

and towed him to the nearest public-house. 'A chop and a glass of brandy-and-water,' said this good Samaritan of the nineteenth century. 'That's what you want. I'm peckish myself, and I'll keep you company.'

He was perfectly passive in the hands of any one who would take charge of him; he submitted as if he had been the boatman's dog, and had heard the whistle.

It could only be truly said that he had come to himself, when there had been time enough for him to feel the reanimating influence of the food and drink. Then, he got on his feet, and looked with incredulous wonder at the companion of his meal. The man from Broadstairs opened his greasy lips, and was silenced by the sudden appearance of a gold coin between Mr. Ronald's finger and thumb. 'Don't speak to me; pay the bill, and bring me the change outside.' When the boatman joined him, he was reading a letter; walking to and fro, and speaking at intervals to himself. 'God help me, have I lost my senses? I don't know what to do next.' He referred to the letter again: 'If you don't believe me, ask Mrs. Turner, Number 1, Slains-row, Ramsgate.' He put the letter back in his pocket, and rallied suddenly. 'Slains-row,' he said, turning to the boatman. 'Take me there directly, and keep the change for yourself.'

'The boatman's gratitude was (apparently) beyond expression in words. He slapped his pocket cheerfully, and that was all. Leading the way inland, he went downhill, and uphill again—then turned aside towards the eastern extremity of the town.

Farnaby, still following, with the woman behind him, stopped when the boatman diverged towards the east, and looked up at the name of the street. 'I've got my instructions,' he said; 'I know where he's going. Step out! We'll get there before him, by another way.'

Mr. Ronald and his guide reached

a row of poor little houses, with poor little gardens in front of them and behind them. The back windows looked out on downs and fields lying on either side of the road to Broadstairs. It was a lost and lonely spot. The guide stopped, and put a question with inquisitive respect. 'What number, sir?' Mr. Ronald had sufficiently recovered himself to keep his own counsel. 'That will do,' he said. 'You can leave me.' The boatman waited a moment. Mr. Ronald looked at him. The boatman was slow to understand that his leadership had gone from him. 'You're sure you don't want me any more?' he said. 'Quite sure,' Mr. Ronald answered. The man from Broadstairs retired—with his salvage to comfort him.

Number 1 was at the farther extremity of the row of houses. When Mr. Ronald rang the bell, the spies were already posted. The woman loitered on the road, within view of the door. Farnaby was out of sight, round the corner, watching the house over the low wooden palings of the back garden.

A lazy-looking man in his shirt sleeves, opened the door. 'Mrs. Turner at home?' he repeated. 'Well, she's at home; but she's too busy to see anybody. What's your pleasure?' Mr. Ronald declined to accept excuses or to answer questions. 'I must see Mrs. Turner directly,' he said, 'on important business.' His tone and manner had their effect on the lazy man. 'What name?' he asked. Mr. Ronald declined to mention his name. 'Give my message,' he said. 'I won't detain Mrs. Turner more than a minute.' The man hesitated—and opened the door of the front parlour. An old woman was fast asleep on a ragged little sofa. The man gave up the front parlour, and tried the back parlour next. It was empty. 'Please to wait here,' he said—and went away to deliver his message.

The parlour was a miserably-furnished room. Through the open win-