

you invented-to blind me. Even Mrs.

Merrilees pretended, in the goodness

Groaning, Craven covered his face

"Now," said the girl, "let me go, I

don't know what action they mean to

take against you, but, as for me, I ask

nothing better than to be permitted to

"You mean you won't appear against

"Not if I can manage to lose myself

"It won't be necessary," Craven in-

suddenly hollowed out by despair. "I'm

A certain simplicity in that declara-

"What do you mean? Father, what

"You remember the knave of dia-

"It's an old story-too long to detail.

The knaves are warnings. I haven't

had spades yet; but I'll get it within

six hours unless I produce the necklace

to be sold and shared. And that's now

"Father !" the girl relterated witless-

"The trouble," said Craven in a

ly. She caught the arm of a chair to

removed forever beyond my reach !"

monds-the knave of clubs? There's

-and that spells-death !"

tion convinced and struck fear into a

heart that had been impregnable to all

another name, perhaps-"

other appeals.

do you mean?"

"Father !"

CHAPTER XVI-Continued. -18-

A key grated almost inaudibly in the of her heart. And I was deceived unlock. Lydia started; but before she til-this Mrs. Ellsworthy locked me in, could move the door swung open far and so gave me a chance to think from enough to admit Craven, and was at a true point of departure. Then I understood, I thought it all out-realized once slammed behind him.

that you had stolen the necklace-that A pace or two from the wall the man you were an associate of criminalspulled up and stared at his daughter, that I was the daughter of a common his face dark with temper.

thief!" Slowly Lydia rose and confronted him, hard eyes challenging his relentagain. lessly.

"What's this," he demanded abruptly in an ugly voice, "what's this I hear about your bringing Peter Traft here in a taxi?"

go and forget you." "What does this mean," the girl retorted, "that you send me here to be me?" he asked. locked up, as though I were a thief to be held for the police?"

He ignored, if he was sensible to, the stressed pronoun. "I want an answer terrupted in a voice of chill despair. to my question," he said threateningly. He rose, stood staring at her with eyes deep sunken in sockets that had been

"I demand an answer to mine," she returned, unvielding.

With an impatient gesture Craven done for !" advanced as if meaning to seize her and enforce obedience. But halfway he paused, let his hand fall, with obvious effort relaxed; mustered a flickering and uncertain smile, meant to be ingratiating; moderated his tone. "Oh, come now !" he said in strained indulgence. "We can't go on forever quarreling, you and I, Liddy."

"I agree," she replied coolly. "Any explanation you can make-"

"It's all a mistake. Mrs. Ellsworthy, a most zealous woman in-ah-our service, misinterpreted my message, believed it imperative you should be detained, and when you showed temper committed an unpardonable error. I'll see she apologizes: meantime I, your father, express my sincere regret."

steady herself, unconsciously sank into Briefly Lydia analyzed words and it, and sat staring and terrified. tone, and found both hollow with insincerity. She shook her head wearly. broken voice, "the trouble is, I've al-"You're not telling me the truth. I've ways wanted to run straight-always. learned too well to know when you're I guess every crook does, down deep. -inventing. If you mean what you say, if you wish to prove you didn't And when I saw a chance to marry money I shook Smith and Gordon. Only instruct that woman to lock me up, open that door and let me leave this house at once." Craven sighed, shrugged tolerantly. "Very well," he urged. "I've no wish to detain you. Just one thing-and we'll go together. First be good enough to give me that puzzle box-" "No!" Lydia cried out in a round full voice. "No!" "What's that?" he said, incredulous. "I said no," Lydia told him. "I wili not give you the puzzle box. It belongs to Mrs. Merrilees." In a breath his face was suffused with blood. "So that's your style, is it?" he stormed, advancing. "Well, we'll have this out here and now, my lady! I'm your father-I order-I command you to hand over that box! Unless, of course, you prefer me to take hood's love for him alone remained. it by force."

and repellant. Death conferred no ma- ing him. I was alarmed, and asked if jesty on his clay. The upturned face I could do anything. He looked at an was deeply congested and hideous, with as if he didn't know me, took a step eyes bulging and glazed, with lips swollen, purple, and half parted.

Quoin bent an ear to the bosom, above the heart, sat up and felt for the pulse in a swollen red wrist, bent again to hold his ear close to the gaping lips. Then he got up and, looking from Mrs. Ellsworthy to Peter, nodded sober refutation of any lingering doubt.

