

for his removal to the next. The sentence seemed to give general satisfaction, and a buzz of approbation followed its delivery. The popular feeling had set in strongly against the unfortunate young man. His appearance was not prepossessing, he had a heavy brow and a downcast look, and, strange as it may appear, his very name was seized upon as proof presumptive of his guilt.

He was immediately removed from the dock, for the purpose of being reconducted, to his solitary dwelling, from the walls of which, in a few hours more, he was to be led forth, amid the groans and execrations of the people, to suffer an ignominious death. The trial had occupied the court ten hours, and the evening was far advanced before it was concluded. The pressure of persons, both in the interior and without the walls of the court-house, was so great, that the officers could scarcely effect a passage for the prisoner, who moved quietly along, hardly conscious of his dreadful situation. Having advanced about half-way from the court house to the prison, the officers found it impossible to proceed further. and Savage, who was closely plighted between two of them, had scarcely room to breathe. A reinforcement of constables was sent for, but before they could arrive, a tumult arose, nobody could tell how, and the officers were suddenly assaulted by a group of wild looking, dark coloured men, whose bare brawny arms brandished huge bludgeons. The crowd gave way, and Savage to an instant found himself separated from those to whose custody he had been but a moment before consigned. The effect of the trial, however, had so stupefied him, that he had scarcely sufficient power to profit by the chance which was then presented to him. His hands were plighted, but his legs were free, yet still, instead of rushing through the panic-struck crowd, and making a desperate effort to save his already forfeited life, he stood with a stupid stare, apparently the only unconcerned spectator of the riot of which he was the cause, and had it not been for the increasing darkness, and the confusion which prevailed, he would inevitably have been recaptured. But that which he himself was unable to effect, was soon undertaken by an unknown friend. He felt his wrist tightly grasped, and he was hurried onwards by a tall muscular man, muffled in a large cloak, with his face concealed by a stouched hat. Forcing a passage through the crowd, Savage and his conductor soon found themselves on the outskirts of the town. Once, and but once, they ventured to look back, and found that the utmost confusion prevailed around the court-house. A detachment of dragoons had just arrived, lights were moving to and fro, and the words "rescue!" "escape!" and "murderer!" were echoed by a thousand tongues. Savage, who till now had scarcely felt the extent of his danger, shuddered and hurried onwards, urging every sinew to keep pace with his unknown friend, who strode before him with a giant's speed. Having cleared the town, they struck into an unfrequented path, and continued their route across the country, avoiding the public roads, and pausing at intervals to listen for the sounds of pursuit. But all was silent, and the full round moon, rising from behind a ridge of dark clouds, threw a mild and gradual lustre over the surrounding scenery.

Having travelled at a rapid rate for the space of an hour, without exchanging a single word, Savage and his guide suddenly checked their speed; and the latter, lifting his hat from his eyes, and allowing the moonlight to fall full upon his features, asked Savage if he knew him. The young man thought his features were familiar to his eye; he had surely seen them before, but he was too much overpowered by his feelings to recollect where. "It is of no consequence," said his preserver, perceiving that he hesitated, "I have saved your life, and would have done so, even at the hazard of my own. They would have caused you to die a painful and a public death, for a crime of which you were not guilty; for know, Walter Savage, it was this hand that struck young Dor-

kins to the earth, and this was the weapon," he continued, drawing a large clasp-knife from his bosom, and opening the fatal blade,—"this was the weapon that let out his life's blood." Savage shuddered, and involuntarily stepped a few paces back. "You must not mistake me," continued the unknown, "I am no common murderer, I would not willingly have sought his death, but the tiger is not to be beard in his own den. He came with threats and upbraidings, I warned him away, but he was rashly bent upon his own destruction. He struck me, we grappled. He was young, active, and courageous, and a noted wrestler too, as you may perhaps remember. We struggled hard, till at last he fell beneath me. Even then I did not desire his life, but he renewed his insolent upbraidings, heaped the most odious terms of abuse upon me and my people, and treacherously springing upon me, unprepared as I was to sustain his assault, he fastened on my throat, and would probably have choked me, but that, stepping back, I seized upon my ash staff, which till now I had disdainful to use, and with one blow I dashed him to the earth, never to rise again! But time flits, you are safe now, but you will be pursued, and if taken, it may be that I cannot again effect your rescue. Go, then, consult your own safety by flight. Seek, for the present, some distant and secure retreat, or the blood hounds of the law will surely find you out. Even now, the cry is up, the scent is on the ground, and nothing but courage and decision can save you. The morning sun must find you many miles from hence. The great city lies before you, there, for the present, you will be most secure."

