thought that he would have waited outside to get a reward for bringing those men to your rescue."

As Mark did not care to tell about the diamonds till the time came for getting them, he made no reply, beyond expressing an agreement with the chief's surprise at the man not having remained to the end of the fray. On leaving Bow Street he went up to Ingleston's. The men who had rescued him the night before were gathered there; and he presented each of them with a check for twenty-five guineas.

"I know very well," he said, "that you had no thought of reward when you hurried down to save me, but that is no reason why I should not show my gratitude to you for the service you have rendered me; some of you might very well have been seriously hurt, if not killed, by their knives. At any rate, I insist upon you taking it; money is always useful, you know, and it is not often so well earned as this."

The men were greatly pleased, and Tring said:

"Well, sir, if you get into another scrape you may be sure that you can count upon us."

"I shall try and not get into any more," Mark laughed. "This has been a good deal more serious than I had bargained for, and I shall be very careful in the future."

CHAPTER XV.

"THE burglary season seems to have recommenced in earnest," Mark's chief said some nine months after he had been at work. "For a time there had been a lull, as you know, but I have had three reports this week, and it strikes me that they are by the same hand as before; of course I may be mistaken, but they are done in a similar way, the only difference being that there is ground for believing that only one man is engaged in them. I fancy the fellow that you are after has either been away from London for some time, or has been keeping very quiet. At any rate, we have every ground for believing that he keeps himself aloof from London thieves, which is what I should expect from such a man. If one has nerve enough to do it, there is nothing like working singly; when two or three men are engaged, there is always the risk of one being caught and turning Queen's evidence, or of there being a quarrel, and of his peaching from revenge.

"If your man has been away from town, he has certainly not been working any one district; of course, one gets the usual number of reports from different quarters; but although burglaries are frequent enough, there has been no complaint of a sudden increase of such crimes as there would have been judging from the numerous daring attempts here, had Bastow been concerned; therefore I feel sure that he has been living quietly. He would have his mate's share—that man you shot, you know—of the plunder they made together; he would know that after that affair at your place there would be a vigilant hunt for him, and it is likely enough that he has retired altogether from business for a time.

"However, men of that sort can never stand a quiet life long, and are sure sooner or later to take to their trade again, if only for the sake of its excitement. Now that the burglaries have begun again, I shall be glad if

you will devote yourself entirely to this business. You have served a good apprenticeship, and for our sake as well as yours I should be glad for you to have it in hand."

"I shall be very pleased to do so, sir. Although we do not know where he is to be found, I think I can say that it is not in the slums of London; it seems to me that he may be quietly settled as an eminently respectable man almost under our noses; he may show himself occasionally at fashionable resorts, and may be a regular attendant at horse-races.

"He would not run any appreciable risk in doing so, for his face is quite unknown to anyone except the constables who were present at his trial, and even these would scarcely be likely to recognize him, for he was then but eighteen, while he is now six or seven and twenty, and no doubt the life he has led must have changed him greatly."

"I quite agree with you," the chief said. "After the first hunt for him was over, he might do almost anything without running much risk. Well, I put the matter in your hands, and leave it to you to work out in your own way; you have given ample proof of your shrewdness and pluck, and in this case especially I know that you will do everything that is possible. Of course you will be relieved of all other duties, and if takes you months before you can lay hands upon him, we shall consider it time well spent, if you succeed at last. From time to time change your quarters, but let me know your address, so that, should I learn anything that may be useful, I can communicate with you at once. You had better take another name than that by which you are known in the force. I shall be glad if, after thinking the matter over, you will write me a few lines stating what you propose to do in the first place."

Mark went back to his lodgings, and sat there for some time, thinking matters over. His first thought was to attend the races for a time, but seeing the number of people there, and his own ignorance of Bastow's appearance, he abandoned the idea, and determined to try a slower but more methodical plan. After coming to that

conclusion he put on his hat and made his way to Mrs. Cunningham's.

