

thus while he stood enveloped in darkness he saw, standing before him, by the brightness of the moon light, a body of men all armed, and of those who were in the van of the gang, he observed that a few were blackened. Armed only with this case knife, & aided only by a dauntless heart, he took his station by the side of the door, and in a moment after, one of the villains entered from the parlour into the dark room. Instantly upon advancing, Sir John plunged the knife at him, the point of which entered under the right arm, and in a line with the nipple, and so home was the blow sent, that the knife passed into the robber's body, until Sir John's hand stopt its further progress. Upon receiving this thrust, the villain reeled back into the parlour, crying out blasphemously that he was killed, and shortly after another advanced, who was received in a similar manner, & who also staggered back into the parlour, crying out that he was wounded. A voice from the outside gave orders to fire into the dark room, upon which a man stepped forward with a short gun in his hand, which had the butt broken off at the small, & which had a piece of card tied round the barrel and stuck near the swell. As this fellow stood in the act to fire, Sir John had the amazing coolness to look at his intended murderer, and without betraying any audible emotion whatever, that might point out the exact spot which he was standing in, he calmly calculated his own safety, from the shot which was preparing for him. He saw that the contents of the piece were likely to pass close to his breast without menacing him with at least any serious wound, and in this state of firm and manly expectation, he stood without flinching until the piece was fired, and its contents harmlessly lodged in the wall. It was loaded with a brace of bullets and three flugs. As soon as the robber fired, Sir John made a pass at him with the knife, and wounded him in the arm, which he repeated again in a moment, with similar effect, and as the others had done, the villain, upon being wounded, retired, exclaiming that he was wounded. The robbers immediately rushed forwards from the parlour into the dark room, and then it was that Sir John's mind recognized the deepest sense of danger, not to be oppressed by it, however, but to surmount it. He thought that all chance of preserving his life was over, and he resolved to sell that life still dearer to his intended murderers, than even what they had already paid for the attempt to deprive him of it. He did not lose a moment after the villains had entered the room, to act with the determination he had adopted; he struck at the fourth fellow with his knife, and wounded him, and at the same instant he received a blow on the head, and found himself grappled with. He shortened his hold of the knife, & stabbed repeatedly at the fellow with whom he found himself engaged. The floor being slippery from the blood of the wounded man Sir John and his adversary both fell, and while they were on the ground, Sir John thinking that his thrusts with the knife, though made with all his force did not seem to produce the decisive effect which they had in the beginning of the conflict, he examined the point of his weapon

with his finger, and found that the blade of it had bent near the point. As he lay scruffling on the ground he endeavored, but unsuccessfully, to straighten the curvature in the knife, but while one hand was employed in this attempt, he perceived that the grasp of his adversary was losing its constraint and pressure, and in a moment or two after he found himself shortly released from it—the limbs of the robber were in fact by this time unnerved by death. Sir John found that this fellow had a sword in his hand, and this he immediately seized, and gave several blows with it, his knife being no longer serviceable; at length the robbers finding so many of their party had been killed or wounded, employed themselves in removing the bodies, and Sir John took this opportunity of retiring into a place a little apart from the house, where he remained for a short time. They dragged their companions into the parlour, and having placed chairs with the backs upwards, by means of those they lifted the bodies out of the windows, and afterwards took them away. When the robbers retired, Sir John returned to his house, and called up a man servant from his bed, who during this long and bloody conflict had not appeared, and had consequently received from his master warm and loud upbraiding for his cowardice. Sir John then placed his daughter-in-law and grand child, who were his only inmates, in places of safety, and took such precautions as circumstances pointed out till the day light appeared. The next day the alarm having been given, search was made after the robbers, and Sir John having gone to the house of the prisoner, Maurice Noonan, upon searching, he found concealed under his bed the identical short gun with which one of the robbers had fired at him. Noonan was immediately secured, and sent to goal, and upon being visited by Sir John Purcell, he acknowledged that Sir John "had like to do for him," & was proceeding to show, until Sir John prevented him, the wounds he had received from the knife in his arm.

An accomplice of the name of J. D. Sullivan was produced, who deposed, that he was one of the party that met at Noonan's house to rob Highfort house, that they were nine in number and had arms—that the prisoner was one of the number, & that he carried a small gun. Upon the gun (which was in Court) being produced, with which Sir John Purcell had been fired at, the witnesses said it was that with which the prisoner was armed the night of the attack. Witnesses said he did not go into Mr. Purcell's house—that two men were killed & three severely wounded, out of the nine of which the party consisted. He said he was induced to come forward and give evidence, upon hearing that two men of the names of Cushing, who were innocent, were accused of being of the party that attacked Sir John Purcell's house. He said he did not hear that informations had been sworn against him before he delivered himself into custody.