"Gone !" he said. "Not a flicker of heart or breath-a stroke of apoplexy or something. I'm no doctor." "How did it happen?"

"He was coming downstairs," Mrs. Ellsworthy replied with difficulty.

Quoin interrupted brusquely, "What was he doing upstairs, please?"

"His daughter-talking to her." "She's up there now? Safe? Unmolested?"

"Locked in the sitting room-safe, yes.'

"Doesn't know of this as yet-ch?" "No. With the door closed, the room soundproof. Besides, there was no noise."

"Go on. How did he come here, and why did he send his daughter on ahead?" "If you please," the woman begged,

"one moment. I am fearfully shocked." "Take your time," Quoin consented. And while she turned away and, with Mrs. Ellsworthy, And we'll do our best handkerchlef pressed to her lips, struggled to recollect herself, the deteetive explained to Peter in an undertone, "Widow of one Ellsworthy, in his day a world-known collector of tell her anything until you get her stolen property-I mean a 'fence,' of course. Always lived most respectably-much as you see. Craven proband last, and afterward with Mrs. Ellsworthy, who carried on the business in a smaller way, but quite as successful-

ly, as far as keeping out of trouble was concerned. Feeling better, Mrs. Ells- ried?" worthy?"

"Yes-thank you. Mr. Craven called up about half-past ten to say his daugh- FROM PRIVATE TO GENERAL ter was coming to see me, bringing with her a valuable property-I have no idea what-and that I was to find some pretext to detain her until he folone more knave in the series-spades lowed. She got here about eleven in a taxicab with this gentleman. When

she heard Mr. Craven was coming she refused to walt, and I had to lock her in the room to keep her. Mr. Traft-I'm sorry-I put off with a note ostensibly from her. When Mr. Craven came he went directly to the girl. While he was upstairs two men of my acquaintance came to the basement door, and I let them in."

"Southpaw Smith and Colonel Gordon?"

"Yes. Mr. Craven had-business relations with them, I believe. They



or two this way, and suddenly fell as if he had been shot. And immediately I telephoned for a doctor-'

"I understand, Mrs. Ellsworthy." For an Instant Quoin contemplated the knave of spades, frowning thoughtfully, "Odd," he mused, looking up at Traft, "odd how these things run. It's not a month now since an Italian in a low coffee house up on One Hundred and Tenth street left his chair for a minute, with his hat on it by way of reservation. When he returned and picked up the hat there was a playing case the four of hearts. Five minutes It only goes to show how the criminal are imagination inclines to melodramagive your victim warning, so that he may die a dozen imaginary deaths before you kill him. In this case Craven's heart spoiled their fun ; but the chances are he would never have got back to his hotel alive."

He paused, looked pityingly down at the dead man, sighed, "Well-poor devil !" then, unfolding a handkerchief, placed it gently over the livid and distorted mask. "Better not move him till the doctor comes; though I fancy we can save you the trouble of an inquest, to keep it out of the papers. We'd better draw the portieres while Peter gets Miss Craven out of the house. Yes, that's your job, Peter; but better not away. Take her to Mrs. Beggarstaffdon't you think?"

"Yes," agreed Peter, "for a few days ably did a lot of business with him first or weeks-as long as she needs to get over lt."

> "And then?" asked Quoin curiously. "Why," said Peter in surprise, "didn't you know we were going to be mar-

(THE END.)

Enlisted Man in U. S. Army Has Nine Steps to Climb Before He Arrives at the Top.

The private soldier, standing at the bottom of the army stairs, has nine steps to climb before he arrives at the top, a general. His first promotion is to corporal and the next to mother was. For he said that his sergeant. He is elevated to these mother was a little bit old fashioned, grades by his regimental commander. The next step to a commission bear- pig. ing the president's name was formerly the most difficult to negotiate, but thanks to the army's pressing need of officers it is now fairly easy to take for men who honestly possess the qualities necessary to make the some boys starting off on a camping right kind of officers, says Richard trip. Smith in Leslie's.

After he becomes a second lieutenant time and opportunity will give



PIG WHO TOOK A WALK.

"There was once a little fairy, who was named Fairy Sunrise, because every morning she got up just at the same time as Mr. Sun did.

