

The Rockwood Review.

he felt the same, and, turning to Sam, told him he'd be the death of him if he wasn't more careful.

"If you don't run away," said Mr. Brown, harshly, as he turned to the boy, "I shall give you a hiding."

"Where am I to run to?" whimpered Master Jones, dodging off and on.

"Run 'ome," said Sam.

"That's where I'm going," said Master Jones, following.

"Better try and give 'im the slip, Sam," said Mr. Legge, in a confidential whisper; "though it seems an unnatural thing to do."

"Unnatural? What d'ye mean?" demanded his unfortunate friend. "Wot d'ye mean by unnatural?"

"Oh, if you're going to talk like that, Sam," said Mr. Legge, shortly, "It's no good giving you advice. As you've made your bed you must lay on it."

"How long is it since you saw 'im last, matey?" inquired Mr. Green.

"I dunno; not very long," replied the boy, cautiously.

"Has he altered at all since you see 'im last?" inquired the counsel for the defence, motioning the fermenting Mr. Brown to keep still.

"No," said Billy, firmly; "not a bit."

"Wot's your name?"

"Billy," was the reply.

"Billy wot?"

"Billy Jones."

Mr. Green's face cleared, and he turned to his friends with a smile of joyous triumph. Sam's face reflected his own, but Charlie Legge's was still overcast.

"It ain't likely," he said, impressively; "it ain't likely as Sam would go and get married twice in the same name, is it? Put it to yourself, Arry—would you?"

"Look 'ere," exclaimed the infuriated Mr. Brown, "don't you interfere in my business. You're a crocodile, that's what you are. As for you, you little varmint, you run off, d'ye hear?"

He moved on swiftly, accompanied by the other two, and set

an example of looking straight ahead of him, which was, however, lost upon his friends.

"E's still following of you, Sam," said the crocodile, in by no means disappointed tones.

"Sticking like a leech," confirmed Mr. Green. "'E's a pretty little chap, rather."

"Takes arter 'is mother," said the vengeful Mr. Legge.

The unfortunate Sam said nothing, but strode a haunted man down Nightingale Lane into Wapping High street, and so to the ketch Nancy Bell, which was lying at Shrimpett's wharf. He stepped on board without a word, and only when he turned to descend the fore-castle-ladder did his gaze rest for a moment on the small, forlorn piece of humanity standing on the wharf.

"Halloa, boy, what do you want?" cried the skipper, catching sight of him.

"Want my father, sir—Sam," replied the youth, who had kept his ears open.

The skipper got up from his seat and eyed him curiously; Messrs. Legge and Green, drawing near, explained the situation. Now the skipper was a worldly man; and Samuel Brown, A.B., when at home, played a brass instrument in the Salvation Army band. He regarded the boy kindly and spoke him fair.

"Don't run away," he said, anxiously.

"I'm not going to, sir," said Master Jones, charmed with his manner, and he watched breathlessly as the skipper stepped forward and, peering down the fore-castle, called loudly for Sam.

"Yes, sir," said a worried voice.

"Your boy's asking after you," said the skipper, grinning madly.

"He's not my boy, sir," replied Mr. Brown, through his clenched teeth.

"Well, you'd better come up and see him," said the other. "Are you sure he isn't, Sam?"

Mr. Brown made no reply, but coming on deck met Master Jones'