

"It is crooked counsel which I would receive from any here, and I ask for delay to consider of my situation."

"Neither shall you have that. I have offered you counsel, and when the time comes, you need not lament that you are punished in ignorance."

"I am no lawyer," I said, in order to gain time, for things were going badly, "and my knowledge of the law is but small. Yet I have spent some leisurable hours in the reading of it, and I seem to remember having read that no freeman shall be taken but by due process of writ original, according to the old law of the land, and that if any judgements be given contrary, they are void."

With this there was a fierce interruption. The judges broke out against me, and the Sheriff advanced to restrain my speech.

"I shall provide my own counsel," I cried above the tumult, and looked about the court room, in the hope that I should discover some middling honest lawyer who might in a spirit of freakishness undertake so desperate a defence. Upon the instant a trifling young man arose in the thick of the assemblage, where he had been in consultation with a person of grave, and even noble appearance. But the court room was ill-contrived for seeing, and the face of his instructor was quickly lost in the throng. This young man, who seemed but a slight, impertinent fellow in spite of his serious garb, stood forth, and faced the bench.

"I am commissioned to undertake the defence of this brave man," he declared, "because I am persuaded that he is a ready soldier who is too lightly accused." He spoke in a chanting voice which went ill with his