

secured the thief. "You ought to be knighted for fighting so well! This boy you have taken is a sad fellow! He broke his poor mother's heart a year since by his wicked ways, and I have long wished to catch him. A few weeks on the treadmill now may save him from the gallows in future."

"He seems well practised in his business," observed Major Graham. "I almost deserved, however, to lose my pocket-book for bringing it out in a night of so much crowding and confusion. Some lucky person will be all the richer, though I fear it is totally lost to me."

"But here is your pocket-handkerchief, Uncle David, if you mean to shed any tears for your misfortune," whispered Laura; "how very lucky that you felt it going!"

"Yes! and very surprising too, for the trick was so cleverly executed. That little rascal might steal the teeth out of one's head, without being noticed! When I was in India, the thieves there were so expert that they really could draw the sheets from under a person sleeping in bed, without disturbing his slumbers."

"With me, any person could do that, because I sleep so very soundly," observed Frank. "You might beat a military drum at my ear, as they do in the boys' sleeping-rooms at Sandhurst, and it would not have the smallest effect. I scarcely think that even a gong would do!"

"There will be no waking any of us to-morrow if we do not hurry home," said Uncle David.

"There is not a thimbleful of light remaining, and your grandmamma will be impatient to hear all the news. This has really been a most adventurous night, and I am sure none of us will soon forget it."

When the whole party entered the drawing-room, in a blaze of spirits, all speaking at once, to tell Lady Harriet what had occurred, Mrs. Crabtree, who was waiting to take a couple of little prisoners off to bed, suddenly gave an exclamation of astonishment and dismay as she looked at Harry, who now, for the first time since the robber knocked him down, approached the light, when he did, to be sure, appear a most terrible spectacle! His jacket was bespattered with mud, his shirt frill torn and bloody, one eye almost swollen out of his head, and the side of his face quite black and blue.

"What mischief have you been in now, Master Harry?" cried Mrs. Crabtree angrily; "you will not leave a whole bone in your body, nor a whole shirt in your drawer!"

"These are honourable scars, Mrs. Crabtree," interrupted Major Graham. "Harry has been fighting my battles, and gained a great victory! We must illuminate the nursery!"

Uncle David then told the whole story, with many droll remarks about his purse having been stolen, and said that, as Harry never complained of being hurt, he never supposed that anything of the kind could have occurred; but he felt very

much pleased to observe how well a certain young gentleman was able to bear pain, as boys must expect hard blows in the world, when they had to fight their way through life, therefore it was well for them to give as few as they could, and to bear with fortitude what fell to their own share.

Mrs. Crabtree seemed rather proud of Harry's manly spirit, and treated him with a little more respect than usual, saying she would fetch him some hot water to foment his face, if he would go straight upstairs with Laura. Now it very seldom happened that Harry went straight anywhere, for he generally swung down the bannisters again, or took a leap over anything he saw on the way, or got on some of the tables and jumped off, but this night he had resolutely intended marching steadily to bed, and advanced a considerable way, when a loud shout in the street attracted his attention. Harry stopped, and it was repeated again, so seizing Laura by the hand, they flew eagerly into Lady Harriet's dressing-room, and throwing open a window, they picked up a couple of cloaks that were lying on a chair, and both stepped out on a balcony to find out what was going on; and in case anyone should see them in this unusual place, Harry quietly shut down the window, intending to remain only one single minute. Minutes run very fast away when people are amused, and nothing could be more diverting than the sight they now beheld, for at this moment a grand crash exploded of squibs and rockets from the Castlehill,

which looked so beautiful in the dark, that it seemed impossible to think of anything else. Some flew high in the air, and then burst into the appearance of twenty fiery serpents falling from the sky; others assumed a variety of colours, and dropped like flying meteors, looking as if the stars were all learning to dance, while many rushed into the air and disappeared, leaving not a trace behind. Harry and Laura stood perfectly entranced with admiration and delight, till the fireworks neither burst, cracked, nor exploded any more.

A ballad-singer next attracted their notice, singing the tune of "Meet me by moonlight," and afterwards Laura showed Harry the constellation of Orion mentioned in the Bible, which, besides the Great Bear, was the only one she had the slightest acquaintance with. Neither of them had ever observed the Northern Lights so brilliant before, and now they felt almost alarmed to see them shooting like lances across the sky, and glittering with many bright colours, like a rainbow, while Laura remembered her grandmamma mentioning some days ago, that the poor natives of Greenland believe these are the spirits of their fathers going forth to battle.

Meantime, Lady Harriet called Frank, as usual, to his evening prayers and reading in her dressing-room, where it was well known that they were on no account to be disturbed. After having read a chapter, and talked very seriously about all it was intended to teach, they had begun to discuss