

unfortunate subject of this unexpected recognition to explain his conduct as he best could.

The next morning he began his journey. It was no cold winter weather: forcibly recalling to his mind under what circumstances he had first travelled that road, and how many vicissitudes and changes he had since undergone. He was alone inside, the greater part of the way, and sometime when he had fallen into a doze, and, rousing himself, looked out of the window, and recognised some place which he remembered as having passed, either on his journey down or in the long walk back with poor Smike, he could hardly believe but that all which had since happened had been a dream, and that they were still plodding wearily on toward London, with the world before them.

To render these recollections the more vivid, it came on to snow as night set in; and, passing through Stamford and Grantham, and by the little alehouse, where he had heard the story of the bold Baron of Grogzwig, everything looked as if he had seen it but yesterday, and not even a flake of the white crust on the roofs had melted away. Encouraged by the train of ideas which flocked upon him, he could almost persuade himself that he sat again outside the coach, with Squeers and the boys; that he heard their voices in the air; and that he felt again, but with a mingled sensation of pain and pleasure now, the old sinking of the heart, and longing after home. While he was yet yielding himself up to these fancies he fell asleep, and, dreaming of Madeline, forgot them.

He slept at the inn at Greta Bridge, on the night of his arrival, and, rising at a very early hour next morning, walked to the market town, and inquired for John Browdie's house. John lived in the outskirts, now he was a family man; and, as everybody knew him, Nicholas had no difficulty in finding a boy who undertook to guide him to his residence.

Dismissing his guide at the gate, and in his impatience not even stopping to admire the thriving look of cottage or garden either, Nicholas made his way to the kitchen door, and knocked lustily with his stick.

"Hallow!" cried a voice inside. "Waat be the matther noo? Be the toon a-fire? Ding, but thou mak'st noise eneaf!"