

THE COLUMBIA SPY.

SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

"NO ENTERTAINMENT IS SO CHEAP AS READING, NOR ANY PLEASURE SO LASTING."

\$1.50 PER YEAR IN ADVANCE; \$2.00 IF NOT IN ADVANCE.

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DR. HOFFER,
DENTIST—OFFICE, Front Street 4th door from Locust, over Taylor & McDonald's Book Store, Columbia, Pa. [By Entrance, same as Jolley's Photograph Gallery.]

THOMAS WELSH,
OFFICE, in Whipper's New Buildings, below Black's Hotel, Front Street.
[By Entrance, same as Jolley's Photograph Gallery.]
From attention given to all business entrusted to his care.
November 28, 1857.

H. M. NORTH,
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW
Columbia, Pa.
Collections promptly made in Lancaster and York Counties, Columbia, May 4, 1859.

J. W. FISHER,
Attorney and Counselor at Law,
Columbia, Pa.
Columbia, September 6, 1856.

S. Atlee Bockus, D. D. S.
PRACTICES the Operative, Surgical and Mechanical Departments of Dentistry.
Office, Locust street, between the Franklin House and Post Office, Columbia, Pa.
May 7, 1859.

Harrison's Columbian Ink
WHICH is a superior article, permanently black and not corroding the pen, can be had in any quantity at the Family Medicine Store, and blacker yet at the English Book Polish.
Columbia, June 9, 1859.

We Have Just Received
DR. CUTLER'S Improved Chest Expanding
Sunderland and Shoulder Braces for Gentlemen, and Patent Skirts, Supporters, &c. &c. Has just received the article that is wanted at this time. Come and see them at Family Medicine Store, Old Post-office Building.
April 9, 1859.

Prof. Gardner's Soap.
We have the New England Soap for those who did not obtain it from the Soap & Perfumery Store. It is the skin, and will take grease spots from Woollen Goods. It is the best of its kind, for you get the worth of your money at the Family Medicine Store.
Columbia, June 11, 1859.

GRAHAM, or Bond's Boston Crackers,
is superior to all other Crackers, for invalids and children—now received in Columbia, at the Family Medicine Store.
April 16, 1859.

NEW CROP SEEDLESS RAISINS.
The best for Pick, Pudding, &c.—fresh supply at the Family Medicine Store.
Grocery Store, Corner Front and Union sts. Nov. 19, 1859.

SHAKER CORN.
JUST received, a first rate lot of Shaker Corn.
Grocery Store, corner Front and Union st.
Nov. 29, 1859.

SALVING'S PREPARED GUM—The want of
an article to get in every family is a common one. It can be supplied for bedding, furniture, clothing, &c. &c. It is superior to all other gums, and is the best for the purpose. We have for sale in large quantities, at the lowest price.
J. W. FISHER & SON,
Corner Front and Union sts.
April 24, 1859.

IRON AND STEEL!
THE Subscriber has received a large and complete stock of all kinds and sizes of IRON AND STEEL. They are constantly on hand in all quantities, at the lowest price.
J. W. FISHER & SON,
Corner Front and Union sts.
April 24, 1859.

ARTIST'S COLORS. A general assortment of colors in tubes. Also, a variety of Artists' Brushes, in the Golden Age and Union st. [Daily.]

RITTER'S Compound Syrup of Par and Wild Cherry, for Coughs, Colds, &c. For sale at the Golden Age and Union st. [Daily.]

AYER'S Compound Concentrated Extract of Sassafras for the cure of Scalds, Burns, and all scurfy eruptions, a fresh article just received and for sale at the Family Medicine Store.
R. WILLIAMS, Front st, Columbia, Sept. 24, 1859.

FOR SALE.
200 GROSS Fruit Matches, very low for cash.
R. WILLIAMS, Front st, Columbia, Sept. 24, 1859.

DRIED FRUIT.
Dried Fruit—Peaches, Cherries, &c.—the best in the market, for sale at the Family Medicine Store, Corner Front and Union sts.

Dutch Herring!
Any one fond of a good Herring, can be supplied at the Family Medicine Store, No. 71 Locust st. Nov. 19, 1859.

LION'S PURE OHIO CATAWBA BRANDY
and PURE WINES, especially for medicinal and Sacramental purposes. A fresh article just received and for sale at the Family Medicine Store.
R. WILLIAMS, Front st, Columbia, Sept. 24, 1859.

