

promised to be there, I must go; so good night, and be wide awake."

"You need not fear for 'Old News,' he knows what he's about; and if he don't catch the old rat in his own trap, he's not the man he used to be, that's all; so good night to you, and success to the pretty innocent."

"Good night, and God be with you!—and here, by the way, is something to treat your friends with," said Bantwick, throwing him a purse containing a quantity of small change as he retired.

With a smiling countenance the good hearted Juet gathered up the purse, and while undoing the string, gave vent to the following soliloquy:—"By the pipers! this will do! yesterday a sovereign to bribe me to participate in a crime—today a whole purse, no body knows how much money, to stimulate me to counteract the same. Egad! see the crowns! and the good old Spanish dollars! not to say any thing of the shilling pieces, and other small bits uncountable. Hurra for 'Old News!'—two pretty good days work, by ginger!" and the delighted Juet snapped his fingers, and strutted about the room awhile in the highest spirits. At length, depositing his gold piece in the purse with the rest, and drawing the string, tightly and otherwise securing his valuable acquisition, he put the whole carefully into his pocket, and set off, intending, as he expressed it, "to have a good drink" along with his jolly companions.

At the head of those who *secretly* rejoiced at the widely spread rumour regarding the character of Miss Dartmouth, stood Pestley and Cotts, and their youthful brides. But although they underhandedly used every exertion to give it authenticity and a wide and rapid circulation, yet, in the presence of Miss Dartmouth's friends, they expressed the utmost horror at what they termed the basest calumny, declaring their readiness to aid in sifting out the author of the false report, and bringing him to condign punishment; and in order to conceal their actual guilt, and bear themselves above all suspicion of participating in, or of originating the slander, and, what was yet more, to advance their darling schemes whilst they yet went on smoothly, they got up a social party, and invited, in the greatest friendship, Mr. Bantwick, the Dartmouths, and their friends and relations, to be present, and this, too, on the eve of the very day in which the rumour began to circulate. It was to this party that Chauncey Bantwick hurried, after his conference with Juet was ended. On his way thither, his mind was cast down by dreadful forebodings. He recollected the dark hints of the widow Comstock, on the night of Mrs. Bartel's ball, in relation to Emily, and began to think she might be acquainted with her secret history. He thought how short had been their acquaintance, previous to which he knew nothing of her life; and then the circumstances re-

lated by Juet came with an overwhelming weight to force him to believe what he dared not think of. It was in this mood that he arrived at Pestley's house, where the party was to meet.

Previously to his arrival, Pestley had introduced the stranger to the company, under the name of Marston, as his friend and old acquaintance. He had also particularly introduced him to the Dartmouths, as almost the only survivor of the wreck in which their parents had perished, and as bearer of important matters intrusted to him by them in their last moments, with special injunctions, if Providence should spare his life, to seek out their bereaved children, and make them acquainted with their last wishes. Under this guise he was warmly received by the Dartmouths, who invited him into an adjoining room, to hear from him, without interruption, what he had to say on a matter so near their hearts.

Chauncey entered the room occupied by the company, at the door opposite to that which led into the room in which the Dartmouths and Marston were seated.

It so happened that the first objects which struck his eyes on entering were these three persons; and to a lover's eye, already jaundiced by a thousand dark suspicions, it may easily be conceived these were no very agreeable objects. Albert and Emily seemed to be listening with intense interest to what Marston was saying, who, seated between them, and holding a paper in his hand, from the lower end of which depended a small bit of *red tape*, was earnestly engaged in conversation. He alternately cast his eyes from one to the other of his listening auditors; whilst Emily frequently applied her handkerchief to her face to wipe away the tears which coursed rapidly down her cheeks; and Albert's countenance exhibited great emotion.

Chauncey was unable to advance a single step, after making this fatal discovery. He stood rooted to the spot; while his countenance changed rapidly from a burning red to a deathly hue. His excited imagination presented this conference to his mind as a confirmation of his worst fears; it construed Marston's earnest manner and violent gestures, into the act of upbraiding his renegade wife for her cruel desertion of him; and Emily's emotion as the natural effect, consequent on her dereliction from duty being thus suddenly held up to her view by an injured husband. His brain whirled; his knees shook as with palsy; and he would have sank to the floor, had he not, by a violent effort, recovered himself sufficiently to enable him to reach a chair near by, into which he threw himself; and, almost gasping for breath, exclaimed, "Good God! do I see aright?" and he covered his face with his hands and groaned audibly, as the conviction irresistibly forced itself upon his mind, that Emily was lost to him forever.