

cane, and, confronting Mrs. Squeers, with a stern countenance, snatched off her cap and beaver-bonnet, put it on her own head, armed himself with the wooden spoon and bade her on pain of death, go down upon her knees and take a dose directly. Before that estimable lady could recover herself or offer the slightest retaliation, she was forced into a kneeling posture by a crowd of shouting tormentors, and compelled to swallow a spoonful of the odious mixture, rendered more than usually savoury by the immersion in the bowl of Master Wackford's head, whose ducking was entrusted to another rebel. The success of this first achievement prompted the malicious crowd, whose faces were clustered together in every variety of lank and half-starved ugliness, to further acts of outrage. The leader was insisting upon Mr. Squeers repeating her dose, Master Squeers was undergoing another dip in the treacle, and a violent assault had been commenced on Miss Squeers, when John Browdie, bursting open the door with a vigorous kick, rushed to the rescue. The shouts, screams, groans, hoots, and clapping of hands suddenly ceased, and a dead silence ensued.

"Ye be noice chaps," said John, looking steadily round. "Waat's to do here, thou yoong dogs?"

"Squeers is in prison, and we are going to run away!" cried a score of shrill voices. "We won't stop, we won't stop!"

"Weel then, dinnot stop," replied John; "who waant thee to stop? Roon awa' loike men, but dinnot hurt the women."

"Hurrah!" cried the shrill voices, more shrilly still.

"Hurrah?" repeated John. "Weel, hurrah, loike me too. Noo then, look out. Hip—hip,—hip—hurrah!"

"Hurrah!" cried the voices.

"Hurrah! Agean," said John. "Looder still."

The boys obeyed.

"Anooother!" said John. "Dinnot be afeared on it. Let's have a good 'un!"

"Hurrah!"

"Noo then," said John, "let's have yan more to end wi' and then coot off as quick as you loike. Tak' a good breath noo—Squeers be in jail—the school's brokken oop—it's a power—past and gane—think o' thot, and let it be a hearty 'un! Hurrah!"