"Well, Mr. Constable," Millicent said saucily, as he entered, "any fresh captures?"

"No, I think that I have for the present done with that sort of thing; I have served my apprenticeship, and am now setting up on my own account."

"How is that, Mark?"

"There is reason to believe that Bastow has begun his work again near London. As I have told you, it is absolutely certain that he is not hiding in any of the places frequented by criminals here, and there is every reason for supposing that he has been leading a quiet life somewhere, or that he has been away in the country. As long as that was the case, there was nothing to be done; but now that he seems to have set to work again, it is time for me to be on the move. I have seen the chief this morning, and he has released me from all other duty, and given me *carte blanche* to work in my own way."

"Then why don't you leave the force altogether, Mark? You know that I have always thought it hateful that you should be working under orders, like any other constable."

"Of course, women don't like to be under orders, Millicent; but men are not so independent, and are quite content to obey those who are well qualified to give orders. I have had a very interesting time of it."

"Very interesting!" she said scornfully. "You have nearly been killed or shot half a dozen times; you have been obliged to wear all sorts of dirty clothes, to sleep in places where one would not put a dog, and generally to do all sorts of things altogether unbecoming in your position."

"My dear, I have no particular position," he laughed, and then went on more seriously: "My one position at present is that of avenger of my father's murder, and nothing that can assist me in the task is unbecoming to me; but, as I said, it has been interesting, I may almost say fascinating, work. I used to be fond of hunting, but I can tell you that it is infinitely more exciting to hunt a man than it is to hunt a fox. You are your own hound,

you have to pick up the scent, to follow it up, however much the quarry may wind and double, and when at last you lay your hand upon his shoulder and say, 'In the King's name,' there is an infinitely keener pleasure than there is when the hounds run down the fox. One sport is perhaps as dangerous as the other: in the one case your horse may fail at a leap and you may break your neck, in the other you may get a bullet in your head; so in that respect there is not much to choose between man and fox hunting. There is the advantage, though, that in the one you have to depend upon your horse's strength, and in the other on your own courage."

"I know that you are an enthusiast over it, Mark, and I can fancy that if I were a big strong man, as you are, I might do the same; but if you are going now to try by yourself, why should you not leave the force altogether?"

"Because, in the first place, I shall get all the information they obtain, and can send for any assistance that I may require. In the next place, by showing this little staff with its silver crown, I show that I am a Bow Street runner, and can obtain information at once from all sorts of people which I could not get without its aid."

"Well, I won't say anything more against it, Mark. How are you going to begin?"

"I mean to go the round of all the places near London —say, within ten miles. I shall stay from a week to a fortnight in each, take a quiet lodging, give out that I am on the lookout for a small house with a garden, and get to talk with people of all kinds."

"But I cannot see what you have to inquire for."

"I imagine that Bastow will have taken just the sort of house that I am inquiring for, and in the course of my questions I may hear of someone living in just that sort of way—a retired life, not making many friends, going up to London sometimes, and keeping, perhaps, a deaf old woman as a servant, or perhaps a deaf old man—someone, you see, who would not be likely to hear him if he came home in the middle of the night, or in the early morning. Once I hear of such a man, I should ascertain his age, and whether generally he agreed in appearance

with what Bastow is likely to be by this time, then get down one of the constables who was at the trial, and take his opinion on the subject, after which we should only have to watch the house at night and pounce upon him as he came back from one of his excursions. That is the broad outline of my plan. I cannot help thinking that in the long run I shall be able to trace him, and of course it will make it all the easier if he takes to stopping coaches or committing murderous burglaries."

"Then I suppose we are not going to see you often, Mark?"

"Well, not so often as you have done, Millicent, for some time, at any rate. I shall not be more than five or six miles away, and I shall often ride into town for the evening, and return late with some sort of hope that I may be stopped on the road again; it would save me a world of trouble, you see, if he would come to me instead of my having to find him."

"Which side of London are you going to try first?"

