

"There's the quorntity and no cheatin'," said he. "You oan medger it up with a rule if you like. It'll medger, you find if it don't! Like I told you! And a 'apenny returned on the transaction." The tension of the situation did not admit of the measuring test—nor indeed had Aunt M'riar data to go upon—and as for the halfpenny, it stood over.

Uncle Moses had not laid false claim to surgical skill, and was able to strap the wound a'most as if he'd been brought up to it. By the time it was done Dave's courage was on the wane, and he wasn't sorry to lie his head down and shut to his eyes. Because the lids thereof were like the lids of plate-chests.

However, before he went off very sound asleep—so sound you might have took him for a image—he heard what passed between Uncle Moses and Michael, whose name has been spelt herein so that you should think of it as Sapps Court did; but its correct form is Rackstraw.

"Now, young potato-peelin's, how much money did the doctor hand you back for that diacklum?"

"Penny. Said he'd charge it up to the next Dook that come to his shop."

Thereupon Aunt M'riar taxed the speaker with perfidy. "Why, you little untrue, lyin', deceitful story," she said. "To think you should say it was only a ha'penny!"

"I never said no such a thing. S'elp me!"

"'Apenny returned on the transaction' was the very identical selfsame words." Thus Aunt M'riar testified. "And what is more," she added inconsecutively, "I do not believe you've any such an aunt, nor yet ever been to Chiswick."

But young potato-peelings, so called from his father's vocation of costermonger, defended himself with indignation. "Warn't that square?" said he. "He never said I warn't to keep it all, didn't that doctor!" Then he took a high position as of injured virtue. "There's your 'apenny! There's both your 'apennies! Mean to say I 'aven't kep' 'em safe for yer?" Uncle Moses allowed the position of bailee, but disposed of the penny as Solomon suggested in the case of the baby, giving one halfpenny to Michael, and putting the other in Dave's cat on the mantel-shelf.

He justified this course afterwards on the ground that the doctor's refund was made to the actual negotiator, and that Aunt M'riar had in any case received full value for her money. Who could say that the doctor, if referred to, would not have repudiated Aunt M'riar's claim *in toto*?