NICE RAISINS for 8 cts. per pound, are to be had only at EBELER'S Grocery Store, No. 71 Locust street, March 10, 1860.

GARDEN SEEDS—Fresh Garden Seeds, warranted pure, of all kinds, just received at EBELER'S Grocery Store, No. 71 Locust street, March 10, 1860.

POCKET BOOKS AND PURSES.
A LARGE lot of Fine and Common Pocket Books and Purses, at from 15 cents to two dollars each. He repairs and News Depot.
Columbia, April 14, 1859.

A NEW more of these beautiful Prints
left, which will be sold cheap, at the Family Medicine Store, No. 71 Locust st.
April 14, 1859.

Just Received and for Sale.
1500 Sacks Ground Alum Sulfate, in large or small quantities, at APOLLO'S Warehouse, Canal Basin, May 20, 1860.

TAMARINDS. Just received a new lot of Tamarinds, at the Golden Age and Union st. May 9, 1860.

COLIC CREAM OF GYNERINE—For the cure
and prevention of colic, &c. For sale at the Golden Age and Union st. May 9, 1860.

Turkish Prunes!
FOR a first rate article of Prunes you must go to the Family Medicine Store, No. 71 Locust st. Nov. 19, 1859.

GOLD PENS, GOLD PENS.
JUST received a large and fine assortment of Gold Pens of Newell and Griswold's manufacture, at TAYLOR & McDonald's Book Store, Front street, above Locust.

Selections.

The Guest-Chamber of the Inn at St. Ives.
FROM THE JOURNAL OF A DETECTIVE.

I received an urgent letter from the sub-agent of St. Ives, calling me to come and unravel the mystery of many murders committed there, to which no else could be had. Proceeding on the journey I met the sub-agent, Berret, in the diligence which had to carry me to St. Ives.

The excitement consequent upon this alarming state of affairs, had caused the sub-agent to decide upon a personal investigation of the matter, and when I encountered him, he had already started for St. Ives, so that our destination was the same.

"You entrapped the rascal, Jacques Guichard, so admirably," M. Berret remarked, "that I am led to hope for your success in the present case, dark and doubtful as the matter now looks."

"At all events," was my reply, "I deem it no more than justice to myself to make a strong effort. I must ask you, however, Monsieur Berret, to give me the entire control and management of this matter in every particular."

"I will do so, and with pleasure. Frame whatever plans and use whatever means you please. I will be guided by you in all things pertaining to this business."

"This will be well. But one thing more, Monsieur Berret. You must be as secret as the grave. Do not upon any consideration let it be known at St. Ives that there is a detective officer nearer to them than Paris; and above all, do not suffer yourself to make inquiry concerning these murders. Leave me to ask all the questions in my peculiar manner."

The sub-agent promised full compliance with my instructions, and in a few moments we were rolling through the darkness and rain into the village of St. Ives. During these few moments, however, an incident occurred which necessarily has an important bearing upon my narrative.

Our conversation had been held as a matter of course, in so low a tone as not to be overheard by the other occupants of the diligence; in fact I had hardly noticed any of their faces. But now, as I finished speaking for the time with M. Berret, I looked around me, I discovered in the elderly gentleman who sat directly behind us, Monsieur Lemare, a wealthy wine seller of Bordeaux, and with whom I was quite intimate. Upon recognizing me, he greeted me cordially, and we conversed together upon passing topics for a moment.

"You stop at the hotel St. Ives, I suppose?" he said, changing the subject somewhat abruptly. I consulted the sub-agent, and learned that this was the only place at St. Ives at which he ever stopped. I answered the question in the affirmative.

"Well, I shall stay there also, but it is possible I may not see you again, as I intend to leave St. Ives early to-morrow morning. I am now on my way to England, travelling as my business compels me to, in a round-about way. Contrary to my usual custom, I have neglected to obtain letters of exchange, and have now the sum of five thousand francs with me. Permit me to count this over before you, that in case any unseen misfortune should deprive me of it before reaching Calais you may certify to my creditors as to my possession of the money at this time."

Producing a plethoric pocket-book, the wine merchant counted its contents. The sum was correct as he had stated, five thousand francs. M. Berret also, at his request, became a witness to his possession of the money.

