

slipped him like a fool, instead of going for the otter, he up and legged it for his life, what !”

“He didna,” said the other loudly. “He was in t’ watter, and heft on to the otter ’fore ever she could dive. And then”—his hand was to his mouth again—“ma guy!”—he breathed deep—“ma’ guy!”

“What!” said the other, nervous, irritable, his eyes over his shoulder, “what! Go on! what happened? what?”

“They fowt,” said the slow Englishman, and paused.

“Go on, man! go on! go on!”

“They fowt,” said the slow Englishman, “they fowt—and fowt—and they”—he paused and looked round him—“fowt.” His tongue came back to him, and his eyes began to glow. “They fowt it oop, and they fowt it down. Such a wranglin’ and wrestlin’, such a lashin’ and splashin’, such a snarlle-tarlie-tangle—A niver see! First on land, then in t’ watter, then under it! She was all for drowning him,” said the Englishman with upraised fist, “but ma lad——”

“The dog, d’ye mean?”

“In t’ watter or under, it was nowt to him. He was theer, and theer he meant staying, did ma lad. And she couldna get shut of him! She couldna get shut of him! She couldna get shut of him, try all roads.” He paused to breathe.

“At last they coom along under bank, and A lay flat and tailed ma lad. Theer he hung from ma hand by the tail—so!” said the Englishman, and held out an arm shoulder-high, “and she hung from his mouth—all in a string like. And the weight of them at arm’s length! Yo’d never believe!” He went off into roars of tempestuous laughter, and was still again, as he caught his master’s eye, and went on in hushed voice. “So A cop’d t’otter a bat with ma stick; and that kept her quiet, but ma lad niver let quit his holt, till A grupp’d him by the throat, and nigh throttled him. Then the otter dropp’d. A thowt she’d be dead, but theer’s no killin’ one o’ them! and she was oop and off and into t’ dub fore A could settle her.”