

LUKE HAMMOND, THE MISER.

By Prof. Wm. Henry Peck,
Author of "The Stone-Cutter
of Lisbon," Etc.

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CHAPTER XXVII.
Continued.

"I know such a man," replied Hammond.

"Then may heaven help me!" said Kate, bitterly.

"Heaven will not; and so I leave you for a time," said Luke, as he left his prisoner and locked the door after him. He found Nancy pacing the hall.

"Has Stephen returned?" he asked.

"I thought I heard his voice."

"He was here a moment ago," said Nancy, "and told me these letters were for you."

Hammond took the letters she held from her hand.

"Duns! nothing but duns!" said he. "I do not wish to see Henry Elgin until the last moment. Rouse Daniel and put him on guard. Let Stephen sleep until night. I will go read these letters."

"But the body—our mother's body?"

"We will attend to that to-morrow. You had better lie down when Daniel comes. Or first let Stephen bring me some refreshment to my library—I feel faint. This is a great pity our cook has left us just at this time. I must have some sleep, also. I shall be awake all night."

So saying he departed, while Nancy followed him to fulfill his orders.

Leaving them for a time, let us enter the crimson chamber.

Since we were there James Greene had worked steadily. Once he had descended to hold a short conversation with Henry Elgin, and to receive food and drink. Then he had returned to his labor.

At first his progress was fearfully slow, for the ironwork was deeply imbedded in the masonry, and he was nearly two hours in removing that great obstacle. Next he encountered a head in the flue, and to pass it cost him two hours more. It was 2 o'clock in the afternoon when he reached a place where, by looking up, he could see the clear blue sky.

"Thank God for that sight," said Greene, as he gazed upon the little patch of heaven that was visible. "I have still ten feet to ascend."

It was very hard work, and he progressed at the rate of little more than one foot an hour. But he was progressing, and he felt that in time he would be free.

Elgin, lying on his bed in the crimson chamber, was hopeful and vigilant and whenever he paused in his listening it was to pray. To him the noise of the bricks as they fell seemed like thunder rattling down the chimney, and every moment he thought he heard the rush of feet about the house in search of the cause of the disturbance.

Kate, in her prison, often imagined she heard the crash of falling bricks, and so she did, but it was from the demolishing of an old building not far off.

It was nearly dark when Greene reached a place in the flue which enabled him to breathe the fresh air.

"I am now above the level of the roof," said he, "or I soon shall be. I must be more careful than ever, or I may topple down the chimney top and create such an alarm as to result in my capture or destruction. The chimney above the roof may fall on me and crush me, or in falling may carry me with it. I am, in fact, in greater danger of sudden death than I have been since I escaped from the well. And after I shall have gained the roof I may find it too far from the next house to leap without breaking my limbs, or even my neck!"

He resumed his work, and as he did so his wedge slipped from his hand, and he heard it clattering far below him.

He was forced to descend and search for it. More than an hour slipped by before he could find it among the bricks below. It was impossible for him then to hold any conversation with Elgin, for the loose bricks had choked up the flue, and James Greene now worked under the fear that the sound of Elgin's warning cry to pause might not penetrate the mass of rubbish his work had heaped up below him.

He paused in terror lest Hammond might enter the crimson chamber and detect his presence in the chimney.

"If he should," said Greene, shuddering, "he will kindle a fire in the grate and suffocate me! To escape in time to save Kate and her father I must work. But if I work I may only hasten their ruin."

He looked up. Immediately above the opening of the chimney, in the deep, dark bosom of the sky, shone a brilliant star. It was the star he and Kate Elgin had often admired, and in their courtship fondly named "the lover's star."

"It is a good omen," said Greene, full of newly kindled hope. "I will work and trust in heaven."

He toiled on. Hours passed, and his head and shoulders were above the chimney when he felt it tremble under his weight as he struggled to rise higher.

"There is but one way," said he. "If I attempt to climb out the chimney (will

ed himself near the bed and waited for the coming of Hammond.

CHAPTER XXVIII.
THE LAST WARNING.

While James Greene was forcing his way to the room Luke Hammond slept, slept in his library chair and slept well until Stephen awoke him at 9 o'clock at night.

"Ha! I have slept six hours," said Hammond, after lighting the gas and glancing at the clock. "It was nearly 3 when I closed my eyes. I feel amazingly refreshed. Now, Stephen, did you see Mr. Thomas Allday this morning?"

"Yes, sir," said Stephen. "He said 'all right!'"

"Very well," said Hammond. "Now go lead him here. Come by the private entrance. You will be gone an hour. Go."