The diligence now came to a stop before the inn, and the passengers hastened to leave the one for the other. After we had taken our supper, I accompanied the sub-agent to his room where for an hour, we talked on the subject of our mission to St. Ives, and the probabilities of success; and then as the hour was quite late, bade him good night, and retired to my chamber and soon after to sleep.

Nothing unusual occurred during the night, if I may make one exception, which it may be well to mention in this place. I had been sleeping for more than two hours and was lying in a half unconscious state, when I was awakened by a heavy, though smothered groan. I was perfectly sure that I had not mistaken the sound, and mentally deciding that it had been occasioned in some manner, in the next room, I sat upright and listened intently. But I heard nothing more, although I placed my ear close to the wall. Whatever the strange sound might have been, it was not repeated.

As I walked away, I noticed that he followed me suspiciously with his eyes. His manner seemed strange to me. It was, in fact, rather strained and overstrained; although he wished very much to impress it upon my mind that M. Lemare had not been in the hotel. Upon further reflection, however, I was forced to confess that I had really not seen the wine merchant in the inn. True, he had informed me that he had changed his mind, and so I dismissed the subject from my thoughts.

Passing into the street, I strolled along in search of the sub-agent. And I am also induced to believe that every one of these midnight assassinations has been committed in the adjoining chamber."

"I have no doubt that you have arrived at the truth," the sub-agent replied. "And now, what do you propose to do first? Would it not be better to arrest this inn-keeper and his hostler at once?"

"By no means, M. Berret. I think that that would be an extremely injudicious step. What I have been telling you are only conjectures of my own, which, though probably true in almost every particular, would, I greatly fear, avail little as proof to charge the villainous inn-keeper and his servant (who, beyond all question, are the criminals) with these crimes. There is now one decisive step to be taken; I propose to pass the night in this mysterious chamber."

Monsieur Berret heard my quietly spoken words, and looked perfectly agast with astonishment.

"What, Guillo! are you mad?" he exclaimed. "Pass the night in that infernal slaughter house? Why, are you tired of life? Consider the danger of the thing, and the great loss to the service which your death would occasion."

The earnest anxiety with which this last remonstrance was uttered was so perfectly ludicrous that I refrained with difficulty from laughing outright. But I soon succeeded in silencing his objections, if not in satisfying his scruples.

"You have, I believe," I then remarked, "a considerable amount of money with you?"

"Yes, *mon Dieu!* had this rascally landlord known it last night, I might now be as cold as poor Lemare! Can it answer you any purpose?"

"A very important one. Lend me your pocket-book."

"Still holding it in my hand, I descended the stairs, the sub-agent closely following me. The innkeeper was sitting behind his bar, seemingly half asleep and half awake, but the instant he saw the pocket-book, his dull eyes lighted up with an eager gleam, and he watched my motions with strict attention.

"The amount is correct," I said aloud, to M. Berret. "Two thousand francs—this, then, discharges the debt." Then walking up to the bar, I said to the innkeeper: The room which you have given me does not suit me in the least—have you not a larger one where I can lodge?"

"Yes, monsieur," the man replied, "with remarkable alacrity, 'I should have spoken of it myself. There is a large and pleasant chamber next to the one in which you slept last night—do me the favor to occupy it as long as you please.'"

"You had better decline before it is too late," M. Berret whispered in my ear. "I fear you will not occupy it for more than one night. If you do you will accomplish what no person has done."

there was nothing unusual about the appearance of the room. It was very much such a bed-chamber as might be met with in almost every village inn. Nevertheless, I resolved to put no faith in appearance, and immediately commenced a systematic examination, I searched everywhere—under the bed, in the closet and behind the window-curtains—but my search revealed nothing. It was certain that no one was concealed in the room, and there, as certain it seemed no place of ingress, save the door—I was beginning to become anxious. I reflected that the danger might come upon me unexpectedly, and from an unexpected source, I sat down, and for an hour I waited—waited in restless expectancy for the appearance of the assassin—but still I waited in vain. Looking at my watch I perceived that it was nearly midnight. My unaccustomed vigil had wearied me, and placing my pistols beneath the pillow, I lay down upon the bed without removing my clothes.

