

glanced at the squire, as much as to say, ' what are your instructions for I'm afraid of this man ' ? The Squire understood the cowed, enquiring glance, and at once responded.

" You do nothing of the sort Sertum ; there is no occasion to contest the matter again at the present, my award is sufficient, at least we don't want the opinion of vagabonds, and blacklegs rambling about the country."

The powerful black horse on which the Squire was seated, snorted an endorsement to his master's dictate, and shewed great impatience at the delay. The stranger seemed to notice and value the horse much more than its rider, for after looking at the two for a short time, he quietly observed in answer to the Squire's insulting remarks,—

" That is merely *your* opinion, young man, and as your horse is beginning to chafe, you had better let him carry you home, while we will try to do without you."

" Who are you ?" said the Squire, boiling over with indignation at such familiar language from a stranger in plain, almost shabby attire. " Who are you, to be young manning me, and interfering in matters with which you have no concern. I have a good mind to horsewhip you."

The young Squire showed unmistakable signs of a desire to suit his action to his assertion.

" I have no doubt," said the stranger, " that were you but as able as you are willing, you would do so : but you will consider the matter over very carefully before you experiment in that way, for I can assure you that I am not the person to submit to insolence quietly : and as to personal violence, boys must be very careful, and men cautious, how they act."

The Squire had carefully examined the stranger's build and appearance, during his speech, and seemed to think the advice given was worth considering, for after making a few enquiries as to what, or who, the man was, and finding that no one could give him any information, he rode slowly away, followed by his minion Sertum.

CHAPTER II.

PLOTTING.

After riding some distance, the Squire said, " So you don't know you fellow."

" No, Sir," said Sertum, " I never saw him before, and I don't think anybody knows him hereabout."

Curious, said the Squire, in a soliloquizing manner ; " very curious, I have an idea I have met him in some place before, can it be the same, of course it's the same. I remember the varlet now, the very same, a bold unceremonious, cool headed fellow."

Sertum was walking beside the Squire's horse, and concluding the conversation was for him said,—

" So you know the man yourself Sir."

" No," said the Squire, " I don't know him."

" Oh," said Sertum, " I thought from your remarks that you had seen him before."