

**The Three Burglars—Continued.**

"I don't think this man suffered for want of education," said my wife; "he used very good language; that was one of the first things that led me to suspect him. It is not likely that sons of boat builders speak so correctly and express themselves so well."

"Of course, I can not alter your opinions," said Aunt Martha, "but the story interested me, and I very much wish to hear what that other man has to say for himself."

"Very well," said I, "you shall hear it, but I must drink my tea and go back to the prisoners."

"And I," said Aunt Martha, "will take some tea to them. They may be bad men, but they must not suffer."

I had been in the library but a few moments when Aunt Martha entered, followed by Alice, who bore a tray containing three large cups of tea and some biscuit.

"Now, then," said Aunt Martha to me, "if you will untie their hands, I will give them some tea."

At these words each burglar turned his eyes on me with a quick glance. I laughed.

"Hardly," said I. "I would not be willing to undertake the task of tying them up again, unless, indeed, they will consent to drink some more of my wine."

"Which we won't do," said the middle burglar, "and that's flat."

"Then they must drink this tea with their hands tied," said Aunt Martha, in a tone of reproachful resignation, and taking a cup from the tray, she approached the stout man and held it to his lips. At this act of extreme kindness we were all amused, even the burglar's companions smiled, and David so far forgot himself as to burst into a laugh, which, however, he quickly checked. The stout burglar, however, saw nothing to laugh at. He drank the tea, and never drew breath until the cup was emptied.

"I forgot," said my aunt, as she removed the cup from his lips, "to ask you whether you took much or little."

"Don't make no difference to me," answered the man. "Tea isn't malt liquor; it's poor stuff any way, and it doesn't matter to me whether it's got sugar in it or not, but it's moistenin', and that's what I want. Now, madam, I'll just say to you, if ever I break into a room where you're sleepin' I'll see that you don't come to no harm, even if you sit up in bed and holler."

"Thank you," said Aunt Martha, "but I hope you will never again be concerned in that sort of business."

He grinned. "That depends on circumstances," said he.

Aunt Martha now offered the tall man some tea, but he thanked her very respectfully and declined. The young man also said that he did not care for tea, but that if the maid—looking at Alice—would give him a glass of water he would be obliged. This was the first time he had spoken. His voice was low and of a pleasing tone. David's face grew dark, and we could see that he objected to this service from Alice.

"I will give him the water myself," said Aunt Martha. This she did, and I noticed that the man's thirst was very soon satisfied. When David had been refreshed and biscuits refused by the burglars, who could not very well eat them with their hands tied, we all sat down, and the stout man began his story. I give it as he told it, omitting some coarse and rough expressions and a good deal of slang which would be unintelligible to the general reader.

"There's no use," said the burglar, "for me to try and make any of you believe that I'm a pious gentleman under a cloud, for I know I don't look like it, and wouldn't be likely to make out a case."

At this the tall man looked at him very severely.

"I don't mean to say," he continued, "that my friend here tried any thing like that. Every word he said was perfectly true, as I could personally testify if I was called upon the stand, and what I'm goin' to tell you is likewise solid fact."

"My father was a crackman, and a first-rate one, too; he brought me up to the business, beginning when I was very small. I don't remember havin' any mother, so I'll leave her out. My old man was very particular, he liked to see things done right. One day I was with him and we saw a tinner nailing a new leader or tin water-spout to the side of a house."

"Look here, young man," says dad, "you're makin' a pretty poor job of that. You don't put in enough nails, and they ain't half drove in. Soppin' there was a fire in that house some night, and the family had to come down by the spout, and your nails would give way and they'd break their necks? What would you think then? And I can tell you what it is, young man, I can appear ag'in you for doin' poor work."

"The tinner grumbled, but he used more nails and drove 'em tight, dad and what standin' by an' looking at him. One rainy night not long after this dad took me out with him and we stopped in front of this house. 'Now, Bobbie,' said he, 'I want you to climb into that open second-story window and then slip down-stairs and open the front door for me; the family's at dinner.'"

"How am I to get up, dad?" said I.

"Oh, you can go up the spout," says he; "I'll warrant that it will hold you. I've seen to it that it was put on good and strong."

