

entered a small by-street, which is, or was at that time, called Little College Street, and which, whatever it may be now, was in those days a desolate place enough, surrounded by little else than fields and ditches.

"Having drawn the traveling-cap he had on half over his face, and muffled himself in his cloak, Heyling stopped before the meanest-looking house in the street, and knocked gently at the door. It was at once opened by a woman, who dropped a courtesy of recognition, and Heyling, whispering the officer to remain below, crept gently up-stairs, and, opening the door of the front room, entered at once.

"The object of his search and his unrelenting animosity, now a decrepit old man, was seated at a bare deal table, on which stood a miserable candle. He started on the entrance of the stranger, and rose feebly to his feet.

"What now, what now?" said the old man. "What fresh misery is this? What do you want here?"

"A word with *you*," replied Heyling. As he spoke, he seated himself at the other end of the table, and, throwing off his cloak and cap, disclosed his features.

"The old man seemed instantly deprived of the power of speech. He fell backward in his chair, and, clasping his hands together, gazed on the apparition with a mingled look of abhorrence and fear.

"This day six years," said Heyling, "I claimed the life you owed me for my child's. Beside the lifeless form of your daughter, old man, I swore to live a life of revenge. I have never swerved from my purpose for a moment's space; but if I had, one thought of her uncomplaining, suffering look, as she drooped away, or of the starving face of our innocent child, would have nerved me to my task. My first act of requital you will remember: this is my last."

"The old man shivered, and his hands dropped powerless by his side.

"I leave England to-morrow," said Heyling, after a moment's pause. "To-night I consign you to the living death to which you devoted her—a hopeless prison—"

"He raised his eyes to the old man's countenance and paused. He lifted the light to his face, set it gently down, and left the apartment.

"You had better see to the old man," he said to the woman, as he opened the door and motioned the officer to follow him into the street. "I think he is ill." The woman

closed the door, ran hastily up stairs, and found him lifeless.

* * * * *

"Beneath a plain grave-stone, in one of the most peaceful and secluded church-yards in Kent, where wild flowers mingle with the grass, and the soft landscape around forms the fairest spot in the garden of England, lie the bones of the young mother and her gentle child. But the ashes of the father do not mingle with theirs; nor, from that night forward, did the attorney ever gain the remotest clue to the subsequent history of his queer client."

As the old man concluded his tale, he advanced to a peg in one corner, and taking down his hat and coat, put them on with great deliberation; and, without saying another word, walked slowly away. As the gentleman with Mosaic studs had fallen asleep, and the major part of the company were deeply occupied in the humorous process of dropping melted tallow-grease into his brandy-and-water, Mr. Pickwick departed unnoticed, and having settled his own score and that of Mr. Weller, issued forth, in company with that gentleman, from beneath the portal of the Magpie and Stump.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. PICKWICK JOURNEYS TO IPSWICH, AND MEETS WITH A ROMANTIC ADVENTURE WITH A MIDDLE-AGED LADY IN YELLOW CURL-PAPERS.

"THAT 'ere your governor's luggage, Sammy?" inquired Mr. Weller of his affectionate son, as he entered the yard of the Bull inn, Whitechapel, with a traveling-bag and a small portmanteau.

"You might ha' made a worsen guess than that, old feller," replied Mr. Weller the younger, setting down his burden in the yard, and sitting himself down upon it afterward. "The Governor hisself 'll be down here presently."

"He's a-cabbin' it, I suppose?" said the father.

"Yes, he's a-havin' two mile o' danger at eight-pence," responded the son. "How's mother-in-law this mornin'?"

"Queer, Sammy, queer," replied the elder Mr. Weller, with impressive gravity. "She's been gettin' rayther in the Methodistical order lately, Sammy; and she is uncommon

pious, to be sure. She's too good a creetur for me, Sammy. I feel I don't deserve her."

"Ah," said Mr. Samuel, "that's wery self-denyin' o' you."

