

feet on the iron fender, snuffed the candle on the table behind her, and opened the publication she had taken from her daughter. Before, however, she was fairly immersed in its beauties, or the first few bars of the jingles had come to an end, a tremendous noise overhead caused them both to start.

"Sakes alive !" uttered Mrs. May—a favorite exclamation of hers : " what's that ?"

A somewhat prolonged noise, as of a stool or chair being moved violently about, was now heard. Sophia jumped off the books.

"Mother ! suppose it should be an apparition !"

"Suppose it should be a robber !" was the more practical remark of Mrs. May. "He may have stolen in to kill us, while he walks off with the law papers. I *daren't* go and see."

"I'll go and see," answered Sophia. "I'm not afraid of robbers ; and I don't suppose they'd hurt me."

She took the candle from the table, hurried fearlessly up stairs, and knocked at the front office door.

Mr. Jones, the young clerk, not being used to solitary evening employment, had dropped asleep over his work, with his stool on the balance. Certain musical sounds caused him to awake with a start, when he and his stool went down together. Picking his stool and himself irascibly up, he inflicted on the latter sundry bumps on the floor by way of revenge, and was just settling to his copying again, when the knock came to the door.

"Come in," cried he, sullenly.

Very much astonished he looked when the knocker presented herself : a blue-eyed, pretty child, with flaxen hair that curled on her shoulders. Dressed well, she would have been an elegant child : but dressed as she was, in all the colors of the rainbow, flaunty, dirty, and with a profusion of glass beads glittering about her as necklace and bracelets, she looked like a little itinerant actress at a country fair.

"Why ! who and what are you ?" demanded the young gentleman.

"If you please, we did not know anybody was left," replied Sophia. "When the noise came, we thought it was a robber got in, so I came up to see ; but ma was afraid."