the steerage, or crouched beneath the orlop-deck, *Tuum* lodged in the poop, or went "a cabin-passenger."

Few persons, like the magistrate before named, or clothed with some recognised *authority*, could venture to pay such a *visit* as he avowed, and come out of it uncontaminated with the breath of calumny; even ourselves, who have seen a little of every thing, and a great deal of most, though taking much pains to investigate all species of villainy, and as much more to prove how anxiously we have put all matters worth knowing to the test, yet hesitate to acquire personal knowledge of the haunts of this detested set of monsters. How much more, then, should persons of weaker nerve abstain from resorting to such a place a second time? How sedulously avoid the familiar approaches of ambiguous or indistinct characters he may, by chance, have so met in company promiscuously; seeing that the man would but poorly follow the advice of Sir John Sylvester who knows not, like us, how to handle "his fists," and possessed not strength of mind, of body, or of public character sufficient to descend with us to some subterranean orgie; neither to penetrate the *back slum* of a "house of resort," nor held the mastery over his feelings, whilst pickpockets were acquiring the rudiments of their art, and street-thieves practising

the sure method of flooring their victims; nor, probably, does the person negatived possess the acumen of developing the cause, the motives, the incentives, the "necessity of purloining" in any one of its varied shapes. Then, let no one who is so deficient in the requisites to investigating the villainous acts, dare approach the contamination of the particular offence now contemplated out of curiosity; for very few can find "a legal excuse," not even a lawyer, who, like small-fry, set up a pretence that he "attended" the *Vere-street* (Clare-market) gang "professionally, with *a deed.*" Yes, indeed, Master *Hum;* only no one *saw the deed,* unless he had eyes ———

Curses alight on all jokes; though it must be allowed that a party may *look at,* though they cannot execute, a legal instrument on a *Sunday;* which was the day of all others on which his *clients* were taken up.

Come hither, monster; let thine own actions tell
What cousinship thou bear'st to mighty hell.
Grin as thou wilt, nay writhe,—half fool, half sot,
And cry, with Macbeth's wife, "out, cursed spot."

Imprisonment in the House of Correction, and the pillorying four of the miscreants, annihilated the party that nauseated *the town,* as "the Vere-street gang." A very proper feeling caused the street's name to be altered, and justice refused to license the premises as a public-house for the future.

Accusation of crime falsely made, affecting

life itself, were at one time much more frequent than at this period, and that chiefly by peace *officers*, who sought to obtain the statutable rewards which conviction of the accused brought them—generally £40 per victim. The iniquity of these proceedings was fully discussed in my former volume on these subjects, 1818; the system of rewards was proved to have been founded in an erroneous estimate of public virtue and private principle, and they were, two years afterwards, abrogated—the judges now having the power to certify when officers deserve well of the country, and the magistrates of divisions and of districts writing orders upon the county treasurer for payment, when the expenses of prosecution are directed by the judge to be *allowed*. Neither are any more *Tyburn-tickets* issued, that exempt the holders from obnoxious offices, so that those still acted upon fall with the present life-holders.

Since the foregoing half-dozen pages (deemed necessary to the full developement of our plan) escaped from the pen upon the yet unsullied paper, two other cases are brought under our notice as illustrative of the wantonly accusatory nature of some men's minds on this very lamentable subject—in one instance, and of the validity of our surmises in the other case: they are both intimately connected with our view of the freedom and conduct of *the press*, too, as set forth in a subsequent page; and, as

we should feel disgust in again entering upon the same topic, conceive the present as the most appropriate moment for finally adverting to the nauseous facts.

The *John Bull* Sunday paper is professedly a scandalising chronicle—of great powers, certainly, but of most mischievous tendencies, leaving politics out of consideration. It attacks, vehemently, the families, wives and children, of the opposite party; their peculiarities, oddities, pursuits, qualifications, and vices, if they have any; and what manner of person is without? And, if without, some juries have sworn that *the John* creates. Ever teeming with quirks, and jibes, and biting paragraphs, and subtle "communications," concerning the character, and person, and family of a late member for Wiltshire, we were all at once struck aghast, as by an air-gun explosion, at the vacuity of John's columns, regarding *the member*, and all about him. Even *Æsop Spring*, the City-road orator, who had been employed by *the member* some years since, in the gin-shop and licensed victualler inquiry, could not convey to us one intelligible *guess* at the reason; though the impression left by one of his hour-long speeches was, that *the said Phrygian's* patron had *broken a limb* at *Brussels*. According to "the Slave"-crump's *cacos*—"he met with *an accident* there, which *obligated* my honourable friend to *abdicate* his seat in the house—" and all St. Luke's parish believed in

their oracle. Thus the above matter rested, until October, 1827, when an indictment, "Rex *versus* Shackell," publisher of the *Bull*, was tried in the Court of King's Bench—and the defendant found *guilty* of publishing a libel, in which the learned *Mr. Heber* was said to have expatriated himself, "in consequence of his attachment" to the translation of *Cornu-cervi*. Let us not propagate the disgraceful lie. By that verdict, the plaintiff completely justified his character from the imputations of *John*, nor do we feel any inclination to keep open the sore; but the disgusting facts were thus published, that "the learned" was unhappily also one of "the contaminated," and that "the member" had been detected in *flagrante delictu* by a footman, or some such fellow. This *Æsop* knew, no doubt, when he mystified our inquiries, and so did the scandalous chronicler; but when the Brussels news reached *the Bull*, he magnanimously ceased to persecute the fallen man, and has never mentioned him since! "*How much* was the price of his silence?" we demanded, when, two or three summers had passed away without a single vituperation at the son of Lord T———e; "how much did *the Bull* receive for ceasing to bellow?" For we *knew* he was venal: we recollected, too well, the *first principle* of its establishment, the *primum mobile* of its first publisher, many a day before even its *title* was adopted, to think it would forego its purpose without payment for the sacrifice.

Further, another case in point occurs whilst we are at press, of a conviction at the Old Bailey December sessions, in which we find one *Morton*, a youth, endeavoured to obtain £50 of a scoundrel, who, in his cross examination, is brought to admit his own infamy; whereas, the only course Morton should have pursued was immediate, direct, undeviating prosecution for the assault.

But many and vexatious are the smaller accusations brought at our police offices by busy officers who desire, in this way, to manifest their superior vigilance, before the magistrates and their employers, in order to obtain promotion. Hired parish officers, policemen seeking to be put on the establishment, special watchmen, paid by particular districts, or single merchants, to prove that they do not receive their salaries for doing nothing, look out, hard and sharp, for every trivial offender they can lay hands on. Some catch hold of such periodically; but further consideration of these matters, *as regards officers*, watchmen, and the whole paraphernalia of police, is discussed further down. Meantime, however, the reader, who may happen to be a *night-walker*, will do well to keep in mind the aphorism which stands under the word "*Charley*, a watchman," in my Dictionary of the Varieties of Life: "A Charleyman no sooner gets on his coat and rattle [twin badges of his *office*] than he becomes choleric, accusatory, and venal," page 23. Is

it necessary to say that, in order to come at this conclusion, I have myself been present at "the clothing" many hundred such "guardians of the night?" A poor, shrivelled, bony, old rip, who could, previously, scarce crawl out of the way of a snail, as soon as he has well-reefed up a button or two of the parish-marked wrap-rascal, will, all at once, open a brisk tirade *at* the yet-unclothed, or talk authoritatively concerning the objects of his "duty." It operates upon him like a *double feed* of corn upon a trickey old horse, or a full glass of max upon a snuffy fish-fag, to both of whom he bears near affinity in several other respects. These sometimes make part of the hordes that waylay the unlucky wights who keep the middle watch sacred to Bacchus; and are, also, found allied, in some manner or other, to the strumpets, pickpockets, and male thieves of the same *dark period.* I do not mean they hold communion, or at all act after a fixed plan; but I do mean to say, that the chief object with all night-prowlers being those who may not be in a condition to take care of themselves, whereby they fall an easy prey—and that the guardians of the night finding these more profitable captives than the thieves, these latter escape, whilst all sorts of monstrous charges are laid to the account of the drunken man or "night offender," they thus all join in the same pursuit. I have my eye, at present, more particularly upon *the city* proper, and the

high carnival for such transactions is my Lord Mayor's day, in the evening, from ten to five: many of the livery, however, live out of town, and most of the juniors "fly their kites," by way of finishing their orgies, beyond Temple-bar, on that annual festival.

On all such occasions, *false charges* and the most preposterous stories, built upon trivial bases, laid at the police offices next morning, are of every-day occurrence, and well-understood to mean a trifle to be paid to each of the accusers for *making it up*. This is shabby work; but there is no way of remunerating the night-guardians properly for their services but by thus levying fines on the *disorderly*.

False accusations, however, do not attach exclusively to the watchman-character. I recollect, in 1808, a grocer, of Newgate-street, Brandon, by name, charging a watchman of his ward with stealing his watch; but after a long examination, and the charge being entered in the book, against the supposed thief, the *lost tattler* was discovered at the knee of his inexpressibles, by the *houseman's* wife, an old harridan, up to snuff in all things pertaining thereto. Master Brandon had been immorally inclined that evening, and paid the accused, as compensation, some trivial damages. In the same watchhouse, some four years previous, George Medcalf, one of the city representatives, accused old *Warren*, the beadle, of participating in the benefits derived from appoint-

ing watchmen to certain beneficial *beats;* where pickpocket-strumpets carried on their operations under protection of said "guardians;" but Warren rebutted the charge, by asserting that he could not get able men to perform the duty at twopence-halfpenny per hour, and he was obliged, therefore, to overlook such trivial affairs as those complained of, *viz.* street-robberies. Hereupon the *councilman* caned the *ward-beadle* round *the house,* and the latter, by *order of the city,* prosecuted the former to conviction, before the Recorder, and immaculacy personified in duodecimo—*a London Jury.*

At Christmas-eve, 1809, a posse of watchmen accused a party of tradesmen, who had just emerged from the Punch-house, in Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, with having "disturbed the *pace,* nigh an hour past, wid bodderens and nacking about all they come to." Palpably untrue as was the allegation, and easily disproved, it was, nevertheless, met with simple denial. Mild rebuke, however, is little calculated to cool a Patlander, especially when clothed in the halo of a brief authority, and they seized the party of punch-drinkers, at an odds of about two to one: neither would remonstrance aught avail the prisoners, nor did the proposal to bring along some exculpatory evidence, from said Punch-house, produce alleviation of the captives' fate of lying *close* confined in Covent-garden watchhouse, until the great feast of the year should have passed

over. To remonstrance succeeded bitter expostulation, which threats could not repress, though club-law might. But the application of this repellant, so well adapted in the generality of cases, "to make the prisoner civil," as the saying goes among them, did not effect its usual purpose in the present case; but, like other excessive sedatives, only served to irritate the patients still more. Never was street-battle more necessary, or more imperatively forced upon the defendants, in any *action* than this; neither, certainly, was one ever more applauded, as was this one, in our hearing, by some bystanders, for its justice, manliness, and rapidity of execution. "Hit away, Tom!" exclaimed Thomas James to Big Thomas [William Jeremy, *the great*, and Jon Bee, *the least*, being also *at hand*)! "hit away!" the sound gave instant life to sixteen pair of as lively knuckles, as ever "put a stop to the plum-pudding eating" of a set of Irishmen, since the distant day that *Bryan Boru*, like an old fool, got surprised in his camp. The watchhouse steps of Covent-garden are admirably calculated to hold just four prostrate Irishmen, the rest having mizzled; all which having seen from his lattice, the constable of the night negotiated with two of the *detenus* (one English and one Welshman) who stood above, whilst a similar pair held the enemy in check below, that the whole should pass off oblivious. "Satisfaction for the past and security for the future" hav-

ing been thus obtained over the *posse*, at the expense of a few teeth and a few more contusions, our party soon heard themselves congratulated by the *real disturbers* of the night (the very persons who *ought* to have been captured) at "the gallant manner in which they had taken the shine out of *the charleys*." The young rogues stood aloof during the caption and affray, for which they deserved to have their names handed over to public view; but four out of the six had no name, designation, or fixed place of abode, that we could ascertain. The laugh was now against us, and so remains.

Trivial as the foregoing true picture of a night adventure may pass with some, the rational reader is desired to take into consideration, that imprisonment in a real dungeon for two whole days and a fraction, (for Christmas fell on a Monday,) and undergoing an examination at Bow-street, in the face of a long-concocted charge of seven hard-swearing watchmen, is no child's play—to say nothing of the usual mulct, or the emblazonment deemed necessary to the support of the penny-a-line reporters for an o'erweening press—sad *Wights*.

Life itself, however, is sometimes put to the stake on the charge of intemperate vicious persons, upon accusations of the most improbable nature, as applied to the accused. Not many years ago, a woman of the town accused *a noble lord* of having robbed her of a fifty pound note; but immediately after his acquittal, at

the Old Bailey, she was herself put to the bar, tried for perjury, and transported. Much later (1818) one *Ann Radford* accused a person of good character of having murdered another man in her presence; but the latter appearing in court, rather staggered belief in her evidence, and she too was convicted and transported.* This last, however, was a provincial occurrence; though no doubt exists on my mind that scenes of secret murder, *in brothels*, occur too often in town; else, how does it happen that we read so frequently in the newspapers of "gentlemen lost," "left their home," and "requested to return to their disconsolate friends." This topic is resumed further down, under the head of *intrappers, crimps, &c.*

Officers' accusations against poor persons, unprotected individuals, old basket-women, carters, cattle-drivers, and the like, do not always merit credence for their fidelity, seldom for their humanity. Some years ago, a fellow (since disgraced) seized two boys, on Tower-hill, whom he charged with having offered to pass bad shillings; and hauling them into a shop there, pretended to find "upon their persons" some score or two of base coin. They were indicted upon the grave charge and found guilty, but it was timeously proved that he had

* The father of this woman appears to have been one of the five persons saved out of the Royal George, at Spithead, in 1784: he died in 1827.

himself induced them to engage in this traffic, and that the base pieces were taken from his own pocket in the shop.

For several years, one *Waite*, a very "active constable," substitute of Aldersgate, made it a practice to bring up one *charge* a week, at least, before the sitting alderman. They were of the most trivial nature imaginable, chiefly on the score of "humanity to animals," then very much in vogue; which the offenders usually expiated by a few days seclusion in Bridewell, and vivid application at the hemp-block; where they get "bread and water sufficient to keep life, soul, and body together, and light enough to inform them there is a God in heaven." Men, or boys, or old women, writhing under the double affliction of false accusation and hard (because unusual) work, to say nothing of privations, would be little likely to benefit by any instruction, however well intentioned. But here, too, "*humanity*," and "*morality*," and "*a due sense*" followed them, under the fostering care of *serious* sheriffs, with a religious turn of mind;* and the persecuted poor elves, hitherto free as air, though empyreumatic as gas, might here form a tolerably fair notion of the solitary practices of the inquisition, as regards peninsular slaves, if like ——— and ——— they

* Certainly not under the joint *Vice-comes-Perkins* and *Rothwell*, both of them pretty chickens, each in his *way*.

could hire scribes of better clerkship than themselves to write down, legibly, the belchings of their cogitations. What motive he could have, who thus pounced upon scarce-offending beings, with voluntary malignity, long puzzled my endeavours to ascertain. His name, constantly appeared upon the *notes* of charges reported *to me* from the *Justice-room*, and occasionally at the *Mansion-house*: "*Waite, Waite*, everlasting, sixty-four charges in one year! How is this?" I inquired, in the midst of three or four attendants, at the Justice-room. "*Waite* is always *up* with something or other?" "He waits to recommended himself as a vigilant officer to each of the sitting aldermen in rotation," replied the most communicative of those *politii*; to which all assented *in words*, or by the more intelligent interpretation of a knowing smirk. Here the real fact came out; neither the five-shilling inducements of the humanity parliament, nor the exhortations of little Galway Martin, of long Buxton, or short Montague—presiding spirits of *potheen*, of *porter*, and of limpid *streams*, respectively, influenced our Aldersgate substitute; but ambition and the "love of office," so often thrown in the teeth of his superiors, bare him away to an exacerbated infliction of his authority—like the every-day *ex officio* filature of an irritable Attorney-General, or the super-active jackal, who seizes more prey than his master-lion requires, or ultimately does himself any other good than to

unfit him for escape from *the pursuers.* Both the consequences which observers of the most opposite feelings may anticipate followed this man's malversation: 1. He was denounced and disgraced for two years. 2. He obtained the ultimatum of his ambition, which so many other coarse-minded fellows seek after, an *officer's* situation. His operations now appear to be restricted to the eastward of Leadenhall, on what account it boots not me to inquire; but whilst the foregoing *waits* for going to press, I observe that *Waite* received a very fine "slap in the face" reply from Vaughan, the blood-hound-officer, who was convicted in 1818, and suffered a long imprisonment. Those two meeting in the waiting-room at the Mansion-house, in September, 1827, Waite exclaims, "What, arn't you dead yet, master Vaughan?" "No," (answers he,) "nor is there occasion for your surprise, for there is not one among you that would not do as I did, whenever it lay in your power, and worse." Waite was dumb-found.

Notwithstanding all this, I am full willing to believe that *Waite* is likely to make as true an officer as five-sixths of the whole body of them, so I guess, though I never detected him at a caption, or ever heard him speak out, unless to a *sitting alderman.*

Watchmen's charges, I have said, are seldom weighed in the scale of truth; that they are unmeasurably false and unfounded is no less lamentably the case, when the party against

whom they may be directed has dared to interfere with his line of duty—trespassed upon his *beat*, or spoiled the operations of women thieves, to whom he affords protection. *Men thieves* do not so often carry on their designs with the privity of watchmen, though some do identify themselves with robbers of every description—*i. e.* hustlers, pickpockets, and cracksmen; but it more frequently happens that when any thing *is to be done* in the way of *a crack*, or stripping a warehouse, then the thieves prepare a bit of a treat for the *man* or men who would be likely to interrupt them, whilst the job is performing. Sometimes they get a woman to invite the watchman's woman, who invites "her man" of *the watch*, to take a drop of brandy, "nice and hot," (cum infusio *tart. ac.*) down the next street save one or two, whereby they stultify what little sense he may have remaining. In which of these—or dupes or rogues, the watchman of the following story ought to be classed, I leave to the reader's fancy, taste, or discernment, to settle.

Case. It might be half past twelve o'clock on the night of May 17, 1821, [Tom Shelton had a benefit that day,] that *Jon Bee* and his friend *John Hinds*, the farrier, toddling homewards, saw two youths struggling with a third person, close to the timber-yard premises, nearly at the top of Long-lane, Smithfield. Much fatigued, and in the midst of drizzling rain, they passed on to the Barbican corner, and parted; when

one of those persons crossed over also, wildly exclaiming he had been "robbed by two fellows—one of whom held him behind whilst the other rifled his pockets of near twenty shillings." As the watch-box facing, within six yards of *the robbery*, was found empty, and none answered to the cry of "Watch! stop thief," Jon Bee inferred that the old chap was *in it*, and gave him half an hour's waiting, in order to sift the matter a little, according to his custom. On his return to the box, *Mr. Bee* told the watchman of his long absence, and of what had happened. "*You* interrupt me in my duty!" hastily interposed the unfaithful guardian, and sprung his rattle; when another, whose box was within hail, and who had also been absent, ran to his aid, any fourth person would have thought some sad offence had been committed. At the watch-house, the respectable constable of the night, just returned from *his rounds*, recognised Mr. Bee as having been seen watching the empty watch-box; and the motive for doing so being briefly explained—viz. to make the fact a subject of future publicity, the accusation was dismissed, but neither of the watchmen. They remained, many months after, under surveillance; and were at length discharged, at the joint instance of *Mr. Bee* and Mr. Turner, a bookseller hard by, for an act of tyranny exercised towards a poor fellow who had spoiled their peculations.

Real rogues—bonâ fide thieves: these come

less under the restraint of our parish watchmen than disorderly persons—or those keepers of late hours who may be on their way home in any degree inebriated or indiscreet. Of these they invariably make a market, either by extracting an immediate *bonus*, or carrying the charge, with all its emblazonments, up to the magistrate, in the morning; whilst they serve as the cover for actual rogues, either wilfully or by corruption, unless indeed the police patrol stroll round and derange the plans that either may have laid. By twelve o'clock, however the duty of these latter officers cease; and while employed they appear to exert themselves rather in the promoting of *morality* and *good behaviour* in minor matters, than in reserving their authority and personal influence for great occasions; as if "looking after disorderlies" and "clearing the public-houses," according to the words of their instructions, were of more importance than detecting street-thieves, preventing housebreaking, or catching pickpockets, and dispersing strumpets. Be this, however, said "aside;" though we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that, when men of uncultivated intellect, as far as cultivation of the mind is concerned, are *professionally employed* in curbing the moral aberrations of others, they cannot, nor do they, distinguish between right and wrong, but to *follow their instructions*, which are clearly to *accuse*, and intrap, and bother the sinners—among whom the publicans are

looked upon as the chief. The *City patrol* lodge information against no other description of sinners. But the whole machinery of our night-watch requires alteration, to adapt it to the changes which have taken place in the state of property, the exposure to which the improved rural manner of living of our citizens leaves their warehouses, to enable it to cope with the increased skill, numbers, and adroitness of our modern thieves. And reformation already resounds in our ears; the congregated wisdom of the city, having voted *resolutions* and amendments, at the moment of our going to press. For our parts, we will not, in this page, enter upon the discussion, whether a *Figgins* or a *Venables* have taken the most correct view of the subject; we believe them *both* ill-informed as to *the remedy;* but when they and their respective supporters agree with us, that the present system is a bad one, they grant much more towards a real reformation of *street-watching*, than aught we have listened to since the subject first occupied our attention. The new measures do not go the length of correcting the evils, and must undergo fresh modifications at the end of a year; increase of pay being but a half-measure, and unceasing ambulation an absolute impediment to a due exercise of the watchman's real duty. Among other objections, he cannot be found so readily, when rambling uncertain about his beat, as when he can he pitched upon in his *watchbox*, in the cer-

tain intervals of his rounds: challenging, by the constable of the night, will be imperfectly performed, although he run through every crick and cranny of the ward; he will find good excuses for leaving his beat, or sneaking, and the sudden requisition of an inhabitant can seldom be complied with, and may easily be evaded.

FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Of crime, in a city so thickly inhabited as this metropolis, may be brought against innocent persons, through similarity in the likeness, without any evil intention on the part of the accusers, though with extremely harsh consequences to the accused. *Execution* hath followed in some such cases, unhappily, and a good deal of temporary misery ensues to the family and friends, even through the slightest mistakes, when the charges may be of a criminal nature. One of these occurs whilst this sheet is being despatched to the press, viz. November 12th, a poor fellow is brought up to the Mansion-house, on the charge of a journeyman oyster-vender, averring that he and two more, after eating their bellies full, dragged the accuser to an inner room, and there gagged him, whilst they robbed the upstairs rooms of his employer, a Mrs. Norbury, of some five pounds in money. A good *alibi*, however, drove all those circumstances to sea; the accused person having but just emerged from an hospital, and still carrying in his phiz the ra-

vages of a protracted hydragyrian treatment. Since, then, however, two brothers, who are *sworn to*, as having robbed the house of *Pring*, a cheesemonger, likewise on a Sunday, are condemned to death, with one more, for this robbery also, and one of them has really lost the cartilage of *his nose*.

Some two years since, a young fellow, in the employment of a shopkeeper, in the Strand, one R———, was brought up and tried at the Old *Bailey*, on three several indictments, for shoplifting, in Oxford-street, &c. but was acquitted by *the jury*, without hesitation; but being again tried by the same jury, upon another indictment, and a Mrs. *Dolby*, of Wardour-street, being quite sure of his person, she swore positively, and he was now found guilty, in conformity with their solemn oath, which runs in these words, "to well and truly try, and a true deliverance make, and a just verdict give *according to the evidence*, between our Sovereign Lord the King and the prisoner at the bar." Notwithstanding this, the prisoner was liberated; and in a very short time after, the *real rogue* being detected and brought to Bow-street, the two, upon being placed side by side, were found so to resemble each other as well might puzzle even an officer of that establishment. Much more serious was the accusation against the *two printers*, Clynch and Mackay, for murder, (see p. 99,) when the chief witness, Miss Fryer, was so uncertain as to their identity, that the men were admitted

to bail, our old friend, Mr. *Deodatus Bye*, being one of their sureties; but, upon the trial, she swore so very positively, augmented with asseverations, that nought remained for the jury but to bring in a verdict of guilty. The fatal morning of their premature exit from this world was remarkable for the precipitation of the drop, before the signal for that purpose was given; whereby the reverend ordinary, *Dr. Ford*, was cast rudely to the ground, and received an injury, from which he is supposed never to have recovered. The execution of *John Holloway* and *Owen Haggerty*, for the murder of *Mr. Steele*, also recently adverted to, upon insufficient evidence, was pretty strongly insisted upon at the time, in a well-written pamphlet, by *Mr. Harmer*, their solicitor; to which public opinion and subsequent avowals of the deed by the elder Symonds, of Hounslow, have added their sanction. The father was overheard accusing his son of that deed, and both of them ran away upon finding a bill of indictment was preferred against them. Then what becomes of the pretended *confession* overheard in the privy at Worship-street: alas! the countenance extended to the listener, we know, has done much harm, as an incitement to other officers. This single example, we know, has done much harm, and the averment of the blood-hound, *Vaughan*, (page 174) is justified. This man accused the boys on Tower-hill, before alluded to, (page 173) of passing counter-

feit coin; he convicted *Bill Soames* of stealing a pocket-book, which the latter never saw; he convicted to the pillory (where a life was lost) opposite the Mansion-house, a banker's clerk, upon his single evidence; he got one *Davies*, a lame naval pensioner, to *put up* three youths to breaking the premises of Davies's *mistress*, and *nabbed* them before the *crack* was accomplished; but he had provided *a ring*, belonging to the woman, which he pretended to find on one of them; yet he tells *Waite*, without contradiction, that others do the like things. The crimes of Pelham, Power and Brock, with Johnson and Donnelly, were of the same hue, and all perpetrated in the hope of fingering the statutable reward, (since abrogated,) and the wish to obtain promotion in the calling they had chosen, according to the cheering example set before them. Let us not probe *over again* the heart-rending fact, of those men being engaged in the work of blood, shedding that of the innocent and none of the guilty, for several years, down to 1818, when their machinations were exploded, the five first-mentioned convicted, and sentenced to death, but subsequently *pardoned*, upon *a legal quibble*. *Vaughan*, however, was again indicted, and received sentence of five years imprisonment in Cold-Bath-fields, where he obtained an *office*, the ultimatum of his wishes; and although of no higher character than *inner turnkey*, this boon ought not to have been granted to him, as it evinced a leaning

towards the crime, an alleviation of sufferings that were too little to expiate his offences: and *Tom Limbrick*, of Bow-street, brought two youths, named *Kelly* and *Spicer*, to conviction, on the evidence of a suborning accomplice, named *Finney;* but 'tis scarcely enough to add that execution was stayed, and Limbrick little heard of since.

Speaking of *Limbrick*, let us stop the current of our thoughts a minute, and arrest the melancholy reflections that the contemplation of innocent sacrifices such as these give rise to, whilst we turn to the instructive note of a blunderous *false accusation*, into which that officer was most unaccountably led, in the eager performance of his duty—some few years ago. That it happened to a respectable person in trade strengthens the monition which the narration is intended to convey; that he is an acquaintance of the author's is less to the purpose; but that he is a real good thorough-bred cockney, the beau ideal of his entire class, comes well in point of what we would teach, and, sure we are, reflects no discredit on him as a man, an honest citizen, or a "London tradesman." Fancy has no hand in stating the fact, that Mr. Goodcheap was mistaken for a highway-robber of very much *celebrity*, according to the mode of estimating public characters adopted by a certain description of writers; at least he was certainly *taken*, "without any mistake," in Holborn, by the same *Limbrick*,

and carried to Hatton-garden police-office, under the allegation that he resembled *Huffey White*, who had robbed the Leeds mail, near Kettering, besides numerous other thefts, and was subsequently executed at Northampton. This it must be allowed is a sufficiently awkward predicament for any man to be placed in, however conscious of his rectitude, however well known, recognisable, and certain of liberation. "Holloa, Bill, I say," cried *Limbrick*; for the cognomen *Huffey* applied to the *manner* of *White*, which was short and crusty, pugnacious and repulsive, to such a degree as to supersede the orange-coloured "William" conferred by his fathers and mothers, the sponsors of his smiling baby-hood. How unlike the mild manners and bland endearments of our old acquaintance! A man the reader might take by the hand (let us presume) without the fear of having his odd joints squeezed together into a jelly; whose conversational elegancies he will find far from *short*, and not at all *crusty*; who is supposed never to have struck a blow, unless at the nails of a coffin occasionally, or against the stock of his flugel musket, for edification of the Aldersgate volunteers; and is so utterly removed from all repulsiveness, that his speeches more resemble the last of a "desultory debate;" besides, we know he is further distinguished as to lie under constant invitation "to visit the Gentleman and Porter parlour *once a month* at most." And was this a man of

Cockaigne to be accosted by a Limbrick, with "Bill, I say?" Why, he might as well have accosted *Aldgate-pump* with *a bill* for payment.

"What is your pleasure with *me?*" demanded our acquaintance; nor did he long wait for an answer; *the office* was hard by, and there *the parties concerned* came to an explanation, but not until the *exordii* to many a fainting oration had died away. Let the reader picture to himself the anxious moments that intervened the caption of our orator, and the due recognition of his friends. Let him next "make the case his own," as our friend phrases it, and think what solicitude would rack the breast of *a stranger* to town, under similar circumstances. Let any one think, also, of the eagerness of officers to prosecute and to identify, and of the facilities afforded to "bring forward evidence," and of the tampering and fashioning its various particles receive at their hands; and we will tell him that such an accusation, however preposterous, is little else than putting a man upon the rack of sorrow and grief for a time, all the while suspending him over a yawning gulph, into which the least accident might precipitate him irremediably, as we have upon record, many have already fallen.

Blood-hounds—is the name long bestowed upon those persons who were so engaged in entrapping men to the loss of life; and, although two or three periods only of our history are marked by the disclosure of those appalling

acts, we have reason for believing that similar practices existed in the intermediate space, if the shedding of innocent blood under semblance of justice, to amend some public wrong, did not cry aloud for vengeance at every period from the time of Cain, and in every country of which we preserve any record. With what solemn mockery did the Athenians punish with death those who laughed at their Polytheism? and is the most enlightened nation now on earth less intolerant? or the most powerful people more weakened now by the gap that exists between the patrician and plebeian orders, than when *Servius* forced his way to the throne, and the battle of the *Regillus* threw down the remnant of Tarquin's unbearable aristocracy? Has not England been torn to pieces for thirty-three years between the *soil-men* and the *toil-men*—the landlords and the manufacturers; now one party *going to the wall*, now another—then one set crowding our gaols, or filling the columns of a two-handed gazette, whilst another cry aloud at the galling necessity of putting down a *carriage* or two, and discharging a few flunkies out of dozens, because they cannot obtain *war-prices* in times of peace? All legislation is necessarily in the hands of the landlords—*i. e.* owners of land; land-holding constituting the qualification for validating the peoples' choice—where they have *a choice*. One consequence is, that all the efforts hitherto made by *the people* to obtain bread in peace, at

peace-prices, were opposed by those who hold the lands upon which bread corn is grown. Commotions among the consumers of bread were the consequence of this denial of justice, because the agitators earned their subsistence by the sweat of their brow, and hard toil in the tepid manufactories of cotton, in the chilling dye-house, or fulling-mills of woollens. When the grossness of their harsh measures widened the breach between the landlords and their customers beyond endurance, the starving population, as usual under similar circumstances, assembled together to fret and fume, to make speeches and petition, and perhaps to threaten and insult, the landlords; but, in all this vapouring, we could see nothing like *insurrection,* though some few lives were lost, and many machines were demolished; for, as often as their customers got full employment they gave the lords of the soil their *war-prices* without further speechification, if not without grumbling. In the silk-weaving district called Spitalfields, which includes also *Shoreditch* and *Bethnal-green* parishes, when work was to be had, the assemblages dwindled to nothing, almost; the *Three Colts* were nearly deserted, and orator *Thompson* addressed his solemn conciones to empty benches, at "the chapel:" a *three-single* had more charms for the weavers than the best speech ever heard by *bird-catcher* or *bullock-hunter,* and an occasional sprinkle of work, with the good sense of the committee,

kept down the spirit of discontent, even at the worst period. Remote from *Town*, however, mostly northward, the *blanketeers* and the *Luddites* were stirred up to desperate acts by the agents of a weak if not wicked government; by a man, calling himself *Oliver*, and others, going about to incite the hungry manufacturers to crime, for which they delivered over to ——— justice good numbers of ignorant offenders; but the machinations of the "government *spies*" being exposed, the deluded poor creatures escaped, for *Oliver* proved himself the chief conspirator, thanks to a London lawyer, and the trials could not proceed. What was his real name is uncertain, but we find him filling a post at the Cape of Good Hope, under the designation of *Jones*, and where he had the grace to die of chagrin, after several years had passed away in impunity.

Whether he were one of the *blood-hounds* named above, we have no means of ascertaining; nor will we stop to inquire what was the real name of the miscreant hound who, subsequently, under the name of *Castles*, led on *Thistlewood* and his companions to talk of assassination until they actually prepared for the horrid deed. The *Cato-street* plot cost money; but none of the conspirators, except *Castles*, had any cash to spare; yet had he no occupation to earn any, though he expended small sums constantly upon the party, whilst they concocted their schemes at the White Lion, in

Wych-street, and elsewhere, and he ultimately found the arms with which they were furnished at the moment of detection. If it be necessary (as I apprehend it is) for a government to employ persons to watch the movements of suspected characters, as *Thistlewood* and his fellows undoubtedly were, it never can form part of the espyal's duty to prompt, to egg-on, or *promote* the schemes of the discontented, until their crimes become capital. A fine sample of retribution in kind overtook two spies, *Downie* and *Watt*, by name, who were sent down to Edinburgh, in 1792, under the administration of that mistaken gentleman *Mr. W. Pitt*, and his colleague, *Mr. Dundas*, who had a high character of those men from their employer, the government printer. But, like *Castles* and *Oliver*, and all of that *genus*, they went miserably beyond their instructions, became the worst of conspirators, in order to please their employers with horrid—thrilling intelligences, who "if they find no treasons—make them;" and a Scotch jury took their conduct so seriously into consideration, that they delivered over "the two spies" to be hung, drawn, and quartered: none commiserated their fate. We naturally infer, that Messrs. *Watt* and *Downie*, in the event of their *escape* back to Town, would have received some post or office under government, and thus added another insult to the inhabitants of some colony, port, or town-

ship; but we have yet to learn what places Messrs. *Brock*, *Pelham*, *Power*, *Johnson*, and *Donnelly* now fill, nor what *names* they bear at present, nor what part of the kingdom they pollute, nor *who* undertake the task of patronizing their *terror-striking* villainies, though we can guess shrewdly *what* sort of politicians they belong to. If, like *Oliver*, they have been sent to rot, neglected, in some remote nook of the earth; or, like Manners, "the Satirist!" they stick fast in such a supervisance as that of the Bay of Passamaquoddy—all is well, as regards those personages; but the principle still remains. The patronage of assassins opened the road to the downfall of the Roman Empire, by clearing away, alternately, the most able persons of the two parties, under semblance of justice, as the *patricians* or the *plebeians* prevailed; but its application to their political opponents upon an extended scale was many centuries in coming to perfection, and then we find it exercised, with most rancour by the first-mentioned, against rival families of their own order. Even though the *Roman story* be a fable, as *Niebuhr* and others maintained, and the poetic style of Gibbon would induce us to believe, but for his *notes*, it might well serve as an instructive lesson, teaching us, that those who are now struck with terror at the machinations of their rulers, may themselves *strike first blow* in the third and fourth generations—for the Britons of to-

day preserve the printed testimonies of such deeds, as the Romans nursed up their wrath in the oft repeated narratives of their wrongs.

But for the affair of the *Oakley Arms* conspiracy, we should imagine that the gift of prophesy entered into the following reflection, which appeared in the former volume of the "London Guide." Alluding to the impunity with which all those fellows, before named, got off, and perhaps even now beard us, unknown, under some new name, and keep sober citizens in jeopardy of their lives and properties under the cloak of some snug appointment, we were induced to exclaim, rather uncharitably—"The cry of immolated victims was before the judgment seat; but so much of state policy, and of feverish management, and overweening care, hath marked the two administrations of *Lord Sidmouth*, from the time of *Despard* and the *Tinman* of Plymouth, to that of the Derby-row and *William Hone*, that we should not wonder the least to see those "hellish scoundrels," as Mr. *Tierney* called them, advanced to some post or office in the state, FOR THEY ARE QUALIFIED," vide page 231 of that book. And we have seen that some of them were subsequently advanced. We already knew the promotion that attended those soldiers, with the *chandler*, who assisted in the scenes at the *Oakley Arms*, that precipitated the chattering Colonel *Despard*, and half-a-score more, upon the scaffold; we know that what treasons the

intemperate Colonel did not utter, others uttered for him, and we heard, without surprise, that one of them behaved like a consistent poltroon in the advance upon *Chiclana;* all this pre-knowledge may exonerate us from the charge of soothsaying, but will never exonerate *Hiley* from the charge of extreme harshness. History will fill up two or three pages with details * * * * *; or 'tis not *history*, but something else.

False accusations of crime, and the intrapment of persons to perpetrate crime, that these may be afterwards delivered over to the strong arm of the law, to be dealt with *to the life*, are so nearly allied, and so naturally spring up out of each other, that both are necessarily commixed in our consideration of either. For, should one or more such base instruments be required by wicked men, where would they look with propriety for miscreants so nicely fitted to their hands, but among those already polluted with blood? What manner of man is he who could approach a yet uncontaminated person, and require him to set out on a tour to Manchester or Leeds—to Cato or Wych Street, or Lambeth, for the purpose of *drawing in* irritated people, to say and to do those things which would cost them their lives? No; the upright man would spurn at the proposal, if he did not knock down the proposer, as recommended by the late *Recorder*, or like the famous *Jem Belcher*, "knock him about a bit from right to left, till he was tired of *receiving*," when

he might sink to grass or *bite the dust*. Probably, I might console myself with thinking, truly, that those sins against society are past, and that their recurrence is less likely now than at any former period; nevertheless, I cannot help coinciding in the opinion that those facts, and the reflections upon them, ought to be preseved among us against all contingencies in the march of events, among which the *bread-corn* and game-law restrictions seem most imminent.

The particular crime charged against *Brock*, *Pelham*, and *Power* was, that they hired one Renorden, and two other Irishmen, to go to a room in Moor-lane, already prepared by one of the conspirators, and who there set them to work in colouring base money. The same morning, another then informs against them to the beadle of Aldersgate Ward (Taylor), and accompanies him in making the capture; in a few days, they were sentenced to death; but at this very moment a friend of Renorden's discovers their employer, *Pelham*, in the Court-yard at the Old Bailey, looking on, and the whole scheme is thus *blown up*. One part of the objection to the prisoners was not sufficiently understood. They were not, as said, "willing to undertake any thing," at least not *such a thing*. The practice is, for labourers like these, who seek employment at hard work, in digging and carrying, at new buildings, to ply, with hods, or shovels, or other insignia, every Monday morning, at four o'clock, or dawn of day, opposite

Bow Church, in Cheapside. The hiring takes place in a few minutes; foremen directing tens and dozens to this or that particular *works*, whilst seasons occur when little labour of this sort is required; at other times labourers unhired are few. At this place it was, Pelham hired the three Irishmen, who did not, in fact, understand English sufficient to hire themselves without the interpreter, who was the person that so opportunely rescued them from the gallows.

CRIMPS AND TRAPPERS; IMPRESSMENT, &c.

By reason of the change in the times, the two former may be considered extinct *for the present;* the latter, which means "to intrap," is nearly obsolete as a term, and seems partly to merge in the more modern "*false accusers*" schemes, just above dilated upon. All three kinds of misdoers were long employed in subtracting from the liberty of the subject, individually, by rendering compulsory their enlisting into some generally obnoxious service by sea or land. Men guilty of minor crimes—after conviction, were often sent to the West-Indian or African regiments; and when these did not *turn up* in sufficient numbers, there were not wanting wretches who would superinduce young fellows to commit small crimes, for the purpose of *selling* their "consent to go abroad." Within our own recollection, the long voyage to India, of two or three years' duration, "to farthest off

Cathay or even *Bisnagar,*" was far from attractive to seamen who had attached themselves to this or that particular *trade.* At that time of day, it was no uncommon thing to find seamen who had gone all their lives to the Baltic—others by entire families sailed only in Newfoundland ships, those of them who went up the Mediterranean with the *cod* of their own catching, their *tongues* and *sounds,* being deemed, by the generality of persons, to have gone unnecessarily out of their way. Even at this day, during the least combustion in our foreign relations, when seamen are *wanted* for the navy, the East-India Company find a difficulty in manning their ships, which they seek to overcome, by employing people who keep "crimping-houses." These are almost invariably *Jews;* for a more obnoxious occupation than that of *a crimp* can scarcely be conceived—where money is required to carry it on; seeing that it includes the concealment of cheats, runaways, and other rogues, with strumpets and their consequents.

The practice of finding such men in victuals and drink, and slops, and concealment from the press-gangs, until they could get a berth and obtain their three months' *advance* pay, includes in it nothing like a compromise of proper feelings or good conduct. But cupidity awakened at the prospect of realizing twenty-four or thirty pounds per man, on *delivery a-board,* besides the sum paid to them, in war time, as

"bringers," set the *crimp* upon devising how to run up his bills against the men to the highest pitch; and not only *necessaries*, but spirits, tobacco, watches, blind-fiddlers, girls galore, gambling and picking pockets, contributed to effect this, but the unthinking fellows were often made debtors in a much larger sum than by the regulations they were entitled to receive for their outfit. Arrestation for debt not unfrequently completed the farce of *giving credit* to seamen, unable in general, and always unwilling, to "come to book:" the county prison of Middlesex is never without some such inmates; blacks, men of colour, and the crimps themselves, overtaken by their own lawyers, with undigested *bills of costs*, lie there promiscuous, by six, seven, and eight at a time.

An immediate consequence of this mode of living was extreme irregularity, endeavours of the men to get away from their *crimps*, and to join others, or to enter on board without such control; a necessity existed in the *crimp* to coerce his unruly inmates, which brought him to employ land-ruffians of sufficient powers to assist him, and thence arose a systematic arrangement for effecting the like purposes that did not entirely subside with the war. The same parties were, in this manner, instructed, if not purposely trained, to carry on similar operations against landsmen; and we thus account for the great body of depredators who act in concert, after an evidently pre-concerted plan, at all large

public meetings, by broad day-light, and dare the interference of by-standers, as they do the least symptoms of defence on the part of their victims. *Jews* are almost invariably connected with these *bands* of robbers: I never saw an exception; nor ever witnessed such a set *at work* at Lord Mayor's show, election, fire, or *man-fight*, that the majority were not composed of *East-enders*. On occasion of one of these last mentioned assemblages, *lately*, the gang of thieves carried on their depredations with so much boldness, that, when the celebrated *John Gully* interfered by a single remark, one of them threatened him with "what to the *heel* do you "stash" at? I'll soon *chive* you;" an admonition he prudently took care to observe; since *Gully* knows, as well as we do, the extreme impolicy of withstanding an overwhelming number; therefore it is, that I have, in various parts of this volume, advised persons *completely* in the hands of robbers, of whatever genus, to make no resistance under such circumstances, when this is evidently ineffectual. *Mr. Steele* lost his life on Hounslow-heath, owing to this mistake; so did *Mr. Fryer*, in Islington-fields, in 1797, as we have in proof; and so, I apprehend, did *Mrs. Donatty* and others, who were killed by burglars, according to history. Indeed, when a night-robber breaks into a house, or knocks down one in the dark, he is considered as an intentioned murderer by the law, and is capitally convicted therefore.