"Wery," replied his parent, with a sigh. "She's got hold o' some invention for grown-up people being born again, Sammy; the new birth, I thinks they calls it. I should wery much like to see that system in haction, Sammy. I should wery much like to see your mother-in-law born again. Wouldn't I put her out to nurse!"

"What do you think them women does t'other day," continued Mr. Weller, after a short pause, during which he had significantly struck the side of his nose with his forefinger some half-dozen times. "What do you think they does, t'other day, Sammy?"

"Don't know," replied Sam; "what?"

"Goes and gets up a grand tea-drinkin' for a feller they calls their shepherd," said Mr. Weller. "I was a-standing starin' in at the pictur-shop down at our place, when I sees a little bill about it; 'tickets half a crown. All applications to be made to the committee. Secretary, Mrs. Weller;' and when I got home there was the committee a-sittin' in our back parlor. Fourteen women; I wish you could ha' heard 'em, Sammy. There they was, a-passin' resolutions, and wotin' supplies, and all sorts o' games. Well, what with your mother-in-law a-worrying me to go, and what with my looking for'ard to seein' some queer starts if I did, I put my name down for a ticket; at six o'clock on the Friday evenin' I dresses myself out wery smart, and off I goes with the old 'ooman, and up we walks into a fust-floor where there was tea-things for thirty, and a whole lot o' women as begins whisperin' to one another, and lookin' at me, as if they'd never seen a rayther stout gen'l'm'n of eight-and-fifty afore. By-and-by, there comes a great bustle down stairs, and a lanky chap with a red nose and a white neckcloth rushes up, and sings out, 'Here's the shepherd a-coming to wisit his faithful flock;' and in comes a fat chap in black, with a great white face, a-smilin' avay like clock-work. Such goin's-on, Sammy! 'The kiss of peace,' says the shepherd; and then he kissed the women all round, and ven he'd done, the man with the red nose began. I was just a-thinkin' whether I hadn't better begin too—'specially as there was a wery nice lady a-sittin' next me—ven in comes the tea, and your mother-in-law, as had been makin' the

kettle bile down stairs. At it they went, tooth and nail. Such a precious loud hymn, Sammy, while the tea was a-brewing; such a grace, such eatin' and drinkin'! I wish you could ha' seen the shepherd walkin' into the ham and muffins. I never see such a chap to eat and drink; never. The red-nosed man warn't by no means the sort of person you'd like to grub by contract, but he was nothin' to the shepherd. Well; arter the tea was over, they sang another hymn, and then the shepherd began to preach: and wery well he did it, considerin' how heavy them muffins must have lied on his chest. Presently he pulls up, all of a sudden, and hollers out: 'Where is the sinner? where is the mis'erable sinner?' Upon which all the women looked at me, and began to groan as if they was a-dying. I thought it was rather sing'ler, but how's ever, I says nothin. Presently he pulls up again, and lookin' wery hard at me, says, 'Where is the sinner; where is the mis'erable sinner?' and all the women groans again, ten times louder than afore. I got rather wild at this, so I takes a step or two for'ard and says, 'My friend,' says I, 'did you apply that 'ere observation to me?' 'Stead of begging my pardon as any gen'l'm'n would ha' done, he got more abusive than ever: called me a wessel, Sammy—a wessel of wrath—and all sorts o' names. So my blood being reg'larly up, I first give him two or three for himself, and then two or three more to hand over to the man with the red nose, and walked off. I wish you could ha' heard how the women screamed, Sammy, ven they picked up the shepherd from under the table—Halloo! here's the governor, the size of life."

As Mr. Weller spoke, Mr. Pickwick dismounted from a cab, and entered the yard.

"Fine mornin', sir," said Mr. Weller senior.

"Beautiful indeed," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Beautiful indeed," echoed a red-haired man with an inquisitive nose and blue spectacles, who had unpacked himself from a cab at the same moment as Mr. Pickwick.

"Going to Ipswich, sir?"

"I am," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Extraordinary coincidence. So am I."

Mr. Pickwick bowed.

"Going outside?" said the red-haired man.