"The south side, certainly; there are a score of places that would be convenient to him—Dulwich, Clapham, Tooting, Wimbledon, Stockwell; the list is a long one. I should say Wimbledon was about the most distant, and I should think that he would not go so far as that; if he only acted as a highwayman he might be as far off as Epsom; but if he is really the man concerned in these burglaries he must be but a short distance away. He would hardly risk having to ride very far with the chance of coming upon the patrols. I think that I shall begin at Peckham; that is a central sort of position, and from there I shall work gradually west; before I do so perhaps I shall try Lewisham. He is likely, in any case, to be quite on the outskirts of any village he may have settled in, in order that he may ride in and out at any hour without his coming and going being noticed."

"You certainly seem to have thought it over in all ways, Mark; you almost infect me with your ardor, and make me wish that I was a man and could help you."

"You are much nicer as you are, Millicent."

The girl tossed her head in disdain at the compliment.

"It is all very well, Mark," she went on, ignoring his

speech, "but it seems to me that in finding out things a woman would be able to do just as much as a man; she can gossip with her neighbors and ask about everyone in a place quite as well, if not better, than a man."

"Yes, I don't doubt that," Mark laughed, "and if I want your aid I shall have no hesitation in asking for it. Until then I hope you will go on with your painting and harping steadily, like a good little girl."

"I am nearly eighteen, sir, and I object to be called a good little girl."

"Well, if I were to say a good young woman you would not like it."

"No, I don't think I should. I don't know why, but when anyone says a girl is a good young woman or a nice young woman, there always seems something derogatory about it; it is almost as bad as saying she is a very respectable young person, which is odious."

"Then, you see," he went on, "you are quite getting on in society; since Mr. Cotter's introduction to Mrs. Cunningham and his mother's subsequent call you have got to know a good many people and go about a good deal."

"Yes, it has been more lively of late," she admitted. "At first it was certainly monstrously dull here, and I began to think that we should have to change our plans and go down again to Weymouth, and settle there for a time. Now I am getting contented; but I admit, even at the risk of making you conceited, that we shall certainly miss you very much, as you have been very good, considering how busy you have been, to come in three or four evenings every week for a chat."

"There has been nothing very good about it, Millicent; it has been very pleasant to me; it is like a bit of old times again when I am here with you two, and seem to leave all the excitement of one's work behind as I come in at the door."

"I wonder whether the old time will ever come back again, Mark?" she said sadly.

"It never can be quite the old time again, but when you are back at the old place it may be very near it."

She looked at him reproachfully.

"You think that I shall change my mind, Mark, but at heart you know better. The day I am one-and-twenty I hope to carry out my intentions."

"Well, as I have told you before, Millicent, I cannot control your actions, but I am at least master of my own. You can give away Crowswood to whom you like, but at least you cannot compel me to take it. Make it over to one of the hospitals if you like—that is within your power; but it is not in your power to force me into the mean action of enriching myself because you have romantic notions in your mind. I should scorn myself were I capable of doing such an action. I wonder you think so meanly of me as to suppose for a moment that I would do so."

"It is a great pity my father did not leave the property outright to your father, then all this bother would have been avoided," she said quietly. "I should still have had plenty to live upon without there being any fear of being loved merely for my money."

"It would have been the same thing if he had," Mark said stubbornly. "My father would not have taken it, and I am sure that I should not have taken it after him; you are his proper heiress. I don't say if he had left a son, and that son had been a second Bastow, that one would have hesitated, for he would probably have gambled it away in a year, the tenants might have been ruined, and the village gone to the dogs. Every man has a right to disinherit an unworthy son, but that is a very different thing from disinheriting a daughter simply from a whim. Well, don't let us talk about it any more, Millicent. It is the only thing that we don't agree about, and therefore it is best left alone."