Villains so trained to their calling as *the crimp* and his men are, capable of fighting and drinking till "all's blue," of devising and swearing anything, would be well prepared to effect any other similar purpose. From crimping for one *service* or two, in which their *subjects* ran great risk of life, to crimping for any other service—the step was easy, if not eli gible; indeed, the graduation from one to the other, from a calculable risk to a certain loss of life, is but an inclined plane, obvious, profitable, and readily surmounted. What frightful murders did we not hear of, along shore, soon after the peace had rendered his trade a nullity, and the *crimp* and his men found their occupation gone. Without stopping to whine over the Marr and the Williamson families, the Greenwich or the Dulwich sacrifices of life, when no longer the press-gangs compelled sailors to seclude themselves in crimping-houses—what horrors affright us at the numbers of persons announced as "lost," "left home," or "missing," to say nothing of those who leave no friend behind, or none that have advertisement-money to cry abroad the heart-chilling sound of a mysterious death that fancy depicts as a protracted and lasting one.

The class of miscreants whose wicked ways are here described, as near as we could approach to reconnoitre, confined their operations during their harvest time (the war) to the eastern end of town, none having *crimping-houses*

farther West than the neighbourhood of the India-house, some in Houndsditch, the Minories, and Crutched-friars, and thence along shore for miles, these dens of iniquity were numerous indeed. That none would commence such a base calling who was not previously a disgraced member of society, may easily be conceived; accordingly, whenever the *men* were brought up to the India-house for approval, and *to enter*, as was the case for many years, their conductors, the crimps and their assistants, included in their numerous assemblages a good proportion of street-thieves and receivers of stolen goods. After the ceremony of approval, *the men* were usually shipped off *per* Gravesend packet-boats; and, in 1813, being on board one, I recognised *the conductor* of a very unruly party of these, destined for the *Cabalva*, who had a notable Babylonish old eschar in his cheek; he turned out to be a just-*returned lag*, whom I had seen holding up his hand at the Old Bailey sessions, some five or six years previously. He seemed afraid of his mutinous charge, it being midnight; and I proceeded to *worm* the miserable fellow, after congratulating him on having regained his "liberty." He it was who now confirmed the opinion I had previously formed *upon the view*.

As the introduction to this notable piece of machinery for manning our merchant ships is thus disreputable, the discontinuance of their services is not at all calculated to leave them better fitted to return into upright society; so

that, whether the monied men among them afterwards commence *business* as publicans, silversmiths, "merchants," or jobbers, they come as little recommended to us, therefore, as if they had resumed their original occupations, or set up for *fine gentlemen*, as black legs and bullies at gaming-tables. Every man of them will vaunt of having property, on all occasions or none, and *flash* it too; for which purpose they propose quirkish bets with any body and every body, and with each other, dress gaudily, and talk everlasting. With flashy manners such as these and the *vulgar language* in perfection at command, let us not be surprised that they obtain *imitators*, if we may not term these *proselytes* or disciples; so that a numerous and entirely *new class* has been created in cockney society, unknown to the last century, which may be termed the crimping class: showy, fascinating, talkative, vulgar, wagering, fencing, brothelling, they constitute the bases and appui of the apparently isolated rogues who expiate their crimes from time to time on the scaffold, or suffer out their *time* (on earth) at Botany-bay.

Impressment.—A subject very closely connected with that of intrapping and crimping for the sea-service is that forceful measure for manning our fleets, termed *impressing of seamen*, which, whenever an armament takes place, is felt along the whole of *Thames* from London-bridge to its *embouchure*. This is a *duty* that is either executed by a gang of landsmen and

ordinaries, under a captain commanding off the Tower-stairs, and his subalterns, or by boats manned by several ships' crews lying farther down the river. The latter seldom come ashore to insult the peaceful citizens, and that always far away to the eastward, where "peace least desires to dwell;" the former description of gangs sometimes enter *the City* itself, through the mistaken complaisance of a subservient *Lord Mayor*—a creature seldom *re infesta*, whose appearance among us is hailed as a blight, and the memory of whose acts scents like a mildew. On such occasions, persons of whatsoever quality, on crossing *the Thames*, run the risque of being captured by the gangs and carried on board the *receiving ship*, off the Tower, which lies there upon such occasions and all occasions, contrary to ancient practice, and, indeed, she *there lies* still. Captions of respectable landsmen *in business* have been made, under my eye, as high up as Westminster-bridge, with the hope probably of nabbing unprotected watermen—sneaks who failed to enter themselves in "the river fencibles," under *Commodore Lucas*. Indeed, many who were thus compelled *to volunteer*, did so

> Hoping the day would never come,
> When they should, grudging, sail from *home*.

But many of them "found it out" at *the Helder*, at Walcheren, and still more remotely with *Moira*, at Ostend; additional reasons

these why none of the able bodied should be allowed to sneak between the blankets, and less still place themselves under petticoat coverture. They were deservedly scouted from their skiffs, and obliged to take up with west-country barge-work, or to ply among the freshets, like eels in May. Reprobate them as we may, freshwatermen, no more than ditch-loving citizens, like to be caught at a *nonplus* for foreign service. These latter, if captured improperly during the *heat* of impressment for some unforeseen armament and carried on board the *Tender*, or get cooped up in "the True Blue," on Tower-hill, have but to send a message to my Lord Mayor *next morning*, or to an alderman, or active common-councilman of their ward, and their liberation is no longer problematical: the afternoon will find them at the *Nore*, beyond his lordship's jurisdiction. One of those *quiet citizens*, in an unspeakable state of ebriety, being in the clutches of a press-gang, who assiduously handed him along, under a *cheveaux de frize* of half hangers, another simply demanded, "what are ye hauling the man along in that there manner for?" To which the officer replied "mind your own business, man alive; we're only making him volunteer aboard ship."

Crimps were known during war, and when their most disgusting occupation was found necessary to the shippers, and the East-India Company, among others, to procure the escape of seamen from their ships, after these

had received their "three months' advance" pay aboard, and expended part of it in drunkenness; whereupon the merchants had no alternative but to incur the vastly high *crimp-bounty* over again, or subject their ships to the guidance of drunken crews, over whose diminished number the officers scarce preserved sufficient control to keep the sea safe so far as the Mother Bank, or first place of resort. Hence the number of Indiamen lost in the very first days of the outward-bound voyage, from the time of the *Halsewell*, on Purbeck, in 1783, to that of the Britannia and two more, on the Goodwin, in 1807. But the energy of *the officers* might have repressed desertions, so fraught with danger at an earlier period, had they pursued the same course as third officer T. Upham, who very properly fired upon the run-aways, and kept the remaining rogues to their duty.

CHAP. IV.

In-door Tricks and Domestic Annoyances—Dishonest Traders and Servants—Wagering Kiddies — Gambling — Sporting-houses — Betting.

Most of those tricks, of which strangers are the main object, usually commence in the streets, and have been freely handled. Others

that are common to these, to long residents and natives, town-breds, come next under review; and though not so much exposed to the casual observer, includes a vast proportion of the population in their influence. Of these tricks, the most frequent are base attempts to palm off, from house to house, India silk goods, tea, and French manufactures, as smuggled, with Irish-linen and other piece goods; the caitiffs conveying an idea, at times, in an under tone, that sounds as if the goods had been really stolen; whereas, the handkerchiefs were invariably our own country manufacture, usually heavy Macclesfields and the broad silks of Spitalfields make. For my part, I never saw any other, and have often seen these street-venders making their purchases of the manufacturers, having walked into the warehouses after them, the more accurately to mark their mode of "doing business." They are the same with the *duffers*, but take out hawkers' licenses to sell from house to house, to the great annoyance of housekeepers in the more secluded lanes and small squares, at the outskirts and middling genteel neighbourhoods, whom they pester with offers of goods of every kind, knocking and ringing at their doors incessantly, from morning to night. Not only matches, ballads, fruit, bobbins, rabbits, blacking, potage, plants, "growing blowing," fish of all persuasions, butter, "nice new cheese," oranges and lemons, but tea and coffee, books in sixpenny numbers, cloth goods, and

cabinet ware, with fifty others, not enumerated. All which make up the far-famed, but much-altered "London cries," that amused or surprised our juvenility, in the form of a penny gilt book, and which a musical friend of ours, at one time, undertook to reduce to the harmony of "piano and flute accompaniment;" but the first series of petty traders, the real *cryers*, endeavour to circumvent his crotchets, by adopting the mute applications from door to door of the latter; so that 'tis no uncommon thing for a small family to have their dinner belated, by some quarter of a hundred *walking tradespeople*, thundering at the outer portal, or bawling down the area, "hareskins, Mrs. Cook?" "any ould clows, gentlemans?" and the thousand-and-one other *stories*, that we had rather imagine than hear.

But the evil, which begins with "soot ho!" and *milk*, or rather "*l'eau!*" in the morning, and continues down to "fine cod" and "beer ho!" of an evening, does not end here; much less do the effects of our London cries terminate with *midnight*, for at that hour the real troubles of some of the purchasers may be said to begin. Many of the knocking and ringing applicants are connected with thieves, hair-brush vendors in particular, and the transmutation of any one of these into a burglar is neither a difficult operation, nor an uncommon occurrence. The females, who bawl "Buy my water-cresses!" at dawn, in spring, are invariably so

allied, and upon the constant look out for squalls; for doors a-jar, or window-shutters carelessly left; for shops insufficiently guarded, as to *the youth*, or the disposition of *the man*, "just to step out for a drop of gin," the first thing in the morning. On such an occasion, what scheme could be better devised, for perpetrating the *safe thing*, than for an accomplice to detain him at "the wine-vaults" by persuasion, by a treat, by fun, or by civil jaw? A sort of cajollery that is often practised upon other weak-headed guardians of every kind of property, who may incline towards a drop of the creature too much. Whether those guardians be porters, or shopmen, or watchmen, or *trusty servants*, who may thus endeavour to *keep their spirits up*, they are ever more liable, than any other description of innocents, to contribute to the purposes of

BURGLARS.

Beggars and *tinkers* are, properly enough, suspected of contributing to burglaries; but then, those people *work* for themselves, and seldom carry off great amounts. When a large robbery of this kind is contemplated, the rogues employ other agents to examine the premises, to ascertain when the stronger part of the family may be from home; and they cannot better obtain this desirable information than by means of those travelling tradespeople before enumerated. These will annoy the family with

rudeness; place their feet inside the door, to prevent its shutting; refuse to take *no* for an answer, and grumble or threaten, by certain ferocious indications, or give cause of uneasiness to females,—who should then ring the *door-bell.*

The perpetrators of house-robberies, not only put in practice the foregoing means of making entry upon premises to rob them, but avail themselves as often of the information to be obtained from servants of every degree, as to what premises are worth entering by force, as also the times when it may be effected with greatest facility and safety, and whereabout the more valuable property is deposited, with other precious particulars, that are sometimes communicated with a guilty participation; at others, not so. When premises have been burglariously robbed, in a surprising manner, or to great amounts, unreflecting people affect to wonder how the entry has been accomplished; simply imagining that the villains may have selected the particular house, on the spur of the moment, after walking about with the implements of house-breaking, crow-bar, jemmy, dark-lantern, skeleton-keys, the *means* of procuring light, &c. &c. for a day or two, let us suppose: whereas, no conclusion more fallacious any man of sense could ever arrive at, whatever the premises might be whence he drew his deduction. He might as well imagine that body-snatchers, who disturb the mansions of the dead, took their chance of

finding any body at home; although it must be pretty evident, upon reflection, that neither could succeed in their depredations, without previously reconnoitring the spot, and lulling the vigilance of the guard, or procuring his absence by administering to his cupidity or supplying his wants.

But the better to introduce the several points that bear upon the crime of subtracting the property of their employers, by servants and others, we may safely be allowed to look into the morality and private life of the great bulk of Londoners, use our best endeavours to fathom the motives to some nefarious actions, and to assign causes for others, if not the reasons for their recurrence. After getting over, rather than *completing*, this rapid excursion, we shall return to the subjects set down at the head of this chapter, and to finish the sketches imperfectly touched upon in the preceding pages.

Come we next to enter into the privacies of domestic life, where these militate against the comfort or well-being of the heads of families. Of course, the reader will imagine with us, that the master of a family should be an *upright* person, to say the least of him; *moral* let him be, and *religious*, too, if that mode of conducting the duties of social life please him best; but neither the one or the other is indispensable to our present mode of considering the subject in

hand, though his mistaken zeal in imposing his own uprightness, his morals, or his religion upon his neighbours, most certainly comes within our purview, if it do not call for reprobation. (*ubi*, page 7.) Among other subjects fit for the grave consideration of every citizen, one thing is sufficiently clear: if the *head* of a house be not himself exemplary in his conduct, he may look in vain for regularity among his domestics, deference from his assistants in trade, or due respect from his co-tradesmen and neighbour-gentry. The *ban* against gross impropriety is raised against their equals in no higher rank in society than those, nor then always, when the transgressors be rich in lucre as they are poor in good works: the *haut ton*, on the contrary, rather caressing, if they do not patronise deviations from morals in their caste, that do not bring the perpetrators immediately within the provisions of a maledictory statute, or the adverse meaning of common law, if the offence can be commuted with money; because the lower grades cannot follow them thus far, in making pecuniary compensations, that seldom expiate guilt or cause inconvenience to the perpetrators.

But let the deviations from moral rectitude of a housekeeper be what they may, no reason can be offered why he should be disrobed of his property, by the unlicensed appropriations of servants and *making-free* inmates; even though he be a thief himself, or more harmfully

engaged in *fencing* others' thefts, these are not sufficient warranty for breaking into his house while he is at church, or throwing brickbats at his windows whilst he is trying to sleep in peace with all mankind; for, in either case, the roguishly inclined need do no more than give their victim a bad name, and then commit their crimes with unseared consciences; as we do frequently find such unfaithful persons console themselves with a set off of accusations, though this be but the venial offence of his not being so observant of religious attendances as the thief himself, or he repeat the tenth-time-refuted lie of some adverse party, whose impertinence is cruelty itself. Yet do many Christian bodies thus console themselves with carrying on a petty warfare against the goods and chattels of their neighbours, because these may bear a *bad character;* that is to say, "bad" according to the opinion of the givers. For example, "an old *miser*" is decried as unworthy the rights of ownership, and from that moment, his property may justly be invaded; the irregular *quack* is denounced for an impostor, by the regular *admissus* of the "Guinea-trade;" and the *Socinian* damned by single authority of the *evangelical;* thenceforward, the half-honest deem themselves authorised in purloining the stray chattels of the obnoxious party, and the confirmed rogue persuades himself that he merely fulfils a moral duty in enforcing his discomforts. Perhaps 'tis only in *fun*, that all the

neighbours send all the match-venders and china-hawkers to "knock at the *green door*," because 'tis that of a needy author; but then the rude boys, belonging to those considerate neighbours, lean over his garden-wall and pluck his grapes; whilst one, more funny than the rest, runs away with his only laying hen; and on a day that he has dodged the poor scribe into *Paternoster-row*, in search of a patron, the same faunist carries the joke so far as to break open his premises, and runs off funnily with certain *select articles* adapted to the magazine of a "dealer in marine stores," with a few that are "of no use to any body but the owner;" nor to him either, or they would not have been thus *lying by him*, but *before the public*. With these, the jocose rogue lights his mother's fire or his own *cigar*, and, as either smokes heavenward, safely despises the man that nobody speaks well of, principally on account of violent suspicions the robbed person lies under, of being already poor, or otherwise generally obnoxious.

Servant girls, given to purloining frippery articles from their mistresses, as soon as they get over the self-reproaches of a first essay, stifle all future compunctious visitings, by imagining *my lady* has more than she deserves, nor can the inquiring Abigail make out by what right her employer possesses so many fine things. *Shopmen*, with more reason, violently desire to share in the sharp tricks and contri-

vances of their masters to cheat the public, in which they have borne a main part, either as to short weight and scanty measure, deterioration of the articles sold, or steady unblushing asseverations that all his "trade-lies" are true as holy writ. And, truly, they have good reason on their side to expect a coparceny with their principals; for, as the noblest females *undressed* are no longer angels in the sight of their waiting women, any more than a hero is such in the estimation of his valet; neither is the knavish shopkeeper aught but a base knave, according to the best means of judging within the scope of his servants' capacity. Besides, does not the employed run the same risk of detection as his employer, and has he not already incurred the self-accusing obloquy of having acted amiss? What then remains to be done, when his accomplice-master refuses or withholds all participation in the benefits arising from their joint fraudful exertions?—what, but to *help himself?* Not but that the crimes of servants, with very many shades of guilt, some without one rascally apology, are coming before the public daily, in which not even want is offered in excuse; but generally the extravagance of the accused is found to have actuated him to the perpetration of his first offence, and buoyed up his hopes from that moment to the final upshot of complete detection. But, however begun, by what means soever continued, that servant, man or woman, who is in the habit of

robbing an employer, is ever the most garrulous, impertinent, or saucy in his particular employ; if with some talent, though that may consist only of conversational elegance becoming his station (*vulgo* "civil jaw"); or, may be, he is clever in "making sale" of goods, quick as a hawk, sharp as a razor, pugnacious in defence of his master's property, suffering none to rob with impunity, but himself,—still he will be exceeding talkative, accusatory of others, commanding in tone and manner, and if *watched*, or removed to a department of the concern where he can no longer carry on his operations with impunity, he will kick and fling and threaten to quit, or, if an apprentice, will actually take to his heels and "run away." If it be a female who is placed under those unhappy circumstances, her *running away* will occur with some fellow or other; but, of either sex, the fact of secretly robbing may be calculated upon paper, by taking an estimate of the expenses incurred by the suspected person, principally in clothes, sometimes in junketting-parties of pleasure, play goings, chaise driving, horse exercises, and drunkenness. Much thoughtfulness overspreads the countenance of the *private thief*, if he be capable of reflection, and has an inclination for reading; if some latent sparks of religious feeling, or compunction, come over his mind, he becomes melancholic or outrageous, according to his temperament. Indeed, persons suffering under secret

troubles of whatever nature, will usually comport themselves after a similar manner. Ill-requited love or misplaced affection, as well as the consciousness of guilt or self-revilings of *sinfulness*, and the damning proof of exercising a losing trade, or any other viperous entwinement of the soul's best purposes, show their corroding existence by the same line of conduct, that is otherwise inexplicable to the ordinary observer.

Female servants of every description may fairly be suspected of a desire to appropriate to themselves house-keeping necessaries, though I have chosen to begin with "servant girls;" for that is the condition in which they themselves begin *life*, creeping upwards with their years to the higher posts of guiding some particular department of a large household, if they do not entirely control those of less extensive families. Much of this pilfering is considered by them as *perquisites*, the domestic "cheese-parings and candles ends" of their offices; and where the establishment is of sufficient munificence, they do not amiss to remove the *parings* and *ends* out of sight by any means, when *the cheese* and the *candles* come to that pass; but unhappily, they do not always wait until the consummation of the articles desiderated, but often commit acts of violence upon the untouched virgin purity of their employers' property, ere toll has been taken by the right owner. Then again, if the tradesman who supplies those

articles allows the *servant* (woman or man) a per centage upon the articles supplied, according to the prevalent practice, this excellent mode of making sudden riddance by wholesale cuts both ways, like a two-edged sword. Butlers, cooks, housekeepers of high and distinguished families, take toll of all these tradespeople upon paying their bills, which varies greatly in proportion to the carelessness or supineness of their principals. About ten per cent. satisfies the greater number at their entré upon their offices, respectively; but fifteen per cent. and thence to twenty per cent. is neither an uncommon draw-back, nor undeserved requital for the trouble of recommendation, and the great industry necessary to "make away" with goods sufficient to *make it worth while* for both parties to do *business together*. By this species of arrangement, the *man-cook*, whose stipulated privilege is "to order every thing used in the kitchen," *the butler*, who has the like privilege over the drinkables, and the *valet de chambre*, or own man, who regulates, first, the tailors, and, secondly, the old-clothes-men, with the *coachman*, who studies horse-flesh and new harness, saddles and carriage-wheels, add to their already well-weighed salaries, incomes of £400, £300, £200, and £100 a-year, according to situation and circumstances, their own consciences or their employers' means, advancement in the state, or increase of estate. For, be it known, whenever a chief justice, or a chan-

cellor of any degree, a marquis or a *(noli me)* bishop receives his *new distinction*, his domestics seek to partake in the honours of *the house*, by sharing its profits—each in his several avocation, and thereby advancing the honour, state, and dignity of their employer. All this would be very well, and happens much after the course of all human events, and the due pursuit of trade in a rich commercial metropolis, in particular; but the privilege of perquisites descends to the servants employed by much lower orders in society than "the privileged classes," the *gentry*, or even the mere *squirearchy* of the surrounding districts; and to some who cannot conveniently bear its effects, though they violently desire to maintain their station in society, by means of tolerable equipages supported on economic principles. In this respect, the example of the *haut ton* servants is found materially dis-serviceable to the middling classes of gentry, by infusing spendthrift notions, and teaching wayward tricks of raising the ways and means for its support, to the domestics of these latter; which induce these economists to take in dudgeon the coalition of their tradespeople and servants, they look upon the *per centage* as fraudful, and *waste* as a crime against the giver of all good; they appeal irascibly to the laws for protection in the punishment of the offenders, and herein seek to avoid the ruin that assuredly follows a lavish expenditure in house-keeping. In this consists

the difference between the appropriation and sale of a great man's edible property by his servants, and the remorseless augmentation of his trade-bills by adding thereto their privileged *per centages*, which are both clearly robberies, though seldom punished, because little valued; as are similar subtractions from the property of the middling classes, who are less able to bear these privations, if they do not prove actually ruinous to the sufferers. Hence the asperity with which this class of people pursue purloiners of every description, even although they may not feel the necessity of deterring others by example. Truly enough has it been said: "He who is robbed not knowing what is stolen, he is not robbed at all;" but, he who is robbed requiring what is lost for his support, why he is robbed indeed.

