

"Now which of you are ready for your coffins? he boldly said.

The report of the pistol called down from their rooms in an incredibly short space of time a score of travellers. The police from the streets gathered in like eagles to their prey. Before the smoke of that first discharge had dispersed the office was crowded with persons, crowded all but that handy nook in which was ensconced our friend Larkin who still, gaily and invitingly said,

"Who will be the next? my hand is in now and I never miss my shot twice."

A venerable man, grey haired and mild, evidently a preacher, proposed a compromise.

"I consented to the arrest. I started peaceably to go with that man. He had a number of men to help him. Yet he was about to handcuff me, that is an indignity that can only be inflicted on my corpse. One step nearer and you die. This last remark to the *ex-déjà* Col Westcott who was quietly slipping upon his prey. The detective hastily stepped back.

"Tell us who you are," said the grey-haired man of peace. "Commit no murder, if you are innocent I for one will stand by you."

Then Brother Larkin informed the excited crowd that he was a peaceful tradesman, journeying to the east, and took care to say that as a Freemason he had his diploma in his pocket.

This turned the tables. A dozen men in the company formed a semi-circle before him. Their backs towards him, and declared he should not leave the house till morning. The grey-haired preacher loudly approving their determination.

At his own suggestion he was guarded through the night, in the landlord's private parlor, but not handcuffed. At early day, his notes to old friends in St. Louis brought a half dozen prominent citizens to identify and release him. And so after an interchange of cards with "the silent friends" who had stepped forward at that opportune moment. Brother Larkin went his way rejoicing that he had neither killed nor been killed. While the veritable Tom Brailey was picked up a week afterwards in a totally unexpected place, and subjected to one of those hasty initiations common in the west, where nothing is left of candidates but the stump of a rope and a new-made grave. And this is the story as related to me by Brother Larkin himself not a year ago, of "The perilous Moment."

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The Old Chair has been questioned as to whether Mr. Greeley is an anti-mason or not? The Old Chair has lived long enough to know some things, but it don't know everything. It presumes, however, that Mr. Greeley has too much good sense to espouse such a hopeless cause, and one that gives evidence of either a weak head or a bad heart—perhaps both.

When the old Morgan excitement broke out, some forty-five years ago, Mr. Greeley had not attained his majority, and it was some years afterwards before he became an active politician.

By the time he became prominent as an Editor, anti-masonry had begun to wane, and he would hardly identify himself with a cause which its best friends would be ashamed of. Mr. Seward, Judge Spencer, Edward Everett and other prominent men, who had been active antis, deserted the sinking ship about this time. The Old Chair thinks Mr. Greeley was never identified with anti-masonry, though it presumes he is not a Freemason,—nor is General Grant.—*The Masonic Review*.