I was not long in discovering that this bed was of somewhat singular construction—the formation of the top being rather concave than otherwise, and so adjusted that the occupant could not possibly rest in it in any other way than upon his back in the middle.

Upon his back! That seemed rather a singular discovery to make just at that moment. Had not every one of the murdered men been stabbed through the back? Yes—and each one of them must have received his death wound while lying in this very bed, just as I—

Click—click—click!

Three sharp, distinct sounds, apparently close at hand, interrupted my reflections. I know their meaning in an instant—those sounds needed no interpreter. I rose quickly and silently, and grasping my pistol, awaited the next movement of the unseen assassin. Click—click. That noise again, and now like the creaking of a hinge. Next there was a shuffling sound which made me aware that there was a man beneath the bed—and the next instant I saw the blade of a dagger driven up through the thin mattress, in the very place where I had been lying. I gave a low groan, which was answered by a chuckle from beneath the bed.

"An easy death! Now for the spoils," I heard the same voice say. And at the same instant the head and shoulders of the innkeeper were thrust out from the bed hanging. Covering him with the muzzle of one of my pistols, I said—

"Come forth, sir, and deliver yourself up! Your innocent guest is no other than a detective officer! Don't attempt to escape—I shall certainly fire if you do!"

But he did try, and I speedily sent a pistol ball after him. The report was succeeded by a deep groan, and instantly M. Berret and his assistants rushed in. A hasty search was sufficient to discover the landlord under the bed weltering in his blood, and the hostler was seized before he had an opportunity to close the secret panel in the wall, through which he attempted to escape.

This panel, as a short search disclosed to us, opened directly into a hollow partition. By means of this strange contrivance, the assassins had always been able to enter this particular chamber at any time—and once through the panel without having disturbed the unsuspecting sleeper, their work was easily done. This bed was, as I have said, constructed in such a manner that a sleeper could maintain only one position in it—a hole had been worked for the passage of the dagger, and a powerful thrust had been in every instance enough to transfuse the heart of the victim. After riding the body of everything valuable, the murderers were accustomed to carry it out in the darkness of the night and leave it in one of the public streets of the town. And so audaciously had the game been played that no shadow of suspicion had attached to the real criminals.

The innkeeper recovered from the wound which I gave him, but it was only, together with his partner in guilt—the hostler—to receive one of a much more serious character from the hands of the executioner.

From Chambers' Journal.

The False Funeral.

I never liked my uncle's business, though he took me when my father died, and brought me up as his own son. The good man had no children. His wife was long dead; he had an honest old woman for a housekeeper, and a flourishing business, in the undertaking line, to leave to somebody; but he did not leave it to me, and I'll tell you the reason.

When I had been about five years with him, and had grown worth my salt, as he used to say, a death occurred in our neighborhood, which caused greater lamentation than any we had heard of since my apprenticeship began. The deceased gentleman was a Mr. Elsworth. The family had been counted gentry in their day. I should have said my uncle lived in York, and all the world knows what Yorkshire families are. Well, the Elsworths were of good family, and very proud of it, though they had lost every acre of an old estate which had belonged to them time out of mind. I am not sure whether it was their grandfather's dice and cock-fighting, or their father's going surety for a friend, who did something wrong in a government office, that brought them to this poor pass; but there was no house in all York where candles went no farther, and tea-leaves were better used up.

There was a mother, two sisters, and a cousin who lived with them. The mother

was a stately old lady, never seen out of a black brocade. The sisters were not young or handsome, but they dressed as fine as they could. The cousin was counted one of the prettiest women in Yorkshire, but she walked with a crutch, having met with an accident in her childhood. Master Charles was the only son, and the youngest of the family; he was a tall, handsome, dashing, young man, uncommonly polite, and a great favorite with the ladies. It was said there were some red eyes in the town when the story got wind that he was going to be married to the Honorable Miss West-bay. Her father was younger brother to the Earl of Harrowgate, and had seven girls beside her, without a penny for one of them; but Miss Westbay was a beauty, and the wonder was that she had not got married long ago, being nearly seven years out, dancing, singing, and playing tip top pieces at all the parties. Half-a-dozen matches had been talked of for her, but somehow they broke down one after another. Her father was rather impatient to see her off; so were her sisters, poor things, and no wonder, for grow up as they might, not one of them would the old man suffer to come out till the eldest was disposed of, and at last there seemed something like a certainty of this business. Young Mr. Elsworth, who she struck up a courtship. He was fascinated—didn't the word?—at an assize ball, paid marked attentions at the bishop's party, and was believed to have popped the question at a picnic, after Lord Harrowgate, the largest shareholder in the North Eastern Bank, got him promoted from a clerkship to be manager. It's true he was some years younger than Miss Westbay, and people said there had been something between him and his pretty cousin; but a Lord's niece with beauty, accomplishments, and serviceable connections, does not come in every young man's way; so the wedding-day was fixed for the 1st of January; and all the milliners were busy with the bride's bonnets and dresses.