"She had a great love for nice little card beneath it-the death card-in his pigs, as she thought they were very cunning, and not at all the horrid iitlater he was shot dead where he sat. the creatures some people think they

> "But one little pig worried her a great deal. He put on airs and was very proud of himself. The little pig's name was 'Gink,' and he was the pet pig of a little girl who lived on a farm. Of course, although there were plenty of other pigs on the farm. this little girl was fonder of Gink than of any other. She thought his squeal was much the nicest little squeal she had ever heard.

> "Gink was very much petted, and he had a most beautiful home. There was delicious mud for him to play in. He could make mud pies all day long if he wanted to, and if he felt lazy he could simply lie in the cool mud all the time,

"But this special time I am going to tell you about, Gink had a very great wish to exercise. It was simply because he was becoming so vain.

"He had overheard some city folks who had visited the farm talk about their figures. For a long time he couldn't imagine what they meant. Then, after listening for some time, he heard one of them say that it was quite all right to eat everything anyone wanted to, but everyone must exercise, walk and play games so as not to grow fat-for it was so ugly to be fat!

"Gink had never thought it was ugly to be fat, but then that was because he had never really thought about it at all. And yet when he did think about it, he decided that he would much rather keep just 'plump' as he now was than grow as fat as his and he wanted to be a very modern

"The next day he went for a walk. He went through the little village, just managing to escape from under horses' feet, and the little boys' bicycles. He went as far as the lake, where he saw

"'Don't you want to come with us?' asked one of the boys.

menacing her with face and gestures confession inspired, Lydia sat huddled of uncontrollable wrath. But she in misery, racked with tearing sobs. didn't yield a step.

"You can't," she said evenly.

"What the devil's to prevent?" "Because Mrs. Merrilees has it now."

raised a shape of horror between them; loved her. Well-well-' stammering and aghast he jabbered repetition, "Mrs. Merrilees has itnow !"

Lydia affirmed with a nod.

"You-you're not fooling me, Liddy?" asked Craven in a stricken voice.

"I'm telling you the truth, if you've the wit to recognize it," she said with door made her understand that she the brutal intolerance of youth for age allied with depravity. "Sheer chance fooled you. My cab broke down at Fifty-fifth street. I walked two blocks north to get another at the Margravewhere Mrs. Merrilees wasn't stopping, and where you didn't mean to meet me after I'd called here-and by downright good luck found her with Mrs. Beggarstaff. So I gave her the necklace, and came on here-Mr. Traft escorting me, though not at my request."

"Good heavens !" said Craven again, his accents quavering. "Do you know what you're saying, Liddy?"

"I'm afraid-I know too well."

With an inarticulate groan Craven sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands. "You've ruined me!"

"I've saved you, you mean."

"You don't understand. What-" He looked up eagerly. "What did they say when you-when you gave back the necklace?"

"They were kind enough to say nothing, to pretend Mrs. Merrilees had instigated the smuggling swindle that

they wouldn't be shaken. And then I ran short, and to keep up appearances until after the marriage made up my mind to turn one last trick-the necklace-and then," he laughed bitteriy, "virtue! But they were on the same job. And then you turned up. Otherwise I could have come through with the loot and saved myself. Now-"

He paused an instant, profoundly speculative. "I may have a chance yet for a getaway. They don't know where I am; though they may suspect. If only I can get an hour's lead out of town-"

The sound of sobbing disturbed him. What lies had conjured up-fear, disgust, contempt-the truth had exorcised: the rags and tatters of her child-Spent, broken in heart and spirit, He had come within two feet, was humbled and torn with the horror his

Craven moved to her side, touched her hair with hesitant fingers. "Well, well!" he said huskily. "We were fond For an Instant Quoin Contemplated of each other, weren't we, while it last-The man fell back as though she had ed, little girl? And your mother-1

> He turned and without her knowledge gained the door; paused for a single, prolonged backward glance; shook his head uncertainly; shrugged; deftly inserted a key in the slit in the doorknob; and let himself softly out. Only the muffled jar of the closing

was alone.

CHAPTER XVII.

To the right of the hallway, as one entered, stood a conventional mahogany hat and coat rack, framing a mirror. On this Peter noticed the raincoat Craven had worn. His hat lay on the floor near the foot of the stairway. Immediately opposite the mirror an arch admitted to the drawing room, a room in darkness tempered by the glow from the hallway.

