

ing, of course, of the character of our condition, was noisy and outrageous. Feeling, at length, that we had reached a consumption, and aware that the hour was late, (it might be about two o'clock in the morning,) we arose, paid our reckoning, and left the house. On gaining the street, we gave full swing to the excitation which a sense of propriety had kept somewhat under while we remained in the tavern, and shouted and sang as other fools do in similar circumstances; that is, when labouring under the insanity of intemperance. In this way, we came noisily and joyously along, until we arrived in front of the house in which Maitland lived. It was his father's, and lay directly in our way.

"Now, my friends," said Maitland, as we were about to bid him good night, "we will not part yet. My father is not at home, and there's nobody in the house but an old woman; so you'll just go up with me, and we'll have one single tumbler before we part. I'll promise you a glass of as fine old rum as ever came from Jamaica." This proposal I met with a decided negative. Not so Brown, he at once closed with it.

"Faith, we shall, we shall Bob," he said; "we'll have one tumbler of your old stingo. Our bachelor days are nearly at a close now, and we'll see them merrily out."

Saying this, he seized me by the collar on one side, while Maitland did the same on the other; and thus was I forcibly dragged into the house. I determined, however, to drink no more, but to wait patiently till my friends should think fit to close the scene of their own accord. The old house-keeper having been roused from her bed, tumblers, glasses, and hot water were soon produced; and to these Maitland himself added a bottle of rum, which he took from an adjoining closet. In a few minutes my two friends had each mixed up a large tumbler; and at their obstreperous importunities, I also mixed up one; but I resolved not to taste it, and neither did I—a dereliction which escaped the notice of my companions, who, satisfied by seeing me with a dose before me, forgot to compel me to swallow it. This, however, was a proceeding which they did not forget. In a very short time, both of their tumblers were drained to the bottom, and another couple prepared. It was at this moment that I observed a curious change in the manner of Brown: he all at once became strangely incoherent—an incoherence that appeared to me more like that of insanity than intoxication. It is true that this is a common, nay, a necessary consequence of the latter; and it is true also, that Brown had drunk quite enough to account for it; but there was a peculiarity, a wildness in his incoherence, that both surprised and alarmed me. He did not seem to know where he was, who he was with, or what he was doing. Nor was this state accompanied by the physical imbecility or sottish lethargy which usually characterises excessive inebriety; on the contrary, his animal energies seemed unnaturally increased. He was furious, although not ill-natured; and his unsettled eye roved about with a wild expression, and with restless activity. It might be, that all this was merely the effect of intoxication—and there can be no doubt that there lay its origin; but I had never seen such effects before from the same cause.

I have already casually adverted to one feature of Brown's case—his not seeming to know whom he was with. This obliviousness came suddenly upon him; for, but an instant before, he had been addressing both Maitland and I by our names, in a moment after, he stared at us alternately, with a wild and enquiring look. It was evident he did not recognize us. I now, by signs, called Maitland's attention to the condition of our friend; and he acknowledged the communication, by proposing, in an affected off-handed manner, as it was now so late, and the morning so wet, (it was at this moment raining heavily,) that we should not leave the house at all, but take our beds with him. To this proposal, thinking it advisable on Brown's account, I at once agreed, and suggested that we should retire to bed immediately. Brown made no remark on his friend's suggestion that he should remain all night; he neither dissented from nor approved of it, but seemed quite passive, and willing to submit to any arrangement that we chose to make. Taking advantage of this apparent pliancy and indifference, we conducted him to a sofa, which was in the apartment, as the most convenient resting-place for him; and, having desired the house-keeper to bring in some bed-clothes, we covered him up, and left him, as we thought, snug for the remainder of

the night. Having thus disposed of our friend, Maitland and I retired to bed, as did also the old housekeeper: and in a few minutes, all was quiet in the house. I almost immediately fell into a profound sleep, and might have been thus for about an hour, when I was suddenly awakened by a violent noise in the apartment in which Brown was. He had got up, and was overturning every thing he came across in the room, and shouting violently. I listened for a moment, and heard him demanding to be let out, and threatening the demolition of every thing within his reach, if he was not; and he was already acting on this threat, by smashing pictures and mirrors, and every thing else that came into his hands that he could destroy. But his great object seemed to be to get out; and he appeared the more bent on this, that he did not yet know where he was. Of this he had no idea, as I perceived from his outrageous and incoherent expressions. He seemed, however, to be under an impression that he was forcibly detained by some persons; and conceiving himself ill-used, was in a furious rage.

Alarmed at the destruction he was making, I hastily arose, and finding my way to where Maitland slept, I awoke him; for he was sound asleep, and had heard nothing of the noise and ruin which his friend was occasioning.

"He must be let out instantly," said I, "or he'll destroy every thing in the room. I wonder he did not find the way out himself, for I heard him working at the handle of the door."

"Oh, I locked it," said Maitland, "for fear he should get up through the night, and leave the house." Here then was, in part, explained the cause of Brown's outrageous passion. He had found himself locked in, and this had irritated him, and inspired him with the notion of his being forcibly detained.

"But we must let him out instantly," said I.

"Oh, surely, surely," replied Maitland, leaping on the floor; "but go you to bed, Tom—no occasion for you disturbing yourself; I'll pacify him in a minute—and perhaps the more readily, that none are present but ourselves." Saying this, he hurried away in his night-gown to the apartment in which Brown was confined, while I retired, as he recommended, to bed, and listened for the result of Maitland's proceedings. The house was a large one, with a very long passage running down the centre; and as Brown's apartment was at the further end, I could not hear distinctly what passed; but I was surprised at a sudden cessation of all noise in Brown's room, the moment Maitland's footsteps approaching it by the passage became audible. It seemed as if Brown had become silent on discovering that some one was moving towards him; and this perfect silence he maintained while his friend was for some time unsuccessfully endeavouring to introduce the key into the key-hole; neither did he make any reply to, or take any notice whatever of the expressions which Maitland was, from time to time, addressing to him from the outside, while employed in searching for the key-hole. I considered the circumstance odd, and without being able to account for it, felt uneasy at it. At length, while listening with intense anxiety for the issue, I heard the key enter the lock, I heard the door opening, and in the next instant heard—I leave the reader to imagine with what sensations—the cry, uttered in a wild, unearthly voice, "I am murdered! I am murdered!" The voice was Maitland's. I leaped frantically from my bed, and rushed along the passage. I met my unfortunate friend coming towards me. He was staggering. "A light! a light!" he exclaimed—"I am murdered! I am murdered, Tom!" I flew to the kitchen, found a lamp burning on the hearth, snatched it up, and ran again to the passage, when and where a sight presented itself to me, which, to this hour, fills me with horror when I think of it. Seated in the middle of this passage—he had been able to get no farther—I found Maitland, with both hands endeavouring to cover a large wound in the lower part of his body. Here was a winding-up of the merriment, and joyous recklessness of the preceding night! On seeing the horrible and deplorable condition in which my unfortunate friend was, I instantly ran away for a surgeon, without waiting to exchange words with him, or to make any enquiries into the dreadful occurrence. I conceived that the first thing to be done, was to procure him surgical assistance.

On knocking up the medical gentleman whose aid I desired, and hurriedly stating the case to him, he recommended to me to run instantly, and call up other two of the profession, whom he