It was just a month to come, and everybody was talking of the match, when Mr. Elsworth fell sick. At first they said it was a cold; then it turned to a brain fever; at last the doctor gave no hopes, and within the same week Mr. Elsworth died. The whole neighborhood was cast into mourning. A promising young man, in a manner the only dependence of his family, newly promoted to a station of trust and influence, and on the eve of marriage, everybody lamented his untimely death, and sympathized with his bereaved relations, and his intended bride. I think my uncle lamented most of all. None of his customers, to my knowledge, ever got so much of his sorrow. When he was sent for in the way of business, it struck me that he stayed particularly long. The good man could talk of nothing but the grief of the afflicted family—how the mother went into fits and the sisters tore their hair—how the cousin talked of wearing mourning all her days—and how it was feared that Miss Westbay, who insisted on seeing him, would never recover her senses. The county papers gave expressions to the public grief. There were a great many verses written about it. Nobody passed the house of mourning without a sigh, or a suitable remark. My uncle superintended the making of the coffin, as I had never seen him do to any other; and when the work was gone home, he spent hours at night finishing it by himself.

The funeral was to set out for the family vault in the Minster church, at Beverly, about three o'clock in the afternoon. It was made a strictly private affair, though hundreds of the townsmen would have testified their respect for the dead by accompanying it all the way. The members of the family in two mourning-coaches, and the undertaker's men, were alone allowed to follow poor Elsworth to his last resting place, and the coffin was not to be brought till the latest hour. My uncle had got it finished to his mind, but evidently did not wish me to look at his work. He had a long talk with Steele and Stoneman, two of his most confidential assistants in the workshop after hours, and they went away looking remarkably close. All was in train, and the funeral to take place next day, when, coming down his own stairs—they were rather steep and narrow, for we lived in one of the old houses of York—my uncle slipped, fell, and broke his leg. I thought he would have gone mad when the doctor told him he must not attempt to move, or mind any business for weeks to come, and I tried to pacify him by offering to conduct the funeral with the help of Steele and Stoneman. Nothing would please the old man; I never saw him so far out of temper before. He swore at his bad luck, threw the pillows at his housekeeper, ordered me to bring him up the key of the workshop, and kept it fast clutched in his hand. I sat up with him that night. In a couple of hours, he grew calm and sensible, but could not sleep, though the house was all quiet, and the housekeeper snoring in the corner. Then he began to groan, as if there was something worse than a broken leg on his mind, and "Tom," said he "haven't I been always kind to you?"

"No doubt of it, uncle," said I.

"Well, Tom, I want you to do me a great service—a particular service Tom, and I'll never forget it to you. You know Mr. Elsworth's funeral comes off to-morrow at three, and they're very high people."

"Never fear, uncle; I'll take care of it as well as if you were there yourself."

"I knew you would, Tom—I knew you would. I could trust you with the hearing of an earl's coffin; and for managing mutes, I don't know your equal. But there's something more to be done. Come over beside me, Tom; that old woman don't hear well at the best, and she's sleeping now and no mistake. Will you promise me—and her voice sunk to a whisper—"that, whatever you hear or see, you'll make no remark to any living, and be as cautious as you can about the body? There's foul play," said he, for I began to look frightened; "but maybe this leg's a judgment for taking on such a business. However, I'm to have three hundred pounds for it; and you'll get the half, Tom, the full half, if you'll conduct it properly and give me your solemn promise. I know you'll never break that."

"Uncle," said I, "I'll promise, and keep it too; but you must tell me what it is."