The next day Mark established himself at an inn in Peckham, and for six weeks made diligent inquiries, but without success. There were at least a dozen men who lived quietly and rode or drove to their business in town. Many of them were put aside as needing no investigation, having been residents there for years. Some of the others he saw start or return, but none of them corresponded in any way with the probable appearance of the man for whom he was in search. During this time he heard of

several private coaches being held up on the road between Epsom and London, and three burglaries took place at Streatham.

He then moved to Stockwell. Before proceeding there he had his horse up again from Crowswood, and rode into Stockwell from the west. He was dressed now as a small country squire, and had a valise strapped behind his saddle. The inn there was a busy one.

"I want a room," he said, as he alighted. "I shall probably stay here a few days."

Presently he had a talk with the landlord.

"I am on the lookout," he said, "for a little place near town. I have come in for a small estate in the country, but I have no taste for farming, and want to be within easy reach of town, and at the same time to have a place with a paddock where I can keep my horse and live quietly. I don't much care whether it is here or anywhere else within a few miles of town, and I intend to ride about and see if I can find a place that will suit me. I do not want to be nearer the town than this, for I have not money enough to go the pace; still, I should like to be near enough to ride or walk in whenever I have a fancy for it."

"I understand, sir. Of course there are plenty of places round here, at Clapham and Tooting, and I may say Streatham, but most of them are a deal too large for a bachelor, still I have no doubt you would find a place to suit you without much difficulty. These sort of places are most in request by London tradesmen who have given up business and want to get a little way out of town and keep a gig. I should say there must be a score of such people living round here. I am often asked about such places, but I don't know of one to let just at the present moment.

"Still, there ought to be, for of late people have not cared so much to come out here; there has been such a scare owing to highwaymen and burglars, that men with wives and families don't fancy settling out of town, though there aint much work about it, for to every one house that is broken into there are thousands that are not, and besides, the houses that these fellows try are

large places, where there is plenty of silver plate and a few gold watches, and perhaps some money to be had."

Mark soon made the acquaintance of the stablemen, and a few pints of beer put them on good terms with him. Every day he took rides round the neighborhood, going out early, stabling his horse, and after having a chat with the ostlers, strolling round the place. Clapham, Ewell, and Streatham were also visited.

"I know of a place that would just suit you," the ostler at the Greyhound at Streatham said to him, on the occasion of his third visit there, "but it is let; my old mother is the gentleman's housekeeper. He took the place through me, for he rode up just as you have done, one afternoon, nigh a year ago. He was from town, he was; he told me that he had been going the pace too hard, and had to pull in, and wanted a little place where he could keep his horse and live quiet for a time. I told him of a place that I thought would suit him just outside the town, and he called in the next day and told me he had taken it. 'Now,' he said, 'I want a woman as housekeeper; an old woman, you know. I cannot be bothered with a young one. If you speak a civil word to a wench she soon fancies you are in love with her. I want one who can cook a chop or a steak, fry me a bit of bacon, and boil an egg and keep the place tidy. I intend to look after my horse myself.'

"'Well, sir,' I said, 'there is my old mother. She is a widow, and it is as much as she can do to keep off the parish. She is reckoned a tidy cook and a good cleaner, and she could keep herself well enough if it wasn't that she is so hard of hearing that many people don't care to employ her.'

"'I don't care a rap about that,' he said. 'I shall not need to talk to her except to tell her what I will have for dinner, and if she is deaf she won't want to be away gossiping. Does she live near here?'

"'She lives in the town,' I said. 'I can fetch her down in half an hour.'

"'That will do,' says he. 'I am going to have lunch. When I have done I will come out and speak with her.'

"Well, sir, he engaged her right off, and he tipped me

a guinea for finding the place for him, and there he has been ever since. It was a lucky job for mother, for she says there never was a gentleman that gave less trouble. He is wonderful quiet man, and in general stops at home all the day smoking and reading. He has a boy comes in two or three times a week to work in the garden. Sometimes of an evening he rides up to town. I expect he cannot keep away from the cards altogether."

"Is he an elderly man?" Mark asked.

