

Nimrod: A Mighty Hunter Before the Lord

downwards until it disappeared in the drooping moustache that concealed his mouth, the vast extent of which was perceived only when he opened it to bellow exhortations at the workmen to greater exertions. His chin was large and extraordinarily long. His eyes were pale blue, very small and close together, surmounted by spare, light coloured, almost invisible eyebrows, with a deep vertical cleft between them over the nose. His head, covered with thick coarse brown hair, was very large at the back, the ears were small and laid close to the head. If one were to make a full face drawing of his cadaverous visage it would be found that the outline resembled the lid of a coffin.

This man had been with Rushton for fifteen years, in fact almost from the time when the latter commenced business. Rushton had at that period realised the necessity of having a deputy who could be used to do all the drudgery and running about so that he himself might be free to attend to more pleasant and profitable matters. Hunter was then a journeyman, but was on the point of starting on his own account, when Rushton offered him a constant job as foreman, two pounds a week, and two and a half per cent of the profits of all work done. On the face of it this appeared a generous offer. Hunter closed with it, gave up the idea of starting for himself, and threw himself heart and mind into the business. When an estimate was to be prepared, it was Hunter who measured up the work and laboriously figured out the probable cost. When their tenders were accepted it was he who superintended the work and schemed how to scamp it, where possible, using mud where mortar was specified, mortar where there ought to have been cement, sheet zinc where they were supposed to put sheet lead, boiled oil instead of varnish, and three coats of paint where five were paid for. In fact, scamping the work was with this man a kind of mania. It grieved him to see anything done properly. Even when it was more economical to do a thing well, he insisted from force of habit on having it scamped. Then he was almost happy, because he felt that he was doing someone down. If there were an architect superintending the work Misery would square him or bluff him. If there were not possible to do either, at least he had a try; and in the intervals of watching, driving and bullying the hands, his vulture eye was ever on the look out for fresh jobs. His long red nose was thrust into every estate agent's office in the