

Delaval, accompanied by the party of dragoons—with the exception of two who had been detailed to keep guard over those who had been laid under arrest the previous evening—had been off betimes in the morning on some quest of his own; and was now returned, accompanied as above stated by McWhirter, the nearest brother-magistrate of the Colonel's.

"Sure an' it's the hoighth av the saysin for me to be aff, Master Calvert:" said Barney, ringing his young friend's hand. "It wouldn't be good for my health to be nabbed again, after givin' them the slip so nate last night."

An instant after, and he was out of sight in the underwood.

Calvert, in deep abstraction turned and made his way slowly back to the Hall.

He was crossing the vestibule, when he was rudely summoned to—Halt! The jar of grounded arms emphasized the command.

Glancing up, he found he was confronted by the military party which just arrived.

"Stand:" pursued the Sergeant, "and give an account of yourself."

"By what right do you interrogate me?" retorted Calvert, haughtily.

"My orders are formal:" responded the Sergeant. "I am directed to let none of the party arrested last night communicate with any outsiders.

"There has been no intimation of any such restrictions to the parties most concerned; and for myself, I refuse to be bound by them at all, for as you very well know, there is no warrant whatever against me. Stay me, therefore, at your peril."

"Come, come, Sir! Don't cut up that way. But after all—" said the Sergeant, grumbling half to himself, "what the young chap says is true enough. And it is mighty hard if a young gent can't go about his own father's house as he likes. I'll let the Frenchman do his own dirty work. Fact is, sir," said he, speaking in a confidential tone, "Fact is, we've been out on the hunt all the morning after that poor devil that kicked the bucket last night; for the Mounseer *will* have' it, that he's alive yet, and above ground. And seeing you come in, he bade me draw it a little tight, and find out whether you hadn't met him belike, seein' he's a peticklar friend o' yours. Eh, young Sir?"

"I refuse utterly to be questioned:" returned Calvert, coldly.