

the one I had on—in the hands of that insatiate wretch, who, for a few paltry dimes would consign me to oblivion—without a shirt. How I regretted my recent extravagance! Fifty-seven cents might have temporarily placated my irate laundress and given me a lease of life. But, alas! it was too late! Rob a mission box I would not; and I shrank at the idea of offering her the rest of my cheroots in part payment of my bill. Sadly I turned to the rest of my mail, which proved to be a card from our worthy secretary asking me to write a paper on the Financial Aspect of Medicine—Great Scott! This was the very aspect I had been looking for for years. How did Bell know that I was as ignorant of finance as a babe unborn? It must be a rude joke or unfeeling sarcasm; and here I broke down and emitted a choking sob. How I longed for boyhood's joyous days when I bolted raisins and canned lobster without a thought of coming care, or of appendicitis or ptomaines; and when I didn't dwell within a half-mile of Dr. Boone, with his murderous array of knives and things, and his deadly curiosity to see how a man looks inside out. While my manly breast was struggling with sobs which were aching to be sobbed, my devoted wife, as usual, brought balm for my woe—this time in the shape of an "original package" carefully and ornamentally labelled "B. Varnish," which a friend from the city of Neal Dow had that day donated as a remembrancer. At once it occurred to me that for that peculiar roughness which grief produced in the pharynx and places, "B. Varnish" might have a very soothing effect, and as my remembrance of this friend seemed to need a little stimulation I concluded to bust the "original package." I didn't remember my friend much until I removed the cork, then my recollection grew vivid. In fact I never remembered a friend so long and so deep. I could hear his beloved name in every musical gurgle, and presently I could see his face in the very bottom of the bottle. Peace now spread her snowy wings above me; and relighting my cheroot I sent the curling incense up through her pin feathers with a calm and serene delight. How grateful to my hyperæmic palate was the flavor of that Old Rye, the most unique "varnish" I ever laid on or in for that matter. In fancy I could see the field in which that rye grew. I had forgotten all about my shortage in shirts and things, and was musing on the magic of rye. This rye must have grown in a great field beneath a bland, warm summer sky. I could see it, the tall shining heads nodding to the caresses of the soft wind; I could hear the low tremulous rustle, as if Ceres once more passed through the lane, trailing her regal robes on the rich young earth; I could hear the lilt of the merry lark as he soared high over the shining field in the fair, fresh morn; and I could hear the low, pleasant sound of the wind of the dewy eves billowing the luxuriant grain. About here I couldn't see or hear any more. I stopped smoking, but my cheroot stub fell on my trousers just above "Scarpas Triangle," and kept on—smoking. I think I must have dreamed.