Stephen departed, and Hammond summoned Nancy Harker.

"Nancy," said he, when she appeared, "I have had a fine sleep."

"I am glad to hear it," said she. "Did you dream of our father's face?"

"I did, for I have slept, also."

"No; not a dream of that kind," said Hammond. "But I had a dream which was merely the result of what I was thinking of when I fell asleep."

"And what was that?"

"I was thinking how strange it was that Catharine Elgin could have found so secret a hiding place for that will in the little time she had to seek for it. Now I have come to the conclusion that she hid upon some place by accident. The fact is, I am unwilling to remove Henry Elgin while that will exists to ruin me."

"We know the will is in the house," said Nancy. "Burn the house, and so destroy the will. The value of this house is not much. It is old and can be spared."

"Right. But while it burns hundreds of firemen will be running all over it. They might discover the will in dashing down the walls and tearing off the framework. No. I must hunt once more before proceeding to extremities. In thinking of all the probable, possible and impossible places in which Catharine Elgin may have hidden the will I fell asleep thinking of that place and dreamed the will was there."

"And where was that?" asked Nancy.

"I will show you. Give me that hatchet and bring a lamp," said Hammond.

They left the library, and Hammond halted at the nevel-post at the foot of the stairs which led to the room where his mother's body was lying.

"Nancy Harker," said he, "do you recollect how I fell here the night we sought for the will? This cap of the banister-post slipped off in my hand and made me fall. I was angry, for the fall hurt my face. I fastened the carved top-piece on the post, saying it would hold until doomsday. Let us suppose doomsday has come and take it off."

Nancy Harker looked on while he struck off the cap of the post. As it fell he plunged his hand into the deep hollow, and shouted with joy as he drew forth the missing will and his own forged copy.

"Now, then, by my life, I have the matter in my own hands," cried he, as they returned to his library. "James Greene is dead—I can easily erase his name wherever it appears in the will and insert Catharine Elgin's—keep my marriage secret until all the estate shall have been converted into gold—I see Henry Elgin has appointed me her guardian in this will, and with it I can defy those country relatives of his who are eternally checking me when I try to sell any of the property."

"If you are appointed guardian of the estate," said Nancy, "why marry her at all? The world will hoot at such a marriage—the law will break it—for you dare not tell the world that you are not Catharine Elgin's uncle."

"If I had this a few months sooner," said Hammond, "and been clothed with the powers it gives me, I would have finished Henry Elgin, gained possession of the entire estate, and then, in case I had failed to make Catharine my daughter-in-law, I would have fed with the estate turned to gold. But now I love Catharine Elgin—she shall be my wife! Even if I must die in the attempt, I will go on. When Catharine Elgin is my wife she will do just what I tell her to do. But until then she will defy me."

"Have you no fear of a woman's revenge?" asked Nancy.

"There never lived but one woman I feared," said Hammond. "And your confounded nonsense and dreaming—for you know I never dreamed of the warning from the grave until you vexed me with your absurd stories—your nonsense made me fear her. I mean Harriet Foss. If John Marks has lied, she is dead, and as for my fearing Catharine Elgin's revenge after she is my wife—bah! The power of a husband, such a husband as I shall be, and have been, is a fate to the wife, Nancy Harker."

"And if John Marks has lied?" asked Nancy.

"He dies. He knows too much," said Hammond. "But how can he lie when he has promised to show me her body? You are pale. What ails you?"

"I don't know. I wish this was all over. I wish John Marks had not appeared in New York," said Nancy.

"Wish! What good will that do you?" cried Hammond, fiercely. "We began under circumstances of little danger, but danger has increased around us. Three dangers are crushed. James Greene is dead, the genuine will is in my hands, and old Pan is dead, also. If John Marks has told the truth Harriet Foss is dead. Besides, both Elgin and Catharine are in my power."

"John Marks may betray you to the police," said Nancy.

To be continued.

Women's Realm

Little Dressmakers of Paris.

The pinson is a French song-bird, and the petites couturieres of Paris are universally called mimis pinsons (little song-birds) because of the habit they have of always singing at their work. Crowded, hundreds of them, in ill-lighted, badly ventilated, great ateliers, during the busy season, they stitch and sing from 7 o'clock in the morning until long after midnight, and they earn the vast majority of them—fifty cents a day.

With this amount they must not only board, lodge and clothe themselves, but they must also make provisions for the winter season—four months, from the middle of June till the middle of September, when the gay world of Paris being a la campagne, no orders for work are given, workshops are closed, and the mimis pinsons earn not one sou.—Harper's Bazar.

With Small Means.

