

afoot was unhurt, but his arms had been abandoned in the seat, and the driver sat stolid and unconcerned, indifferent to the whole affair except only when his three horses shivered impatiently and he spoke scoldingly and soothingly to quiet them. The fourth lay quite still, stunned or stupefied.

A young Englishman leaped out pistol in hand to the aid of the fallen trooper. He had not reached the body when he leaped convulsively in the air, and fell forward on his face—shot dead through the brain.

Where these shots came from we could judge by their white puffs of smoke, nothing more. The two other inside passengers who had taken up their revolvers, replaced them very quietly. There was nothing in view to be fired at, but there was certain death in firing.

A third time, "Throw up your hands all, before worse happens!" The second mounted constable, who had never yet seen his way to action, instantly complied. The driver complied. Our fellow-passenger standing still helpless by the barricade complied. We all by common impulse complied, and I can recollect that, even in the sickening moment of suspense and apprehension, the ludicrous fancy crossed me that we must look very like free and independent electors at the close of a nomination.

"You peeler, jump down!" Somebody threw him a neat coil of strong pack-line. "Tie them one by one, and together. And tight if you want ever to go home again!"

The trooper picked up the cord mechanically and moved towards the man who had shown most pluck amongst us all. The latter stood still by the felled log; beside him the fallen horse, tangled in the harness; beside him the officer stark and motionless with the blood welling heavily over his white buckskins; behind him, a pace or two, the young Englishman, his crisp chestnut hair faintly stirring in the breeze, and a thin red line trickling out over some quartz pebbles under his face, the useless revolver lying idly by his side. And, still with my hands held up as before the hustings, I wondered what o'clock it was exactly down in Devonshire, and if a mother were at that moment on her knees, praying God for her darling five thousand leagues away.

For, while the cords were being nervously bound round the wrists and elbows of the first captive, there was plenty of opportunity to observe. In the dead deathly silence—even the horses were quiet now—our own hearts beat painfully loud, while the hiss of a terrified snake and the hoarse mocking laughter of the great king-fisher who had swooped upon him, made a tumult painful in its resonance. And, without daring to turn our heads, we could see, here and there, the acacias ominously stir, and even make out the glint of a rifle-barrel or two steadily covering the caravan. Beyond this and the blood streaming