Besides all this, the property of a tradesman, and his *stock in trade*, in particular, lies open to depredation more than the goods and chattels, the cash and valuables of persons not in trade: and what renders this consideration additionally recommendable to notice, the lesser tradesman, shopkeeper, or manufacturer, is more exposed to thefts than the greater ones, by reason of the necessity he is under of exposing his goods to allure customers, which the larger dealer feels unnecessary, or despises, according to the cumbency of his purse, or balance in his bankers' books. The subtraction of a loaf of bread, a lump of bacon, or a scrap of meat from the well-laid-out stall, by the unfed prowler,

ought to occasion no evil words between the parties—offender and offended; 'tis the forced tribute which the losers owe to the hungry man, and they even seem to have concurred in it, by laying out an assortment for his choice. In such cases bad betide the man that would attempt to mar the wretch in *taking his supper;* but the case is altered quite, when the arrant thief employs his art in taking goods of any sort, however exposed at the doors or windows of such minor tradesmen. When the articles stolen may be too bulky for immediate use, or only convertible into money; when they consist of niceties or tit bits, as confectionary or oysters, no good reason can be found for treating the theft as less than felony, or the offender with any less audience than the quarter sessions. I once saw a set of fellows carry off a *tub of oysters,* from the corner of St. John's Street, facing Smithfield, and afterwards had ocular demonstration that they were all hungry as hounds; but then, the character of the party, the nature of the thing stolen, and its amount, all tended to stamp the deed as one of the worst character. Strangely perverse, or intimidated, the loser declined to follow his tub, as he might have done.

Retail Shops, that are allowed to continue the only gangway into the *dwelling* after business hours and of Sundays, are thus exposed to purloinment, and scarcely ever escape. Young folks of either sex, who may have the

charge of "answering the door," or of airing themselves at it of an evening, or on Sundays, usually contract new acquaintances, who naturally admire the articles sold within, and consequently obtain some without purchase. Whatever this may be, the practice is likely to continue and increase, if it does not engender a wish to extend itself to a much more decisive depredation.

With this end in view, *servant women* sometimes find themselves addressed by designing knaves, as sweethearts, who carry on the farce of courtship and matrimony—if they do not perpetrate wedlock itself, with the express intention of consummating the more daring crime of *burglary*—scarcely content with the slow process of *privately stealing*.

Warehousemen, as those traders are denominated who sell piece goods, stockings, lace, and the like, leave their premises extremely insecure, in general; the result has been that many of them have found their warehouses completely stripped in the course of one night each. Most of those warehouses that were so entered were parts of large houses, subdivided among several, their owners residing prettily, according to modern custom, at the outskirts of Town, in "country house" *lodgings*. Opportunity like this ought not to be overlooked by thorough-paced thieves; nor is it. A recent case of two such single-room warehouses in Wood-street being cleared on the same night—

May 1827, and that of a tailor and draper, in Finch-lane, in 1825; both occurred on Sunday evenings; and, indeed, this appears to be a favourite point of time for such enterprises, the further mode of procedure being much the same in every case—so far as subsequent inquiry could instruct us; for very seldom does it happen this precise offence has been fully discovered and punished, on account of the persons engaged in such extensive robberies being at the top of their "profession," or *rogues of respectability*. Their mode of operating is no secret:—the thieves, having well ascertained, by previous survey, the habits of the neighbours and persons upon the spot—their uprisings and down lying, the going on and off of the watchmen, together with the mode of fastening the outer door, they then open their way in by skeleton keys, usually on Sunday evenings, previous to the watch going on duty. Being well housed, they procure refreshments and a candle, and amuse themselves with packing up in sacks the whole stock generally, and rest content until morning that the watchmen go off their beats. A coach is then called from the stand, where a "game hackney-man" has previously stationed himself for the purpose; or he drives to a spot hard by, or boldly up to the door of the house, and *the job* is soon accomplished. On a late occasion, however, in Blackfriars-road, (August, 1827,) the watchman, in his way home to bed, after his dis-

charge, spoiled the sport of a set of those burglars, who had packed up the whole stock of a shoemaker, and the coach drove off towards the bridge as hard as the horses could go, whilst the rogues escaped. Another shoemaker, at the corner of Oxendon-street, Coventry-street, lost the whole of his stock by similar means, a year before; and, what must have been particularly cruel to the sufferer, we heard, from *on dit*, that he had *robbed himself*, the liars. And in troth, so complete is the clearance, and effected with so much silent celerity withal, that none imagine aught but magic or collusion could have accomplished the ready metamorphosis—especially in those cases where the houses were at all partially inhabited. The same infernal charge as that sustained by the shoemaker, was formerly, *i.e.* twenty five years since, flung at a silk-mercer, in Paternoster-row, facing of Pannier-alley, whose stock *walked off* at the same short warning. The house of *Mr. Barry*, in the Minories, was also inhabited by the family, when all the stock of silk mercery was stolen, about the year 1810. But the carrying off the whole stock of woollen-drapery goods at the warehouse next to Sambrook-court, Basinghall-street, was the *heaviest job* of its kind that occurs to my recollection at this moment; it was also remarkable for consisting of a great quantity of *blue* broad-cloths, which gave the thieves an opportunity for dressing themselves in a kind of uniform, viz.—blue

coat, and blue pantaloons, a taste that has not yet entirely departed from among them, by a great deal.

Porters, carmen, and other underlings, when left to themselves, most frequently find the temptation too great for their moral rectitude, so they should never be relied upon implicitly, without many years of trial, and numerous tests of their honesty. I do not mean that cruel test which some foolish heads of families play off upon their servants, of leaving some glittering article open to purloinment, or pretending to forget to take the key or keys of their money, which they may have previously counted; but the performance of some well specified task, or series of *deliveries*, afterwards ascertaining that his instructions have been accurately followed, and without equivocation. When it so happens that one of this class of persons is entrusted with the payment or receipt of small sums, and his account of the transactions is enveloped in over much jobation, in assumed stupidity, in impertinent answers, or he drop his money on the ground, shuffle it from pocket to pocket, and otherwise evince confusion of purpose, he has most assuredly been at *no good:* drunkenness on such an occasion is decisive of his dishonesty; 'tis ever the cloak or the solace of his misdeeds.

Many, however, preserve their temper and respectful demeanour during a long series of years, and a few within recollection were the

patterns of decent behaviour during long services, as was conspicuously the conduct of *Flannigan*, who received the distinguishing appellation of *Mister*, from every Paddy, but, being transported for stealing brass wire from his employers—the ironmongers near Guildhall, was found to have carried on the practice to a great extent for many years. He was, likewise, exemplary in the fulfilment of his religious duties, confessing often, and going to mass regularly; so were the knot of *Porters*, who had a *depôt* of almost every article of commerce, in *Hand-court*, Thames-street, that proved they practised exchanges of goods with many persons more than their own acknowledged number, (nine of them,) who were never brought to justice. They lived expensively, were remarkable for wearing top-boots—one of them being a leather thief, at *Curtis's*, in Well-street, Cripplegate—and the Irishman just named being further notorious for the sugar-candy accompaniment that always attended his every footstep in his Sunday visits to chapel, and in his rounds to those numerous customers whom he supplied withstolen goods. The *Hand-court* people were also exemplarily strict in their religious observances: by the way, this species of cloak for their misdeeds is not a deception confined to London and its environs; for I find, at the moment of this sheet going to press, that a father and two sons, (*Heyworth* by name,) just now executed in Lancashire, for numerous foot-pad rob-

beries, accompanied by sad cruelties, died as they had lived, good methodists—not by works, but by faith. With the like claims to uncommon sanctity, a millwright, in good employ for many years, in the neighbourhood of Wells, in Somersetshire, is ascertained to have committed burglaries out of number, including sacrilege, with grand larceny, and he finally attempted murder: he remains for trial.

This class of depredators upon the property of their employers are numerous beyond conception, generally much emboldened by long impunity, and some of them contrive to amass property enough to enter upon business on their own account, in a manner very edifying to the close observer of passing events. If they oppose their old employers in trade, and by their continued machinations, complete the ruin they began, we clearly perceive the task is incomplete, until they have also blackened the character of him they once *served out*, in order that his enemies may fix on some certain cause for his losses, and not join his friends in perversely attributing his ruin to the dishonesty of servants. These are no idle speculations: I have proved the facts in all their bearings; and could put my hand upon forty living instances, at any time; some in two's and three's, who have thus battened under the same roof. "How's this, Bill?" said I, to one whom I had formerly caught robbing his employer; "How comes it that you did not speak to your old

master, just now? I think I have a right to inquire?" I added significantly. As he looked confused, another *youth* answered for him; —"Oh, why we have just been talking of him; he is not worth a dump; you see, Sir, he has nothing to thank the old fool for." "Nothing but his *life*," I rejoined; though I might have added, that he ought not to have forgotten seven years of unceasing kindness, instruction, and frequent forgiveness, that ultimately *made a man of him*, as of all his fellow apprentices. Forgiveness, however, or *lenity*, as we call it when the investigation has been submitted to a jury, is often thrown away upon the individual, and always operates to the disadvantage of the grantor himself. Some years ago, early in the morning, I noticed a fellow take an armfull of books, from the shelves of his employer, in Stationers' Court, and followed him to a pawnbroker's, in Brydges-street; but, although he was found to have practised the same kind of robbery to a good extent, yet the master thought proper to relent, and the offender went at large. By way of requital, the culprit stigmatised his master's character, and shortly afterwards informed against him, upon some penal statute, whereby he pocketed a portion of the fines. In the year 1826, one *Dunn*, a confidential clerk, or assistant, to certain silk mercers, in Compton-street, Soho, was condemned to death for privately robbing his employers of goods in a large amount; but, as

frequently happens with kind-hearted people, they were so ill-advised as to interpose between justice and the convict: he escaped the severity of extreme punishment, and, next year, his successor, in the same situation, Powell, by name, robbed the same persons to a much larger amount, and was executed, 22d November, 1827. Had execution followed upon the first convict, 'tis more than probable the second would have been saved; impunity to any flagrant offender being a great encourager of crime in others.

Burglaries from without may be prevented, by demonstrations of vigilance and of unceasing watchfulness, whatever the real fact may be. For a *lone house*, the bare exhibition of a musket near a window, always effects some good; firing it off, nightly, much more. If the inmates have the character of being sportsmen, and *good shot*, this sort of proficiency offers no encouragement to any neighbourly *inquiring* burglar; for no burglary of any extent, is undertaken, as I remarked higher up (page 222), unless the party has previously reconnoitred the premises, and made some inquiries as to the number, quality, and habitudes of the people within. If the females can be brought to fire off small pistol-charges, the achievement of so much, or *a little more*, would add greatly to the security of the mansion, when the men might be abroad, asleep, or youthful and spiritless. A yard *dog* is indispensable to such an appurtenance; but

he will stand in need of instruction in his duty, to render his good qualities fully available, and prevent any misbehaviour to friends, into which uneducated dogs are most likely to fall. His ferocity may be augmented by frequent alarms at night, by feeding him on raw meat and horseflesh, by mounting a *bug-a-boo* on the wall or railing, and ringing the alarum-bell. In neighbourhoods much infested with burglars, the employment of a *large bell*, in front of the house, is found signally serviceable in the repression of these, and of thieves of every denomination: its sound might be rendered familiar to all the neighbourhood within hearing; and these three defences may be brought to act in unison—the bell, the fire-arms, and the dog, by all three being *set* at the same time, every evening; the dog being called upon, as soon as the piece has been fired, the bell struck once or twice, and the animal set loose from his chain, to "mark, now, Cato! mind them, the rascals!"

Not only at the outskirts of our bills of mortality are those night defences of property and of life thus rendered efficacious, but in the more popular streets also, where neighbouring premises jostle and intersect each other in front, and flanks, and rear. In such cases, a small dog that will yapp a good deal, and can *get away* underneath furniture &c. is goodly desirable for alarming the inmates and bothering the thieves into a precipitate retreat; more especially if wire-communications be extended from

night-bell, or bells, across passages, vulnerable windows, and other places of suspected access. With precautions such as these, or compounded out of them, has the writer of this article, for many years lived in the very disturbed district about Hackney-road and Hoxton, unmolested on his premises, though these are perilously situate in view of the West front of Haggerstone-church, some 400 yards off; and has even retired to rest in the middle of this winter, 1827-8, with a tolerable large family, leaving the front-door unfastened of bolt, bar, lock, or latch, not even a *skewer* to keep out the dreaded "gang" and perdition: an accidental experiment, however, that is not intended for repetition. Even the watchmen, though civil to excess on minor occasions, placed entire reliance upon our own self-defence in this, and disturbed not "the willing door."

Burglaries from within—those committed by unfaithful inmates are easily distinguishable from those of the regular *cracksmen*, by the marks of violence upon the fastenings, inflicted by chissel or crow-bar, appearing on the *inside*; to say nothing of the little confusion those occasion in the goods, trunks, and safes, that may be broken open, compared to the confused operations of the latter. The one is uncertain whereabout the most valuable property is concealed, and breaks open more repositories than is necessary, the other pitches upon the right place at once: the latter is usually ob-

servable also when any person within has been connected with the house-breaker without, in what is technically termed "a put-up robbery." But these put-ups are neither requisite or necessary to the robber who can obtain a tolerable insight as to the situation of the property, the strength of the family at one period or its weakness at any other, by means of his *trading*, or otherwise gaining an insight of the premises, as the travelling Duffers in cloth, china, tea, &c. &c. before enumerated.

Of Duffers, I have recent cause to entertain a very disadvantageous opinion—not so much on account of their ferocious aspects, revolting manners, and the brutal life-contests in vogue at their native villages—as the total want of moral restraint exhibited in those cases where any have been implicated; and if they are very seldom discovered to have been either "up" or "put up" to robberies, certain I am they form the most apt materials for both *offices*, either to *give it* or to *take it*, as the final adventure of *Dick Bowers*, before alluded to, sufficiently tells. But that re-seizure of the Irish-linen, in Regent-street, which the one-legged rogue deemed too good for the price paid for it, is paralleled in many of its points by a city occurrence.

A wholesale tradesman, one of a *firm* dealing very largely in this line, found himself much pestered to buy some muslin, linen, silk goods; *Duffy* even waited at a shop-door into which our

friend had entered with the hope of inducing the downey rogue to retreat. "What can you mean by pressing *me* to buy your muslins, my good fellow, you must be aware that I know they are not India?" remonstrated our friend *Halberd*, with a well-tongued duffer, at the top of Cheapside; for the fellow actually bought his goods at that gentleman's warehouse; doing business, however, with one of his partners he did not know the person he was addressing. But *duffy* was not to be denied; he pressed still stronger, and with such warm asseveration to the truth of his *real India*, that Mr. Halberd accompanied him to his receptacle in a neighbouring public-house, where he found one piece that was indeed real India, bargained for and bought it, amidst continued attempts to shuffle it between others, for the purpose of "ringing the changes," as they term the nefarious act; then, having dashed down the money demanded with one hand, and seized the right piece of goods with the other, he made for the door with his prize, exulting no doubt over the *duper duped*. At this moment, another duffer, as genteel *to look at* as he was rough *in tacto*, ready at villainy and athletic in person, insisted that the identical muslin our friend had bought was his by previous purchase, and proceeded to assert the rights of ownership by violent seizure "*vi et armis*." Thus the question became quite "another man's matter," the first duffer assuming the character of a candid moderator, and "*allowing* that the

piece in *dispute* really did belong to the new claimant, and that *the* gentleman might choose *any other piece* besides for the same money." "A very fair and disinterested offer," exclaimed a third duffer; but the battle already raged, our friend having *muzzled up* the second, or finely-fledged duffer repeatedly, so that he had other fish to fry, in looking after his stray teeth, with a pair of nice black eyes and flowing jib. *Astley Cooper* never performed a successful operation in less time than our *Halberd* reduced this *rank and file* to a state of compound fracture, and left them to compose their affairs in the best manner they could. But his back was no sooner turned than the rogues turned the affair to good account amongst the people of the house, asserting that they had been seized upon by an officer of the revenue, and must sell the remainder of their smuggled importation in much haste. This they not only did, but day after day people flocked to Duke's Court to purchase "pieces of the real India from the gentlemen who had been so scandalously treated by the *Excisemen*," as they observed. But the key to this piece of fatuity is found in the fact, that the people of *Cockaigne* "love to be in a secret," to their very hearts; and whilst they meet to petition for acts of parliament, acts of common-council, and to mke bye-laaws and imposts to coerce their neighbours, themselves endeavour to break through loop-holes, and evade every act that is passed.

Not only do duffers keep watch for persons to pounce upon, at public houses, but itinerant venders, of very decent exterior, and shabby tradesmen, keep a good look out for dupes at such places, and draw from their pockets —the former from neat package or blue bag envelope—articles in which they deal, generally purporting these to have been smuggled. "A beautiful gold watch, French make, or an English, warranted Recordon, that goes excellently," for a day or two; articles of jewellery with a surface of gold, thick as tissue, or none at all. Then again tea, in pounds and half-pounds, of the finest quality, at the top, which the bearer has "brought to a very particular lady (naming her) hard by; but she being out of town, he would sell it at cost price, and stand a glass of grog out of it:" this latter offer usually enlists the recommendatory voice of some parasite near, who hopes to dip his beak in the smoking glass; and after applying his olfactory to the herb, declares it equal to Twining's and superior to Antrobus, "Sparrow! Sparrow never broke a chest of twankay equal to it."

A shade lower.—"This beautiful tea-caddy with waiter, *ensuite*, the manufacture of a poor tradesman out of work, with a large wife and two small children, ready to lie-in! *only* forty subscribers at 2*s.* 6*d.* to be raffled for;" then there are tickets for an excursion to the Nore, under the joint patronage of the Bull boxer and the fight reporter; cards of admission to

the European Museum; ditto to a concert and ball at the Merchant Tailors', or a dance at Mitchell's Rooms; tickets to the Tennis Court; and "Jack Scroggins' Life and Exploits, afloat and ashore, only 3*s*. 6*d*. each, *in the press*," where they have been *compressed* so long, that his admirers never expect he will relax the *screw*: "come, come, my jolly masters, pay your shillings and have done with it; 'tis only once a year;" but that lasts for twelve months, twice repeated, to supply "a little wittles and drink to poor Jack and his old woman at home." Thus it is,

> Whilst some affect the sun and some the shade,
> Some flee the city, some the hermitage,
> Their views as various as the ways they take,
> In journeying through life, be mine to sing

OF WAGERING KIDDIES.

Although not quite so noxious as many queer classes in society, who surreptitiously endeavour to come at the contents of others' pockets, the everlasting *wagerers* whom we have denominated *kiddies*, from carrying their heads, or their hats, or both awry, when in full operation, are nevertheless equally troublesome and annoying to those, who having cash or credit, would preserve both from being impaired, when compelled by business or drawn by pleasure to mix in general companies.

The consideration of this subject, and the exposition of the whole class, will naturally lead

to some inquiries concerning the better-defined gamblers of whom they are imitators, followers, or apes. Conjoined, they constitute a great portion of the population, the sums they wield are immense, and their speculations often lead to the ruin of many. But, unlike the well-marked gamblers, our mere *wagering kiddies* scarcely leave to the *objects of their choice* the option of closing with their propositions, or of declining them. Like flies, they pitch upon every subject, alight upon every topic of discourse, blight every inquiry, are of all sizes, infest every part of town, and buz or bite, according to their capacity of infliction, at every in-door assemblage. Persons prone to laying of wagers pervade every class of society, nearly, including alike those who have no money to lose nor credit to stake in its stead, as well as they to whom addition can be no object, increase bring no new comfort, nor depletion weaken, to whom satiety has administered its full draught, and left nothing to hope for of this world's goods. No matter his station in life, whether he lay a thousand to fifty on the Derby, repeating the same daily, or demands, frequently, "which will you have for the Leger?" or, not more simply, bet "you don't know how many sixes makes a dozen, for *a bob*—there now," all are equally *wagering kiddies.*

"Wagering kiddies!" I like the term vastly; I made it purposely for them, and the better, since 'tis a just one; for they wince at it, as if re-

buked. Unamiable propensity! Vulgar proposal, that is characteristic of the northerns and the Welsh in London; it even enters the shop and counting-house, and is sometimes emitted from the psalm-singing trachea and female lips. What will the reader think of the new-married wife of our friend, (who has written several pages of the present volume,) the day after their nuptials, exclaiming "my dear B——k, I'll bet ye a guinea it rains to day!" and this, too, in the teeth of a well-planned excursion! Though *naïve* in the extreme, and perfectly confidential, it was so completely characteristic of the county (York), that it left an impression thirty years have failed to erase.

