

when, upon turning the corner, they saw a man with his back against the wall, defending himself as best he might against three Ruffians. The moon being bright and shining full upon the scene, they had no difficulty in discovering that the weaker party was the stranger of the Golden Hawk.

"*Voto de Dies!*" exclaimed Tavestock; "'tis the old fellow we took for a citizen; but when did a flat-cap ever stand upon his defence in such soldierly fashion?"

"He may be the devil for aught I care," said his companion; "but being, as he is, one against three, I'll do my best to help him."

"Agreed," replied the soldier; "fair play forever!"

And with this cry they both drew their swords, and without more warning set upon the assailants, who, finding themselves thus opposed to equal numbers when they least expected it, immediately took to their heels. The aid, however, had but just come in time. It is true that the two or three wounds the old man had received were too slight to be worth speaking of; but even in this brief struggle his strength had begun to fail him, for it was only by an activity far beyond his years that he succeeded in keeping the ruffians at bay. In another minute the affair had probably been settled by his death. The first impulse of the two allies was to pursue them; but the authoritative tone of the old man checked their purpose.

"You shall run into no useless danger on my account," he said; "there is no telling how near others of the gang may be."

The valiant captain scouted the idea of danger from such seam of the earth, as he called them, protesting that he had often stood single-handed against a dozen taller fellows; but the stranger was peremptory; his age and manner both carried command with them, notwithstanding his gentleness; and farther, to assure himself of their obedience, he requested they would see him safe home to his lodgings, in the neighborhood of the savoy. To such a request there could be no decently demurring, and the captain complied, the rather as he hoped on some future occasion to make the night's adventure a means of drawing the old gentleman's purse-strings.

On reaching a narrow street, not far from the Savoy, the old man knocked at the door of a house which stood at the extreme end, where it was closed in by an iron railing, preventing any thoroughfare.

"Here," he said, "we must part for the present, for mine is an orderly household, and brooks no late hours. But you now know my lodgings, and, when I farther tell you that I am William Crymes, of Kilworthy, near Tavistock, in Devonshire, no more need be said to-night."

"Tavistock! Why they call me Tavestock," exclaimed the captain. "By Saint George and his dragon to boot, I would we were as near in blood as in name."

"I said my name was Crymes," replied the old man drily.

"Did you," retorted the unblushing soldier; "then it is your estate which is my namesake; and, no offence to you, old gentleman, it were the better kinship."

"Be it so; I have no inclination to dispute that or anything else you may choose to advance at this late hour. Let me see you both to-morrow at midday; till when, God be with you."

The street door opened while he was thus speaking, and, the old man having entered, it was closed again without farther question. The two