

beyond them), and when to sing small, and hold his tongue, and nod at the proper distances, if ever his business led him among gentry of any sense or science, such as we sometimes hear of. Hence it was that he got the order to keep the church-clock of Bridgend agoing by setting the hands on twice a-day, and giving a push to the pendulum; and so long as the clock would only go, nobody in the town cared a tick whether it kept right time or wrong. And if people from the country durst say anything about it, it was always enough to ask them what their own clocks had to say.

There were not then many stable-clocks, such as are growing upon us now, so that every horse has his own dinner-bell; only for all those that were, Hezekiah received, I dare-say, from five to ten shillings a-month apiece in order to keep them moving. But, bless my heart! he knows less of a clock than I, old Davy

Llewellyn; and once on a time I asked him, when he talked too much of his "ometries"—as a sailor might do in his simpleness—I asked him to take an "observation," as I had seen a good deal of it. But all he did was to make a very profane and unpleasant one. As for this man's outward looks, he was nothing at all particular, but usually with dirt about him, and a sense of oiliness. Why he must needs set up for a saint the father of evil alone may tell; but they said that the clock that paid him best (being the worst in the neighborhood) belonged to a Nicodemus-Christian, with a great cuckoo over it. Having never seen it, I cannot say; and the town is so full of gossip that I throw myself down on my back and listen, being wholly unable to vie with them in depth or in compass of story-telling, even when fish are a week on my hands.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE CORONER AND THE CORONET.

An officer of high repute had lately been set over us, to hold account of the mischief, and to follow evidence, and make the best he could of it when anybody chose to die without giving proper notice. He called himself "Coroner of the King;" and all the doctors, such as they were, made it a point that he must come, whenever there was a dead man or woman who had died without their help.

Now all about the storm of sand, and all about the shipwreck, was known in every part of the parish, before the church-clock had contrived, in gratitude to Hezekiah, to strike the noon of Monday. Every child that went to the well knew the truth of everything; and every woman of Newton and Nottage had formed from the men her own opinion, and was ready to stand thereby, and defy all the other women.

Nevertheless some busy doctor (who had better been in the stocks) took it for a public duty to send notice and demand for the Coroner to sit upon us. The wrath of the parish (now just beginning to find some wreck, that would pay for the ropes) was so honest and so grave, that the little doctor was compelled to

run, and leave his furniture. And so it always ought to be with people who are meddlesome.

It came to my knowledge that this must happen, and that I was bound to help in it, somewhere about middle-day of Tuesday; at a time when I was not quite as well as I find myself, when I have no money. For, being pleased with my luck perhaps, and not content quite to smoke in the dark, and a little dry after the glow-worms, it happened (I will not pretend to say how) that I dropped into the "Jolly Sailors," to know what the people could be about, making such a great noise as they were, and keeping a quiet man out of his bed.

There I smelled a new tobacco, directly I was in the room; and somebody (pleased with my perception) gave me several pipes of it, with a thimbleful—as I became more and more agreeable—of a sort of rum-and-water. And, confining myself, as my principle is, to what the public treat me to, it is not quite out of the question that I may have been too generous. And truly full I was of grief, upon the following morning, that somebody had made me promise, in a bub-