At those several places that are distinctly set apart for the purpose of laying wagers, the case is very different; there, where their whole object is clearly understood to be an adventurous speculation, that admits of no other periphrasis than one would define as the fit arena for speculating in well-calculated chances of hazard, risk, or *odds*, against any coming event, whether that be a horse-race, a ship's arrival, a man-fight, or a wrestling match, we expect no other conduct. At *Lloyd's Coffee-house*, for example, the members will take ten to eight that a prince "survives a week from the date of *the slip*," and the next moment offer eight to ten on the contrary; thus pocketting *a safe* twenty per cent. upon the double transaction, and obliging two parties oppositely interested in the fate of the

nominees; the first being a creditor, perhaps, or an annuitant, who only hopes for payment if the royal patient lives, the other a lessee who will be thrown out of his tenement and his income in case of death. The word "obliging" is the wrong word, I fancy, as applied to any member of *Lloyd's, whilst on its boards;* for at that house of adventurers they think of nothing less than obliging any one living, and a co-member even less than that; nay, according to the language of *the house*, 'tis seven to five they would prefer obliging him *over the left.* The *members* do not stop here, nor with the shipping interest, in their gambling speculation: scarcely any event that can happen of a political or fiscal nature but is here, at some time or other, the subject of betting to large amounts. A declaration of war, the amount of hop-duty for the current year, quantity of loan required, or the amount of Exchequer-bills; who will be returned for the City M. P.'s, or whether Sheen will suffer for murdering his child, are all alike considered legitimate subjects of betting at this centre and touchstone of the commerce of the world. Then, in what, or how much does this *house* differ from the "betting *room*" at *Tattersals';* there, where they extend their speculations to little else than running-horses, with the usual adjunct sports, of fighting-cocks and the manful contests of the prize-ring? With the exception of the regular business, the insurance of ships and their cargoes, the city emporium for

laying wagers is excelled in amount by the West-endians; in other words, the horse beat the foot, *the room* is bigger than *the house*. I shall return to visit those two places at a subsequent page, with the intention of delicately dissecting a few frequenters of both as samplers of all the rest; meantime

The Tun, in Jermyn-street, and *The St. James's Coffee-house*, in the street of the same name, likewise maintain their separate rooms, for bettors upon horse-racing, much the same as at Tattersal's, but for lower amounts. Indeed, both may be considered as addenda to that more ancient place of resort; some of the party retiring, after the *sales* of the *old one* cease, to these more modern establishments, to take dinner, to renew their offers of giving and taking *odds* on races pending, and up to a late hour previous to the start, daring, coaxing, cozening, and cajoling one another into as improvident bets as such means are calculated to superinduce. By the same means was "the *General*" here bolstered up for the Derby of 1826; and here is much more done than is left undone at Tattersal's, with a *stat verbis*.

Gaffing.—Although this manner of obtaining the money of another, by *apparently* fair means, is as old as the Mint, at the same time that it is as juvenile as *taw*, yet does it deserve notice here, because of the large sums the practice occasions to change hands, notwithstanding its extreme lowness of character. Perhaps, however, this very humbleness, its juvenile origin,

and evident simplicity, combine to recommend it to inexperienced persons, *in cash*, who may have made up their minds not to *play at any game* whatever; those persons mistakenly supposing that "the toss up of a halfpenny" is perfect chance-medley, and "heads or tails" not to be controlled by the juggling tricks of *black legs*. But, since *precaution* has been rung to some purpose in the ears of our *youth*, who would see LIFE, as regards gamblers' tricks and wiles, scarcely any stray single gentleman will take a hand at cards with strangers at late hours nor in flash parlours, much less in confessedly "flash-houses," where flash-men to flash-whores flash their money, whilst they talk flash, and flashily *do* all they come near, and some times each other: even the landlords of the *flash-houses*, who will *come in* with a bet now and then, in order to *bear up* the person to be *done*, do not *always* get back the money so staked, and *purposely lost*, and much oftener get done out of their *reg'lars*, or share in the booty obtained of the novice. 'Tis no better if they employ a known seedy cove to stake for them, when the house may be full of flash, nor yet when they lend a *prime gaffer* money to begin the play. This, however, happens seldom; but when it does, a row takes place, and *the gaffer* (the treble rogue!) splits upon the misdoings, late hours, and strong liquors, served by the flash *coffee-shop*-man, if he does not *stand fight*, and go before the grand jury with a bill of indictment; who would do well to form an estimate of the cre-

dibility of his *ex parte* testimony, by questioning the prosecutor as to his mode of life, place of domicile, trade, &c. Besides the flash-houses, some score, or so, in number, all situated in the vicinity of the theatres, or avenues leading from them, and assuming to be fish-shops, coffee or chop houses, this gaffing extends to but few others, and these *public-houses*, all in the neighbourhood of Covent-garden. In *the city*, I know of but one such *public-house*, where gaffing is carried on to any amount, or is pressed upon the visitors, for we here speak of no other, and that is at Moorgate.

And, to speak truly, the gaffing, though heavy, is carried on at this latter place with more appearance of fairness, as between party and party, than at the *similar places* in Westminster, just alluded to, viz. Benchester's, Bensols, the Grapes and Black Boy. At the *house* first-mentioned, a number of pieces are played with, say six, of all sizes, and if the person *calling* for "man" or "woman," is not right or wrong at *five pieces*, neither of the gaffers win or lose, but *go again*. At the *West-end*, *au contraire*, one piece only is supposed to be used, though the most expert leg-gaffer employs one that has two heads, and another with two tails,* sometimes throwing up *one*, and catching it with both hands, when

* So managed, by *rubbing down* one side each of two pieces, to half the thickness, (or less) of either, and joining them together again, *secundum artem*, which may be done without soldering.

he slips the other into his palm, and *puts down* both. Upon the adversary *calling* for *head*, let us suppose, *the leg* presses the ball of his finger upon *the head*-piece, and gives it a jerk into his coat-sleeve, which lies flat on the table to receive it; then dropping his arm, the piece of money falls into his hand for a fresh *put down*, or to make his call in turn. Sometimes the piece to be *taken up*, or got rid of, lies under the palm of the thief's hand: he then contrives to squeeze his hand so hard upon the coin, that its inequalities press into the moist cuticle, by which means he lifts it from the table, and clasps it with his thieving irons.

Large sums, for such a game, occasionally change hands at the places indicated; ten pounds being no uncommon stake, and when the gaffer is sure of having his piece *all correct*, he waits and talks, ere he draws up his hand, (always with *an air*, or jerk,) after betting with all who will take, and doubling or trebling with the principal dupe: by these means, we have seen fifty pounds lost upon a single *toss*, or *put down*, and have *heard* of still larger stakes, that were decided in the same manner at the upper-house, in James-street. At this place, the most obnoxious gaffer, for some years, has been long *Jerry*, (the son of a respectable leather-man, in Oxford-street,) whom the three authors of Egan's "Life-in-London" thought proper to make the hero of their *tale*, at first, but were obliged to abandon him after their

first two numbers had *come out*, and convert "Jerry Hawthorn" into a farmer's son "just come up to see life." This *Jerry* is a most ineffably ignorant, rude fellow, whose whole mind is centered in the grossest legism, who nightly retires from his humble occupation, at "one of the hells, further *west*," to Robotham's, or latterly, to Mother H.'s, at about one or two o'clock in the morning; where he commences the gaff instanter, while whistling some popular tune, to excite the attention of any simpleton, or to take it off when he becomes an adversary, by adding thereto a finger, a toe-and-heel and elbow accompaniments, that render him, altogether, an astonishing good customer to an all-night-house of any description, especially where they allow of "play." But, latterly, it is not every visitor who would willingly go into the little corner-room, to play at cards with *Jerry* and "Mr. R———," though "any gentleman would gaff for a pound, there or any where else;" when the *dress ladies*, also, usually go to the door and put in their word, and incite the dupe to "try his luck once more." How such an inane *sottise* could be adopted for the *hero* of any author's *tale*, would *appear inexplicable* to any reasonable reader: how he got dismissed *we know*, and the fact shall be told in the vol. for 1829.

Sporting-houses, in good number, and of every calibre, are spread all over town, from Mile-end-road to Kensington-gore, and in a transverse line, from Hampstead-heath to Cam-

berwell-grove; but, notwithstanding their number, where these are well-marked, or denoted as such without disguise, they elude our censure, though they never may attain our concurrence. Those public-houses, or *taverns*, that may be kept by men of the prize-ring, those of retired horse-jockeys, or adepts in any other athletic exercise, will ever be frequented by amateurs of such exercises; and in general, the offers of bets, wagers, and odds, on events that are coming off, not only are the natural consequences of such men going into business at all, but it would seem strange if such were not the case. Whoever enters them, must expect this and more, if they join in the heat of the debates that ensue all such "appointments" for trials of skill, strength, or activity. The same disposition to lay wagers is discoverable every where, more or less: if our London rambler visits the Thames-tunnelling adventure, he may receive odds from its advocates that its completion is sure, and even that the proposer names the year; he may "lay out his money" *per contra*, to advantage, by *hedging* off among the apocryphals on the spot, and much greater "odds against the undertaking," among the tavern-brawlers, at the remote parts of town. At *The Shades*, every arch of new London-bridge became the subject of many wagers; and Tumble-down-Dick, on the other side of the water, deserved his final fall, his annihilation, for having witnessed, un-

rebuked, the ten thousand bets, annually made under his very nose, that Blackfriars' bridge would ruin each jolly young waterman, and the building of Waterloo send their wives and families to the workhouse.

We expect those occurrences, because we ought to believe that such questions would be mooted at the places indicated; but we may be excused from expecting that offers of betting would take root in a genteel private company, or in select parties of any sort, though in a tavern, because we can scarcely believe that, in the society of tradesmen, merchants, men of independence, any one would be found desirous of putting his finger into the purse of his companion, by means of a quirking wager. The jollity usual at a smoking club, may possibly be allowed to effervesce in the repression of hardy assertions, by punishing the offender with a wager, that acts in the way of a fine for over-officious dictation; or, we may smile fifty times at the jejune offer of a dish-of-coffee wager, or a penny-bun bet; but fifty times that number promotes no merriment, adds nothing to a negation of veracity, nor is it *wit;* and if a troublesome fellow carry a long purse, he pays without caring for the supposed punishment, feels not rebuke in the transaction, and rejoices in the notice he has attracted, if he really did not incur the penalty voluntarily, as a means of avoiding the contempt that total silence brings. How many were the bowls of punch

that we thus inflicted on our right jocund and jolly-faced good friend *John Lord*, of Newgate-street, during the revolutionary wars, who so far presumed upon our credulity—incited thereto, no doubt, by the dumpling face, and ox-noble cranium of his auditor, to publish frequently a *Brussels' Gazette* of military victories that never were fought, and of naval exploits, scarcely within the bounds of possibility! Yet was our hand-and-*glove* friend the beau ideal of Farringdon-within, at his day, all Tory as it then was; whose representatives in common-council looked up to John, as the *vraisemblable* prototype of our "good old King," when tried by the two only senses by which royalty is approached. Many were the Jacobin wags who requested our friend to prove the goodness of their guineas, when the lean dogs had any *to prove*, by comparing his living profile with the obverse of their coin. They were absolutely merry, and wrinkled their parchment fizzes at the thought, when John having finished his eleventh pint of stout, knocked out his pipe, and propounded his new mode of destroying the French armies. He was a soldier, bearing the King's arms as well as his features and faculties, and as lordly a gentleman, let it be said without a pun, as any in the volunteer service; yet would he economise gunpowder in the land-service, "that our sailors might have abundance to throw away in *long shot*, because they could no otherwise

come at the rascals; but, upon land, depend upon it, no better way can be adopted than going up to them with *long poles*, and knocking them down, as they do penguins there." In this opinion, Mr. Lord was serious and stedfast; he had many believers in his own and neighbouring wards, of Aldersgate, Bread and Milk street, of which he was *like-wise* the oracle, and a fair sampler; but made no progress in his application to the War-office for the honour of exemplifying his plan, nor obtained promotion beyond a *l'ance corporal's* comrade.

Under none of those circumstances is the practice of laying wagers likely to influence the morals or the manners of the uncontaminated; they who put themselves voluntarily in a way to be so annoyed or *taken in*, doing so with their eyes open, if they do not, at first opening their eyes in the morning, resolve upon going to the sporting houses or elsewhere, for the express purpose of being *taken in*; or more disreputably with the ardent hope of taking in some unsuspecting noodle, more silly if possible than themselves. Danger to the pockets and purses of strangers to the ways of life, only begins when they are deluded by an imposing exterior of houses or persons, or mealy-mouthed professions, or some ostensible cause of meeting, that is to cover the ultimate intention of gambling in any of its varieties, of which laying wagers is incipient, introductory, and inaugural. "Just see how he will stand any common bet," says one leg to another; "and,

d'ye see, let him win it;" accordingly the latter proposes, as a test, the height of *Achilles*, or the depth of the coffer-dam, the number of grey-horses that shall pass *up* against those that pass *down* before the clock strikes, for a sovereign — or something equally edifying, but quite unexpected in a party "met together over a friendly dinner," given, by some one, perhaps, for the express purpose of fleecing any novice the conspirators may invite, casually, at some coffee-house or public assemblage. *Brodum* the quack was a notable instance of domestic leg-ism: nobody, of course, visited monkey-face; but he drove about in his *vis-a-vis*, and invited pigeon-looking people at random, to his dinners. But, *such dinners!* There was nothing in them, though served up in plate, with a side-board display equal to an ambassador's out-fit. And then, for his wine! It *might* be good, but before a full-grown man could get down his third glass, it was "Come, my goot friends, what do you say to a hand at *twiss? Captain Parker*, don't drink too much afore *cards*, becas you not mind 'em, when you mought be ma pardner." "Damn the fellow!" observed *Barker* afterwards, "I was never so smoothly done out of twenty pounds in my life. I paid for my dinner, with a vengeance." But the whole *life and adventures* of the nervous doctor was one continuous game at hazard: his escape from Germany, *safe;* the wondrous *exit* of his patron quack, and quick marriage with the widow; his obtaining a diploma of M.D.,

without an essay *pro gradu doctoris*, from Scotland, price £3 : 14 : 7; the blow-up of this transaction and his pretensions in the "Medical Journal," and humiliation of the publisher (Phillips); the iteration of the charges in "*the Scourge*, or monthly Satirist," when *the doctor* succumbed in turn, by "choking off" the editor and publishers (Clarke and Jones's), with a stout dinner and wine—an act of supererogation, that hurried into dust his advertisemental reputation, and blew up the secret of his factitious cases. If Brodum, or any private leg, resorted to a known place of gambling for the display of his talent, he would stand exonerated from two-fifths of his offence; or, if he and they were compelled to place up, conspicuously, some well-recognised insignia of gambling—as they do at the sporting-houses before alluded to—viz. pictures of running-horses, trotting-ponies, fighting-cocks, and boxing-men—as the case may be; chequers at the door, indicative of draughts and back-gammon; or the broad and long green board, with the pendant maces and upright cues, corresponding symptoms of billiards, *et cætera*, then would the unwary remain sono longer; for, would not his "bane and antidote both lie before him?" The reflection almost reconciles one to the scheme of allowing licensed gambling-houses, under the surveillance of a sedentary police, as "they manage these things" in a neighbouring country, whence we have imported much more disgraceful practices.

Before we entirely quit the *wagering kiddies* and their practices, the reader would desire, probably, to come at a criterion for judging of both, and to know when and how it is they come forth of their *chrysalis* state, to become gamblers prepense, or finished legs. Whilst I was a citizen of London *City*, I was equally disposed with my neighbours to look over the conduct of others with an easy glance, and kind indulgence at their failings, provided these interfered nought with the comforts of others, nor attempted the coercion of thought or action. This state of the mind our citizens owe to a greasy atmosphere, fat-enveloped spleen, and general repose of the corporeal system. Hence it was, that, regarding the kiddies of our wagering genus without prejudice, though I could not deny that the practice of laying bets was but so many varied mean attempts to come at the money of others by undue, though excusable means, yet I dressed up my opinion of their motives for laying wagers, and the means of *getting off*, in the aphoristic form as follows, by way of rebuke.

1. A wager well laid is already half won.
2. Wagers are not laid to be *lost*; not a bit of it: for, though fairly lost, they are not to be paid.
3. So, if the decision goes against *kiddy*, still the stakes must not be *given up*; but
4. Payment must be *talked off*: jaw-work does it.
5. If that will not *do*, quarrel it off:
6. If this succeeds no better, go to *law*; where,
7. If they scout your squabbles, nought remains but Fight, Fight, Fight.

Were the persons to whom those aphorisms apply downright thorough-paced blackguards and whores, in whom there is no deceit on the score of gentility of behaviour, or decency of conduct, no one ought to express surprise; but men of respectable appearance, some of known stability in trade, not only observe those rules with shameful precision throughout; but, here and there a few capital tradesmen are found to have connected themselves with fellows who undertake to perform certain feats of activity, with the known previous intention of losing the stakes, that their associates may win bets to very large amounts. Some of these last mentioned tricksters I have taken occasion to denounce and expose *by name*, elsewhere: they reform, I am told, or at least shrink from our ken, and I may, for this once, be excused from repeating the blow. They appear no more on the *turf*, or in the *ring*; and I ask for credence without further proof than my own assertion is worth, and this, I take it, goes as far as any man's, in all such affairs at least.

Is it not painful to sit down of an evening in sessions time, with the majority of an Old Bailey jury, and hear them laying *quirkish* bets that are to *take in* the unwary? or, what is the same thing, brag of having done so, after sitting half the day and deciding the fate of poverty-stricken culprits for purloining much less sums than they themselves have stolen, under the semblance of a wager? "Stolen" is the right

word, as applied to such an act, and I—shall —not—alter it, notwithstanding an otherwise worthy old acquaintance is the subject of an exemplification of the fact. He read the rough copy in my *first book*, of 1818, and assented to its justice every time we met, almost until his dying day.

For a great number of years that a friend of mine frequented the respectable companies of tradesmen meeting at the taverns in and about Covent-garden, he was greatly amused with the daily and nightly struggles there exhibited to take money out of each others' pockets, by means of tricky wagers. At one of those, a famous punch-house, nick named from the pattern of their bowls, "the Blue Mark,"—where a very jolly doltish set associated nightly, the first *salutation* at entering was commonly a wager, and every '*vale benedicite*,' a challenge for the morrow's "blue mark." Of an evening in July, a couple of Welshmen, of substance and credibility, from *the City*, entered, looking slyly about them, as if to ascertain that all was safe, and no circumvention likely to take place. One of them soon opens the subject of the trials at the Old Bailey that day, as to who had been convicted, and how; with the exact words of a verdict. As usual in such companies, one contradicts what had been so roundly asserted, and is supported by others of the *old standers*, with "*we* cannot take it in." A wager is offered and laid; it is doubled and doubled with all who

choose to say *done!* "Who is to decide, look you?" asked the Welsh wagering kiddy. "Who! why any respectable man who heard it, to be sure;" answered a glum old fellow, who did not so much relish the wordy warfare, as he did the smell of the *blue mark.*

This mode of deciding was greeted as just by the wagering kiddies, and agreed to by the Welsh one; who immediately told them he could "show them one of the jury presently. Who, now, look you, do you think was the foreman, then, upon that trial? Ah, you shall find after a bit, that I knows as much about things as all of you. Now, I fwill pet you five pounds and plue mark, that I find the foreman who spoke the ferdick, himself, in five minutes."

"This was too bad," they said, and began to *smell a rat.*

Our Welshman resumed—"Ah, *too bad!* It is too bad *for you*, this time. Now, what do you think of Mr. Jenkin James, Esq. here, of King's-arms-buildings? look you."

His companion had indeed been that foreman, and had given the verdict in a most peculiar manner on the occasion, but whether with any design upon the gentlemen of that room, is too much to say. Some of them called it "*a do*," and nothing better; whilst a broad-faced north countryman, rather lame of a foot, with snuffling speech, as if he had caught a cold in the *Park*, wanted to prove, (through his nose,) *metaphysically*, that the thing was impossible.

"Prove it at your leisure, Jack," said Mr. James, in his usual dry manner, and "we will drink the punch in the meantime." This was a robbery, and nothing else. And so are all wagers that may be pressed upon any one regarding *play*, or the events of the turf, that may be coming off; the more general of which are the Derby, Oaks, and Leger—trotting matches, foot-races, and man-fights, many of which are *knocked up* with the previous knowledge which is to win. Without this guilty pre-knowledge, no doubt exists but that gentlemen may sport their money innocently enough; and so may every other class, order, and genus of society, without either being justly chargeable with more wickedness therefore; since it is to those sports we denominate athletic, that Britain owes her pre-eminence over the nations that hate her institutions, and fear her power, if they do not wonder in astonishment at her domestic feats just enumerated—to which I will add, without permission, both cudgelling and wrestling. But, when the general predilection for those *sports*, or any others less conducive to the national glory, is made the handle to help themselves nefariously to the property of honest people, by sets of sharpers, cheats, and swindlers, we know not in what terms sufficiently to reprobate the acts and those engaged in them, as tending to bring odium on those truly British games; to say nothing of the money thus dishonestly subtracted by the *kiddies*,

from the pockets of the unsuspecting noodles, who carry about them more cash than sense.

Of the great horse-race stakes, just mentioned, it may truly be averred that no man yet born ever had previous knowledge which horse would win, even soon *after* "the start;" whence we may safely infer he never will possess that guilty knowledge. Neither can he tell to a certainty which horses will start, even up to the week of running, as any horse may fall lame, die, or change owners in the meantime; but, whenever great sums are laid upon any given horse, *pro* and *con*, so many persons—jockies, owners, and wagering kiddies, are interested in his defeat, that they *join*, though they may not *conspire*, in measures to "shut him out," or prevent his winning. Some kiddies, of high degree too, even anticipate the *shut out*, by procuring illness, and, in one or two cases, death to the favourite! On this account, and that, the knowing ones always *take* against every horse, whereby they make sure of a favourable balance in the end, to say nought of *hedging off*. By a moderate estimate, about £600,000 annually depend on those three great stakes, without including one of the Newmarket (equal to as much more) or any other of a multitude of races throughout the kingdom. Tattersal's *room*, the St. James's Coffee-house, the One Tun, and about fifty minor "sporting-houses," kept by retired jockies, grooms, fighting-men, and game-coach-

men, are the chief resort of those "out-and-out bettors, in the order here set down: they disport in all other quarters, of Town occasionally, for small sums, but often impose more onerous *odds* on the novices so "picked up," than are *done* upon the large scale.

