

whip, I failed to keep up with my more excited companion.

"Come, good horse!" I cried, striking him with my whip, "we have not far to go, yonder they lie!" and I patted him on the neck, "quicker! quicker!" I shouted, as he slackened his pace, for the carriage had been righted and was now rapidly rolling up the hill, "quicker! quicker yet!" and again the blow descended. "Good horse!" I said, as I brought him up within half a length of M. Martin, who turning in his saddle, said, "they are off again!"

"I see! but we'll catch them yet," and on we flew.

"Hallo-o-o-o! Mark! where are you off to in such a deuce of a hurry! Mark Truewitt, I say, Hallo-o-o-o!"

I checked my horse suddenly, the dream was ended. "Why, Mark," said my brother Harry, "what's the matter with you, are you riding a race against old father Time, or have you distanced your opponent? Your horse is in a perfect foam."

"I have been making a fool of myself."

"Indeed! and trying to fly your folly?"

"No, I merely allowed my thoughts to run away with me. I somehow or other got thinking on my adventure at the German inn last year, and fancied myself again chasing Darnell."

"What a strong imagination you must have, no doubt you saw them on the road before you."

"Indeed I did, or rather I fancied——"

"Ha, ha, ha! do you think you would have caught him if I hadn't stopped you?"

"Nonsense!" said I, for I perceived he was laughing at me, and endeavored to change the conversation by asking how it was, I found him still in England, for I understood that he had left for France.

"I could not get off before, but am now on my way. How was it that you were not at home last night?"

"I spent the evening at the 'Harrow' expecting to meet Writ there, but he disappointed me, and I was going to London to meet him."

"By Jove!" said Harry, again laughing, "you will be the death of me: why you are worse than a crab, for, going backwards you have not progressed, were you at Tindal's now, you would be a dozen miles on your journey." I was painfully aware of the fact and held my tongue. "I'll tell you what," he continued "you had better go home and give your horse a rest, it will be time enough this afternoon to see your lawyer."

"I think I shall, I suppose you have just left Briardale?" the name of my place.

"Yes, but I must now leave you or I shall miss

my journey—good bye; yet stay," said he calling me back, "if you miss anything while I'm gone you'll know who has taken it, so make your mind easy, I shall not be back these six weeks; good bye again."

"Good-bye! A pleasant trip," I called out after him.

Briardale was not half a mile distant, and while riding over, I could not help but laugh at my morning's adventure. My ride had given me an appetite, and I was eager for breakfast; it was yet early, and a couple of hours' rest would do me no harm; I could thus proceed leisurely to London, and find out Writ's business.

On reaching home, my wife informed me that Henry had spent the evening with her, and that she had refused to lend him a beautiful brace of pistols, which I valued highly, having received them from my father.

"I'll bet anything!" I exclaimed, as I called to mind his parting remark, "that Harry has taken them." My wife looked: they were gone!

CHAPTER III.

AN INTERVIEW WITH WRIT.

AFTER breakfast, I ordered my servant to bring out my cab, thinking it would be hardly prudent to trust myself a second time to my own guidance. While leisurely proceeding over the smooth and level-beaten way, I may as well indulge the reader with a few words concerning Mr. Writ and myself.

We were children together, and as children, went to the same school. I often contrast our childish desires and ambitions with the realities of after life. How different! As children, the golden future was ever before us! As men, we find the golden future has become the past; and now look back, with fond regrets, to the happy, happy days of childhood. Writ—"little Tommy Writ," as we used to call him—said that he would be a merchant; and I, who had perhaps more love of glory, vowed that I would be nothing but a soldier. However, Writ's father, who was in business, determined to give his son a profession, and the law was chosen. A fortunate thing it was for his numerous clients that they had such a man as Mr. Writ turned out to be, for their legal adviser. He inherited all the method of a merchant from his father, and applied it to law. Punctuality, promptness, and order were his mottoes, and he treated his suits as so much goods consigned to his care, which, if neglected, would result in loss to both employer and employed.

He would never take a suspicious case; if he