

about, it was not likely that he would have lain so quietly, or have groaned as if in pain.

"Hurt? I'm done for, side-tracked for good and all, the scamps!" ejaculated the injured man so fiercely that Elgar drew back under the impression that he was going to start reprisals on him.

"Can I help you back to your house, or would you rather that I called somebody?" If Elgar's tone was not too willing, he might surely be forgiven, for not one kindly word had he received as yet for his spirited interference, which, without doubt, had saved the man's life.

"There is no one to call, so it is you, or no help at all," growled the man, and then he got on to his feet with a good deal of help from Elgar, and stumbled slowly back to the store.

But he was groaning at every step, and walked with so much difficulty that it was plain he was rather badly hurt.

"Shall I go for the police? The brutes have knocked you about horribly," said the boy, with quivering indignation.

"The police? No, indeed, they'd be only too glad to find me in a hole. Just you help me inside my door, and then run away; I don't want no boys hanging about my place," answered the man in a snarling tone.

Elgar's indignation nearly choked him. What was the man made of, that he could not show even decent gratitude for the service rendered him?

But it is useless to expect more from a pig than a grunt, and if this man had no sense of thankfulness, it was of no use getting in a rage with him. So Elgar helped him carefully to the door of the