other man's sewel box for the sport of it—unless he's a rich man like you, Mr. Crawford, an' wants an exciting joke. What do you know about Mason before you hired him?"

Crawford thought for a moment. "Nothing. If I recall it, he came to me without recommendations."

"Uh-huh." Haggerty turned round his cigar luxuriously. "How'd you know he wasn't off color when you hired him?"

"Why, Man, he's had a thousand chances to rob me, of big sums too, over there! Joint letters of credit for thousands, and loose money besides!"

"An' in a minute the whole world'd know he did it," observed Haggerty. "No, your man ain't that kind. Saw his chance when you fooled with the safes. He had some patience, believe me!"

"But why, why? He had twelve hundred a year and all his expenses, and no family. Where's your motive?"

"Listen here! Men an' women commit murder an' robbery for two things, nothing else,—for love, an' stakes to gamble with. Think it over. It all comes down to that. There ain't anything else. Love an' a stack o' chips. I ain't one o' those philosophical guys, Mr. Crawford; I'm talking from experience. I know more about actual life in one minute than those book guys with ten Carnegie libraries stacked be'ind 'em. You might add jealousy; but that's only love turned wrong side out. Love an' chips it is."

GRAVELY Crawford took out his poker winnings.

"What's that for?" asked Haggerty.

"Twenty-four hours," begged Crawford; "for I feel like a criminal myself. Twenty-four hours!"

"The poor man!" said the girl, timidly touching Haggerty's arm.

"If I took that money, it wouldn't be fair to you, Sir. Twenty-four hours'll do him no good. They're hunting for him all over town now,—every railroad, every boat, ferry, streetcar, cab. From coast to coast, north an' south, too, tomorrow there won't be a town as small as your fist where they won't be looking for him. An' he's easy. No ordinary phiz. An' I have his thumbprint, the best photo going. The newspapers guy us a lot; but we go right along just the same. When a man really gets by us it's suicide or graft to some guy higher up than yours truly. How do you know there ain't a woman back of it, or that he wasn't a secret gambler? An' now you'll have to put over your sailing an' give evidence."

"I can do that very well," replied Crawford, drawing the girl to him again.

"Never mind me," said Haggerty. "I've been through all that. The only thing that gets my goat is the splitting up of the rewards six ways for Sunday; unless," with sudden alertness, "unless the loot is hidden in the trunks somewhere, ready to sell to some nigger over there who ain't particular. Hey? Keen idea. No beaten track for his!"

"Let us go to work at once," said Crawford. "Are you cold?" to the girl.

"No. I'm never going to be cold any more. Kiss me. I don't care."

Crawford looked at Haggerty, who suddenly found interest in his cigar; at Forbes, who calmly turned his back.

AND as Haggerty's gaze trailed off the end of his cigar he saw the merry, winking shoe buttons. The cigar went through the window.

"Say, do you wear ol' shoes when you go scouting round for mummies?"

"Yes."

"Did you order Mason to have them shoes done over?"

"No; but he always has them soled and heeled when I start on a journey. Good Lord! do you think—"

"I can soon find out!" cried Haggerty.

He seized upon a pair of shoes haphazardly, and carried them to the desk. He was an old hand at this business, and he ripped off the heel neatly. From the hollow within a dozen beautiful pink pearls rolled and danced upon the desk. With startled cries Crawford and Forbes and the girl put out their hands to prevent the orients from scattering on the floor.

Haggerty, who was still wearing his hat, took it off and solemnly bowed toward the open window.

BUT they never found Mason. He was destined for more brilliant things than stone breaking. I learned all these facts from Forbes the next day. You see, I'm Piffle.

THE END

NOT IN THE ORDER BOOK

Continued from page 8

ruminatively. "You stick it into the post—yes, I see. But what you're really trying to do is stick me with it, isn't it? No, Dutch, no stick lamps today."

Now was it the merry villagers' opportunity to make repayment for the chairs, stove, and other comforts they were enjoying on the house, and they did it right generously, with loud laughter and knee slapping.

But Gregg was not in the least disconcerted. He put away the lamp leisurely; at the door he paused. "Goodby, Sam," he said. "I'll bet you that as soon as I'm gone you'll give all of them a chew of tobacco for laughing at your bum joke."

FROM Heathton, Gregg drove a pitching, tossing three-mile journey to Goodman, thence two miles to Sparta, and afterward down the other side of the ridge to Torrey City for dinner. He sang his lamp and his other wares in many keys and with all sorts of variations and modulations, and in every instance he wrote a tune of profit in his order book. The end of the day found him back again at Eltonville, his seven towns covered, and well covered.

On Wednesday the three uproarious knocks again sounded on his door, this time at six o'clock, and once more he was out upon the road, cheerful and ready. Thursday and Friday brought their rounds of visits, made in two fifteen-mile loops, Friday's base being the energetic little community of Wintersburg, half town, half city.

HIS first call in Wintersburg was upon Fritz Weckmann, a genial old soul with a big, round face and a big, round heart. Fritz put a rough, kindly hand upon his shoulder, called him "Heiny," and immediately dropped into German. He put on his square-rimmed spectacles and studied the two shiny miners' lamps with all a German's interest in mechanisms. In the end he bought two of each of them, "just because you talk so much, Heiny," and a large bill of groceries.

Then Fritz beckoned him to the back of the store. "I want a little help." Behind a pile of boxes that screened his battered and littered desk he paused. "Listen, now, and give me some good advice. We've been friends a long time, Heiny, and I want you to tell me what to do. I've got three thousand dollars in the bank here, and it's drawing only three per cent. interest. What can I do with the money to get a little more for it?"

"Three per cent., Fritz? Why, you ought to get three and a half at least." Gregg replied. "You can get three and a half in my bank in the city. Why don't you put it in there? It's as safe as can be. I'll deposit it if you'd like me to."

"Sure, Heiny, that's better than three," was the prompt response. "Come in this afternoon, and I'll have it all ready for you. Yes, sure, three and a half is better. You're a good boy, Heiny. Come in and we'll fix it up."

It was late in the afternoon, when he was on his way to the hotel, that Gregg stopped at Fritz's. Again the old German drew him to the secluded part of the store, and there took from the pocket of his big, loose coat a roll of bills which looked to Gregg like a "hundred dollars' worth of stair carpet."

"Here it is," said Fritz. "Now put it in your bank."

Gregg looked from roll to him in amazement. "What in the world's that? I don't want that; give me a check."

"No, Heiny, no check." The protest was vehement. "If I give you that the bank here'll know what I've done with the money, and that's nobody's business but mine. No, you take the money, just so, Heiny."

"But I'm not going back to the city until tonight. What'll I do with it? The banks will all be closed by the time I get in; they're all closed now, Fritz."

"I don't know; but here's the money." Fritz laid it with finality upon the desk. "I can't put it back in the bank now, and I can't leave it here, that's sure; so you take it, Boy. Put it in the bank the next time it opens."

Despite his protests, Gregg was forced to accept the amazing roll of greenbacks, as Fritz seemed on the point of being mortally offended by refusal. The new custodian insisted upon counting it, an operation that Fritz declared to be entirely unnecessary, as he was sure there were three thousand dollars there.

"Let's count it, anyway," Gregg persisted,

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