

and someone had waved a red rag before him. With a bound, he sprang into the centre of the room, the wild light of the unleashed fighting animal gleaming in his eyes. He leaped at the stranger and grabbed him by the blue bird's-eye handkerchief, and in his frenzy pulled him to and fro, amid loud cries of "Order" from the startled crowd.

"You—you—you chawbacon!" he yelled, almost foaming at the mouth. "You come among your betters and talk fight. I'll fight you—by God, I will! I'll whip you to a jelly; I'll make holes in you; I'll send you yelping back to Bristol like a beaten mongrel dog! Bristol—by God, Bristol!"

Before they could stop him the black man had spoken.

Pearce turned white with passion and then flushed red.

"Take your black hands off me," he said, and then raising his big clenched fist drove it clean into Richmond's frenzied face.

Stunned for a moment, the black man lay where he dropped. Then, stupidly, he rolled over and sat up, almost comical in his wrath. When the full measure of his humiliation dawned on his scattered senses, rage boiled within him, and he leaped to his feet.

"Damn you—you young whelp; I'll trim you for that. Gentlemen all—gentlemen, leave him to me," he screamed, as they tried to drag him back. "He's mine by the blow, and curse the ugly face on him, he'll have to take it back. Leave him to me; stand away—for God's sake, give me a ring!"

Gentleman Jackson thrust himself amongst the swaying figures,

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