

murmuring of the rills issuing from the side of the hills and from every nook in the gorges and glens.

I confess that a sense of insignificance stole over me, originating doubtless from the reflection caused by this silence and almost painful quiet; and I could not but realize my unfitness for the work before me. There I was, hardly more than a plodding country cooper, having had but little experience save that given me by a life of toil in Scotland and my trip to this country, and no experience of things in this country save that secured through a few years of the hardest kind of hard work. For a moment I felt wholly unable to cope with this keen man of the world, but as I was gaining the top of the hill I glanced back over my shoulder, and noticing that the horseman was following my instructions to the letter, I reasoned that, from *some* cause, I had gained an influence over this stranger, or *he* thought he had secured such a one over me, as would enable me, by being cautious and discreet, to obtain a sufficiently close intimacy with him to cause the disclosure of his plans, and possibly ultimately result in his capture.

I had now reached the top of the hill, and taking a position which would permit of my being seen by no person save the horseman, I waited until he had approached near enough for me to do so, when I signalled him to follow, and then struck into the woods over a narrow trail about two hundred yards, to a beautiful little opening on the banks of a purling brook, leaping down the descent towards the river from a limpid spring a few feet above the spot I had chosen for the interview.

But a few moments elapsed before the stranger, dashing in over the trail in fine style, leaped from his horse with a good deal of dexterity for a man of his age, and carelessly flinging the bridle-rein over the limb of a small sapling, passed me with a smile of recognition, proceeded to the spring, where he took a long, deep draught, and then returning to where I was seated upon the velvety greensward, threw himself carelessly down upon the ground beside me.

There we two lay—the stranger, with his keen, sharp eyes and his altogether careless, but always attentive manner, closely regarding me, and looking me over from toe to tip; while I assumed an equal carelessness, but was all intent on his every