

as wholly *sui generis*; nor yet to those of the Thurtle or Tawell class, which occurred in private society, and lay outside what may be regarded as the professional pale. Within that pale great improvement took place; robbery accompanied by violence became rare, and robbery accompanied by murder rarer still. The streets and lanes of our larger cities might be traversed in comparative safety at all hours; the great bulk of offences committed against the person were offences committed under the influence of drink,—quite a bad enough symptom of the condition and morals of a great portion of the humbler classes, but in several material respects greatly preferable to that class of offences against the person which obtained in the days of Fielding, and respecting which he had to conduct, as has been said, five examinations in a single week. The means, too, by which the darker class of crimes had been suppressed in our own days were equally in advance of those to which the novelist,—unrivalled, as his writings show, in his knowledge of the worse traits and specimens of human nature,—had been compelled to have recourse a century ago. In the introduction of the “Voyage to Lisbon,” he relates that, when consulted by the Premier of the day,—the Duke of Newcastle,—respecting the best mode of putting down the robbers and murderers of the metropolis, he could advise nothing better than the employment of money in corrupting their associates. “I had the most eager desire,” we find him saying, “of demolishing these gangs of villains and cut-throats, which I was sure of accomplishing the moment I was enabled to pay a fellow who had undertaken for a small sum to betray them into the hands of a set of thief-takers whom I had enlisted into the service, all men of known and approved fidelity and intrepidity. After some weeks,” he adds, “the money was paid at the Treasury; and within a few days after two hundred pounds of it had come into my hands, the whole gang of cut-throats