"And you," said Walter, overcome by strong feelings of gratitude, "where will you find a refuge, should chance discover what you have now confessed to me?"

The stranger paused for a few moments, and then replied,—"The secret lies in your breast, Walter Savage, and I rely too much upon your gratitude, to suppose you would wantonly betray me, and, if you had villainy enough to do so, you surely would not be the fool to risk your own life again, by an endeavour to implicate me, for, who would give credit to the tale of a convicted murderer? No, Walter, the price which you must pay for your rescued life is silence, and a self banishment from your native haunts. Thus we shall both be secure. The time may come, however, when you may once more return to your home, cleared from the crime of which the world now believes you guilty, — when I die, I will do you justice. But, we waste the night in talk, you are without money, I suppose, and your rifle must no longer ring through the glades of Epping Forest, to bring down the red deer. Here are five guineas," he continued, drawing a leathern purse from his bosom, and counting out that sum; "and when you sit down in safety, recalling the transactions in which you have lately been engaged, think kindly of him who now bids you an eternal farewell, — remember Young, the gipsy."

Savage took the advice of his mysterious preserver, and, having secreted himself in an obscure lodging in London, until his pursuers despaired of effecting his capture, he made his way to Portsmouth, and immediately embarked in a King's ship for the West Indies. Profiting by the errors of his early life, he applied himself with steady perseverance to his duty, and soon gained the goodwill of his companions and the officers under whom he served. He distinguished himself in several actions; and, being an uncommonly good marksman, was generally directed to go aloft with his rifle, when an enemy came to close quarters. His last action was fought in the very ship, on the deck of which the gallant Nelson received his death wound. A nine-pounder carried off his left leg; and falling from his station on the round-top, he was borne to the cockpit by two of his companions, where he underwent the amputation of his shattered stump.

He had fought for his country for ten years; and being unfit any longer for service, he was

sent to England in the first hospital ship that left the Bay of Trafalgar after that ever-memorable battle. For obvious reasons, although many opportunities had offered, he had never seen England since his first departure; and filled with recollections of the past, he had now returned to her shores with gloomy forebodings and a heavy heart. He remembered that, however innocent he was, the sentence of the law still hung over him, and that the name of convicted murderer would tarnish all his laurels. Time, to be sure, had wrought a considerable alteration in his appearance, and he had changed his name on entering the service; but there were many still living to whom his features would be familiar, and who would not be baffled by the change which his person had undergone. He remembered the gipsy's words, "When I die I will do you justice;" but this chance was too uncertain and remote to excite the slightest hope.

As he lay one evening in his hammock, debating within himself on the risk which he should shortly be obliged to encounter, he took up an old newspaper, which one of his messmates had lent him, and turning over the contents, he chanced to light upon these words:—"If this should meet the eye of Walter Savage, who, about the year 1733, lived near Epping, in Essex, and who effected his escape from Chemsford, in the said county, while under sentence of death, for the commission of a crime of which, it was afterwards discovered, he was not guilty,—he is informed, that he will hear of something very much to his advantage, by applying to Mr. Franklin, solicitor, Gray's Inn, London; or, any person giving such information as may lead to the discovery of the said Walter Savage, shall be handsomely rewarded, by applying as above."

A few words will suffice to close this narrative. When Savage arrived in England, and as soon as he was sufficiently recovered to go abroad, he wanted on the solicitor to whom he was directed to apply. From him he learned, that Young, having closed his vagabond career in a wretched hovel, on the borders of the Epping Forest, acknowledged, among other crimes, that Dorkins had fallen by his hand, and that the young man who had been condemned to death as the supposed murderer, was entirely innocent of his death. "I shall take occasion," continued the solicitor, "to make the Secretary of State acquainted with your singular case, and I have no doubt but that you may soon return to your home with an undiminished character. In the mean time, I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that an uncle of yours in consideration of your early misfortunes, has left you his sole heir to a very comfortable property; in your native county, and, in presenting you with the title deed, allow me to wish you all possible happiness, and length of years to enjoy it.

G. L. A.

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