"Lor', no, sir; under thirty, I should say. He is a free-handed sort of chap, and though he aint particular about his eating, he likes a bottle of good wine, the old woman says, even if it is only with a chop. He never rides past here and I happen to be outside without tossing me a shilling to drink his health."

Mark went into the house and ordered lunch. It would not have done to have asked any more questions or to have shown any special interest in the matter, but he felt so excited that he could not have avoided doing so had he waited longer with the ostler. After he had finished his meal he strolled out again into the stable yard.

"Well," he said to the ostler, "can't you put me up to another good thing, just as you told that gentleman you were speaking to me about?"

"There are two or three places that I know of that might suit you, sir. There is a house on the hill. I know that it has got a paddock, but I don't know how big it is; it is in general known as Hawleys—that is the name of the last people who lived there. Anyone will tell you which is the house. Then there is another place. You turn to the right the third turning on the hill; it stands by itself two or three hundred yards down; it has got a goodish bit of ground. There is only one house beyond it; that is the one where my mother lives. That was an old farm once, but this was built later. I believe the ground belonged to the farm. You will know it by a big tree in front of it; it stands back forty feet or so from the road."

"Where does the road lead to?"

"Well, sir, it aint much of a road beyond the next house; it is only a lane, but you can get through that way

into the main road, through Tooting down into Balham, and on to Wimbledon."

"I think I will go and have a look at both those places," Mark said.

"Will you take your horse, sir?"

"No; I suppose it is not much above half a mile?"

"About that, sir."

"Then I will walk; I shall not be likely to find anyone to hold my horse there."

Mark had no difficulty in finding the house. It looked as if it had been untenanted for some time, and in the window was a notice that for keys and information applications were to be made at a shop in the High Street. Well pleased to find that there was no one in the house, Mark entered the gate and passed round into what at one time had been a kitchen garden behind it; at the bottom of this was a field of three or four acres.

The ground was separated by a hedge from that of the house beyond. This was fully a hundred yards away. A well-bred horse was grazing in the field, a man smoking a pipe was watching a boy doing gardening work behind the house. Mark remained for nearly an hour concealed behind the hedge in hopes that he would come nearer. At the end of that time, however, he went into the house, and after waiting another ten minutes Mark also left, resisting the temptation to walk along the road and take a closer look at it, for he felt that such a step would be dangerous, for should the man notice anyone looking at the place his suspicions might be aroused.

It was evident that the lane was very little used; in many cases the grass grew across it. There were marks of horses' feet, but none of wheels, and he concluded that when going up to town the man came that way and rode quietly through Streatham, for the hoof-prints all pointed in that direction, and that on his return at night he came up the lane from the other road.

"Well, master, what do you think of the houses?" the ostler asked on his return to the inn.

"I have only been to the one in the lane that you spoke of, for I want to get back to town. I had a good look at it, but it is rather a dreary-looking place, and

evidently wants a lot of repairs before it can be made comfortable. The next time that I am down I will look at the other."

Mounting his horse, he rode at a rapid pace into London, and dismounted at Bow Street.

"You have news, I see, Mr. Thorndyke," the chief said when he entered.

"I have, sir; I believe that I have marked the man down; at any rate, if it is not he, it is a criminal of some sort—of that I have no doubt."

"That is good news indeed," the chief said. "Now tell me all about it."

Mark repeated the story the ostler had told him, and the result of his own observations.

"You see," he said, "the man, whether Bastow or not, has clearly taken the place for the purpose of concealment, for he can approach it by the lane, which is a very unfrequented one, on his return from his expeditions. He has taken on a deaf old woman who will not hear him ride in at night, and will have no idea at what hours he comes home. Riding out through the main street in the afternoon he would excite no notice, and the story to the ostler would very well account for his taking the house and for his habit of coming up here of an afternoon and returning late. I thought it best to come back and tell you, and I will adopt any plan that you suggest for his capture."

"You say that he has been there for nearly a year?"

"About a year, the ostler said."

