

joyous countenance; yet he preserved a dignity and authority, as if he would not be trampled underfoot by any man. My spirits rose.

"Who commissions you, Master Walton, to interfere with the business of this court?" the Chief Justice enquired, I thought with some show of mildness. The young man, whose very name was a stranger, turned to me, and demanded an answer with his eyes.

"I do," I answered promptly to the judge.

"And if it is an interference with the proceedings of the court for a King's Counsellor to exercise his privilege in defending a prisoner at the bar, then I desire to be informed of it in the presence of my fellow Templars."

With this the young man hectored about. He pulled at the neck of his gown, and cast his papers upon the table, as if his dearest rights had been filched away. The bench of judges whispered together, and gave swift glances towards the quarter from which this unexpected succour had come. When Master Walton received no reply from the bench to his challenge he turned to the Clerk.

"It may be that you will allow me a reading of this document," he cried, and seized the copy of the indictment from his hand. He cast his eye down the sheet; and, falling into a passion, he swelled himself like one of the four winds. I had misjudged the young man with the merry face. I had thought him merely one of those best fellows in the world, who can be won over by money; but on the contrary his heart was in my case.

"This indictment," he declaimed, "charges nothing but that Captain Nicholas Dexter has neglected to

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