Mr. Pickwick bowed again.

"Bless my soul, how remarkable—I am going outside,

too," said the red-haired man; "we are positively going together." And the red-haired man, who was an important-looking, sharp-nosed, mysterious-spoken personage, with a bird-like habit of giving his head a jerk every time he said any thing, smiled as if he had made one of the strangest discoveries that ever fell to the lot of human wisdom.

"I am happy in the prospect of your company, sir," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Ah," said the new-comer, "it's a good thing for both of us, isn't it? Company, you see—company is—is—it's a very different thing from solitude—ain't it?"

"There's no denying that 'ere," said Mr. Weller, joining in the conversation, with an affable smile. "That's what I call a self-evident proposition, as the dog's-meat man said, when the housemaid told him he warn't a gentleman."

"Ah," said the red-haired man, surveying Mr. Weller from head to foot with a supercilious look. "Friend of yours, sir?"

"Not exactly a friend," replied Mr. Pickwick in a low tone. "The fact is, he is my servant, but I allow him to take a good many liberties; for, between ourselves, I flatter myself he is an original, and I am rather proud of him."

"Ah," said the red-haired man, "that, you see, is a matter of taste. I am not fond of any thing original; I don't like it; don't see the necessity for it. What's your name, sir?"

"Here is my card, sir," replied Mr. Pickwick, much amused by the abruptness of the question, and the singular manner of the stranger.

"Ah," said the red-haired man, placing the card in his pocket-book, "Pickwick; very good. I like to know a man's name, it saves so much trouble. That's my card, sir; Magnus, you will perceive, sir—Magnus is my name. It's rather a good name, I think, sir?"

"A very good name, indeed," said Mr. Pickwick, wholly unable to repress a smile.

"Yes, I think it is," resumed Mr. Magnus. "There's a good name before it, too, you will observe. Permit me, sir—if you hold the card a little slanting, this way, you catch the light upon the up-stroke. There—Peter Magnus—sounds well, I think, sir."

"Very," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Curious circumstance about those initials, sir," said Mr. Magnus. "You will observe—P. M.—post-meridian. In

hasty notes to intimate acquaintance, I sometimes sign myself 'Afternoon.' It amuses my friends very much, Mr. Pickwick."

"It is calculated to afford them the highest gratification, I should conceive," said Mr. Pickwick, rather envying the ease with which Mr. Magnus's friends were entertained.

"Now, gen't'm'n," said the hostler, "coach is ready, if you please."

"Is all my luggage in?" inquired Mr. Magnus.

"All right, sir."

"Is the red bag in?"

"All right, sir."

"And the striped bag?"

"Fore boot, sir."

"And the brown-paper parcel?"

"Under the seat, sir."

"And the leather hat-box?"

"They're all in, sir."

"Now, will you get up?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Excuse me," replied Magnus, standing on the wheel.

"Excuse me, Mr. Pickwick. I can not consent to get up, in this state of uncertainty. I am quite satisfied from that man's manner, that that leather hat-box is *not* in."

The solemn protestations of the hostler being wholly unavailing, the leather hat-box was obliged to be raked up from the lowest depth of the boot, to satisfy him that it had been safely packed; and after he had been assured on this head, he felt a solemn presentiment, first, that the red bag was mislaid, and next that the striped bag had been stolen, and then that the brown-paper parcel "had come untied." At length, when he had received ocular demonstration of the groundless nature of each and every of these suspicions, he consented to climb up to the roof of the coach, observing that now he had taken everything off his mind, he felt quite comfortable and happy.

"You're given to nervousness, an't you, sir?" inquired Mr. Weller senior, eyeing the stranger askance, as he mounted to his place.

"Yes; I always am rather, about these little matters," said the stranger, "but I am all right now—quite right."

"Well, that's a blessin'," said Mr. Weller. "Sammy, help your master up to the box: t'other leg, sir, that's it; give us your hand, sir. Up with you. You was a lighter weight when you was a boy, sir."

