

outside the turnpike house, I proceeded to put my intentions into practice.

But whilst I had been thus engrossed, affairs had assumed a somewhat different aspect. The turnpike-man was actively engaged in a pugilistic contest with Captain Spicer, who, on his attempting to lay hands on him, had shown fight, and was punishing his adversary pretty severely. Cumberland's quick eye had perceived the moment the moment he had regained his feet, and when he saw that I was fully occupied, he had determined to seize the opportunity for effecting his escape. Springing over the gate, he untied one of the horses, and striking down the boy who attempted to prevent him, rode away at a gallop, at the moment I reappeared upon the scene; while the second horse, after struggling violently to free itself, had snapped the bridle and dashed off in pursuit of its retreating companion. This being the case, it was useless to attempt to follow him; and not altogether sorry that circumstances had rendered it impossible for me to be his captor, I turned to assist my ally, the turnpike-man, who, to use the language of the "Chicken," immortalized by Dickens, appeared in the act of being "gone into and finished" by the redoubtable Captain Spicer. Not wishing to have my facial development disfigured by the addition of a black eye, however, I watched my opportunity, and springing aside to avoid the blow with which he greeted me, succeeding in inserting my fingers within the folds of his neckcloth, after which I had little difficulty in choking him into a state of incapacity, when he submitted to the indignity of having his hands tied behind him, and was induced to resume his seat in the rumble as a prisoner, till such time as I should learn Mr. Frampton's opinion as to the fittest manner of disposing of him. I then replaced Clara in the carriage, which by my orders had turned round, rewarded the turnpike-man, as well as the boy to whose forethought and able guidance I was mainly indebted for my success, and taking my seat beside my prisoner, we started on our return.

One naturally feels a certain degree of awkwardness in attempting to make conversation to a man whom only five minutes before one has nearly succeeded in strangling, however thoroughly the discipline may have been deserved—and yet silence is worse; at least, I found it so; and after clearing my throat once or twice, as if I had been the person half throttled rather than the throttler, I began:—

"It is some years since we have met, Captain Spicer."

The individual thus addressed turned round quickly as I spoke, and favoured me with a scrutinizing glance—it was evident he did not recognize me.

"Have you forgotten the billiard-room in F—— Street, and the way in which your pupil and associate, Mr. Cumberland, cheated my friend Oaklands?"

The Captain, on having this somewhat unpleasant reminiscence of bygone hours forced upon him, turned—I was going to say pale,