If such are the measures pursued by "the Turfites," in town, not so honest are those adopted by the wagering kiddies, in respect of the other sports mentioned, including matches of the two horses' race, got up by themselves or "their associates." With the exception of *pace*, these two kinds of horse-match come under the same malediction, the trotters, however, usually "going against Time," the vagrant; and on whichever side the owners of the animal may get most money laid on, whether "on time," or "on the horse," that side is ultimately resolved to be the winner. Hereby, to be sure, many of their friends get "thrown over the bridge," through having taken their *cue* at the wrong period of the betting; but what signifies that to the winners, those who "row in the boat," even persuading others, *outside* their sphere, to lay wrongly, though these may have acted kindly for a series of years, or as co-rogues upon many a similar occasion.—No: "honour, among thieves," is no longer true, and that "dog will not eat dog," is a currish notion, which ought to be *rated over* by all *civilised society* in the metropolis, and scouted even at the kennel door, in country places: the age is

too refined for such phrases. *Ditto*, as regards the *prize ring*, where the cross-coves have effected similar inroads; *ditto*, in respect of some *pigeon-shooting* matches, lately, on the banks of Thames; *ditto*, as to nearly all *foot races* and *walking-matches*, whether against *Aeriel*, or a more fleshy opponent, in town or country.

In fact, these latter are commonly concocted in town, and "come off" in the country, similar to the races of the four-legged animals; therefore, as illustrative of all the rest, we will *let out* some particulars of a cross match *foot-race* run in the spring of 1827, at Doncaster, between *Captain Barker* and *Calfmeat*, for an alleged large sum. At what period it was settled that the winner should be *appointed* is not ascertained upon inquiry; whence I infer, that the match was made with a predetermination that the "captain" should lose; for he, indeed, *could not win*, if he would. He was not known, however, at Doncaster, so he was industriously puffed off, as *capital*, and odds on him offered, at the very commencement, by some of the knowing ones, and accepted to large nominal amounts by others of the same party. In the midst of large companies *there*, and in London, *the foot race* was hourly broached by them; it occupied everybody's attention, and large sums were ostentatiously placed in the hands of third persons for *security sake*, but in reality to gammon the flats. These manœuvres succeeded: the Captain (whom none knew to be

such, but a *marker)* entered the lists, decidedly the favourite; the party *backed him* to the last, but with none save each other or their associates, in order to throw dust in the eyes of the bystanders. The racers started, the Captain lost to *a nicety*, Calfmeat's backers received the stakes, if he really had any besides *the London party;* and these, upon making up their receipts and payments, found a balance of £4600, to be divided into certain shares, between the worthies, Messieurs Grampias, Bronteman, Grouch, Priestby, and Barker.

At the settlement and division of the spoil, a boggle arose, which threatened a bubbery and split; and this was the manner in which the facts came out: Priestby had started a sum off to London, before the hour of settling came, and the Bronteman could no otherwise obtain his share of the plunder (some seven or eight hundred pounds) than by taking *paper* from Priestby, i. e. *stiff*, in the form of "I promise to pay,"—a promise he has not kept to this day. * * * * * * * * * * *.

And this was the way the row began
That told folks the way the *cross-coves* ran.

CARDS, DRAUGHTS, BAGATELLE, &c.

Games that occupy great numbers of persons, in the winter evenings particularly, introduce and keep alive vicious propensities throughout the year, and frequently occasion heart burnings by the destruction of hours

which ought to be devoted to better purposes, are salutarily interdicted to journeymen, apprentices, and mechanics. Yet are the whole three in universal request, and the first mentioned destructively prevalent. With stated parties, who meet for the express purpose of playing at cards, we profess not to interfere; but in the name of common sense, why should fellows of the lowest order, and thence upward, dare to play at this or any sedentary game, against which so many hands are uplifted, and voices raised, in public-house taprooms, parlours, kitchens, to the infinite annoyance of the better inclined athlete, and with the evident design of intrapping the unwary possessors of small sums, and seducing young men and boys, by their evil example? If people of any degree admire *card playing*, even let them enjoy their whim, whilst we pity their taste; but let them not insult some parties, whilst they set others a longing by the publicity of such an exhibition. Clumsy cheating takes place at every public-house card-party—and these pervade every common room throughout the metropolis; a little higher, the more refined the chicanery, the larger the stakes, but equal the ultimate ruination to the parties: time, money, peace of mind, rest, all sacrificed to the itch for play, and a foolish desire to imitate their betters in the lowest of all pursuits that is not a positive crime in men who can scarcely afford to throw away either.

Even in the better sort of *taverns* and *coffee-houses*, where the card players have the grace to retire out of sight, upstairs, or into a small cabinet, the cheating system is invariably introduced, so far as I have seen, can learn, or have been given to understand; in this respect, the gaffing shops and flash houses, spoken of higher up, (page 240,) are not exceeded by an equal number of "respectable houses at which the company play." Nothing is more common throughout the whole of *Cockaigne*, whether in public or private parties, than for the players to cheat each other *at cards*, for trifles absolutely worthless, such is the itch for coming off conqueror; and, as the stakes played for would rise commensurate to the situation of the parties in life, we infer that the higher the sum the greater would be the desire to put in practice the well-recognized maxim, "fair cheating *at cards*." Of course, we do not mean that the *whole company* would so enact their parts; but will not hesitate to fix that charge upon the majority of the *best players*, who scruple not to revoke "through the merest accident imaginable," frequently wish the turn-up to *Old Nick*, and often follow up that devilish wish on another occasion by some sort of substitution. Almost all thorough-paced gamblers of the taverns, who go about from *club* to *club*, or dedicate "the twelve days" to the *four kings*, their consorts, and *subjects* of the *pip* quality, unfailingly resort to some contrivance

or other to ensure the victory. Marking the cards, during the play, in an off handed manner "slipping in an old man," (or concealed card,) and *making them up* with "the long shuffle," are the most common tricks; though their manœuvres are known to be as varied as the fabled Protean forms of old.

Cards belong only to the higher orders; those whose *time* hangs heavy on their hands, and requires to be "murdered" as they phrase it; and whose property, if suffered to accumulate, would overwhelm them with cares, oppress them with *ennui*, or being turbulent spirits, embue them with a desire to overturn the state, and raise the standard of King *Cræsus* in the yellow fields of Plutus. By all means, then, let them dispense their drossy heaps as they accumulate, among all the black-legs of all the gamblers of every degree; and when at length the *Thellusson mountain* brings forth its golden bowels, may some tornado, concocted in the *Palais Royal*, or any other *inferno*, sweep along the fissure time has made, and drive large streams of wealth down the barren heaths, and render them doubly productive. Oh, 'tis joyous to think how the narrowing schemes of contracted minds are expanded and driven into ten thousand ramifications by the inscrutable power of natural cause and effect!

Draughts have the recommendation of occupying much time in each contest, that the players are necessarily mute "as mice in

cheese," and thus offer no attractions to the casual visitor; besides that, only two can play at a time, unless Publicans multiply the number of their *boards*, and therefore few can learn it satisfactorily to themselves, whilst none are amused by looking on. A prevalent notion often is thrown out, that "draughts are allowed in public-houses by law, from their resemblance to the chequers they place on their lintel posts." *Chequers* are as ancient as Cæsar Augustus at least.

Bagatelle is a modern vulgar approximation towards *Billiards*—the most manly, scientific, and genteel of in-door games. In no other view is the new game fit to be tolerated; but the rapidity with which the matches *come off* seems to counteract completely its only good quality; besides which, little art is necessary to play these matches, practice, cunning, and a steady arm, supplying the place of every absent quality: a multitude of those boards are constantly *going* all over the metropolis, at which great quantities of liquor and some wagers are lost; of these, I cannot hear of any higher stakes than a pound or two at farthest, and then but seldom. The landlords invariably play well at their respective boards. In every respect, *Backgammon* is the very reverse of *La Bagatelle*. Affording no opportunity for exercise, farther than throwing the *dice* and moving the *men*, it yet involves science and dexterity of *move* in the highest degree. Long in the contestation and

difficult of acquirement, a rubber at back-gammon offers no invitation to the generality of spectators; consequently holds out no inducement to the novice to intermeddle, though the game were to be played in a public room, which is very seldom the case in London.

None of the *commonalty* undertake to play those games: they are more appropriately smitten with the charms of *nine pins*—whether this be of skittles, knock-em-down, bowl-and-tip, dutch-pins, or the more sturdy *four-corners*. These are the bold, athletic, in-door games, that seem pleasingly calculated to exercise the sedentary mechanic after labour, and fill up the holiday sports of the more hardy artizan, in the way best adapted for keeping his limbs in proper suppleness. For a tailor off work, what amusement could we devise so well adapted to afford due exercise at short intervals, of every muscle in his ninth part of a body? The bare flinging a *lignum vitæ ball* of ten or fourteen pounds, upwards of twenty feet, is no child's play. In summer time, many hundreds, on Saint Mondays, thousands of mechanics and others are found playing at those games; mostly at the outskirts of town, though the sport is evidently better adapted to winter use, when "the ground" is covered overhead.

Tennis, Racket, and Fives are noble games, and demand notice: at *the Court* in Windmill-street, pistol-shooting is practised—to the terror of all quarrelsome duellists.

CHAP. V.

A Sketch of Society, and Manners in the Metropolis.

By metropolis we would be understood as speaking, not only of the City of London proper, which gives the *popular name* to a large district around it, but of the City of Westminster and Borough of Southwark also. Some persons, faunists and *foreigners* by birth, choose to contemn the inhabitants of this first of all cities *in every respect*, by terming them *cockneys*, and the district they occupy "Cockneyshire," or, with more elegance, "Cockaigne." But say what they like, let us expose as we may the weaknesses, the frailties, and even the crimes of Cockaigne, the triple compound just sketched contains a greater aggregate of talent, of trading honour and generosity, than any other city of ancient or modern times. Other cities may have been more populous, or more securely fortified; *Delhi* and *Babylon*, what were they? *Paris* and *St. Petersburgh*, of what do they boast, that in London we cannot find an over match *in kind?* Happiness, comfort, health, ease, and progressive improvement, are perceptible every where, in the faces, the houses, the manufactories, the domestic arrangements of the major part of twelve hundred thousand persons; though we must make large deductions for

casualties, and the usual drawbacks to which individuals occasionally subject themselves, or are reduced by the improvidence, the chicane or dishonesty of others, as much as by age, accident, or other uncontrollable events.

In the foregoing pages, we have necessarily performed the most ungracious part of our task *first*, by exhibiting the roguish part of the population, in nearly all their varied hues; interspersing the whole with short traits of character, real anecdote, facts and cases, that illustrate the actions, motives, casual lapses and errors, into which a vast portion have been led, or are likely to fall. This was the butt, the end and aim of the book, originally; but the employment would have afforded no satisfaction, if ultimate benefit were not likely to result from so much labour, to say nothing of the peril some of the personal occurrences involved; whilst the melancholy reflections all this waywardness must give rise to, are occasionally broken by an excursus now and then among mistaken individuals of the better orders of society. Notwithstanding the long catalogue of actual crime which we have thus set forth in full array, the bulk of settled Londoners our stranger is likely to come in contact with, will be found less active in their individual pursuits, of whatever nature these may be, and not anywise remarkable for evil doing; though superlatively animated when assembling for *general purposes*, as the carrying an election of any sort,

to promote benevolence, or to oppose a bad ministry and its mistaken measures. Indeed, a free people, to be estimated rightly as to manners, must be judged of under their highest state of excitement; at which these arrive when exercising the elective franchise, and imagine they are making *law makers*, who will look after their pecuniary interests, and coerce the evil disposed by statutes, which *the elect* soon afterwards manufacture under our noses in frightful numbers. Whatever the bulk of the people may be found in any of the provincial cities, under similar circumstances, the population of London, of Westminster, of Middlesex and Southwark, is respectively in a superior degree; or, say *baser*, if the purpose be a bad one, as rioting, or the attempts of a mobocracy to rule the roost; with the exception that, in the Metropolis, more money is spent, or subscribed, to support a *cause*, and that scarcely any man or party can attempt to bear the sway, without raising up a strong opposing party, which is very likely to expose and overturn his best contrived plans of ambition. Although in practice several of her internal representatives cringe to the powers that be, and bow the head to *Baal* lowest when he appears in his worst attribute, yet is *London City* far from being *Tory* in principle. This I apprehend is a necessary consequence of the land-holders crippling commerce by their absurd tenacity of high average corn laws, and equally ridiculous as cruel game

enactments; such truly despicable economists, as Sir Thomas Lethbridge and Lord Malmesbury, being often named in their assemblages, as "pretty samplers," each in his way, of what they might expect from the worst elements of that party. On the other hand, *Westminster* is devoted to parliamentary reform, individually and collectively, the electors mis-taking this to be the panacea for all complaints; whilst the Borough of Southwark is *radical*, and tax-opposing, to the extreme of ridiculousness; and its better chastened counter part, the county of Surrey, lately proved, that she would no longer submit to the arrogant inefficiency of *Holme Sumner* and his high-sounding abettors of the squirearchy.

The habits of the people are gregarious to a fault, accompanied by conviviality and unrestrained manners; the younger folks, rising branches of improving mercantile houses, carrying these qualities to the extreme in many instances; when that happens which always takes place in similar cases—they fly off in a tangent, and are lost to their sphere. Among the middle walks of life, which may comprise about three-fifths of the whole resident population, who are easy in circumstances, and bland in their manners, the minor moral aberrations of their neighbours, their means of doing business, mode of managing a family, or extent of establishment—all which give cause for so many heart-burnings and prying investigations in

little towns and dull cities, here occasion no unneighbourly uneasiness, no unchristian surmises, nor any of those base suggestions of reform as are met with to perfection in Calvinistic society; unless, indeed, the transgressors publish their misdeeds to the world, or render their doings offensive to mankind. Of the remaining two-fifths, one may belong almost entirely to the fictitious part of society, if that term can be used of persons who avoid generalising their intercourse, and are better studied in the fashionable novels that issue incontinently from the Burlington press of our ancient acquaintance, Mr. Henry Colburn, or from Messrs. Saunders and Ottley, hard by.

The remaining *fifth* of our population, leaving out of consideration all hospitals and other *secluded places*, consists of that link in society which denominate themselves the *serious* part of it. As in all other parts of the world, the more violent sects seek proselytes with most fervency, and attract together the greatest congregations of gaping ignorance, whom they fleece and cajole under various pretexts; whilst the modest Quaker, the unassuming Unitarian, the jaded Romanist, and the otherwise garrulous Jew, are content to wend their way, unseeing and unseen of controversialist or polemic.

Trade has been considered the main characteristic of the people of this immense metropolis, as it is in a less degree that of the whole na-

tion. Within our cockney district, not only those professedly engaged in commerce seek after profit, by bartering one commodity for another—*generally for money*, or its representative *paper*, but the desire of gain pervades all classes and all ages, more universally than is perceptible in any other city of the empire. Every thing in London has its price, and every man and woman, too: virtue, honour, and honesty are marketable commodities; enjoyments may be purchased and happiness secured thereby, abstract from reflection; even love and affection are often swerved from their purpose, or fixed upon unworthy objects, by dint of lucre that is applied with malign judgment to purchase thoughtless pleasures. Religionists expend vast sums in procuring converts to their respective sects; so that *faith* is thus sacrificed at the shrine of *good works*, contrary to the rule they teach to lapsed conscious sinners; whilst the man of worth—being reduced, may carry his sorrows to market, and the widow dry her tears in the lap of benevolence.

Lay sectarians in good numbers speculate upon chapel-building, and the price paid for seats, according to the attractions of their cushion-thumper; whilst several undertake parish offices, or become tax-gatherers, and one or two, incongruously enough, accept the post of churchwardens: at Christ-church, one of them lately repaired the parish church throughout, at a cheap rate, and a very sanc-

tified one is now erecting a Playhouse in Goodman's Fields—and all is *Trade!*

In the midst of the late *bubbles* for forming joint-stock-companies, to enrich the projectors and directors, by the sad impoverishment of the mass of adventurers, who was it stood foremost in the maniac pursuit, but those of *the three professions* (having at their head the legal scyon of the apostle of methodism)—with titled persons, ladies, place-holders, people of state—cockneys by adoption, seeking after the loaves and fishes of the West, and the mammon of the East end of our huge metropolis? And this too is *Trade*, with a vengeful profit.

The *spirit of Trade* infuses itself into every transaction of life; or what is the same thing, every affair in which the citizens of our tripolitan Town may engage, receives the tincture, the smack of trade in no trivial degree. Does one with his face towards Change meet another who has turned his back upon it, with a compliment, the latter replies, "seven-eighths, buyers," or, "down two and a half; Henty's off, by g—d!" Even in their amusements—*card-playing*, for example, or a marriage-feast, all have "an eye to trade," which they along-shore term "keeping your weather eye up;" and in some *trades* they institute dinners and suppers for the express purpose of transacting business, making sales *in gross* when the pleasures of gastronomy and the fumes of port wine have mellowed the heart and expanded the mind, if they fail to

enlighten the understanding. For the first kind of banquet booksellers prefer the *Albion* and *London* Coffee-houses, whilst the second are better adapted to ship-brokers and timber-dealers at *Garraway's*, and the purchasers of general produce, *by candle*, at Jack's.

Eating and drinking, in fact, are occupations in modern London that are undertaken, less with a view to appeasing the calls of *nature*, than to overpower her, and in frequent instances, absolutely kill her with kindness. After one of their great city gorge-matches, in which they vie with each other who shall swallow the largest quantities of viands, of flummeries, our citizens may be discovered in their recesses as immobile as the wolverene after a buffalo feast, incapable of "doing business" satisfactorily, yet unwilling to "give in," though almost ready to cry out, with Frank in the play, "sink the shop, and I'll give ye a hundred." Then it is they justly incur the rebuke of greasy citizenship; then are they most liable to be captivated with extravagant schemes for making money without trouble, to enter into joint stock speculations, and commit those fitful acts of supererogative generosity which at times "astonish Europe," and raise the smile of those who stand aloof, or have retired from the smoke and the vapour of *the subscriptions*, "to rusticate afar, the fields among." The love of *good living* and jollity extends thither also, at times, and always pervades the

three Towns, though not *alike;* the more *distinguished* gourmands being those of the *West-end,* while those of *the Borough* may be looked upon as mainly addicted to substantials.

No transaction in life, of whatever magnitude, that includes numbers in its train, is undertaken now-a-day unless attended by "a good *tuck-out,*" in low life, or a *grand dinner* in the higher. Upon this principle, the East India Directors could not think of despatching their new governor-general lately, without the accustomed belly-full of the products of earth and air, of water and fire—and fancy to boot.

Does the Marquis contemplate a new ministry, he invites the canditates to "a cabinet dinner," the better to judge of their digestive powers, and thus infuse good fellowship into discordant minds, by way of the stomach; with the same view as the coy village maiden induces her *Colin* to get tipsy that she may ascertain the real bent of his soul when his heart is most unbent. If the Speaker of the House of Lords hold his *state dinners,* and he of the *other house* invite contending parties to his periodical feasts, to hob-or-nob each other, and evince a disinterestedness they cannot feel; so do every class of society gormandise their friends to extreme obesity, or endeavour to pacify their opponents with stimulative draughts, that give vent to the worst passions of our nature, after having exhausted the more social qualities of the

breast.* The mistake is not so much in the thing itself, as the extent to which it is carried. *Pitt* and *Dundas* are said to have unbended themselves extremely over the tuscan juice, "oblivious of the misery their counsels created;" perverting, probably, the advice of M. Tully, (*Epistolæ ad Familiares,*) to "spend some time daily in convivial company, because, in such communications, life is most truly enjoyed," And the Roman orator was right, and so was the English, in his way, as well as the Scotch one: life is not worth carrying about, unless with due enjoyment; but the joyous souls, in the midst of their hilarity, should remember that the means of living is the cause of death: Lent in London is not half so well *kept* as Christmas; whence I deduce the precosity evinced by mere cockney children, which makes them adults in petticoats, men in their teens, and dooms them to premature old age.

Clubs.—An immense number of all descriptions, and with various purpose, pervade the

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* Hence the enormous consumption of provisions of every kind, and among the rest of *game*—hares, pheasants, partridges, about nineteen-twentieths of which, that are eaten throughout the metropolis, being obtained *contrary to act*, and at the great City Taverns, not one head a-year, but through poachers! Thus, those great and distinguished gourmands may be said to patronise poaching, if they do not sometimes eat their own, after being so obtained—as Jack Curtis (the ace of spades maker) did his own hare.

whole town and country district: four thousand two hundred licensed public-houses—each of which has its club, or two or three, or more, weekly, gives a vast aggregate of human enjoyment; in every one of them *singing* of some sort or other is introduced, in nearly all *politics* prevail, and hilarity every where presides. The people of England are decidedly *clubists;* those of London eminently so; for, whereas, in provincial places, all society is more contracted, the independent and enlightened population of London, feeling less restraint, give free vent to their thoughts, their fancies and vagaries, insomuch that we sometimes find the wholly convivial clubists swerving a little from the right rule in their night rambles. The rise and progress of clubism, the spirit and purposes to which these are applied, the use which has been made of clubs as a political engine, and for electioneering purposes—would form a subject worthy the investigation of the curious and the enlightened inquirer. Some one has recently made "the clubs of London" the matter of a large separate history; but this work is too expanded in personals, for the general reader: the like task was performed recently for a single club, "the Kit Cat," which makes a figure in English story, as being mainly instrumental in bringing about the Hanover succession. But our friend should have taken a glance at the Jacobites, also; the *Queen's head* clubs at Dolly's Beef-steak-house, the *King's*

(James's) head, hard by, and the *St. Ann's*, Foster-lane, all professedly charitable. Next in age is the *Beef-steak*-club meeting, every Saturday at the English Opera-house, the resort of wits for the last four-score years; then there was "the Dirty-shirt-club," that implied a certain carelessness of dress, quite compatible with sterling wit; next, the Coal-hole meetings vied with the latter in its designation, and we are told that Doctor Samuel Johnson was a frequenter of both, as well as "the Literary-club," and his own *coterie* at the Mitre, constantly. That truly great man had the full relish for clubism, and did not escape the rebukes of his *serious* friends for his convivial attachments: to one of those starched moralits, he replied, "Sir, the great chair of a full and pleasant club is the throne of human felicity."

