the sake of example, been cut short at the knees, they had remained, notwithstanding the mutilation, as incorrigible ruffians as ever. From time to time there would be some terrible tragedy enacted by some tremendous incarnation of illegality and evil, who was both red-haired and six feet high to boot. Of course, to secure the protection of the lieges, large additions would be made to the original statute; and thus the mischief would go on from bad to worse, unmitigated by the teachings of the pulpit or the press, and unrestrained by the terrors of the magistracy, until some bold reformer, rather peculiar in his notions, would suggest, as a last resource, the repeal of what ere now would come to be very generally lauded as the sole safeguards of the public peace, and the glory of the Constitution,—the anti-red-hair, anti-six-feet-high enactments. And after the agitation of some fifteen or twenty years,—after articles innumerable had been written on both sides, and speeches without number had been spoken,—the enactments would come to be fairly rescinded, and the tall and the red-haired, in the lapse of a generation or two, would improve, in consequence, into good subjects and quiet neighbours.

Is the conception too wild and extravagant? Let the reader pause for a moment ere he condemns. England little more than a century ago was infamous for the number of its murders committed on the highway. Hawksworth's story, in the "Adventurer," of the highwayman who murdered a beloved son, just restored, after a long absence, to his country and his friends, before the eyes of his father, and then threw the old man a shilling, lest, said the ruffian, he should be stopped at the tolls, was not deemed out of nature at the time. It was, on the contrary, quite a probable occurrence in the days of Jack Sheppard, Turpin, and Captain Macheath. About an age earlier, as shown by the "London Gazette,"—one of the oldest of English newspapers,—there were from