

"Then, my dear mother, medical assistance he must have. The village is but an hour's ride from here. I will go for Dr. Burnet, and be back before nine o'clock."

"Go, my son," said his mother. "Heaven has sent you back to us, and its promptings must be obeyed. Bring Dr. Burnet, and I will prepare your father to receive him. When he finds that the doctor is really coming, he will probably consent to what appears unavoidable."

The young man hurriedly embraced his mother, and a minute had scarcely elapsed ere he had remounted his horse and departed.

THE DISCLOSURE.

WHITLEY, as he sought the dark recesses of the wilderness, finding himself beset on every side, and seeing no prospect of escape, should he again fall into the power of his former friends, determined as the least dangerous course, to seek the residence of a magistrate, with whom he knew that Craighton had had some quarrel, and to communicate to him the whole particulars of the robbery, hoping that he might still receive the mercy of the Crown, in consideration of the benefit which would result from the disclosures he had it in his power to make.

He passed the remainder of the long night within the depths of the forest, not daring to seek a human habitation, not knowing where Greene and his companions might have gone. With the earliest dawn, he directed his course to the village, in which the magistrate had his residence, and when within its walls he for the first time breathed freely, for though he did not believe he should escape totally unpunished, he had no fear for his life, and the last night had shewn him, the perilous position in which he stood.

Mr. Warren was an early riser, and usually indulged himself with a stroll about the village, in order to provide himself with an appetite for breakfast. He was a bachelor, and as he had passed the grand climacteric,—nay, indeed, as his "day of life was waning into the sere and yellow leaf,"—it seemed likely that he would continue so. His household was composed only of a widowed sister, and a boy who acted in the various capacities which his unpretending household required. Already they were both astir, and the merry laugh of the boy, as he pursued his early tasks, was heard by Mr. Warren, as he was about to issue from the house. It sounded rather strangely at such an hour, particularly as in his well regulated household, which, although it was sufficiently cheerful on all ordinary occasions, was rarely the scene of boisterous mirth.

Curious to ascertain the cause of the unusual sound, Mr. Warren entered the kitchen, determined to administer a little wholesome correction, unless the cause of the uproar were satisfactorily explained. An unexpected sight awaited him, and he was as much surprised as pleased, to find Whitley seated there, the boy gibing and jeering at him with malicious pleasure. The spectacle he presented, however, was not one calculated to inspire mirth or laughter. He was the very picture of misery. The long night passed in watchfulness, in the dreary woods, in addition to the terror in which he had lived for many hours, had left deep traces upon his countenance, which was haggard in the extreme, and evidently had been long unwashed, while his unshaven chin, and matted and uncombed hair added to the woe-begoneness of his appearance. It was evident that he was in no enviable mood, and the good-hearted magistrate felt pity as he looked at him, although he was prepared to believe him guilty of many a grievous crime, for, in the course of the previous day he had heard of all that passed at Captain Willinton's, and being a shrewd observer, and a deeply thinking man, he was convinced that Whitley had been connected with the abortive attempt at robbery, which had alarmed the neighbourhood during the previous week.

We have said that Mr. Warren was surprised, when he found Whitley in his kitchen. He did not, however, suffer his surprise to be apparent to his early visitor. He eyed him steadily for several moments, and he could see that Whitley writhed and cowered beneath his glance; but he did not attempt to speak. Mr. Warren was the first to break the silence:

"What!" he exclaimed, "is it possible I see you here at such an hour? From what I heard of you yesterday, I hardly expected to have the pleasure of seeing you so soon. May I inquire your particular business with me?"

"Mr. Warren," said Whitley, hesitatingly, and with an expression of abject humility, for the hope which had hitherto supported him was rapidly giving way; "Mr. Warren, I come to you, to ask you to save my life—"

"Your life!" exclaimed Mr. Warren, "what ails you man? Surely nothing so grave as that, you seem as if you had been upon some debauch, but there's nothing, I hope, very dangerous in that. I hardly think it is the first time. You'd better take a soda, man, and you'll get over it at once. Besides," he continued, assuming a more serious tone, "if your life's in danger, you'd better see the doctor. There's one of the Faculty, I'm of opinion, has some wish to see you. Dr. Greenleaf, I mean."