Just within the arch lay the body of Thaddeus Craven, supine, limp, with arms outstretched. Kneeling beside the body Quoin looked up at Mrs. Ellsworthy and demanded in an irritable voice, "Light, please !"

The woman moved away into the gloom. A switch clicked sharply; the room was rendered brilliant by half a dozen sconces.

In this illumination the body of Cra-

the Knave of Spades, Frowning Thoughtfully.

forced their way upstairs, declaring they must see him. When he came down they were waiting for him in here-in shadow. Smith stepped out and said something to him in a low tone-I didn't hear. Mr. Craven shook his head and made an inaudible reply. Smith lost his temper at that, and said aloud, 'You lie! Permit me to present you with this token of our esteem."

"And that was-" Quoin prompted. "This," said the woman, pointing down to Craven's clenched right hand. With an exclamation of surprise Quoin bent over and, after some difficulty with the stiffening fingers, stood up, exhibiting a knave of spades. "And then?"

"Nothing. They went away, Smith and Gordon, by the basement."

"There was a quarrel-blows were struck?"

"No. Mr. Craven said something to this effect, 'If that is your decision, very well-so be it!' Smith merely laughed unpleasantly, called Gordon, and turned down the basement stairs. Afterward I heard the gate slam as they left."

"And Craven-"

"He stood looking at the card, swaying and mumbling to himself. I won-I noticed he was holding one hand to ven wore an aspect even more terrible his side, as though his heart was pain- city.

the soldier his first lieutenancy and later a captaincy. Next he becomes a major. Directly above the major stands the lieutenant colonel, who is one grade below a colonel. At the top, for final reward, is a general's star.

Easy as the ascent seems to the laymen, a superficial examination of the facts will prove it a difficult climb, but by no means a forlorn hope. Witness the fact that one of the most caste-controlled armles in the world, the British, has at its head a general in chief who began as a ranker. Even on a peace footing enlisted men of ability in our army have been able to secure commissions through study and application to duty. On a war basis this opportunity is much greater.

Prophetic.

Sir Hubert Herkomer, the wellknown artist, used to tell an amusing story of a London art dealer. This man had two beautiful reproductions of the painting "The Approaching Storm."

One of these pictures he placed in the show window, but it did not sell. At length, in order to draw attention to the picture, he put a card on it on which he printed the words, "The Approaching Storm, especially suitable for a wedding present."

Donkey Meat Fine, Moravians Learn.

According to a newspaper account, the governor of Moravia, in Austria-Hungary, has given instructions that the population of the province should eat donkey meat as much as possible in order to save the inadequate supply of other meats.

The flesh of the donkey tastes like that of the finest game, it is stated, and experiments have proved completely satisfactory. Donkey meat has few peers as a table delicacy, the newspaper article declares.

Alkall Salts.

Alkall salts follow water when the course is downward and flowing to lower levels, but as well it rises to the surface by capillarity, and when the water evaporates the salts remain fixed and we see the alkall on the

The City and the Farm.

Fifty years ago two-thirds of all Americans lived on farms. Yet every dered if he had been drinking. Then year life on the farm grows easier and every year it grows harder in the player who makes the most correct

the little pig was just about to start off, thinking in his vain way that the trip would do him good, when he heard a second boy say:

"'Won't he make wonderful bacon?' "Then you should have seen little Gink run home to his mistress. And after that awful fright and narrow es-



'Won't He Make Wonderful Bacon?"

cape, Gink stayed on the farm outside of the village, and decided fashions were very silly, and apt to be dangerous. He also lost his love of walking!

"And little Fairy Sunrise who had been around just in time to whisper to the little boy (though of course he didn't see her) the word 'bacon' which had frightened Gink so much, was delighted that all her schemes had worked out so well, and that she had cured the vain Gink."

"GIRL MYSTERY" IS AMUSING

Girls Disguise Faces in Pretty Colored Masks and Boys Guess Identities of Lassies.

In the game of "Girl Mystery," all the girls wear the pretty colored masks obtainable nowadays for a few cents-disguising their faces and hair and allowing only their eyes to be exposed to view. The girls then stand on chairs behind a curtain or screen. allowing their heads only to appear above, and the boys equipped with pencils and paper proceed to guess the identities of the dainty lasses and to write their names down in order. The guesses obtains the prize.

surface.