"True enough, that, Mr. Weller," said the breathless Mr. Pickwick, good-humoredly, as he took his seat on the box beside him.

"Jump up in front, Sammy," said Mr. Weller, "Now, Villam, run 'em out. Take care o' the archvay, gen'l'm'n. 'Heads,' as the pieman says. That'll do, Villam. Let 'em alone." And away went the coach up Whitechapel, to the admiration of the whole population of that pretty densely populated quarter.

"Not a verry nice neighborhood this, sir," said Sam, with a touch of the hat, which always preceded his entering into conversation with his master.

"It is not, indeed, Sam," replied Mr. Pickwick, surveying the crowded and filthy streets through which they were passing.

"It's a verry remarkable circumstance, sir," said Sam, "that poverty and oysters always seems to go together."

"I don't understand you," said Mr. Pickwick.

"What I mean, sir," said Sam, "is, that the poorer a place is, the greater call there seems to be for oysters. Look here, sir; here's a oyster stall to every half-dozen houses. The street's lined with 'em. Blessed if I don't think that ven a man's verry poor, he rushes out of his lodgings, and eats oysters in reg'lar desperation."

"To be sure he does," said Mr. Weller senior; "and it's just the same vita pickled salmon!"

"Those are two verry remarkable facts, which never occurred to me before," said Mr. Pickwick. "The verry first place we stop at, I'll make a note of them."

By this time they had reached the turnpike at Mile End; a profound silence prevailed until they had got two or three miles farther on, when Mr. Weller senior, turning suddenly to Mr. Pickwick, said:

"Verry queer life is a pike-keeper's, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"A pike-keeper."

"What do you mean by a pike-keeper?" inquired Mr. Peter Magnus.

"The old 'un means a turnpike-keeper, gen'l'm'n," observed Mr. Samuel Weller, in explanation.

"Oh," said Mr. Pickwick, "I see. Yes; verry curious life. Verry uncomfortable."

"They're all on 'em men as has met with some disappointment in life," said Mr. Weller senior.

"Ay, ay?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Yes. Consequence of vich, they retires from the world, and shuts themselves up in pikes; partly with the view of being solitary, and partly to rewenge themselves on mankind, by takin' tolls."

"Dear me," said Mr. Pickwick, "I never knew that before."

"Fact, sir," said Mr. Weller; "if they was gen'l'm'n you'd call 'em misanthropes, but as it is, they only takes to pike-keepin'."

With such conversation, possessing the inestimable charm of blending amusement with instruction, did Mr. Weller beguile the tediousness of the journey, during the greater part of the day. Topics of conversation were never wanting, for even when any pause occurred in Mr. Weller's loquacity, it was abundantly supplied by the desire evinced by Mr. Magnus to make himself acquainted with the whole of the personal history of his fellow-travelers, and his loudly-expressed anxiety at every stage, respecting the safety and well-being of the two bags, the leather hat-box, and the brown-paper parcel.

In the main street of Ipswich, on the left-hand side of the way, a short distance after you have passed through the open space fronting the Town Hall, stands an inn known far and wide by the appellation of The Great White Horse, rendered the more conspicuous by a stone statue of some rampacious animal with flowing mane and tail, distantly resembling an insane cart-horse, which is elevated above the principal door. The Great White Horse is famous in the neighborhood, in the same degree as a prize ox, or county paper-chronicled turnip, or unwieldy pig—for its enormous size. Never were such labyrinths of uncarpeted passages, such clusters of moldy, ill-lighted rooms, such huge numbers of small dens for eating or sleeping in, beneath any one roof, as are collected together between the four walls of the Great White Horse at Ipswich.

It was at the door of this overgrown tavern that the London coach stopped, at the same hour every evening; and it was from this same London coach, that Mr. Pickwick, Sam Weller, and Mr. Peter Magnus dismounted, on the particular evening to which this chapter of our history bears reference.

"Do you stop here, sir?" inquired Mr. Peter Magnus, when the striped bag, and the red bag, and the brown-paper