The doctor did not confine his ideas to *clubs of wits*, but must have witnessed the use that was made of them in propagating opinions of men and measures. We have proved how these, broached at one or two, fly like wild-fire round the entire series of all descriptions of such assemblages, many persons being members of several, and some men visiting two or three of an evening, particularly when they have aught to propagate. *Edmund Burke*, in a letter to his friend Dr. French Lawrence, dreaded "the smoke and vapour of our chattering and scribbling domestic tavern and club orators;" adding, soon after, "there is a force in West-

minster, fully sufficient to counterbalance the influence of the crown; and that force is the weight of the various clubs and societies."

And *Mr. Burke* was right in this, as he was in most other matters to which he brought his great mind to fix all its attention; and he had, probably, in his sojournment among the spirits he spoke of, ample means of seeing *the force* he alludes to put in motion. In case of any great political struggle, a petition to parliament, or to nominate a new candidate, for example, the clubs and societies are all put in motion; certain active promoters of the proposed measure go round to various societies, or *frequenters* of some given places, where sits the presiding genius of the party, and the affair is opened up and discussed, without parade or formality; every one is *led*, not directed or called upon, to consider the subject, and each individual, desiring not to shine less than others, he concurs in the measures, and promotes the views of the prime movers.

LITERATURE.—Among the numerous subjects for reflection, which will press upon the attention of the inquiring stranger, none is more likely to fix him for awhile than the great mass of intellect, natural and acquired, that is to be met with in his intercourse with all society. True, that some is superficial, much is assumed, a good deal but the tinsel and glitter of school acquirements; but still there remains a great fund of intelligence, derived from reading and

intercourse with the world, amongst the mercantile classes, generally spreading itself on particular topics into the ranks of the shopkeepers and manufacturers of every degree, almost *visibly* to the close observer. This taste for acquisition by reading, it must be confessed, began with the second rate persons of each department first, and extended itself upwards to the already fortunate traders, who were thus compelled to study somewhat intensely, or to resign the vantage ground to the new comers. From thirty years ago, to a dozen years since, the struggle was very great between them; the sale of books of every description immense, (vide page 120); and about the latter period, I took an opportunity of exhorting the junior branches of the better sort of citizens to persevere, in a manner that I was pleased to find had its desired effect.*

Swindlers.—To the volume just referred to, the reader who would become acquainted with the practices of those who prey upon trade, must turn for information; I have very little to

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* Introduction (page xiii) to "the London Tradesman; a Familiar Treatise on the Rationale of Trade and Commerce; showing, first, the right Practice of Trade, and second, the Mal-practices of the Unworthy," &c. &c. 8vo. second edition, 1820, price 10s. 6d.

Whilst I live, perhaps, I shall never put forth a better book than this; one more generally useful, more strictly and plainly applied to its purposes, nor one better calculated to serve the commercial reader in his pursuits.

add to what is there said as to their schemes, except that Koster and his crew have fallen into the habit of writing circulars to distant manufacturers, offering to accommodate them with fictitious acceptances, and then swindling the parties out of their stiff: they have been detected and up before the Lord Mayor several times in 1825, 6, and 7. *Anecdote:* when the first edition of the book mentioned in the margin was published, "Dicky" ordered *a copy* to his *warehouse*, but foreswore the delivery, and I was soft enough to believe his protestations; chiefly, I apprehend, because they were made in an amended north country dialect.

CHAP VI.

Hints for the Improvement of the Police.

UNDER this head I formerly submitted some papers to the public, through the medium of a popular publication, at that time devoted to useful topics of general interest,* the result of sixteen years close observation, and

* Three *letters* inserted in the *New Monthly Magazine*, for 1817: the *first* communication in the No. for June, page 399—401; the *second* in the No. for September, page 101—104; and the *third* in the No. for October, pages 203—207. From each of these, I mean to make extracts suited to my present purpose.

somewhat penible inquiry. I have reason to believe they were favourably received, and the suggestions therein contained thought worthy of consideration by those of whom it is an honour to be esteemed. They were chiefly directed towards the repression of crime, to the speedy detection of offenders, on which the first greatly depends, and the concentration of police information; but I have to lament, that these points are still imperfectly understood, and require fresh arguments or reiteration of the old ones: I have also some personal explanations to give, which I hope may induce a more general gratuitous aid of the persons *employed and paid*, than some folks think themselves bound to afford, or find it convenient to bestow.

Police, or the right government and controul of the worst elements of a population, at once dense and evil disposed, is not a matter likely to attract the regard of people in trade, much less those of retired habits; whilst independent gentlemen living at their ease, those of the professions, and even such as possess true energy of character and the wish to evince themselves *good citizens*, shrink from the danger of close personal examination, if they do not imagine reputation may be compromised in the attempt to obtain the information necessary to a right understanding of a subject blasted on all hands by vile imputations and mal-practices. Some such feeling may have actuated me, when

having undertaken to submit to public inspection my observations on this topic, I did so anonymously. Personal danger, it is upon record, could not deter me; so I conclude, that I then thought of some connection or other, that actuates me no longer. In one case, I employed the name of another man instead of my own, and wrote down to his capacity, or copied his words to preserve the unity of the deceit; in another I was "A Constant Reader," and the following was my apology for troubling the public *at that time*, (*i. e.* 1817) as it shall be *at this*:—"Previously to entering fully upon the subject [of police] I may, properly enough, state to you, that my familiar acquaintance with the *faces* of rogues of various hue, and many of their *practices*, arise from living in so public a situation as this is [nigh St. Paul's], as well as the accidental circumstance of having taken a daring robber fifteen *years* before [mentioned, at page 82,] besides *three* minor offenders, latterly. *Ever since* that time, I have not ceased to give some attention to depredators of all descriptions, I mean their persons and practices, their combinations, and the means employed for their detection; for this good reason, (*at first*,) that I refused the *friends* of the culprit alluded to *my* interference for lessening his punishment (as my neighbour had done) since I found upon inquiry at Bethnal-green, where he belonged, that they were *all thieves* alike. Whereupon, I heard a distinct threat, so very

intelligible, that for more than three years I found it requisite to walk circumspectly by day, rapid or armed by night. Whenever I perceived any of them about, I screwed myself up to the pitch of a stout repulse, and uncharitably set down in my mind all those for rogues whom I saw in the same company,—and then again, all that I might afterwards see in the company of these latter;" and so onwards I continue to the present day. In those conclusions, however hastily formed, I was subsequently borne out by some very painful results befalling the parties. Vide my first letter.

When the string of villains just alluded to had *passed away*, my circumspection might have gone to rest; vigilance may go sleep when no longer excited by apprehension. Not so, however, in this case: what had commenced in caution, I might say, now devolved into habitual curiosity, if it were not patriotism or the love of order; and I found several occasions and various, when my advice and *manual help* became practicably available; whilst a cry of "Stop thief!" roused my dormant energies, —as that of "Fire!" would those of an old Bridewell-boy, and nearly as often threw me into the *head* of the chase, by dint of pace or force of stratagem. At length, in my *first letter*, I was "free to confess that my taste for this 'stopping' and *stagging*, or looking on, underwent partial abatement, by reason of certain odd punctures and hard bruises I received

from three or four of those gentry, not far from my own door, at wane of day." Such is the fortune of war, and the natural effect of numbers: it was uncommon rough work; but did not prevent my detecting one of the party a week after, who had stolen a pocket-book in the crowd gathered round a conflagration facing the south door of St. Paul's. According to my custom, he was delivered into the custody of a constable, who received the *usual panegyrics* on his diligence, activity, &c. without blushing. Thus, I may say, I sought for information on these subjects with many advantages, having full as much zeal as the *paid people*, who are all too well known, most assuredly with perfect independence, sometimes at some expense, and always with commensurate success. At a later period, I managed to be present at *conferences* they could never hear of, but at polluted second hand. In this manner I could examine motives, and weigh reasons at their source, yet unfathomed by any person competent to the task; ——— ——.

With such facilities, in the course of so many years, as will be seen by numerous passages dispersed over the foregoing pages, and in the *former volume*, many such adventures befel me, as regards officers as well as offenders; I had an eye constantly on both. I was duly impressed with the common-law doctrine, that to every citizen belongs the right of detecting robbers,—if it be not a duty incumbent

on all men; and, if put in practice by respectable people in good numbers, by entire neighbourhoods, for example, it would go a great way towards extinguishing thefts in such districts, as the perpetrators, *generally few in number*, would thus be driven from their haunts in despair of success. I one winter belonged to such a party, at Lower Islington, where our gardens were nightly robbed of wet clothes, &c. and the perpetrators were soon ascertained to consist of two only. On the signal for chase, I ran after and overtook one in front of the Britannia (Brindley's), and the other fell at the starvation-farm-pond. One of our maxims was to look after the *watchmen* and *patrol*, and keep them to their duty; and to this end two or three sallied out *in turn*, whilst the body smoked their pipes awaiting any alarm. The first description of night-guardians are generally liable to suspicion; but of the second, I recollect but one distinct charge of malversation in his office, and that so absurdly peculative, that I contrived to send him before his betters at Hatton-garden, Mr. Laing and Mr. Rogers, with his peepers in mourning, (April, 1822,) as the most appropriate treatment for extorting douceurs from publicans for keeping alleged late hours. His *brother-officer*, upon occasion of that *appearance*, *we* had already ascertained to be corruptly connected with thieves; he having stashed one robbery for *fifty pounds* of the booty; and, in another

case, I myself saw him *turn up* a pickpocket after subtracting some six or eight notes out of the stolen *wallet*. By the way, the latter occurred by day, in the narrow passage connecting Cloth-fair and Long-lane: the fact was no secret at the time; but, under circumstances, no good could be done with it.

Both those thieves were, subsequently, transported—as I believe, but not until their long, unbroken career had incited others, hitherto innocent, to join the nefarious gang. I had already remarked, on similar transactions, [Letter I.] "It is the dispensing power thus left in the hands of officers which ripens crime and produces the greatest number of capital offences." Both instances of *stashing* were well known to all the gang, whereby it literally *encouraged* crime; as we afterwards ascertained, that three or four *unemployed youths* of decent parentage, were enticed away by the impunity thus purchased, and long time enjoyed, by their companions. All were ultimately punished, but the process occupied too much time to operate exemplarily on others.

Had the two hacknied thieves whose robberies were so compromised by the unfaithful officer then received the punishment due to their crimes, and that *speedily*, the *new ones* could have had no such inducement to become dishonest, they would rather have been scared from their purpose at the outset of their career. In proof of this proposition, I may adduce the

instance of a youth who had made his appearance but once among the Smithfield gang, (of which I now speak,) and who had *gone out* with an older thief to rob, but both were missed from their usual haunts* some four or five days; at the end of which time, the *new-one* enters the *Green Lettuce* with the information, that both had been taken, and he liberated that evening, as one *not known* to the officers, whilst his better recognized companion was tried and "*found guilty*, and would be either lagged or scragged, he could not very well say which." I was present, and marked the effect as most salutary: consternation sat upon every brow, dismay seized the party, and caused a few ejaculations—as, "Poor Bill! vhy, he han't got a squeak for it!" Hereupon they "mizzled," leaving *the new-one* behind; who, on his part, set up a few good resolutions, and returned to his friends in a reforming mood, that may have lasted him to his parental roof at Manchester, for he was seen no more of us. At which I very much wondered—for these reasons, among others,—*new thieves* are mostly acceptable to the old ones, as being unknown to the officers,

* These were—the Blue Posts, Cloth-fair; the Green Lettuce, Charter-house-lane; and another near West-street, in the calf-market: the first two were *put down*, and two others in that lane suspended for twelve months; but what of all that? they removed to other public-houses near the market.

so that they may be safely employed in carrying stolen things to *the fences*, in the day, or at any time, without detection. These, the hacknied rogues *take out* with them; "*going out* together," implying to rob in the streets; and, in order to do this profitably, the older one instructs "the *new-one*," as he is called, how to perform this efficiently. Thus, through the crannies of a tap-room I have seen the thief just adverted to, as giving £50 of his booty to *get off*, and who had the name of Tom,—imparting instructions to another youth, "how to draw a reader." For this purpose they had an old pocket-book, or *reader*, now put into one pocket, now into another, and as *Tom* stood up for the several experiments, he recommended certain motions—sometimes showed how, and at others exclaimed, "there! there! now I feel you nibbling, you * *; try that again;" &c. &c. intermixed with imprecations quite suitable to the occasion.

Half-thieves, those who are uncertain of their own honesty, who nibble occasionally, and will partake of the *reg'lars*, and the drink that is to be found at flash-houses; who sometimes obtain places of work, relapse a little, get work once more, and still frequent the company of thieves, are looked upon with great suspicion by the thorough-paced rogues; because they are frequently made use of as *noses* by the officers. These, as well as the *new ones* who attain not to sufficient expertness, are sometimes betrayed

or relinquished by their pals, while in the midst of a clumsy job, and get *nabb'd;* this they term being "put in the hole;" it is considered highly disreputable, and is visited as such, when the culprit gets out of his *hole,* as usually happens for slight offences, or incomplete robberies. Of those materials, the officers who seek for promotion, or reward for their "ingenuity and penetration," form their *noses;* those who endeavour to secure their own personal impunity, by talking of the particular misdeeds of others; who join in a robbery, and then betray their com-rogues, or suborn unsuspecting noodles into the perpetration of crimes, as smashing coin, or flimsies, house-breaking, starring the glaze, &c. their *friend,* the aspirant officer, being at hand, "fortunately," to pounce upon the offenders. Of course, the nose gets off, or turns *approver, vulgo,* king's evidence; and he and the very *vigilant* officer, though but *one rogue,* constitute the *legal evidence* that is to cost "a poor fellow" his life, or, at least, his *liberty.* Hence I draw the conclusion, that the evidence of an officer *or two,* should not be taken as confirmatory of *king's evidence* testimony; especially if these have been *previously intimate,* or seen together; a fact that might be extracted upon cross-examination, apart from each other, or one being put *out of court,* while the other is in the witness-box, as is practised in some other folks' cases.

Nosing or *splitting,* by an accomplice, is the

same with the espionage in political affairs, noticed at a former page (190) and is equally dangerous. For "among individual officers, there exist constant jealousies and circumventions, such as those between petty tradesmen of the same vocation;" so that one will endeavour to entrap another officer's *nose*, in order to spoil his source of information, and always withholds any intelligence that would aid the inquiries of another. Without circumlocution then, (I concluded in my *first letter)* the *nosing* must be taken out of the hands of those officers, and that immediately; or, the same end would be answered by ordering, that the *clerk to a police-officer* do take down *in secret* the daily progress of any negotiation carried on with accomplices or spies; any deviation from a full and fair disclosure, or misinformation, to be visited with prompt und unsparing rigour." In my *second letter* I suggested, that the remedy for this discrepancy in the operations of the police, would "be found in a *superintending power*, emanating from the Secretary of State's Office, and holding close communication with it and the magistrates,* and the surrender of a small por-

* In December, 1827, this measure was adopted, so far as superintendence goes; the remainder of the suggestion remaining to be *filled up:* to render the first part fully efficient, the latter should be controlled by no *ordinary* hands. The following, taken from a morning paper, is the substance of all that has yet reached us on this head: —"An important circular was yesterday transmitted to

tion of the liberty of the subject." My attention was mainly directed towards the suppression of riotous assemblages, then very frequent; but the same unity of action would also go a great way towards breaking-up those nests of thieves, who assemble towards the wane of day, at some favourite spot or corners of streets, and adjourn thence to public-houses, or to some other such place, but not by sending "a strong patrol," as it is termed, from any one *office*, usually composed of three old men in uniform, strolling up and down to *frighten* them away; for I find that the rogues consider this as mere *bug-a-boo*, and they remove for a time, or disperse for a few minutes, whilst the *patrol* move off. As soon as their backs are turned round the next corner, robberies commence immediately, and no one ever yet heard

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each of the metropolitan police-offices, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, requiring a daily report to be made out, containing the substance of all informations received of felonies or aggravated misdemeanours, with a description of offenders not taken or escaped; and for property stolen, and any other particulars that may lead to the apprehension of offenders; this report to be signed by one of the magistrates, at eight in the evening, and sent to Mr. Stafford, the editor of the *Hue and Cry*, to be printed ready for delivery the next morning, to a messenger from each office. The noble secretary hopes that this plan, "carried into effect with zeal and activity, will be productive of public benefits," by means of "a full and complete interchange of useful information between the several police-offices."

of these "strong patrol" capturing a single thief of any description. It is a real piece of humbug, to talk of the efficacy of a moving well-marked body, that covers no more than three feet square at any time. Whereas, the greatest efficacy would be found in their slily pouncing upon the congregated rogues, and locking some of them up; if they are a young set, as usually happens, with some two or three who have already suffered imprisonment, and they assemble often, a good stick-flogging for the former would be quite appropriate and happy in its effects, especially when coupled with the summary imprisonment of the ring-leaders.

As at present managed, the police are wholly useless in repressing the nurseries of crime I allude to, where youths out of place, idly inclined, or accidentally, first get acquainted with older persons of depraved character. They are as little efficient in breaking asunder the disgraceful connection, when the parties adjourn from the street or crowded alleys and courts, into public-houses; indeed, their attention has never been directed to the interior of any house whatever, to reform the parties or to prevent the engendering of crime; neither does such a disposition exist any where, the mere thief-taker despising the means of *prevention*, the philanthropic parish or ward constable, the benevolent headborough, or others serving in their own right, being the only persons who ever cast away a thought upon the subject. "I

remember that *lad*, when he first took up with bad company!" is often remarked, concerning youths tried for early crimes, or brought to the punishment of death; whose wicked courses were first imbibed at the corner of a street, and nursed into crime at the public-house of resort. I leave out of consideration here, the thief who steals through necessity, as also those who, in early life, may be set on by unprincipled relatives, and they again who are first seduced by the charms of portable property, carelessly left within reach. For these nought remains but coercion; instant detection, and immediate exemplary punishment. Only one opinion regarding the treatment proper to be exercised towards *practised thieves* prevails; but it would be inhuman to treat first offences, incipient robbery, or thefts of necessaries of life, as you would the arrant knaveries of him who steals to fence, and fences to carouse, and by his carousals incites others to partake in his crime; to drink of his cup, and to *go out* upon the next occasion, being necessary consequents. In this manner, it will be easy enough to prove the greatest number of thieves are made. I would prevent, in great measure, their so falling by bad example; and shall presently go on to say how.

"But the thieves have only to move out of a district, where they are known to the officers of that district, into one where they are not so known, and they elude pursuit, or avoid detec-

tion, by the most trivial further alteration. This is a miserable state of things, and brings me to the proposed remedy, a *superintendent*, in whom should concentre all the information of all the offices and officers regarding thieves at large; and whose attention should be directed towards the repression of crime, the correction of young offenders, and dispersion of gangs of old ones.

"At present, each individual officer keeps in profound secresy, whatever intelligence may have come to his knowledge singly, or doles out a part to one of his brethren as a bonus; and I have known this spirit carried so far, that one officer has retarded information coming to another, because he wished to have it himself, like the dog in the manger! Is it longer to be endured, that individuals should take upon them to intercept the speedy exercise of justice, upon which so much depends? On the other hand, I must notice that there are some who bring it into disrepute by their officiousness, in taking up trivial matters and occurrences undeserving of attention, or only worthy of rebuke and domestic chastisement.

"To correct this singleness of pursuit, and consequent delays, every constable-officer should be compelled to bring in all the information he is possessed of to the superintendent's office. They should be taught to pay instant deference to his paramount authority, in all cases where unity of operation is required; and to a

delegation of that authority whenever he thinks it necessary: this delegation to be marked by insignia,* to be obeyed upon every proper occasion for its being displayed. Numerous other ramifications of his duties present themselves to my mind; it is chiefly pervaded with the necessity of a general repression of crime, by the *speedy detection* and conviction of offenders *in the earlier stages;* the concentration of all police-information at that one point; daily communication with subordinate officers and sitting magistrates, and active correspondence with all parts of the kingdom, particularly the favourite ports of self-deportation. *Vide* Letter 3.

"The obvious duties of a superintendent (call him what you like) would include not only the extinction of such errors by a totally contrary practice, but many other facilities for the detection of crime, the earliest information of plots, conspiracies, concerted robberies, commotions,

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* "Say a striped belt, worn across the shoulder under the waistcoat, and, perhaps, worked with G. Rs.

"I know these regulations approach very near to those of the French police—but what of that? If your rival be pre-eminent in any one desirable quality, that should be no reason for its rejection, but the contrary."

Since the foregoing *appeared* (1817) the instituion of dismounted patrols, in a livery of *blue*, with *red* waistcoats, would seem like an approach towards adopting this suggestion; but the reader will perceive that I could not consistently recommend dressing up in *uniforms* persons whose duty is to come upon the offenders unawares, and not merely to frighten them.

the retreats of known offenders, the speedy detection of recent thefts, and various other objects of public good. For, in every class of rogues, the rapidity of pursuit and detection is the cause of great dismay; as its procrastination is of exultation and encouragement to their friends, as I have just shewn, page 283.

