

of the soldiers on the hill, that he would prefer to stay with his father.

"Ha, ha," laughed the father's then fellow tippler, "an exemplary boy, a good lad, fond o' his father." And Upcott appeared a trifle annoyed at the words, reading, doubtless, in the twinkle of the man's eye, an irony more keen than was intended.

There were two or three such episodes. The father gave permission to his boy to go if he so desired; then he suggested that he should go; and all the while, as ballads have it, "the wine was birling." Then came the command:

"Get out of it now, John, and meet me to the Ship a couple of hours from now."

The eyes of father and son met. They understood each other in that gaze—and there was more than the barrier between.

"Yes, that's me," said the father's eye. "You're getting years, and you can understand things a bit. Well, that's me, so now you know."

And the lad's eye said: "So be it. And I am growing older every day!"

But he obeyed, and gave his father his absence.

In the streets as he strolled round, his face no very placid face then, he encountered a man that he remembered—he having a distinctive, superlative air of vagabondage—as one of the crowd in the Gunstone Lane fight.

This man merits description. He wore, a-cock, a fine hat with braid, and round his pow, beneath the hat, was a red handkerchief with blue and yellow spots, coming down to near his ears, which were long

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Upcott fo

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brandy, lad.

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