

The Body of John Baskerville.

EVERYONE has heard of John Baskerville, the Birmingham printer and typefounder, and the beautiful books which came from his press. Now, for years Birmingham antiquaries have wrangled over his probable burial-place. Till 1821 his body remained in the building which he had himself built for the purpose. Then a canal had to be cut right across the property, and the body was for a long time stowed away in a warehouse. Finally it was supposed that Baskerville had found a resting-place in the Christ Church catacombs. On April 13th, several leading citizens, including the mayor and Mr. S. Timmins, the Shakspearean scholar, proceeded to the catacombs to "mak' siccar." When the company had assembled within the gloomy chamber, a couple of workmen, by the light of some oil lamps, which only served to make the scene more uncanny, commenced to chip out the concrete and brickwork with which the aperture had been sealed. When the coffin was found it was seen that the lettering was in actual printers' types, soldered on to the lead—"John Baskerville." *The Westminster Gazette* says:—"But even this evidence was not sufficient; there was no proof of identification unless the coffin contained a body. The medical officer of health and the city coroner were of opinion that there would be no danger to health in opening the coffin, and the vicar accordingly gave the word for its removal to the open air, where the lead casing was opened, revealing inside a wooden shell in fairly good state of preservation. On raising the lid a ghastly sight met the view. There, in the bright spring sunshine, after a lapse of 120 years, lay the skeleton of the great printer. Upon the question of identity there could be no doubt. Mr. Sam Timmins at once declared the moment he saw the body that it was Baskerville. He could recognise it from the sketches which had been made when it was first opened at the time the canal was being cut in 1822. A still more striking confirmation, was, however, forthcoming when several of the medical gentlemen present made a closer examination of the remains. There, lying in the middle of the coffin, was an ordinary glazier's putty knife, the presence of which can be easily accounted for when it is remembered that the body lay open in the coffin in Mr. Marston's glazery warehouse for a long time. The size of the skeleton, too, was in strict conformity with the known personal appearance of the great printer. Baskerville was a small man, and the body in the coffin measured 5ft. 4in.; the skull—which was the only portion in a good state of preservation—showed that of a small well-formed head, with traces still adhering of heavy well-arched eyebrows. The teeth were in a wonderfully fine state of preservation, and it was remarked that the molars in the bottom jaw were absolutely without flaw. All the experts present declared themselves to be absolutely satisfied as to the identification, and the lid of the coffin was replaced and the lead re-soldered preparatory to its being returned to its receptacle in the catacombs. A photograph was taken of the coffin."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"Notice their Methods."

IN every shop there are a few men at least who have the reputation of being the best workmen; it is well to notice their methods. You may be able to improve on them later. A large amount of education comes by keeping one's eyes open, also by asking sensible questions. It is better to listen well than to talk well. When you are receiving instructions about your work, pay the most strict attention. Do not allow any false pride or diffidence to keep you from asking a repetition if you do not thoroughly understand—don't say you do, unless you are certain. It is better to settle these things on the spot. No matter how rough a foreman may be, he is apt to like the boy who attends strictly to business; this is better than brightness. If the foreman deems it essential to give you explanations, don't stop him by saying, "I know," let him finish, keep quiet, or you may lose a chance to learn. If he asks you about a certain job, better tell him how you propose to do it, if he has time to listen; he may know a better way. To say, "I know," cuts off all chance for him to explain. Be on time—there is no excuse for habitual tardiness; this cuts a man's value away below par. There should never be any doubt about your being on hand. If unavoidably absent, send a note; it pays. You are not humbling yourself by so doing. The foreman is responsible to the firm for getting out the work; he must know whether to count on you or not. Your job may suddenly come to be in a hurry; he must know whether to put someone else on or not. Life is short; we are not here for fun, but for business. The shop is not running for the benefit of anyone's health, but for the good of all parties—for the customers; don't forget this. Your interest is identical with that of the proprietor. Print this in big letters and paste it in your cap. He is looking for men who can turn out the most work for the least money. You are training for that position. The quickest, most skilful and best paid man in the establishment will hold it. With industry, average intelligence and strict attention to business, there is no reason why a young man should not succeed. Keep this in mind. Your garments may not be unblemished, nor your hands lily-white, but the first may cover a manly breast, and the second ought to be washed before you go home.—*Scientific Machinist*.

A NOVELTY in the way of window bills has been seen in Edinburgh recently, the superintendent of police seeking by this means to enlist the aid of the public in capturing the purloiner of a first edition of "Sketches by Boz." The thief evidently knew what he was about, and it may be doubted if the public are likely to have the chance of helping to trap him. The value of the three-volume original "Boz" is now something like £15, and the octavo edition in parts as issued, with all the wrappers, would certainly bring at auction £20, and if properly heralded might find a purchaser at half as much again. These things are not known to all, and a man who smuggles away a first edition of Dickens in his pocket may be presumed to have other than personal use for the rarity.