"I tried it, and, as far as I can remember, I never went up a safer spout."

"And you opened the front door?" asked Aunt Martha.

"Indeed I did, ma'am said the burglar. "You wouldn't catch me makin' no mistakes in that line."

"After awhile I got too heavy to climb spouts and I took to the regular business; and did well at it, too."

"Do you mean to say," asked Aunt Martha, "that you willingly and premeditatedly became a thief and midnight robber?"

"That's what I am, ma'am," said he; "I don't make no bones about it. I'm a number one, double-extra, back-springed, copper-fastened burglar, with all the attachments and noiseless treadle. That's what I am, and no mistake. There's all

kinds of businesses in this world, and there's got to be people to work at every one of 'em, and when a fellow takes any particular line his business is to do it well; that's my motto. When I break into a house I make it a point to clean it out first-class and not to carry away no trash nuther. Of course I've had my ups and my downs like other people—preachers and doctors and store-keepers. They all have them, and I guess the downs are more amusin' than the ups, at least to outsiders. I've just happened to think of one of them and I'll let you have it."

"There was a man I knew named Jerry Hammond that was a contractor, and sometimes he had pretty big jobs on hand, buildin' or road makin' or somethin' or other. He'd contract to do any thing, would Jerry, no matter whether he'd ever done it before or not. I got to know his times and seasons for collectin' money and I laid for him."

"Abominable meanness!" exclaimed my wife.

"It's all business," said the stout man, quite unabashed. "You don't catch a doctor refusin' to practice on a friend, or a lawyer, nuther, and in our line of business it's the same thing. It was about the end of October, nigh four years ago, that I found out that Jerry had a lot of money on hand. He'd been collectin' it from different parties, and had got home too late in the day to put it in the bank, so, says I to myself, this is your time, old fellow, and you'll better make hay while the sun shines. I was a little afraid to crack Jerry's house by myself, for he's a strong old fellow, so I got a man named Putty Henderson to go along with me. Putty was a big fellow and very handy with a jimmy, but he wasn't awfully contrairy minded, and he wouldn't agree to clean out Jerry until I promised to go halves with him. This wasn't fair, for it wasn't his job, and a quarter would have been lots for him."

"But there wasn't no use arguin', and along we went, and about one o'clock we was standin' alongside Jerry's bed, where he was fast asleep. He was a bachelor and lived pretty much by himself. I give him a punch to waken him up, for we'd made up our minds that that was the way to work this job. It wouldn't pay us to go around huntin' for Jerry's money. He was such a sharp old fellow it was six to four we'd never find it. He sat up in bed with a jump like a hop-toad, and looked first at one and then at the other of us. We both had masks on, and it wasn't puzzlin' to guess what we was there fur."

"Jerry Hammond," says I, speakin' rather rough and husky, "we knows you've got a lot o' money in this house and we've come fur it. We mean business and there's no use foolin'. You can give it to us quiet and easy, and keep a whole head on your shoulders, or we'll lay you out ready fur a wake and help ourselves to the funds; and now you pays your money and you can take your choice how you do it. There's nothin' shabby about us, but we mean business. Don't we, pard?" "That's so," says Putty.

"Look here," says Jerry, just as cool as if he had been sittin' outside on his own curbstone. "I know you two men and no mistake. You're Tommy Randall and you're Putty Henderson, so you might as well take off them masks."

"Which I am glad to do," says I, "for I hate 'em," and I put mine in my pocket, and Putty he took off his."

"Excuse me," said Aunt Martha, interrupting at this point, "but when Mr. Hammond mentioned the name of Tommy Randall to whom did he refer?"

"I can explain that, madam," said the tall burglar, quickly. "This man by his criminal course of life has got himself into a good many scrapes, and is frequently obliged to change his name. Since I accidentally became acquainted with him he has had several aliases, and I think he very often forgets that his real name is James Barlow."

"That's so," said the stout man. "There never was a more correct person than this industrious and unfortunate

man sittin' by me. I am dreadful forgetful, and sometimes I disremember that belongs to me and what don't. Names the same as other things."

