

CHAPTER IV

GENTLE snow fell through a grey night as a party of men and women marched up Red Hill upon the following Tuesday evening. An invisible moon made all this clear. Parson Yates led the way with his cassock hitched out of the snow and with a stout boy on either side of him. One lad bore a candle, and the other, a little bell.

"Butivul night for a holy deed, I'm sure," said Mr. Cramphorn. Mrs. Pearn, Jenifer and Mr. Bluett walked beside him and a dozen villagers accompanied them. The matter, however, at their pastor's desire had been kept as far as possible from the general ear.

"I hope as you'm lookin' sharp to the roads an' the quay an' Smugglers' Lane as usual," whispered Johnny to Robert Bluett. "Some long tongue be sure to blab this business; an' if the Frenchman's laying off, they might signal her in to-night, 'stead of to-morrow."

"Not so much as a sea-otter could go from sea to shore without one of my men would know it," answered the other.

"Then a great load be off my mind, I assure 'e."