

with some subject that interested them deeply. More than once they stopped, turned round toward each other, and spoke earnestly with more gesticulation, at least on one part, than is common among the phlegmatic nations of the north.

Let us listen awhile to their conversation, for it may have its interest.

"Fore half of them are paid for," said the shortest of the two men, "they will have to pull them down, and then all the money is wasted."

"Money enough to feed half of the poor of the country if it were well managed," said the other, jogging on by his companion's side; "but it is all a job, Ben. They wanted to put out the old rogues and put in new ones, and so they made places for them. The gentlemen pretended when they got up this new law, that the poor's rates were eating up all the property of the country. That was a lie, Ben, in the first place; but even if it were true, I wonder whose fault that was if not the magistrates that suffered it?"

"Part theirs, part other folks," answered the man called Ben; "but it was a queer way to begin their saving to pull down, or sell for an old song, or leave to rot by themselves, all the old houses, and