

the door of the box, and leave the illuminator to fulfil with flickering effort the functions of the watch, while the Charley himself snoozed away, satisfied in his own mind that the rays emitted from his lantern would convince all intruders, not only that its proprietor was wide awake, but also that if they became too "venturesome" they would infallibly be "nabbed."

Billikens, however, shook his head at Mummerglum's suggestion, and turning to Quaggy invited the expression of his view of the subject.

Quaggy, on his part, was prepared to make a sacrifice of the comforts which the watch box afforded in a winter's night, and therefore he at once suggested, that as "prevention was better than cure," and as their object was to prevent the grave from being violently attacked, he proposed that Mummerglum and himself should bestride the mound of earth, which indicated poor Mary's last resting place, and fortified with "bacca, pipes and beer, perwent the coming of the villainous 'coves.'"

"Thankee!" rejoined Mummerglum, with more alacrity than usual, "I'd rather not; I should'n't like to spend a night in the wery 'art of the 'Church Yard,' and 'ave all the spirits a whispering in one's ear, or a playing at leap frog over one's body."

"In course you would'n't, nor more vud I," responded Mr. Billikens; "it ain't pleasant to be diwerted from duty in any such a vay. I ain't fond of speerits, leastways grave-yard speerits, and I ain't up to their doings; but now I'll tell you what my plan of operations is," continued Mr. Billikens, majestically. "I think, and thank you, Mr. Quaggy, for the saying, that perwention is better than cure,—and to perwent is no doubt werry good as far as it goes, yet it don't express enough for our purpose. My object, gen'lem, then is, not only to perwent them from priggig, but also to cure them of coming, and I propose therefore that Mummerglum should adopt his own proposal and sconsen hisself in the box near the church-yard. Next, I proposes, having reckoned the number of doctors in the Parish, and as I knows there be only two as would adwenture upon such a 'orrid undertaking, that you and me, Quaggy, should put ourselves near the house of Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Pell, and the first man as

leaves 'arter nine o'clock, to clap him on the watch'us on s'picion of grave stealing."

This was the grand *coup-d'état* which old Zachary proposed for the adoption of his comrades, who, it need not be added, immediately subscribed to the plan, and murmuring the language of subdued eulogy, "vunderful man," "vunderful sentiment," "purwent them from priggig, and cure them from coming," they followed Mr. Billikens out of the house.

Mummerglum repaired to the watch-box, where, after drinking a pot of beer at his own expense, and another at the expense of a friend, he snored away until he was suddenly awakened by finding himself and his watch box tilted towards the wall, and then expeditiously turned over, and himself most unceremoniously spilled on the pavement. His rattle was removed, and his hands were tied behind him while he was rolled over and over, and then left, a little the worse for the exercise, but without broken bones or injurious bruises, to make his way towards his comrades, unaided by the light of his lantern.

Billikens and Quaggy, in pursuance of their plan, had seized upon the two first persons who left the houses of Doctors Mitchell and Pell, and attempted to take them into custody on suspicion, but they only succeeded in finding themselves immediately trounced into the gutter, and complained against on the following day for being drunk and disorderly on the previous night. Of course, their coats and other garments were covered with a curious tracery of dirt and ditch-water, but Mummerglum, who was gifted with more quiescent qualities, discovered on repairing to the watch house that his mantle of office had been strikingly illuminated by stripes and patches of vermilion paint, while the immaculate rattle had been suspended around his waist.

The kind hearted Beadle was not indebted for the security of Mary Hayworth's grave to the system of the old watch, in securing it, but to the watchfulness of Mr. Ralph Lloyd on the one hand, and to a group of boys on the other, who busying themselves in making grottoes of oyster shells, were willing to rest the live long night beneath the railing of that old Church Yard, and wait unmoved for the dawn of another Christmas morning.

(To be continued.)