

PHINEAS KELLY'S FORTUNE

By George Munson.

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Phineas Kelly was accustomed to see "a look in th' old woman's eye," as he phrased it, when he came home to his tea after eight hours of peaceful employment as a bricklayer. Years of practice had enabled him to interpret it accurately. It meant, "lie low,



"Phineas! We Haven't Got Any Money at All."

Phineas, for things have been at sixes and sevens all day."

On such occasions Phineas, good, honest man that he was, would slip out quietly after tea to the corner saloon, where he would sit talking politics and domestics with his cronies over a glass or two, till the time came to retire home, strictly sober, prepared to find that the odd and umerals had straightened themselves out during his absence.

On this occasion there was an altogether different look in Mary's eye.

"What is it, woman?" he exclaimed, sensing that something quite different from anything in his experience had happened. "Speak out, Mary, girl! Is it the measles? If Tim's got thim I'll whale the life out of him!"

"No, it isn't!" snapped his better half. "Uncle Jim's dead and has left me all his money. The lawyer thinks it will come to five thousand dollars."

While Phineas sat, exhausted from emotion, in his chair, Mary read him the letter from Ireland.

"What'll I do wid it?" ejaculated her husband.

"You're going to be a contractor, Phineas, as you have always wanted to be," answered Mary. "And at the end of the month we leave."

Phineas uttered various exclamations, but he was as straw in his wife's hands. Before he went to bed it was understood that he and Mr. Hogan, with whom the subject had been broached at times of day-dreaming, should go into the contracting business. Hogan had saved up a tidy sum, and with this legacy their dreams could be realized. During the twenty-eight days remaining before June Phineas was to continue laying bricks.

The days that followed were not of unalloyed bliss. Phineas wanted to remain in the little flat, even if he was to be a contractor. But Mary had the "social bee" and she did not fail to impress it upon her husband that, for Tim's sake, they must move to a locality more suited to their new station in life. And, as the days went by, and the whole neighborhood assumed a more cordial friendship than ever before, Phineas found that he was no longer free of Rafferty's saloon.

"We can't afford to be too friendly with that sort, Phineas," explained his wife. "Flaherty and his wife are good enough people, but just common clay."

"We've shook dice together each