



brought me food, but I could eat nothing. The hours passed slowly, but I took little note of them. I did not even know that it was dark until one of the maids came and asked if she should light the lamp. I let her do it and then mechanically took a book from one of the shelves and attempted to read. It was only a mockery of reading, but it acted as a sort of narcotic, and I had dropped into a doze when I was aroused by knocking on my door—sharp and decisive knocking, as if the person who did it was not asking, but was demanding admittance. Just as the knock came the clock struck twelve, and I knew that I must have been sleeping for nearly three hours. I arose from my chair, opened the door, and inquired what was wanted of me. Standing in the lighted hall were the three indoor servants and the old nurse, and the faces of all were blanched with terror. One of the girls, in her agony of fright, caught my sleeve and panted: 'Oh, sir, do come!'

"I shook her off and addressing the nurse, inquired: 'What's the meaning of this?' She was clearly as frightened as the others but was more self-possessed, and replied: 'If you please, sir, Jane and Margaret say that their mistress is standing at the side door tapping on the panels, and that they will leave the house if you do not come and see.'

"I told them they were superstitious and bade them go to bed, but they cowered behind me as I hastily crossed the store-room and strode through it to the side door. I approached the portal and I confess that my pulses bounded as I distinctly heard the well-known tap. I groped for the bolt, which I drew back and flung the door open. If I were to live for a century I could never forget what I then beheld. There stood my wife, with bright, open eyes, a flushed face, disheveled hair and her garments stained with large spots of blood.

"'James,' she said, 'don't be frightened, it is I.' She may have said more, but this was all I heard. They told me that I gasped 'Kate! my Kate!' and fell senseless.

"When I recovered consciousness, I found myself in bed. My wife, dressed as was her custom, was sitting by my side, and I looked around and wondered whether I had been awakened from a horrible nightmare. At last the reality of the events of the past few days came back to me—my wife's illness, her death, her strange return from the world of spirits.

"When I summoned strength for the task, I asked what it all meant, and though she could tell but little, that little was enough to solve the mystery. She said she had felt as if she were being rudely awakened from sleep, and that when she became thoroughly aroused, she discovered that she was sitting up in an open coffin at the bottom of a grave, with the blood running from a deep cut in her ring finger. The grave was shallow and she had managed to climb out, when she observed that she was not twenty yards from the door by which she was accustomed to enter the house. She made her way to it, and we know the rest.

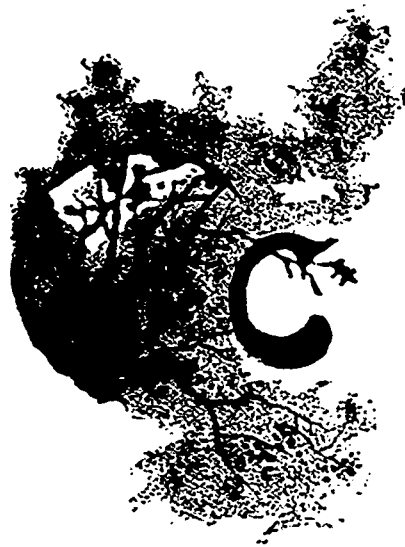
"It had been a curious case of trance, catalepsy, or whatever name men of science may give to those inexplicable simulations of death in which all the functions seem to be arrested while the vital principle remains intact. She had been restored to conscious animation by a cut upon her finger by a ruffian whose cupidity had tempted him to a deed from which many a hardy scoundrel would have shrunk in horror.

"The perpetrator was, of course, one of the undertaker's

assistants, who, unable to resist the temptation offered by my wife's beautiful diamond ring, had broken into her grave and while attempting to remove the jewel awoke her from her trance. My gratitude to the fellow, whoever he was, overcame my sense of duty and I made no attempt whatever to discover his identity.

"I lived happily with my wife many years after this occurrence, and when she died, some months ago, I transferred the ring to my finger, and there it shall remain the rest of my days."—*Exchange*.

INGENIOUS DIAMOND SWINDLERS.



ROOKS and clever swindlers greatly waste their genius for illicit purposes, sorry to say, because, really, several of them possess and evince a degree of talent, which, if devoted to honest pursuits, would soon make them noted for their acuteness. The following two instances, one of which we translate from an Italian paper, the other from an unpublished private French diary,

forcibly support our assertion:

The first case, by which the celebrated jeweler, Mellerio, was defrauded out of a large sum, occurred in Paris. According to the testimony taken, the cheat was perpetrated in the following manner:

A very elegantly dressed lady issued from a carriage drawn up before Mellerio's store and introduced herself as the Countess Salice. She told him that she had come to select marriage presents for her sister, which were to be presented to the latter by her future husband. Her prospective brother-in-law, Dr. Manuel, had requested her to do it. This gentleman was the famous director of the private lunatic establishment in the Rue de Longchamps. The lady selected the diamonds, exhibiting much taste in the selections, and told the storekeeper to wrap them up. She was not surprised at hearing that the account was a little over 100,000 francs, and asked the jeweler to come at two o'clock to the office of the justly celebrated physician to receive payment, as it was very likely that her future brother-in-law would desire to inspect the things. Mellerio called the confidential clerk of the establishment, a man thoroughly tried and found capable by many years of experience and practice, delivered to him the package containing the diamonds, and sent him to the asylum superintended by Dr. Manuel. The clerk, when he arrived there, said that he was sent by Mellerio, and was told that the doctor would receive him in a few moments. While waiting, the countess entered, greeted him very affably, and asked him to let her have the diamonds, as she wished to show them first to the doctor, who was in the garden. The