

at the expense of the tax-payer. That's the way to fatten. I reckon I cost the country three hundred dollars a year, and that's apart from my private income, which comes out of blessed charity."

"Me poor little babby is to be buried at public expense," wailed the mourner.

"Eh, but I have a calamity to cap that," said the Scot, sitting very erect, and turning to the group of talkers who were still arguing over the respective merits of the disasters which had entered into their lives. "Talk of murder, and lightnings, and thunderbolts, boys. Something happened once, a calamity which made me a care-worn man all in the minute. Eh, boys, it makes me shake to think of it."

"What was it, Scottie? Did yer breath catch fire?" asked Krum.

"Don't jest, laddie," cried the Scot piteously.

The thin man looked up from his piece of rope, which he was caressing as though he loved it, and squinted at the speaker. The Greek muttered, "He do tell one fearful story," and stared open-mouthed. The leader yawned and composed himself again to a cat-like sleep, while the dipsomaniac took up his parable.

"There were three of us in one room, Æneas Cleghorn, Angus M'Lennon, and me. 'Twas cold, and the wind blowin' through the windy. There hadn't passed a word between us for most of an hour. We was hungry, and poor, and miserable, and we had just a quarter of a dollar each of us—all the money we had in the world, after dividin' fair. We just set there, and never a word until Æneas pulled out his quarter and thumped it hard upon the bench. 'Whusky,' he proposed. Angus, he put down his quarter quick as he could move. 'Whusky,' he