

"No," he replied, shaking his head, "I wasn't leading up to that. Of course, if the thing is set a-going, I would be glad if you did subscribe, but I had no idea of *touting* for subscriptions now. I merely spoke to you because your coming up just after Palmer's Poll had referred to you, had put it into my head. In fact, now I come back to it, I almost think my *first* intention in stopping you was to mention to you what Palmer's Poll had been speaking to me about, as I am under the impression that you had noticed her leaving me as you came up."

"And what might she have been speaking about?" I asked, for on his first mentioning that she had been with him, I had felt somewhat curious to know.

"Well, curiously enough, about a subscription," he answered, "though not, as you will easily guess, the Sugar-Bags one. She wanted me to get up one to bury Palmer."

"But, of course, you couldn't?"

"No; seeing that I was already turning over the other affair in my mind, I couldn't have acted for her under any circumstances," he answered; "but apart from that, the idea was altogether a mistake. As gently as I could I put it to her that, rightly or wrongly, he had been unpopular, and that to ask subscriptions promiscuously would be bad policy; at the same time, gave her a note to a leading melter, pointedly suggesting that he and a few more of his kidney should make a 'whip round,' to the extent of raising sufficient to put Palmer decently under ground, as parish authorities pottering about his room might make discoveries that would be ugly for some people. I fancy they'll make the whip. Hallo, here comes the messenger I sent for Braidy!" and as he spoke, he indicated by a nod of the head a boy coming along on the opposite side of the street.

"Well, is he coming?" he asked, as the boy came up to where we were standing.

"No, he has gone to the court," was the answer.

"That will do," he said, in a tone of dismissal; then turning to me, he went on, "He must be gone to hear Sugar-Bags' first examination. I'll go too. Suppose you won't care about going?"

"Well, I would not have thought of going of my own accord," I answered; but what he had been saying had interested me, and I rather thought now that I should like to hear the examination.