

Written for THE JURY.

In a Marble Yard.

"This is grave business," remarked the sculptor, as for a moment he suspended his mallet in the air, and then, Click, click, click! and the words,

OUR DARLING!

were slowly developed on the polished surface of the block of marble that lay before him. Grave business, indeed!

To-day, a wedding carnival!
To-day, a birthday festival!
To-day, a solemn funeral!

There are those who have become so familiar, association, with death, that his presence hardly ruffles the even current of their thoughts. It is not believed that such is the case because they are better prepared than other men for his coming, nor because, than other men, they are more completely reconciled to the inevitable fate of all that live. As with sorrow and hardship, familiarity steals the hearts to the encroachments of death. The old soldier is as indifferent to the whiz of a bullet as to the hum of a bee.

"The business of the undertaker is likewise of a grave character," continued the man of the mallet and chisel; "but ours has many phases with which the undertaker is wholly unacquainted. He is called in when the heart's wounds are fresh and bleeding. His assistance cannot be dispensed with. I think that with him there is seldom any haggling about price or terms of payment. He is a sort of autocrat. Solemn as is his appearance and unctious as are his responses during the burial service at the grave, everyone except the mourners knows that each of these is included in the bill."

The words, "Our Darling," had received their last finishing touch and the stone cutter laid down his mallet. Said he: "Of all wounds, heart-wounds are the most painful; but it is wonderful how quickly they heal! I've known the light of the sun to go out with a life, and yet in a few days he would be shining just as brightly as ever! I have heard husbands and wives in tones of agony express a wish to be buried with their loved ones, and a few weeks later I have seen them searching persistently and diligently for something eligible.

Well, it is well! If men could not forget; With phantoms all the earth would peopled be. The ghosts of buried joys our hearts would fret, A flood of tears, salt tears, would drown the sea."
Was this knight of the dusty cap and apron a

eynic—a man soured with the world and at war with himself! Such he did not seem to be, for about his mouth played a kindly smile, and his eye had a humorous twinkle, and his voice was as tender as a woman's.

Ah, between those who know and those who guess there is a great gulf. To know is to accept—to guess is to struggle. Does a sensible man reach for that which he knows he cannot reach, or hope for that which he knows it is futile to hope! As the grass withers, we wither; and when the fields grow green again the grass that withered is forgotten, as we are forgotten by those who follow us.

Click, click, click!

MARY!

Those were the letters cut under the words. "Our Darling!"

And then the man laid aside his mallet and came and sat down by the side of the reporter.

Said he: "I never ask a man who has married a second wife to erect a monument to the memory of his first; and it is extremely hazardous to broach the subject to a woman who has secured a second husband. And it is just so with the children. Step-fathers and step-mothers don't want any tablets erected to the memory of their step-children. As I said before, the undertaker is a sort of autocrat: if hearts bleed at all, he is called while their wounds are fresh; we follow as soon as propriety will admit."

Click, click, click!

And other letters disclosed themselves under the chisel of the sculptor. But after a time he again paused in his work.

Said he: "Some years ago, in the northern part of the province there was a hermit who lived and died miserably. He was buried by his brothers, with whom I was somewhat acquainted, and after the funeral I accompanied them to the wretched cabin which he had occupied. The patched garments that he had worn in life were tossed into the pig sty near which I chanced to stand, and as they were torn asunder by the brutes I saw crisp bank notes and yellow sovereigns scattered about in the straw. An investigation followed at once, and several hundreds of dollars were secured that had been sowed into the linings of the wretched rags. The brothers then ordered a modest slab to mark the grave of the deceased, but when the bill was presented they deplored their liberality. 'But,' said I, 'had it not been for me all the money left by your deceased brother would have been irretrievably lost!' They answered never a word."

The speaker paused and looked away across Courtenay Bay, and the reporter thought he detected a shade of sadness stealing over his countenance. Said he: "I know two wealthy brothers in Nova Scotia, and one of them died, leaving everything he was possessed of to the survivor. And what did he do? He had a broken marble table top, and asked me if I did not

think I could make it answer for a head-stone for the deceased?"

The man of the mallet laughed a bitter laugh. "In the shop where I was employed when a youth," he continued, "we had a cutter who was rather illiterate. He cut on a stone, 'May her sole rest in peace,' and our explanation of the legend was quite satisfactory to the bereaved husband. The tablet stands in a quiet churchyard not a hundred miles from St. John. On another headstone we had to engrave, 'Let her rest in peace,' but as space was limited the tablet faces the suns of summer and the storms of winter with this inscription:

Let her R. i. p.

But the funniest of all was the case of the widow who wanted a tablet for her husband and was struck with the appearance of one already finished for the grave of another gentleman. We explained that the inscription was inappropriate, but we would make a duplicate, suitably inscribed. 'Hoot, mon,' said she, 'Sandy could na read, and he always liked the name of Dakin!'

Without bidding the man of the mallet good-bye, the reporter turned away, with his coat covered with marble dust.

MONEY IN IT.—A man afflicted with deafness took a prescription to a Topeka druggist, who filled it with care and in the latest style. The deaf man asked the price, when the following talk occurred:

Druggist (leaning on the counter and smiling in a won't-you-pay-up sort of manner): The price is seventy five cents.

Deaf customer: Five cents? Here it is.
Druggist (in a louder voice): Seventy-five cents, please.

Deaf customer: Well, there's your five cents.
Druggist (in a very loud and very firm manner): I said seventy five cents.

Deaf customer (getting angry): Well, what more do you want? I just gave you five cents.

Druggist (softly voice): Well, go to thunder with your medicine. I made three cents, any way.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.—Manager: And what do you say to eight hours a day, Alexis?

Alexis: Eight hours, boss? Great lan', dat ain't 'nuff. You don't have no consideration fur workin' man, nohow. Eight hours ain't 'nuff.

Manager: Well, I'm glad to hear one man industrious enough to want to do a full day's work. I'm pleased with you, Alexis, and you may work eleven hours a day.

Alexis: Hole on, boss! Hole on! I don't understand ye. I didn't know it was wuckin' hours you was talkin' 'bout. I thought 'twas restin' time after dinner.

Champrorean is sometimes absent minded. The other day he had his hair cut, and when the operation was completed he regarded himself in the mirror. "You have got it too short," he said to the barber, and he seated himself again in the chair.

Making much ado— a crowd saying good-bye.

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