"Well, now, Jerry," says I, "you needn't think you're goin' to make any shin' by knowin' us. You've got to fork over your cash all the same, and if you think to make any thing by peachin' on us after we've cleared out and left you peaceful in your bed, you're mistook so far as I'm concerned, for I've made the track clear to get out of this town before daybreak, and I don't know when I'll come back. This place is gettin' a little too hot for me, and you're my concludin' exercise." Jerry he sat still for a minute considerin'. He wasn't no fool, and he knewed that there wasn't no use gettin' scared, nor cussin', nor hollerin'.

What's more, he knowed that we was there to get his money, and if he didn't fork it over he'd get himself laid out, and that was worse than losin' money any day. "Now, boys," says he, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make you an offer, a fair and square offer. What money I've got I'll divide even with you, each of us takin' a third, and I'll try to make up what I lose out of my next contract. Now, nothin' could be no squarer than that." "How much money have you got, Jerry?" says I; "that's the first thing to know." "I've got thirty-one hundred

dollars even," says he, "and that will be one thousand and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents apiece. I've got bills to pay to-morrow for lumber and bricks, and my third will pay 'em. If I don't I'll go to pieces. You don't want to see me break up business, do you?" "Now, Jerry," says I, "that won't do. You haven't got enough to divide into three parts. Putty and me agreed to go halves with what we got out of you, and when I lay out a piece of business I don't make no changes. Half of that money is for me, and half is for Putty. So just hand it out, and don't let's have no more jabberin'."

"Jerry he looked at me pretty hard and then says he: 'You're about the close-fisted and meanest man I ever met with. Here I offer you a third part of my money, and all you've got to do is to take it and go away peaceable. I'd be willin' to bet two to one that it's more than you expected to get, and yet you are not satisfied; now I'll be hanged if I'm going to do business for you.' 'You can be hanged if you like,' says I, 'but you'll do the business all the same.' 'No, I won't,' says he, and he turns to Putty Henderson. 'Now, Putty,' says he, 'you've got a pile more sense than this pal of yours, and I'm goin' to see if I can't do business with you. Now, you and me together can lick this Tommy Randall just as easy as not, and if you'll help me do it I'll not only divide the money with you, but I'll give you fifty dollars extra, so that instead of fifteen hundred and fifty dollars—that's all he'd give you, if he didn't cheat you—you'll have sixteen hundred, and I'll have fifteen hundred instead of the thousand and thirty-three dollars which I would have had left if my first offer had been took. So, Putty, what do you say to that?' Now, Putty he must have been a little sore with me on account of the arguments we'd had about dividin', and he was mighty glad besides to get the chance of makin' fifty dollars extra, and so he said it was all right, and he'd agree. Then I thought it was about time for me to take in some of my sail, and says I: 'Jerry, that's a pretty good joke, and you can take my hat as soon as I get a new one, but of course I don't mean to be hard on you, and if you really have bills to pay to-morrow I'll take a third, and Putty'll take another, and we'll go away peaceable.' 'No you won't,' sings out Jerry, and with that he jumps out of bed right at me, and Putty Henderson he comes at me from the other side, and, between the two, they gave me the worst lickin' I ever got in my born days; and then they dragged me down-stairs and kicked me out of the front door, and I had hardly time to pick myself up before I saw a policeman about a block off, and if he hadn't been a fat one he'd had me sure. It wouldn't have been pleasant, for I was a good deal wanted about that time."

"So you see, ladies and gents, that it's true what I said—things don't always go right in our line of business no more than any other one."

"I think you were served exactly right," said Aunt Martha; "and I wonder such an experience did not induce you to reform."

"It did, ma'am, it did," said the burglar. "I made a vow that night that if ever again I had to call in any one to help me in business of that kind I wouldn't go pard with him. I'd pay him so much for the job, and I'd take the risks, and I've stuck to it."

"But even that don't always work. Luck sometimes goes agin a man, even when he's working by himself. I remember a thing of that kind that was beastly hard on me. A gentleman employed me to steal his daughter."

"What!" exclaimed my wife and Aunt Martha. "Steal his own daughter! What do you mean by that?"

