

"Ah! very good, my man, then here's half a dollar for you!"

Jock took the coin, looked first at it, then at his employer, gave one deep grunting sigh, and with "Od, I'll no lippen yeou ony mair," put it in his pocket and turned away, his wrinkled features cringed together with an expression of the most intense and intensifying disgust. Of course, the gentleman, after enjoying a hearty laugh over the occurrence for a few days, made the matter all right.

We have said that a part of Jock's professional skill was exercised in the way of grave-digging. The dead, in almost any shape, or, in fact, at almost every stage of decomposition, seemed to have a charm for Jock's particular attention—a kind of affinity for him, or he for them; for he would think no more of sitting up all night alone beside a dead body than he would of eating his supper. He had been so long in the district of country of which he was, and is beadle and grave-digger, and he was, moreover, gifted with such an extraordinary memory in dead matters, that it used to be his boast that he could name over and show the place of resting of every occupant in every burying-ground for a circuit of some miles. Once, however, when digging a grave in a very old ground, he came upon the side of a coffin whose occupant he could not recollect at all. Every avenue of thought was ransacked, but unsuccessfully, until "At last" said he, for he told this anecdote a day or two afterwards, with the air of a scientist speculating upon some new theory, "I juist jappit the shovel thro' the side on't' an' lookit in; then I kent at ance it was auld Mrs. ——" He then went on as if he were narrating some pet theme of intense interest, to tell the condition in which the body was after an inhumation of over twenty years. One can almost fancy the unutterably horrible feelings that would seize upon almost any other mortal away down all alone, in a lonesome graveyard, in the bowels of the earth, and face to face with the bleached remains of a fellow being. Jock thought, however, rather of the subject than of the situation, and narrated the circumstance rather as one of wonder than of horror.

The great revival of '68 spread to Jock's kirk, and on that occasion he had to be on hand in week-nights to attend to his kirk duties of lighting and firing. There was, we fear, little ground to hope that Jock looked at all favorably on these gatherings, and much less so on his extra share of the work, for he was kept "oot on his bed" night after night until after midnight. Still there was "extra pay for't," he would say to himself, and plod away. It was customary at these conventions to hold an "after-meeting," at the close of the public service. A number of the audience arose during the interval between the two, and went away. Some, however, after preparing to move off, would, out of curiosity, or from some other cause, continue to linger in and about the hall, and peep in at those who remained. Silence was an essential requisite of all these after-meetings, the deepest and most solemn silence. One can imagine, then, the consternation that spread through the audience when one night Jock, who was dreadfully annoyed at the hall-lingerers, roared out in the passage-way, "Ye maun outhier bide in or stay oot!" Jock thought sometimes his pay "was lang o' comin'" for these extra services, and it was a common expression of his to the merchants in town, when calling upon them with his kirk can for coal-oil, "They" (the meeting folk) "talk o' bein' clad an' fed ower there, but heth! I'd like tae ken wha's gaun tae clad an' feed me." At length, several months after the meetings had ceased, a church soiree was held which turned out very successfully, and on the Sabbath morning following, whilst sitting in the vestry along with the minister and one or two of the committee, Jock thought it a good time to advance his claim, and so he began:

"Are ye gaun to pay me the noo?"

*Minister*—"Yes, John, I think we can. How much is it altogether?"

*Jock*—"Twenty-twa dollars an' the interest."

*Minister*—"Interest! nothing of the kind; we want our money for books, man."

*Jock*—"Buiks here nor buiks there, I maun hae the interest; ye always git it when yer steeppen's no pay't up."