"Well Tom—and he drew a long breath—"its a living man you're going to put in that coffin in the workshop! I have made it high and full of air-holes; he'll lie quite comfortable. Nobody knows about it but Steele and Stoneman, and yourself; they'll go with you. Mind you trust no one else. Don't look so stupid, man; can't you understand? Mr. Elsworth didn't die at all, and never had brain fever; but he wants to get off with marrying Miss Westbay, or something of that sort. They're taking a queer way about it, I must say; but these gent people have ways of their own. It was the cousin that prepared my mind for it in the back-parlor; that woman's up to anything. I stood out against having a hand in it till I heard that the sexton of Beverly Church was a poor relation of theirs. The key of the coffin is to be given to him; it will be locked, and not screwed down, you see; and when all's over at the vault—it will be dark night by that time, for we don't move till three, and these December days are short—he'll come and help Mr. Elsworth out—and smuggle him off to Hull with his son the carrier. There's ships enough there to take him anywhere under a feigned name."

"Could he get off the marriage so easier?" said I, for the thought of taking a living man in a hearse, and hearing the service road over him, made my blood run cold.—"You see I was young then."

"There's something more than the marriage in it, though they didn't tell me. Old things will happen in my business, and this is one of the queerest. But you'll manage it, Tom, and get my blessing, besides your half of the three hundred pounds; and don't be afraid of anything coming wrong with him, for I never saw any man look so like a corpse."

I promised my uncle to do the business and keep the secret. A hundred and fifty pounds was no joke to a young man beginning the world in the undertaking-line; and the old man was so pleased with what he called my senses and understanding, that before falling asleep, close upon daybreak, he talked of taking me into partnership, and the jobs we might expect from the Harrowgate family; for the dowager countess was near fourscore, and two of the young ladies were threatened with decline. Next day, early in the afternoon, Steele, Stoneman and I were at work. The family seemed duly mournful; I suppose, on account of the servants. Mr. Elsworth looked wonderfully well in his shroud; and if one had not looked closely into the coffin; they never would have seen the air-holes. Well, we set out, mourning coaches, hearse, and all, through the yellow fog of a December day. There was nothing but sad faces to be seen at all the windows as we passed; I heard them admiring Steele and Stoneman for the feeling hearts they showed; but when we got on the Beverly road, the cousin gave us a sign, and away we went at a rattling pace; a funeral never got over the ground at such a rate before. Yet it was getting dark when we reached the old Minster, and the curate grumbled at having to do duty so late. He got through the service nearly as quick as we got over the miles. The coffin was lowered into the family vault; it was more than half-filled with Mr. Elsworth's fore-fathers but there was a good wide grate in the wall, and no want of air. It was all right. The clerk and the clergyman started off to their homes; the mourning-coaches went to the Crown Inn, where the ladies were to wait till the sexton came to let them know he was safe out—the cousin would not go home without that news—and I slipped him the key at the church door, as he discouraged to us all about the mysterious dispensations of Providence.

My heart was light going home, so were Steele's and Stoneman's. None of us liked the job, but we were all to be paid for it; and I must say the old man came down handsomely with the needful, not to speak of Burton ale; and I was to be made his partner without delay. We got the money, and had the justification; but it was't right over, and I just getting into bed, when there was a ring at our door-bell, and the housekeeper came to say that Dr. Parks wanted to see me or my uncle. What could he want, and how had he come back so soon? Parks was the Elsworth's family doctor, and the only stranger at the funeral; he went in the second mourning coach, and left him talking to the sexton. My clothes were thrown on, and I was down stairs in a minute, looking as sober as I could; but the doctor's look would have sobered any man. "Thomas," said he, "this has turned out a bad business; and I cannot account for it; but Mr. Elsworth has died in earnest. When the sexton and I opened the coffin, we found

would. I could trust you with the hearing of an earl's coffin; and for managing mutes, I don't know your equal. But there's something more to be done. Come over beside me, Tom; that old woman don't hear well at the best, and she's sleeping now and no mistake. Will you promise me—and her voice sunk to a whisper—"that, whatever you hear or see, you'll make no remark to any living, and be as cautious as you can about the body? There's foul play," said he, for I began to look frightened; "but maybe this leg's a judgment for taking on such a business. However, I'm to have three hundred pounds for it; and you'll get the half, Tom, the full half, if you'll conduct it properly and give me your solemn promise. I know you'll never break that."

