

of the horses which his dramatic foresight had provided.

The leader of these four prisoners was Billy Wantage, who had come to know of the curious action of the Seigneur of Chaudière from an intimate friend, a clerk in the bank. Billy's fortunes were now in a bad way, and, in desperate straits for money, he had planned this bold attempt at the highwayman's art with two gamblers, to whom he owed money, and a certain notorious horse-trader of whom he had made a companion of late. Having escaped punishment for a crime once before, through Charley's supposed death, the immunity nerved him to this later and more dangerous enterprise. The four rode as hard as their horses would permit, but M. Dauphin and his companion kept always an hour or more ahead, and, from the high hills overlooking the village, Billy and his friends saw the two enter it safely in the light of evening.

His three friends urged Billy to turn back, since they were out of provisions and had no shelter. It was unwise to go to a tavern or a farmer's house, where they must certainly be suspected. Billy, however, determined to make an effort to find the banking-place of the money, and refused to turn back without a trial. He therefore proposed that they should separate, going different directions, secure accommodation for the night, rest the following day, and meet the next night at a point indicated. This was agreed upon, and they separated.

When the four met again, Billy had nothing to communicate, as he had been taken ill during the night before, and had been unable to go secretly into Chaudière village. They separated once more. When they met the next night Billy was accompanied by an old confederate. As he was entering Chaudière the previous evening, he had met John Brown, with his painted wagon and a new mottled horse. John Brown had news of importance to give; for, in the stable-yard of the village tavern, he had heard one *habitant* confide to another that the money for the new church was kept in the safe of the tailor-shop. John Brown was as ready to share in Billy's second