

I was roused from a deep sleep at an uncomfortably early hour on the following morning, by a sound much resembling a "view, halloo," coupled with my own name, shouted in the hearty tones of Lawless, and, flinging open the window, I perceived that indefatigable young gentleman employed in performing some incomprehensible manoeuvres with two sticks and a large flint stone, occasionally varying his diversion by renewing the rough music which had broken my slumbers.

"Why, Lawless, what do you mean by rousing me at this unreasonable hour? it's not six o'clock yet. And what in the world are you doing with those sticks?"

"Unreasonable, eh? well, that's rather good, now! Just tell me which is the most unreasonable, to lie snoring in bed like a fat pig or a fatter alderman, such a beautiful morning as this is, or to be out enjoying it, eh?"

"You have reason on your side, so far, I must confess."

"Eh! yes, and so I always have, to be sure. What am I doing with the sticks, did you say? can't you see?"

"I can see you are fixing one in the ground, taking extreme pains to balance the stone on the top of it, and instantly endeavouring to knock it off again with the other; in which endeavour you appear generally to fail."

"Fail, eh? It strikes me that you are not half awake yet, or else your eyesight is getting out of condition. Six times running, except twice, when the wind or something got in the way, did I knock that blessed stone off, while I was trying to wake you. Epsom's coming round soon, don't you see, so I'm just getting my hand in for a slap at the snuff-boxes. But jump into your togs as fast as you can and come out, for I've got such a lark to tell you."

A few minutes sufficed to enable me to follow Lawless's recommendation, and long before he had attained the proficiency he desired in his "snuff-box practice," I had joined him.

"There!" he exclaimed, as he made a most epiteful shot at the stone; "that's safe to do the business. By Jove, it has done it, too, and no mistake," he continued, as the stick, glancing against the branch of a tree, turned aside, and ruining a very promising bed of hyacinths, finally alighted on a bell-glass placed over some pet flower of Fanny's, both of which it utterly destroyed.

"Pleasant that, eh? ah, well, we must lay it to the cats—though if the cats in this part of the country are not unusually robust and vicious, there's not a chance of our being believed."

"Never mind," remarked I, "better luck next time. But now that you have succeeded in dragging me out of bed, what is it that you want with me?"

"Want with you, eh?" returned Lawless, mimicking the half-drowsy, half-cross tone in which I had spoken; "you're a nice young man to talk to, I don't think. Never be grumpy, man, when I've got the most glorious bit of fun in the world to tell you, too. I had my