

its centre, and elevated aloft on a proper support, wagging alternately its ends, up and down, up and down, with that busy and whimsical air that has obtained it the name of a whimsey; this is performing a similar operation by a different contrivance. There again, those huge engines are at work, whirling baskets down into the deep shafts for coal, or whirling the colliers themselves down to get the coal, for two or three hundred yards down a hideous gulf into the bowels of the earth, and they sent with a rapidity that to a stranger is frightful, to their labour, or pulled up after its performance to daylight as fast,—all the time these great engines of, perhaps, two-hundred-horse power groaning and coughing over their toils like condemned Titans; and the wheels and pulleys that they put in motion singing and whistling lamentably, like so many lesser spirits doomed to attend on their labours. Here you see baskets of coals emerge from the mouth of the pit, and immediately, as by self-agency, run away, empty themselves into a waggon or boat, and come back empty, and ready for a fresh exploit. There, as you advance over the plain, you see a whole train of waggons loaded with coal careering by themselves, without horse, without steam-engine, without man, except there sits one behind, who, instead of endeavouring to propel these mad waggons on their way, seems labouring hopelessly by his weight to detain them. But what is your amazement, when you come into sight of the river Tyne, to see these waggons still careering to the very brink of the water. To see a railway carried from the high bank, and supported on tall piles, horizontally above the surface of the river, and to some distance into it, as if to allow those vagabond trains of waggons to run right off, and dash themselves into the river. There they go, all mad together! Another moment, and they will shoot over the end of the lofty railway, and go headlong into the Tyne, helter-skelter! But behold! The creatures are not so mad as you imagine. They are instinct with sense! They have a principle of self-preservation, as well as of speed, in them. See! as they draw near the river—they pause! They stop! One by one they detach themselves, and as one devoted waggon runs on, like a victim given up for the salvation of the rest, to perform a wild somerset into the water below—what do we see? it is caught! A pair of gigantic arms separate themselves from the end of the railway! They catch the waggon! They hold it suspended in the air! They let it softly and gently descend, ay, softly and gently, as an angel dropping to earth on some heavenly message—and whither? Into the water? No! we see now that a ship already lies below the end of the railway. The waggon descends to it; a man, standing there, strikes a bolt—the bottom falls, and the coals which it contains are nicely deposited in the hold of the vessel! Up again soars the waggon in that pair of gigantic arms. It reaches the railway! it glides, like a black swan into its native lake, upon it, and away it goes, as of its own accord, to a distance to await its brethren, who successively perform the same exploit, and then joining it—all scamper back over the plain to the distant pit again!

‘How many knives are there in the street besides yourself?’ asked Pilgric of his friend. ‘Besides myself?’ replied the other, indignantly; ‘do you mean to insult me?’ ‘Well, then,’ said Pilgric, ‘how many do you reckon, including yourself?’

From Bontley's Magazine.

THE FUNERAL.

By the Author of "Stephen Dugard."

The house in which I lived had formerly been one spacious mansion, but was now divided into two moderately sized tenements, and a slight wooden partition was all that separated the rooms. My next-door neighbour, in the prime of life—engaged in a lucrative business, married; but without any family, had killed himself by drinking; dug his grave not with his teeth, as your gross feeders do, but with his glasses, as your three-bottle-men, too often do. Strange infatuation!—to throw away life for the pleasure of living in a constant fever! to sit down with a rational, composed mind, for the avowed purpose of dethroning it, and showing what deposed animals we are, deprived of reason! If a man could see or hear himself when he is drunk, as others who are not drunk see and hear him, he would be cured for ever.

There is something very mysterious in the power we have to look upon death as if it did not concern us—as if the epigrammatic line of the poet, that “all men think all men mortal but themselves,” were a sober serious truth. We know, certainly, that our time to die *must* come; and yet, because the time itself is uncertain, we can see those who go before us carried to the churchyard as if we were never to lie there ourselves.

A few yards of painted wainscot divided me from my neighbour, whom I had seen alive, and apparently well, but a fortnight before: now he was coffined, and I was pursuing my customary avocation with scarcely a passing thought upon the subject. It is thus the mind can shut out painful realities when they are hidden from sight. Had his coffin, and he in it, been on this side of the wainscot instead of the other, nearer to me by two or three feet, but *visibly* nearer, could I have pursued those same avocations with equal tranquility? Assuredly not. And *why not?* It is not *death*, considered merely as an extinction of life, that appals us. But a dead man!—nay, not a dead man only—a dead infant of a month old, in its span-long coffin, would diffuse by its presence an awe and solemnity, and create a stillness, and cause a gentleness of peace in moving to and fro, and compel the voice to lower its tone in speaking. Philosophy, there is something for you to explain. I understand it not.

But oh! how transient are these feelings! The undertaker has no sooner performed *his last office*—that of conveying the body to the grave, than a revolution begins. Windows are thrown open, furniture is put to rights, tongues are loud, steps are quick and bustling, and every thing denotes that the house of death and the house of mourning have little affinity with each other.

The night before the funeral a stage-coach stopped at the door, and two persons alighted from it in deep black, they had come from London to follow the remains of the deceased to the tomb. A few moments after they entered the house I could hear the accents of grief. The widow was bewailing her loss, and the sight of her dead husband's friends or relations (I know not which) had awakened afresh the sense of her bereavement. Then there was a sound of steps slowly treading the stairs and passage that led to the room where the body lay. They were going to take a last look of features once familiar, and still remembered. As they draw near the door their steps grow lighter and lighter, and