

and his short legs being, in consequence, almost entirely raised from the ground, would assuredly have set him fast asleep. As it was, he could not properly be said to be either asleep or awake, his thinking faculties remaining in that cloudy state which is the twilight of the mind sometimes experienced in the heavy doze we endure rather than enjoy after too much sleep, or when disease or care prevents the approach of sound sleep at all.

Great was the consternation of the intended fugitives at seeing so unexpected a difficulty in the way. Dumfries' first thought was to drop a bag of his own cotton on the officious West Indian; but fearing that this might do rather more than stun him, he abandoned the idea, and his next scheme was to slide rapidly down on his shoulders and gag him; but a slight cry, he remembered, would bring up the custom-house patrol from the quay. The hour, in the meantime, was stealing away, and Jennie stood weeping and wringing her hands beside him. At length his determination was taken. Holding strongly by the rope where it was fastened to the windlass, that no diminution of security might be felt below, he caused Jennie to undo the fastening, and remove the end altogether from the roller, thus making the block or large pulley at the end of the projecting beam, the only supporter. Then fastening a thick piece of wook to the liberated end of the rope, on the plan adopted by his enemy below, he fixed himself resolutely astride on this apparently precarious seat, which would have been really dangerous to one less accustomed to such seats, and by dint of persuasion, assisted in no small degree by main strength, seated Jennie on his knees, and commenced their descent.

As one end of the rope descended, the other of consequence rose, but the whole was managed so quietly, and Dumfries continued to hold so firmly by the end to which Snell Drake was appended, allowing it softly and gradually to slide through his hands, that the West Indian was far up in the air, before, in the confused state of his intellect, he became conscious that he had taken his departure from the earth.

When he at length, however, perceived his actual situation, rising into the air, heaven only knew how or wherefore, the horror of the miserable man was indescribable, and the hollow groan which at first issued as if from the pit of his stomach, and then rising gradually, keeping pace with his ascent, into a desperate shout, expressive at the same instant of aston-

ishment, dismay, expostulation, and furious resentment, was so loud and weeful, that all idea of the ludicrous, which such an exhibition was otherwise well calculated to inspire, must have been forgotten during its continuance.

Even Dumfries himself was in some manner astounded by the dismal noise; and a "Lord preserve us!" was devoutly mingled with the execration in the name of an opposite power, which his fear of its raising the house prematurely against him elicited. There was no time to lose, however; and he made the rope spin through his fingers so rapidly, that in an instant the two parties met mid-way, and the eyes of the upward bound, who still held on like grim death, glared on those of his enemy with a look of rage, so closely mingled with deprecation, that Dumfries, alarmed as he was, could hardly forbear from laughing outright.

After losing hold of the ascending rope, their descent, from the great superiority of weight on their side, was incessantly rapid; but Dumfries broke the shock with his feet, and in a moment they stood in safety on the ground.—The first step of the adventurous cavalier was to fasten the end of the rope to the iron railing, so that Snell Drake might remain suspended in the air 'till relieved by his friends, whom his terrible cries would no doubt speedily bring to his assistance; and which would serve also the purpose of engaging their attention 'till the lovers should get clear off; for it was not reasonable to suppose that Snell Drake would enter into the cause of his elevation before he had safely descended. They then left him to his fate, and well it was for them that no further delay occurred, for they were no sooner out of sight, than not only the baillie and his family, but every soul in the street, who was not deaf or bedridden, crowded to the spot.

The first emotions excited in the spectators, were horror and commiseration; for it seemed to them that some unfortunate man was really suspended in the usual fashion, videlicet, by the neck, on a gallows as high as that of Haman; but speedily the truth appeared. When in a few minutes a lighted candle was held from the warehouse, exhibiting, with its yellow light, struggling amidst the faint moonbeams, the rueful countenance of the West Indian peeping through the handkerchief which covered his hat, and was tied under his chin in the style of an old washerwoman, a shout rose from the crowd that might have awakened the inhabitants at the most distant part of the town. As for the baillie, he felt by far too