"Suppose a case: a burglary has been committed during night, with symptoms of violence, crow-bar marks, &c. It follows that this must be an old thief; for young ones are not to be brought to so high a game at first. He must, then, be known to some officers (he ought to be known to *the whole)*: and he must have reconnoitred the premises by day, or tried them at night; at least it generally (always) comes out that the chief of a gang does so. Well, then, in going or coming he ought to have been met and recognized by some one of the police. If the latter notes down this, or any other suspicious circumstance comes to his knowledge, he will most likely seek out the offender by himself, that he himself may enjoy the credit, and the reward of conviction. He does not reflect that others of his brethren may have some other information to supply, which might complete the chain; whereas, the clue is often lost for awhile, and lost and found again; meantime the offender is extending his ravages, increasing in boldness, and affording, by his example, encouragement to the timid, and confirming the half-formed rogue in the like courses. But how much more effec-

tually would the cause of justice be promoted by a concentration of the suspicions attached to the old offender; of his movements and connection about the time of the burglary, of his new boots or other dress, of his re-appearance with an old mistress, or adoption of a new one, with other minor indications of an accession of property, and additional marks of depravity."

HAUNTS. When old offenders have known places of resort, usually at small places, in public-houses little accustomed, or kept by some powerless old widow, it is not always adviseable to break up such, unless this be inevitable upon the pursuit of any one upon a specific charge; for it may so happen, that some one or more may be driven thither through necessity (not being acceptable elsewhere), whilst endeavouring to *get into work*, and "leave off his dishonest practices," as sometimes takes place; and would oftener, if tradesman could be found of sufficient powers of mind and body to encourage the first movements of returning rectitude, by giving employment to the repentant sinner. A missionary who should undertake such a task would confer more real benefit upon society than he who preaches sermons on the road side; but he should not assume the *toga* of his order, lest he be unaptly mistaken for "a gentleman," and thus provoke reprisals; and he might profitably forego *hair-powder* upon the occasion, the expense whereof would sensibly aid his endeavours in the shape of *grub*. The most favour-

able moment for such an enterprise would be the day of the unhappy person's coming out of prison, when he may be supposed "fairly *beat*" to a stand-still, as happens to about one half of them. When his period of detention is completed, where is the excarcerated to go but to his old *friends*, his haunts: at such a place alone is he likely to be found and reclaimed; or found amidst his fellows, planning new thefts and endeavouring to laugh off his recent sufferings. In one case, how cruel to "disperse the gang," as we are accustomed to hear recommended in *the papers;* in the other event, how useless to *disperse* the just white-washed culprit along with his less unlucky com-rogues! Much more efficacious, in the sequel, would be the forcible dismissal from the contamination of such a party, of every juvenile offender, of the doubtfully honest or incipient thief, per authority of the landlord of the house; the same would take place in a private dwelling, though the resort of dishonest persons, I believe from report, unless they be of the *most depraved* class in the long catalogue of offenders. *Loose females*, of the tenderest age, usually attend such *haunted* public houses, laying claim to one as a brother, to another as a sweetheart and so on, but always inciting them to theft by the surest seductions: blandishments, example, instruction, ridicule, flash songs and Botany-bay pastorals, are among the arts employed by such *girls* upon mere *boys*, and on some fellows much older. A good horsewhip, or ground ash, strictly and

unsparingly laid on,* will be found more efficacious than imprisonment, and much more humane, too, (though a limb be broke in the process,) than waiting until the urchins and the husseys commit some crime of an unpardonable nature, that may reflect on the office and the officer engaged in their detection, the credit of having deserved well of their country. With the same view of the subject it was that I formerly advocated the efficacy of—

FLOGGING at the cart's tail, or otherwise, and discharging prisoners convicted of minor offences, rather than locking up the scarcely contaminated along with the finished thieves; from whom they learnt worse acts than those for which they stood committed, and where to fence, and whither to resort, and all the means of queering the traps, or getting away from their clutches. I was even led to lament that power was not vested somewhere, to inflict summary punishment off-hand on pilfering children under a certain age: not by stripping and tying up the least, but giving them what is termed "a good lacing" round the room, at the hands of a

* If boys behave ever so dishonestly, or otherwise deserves *the rod*, and a grave personage of consideration inflicts it *on the spot*, as he ought, the villain may indict or bring his action for *the assault*. *Such a person*, or a landlord, thrashing away boys out of his drinking-rooms, from the company of thieves, doing it moderately, ought to be allowed to plead the propriety thereof in justification.

kind of schoolmaster, on the ground that "this part of their education had been neglected." The bigger ones, boys, I would strip, and according to age, give it them soundly, but not severely; not lacerating deeper than the cuticle, but quite up to that point of severity with the most hardy bravoes of thick skin and hard muscular construction. Aught short of this is mere mockery; and so is the infliction of such a slight punishment upon high offenders: witness the operation performed on three Spitalfields weavers this morning, Feb. 7, 1828, for cutting silk out of the machines of their neighbour-workmen. Whoever recommended lenity to be shewn toward those offenders, should have heard the commentary of the spectators as soon as each exhibition termiated:—"I would have taken it all for the value of a pint of gin, but for the disgrace," observed one;—a sentiment that was echoed by a dozen!—and this for a crime that incurs a sentence of transportation in every other case than a summary conviction under "the Spitalfields Act."

On the other hand, an adequate flogging at the cart's tail, for *petty larceny,* is incontestably the most effectual, as it seems, also, the most appropriate punishment for youthful offenders, however inured to robbery; as applied to more aged rogues, I have reason to doubt its efficacy, though I entertain none as to its appropriateness to all minor offences, and then it had better be

inflicted privately, since people in general *cry out* againt punishing men as if they were boys. By the way, this must be the reason that this species of corporal punishment has been so much decried in naval discipline; the lubbers and nincompoops, the psalm-singers and old women, who compose this genus of *thinkers*, not being aware that a squadron of ships cannot be kept in sailing order without it: though I remember the case of a single ship [*quere* two] being so manned with *the elect* of a fleet, whereby it got christened "The Ten Commandments." By this nickery more harm was done in the aggregate than good. People of weak perception should examine matters such as these closer than it seems they are wont: on board ship, for example, or at our prisons, if they dare. It is in contemplating mankind at a distance we become benevolent exceedingly; but when we mix with them, we suffer by the contact that threatens collision, and grow malicious by the apprehension of supposed injury, or at least selfish from the circumspection which our ideas of personal safety impose on us.

Let the objectors to *wholesome flogging* only think of the time or times when they themselves were flogged at school; and the reflection upon its importance to themselves in making them industrious learners, if not *bright scholars* (as we suspect), must have half-converted them already. If this be not sufficient, or it happens their "education has been neglected" in this

particular, let them examine (not in words) the conduct of a recently flogged and discharged young larcenist of 15 to 20 years; and having done this a few times (as we have done) with the precaution set down at page 298, lines 8, &c. and we very much doubt whether the most whining inquirer in TOWN will not rise from the investigation a sincere convert to flagellation. On a former occasion, I adduced the case of an entire party of such larceny rogues being brought to the brink of reformation, by the deeply execrated report of its effects by one of their acquaintance who had just suffered it; but I hesitate to repeat particulars, because of the full reformation, I am disposed to believe, followed. Finally, I must *insist* (for the first time in my life) that unless flogging be persisted in strenuously toward dishonest youth, and even honest boys, frequenting the *company of known thieves*, in-door as well as out, no other hope remains of thwarting the accession of numbers to the several nests of street-thieves that infest every quarter of the metropolis, upon the obverse of the principle, that "to spare the rod is to spoil the child;" and because I have found, from the acknowledgements of many, very many parents of such culprits, that the desired *salutary correction* was out of their power, or at variance with their feelings. Spoiled children, over-nursed, *only-ones*, bastards of wayward habits and strong, furnish the juvenile supplies to our nests of older thieves of both sexes:

more especially if workhouse-bred ones, with contempt of the authorities there, or children of parents fond of pleasure, of tippling, &c. *Rapidity of detection*, I have already taught, will alone lessen the quality of crime in the aggregate, whilst for a time the convictions must necessarily increase in quantity. To this salutary end, *the measure* now in progress (as I apprehend) and referred to at page 288, will most assuredly tend; and provided it be worked well, sedulously and without flinching, must effect *much real good*. A thousand ramifications of that *measure* flit across my mind, by far too numerous for the present space; but I will not conclude this division of my subject, without adverting to one point which is very likely to be mistaken *in toto*, or carried so far as to render a very desirable means of *detecting* thieves, the cause of some private injury.

Stopping and *searching* known thieves, when there is cause to suspect their object, is the indispensable duty of officers; and if *the search* be enforced *whenever they appear* from home, or linger along *any where*, they have no reasonable cause of complaint. Nor when they follow, or are followed by, a *newly-seduced lad*, who usually carries the booty, but whom the thief keeps in view, is any blame to be attached to the officer searching, though nothing be found on the party. *The search* operates sanatively, and should be enforced. But in some instances of reformed thieves, who get into *place*, or drive

a little trade, the discerning officer will see the cruelty of upsetting his return into honest society, by even a hint or allusion to his former (single) misfortune; and the vicious one might be interdicted from molesting him by questions, insinuations, or other practices tending to *nose-ology*, as sometimes happens with those who scarcely emerge from the rank of rogues, when they became vested with a little brief authority. *Reformation* is often aspirated after by thieves "out of luck," or under alarm for their safety; benevolent people sometimes find them employment, even from the bar of the Old Bailey;* and a wise policy would extend to these any mode of reclamation all the facilities in the power of the state to give. *Certificates of reform* might be issued to all approved applicants, specifying particulars of place, occupation, and employers' names, which should exempt the bearer from the right of search. Deception could not avail them, and upon detection would but recoil with fresh force upon the then inveterate rogue.

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* *Bill Perry* was one of those: he had been several times tried, was under the *necessity* of purloining, having long propitiated employment in vain; and the foreman of the jury, who last convicted him, took him into his yard as a helper; there I saw him, employed him to obtain facts for my *first-book* on this subject,—believed him honest, and that he so continued until he went to his long home. He told me it was not he, but a relation, who was concerned with *Knight*, (the *Squire*,) who negotiated the stolen bills for Dudfield, Treble, Palmer, &c. spoken of a few pages farther down.

Searching has been pursued in *the city* with more assiduity than by the officers of the police-offices, and of course with more success. *Tom Dudfield*, the receiver, of Shire-lane notoriety, was detected in this manner with £800 of stolen bank property about him, after a successful career of fifteen years, reckoning *from* the time he was deputy-receiver of stolen *stiff* to Josh Palmer, his subsequent connection with "the Squire," (Warren Knight), and with *Treble*, who did not escape hanging, like his friends, to that of his being finally transported. When taken, the returned lag, *Dudfield*, threatened the officer with an action. "Mind what you're at, mister, I shall imploy my 'torney, *Harris*, upon you: so help me G—, I vill;" and no doubt would have brought his action for damages had he been clear of *the swag* at the time: this is a sad state of the law in such cases, even though the verdict go against such a plaintiff. Similar was the defence of the Crowthers, last year, against the two constables of St. Luke's, who took them in *flagrante delictu*, and got ruined by law-expenses for their *reward*. Instructively contrasted with the above, is the routine conduct of the county police-officers, who, having fixed upon a man as the most likely, in their opinion, to have committed any given offence, "never leave him," but raise heaven and earth for small particles that may "make against him," so as to constitute a whole, or clue. Thus, one *William Jones*, accused of murder at Bow-

street, was said to have been seen with *his woman* on the spot near the time, which information, insinuated into the newspaper reporters at the office, almost condemned the youthful culprit, *à fortiori;* the same constable (name suppressed by the *reporters)* "produced a *shirt collar*, found at the prisoner's lodgings, with spots of blood on it;" but the woman who washed it subsequently to the murder, swears no blood was on it at any time.* Similar blood-stained unofficer-like acts crowd upon my recollection, the most pertinacious being those attempts against the much too celebrated *John Mackcoul*, a reformed pickpocket, which subjected him to repeated vexatious examinations

* This boy is one of those just alluded to, whose parent "spared the rod and spoiled the child," until he and his brother became past endurance, naturally fell into seductive company, dressed kiddily, kept late hours, and pilfered to support it, as usual. Nearly the same was the course of Latko's son, the lawyer of Doctor's Commons, and of Edwards', of the same vicinage, and of twenty other over-indulgent fathers. Stephen Jones, the father of William we knew long: he was one of the authors alluded to in another chapter, (p. 125) having been a journeyman printer, and a compiler of four or five books; two of them unfairly, as regards "trade," and the last without the requisite research: he rather preferred "Plater's ale" to the application of the ferula. So did the lawyer "prefer the cheering glass;" and when the unhappy youth came, in the *natural* order of things, to expiate his crime, he was denied the last consolation of refracting back its causation in sanglant reproaches upon the author alike of his life and death. History will have still more to tell.

at Bow-street in 1802, and in 1807 sent him for trial, capitally, at Stafford assizes, though he had already proved a good alibi, and discovered Dudfield's gang to be the real perpetrators, as above.

Bow-street officers were employed upon most occasions in *the city* until the year 1808, when the marshals expurgated their subordinates, and put their establishment upon better bases. At the present day their system (no; mode of proceeding) is excellent, notwithstanding the few lapses both of marshals and men in the interval, some of which I exposed in my former publications; and, both in the *second* and *third* letters, recommended its abrogation as a separate establishment. For example—the marshal at one time did not pay his people *rightly*, and the rogues had recourse to extortion, to blood-money, and other expedients to make up the deficiency in the means of life. *Holdsworth* and *Canner*, who commanded the civil force at the former period, sought for information, as to the persons and haunts of thieves, at the hands of the very men (of Bow-street) whom they meant to supersede; whilst these, as matter of trade, contrived to render both ridiculous, by introducing the *first* to parties of arrant thieves, to carouse and *shake hands*, (that cover of insidiousness); and the *second* marshal to the bisexual bad houses of *Dudfield*, *Burdett*, and *B—n*, in Fleur-de-lis-court, in Silver-street, and in Clifford's-Inn-court respectively. What a

contamination! What a piece of bad taste and ill-judgement in the first *officers* of the first of cities! None such, to the farthest degree, *being known*, should ever come in contact with the foes to good order; and of this the chief marshal was convinced by the Mackcoul just mentioned; whereupon Mr. Holdsworth forbade the Bow-street officers to interfere with the city police. Accordingly, and very naturally, as things were then managed, they threatened vengeance against Mackcoul, and nearly executed their purpose, as before said; whilst the second marshal, emulating his chief (of the nodding plume) and acting under the influence of his "bad-house intelligencers," joined his powers to theirs—though it is not for a moment to be supposed *Mr. Canner* knew the real perpetrators were "in Co." with his intimates, Messrs. Dudfield and Burdett, who doubtless urged him on to sacrifice *Mackcoul.** Commentary hereon would be thrown away: as for the latter, he was spoken of in the first chapter, page 82; but it may not be unimportant to observe, that *the reporters* of that day, as they of this, aided the conspiracy against Mackcoul by the basest slanders, all conducive to his conviction, *right or wrong;* and, among other ras-

* This person's history of the persecution carried on against him, is well worthy the perusal of all who would push their inquiries farther: he entitles his pamphlet, "Abuses of the Law."

calities, asserting, on the morning of his being brought for examination the fifth time, that "the prisoner had confessed his crime,"—the liars! which was meant to influence their evidence, as to his person, with the witnesses, and had its *desired* effect with one poor-souled fellow, named *Chadwick*.

Reporters of police matters are not only thus apt to take up *a cause*, so as to make their report *tell* in reading, so as to charm, alarm, or amuse the public, but they frequently conjure up pretty little adventitious stuff, to occupy a line or two, or a dozen, which makes a difference in their day's income of one, or two, or twelve pence. They either bepraise and bespatter the magistrates and officers, to conciliate their favour, or, taking a direct contrary course, at times employ the hackneyed "observed the *worthy* magistrate," with insidious irony, as applied to the most *unworthy* remark, into which *the man*, as a magistrate, in the weakness of human nature, was ever betrayed. In the late inquiry at Bow-street, respecting the large robberies of valuable shops and of bankers' parcels, all of them abstained from mentioning the name of *Salmon*; and he who ventured, just to invite the curious or the interested in such investigations, "to inquire at any police-office," being dubbed by Sir R. Birnie a *pickpocket*, they carefully quoted the hasty words, *literis verbis*, and with biting malignity inserted, *at full*, the negativing affidavit of *Mr. Johnson*, (who had compromised a

felony,) denying that any *officer* was engaged in restoring his stolen *time-pieces*. A very impertinent proceeding, truly; since every body knew already, that the person who negotiated *that same* was merely the friend of officers, living in a street issuing out of the Strand, as described above, at page 106, and he himself, at full length, in my *former volume*, at page 225. Some quality of the mind much meaner than absurdity suggested that affidavit; but all those "gentlemen of the press," whose talents are confined to police reporting, are precluded from taking an *enlarged view* of any topic that comes before them—from what *cause* their employers know;—probably "the great first CAUSE" denies them the capacity.

Yet do all manner of men dread *the press*:—"There they go!" exclaimed Sir Richard Birnie, when he perceived them *dabbing down* every syllable of his rebukes, untempered by his wonted prudence—"there they go," and down went that too. But, had they all turned their backs upon the *worthy magistrate*, and agreed to "preserve a stubborn silence," as a long time did the offended *Herald*—and as did their major brethren in the House of Commons, regarding that other stern rebuker of the press, *Mr. Spring Rice*, whom they doomed to silence "for the space of one whole session," so that the public "heard not the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely,"—what would become of the magistrate? Even the philosophic Wil-

liam Wyndham is said to have died of chagrin, in consequence of being condemned to "similar silence by the gentlemen," whom Cobbett, in a fit of apprehension, designated the "Press-gang." What would become of the police establishments altogether, if they were condemned to *silence in type?* What, but that the public would vote them unnecessary, under the belief that the millennium of guiltlessness had arrived.

Extensive robberies of entire stocks of valuable goods, like that of Messrs. Johnson and Grimaldi, have been mostly perpetrated in *the city*, because it is there that such stocks prevail; but the frequent recurrence of these go but little towards impugning the present vigilance of its officers, the watchmen excepted; for, "there is an hour or two occurring every day twice, when entire districts are left wholly unguarded, and the thieves know it well," as I observed in my *third letter*, and Alderman *Magnay*, in the first week of his mayoralty, quoted the passage, following it up with a regulation which filled up the two chasms, viz. previous to the going on of the patrol of an evening, and immediately after the watch going off in the morning: "The men cannot be always upon their legs, 'tis true; but they may be divided into parties of thirds or fifths, like the *watches* on board ship, or, in fact, like any thing but as they now are, straggling, unconnected, and insufficient." The faithlessness of the "guardians

of the night" is proverbial; the cause is equally well known to be inadequate payment, viz. 3*d.* an hour, by a munificent effort advanced from 2½*d.* in December, 1827; but in January we find verified a fact, only surmised at when the observations at page 178 went to press, viz. that their chiefs, who are well paid, are liable to suspicion; the beadle of Coleman-street ward having been detected privately stealing from some undertakers, and committed to Newgate from the Mansion-house. Would such a fellow hesitate about drawing off a watchman from his proper beat, when a *great crack* is to be achieved? If he did, he would be a very inconsistent sort of thief. Upon inquiry whereabout he was *meddling*, when some such extensive night robberies have lately taken place, he will be found to have been no great way off. Wood-street, *to wit.*

Bankers' parcels. Yet we do not find that the robbers of mails of those kind of valuable parcels, which have been so frequent from the year 1823, trust their contents in *the city*, in dread of the superior officers' vigilance—not more than one of them labouring under suspicion, viz. a connection with Ikey Solomons, in the Ludgate-hill business, 1825. Those parcels of notes of great amount, I have reason to believe, made no rest in the city nearer than Moorfields, and then moved a little northward; at least such was the case with the first and last lots, obtained *per mail;* those of the *Ipswich*

bank (Alexanders') having been deposited, during the long negotiation, at the upper end of Britannia-terrace, whither the silly fellows, loth to trust each other implicitly, repaired on horseback daily. The last lot, those of Messrs. Whitehead's bank, stolen in Holborn, as every body knows, went to that other Jew's in North-street, also in the City-road.

The negotiations that are known to have been carried on for the restoration of those *stolen parcels* of notes, and the progress *reported* from time to time in the papers, reflect high disgrace on the police management of the country: the consummation of that disgrace is the *safe performance* of each negotiation. To certain magistrates is confided jurisdiction in such affairs; they delegate to their officers the task of catching offenders and bringing them up for examination, in lieu whereof they convert their authority to the means of private emolument, contrary to law, and shield the thieves they are sworn to bring to justice. They thus encourage new depredations of the same and similar kinds, and have only to *put up* their principals to the tricks, to come exactly within the case of Jonathan Wild, who was himself an officer, a thief-taker, and a restorer of stolen property, for which he at length received a halter as his reward. Among other noticeable things attendant upon those robberies, is it not strange that the persons travelling by the mails at the time of the robberies are not publicly advertised? Are the

losers, then, intimidated by the application, *professionally*, of Mr. H. the Jew lawyer, "not to stir in the business, and all shall be made right?" He, whose brother was transported, was he not in the rig himself, *particeps criminis, prior* to the felony? And if bankers, men of respectability, thus consent to cover the thieves and envelope them in obscurity, how can they expect others to communicate what they happen to know, or little more than surmise? whereby their property might be recovered without compromise of money or character, and the recurrence of such disgraceful proceedings be safely prevented.

Much more is postponed to the new volume, promised next year.

THE END.

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