"Then one of my men, at least, must have been very careless not to have found him out long ago. Let me see;" and he took down a volume of reports. "Streatham. Tomlinson has been here a fortnight making every inquiry. 'No man of suspicious appearance or of unknown antecedents here.' Humph! That is not the first time that Tomlinson has failed altogether in his duty. However, that does not matter for the moment. What is your own idea, Mr. Thorndyke?"

"My idea is that a couple of good men should go down with me to Streatham, and that we should be always on the watch in High Street until we see him ride past.

Directly it is dark we will go to his house, fasten the old woman up, and search it thoroughly. If we find stolen property so much the better; but in any case we shall wait inside the house until he returns, and as he comes in throw ourselves upon him before he has time to draw a pistol. I should say it would be as well the men should go down in a trap. There is an empty house next door, and when we go to search the place we can leave the horse and trap inside the gate. Directly we have him secure we can fetch up the trap, put him in, and one of the men and myself can drive him back here, leaving the other in charge of the house, which can then be searched again next day."

"I think that will be a very good plan, and will avoid all unnecessary fuss. I will send Malcolm and Chester down with you to-morrow. Where will you meet them?"

"I should say that they had better put up at the Greyhound. I don't suppose he will go out until six or seven o'clock, but they had better be there earlier. One should station himself in the main street, the other concealing himself somewhere beyond the fellow's house, for it is likely enough that sometimes he may take the other way. I will go down to the Greyhound at six, and will wait there until one of them brings me news that he has left."

"I think you had better come in in the morning, and give your instructions to the men; there will be less fear of any mistake being made. I should say you had better put your horse up and come here on foot; one can never be too careful when one is dealing with so crafty a rogue as this; he certainly does not work with an accomplice, but for all that he may have two or three sharp boys in his pay, and they may watch this place by turns and carry him news of any stir about the office."

"I will walk in," Mark replied. "It is no distance from Stockwell."

Mark slept but little that night. He had believed all along that he should be finally successful, but the discovery had come so suddenly that it had taken him completely by surprise. It might not be the man, and he tried hard to persuade himself that the chances were

against his being so, so that he should not feel disappointed should it turn out that it was some other criminal, for that the man was a criminal he had not a shadow of doubt.

The next morning he was at the office early. The chief arrived half an hour later, and the two officers were at once called in.

"You will go with Mr. Thorndyke," the chief said, "and he will give you instructions. The capture is a very important one, and there must be no mistake made. We believe the man to be Bastow. I think you were present at his trial, Chester; he escaped from Sydney Convict Prison some three years ago, and is, I believe, the author of many of the highway robberies and burglaries that have puzzled us so. Of course, you will take firearms, but if he is alone you will certainly have no occasion to use them, especially as you will take him completely by surprise. You will order a gig from Morden, and leave here about three o'clock. I should say you had better get up as two countrymen who have been up to market. However, Mr. Thorndyke will explain the whole matter to you fully."

Mark then went off with the two officers to a private room, and went into the whole matter with them.

"I think, Chester," he said, "that you had better watch in the High Street, because you know the man. At least, you have seen him, and may recognize him again."

"I think I should know him, however much he has changed. I took particular notice of him at the trial, and thought what a hardened-looking young scamp he was. It is very seldom I forget a face when once I have a thorough look at it, and I don't think I am likely to forget his."

"Malcolm, I think you cannot do better than take your place in the garden of the house next to his; it is a place that has stood empty for many months, and there is no chance of anyone seeing you. His paddock comes up to the garden, and you can, by placing yourself in the corner, see him as he comes out into the lane. As soon as you see that he has gone, come back to the

Greyhound with the news. I shall be there, and you will pick up Chester in the High Street as you come along; of course you won't pretend to know me, but the mere fact of your coming back will be enough to tell me that he has gone. As soon as it gets dark we will pay our reckoning, and drive off in the gig, leaving it in the drive in front of the house this side of his. I shall have strolled off before, and shall be waiting for you there. If he does not come out by ten o'clock we can give it up for to-night. You had better say that you have changed your mind, and will take beds at the Greyhound; and the next morning drive off in your gig and put up again at the inn at the other end of the town, the White Horse. I will come over again at two o'clock in the afternoon. You will bring handcuffs, and you had better also bring a stout rope to tie him with."

