

ing up in his seat. 'Mr. President, sir, Miss and Madam! Don't 'ee hear mun? don't 'ee hear mun? 'T'es the cannon! 'T'es the King's man-of-war!'

'Don't be a fool, Burch, frightening the ladies like that,' said Standen, angrily pulling him back into his chair: 'we've heard plenty of cannon already the last few days.'

'Us hev, trew, trew, us hev, but thase yere be different. Only hearken tew mun, measter,' and, lifting up his hand, he called for silence. 'Theer!' he said softly at last, as the dull boom broke on the air: 'tes fur off—further off nor the others—she's a coming intew the harbour, you may depend.' They were all gathered together, listening hard, as again and again the guns sounded.

'I believe Burch is right,' said Da Piera at last, a look of relief coming on his face, wan and wasted with anxiety and sickness.

'Of course I be right,' said Burch; 'now, sir, yew write that letter to the King as you told about, and, plase God, be some manes or another I'll get mun aboard, and us'll hev 'ee all out o' this gashly old place in a trice. Us hev doed a bit o' work last vew days, and bushes be most cut threw, and treasures all ready to be muved. 'T'es sartin sure us can't bide yere much longer, anyways.'