

"As much as to say," continued Mr. Fish, "that if the poor body had had a drop of drink, the crumb would have been dissolved, and in course swallowed."

"I wonder who composed those lines," said Mr. Simpkin, musingly.

"Who composed them?" rejoined Mr. Audible; "why, who do you think? none other than the great Mr. Crummy himself."

Loud cheers followed the declaration, in which "the Grecian" was heard to remark, that he thought the composition was not the work of an ordinary Beadle.

"What became of poor Grinkin?" inquired Mr. Fish; "he sadly forgot his dignity, when he turned Schoolmaster; and when a Beadle forgets his dignity, all's lost, all's lost!"

"He had a mind above his station," returned Mr. Buckle.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed several at the table, "where did he show his learning?"

"Many's the time, especially when he wrote those beautiful descriptive lines on the tombstone of Wheeler's wife."

"What were they?" asked several.

"They were these," said Mr. Buckle, laying great stress on the last word:

"Here lies Mrs. Wheeler—
When her glass was spent,
She kick'd up her heels,
And away she went."

"Well! they certainly are touching and appropriate," returned several.

And thus it was, that the evening's festivities advanced; the state of the church, the condition of the country, and the literature of the times were discussed by this convivial company, jests and songs were interspersed with narrative and anecdote, and laughter revelled in their cheeks, and chased from their brows all signs of sadness. But time waits not:—the continuous tic-tic of the household clock, admonished them that their festive joys were drawing to a close; the hour for the departure of their honored guest had arrived.

Mr. Crummy rose to withdraw; he wished to say something, but his tongue again most obstinately refused to fulfil its functions; at last having gained a moment's self-possession, he said:

"Fellow Beadles and kind friends,—I am sorry that my tongue always drops into my toes, ven I vants to make use of it, and I am werry sorry that the severe illness of a young female compels me to leave you—but afore going, I would like to say—that is—I wishes to remark—that I shall say no more—than what I was going to say," and filling up the pause, by finishing his glass of Punch, Mr. Crummy continued, "I drinks all your

good healths, and I wishes you everlasting good luck," then shaking hands all round, he took his departure amidst the good wishes of his friends, that he should enjoy another jubilee.

But the departure of the guest did not "break up the party." Two more bowls of steaming punch replaced at each end of the table those which had fulfilled their duty; every tumbler was replenished, and judging from the silence which reigned in that company, we would suppose that each individual there present, was wrapped in his own meditations.

But the calm was broken by a remark from Mr. Gosling, who inquired, addressing himself to the individual named:

"I say, Jewson, how old be you?"

Whereupon the Patriarch, looking rather furious, rejoined:

"That's none of your business."

Mr. Gosling immediately stated "that he meant no offence, but that he was only desirous of knowing whether he was not turned of fifty."

"In course I are," responded Mr. Jewson, "otherwise I shouldn't be the Father of the Beadles."

"Sartinly—sartinly!"—exclaimed every body; "vot are you driving at, Gosling?"

Without answering the question Mr. Gosling asked another, and inquired how many of that company remained on the sunny side of fifty.

"I do for one," said "the Grecian," and although several appeared half disposed to have made a similar declaration, truth kept their lips closed.

"Are you satisfied, eh?" inquired several, addressing their speech to the questioner.

"Yes," answered Mr. Gosling, "I am satisfied and convinced."

"Of what?" rejoined every body there.

"Satisfied that we have spent our money in convincing Mr. Crummy that he is the only man in the city fit for a Beadle."

The Grecian smiled, but the Beadles did not exactly see at what the observation aimed, so they drank another glass of punch, and asked for further explanation.

"You see," said Mr. Gosling, "that each of you is more than a half a century old, yet I ask vich of you had his Jubilee kept in this manner?"

A silence ensued; the bow drawn at a venture had well nigh destroyed the happiness of the evening—the observation was a truth.

"If I had thought of that sooner, I'd have been blow'd before I would have been one of the party," exclaimed John Joyce.

"And I too," continued several others.

"But what is it that makes Crum so poplar?"