When every detail had been arranged, Mark strolled to Dick Chetwynd's lodgings.

"Well, Mark what has become of you? I have not seen you for the last two months, and I hear that you have not been near Ingleston's crib since I saw you."

"No, I have been away on business. You know I told you that I was spending much of my time in endeavoring to hunt down my father's murderer. I can tell you now that I have been working all the time with the Bow Street people, and I think I know every thieves' slum in London as well as any constable in the town."

"You don't say so, Mark! Well, I should not like such work as that. The prizefighters are a pretty rough lot, but to go to such dens as those is enough to make one shudder. But that does not explain where you have been now."

"No. Well, having persuaded myself at last that his headquarters were not in town, I have been trying the villages round, and I believe that I have laid my hands on him at last."

"You don't say so, Mark! Well, I congratulate you heartily, both on your having caught the fellow and for having got rid of such horrid work. Where is he? Have you got him lodged in jail?"

"No, we are going to capture him to-night; or if not

to-night, to-morrow night. Two of the Bow Street officers are going down with me, and we shall have him as he comes home from one of his expenditions either on the highway or as a housebreaker. If he does not go this evening we shall wait until to-morrow, but at any rate, the first time that he goes out we shall have him."

"I have got a special engagement for this evening, Mark, or I would offer to go with you and lend you a hand, if necessary."

"There is no occasion for that, Dick. We shall take the fellow by surprise as he goes into his own house, and have him handcuffed before he can draw a pistol. Then, when we have got him fairly tied up, we shall put him into a light cart that we shall have handy, and bring him straight to Bow Street. To tell you the truth, I am so excited over the thought that I do not know how I should have got through the day if I had not come in to have a chat with you."

"I can quite understand that, old fellow. Well, the best thing we can do is to take a stroll out and look at the fashions. It is early yet, but just at present it is all the rage to turn out early. It will do me good too, for I was at Ingleston's last night, and the smoke and row has given me a headache. I shall really have to give up going there, except when there is an important fight on. It is too much to stand, and the tobacco is so bad that I am obliged to keep a suit of clothes for the purpose. Let us be off at once."

CHAPTER XVI.

At four o'clock Mark put up his horse at the Greyhound, and chatted for a quarter of an hour with the ostler, who had been making inquiries, and had heard of one or two other houses in the neighborhood which were untenanted. Mark then strolled up the town, exchanging a passing glance with Chester, who, in a velveteen coat, low hat and gaiters, was chatting with a wagoner going with a load of hay for the next morning's market in London. He turned into an inn, called for a pint of the best port, and sat down in the parlor at a table close to the window, so that he could see all who went up or down. He entered into conversation with two or three people who came in, and so passed the time till seven, when he felt too restless to sit still longer, and went out into the street.

When he was halfway to the Greyhound he heard the sound of a horse's hoofs behind him, and saw a quietly dressed man coming along at an easy trot. Had it not been that he recognized the horse, he could not have felt sure that its rider was the man whose coming he had been waiting for, there being nothing in his appearance that would excite the slightest suspicion that he was other that a gentleman of moderate means and quiet taste, either returning from a ride or passing through on his way to town. He had a well-built and active figure, carried himself with the ease of a thorough horseman, and nodded to one or two persons of his acquaintance, and checking his horse at the principal butcher's, ordered some meat to be sent in that evening.

Mark could trace no resemblance in the face to that of the young fellow he remembered. It was a quiet and resolute one. If this were Bastow, he had lost the sneering and insolent expression that was so strongly impressed on his memory. It might be the man, but if so, he was greatly changed. Mark's first impression was that it