

his search, without having found a clue that would lead to a disproof of the apparent guilt of his two grandsons. Before he left Mr. Garnett, he took especial notice of Daniel Johnson, and recognized him as the son of his wilful daughter Isabel. He had several times seen him in previous years but with himself usually unknown to the latter.

Kelley, as we must now call him, seemed in no respect to recognize his grandfather, changed as the latter was by the wearing of a full and heavy beard. Although inclined to regard him more favorably than hitherto, yet Mr. Bennett could not make up his mind to take him under his charge.

"He may be well enough disposed now, but I doubt it. He won't hold out. It isn't in him to do so. He ran into evil from the first as naturally as a duck takes to water. At any rate, he is better off here."

With this resolution he sat out on his return that evening at dusk, his companion of his morning journey carrying him back. After a ride of a few miles they reached a damp and lonely spot near the shore of Squam Lake where the road traversed a piece of timber. It was remote from any habitation, and the deepening shadows added gloom to the scene.

"How wild it is here! Have you not lost your way? The road does not seem so well traveled as the one we took this morning," said Mr. Bennett with evident uneasiness.

"No, I only took a shorter road so that we would not be so late in getting there," said his companion by way of explanation.

They had come to a secluded spot in the little-used road, when the young man stopped the carriage, declaring that something was wrong with the wheels.

He got out, fumbled about the carriage a few minutes, and then requested his companion to get out also and assist him, having invented a plausible pretext. The old man did so, but as soon as he stepped

upon the ground, his evil-minded guide was upon him.

The old man, thus taken at a disadvantage, was no match for his burly antagonist, and was soon borne to the ground. This sinister proceeding was hastened by the approaching sound of cow bells.

"Now, old man, fork over yer dimes," hissed the villainous fellow, at the same time raising a club.

At this instant a sound of rapid footsteps was heard, and a third person was seen hastening toward the scene of the disturbance.

CHAPTER V. ON THE TRAIL.

Let us now return to the two brothers, Richard and Stephen, the career of whom had met with so sudden a change.

While Richard was being sent to prison, Stephen was not inactive. As the expenses of the trial had drawn heavily upon their little stock, he began to look around for temporary employment, but in vain. He soon found that he, too, as well as his brother, was now suspected and shunned, as he was formerly respected and admired.

They who were once his best friends now turned away from him, and he was compelled to go elsewhere until he could choose a definite course of action. His habits of industry forbade his remaining idle. On the day that his grandfather saw him upon the street he was leaving the town.

Unable either to sell or rent the little house, he closed it up and walked away carrying a few effects upon his back. With the belief that both he and his brother were the innocent victims of a gigantic wrong he was not disposed to accept his now wretched condition as a finality, but resolved as soon as he should be a little better able, to make a persevering effort to clear up the matter.

He did not pause in his journey until he reached the distant town of Peterboro, where he soon found employment from a quiet, but honest and respectable farmer.