

staggering on the wet wood, launch Mr. Dane sideways. With a lusty oath and a splash he vanished.

“Stick me! Stap me! Here be to do!” Mr. Smithers muttered, who from the bank beheld the war. “Jerry, you be a fool. Down to ground, boys, and watch the banks! Odso, be ye all jack-ass-babes? Will he float up stream? Get down, down, ye boobies!” Down the boggy banks they ran, puffing and cursing, and Mr. Smithers gave tongue: “There a be, boys, there a be!” Dark amid the foam of mid-stream something rushed by. “Ods bones, there a be!” Mr. Smithers roared and splashed on over land and water till he was suddenly restrained by a frenzied yell:

“Oh, Master Smithers! Master Smithers, Oh!” and a subsequent splash.

For Samuel Bell was a lazy man. So Samuel stayed with the horses while his friends ran down the banks. Samuel remained with the horses and there was seen by Mr. Dane as he trod water beneath the mill dam. Detaching his cloak to follow his hat for the amusement of Mr. Smithers, Mr. Dane paddled gently to the bank and crawled out unseen of Samuel Bell, who watched the fortunes of his energetic friends. In sportsmanlike fashion, stealthily, Mr. Dane approached Samuel Bell, clutched him by neck and leg, and hove him into the stream. Whence his pitiful cry.

Mr. Smithers turning, saw dimly through the mist a commotion of steeds, heard a great scrambling and splashing, and ran back roaring, “In the King’s name! Od rot ye, sir, stand!” There was borne back to him the thud of galloping hoofs. Mr. Smithers came back to the bridge, and found the Prisoners’ Hackney trying to make a meal of sodden grass. “Stap me! Here be to do!” Mr. Smithers muttered, and scratched his head.

In a while they brought to him Samuel Bell, who, shivering, offered him the bedraggled hat of Mr. Dane. At that last straw Mr. Smithers spoke his emotions.

*(To be continued)*