It is very foolish of the woman of small means to try to keep pace with the woman of independent, or even comfortable resources; but very often a woman of taste and judgment, especially if she is skilled with the needle, will make a better appearance on a very small outlay than another would do with large means. Careful planning, judicious outlay and purchases adapted to her circumstances must be made. "The best of its kind" is a good plan, but it is better to get the best your purse will pay for, even though the quantity be very limited, and if the material be reasonably good, it may be made over for another outlay with small addition to cost, thus lessening the next season's outlay. Besides, a garment, cheap as to goods, soon looks "cheap," and if nothing better than a mercerized cotton can be afforded it is better than a flimsy quality of showy silk.—The Commoner.

Idea For Bracelets.

The fashion of wearing a tiny watch in a bracelet, which always holds more or less for traveling, shopping or sporty occasions, is suggested by the big jewels that are being set in the arm ornaments. While a watch bracelet is of leather, these new-old bracelets are of gold.

A big catocoon or cut stone that has served in days ago in brooch or earrings is now just the thing to have mounted in a bracelet, either a plain gold band or one in the link design.

For such resetting the semi-precious stones are in as great vogue as those which cost more. Only the workmanship must be superb, or the effect is loud, cheap or dowdy.

Should the family jewel box contain many such old pieces there is no more attractive use for them than to have them reset in a network of silver or gold links, forming one of the necklaces so much in vogue, especially with lingerie blouses.

One such in eruscan gold is set with corals, which of yore adorned one of grandmamma's "sets." The effect is charming.

A Woman Crusoe.

Beginning due west of Point Conception, on the California coast, and continuing at irregular intervals as far south as the Bay of Todos Santos in Lower California, lie the Channel Islands. In this ideal region for the yachtman, the fisherman and the hunter, one comes to feel like a new Crusoe on his primitive isle. And in very truth Crusoe's semi-mythical story was enacted upon one of these same islands, though minus the man Friday and the happy ending. The case was in this case was a woman, a Danish emigrant, left ashore through some mischance by the crew of a vessel that had sought shelter behind San Nicholas during a storm, in the early fifties. For over seventeen years the lone creature lived unthought and forgotten, though the time at length came, when, on the days the mist-clearing north wind blew, she could climb to the island's highest point and view the ranchers' herds grazing upon the mainland. And at last, when hope and reason had both long died, the poor, wild, gibbering creature was found in her wolf's burrow among the hills by the advance guard of the other hunters' fraternity, who had long wondered at the mysterious footprints they marked upon the lonely sands.—Field and Stream.

Woman's Way of Escape.

Two men sat next her table at luncheon. They were suburbanites, and suburbanite talk engrossed their tongues and attention. She was a careful, though not intrusive listener. So she seemingly bent her head to the business in hand the white her ears were eagerly occupied with the aforementioned small talk.

In a few moments she learned that the topic of conversation was a wonderful suburban ball game played between a married man's nine and a single man's nine. The married men had won.

"I tell you," said one, "it was a great game. Do you remember when Jimmie battled that liner out to left field when the score was 23 to 25 in the ninth, and how I went after it and caught him at second?"

"You bet," replied the other, "that coup decided the game in your favor, but the thing I can't understand about is that your nine, you old married men, won out!"

"Oh, that's easy,"

With the Funny

Felotus



Strange, indeed. Belle—"Do you believe in second sight, my dear?"

Eva—"Sometimes."

Belle—"Speaking from experience?"

Eva—"Yes, I have often told Jack that he needed a shave when it was too dark to see his face."—Chicago News.

As Philadelphia Viewed It.

New York Editor to Philadelphia Correspondent—"Please rush report leading politicians caught in anti-vice crusade and reputations blasted."

Philadelphia Correspondent to New York Editor—"Politicians caught, but no reputations among them to blast."—New York Times.

Something Lacking.

"Is it true that Miss Tallman is going on the stage?" asked the young man.

"Yes," answered Miss Plumpan, "but I'm afraid she'll not make a hit."

"Why not?" he queried.


"Because," explained the other, "she looks like a fright in a bathing suit."—Chicago Daily News.

Automatic.

"In what way could you be of any use to an employment bureau?" asked the proprietor.

"Simplest thing in the world!" replied the shiftless looking applicant. "You are always in need of men to fill positions and I'm always out of 'Job!'"—Detroit Free Press.

Mean of Them.



Kid—"Wot you tink, fellers, of folks wot'll put up a baseball fence wid only er single knot-hole in it!"—New York Evening Journal.

Real Trouble.

She—"You are very depressed. I didn't know you cared so much for your uncle."