The prisoner made no defence, and Judge Mayne then proceeded to charge the Jury in a manner the most copious and perspicuous, and at the same time earnestly exacting for the prisoner whatever could be expected from a junction

of the purest humanity with justice. He commended with due approbation the bravery and presence of mind displayed through a conflict so unequal and so bloody by Sir John Purcell. The Jury, after a few minutes, returned their verdict—*Guilty*.

#### MISCELLANY.

For the KINGSTON GAZETTE.

RECKONER—No. 49.

TO THE RECKONER.

I REACHED London on my twentieth birthday, & found with surprise & delight that my father had arrived on the preceding evening. Our meeting raised a tumult of emotions in my breast different from any that I had ever felt before. He was now far advanced in life, and had something peculiarly venerable in his aspect, and that seeming coldness and reserve, which repelled my childish endearments, were exchanged for tenderness and affection. I was exceedingly anxious to please him, and for the first time secretly lamented the little progress which I had made in my education. My father soon discovered my great ignorance, for I could give him little or no assistance in his business, and he prevailed upon me to relate how I had spent my time in Scotland. After allowing me to finish my narrative without interruption, he burst into tears. Alas! James, what will become of you; the lowest servant in this Hotel is better educated. As I had always been accustomed to consider learning as very useless to a man of fortune, this remark gave me very great offence. He inquired if I knew where my good Tutor would be found, but he could give no information. His name was inserted in all the Newspapers, but in vain. A worthy Clergyman was induced to take charge of my education, for my father protested that I should not appear in Granada, till I had made a competent progress. Having finished his business in London, and made the necessary preparations for returning to the West-Indies, he addressed me in his closet as follows: "My dear son, my life is bound up in yours, I promised myself the greatest joy from your society, the staff of my age, my companion & friend. I could not forbear coming to England that I might taste the pleasure of your conversation and presence the sooner, & during my voyage I pleased myself with the thoughts that I had hitherto discharged the duty of an affectionate father, in giving you the best education which Europe could afford, and from your Grandmother's letters and many of your own, which I find had been written by some other person, I anticipated the most rapturous meeting—A son every way accomplished, possessing extensive information, the most honorable principles, & the most engaging manners & address. I have been cruelly deceived, but the blame is not yours, and it is not yet too late to become what I wish you to be—Let me entreat you to make up for lost time—I return with a sorrowful heart, & shall taste no joy till you join me worthy of yourself and of me. I had long cherished the hope of being able to retire from business, & to spend the remainder of my life in my native country, but the ravages of war have so much dimin-

ished my fortune, as to place the accomplishment of that hope at a great distance."—We parted in tears. My father's advice made a momentary impression, but not having correct ideas of morals, I had no steadiness of principle, and soon relapsed into my former bad habits. In a few months a letter from his Overseer announced my father's death; his disappointment in me preyed upon his spirits, & brought him to an untimely grave. I am ashamed to confess that this intelligence afflicted me very little, which was the more extraordinary, as I seemed to myself to have the greatest veneration for my father, and did not appear to be destitute of feeling. But it will always be found that pure affection never dwells in a selfish breast. I had been accustomed to look only to my own gratification, & altho' I might experience transient emotions of pity & sorrow, they were almost immediately extinguished. By my father's will I found myself in possession of a large estate, but very much encumbered by recent losses. My sister was left £5000, which had been placed in the funds, and a particular friend of my father in London appointed her guardian. I left the house of the Clergyman, who had long been disagreeable to me, from his anxiety to do his duty. I have since learned to appreciate his virtues & to be grateful.—The Overseer of my estate oppressed me with melancholy letters that every thing was going wrong, and that my presence was absolutely necessary. To these remonstrances I seldom deigned to return any answer, but lived in the most extravagant manner. I need not spend the different deceptions which are practised on young & foolish heirs in this metropolis—it is sufficient to say, that I acquired a passion for gaming, was well known at New-Market, and kept open house for all my friends. This could not continue long—I had mortgaged my estate for as much as it was worth, and a large remittance of produce, which my Overseer neglected to insure, was taken by the enemy, and completed my ruin. My creditors getting alarmed, seized my moveables, and threatened me with a jail. My summer friends, as is usual on such occasions, forsook or insulted me, upbraided me with my extravagance, and prompted my creditors to deprive me of my liberty. Terrified at the thoughts of a prison, I fled from London and skulked about the country till my money was spent and my dress had become shabby—Hunger now stared me in the face—To insult I had become familiar, but the cravings of appetite were horrible, and in order to escape them I enlisted in a regiment, which was embarking at Portsmouth for the East Indies. I was now careless and of a fullen disposition. I found myself an outcast from society—No person on earth regarded me, and except my sister, for whom a sigh of tenderness sometimes arose in my breast, I could have seen without emotion the whole human race destroyed. After leaving the Cape of Good Hope, I caught a dangerous fever, and being generally disliked on account of my repulsive carriage, I was very much neglected, but I disdained to complain, and saw death approaching with a