

* ' TWIXT GOLD AND SINEW.

BOOK TWO—PART VIII.

BY C. J. MESSER.

ENTERING Hawkes & Co.'s, Mr. Grillis craned his neck to look into the private office. The banker was at his desk, glancing through a huge pile of documents.

"Busy?" asked Mr. Grillis.

"Not to you," answered Hawkes. "How are you?" shaking the outstretched hand. "You should have gone with me. I thought of you a hundred times."

"Did you, though?" looking pleased. "Well, I wish I had gone."

"Saved money, wouldn't you?" slyly. "Now, confess—how much did Burrows get out of you?"

"Not a—"

"Come, I mean straight."

"How did you know it?" wonderingly.

Hawkes laughed.

"A man just left here who saw you on the street, blowing Burrows sky high."

"I was too hard on him, I guess," sheepishly.

"You've ruined his business for a time," said Hawkes. "How much did you lose?"

"Four hundred."

"Well," quietly, "really, you lost nothing. It would have cost you all that, and more, to have gone with me."

"Now, that ain't a bad way to put it," said Mr. Grillis, brightening, "but you were gone a thundering time longer than you said. How'd you make out?"

"It was a most satisfactory trip. I placed the bonds. The last week, though, I ran about for pleasure. But how are you coming on? You don't look just hearty. I hope Burrows' four hundred hasn't made you lose sleep?"

"No, that only made me mad. I've been in a devil of a mess. You hadn't been gone a week before Goldthurst came in with a yarn about his bein' able to pay the rest of the notes. His daughter was goin' to marry young Pattern, and the husband was goin' into the concern of Goldthurst & Pattern. Well, I spludged round as usual, went down to Millbury, and told the men we were goin' to start up. The papers down there had a column about Brigham & Co.'s enterprise, and how they had the suffering of the men at heart, and so on. The next thing, Goldthurst's daughter run away on the very day of the marriage, and ain't been seen since."

"Well, that's a strange thing all round," said Hawkes, who was greatly interested. "I should have thought Alice would have married Pattern gladly. He's well fixed."

"The day after she ran off, Goldthurst cleared out himself, and no one's seen him since. I've got to give up all idea of starting the mills. I can't run on the capital we've got now."

"You want to stop dallying and put an attachment on Goldthurst!" said Hawkes, vehemently. "That's the only thing you can do. You won't get much, but he must have something."

Mr. Grillis whistled and hesitated.

"What are you hanging off for? Do you think you can make anything by so doing?"

"Well, it's just here, Hawkes," drawing up his chair, "Goldthurst's got some property in Essex. You know that time we were down to Essex, years ago?" in a still lower voice, "and that old man tellin' us the story of the Marshfield property?"

"I remember every word of it," Hawkes replied, catching some of Mr. Grillis' excitement.

"Well, Goldthurst was the old man Marshfield's friend. Crosswicks his real name is. He's got all the papers to prove everythin', an' he can make his claim in less 'n' a year. The conditions of the will are met and declared outlawed. After he come and told me about he and Pattern goin' in together, I used to call on him a good deal, and one day he let all this out, and said he had always intended to fix Brigham and me all right. I didn't let on I had heard about the property, and I ain't told no one but Brigham."

"So Goldthurst was old Marshfield's friend? It's the most singular affair I ever heard of. Perhaps you'd better wait awhile. It's a most remarkable thing."

"Almost like a story, ain't it?" said Mr. Grillis, who had suddenly recovered his spirits.

"Well, it's hardly sure enough for you to do business on," said Hawkes, who had been thinking intently, "but it will bear watching."

"I'll get a deed to a portion of it from Goldthurst!" said Mr. Grillis, in some excitement.

"A deed would amount to nothing. Wait till it's his to give."

"I'll hunt him up an' get some kind of a paper," obstinately. "He's a slippery cuss, if he is a deacon."

"Well, secure yourself if you can," said Hawkes, turning to his papers. "How's everybody that I'm interested in? How's Fred?"

"Oh, Kipp's all right. He's pretty busy, between his mills and Kittie. I told him t'other day I'd propose to Kittie for him, if he wanted me to. I told him he didn't seem to have courage, and if he dangled after her much longer his business would be ruined."

Mr. Grillis laughed so heartily that he choked.

"Fred took it dead earnest," he continued, "and thanked me as polite as a dancin' master; said he was only waitin' for a favorable opportunity."

Mr. Grillis stopped, his face growing thoughtful. He commenced to whistle.

"What is it?" Hawkes asked.

"I didn't tell you all the news," slowly. "You remember that little girl at Pattern's—Marie, they called her?"

"I remember her," Hawkes said, in a peculiar tone, as he turned his eyes on the grizzly face.

"She run away with the Goldthurst girl."

Hawkes suddenly wheeled round back to. It was some seconds before he moved, then he lighted his cigar, clasped his hands behind his head, leaned back, and asked in his usual tone:

"How do you know?"

"How do I know?" in astonishment. "Well," more calmly, on consideration, "I don't know, sure. I only know they went away the same day, and neither of 'em has been heard from since." Mr. Grillis thought he noticed something unnatural in Hawkes' face, which he attributed to remorse. "I don't think