

“‘I have unfastened the door; when you hear me move make a rush.’

“The ‘Old Gardener’ then pouring out the contents of the second purse, exclaimed,—

“‘Why there is almost enough here to build our new house of God! Let me see what the third contains.’

“He took up the third purse.

“‘Now!’ whispered Ryder, ‘make a rush.’

“We did so, and at the same moment heard the old fellow hammering away with his flint and steel. We expected to be instantly blown into fragments. The front door, however, flew open before us; the next step we found ourselves in the garden. The night was pitchy dark. We rushed blindly through the nursery ground, scrambled through brambles and prickly shrubs, ran our heads against trees, then forced ourselves through a thick hedge. At last, with scratched faces, torn hands, and tattered clothes, we tumbled over a bank into the high road.

“Our horses were soon found, and we galloped to Ryder’s residence. Lights were procured, and we sat down. We were black, ragged, and dirty. We looked at each other, and, in spite of our miserable adventure, roared with laughter.

“‘We may laugh,’ exclaimed Tom, ‘but if this adventure is blown, and we are found out, Cornwall will be too hot for us for the next seven years. We have made a pretty night of it. We have lost our money; being obliged to pretend to pray for two long hours before a great heap of gunpowder; while that iron-faced, ugly, red-capped brute threatened us all with immediate passage into eternity! And our money, forsooth, must go to build a Methodist meeting-house! Bah! It is truly horrible. The fellow has played the old soldier on us with a vengeance, and we shall be the laughing-stock of the whole country.’

“The affair was not ended. Reports were spread that three men, disguised as black demons, with horns and tails, had entered the cottage of the ‘Old Gardener,’ who had not only terrified them, but had frightened them out of a good sum of money, which he intended to devote to the building of a new Methodist meeting-house. It was given out that on the following Sunday