He—"I didn't, but I was the means of keeping him in an insane asylum the last year of his life, and now that he has left me all his money I've got to prove that he was of sound mind."—Chicago Journal.

Sure to Break Down.

"Hello, where are you walking in such a hurry?"

"Fellow just stole my auto and went down this road."

"But surely you don't expect to overtake him on foot?"

"Sure. He forgot to take the repair kit with him."—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Safest Rating.

"Before having any financial dealings with a new acquaintance," remarked the crusty citizen, "first find out—"

"How he is rated among his friends, I suppose?" broke in the confiding citizen.

"Not on your life. Find out how he is rated in Bradstreet."

His Experience Against It.

Dr. Washem—"I think a daily bath would be beneficial in your case, Mr. Ploggers."

Ploggers—"Well, I don't know, doctor. I took a bath once—a year or two ago. I felt better for a little while, but it wasn't long before I was as bad as ever, and I've been growing worse ever since."—Boston Transcript.

It Ought to Work.

"A gentleman writes to inquire," said the lady who conducts the "Answers to Correspondents" column, "how he may keep the flies from bothering his bald head. Can you suggest anything?"

"Oh, yes," promptly responded the Boll Weevil editor. "Advise him to hire a spider to live in one of his ears."

There Are Many.

The hustler addressed one of those youths who sit on a bench in the park and watch the grass grow.

"Suppose," said the hustler, "that you stood at the foot of the ladder of success?"

The youth yawned lazily.

"In that case," he said, "I guess I'd wait till they took the ladder away and started an elevator."—Detroit Tribune.

How the Trouble Began.

Mrs. Lakefront—"What's the cause of the estrangement between Mrs. Porkpack and Mrs. Beeftrust?"

Mrs. Souths—"Mrs. Beeftrust said her husband gave away a great deal of money anonymously, and Mrs. Porkpack suggested that might account for the present prosperous condition of the treasury's conscience fund."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Money Mad.

"China would be a poor field for accident insurance companies," said a man in the tea trade. "The inhabitants would be only too glad to get hurt in order to collect their insurance. Up the river from Hongkong there's a little settlement of Englishmen. Just across the river is a graveyard, inhabited by a few scrub birds of the snipe family. They are very poor shooting, but your Briton must have sport of some kind, and shooting these birds is the only sport in sight."

"One day an Englishman let drive at a snipe and hit a Chinaman who had just bobbed out from behind a tombstone. The charge of shot struck the coolie in his wrist, putting his hand out of business. Of course, the Chinaman made a roar. The Briton, wanting to do the square thing, offered to pay the damage. The coolie demanded \$10. The Englishman generously made it \$15. There was never any good hunting in the graveyard after that. Whenever an Englishman was seen approaching a Chinaman hid behind every gravestone."

"With marvelous cleverness they'd manage to get in range just when the Briton fired. If one of them had the luck to get two or three birds shot in his system he would come out, roar, and collect. Of course, this drove away the snipe; but the coolies took to catching birds, tying them by the legs to gravestones, and hiding themselves in holes from which they could rise and get shot at the proper moment. The Englishmen had to stop hunting. It was too expensive."

"One of the pleasant and refined Chinese tortures is crushing the ankle. There are coolies in Shanghai who keep a standing offer to submit to this torture, for the benefit of tourists, at a rate of \$5. I know of several cases where this offer has been accepted. The coolie submitted without a howl and smiled when he collected the money."—New York Sun.

Mothers and Sons.

In taking issue with the schoolmarm who said that when a boy thought much of the teacher it counted, while the girl pupil's professed friendship was only skin deep, a Howard mother who has both a son and daughter touches up boys in this fashion: "The average boy looks on his mother as a slave, a drudge, a person to work for him, to be growled at, to be ashamed of and pushed aside when he gets old enough to look out for himself. The average girl, though she may be spoiled, selfish and at times ungrateful, turns to mother for comfort, for advice, and when needed is kind, considerate and helpful. Some time ago I worked hard to give my boy and girl a treat. They were away from home for a few days, and I fixed up each one's room with new carpets, new curtains and a lot of new things for their shelves, tables and dressers. My little girl was so delighted that she could scarcely contain herself. My son never noticed the things, and never expressed a word of thanks when his attention was finally called to them. I have talked with other mothers, and almost without exception their experience is the same. The daughters are the kindest and most grateful, while the boys exact the most attention, help the least and cause us the most worry and heart-aches."—Kansas City Journal.

Gold, silver, diamonds and coal valued at \$102,497,390 were produced from Transvaal mines during the year ending on June 30.