

there was no longer any lethargy in his manner. He was bending his back to his best stroke — an excellent one it was — and driving his light bark rapidly down the stream.

"My bet," said Varney, "is that he hears those shouts, and they mean something to him — something interesting and important."

"Larry, be a sport! Let's follow this thing along and find out what it all means."

"Oh, I'm willing to drop into town for a little reconnaissance, if you like. Maybe we can pick up something that will help us in our business."

"Spoken like a scholar and a gentleman. One minute while I get on my clothes. Oh — by the way! Er — this new — robe of mine does n't look like a Mother Hubbard, does it?"

"In my opinion," said Varney, "two things could not well be more utterly unlike."

Peter was back in five minutes, clothed and in his right mind. His falling foot hit the center-line of the gig with a thump, and they shot away toward the town wharf.

They bade the boat wait their signal in the shadows a little upstream, and jumped out upon the old and rotting landing. A street ran straight before them, up a steep hill and into the heart of the town, and they took it, guided by a burst of still distant laughter and hoarse shouts. Toiling up the evil sidewalk, they looked about curiously at the town which was to engage their attention for the next day or so. Over everything hung that vague air of dejection and moral