"That's what it was," said the stout burglar, "no more no less. I was recommended to the gent as a reliable party for that sort of thing, and I met him to talk it over and then he told me just how the case stood. He and his wife were separated, and the daughter, about eleven years old, had been given to her by the court, and she put her into a boarding-school, and the gent he was goin' to Europe and he wanted to get the little gal and take her with him. He tried to get her once and it slipped up, and so there wasn't no good in his showin' himself at the school any more, which was in the country, and he knowed that if he expected to get the gal he'd have to hire a professional to attend to it."

"Now, when I heard what he had to say, I put on the strict pious, and, says I, 'That's a pretty bad thing you're askin' me to do, sir, to carry away a little gal from its lovin' mother, an' more 'an that, to take it from a school where it's gettin' all the benefits of eddication.' 'Eddication,' says he; 'that's all stuff. What eddication the gal gets at a school like that isn't worth a row of pins, and when they go away they don't know nothin' useful, nor even any thing tip-top ornamental. All they've learned is the planer and higher mathematics. As for any thin' useful, they're nowhere. There isn't one of them could bound New Jersey or tell you when Washington crossed the Delaware.' 'That may be, sir,' says I, 'but them higher branches comes useful. If Washington really did cross the Delaware, your little gal could ask somebody when it was, but she couldn't ask 'em how the planer was played, nor what the whole multiplication table came to added up. Them things she'd have to learn how to do for herself. I give you my word, sir, I couldn't take a little gal from a school where she was gettin' a number one eddication, silver forks and towels extra.' The gent looked pretty plum, for he was to sail the next day, and if I didn't do the job for him he didn't know who would, and he said that he was sorry to see that I was goin' back on him after the recommend I'd had, and I said that I wouldn't go back on him if it wasn't for my conscience. I was ready to do any common piece of business, but this stealin' away little gals from lovin' mothers was a leetle too much for me. 'Well,' says he, 'there ain't no time to be lost, and how much more will satisfy your conscience?' When I said a hundred dollars we struck the bargain."

"Well, we out and dried that business

pretty straight. I took a cab and went out to the school, and the gent he got the key of a house that was to let about three miles from the school, and he was to stay there and look at that empty house until I brought him the gal, when he was to pay me and take her away. I'd like to have had more time, so that I could go out and see how the land laid, but there wasn't no more time, and I had to do the best I could. The gent told me they all went a walkin' every afternoon, and that if I laid low that would be the best time to get her, and I must just fetch her along, no matter who hollered."

"I didn't know exactly how I was going to manage it, but I took along with me a big bag that was made for the conveyance of an extinct millionaire, but which had never been used, owing to beforehand arrangements which had been made with the party's family."

"I left the cab behind a bit of woods, as not far from the school, and then I laid low, and pretty soon I seed 'em all comin' out, in a double line, with the teacher behind 'em, for a walk. I had a description of the little gal as was wanted, and as they come nearer I made her out easy. She was the only real light-haired one in the lot. I hid behind some bushes in the side of the road, and when they came up and the light-haired little gal was just opposite me I jumped out of the bushes and made a dash at her. Whoop! what a row there was in one second! Such a screamin' and screechin' of gals, such a pillin' on top each other, and the teacher on top the whole of 'em, bangin' with her umbrella; they pulled at the gal and they pulled at me, an' they yelled and they howled, and I never was in such a row and hope I never shall be

again, and I grabbed that girl by her frock and I tumbled some over one way and some another, and I got the umbrella over my head, but I didn't mind it, and I clapped that bag over the little gal, and I jerked up her feet and let her slip into it, and then I took her up like a bag of meal and put across the field, with the whole kit and boodle after me. But I guess most of 'em must have tumbled down in hysterics, judgin' from the screechin', and I got up to the cab and away we went. Well, when we got to the house where I was to meet the gent he began straight off to blow at me. 'What do you mean,' he yelled, 'bringin' my daughter in a bag?' 'It's the only way to do it, sir,' says I; 'they can't holler and they can't kick, and people passin' by don't know what you've got,' and so sayin' I untied the strings, put the little gal on her feet and then pulled off the bag, and then I'd be hanged if I ever saw a man so ragin' mad as he was. 'What do you want with that gal?' he cried, 'that's not my daughter. That girl's hair is as black as a coal, and she's a Jew besides.' As soon as I set my eyes on the little varmint it came over me that I got the thing crooked, and in the scrimmage I let go of the right gal and grabbed another."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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"What!" exclaimed my wife and Aunt Martha. "Steal his own daughter! What do you mean by that?"

