

Chapter 'Twenty-two

He leaped down into the road. "I knowed I was a fool to come away without wakin' up Rameau. But you haven't beat us yet!"

He dove back into the lane, but just inside its entrance I met him.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"Back to the pigeon-house in a hurry. There's devilment here, and I want Rameau. Git out o' my way!"

"You're not going back," said I.

"The hell I ain't!" said Mr. Percy. "I give ye two seconds t' git out o' my— *Take yer hands offa me!*"

I made sure of my grip, not upon the refulgent overcoat, for I feared he might slip out of that, but upon the collars of his coat and waistcoat, which I clenched together in my right hand. I knew that he was quick, and I suspected that he was "scientific," but I did it before he had finished talking, and so made fast, with my mind and heart and soul set upon sticking to him.

My suspicions as to his "science" were perfervidly justified. "You long-legged devil!" he yelled, and I instantly received a series of concussions upon