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"Beat ut, he did, over hedge an' bog an' ditch, wid all our money, th' dhirrty dog. But I cud run tu, in thim days, an' whin I caught up I shure did play a tchune on th' nob av um!" concluded the sergeant thoughtfully. In pursuance of his daily round of the wards, Dr. Sampson presently came swinging in amongst them and saluted the party with his usual breezy bonhomie. A universal favourite with the members of the Force his entry was acclaimed with delight. They promptly bade him sit down and contribute — à la Boccaccio — to their impromptu Decameron, which request he (sad to relate) complied with.

Amid the roar of laughter that greeted the Doctor's last *bon mot*, that gentleman looked ruefully at his watch and prepared to depart.

"Twenty past twelve!" he ejaculated, "and I've got four more patients to see yet. . . ! Behold the retarding influences of bad company!"

"Say, Doctor," enquired Yorke, "how's Hardy doing? Is he bucking up at all? He was pretty down in the mouth last time I saw him."

The Doctor's genial countenance clouded slightly. "Well, no!" he said, gravely, "he's not doing well at