

a lane, at another lost in the yawning depths of a close, or haply floundering among the foundations of a house in the progress of being built; now exchanging greetings with some lorn wight, zigzagging his way homeward anon saluted by a grim-visaged guardian of the night, and reminded that though music hath charms, they are not generally held to be of the soporific kind. At length I emerged into a wide open street which I found myself utterly unable to recognise. It was dark and lonely, the houses of stone, very lofty, rising dim, gray, and cold-like, with here and there a taper glimmering from a window, and the gas-lamps stretching away in two approximating lines, which became, to my bewildered optics, confounded together in the distance. A few passengers were moving in different parts of it, their footsteps sounding hollow and distinct through the deserted thoroughfare, while here and there a watchman, with his will-o'-wisp lantern, lounged at a corner, or disappeared up an alley.

I stood bolt upright, steadying myself in the middle of the causeway, mustering all my wits to my aid in order to come to a correct idea as to my precise position on the chart. Presently I heard a clock chime, then the half-hour called, and after a while a distant rumbling sound. It increased louder and louder, nearer and nearer, when at once, ere I was aware, a carriage rushed furiously round a corner, and flying rapidly on, was all but over me as I stood. The wheels grazed my elbow, and it was past me in an instant. I cast a look after it as it went. Thereupon my mind flew homeward, and away back to the days of my childhood, and I minded how my little brother and I, when going to school, long ago, used to jump up behind coaches, carts, and vans, and get whirled along in beautiful style. A chaise may travel fast, but thought travels faster, and all this had passed through my mind ere the vehicle was gone twenty feet from me. Acting from the impulse of the moment, I made a sudden bolt after it, by a sharp run caught hold of the springs, and with a bound swung myself up, and got seated very snugly upon the hind axle.

And a trick of this sort was just the thing which at that time I took delight in. I was about seventeen years of age, a very slight, agile little fellow, much slighter than I am now, and as active and alert as a cat, very fond of fun, and very careless how I came by it. I wore a kind of tight-fitting surtout of pilot cloth, single-breasted, and buttoning up to the chin, with no collar for any one to hold on by, and having in front, below the waist, two immense pockets, possessed of nooks and ramifications innumerable, the correct topography of which was known only to myself. In these I carried books, instruments, and sometimes other things not so easily named. Along with these a pair of shoes lacing on the instep, and a blue cap without lining of any description, formed altogether an equipment very suitable to the character of the wearer.

Away we rattled along the rough pavement, the sparks glancing from the stones as the wheels flew over them. The motion was most exhilarating, and I began to feel perfectly happy in the excitement and novelty of the adventure. I watched the street lamps as they streamed away in a line, one after another, to the rear; now and then a watchman or passenger caught my eye, standing to look at us while we were whirled away, and on the instant had left them far behind. Now I had no idea where we were going

nor did I much care—all I wished was that it might be some distance. Presently I got hold of a lucifer, and lighting a Cuba, was speedily in the seventh heaven of enjoyment. Still more and more swiftly flew the carriage; twelve miles an hour I am sure was under the speed we were travelling at, and the more rapidly it flew the more rapidly I puffed, till the frag end of the cigar dropped from my mouth, and I looked about me. My head was anything but clear, I must confess; but still I could make out that the town, with its gas, its stony pavement, and tall houses, had been left behind; and while we were flying along a smooth Macadamized road I could see the green trees by its sides, like dim shadows, gliding away to the rear, as the moon looked through a big fleecy cloud, like a fair lady through a jalousied window.

I began now to feel a little anxiety. I had not the slightest notion what road it was we were coursing along, or where it led to, or how I was to get back to my snug lodging, to be ready for lecture next morning. I began to ruminate, but still as I ruminated the vehicle was whirling me along, farther and farther into the dilemma. At last I came to the highly commendable and student-like resolution of leaving it all to luck, and yielding myself up altogether to the spirit of the adventure. When I had done so I felt marvellously comforted and once more at ease, while the delicious uncertainty of what was to befall me again took possession of my mind. I bent back as I sat, and holding on by the straps looked up to the sky, watching the clouds as they darkened over the face of the moon, and listening to the wind that was shaking the trees by the wayside, and rushing away with a winnowing sound up the heavens.

In a little I was sensible of a slackening in the pace, and immediately the vehicle stopped and a voice hallooed. I bent aside, and looked past its body. There was a turpik-gate shut. The postboy hallooed again, and I could see a light moving about in the little gate-lodge. The window of the carriage was let down, and a voice spoke.

"How many miles to go now, Thomas?"

"Eleven of road, sir, and about a mile and a half of avenue."

The other voice said something in an impatient tone, and the vehicle moved slightly upon its springs, as if the speaker was accompanying his grumbling with a corresponding shrug. Shortly the turpikeman appeared with a lantern, and we dashed away along the road once more.

We might have gone a couple of miles when I felt the speed slacken again. I looked out and saw some horses standing before what I judged to be a little road-side inn, from the square sign-board that was swinging half across the way. Several men were lounging about with lanterns, while a bright stream of light issued from the open door of the house. I immediately dropped to the road, and walked along close by the hedge. The coach stopped before the inn, and while four fresh horses were being harnessed to it a girl emerged with some refreshments, which she presented to an elderly gentleman who sat in it. The postboys addressed him by the title of Doctor, but I could not say I had ever seen him before—at all events he was not one of the lecturing doctors at the schools. Presently the word was given, "all right," and away they went. I had walked on a little way, and as soon