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"Could he get off the marriage so easier?" said I, for the thought of taking a living man in a hearse, and hearing the service road over him, made my blood run cold.—"You see I was young then."

"There's something more than the marriage in it, though they didn't tell me. Old things will happen in my business, and this is one of the queerest. But you'll manage it, Tom, and get my blessing, besides your half of the three hundred pounds; and don't be afraid of anything coming wrong with him, for I never saw any man look so like a corpse."

I promised my uncle to do the business and keep the secret. A hundred and fifty pounds was no joke to a young man beginning the world in the undertaking-line; and the old man was so pleased with what he called my senses and understanding, that before falling asleep, close upon daybreak, he talked of taking me into partnership, and the jobs we might expect from the Harrowgate family; for the dowager countess was near fourscore, and two of the young ladies were threatened with decline. Next day, early in the afternoon, Steele, Stoneman and I were at work. The family seemed duly mournful; I suppose, on account of the servants. Mr. Elsworth looked wonderfully well in his shroud; and if one had not looked closely into the coffin; they never would have seen the air-holes. Well, we set out, mourning coaches, hearse, and all, through the yellow fog of a December day. There was nothing but sad faces to be seen at all the windows as we passed; I heard them admiring Steele and Stoneman for the feeling hearts they showed; but when we got on the Beverly road, the cousin gave us a sign, and away we went at a rattling pace; a funeral never got over the ground at such a rate before. Yet it was getting dark when we reached the old Minster, and the curate grumbled at having to do duty so late. He got through the service nearly as quick as we got over the miles. The coffin was lowered into the family vault; it was more than half-filled with Mr. Elsworth's fore-fathers but there was a good wide grate in the wall, and no want of air. It was all right. The clerk and the clergyman started off to their homes; the mourning-coaches went to the Crown Inn, where the ladies were to wait till the sexton came to let them know he was safe out—the cousin would not go home without that news—and I slipped him the key at the church door, as he discouraged to us all about the mysterious dispensations of Providence.

My heart was light going home, so were Steele's and Stoneman's. None of us liked the job, but we were all to be paid for it; and I must say the old man came down handsomely with the needful, not to speak of Burton ale; and I was to be made his partner without delay. We got the money, and had the justification; but it was't right over, and I just getting into bed, when there was a ring at our door-bell, and the housekeeper came to say that Dr. Parks wanted to see me or my uncle. What could he want, and how had he come back so soon? Parks was the Elsworth's family doctor, and the only stranger at the funeral; he went in the second mourning coach, and left him talking to the sexton. My clothes were thrown on, and I was down stairs in a minute, looking as sober as I could; but the doctor's look would have sobered any man. "Thomas," said he, "this has turned out a bad business; and I cannot account for it; but Mr. Elsworth has died in earnest. When the sexton and I opened the coffin, we found

"No doubt of it, uncle," said I.

"Well, Tom, I want you to do me a great service—a particular service Tom, and I'll never forget it to you. You know Mr. Elsworth's funeral comes off to-morrow at three, and they're very high people."

"Never fear, uncle; I'll take care of it as well as if you were there yourself."

"I knew you would, Tom—I knew you would. I could trust you with the hearing of an earl's coffin; and for managing mutes, I don't know your equal. But there's something more to be done. Come over beside me, Tom; that old woman don't hear well at the best, and she's sleeping now and no mistake. Will you promise me—and her voice sunk to a whisper—"that, whatever you hear or see, you'll make no remark to any living, and be as cautious as you can about the body? There's foul play," said he, for I began to look frightened; "but maybe this leg's a judgment for taking on such a business. However, I'm to have three hundred pounds for it; and you'll get the half, Tom, the full half, if you'll conduct it properly and give me your solemn promise. I know you'll never break that."

"Uncle," said I, "I'll promise, and keep it too; but you must tell me what it is."

"Well Tom—and he drew a long breath—"its a living man you're going to put in that coffin in the workshop! I have made it high and full of air-holes; he'll lie quite comfortable. Nobody knows about it but Steele and Stoneman, and yourself; they'll go with you. Mind you trust no one else. Don't look so stupid, man; can't you understand? Mr. Elsworth didn't die at all, and never had brain fever; but he wants to get off with marrying Miss Westbay, or something of that sort. They're taking a queer way about it, I must say; but these gent people have ways of their own. It was the cousin that prepared my mind for it in