"That's what it was," said the stout burglar, "no more no less. I was recommended to the gent as a reliable party for that sort of thing, and I met him to talk it over and then he told me just how the case stood. He and his wife were separated, and the daughter, about eleven years old, had been given to her by the court, and she put her into a boarding-school, and the gent he was goin' to Europe and he wanted to get the little gal and take her with him. He tried to get her once and it slipped up, and so there wasn't no good in his showin' himself at the school any more, which was in the country, and he knowed that if he expected to get the gal he'd have to hire a professional to attend to it."

"Now, when I heard what he had to say, I put on the strict pious, and, says I, 'That's a pretty bad thing you're askin' me to do, sir, to carry away a little gal from its lovin' mother, an' more 'an that, to take it from a school where it's gettin' all the benefits of eddication.' 'Eddication,' says he; 'that's all stuff. What eddication the gal gets at a school like that isn't worth a row of pins, and when they go away they don't know nothin' useful, nor even any thing tip-top ornamental. All they've learned is the planer and higher mathematics. As for any thin' useful, they're nowhere. There isn't one of them could bound New Jersey or tell you when Washington crossed the Delaware.' 'That may be, sir,' says I, 'but them higher branches comes useful. If Washington really did cross the Delaware, your little gal could ask somebody when it was, but she couldn't ask 'em how the planer was played, nor what the whole multiplication table came to added up. Them things she'd have to learn how to do for herself. I give you my word, sir, I couldn't take a little gal from a school where she was gettin' a number one eddication, silver forks and towels extra.' The gent looked pretty plum, for he was to sail the next day, and if I didn't do the job for him he didn't know who would, and he said that he was sorry to see that I was goin' back on him after the recommend I'd had, and I said that I wouldn't go back on him if it wasn't for my conscience. I was ready to do any common piece of business, but this stealin' away little gals from lovin' mothers was a leetle too much for me. 'Well,' says he, 'there ain't no time to be lost, and how much more will satisfy your conscience?' When I said a hundred dollars we struck the bargain."

"Well, we out and dried that business

pretty straight. I took a cab and went out to the school, and the gent he got the key of a house that was to let about three miles from the school, and he was to stay there and look at that empty house until I brought him the gal, when he was to pay me and take her away. I'd like to have had more time, so that I could go out and see how the land laid, but there wasn't no more time, and I had to do the best I could. The gent told me they all went a walkin' every afternoon, and that if I laid low that would be the best time to get her, and I must just fetch her along, no matter who hollered."

"I didn't know exactly how I was going to manage it, but I took along with me a big bag that was made for the conveyance of an extinct millionaire, but which had never been used, owing to beforehand arrangements which had been made with the party's family."

"I left the cab behind a bit of woods, as not far from the school, and then I laid low, and pretty soon I seed 'em all comin' out, in a double line, with the teacher behind 'em, for a walk. I had a description of the little gal as was wanted, and as they come nearer I made her out easy. She was the only real light-haired one in the lot. I hid behind some bushes in the side of the road, and when they came up and the light-haired little gal was just opposite me I jumped out of the bushes and made a dash at her. Whoop! what a row there was in one second! Such a screamin' and screechin' of gals, such a pillin' on top each other, and the teacher on top the whole of 'em, bangin' with her umbrella; they pulled at the gal and they pulled at me, an' they yelled and they howled, and I never was in such a row and hope I never shall be

again, and I grabbed that girl by her frock and I tumbled some over one way and some another, and I got the umbrella over my head, but I didn't mind it, and I clapped that bag over the little gal, and I jerked up her feet and let her slip into it, and then I took her up like a bag of meal and put across the field, with the whole kit and boodle after me. But I guess most of 'em must have tumbled down in hysterics, judgin' from the screechin', and I got up to the cab and away we went. Well, when we got to the house where I was to meet the gent he began straight off to blow at me. 'What do you mean,' he yelled, '