



VOL. III.—No. 72.

FOR WEEK ENDING JANUARY 19, 1867.

4D OR SEVEN CENTS.

THE LION IN THE PATH

(From the Publisher's advanced sheets.)

Continued from page 238.

CHAPTER LVIII.—DICK'S STEPMOTHER.

While the adventurer of Coombe Valley was thus engaged in a work that would have wonderfully interested Humphrey Arkdale, that personage was himself engrossed in matters involving equal energy of aim, and equal anxiety as to the surrounding circumstances. Let us take a glimpse of him on the morning after his return home.

"Hush, Jenkyns! I trust thy mistress sleeps. See and make a fire, and have breakfast ready; but step softly, lad, if canst."

"Step softly!" repeated Jenkyns, staring at his master as he took off his cap, and put back his long, lank hair. "Why, master, you don't mean it—a woman in the place, and you working without a fire, and never broke your fast this time o'day! Wait till I get the winder-bar down, I'll rouse the idle hussey."

"You'll do just as you're told, my boy. Hold your tongue, and make the fire."

As Arkdale, as if accidentally, fingered a certain strap, with which the shoulders of Jenkyns had more than once made warm acquaintance, the 'prentice only hung his head, muttering, as he took off and folded up his clean blue and white checked apron—

"And there's Dick, too. Who's to make his breakfast?"

"Who made it before, booby?"

"Who?" echoed Jenkyns, looking round as he sank on his knees before the fireplace. "Dye s'pose there's a young gal or a widdier in this town that aint been here in her turn while you've been gone, with something or other for Dick? Was there ever a morning I opened the door without finding somebody waiting with a smokin' hot pipkin o' new milk or a gallipot o' gruel, and askin' so kindly to be allowed to feed him as you'd thought he was the son and heir of the Lord Mayor, and so pleasant to me, too, with alwis a 'Good mornin' to ye, Jenkyns,' an' 'Any news o' your master, Jenkyns?' an' 'You'll tell him, Jenkyns, how agrieved I was I couldn't do no more for the sweet lamb,' eh? But the tale's changed now, master, since you brought madam home yesterday—nothing but black looks as I

come along this mornin'; and I reckon poor Dick may sing for his supper or whistle for his breakfast now."

Dick lay down on the floor in a bright beam of sunshine, that seemed to be radiating from him rather than shining down on him, so bright and lovely was the child in his morning freshness and sweet health. His eyes were gazing up at his father, who, from time to time, in spite of his sadness, glanced down, and exchanged with Dick looks of laughing idolatry. That sadness Dick regarded only as a bit of deep fun to make him laugh, and tried all he could to show his father his appreciation of it by puffing out his cheeks, blowing bubbles with his mouth, throwing himself on his back, and pointing delightedly with his rosy, dimpled foot at the unusual lines in poor Humphrey's face. Fun had always been the order of the day with these two; and neither of them being able to make themselves understood by words, they expressed their adoration for each other by laughter—not necessarily audible laughter, though there was plenty of that, but a silent laughter of the eye and lip, well understood by both.

Dick's merry noises, the crackling of the logs,



Dick gave one cry, that caught up all his breath,