

Mr. Garnett, of western Moultonborough. He lives about three miles from here," said John.

"And I am Mr. Bingham," slowly spoke the old man. "I remember seeing you there this morning. And, now, how about that fellow there? I would not wish him to be badly hurt."

"I will see," said John.

His antagonist was now slowly raising himself, but as John approached he took to his heels and soon disappeared in the darkness.

"He could not have been much hurt," said John, "as he has run off. He will make good his escape, I fear, but we can do nothing to prevent it. And now had I not better drive with you back to the village?"

"Yes, that will be best," said Mr. Bennet.

They entered the carriage, and John drove rapidly to Mr. Garnett's. They talked in the meantime of the circumstances of the assault.

"It was very providential that you happened along as you did," remarked Mr. Bennet, when they were well under way.

"Yes, it was," declared John. "Mr. Garnett's cows strayed off, and it took me a long time to find them. They were in these woods. I hear their bells now, and I think they will go home without further driving."

The carriage soon drew up in front of Mr. Garnett's residence, and John, with great solicitude, helped the old man to get out of the vehicle. The latter person's opinion of his grandson had been greatly shaken by the events of the evening, and as he left him for the night he requested a private talk with him in the morning. The schemer could hardly repress his exultation as he promised to grant it. The old man passed the night with Mr. Garnett, and before he left the next morning sought his grandson, whom he found in the yard. He had in the mean time still further considered the matter.

"Daniel," said Mr. Bennet, as he approached his worthy grandson, "I wish to say a few words to you before I leave. I would like to have you tell me about your past life, and if you desire it, I will hold what you say as strictly confidential with regard to the people here. I ask this of you because I may be able to tell you something of importance to you."

"I will tell you," said John softly as he straightened out his features; "and although it is not pleasant for me to look back upon, I ought not to fear to tell the story to you. I have never told it to any one here, and perhaps it would be best if you would not tell it either. I am trying to be as good a man as I can, but, as you know, if a whisper of evil gets abroad it is hard to overcome."

"I will not tell it, then," said Mr. Bennet.

They sat down upon a log, and the schemer told the old man an artfully composed story of his life, of how he had become an orphan and having no friends had drifted into bad company; of how he had many times tried to reform, but everything seeming against him, he had as often sunk still deeper than before; and of how he had made a final and successful attempt by breaking away from his old companions.

This false story had its desired effect.

"I believe that he is sincere," thought the hoodwinked old man. "I must take him in charge. It would be wicked in me not to do so." Then aloud, he asked, "Have you any relations?"

"I suppose so, but personally I know nothing of them. I remember hearing my mother speak of my grandfather—my father's father. He treated my father badly she said. At any rate, I think there must have been a disagreement between them, for mother had nothing to do with him that I know of. I never saw him myself, and do not know where he lives."

X. Y. Z.

(to be continued.)