

MASTER OF THE MINE

By Robert Buchanan.

CHAPTER XXI.

Yes; it was Annie, though for a time I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own eyes. She was so white and thin, so poorly clad, and living in such a den. Truly her sun had set, and as I predicted, she was wending her way home. She cried out at sight of me, and, instead of giving me a welcome, she hid her face and moaned. I felt no animosity toward her now; whatever she had done, she had been bitterly punished. I took her in my arms and tried to comfort her.

"Annie," I said, "my poor Annie, tell me what has happened to you, that I find you like this?"

We soon discovered the cause of her weakness—it was hunger. The poor thing had spent her last shilling, and had not eaten a crust since the morning; and, had we not found her, she would have spent that night starving in the streets. It was the work of a few moments for John Rudd to run out and return with food. When she came wholly to herself again, she looked at me, dreading lest I should question her again; and I thought it better to let her questions rest.

"Annie," I said, "do you feel strong enough to go now? I must take you with me to my rooms. I can't leave you here!"

She was too ill to offer much resistance; so, after I had paid the few shillings that she was owing, we left that miserable den together—Annie, still faint and very weak, leaning heavily upon me. John Rudd had quietly kept in the background, thinking that his presence might serve to further upset Annie. He now as unobtrusively took his departure, after having whispered in my ear that he would call for us in the morning. I took his hint, and determined to act upon it.

The night was very cold, and as we left the houses and passed down the street, facing the chilly wind, I felt Annie tremble violently, so I hurried her along and we soon reached the house where I had taken my rooms. Had I not crept into such good odor through my acquaintance with honest John Rudd, I should have been almost afraid to take Annie into the house; as it was, I expected a cold greeting; but to my amazement we were received with open arms. I afterward discovered that John Rudd had been before us, and had prepared the way for our coming. So when the door was opened, the landlady, who was a good kind soul, came forward and almost took poor Annie in her arms, and led her, half-fainting, up to the little sitting room.

I gave her my bed room that night, and, rolling myself in a rug, lay down on the sofa in my little sitting room and tried to sleep; but it was impossible, and after a while I got up and began to walk about the room. Annie's room adjoined mine; so I could hear that she, too, was awake and crying bitterly. In the morning matters were considerably worse; poor Annie was delirious. Her pale face was flushed, her eyes vacant, and she cried pitifully on someone to come to her.

At 10 o'clock, John Rudd's wagon stopped at the door; a few moments later honest John himself was before me. I took him to the bedside and showed him my poor cousin, and his eyes filled with tears as he looked at her. Then we both went back to the other room.

"Master Hugh," said John, "what do 'ee mean to daw, sir?"

"I shall wait till Annie gets better," I said; "then I shall persuade her to come home. You will be back again on Thursday, won't you?"

"Yes; and mayhap she'll be well enough by then to come. We'll make her a bed 'n' the awid wagon and take her careful, Messter Hugh!"

Never in my life had I thought so much of the honest-hearted carrier as now, when I saw him shedding tears for my poor cousin.

When John Rudd came on the Thursday, he found her sitting up in bed, able to recognize him and talk to him, but still too weak to walk into the adjoining room. Nothing was said about going away that day; but I judged that she would be able to make the attempt on the following Monday, the day of the carrier's return.

On the Sunday morning, therefore, when she had left her bed room, and sat in the arm chair by the sitting room fire, I took her poor thin hand in mine, and said:

"Annie, my dear, do you feel strong enough to take a journey? John Rudd will be here to-morrow, and I want to take you home."

It was pitiful to see her face. "Oh, Hugh! I can't go!" she cried. "I can't face father, it would kill me! You go, and leave me—try to forget you have seen me, and they will never know."

"Annie," I said, "the time has come when you must tell me the whole truth. When we met in London, you said you were a married woman. Was that true, or false?"

"When I told you, I thought it was true. He said I was his wife. We went before a sort of lawyer together in Plymouth, and though I prayed sore to be wed in church, he said it was the same thing. Afterwards, when we quarreled, he told me that the man was in his pay, and that it was no marriage at all. That was why I left him, and went out into the streets to starve."

"Now, answer me," I cried, "who is the man? If he is living, he shall make amends!"

"Too late, too late!" she cried.

"Is he dead?"

"No, Hugh; he is living!"

"His name? Tell me his name!"

"Hugh, dear, I cannot—at least not yet. But I trusted him, and he deceived me. He made me swear to keep his secret for a time, saying that if folk knew of our marriage it would be his ruin. At last, when I could bear suspense no longer, he told me the truth. With the aid of him that's dead, he had deceived me. What shall I do?"

My head whirled; I had a sore struggle to collect my furious thoughts. At last I mastered myself, and cried:

"You must come home with me. You must tell the truth to those that love you."

I shall never forget that journey. As we drew nearer and nearer to St. Gurlott's, her agitation increased ter-

ribly; and when at last John pulled up within a hundred yards of the cottage gate, she began to cry piteously, and beg to be taken away. I soothed her as well as I could, and, having left her in the van, I walked on to the cottage to prepare the way for her reception. I entered the gate, went softly up to the cottage, and looked in at the kitchen window. It was quite dark outside; but inside the kitchen lights were burning, and a fire was blazing on the hearth. Before the fire, seated in his arm chair, was my uncle. His face looked whiter than ever, his hair was like snow; in his knees he held the big family Bible, which he was reading, tracing the lines with the forefinger of his right hand. I looked around the kitchen for another figure—that of my aunt. She was not there. I hastened back to the wagon, lifted out Annie, more dead than alive, poor child; and half led, half carried her to the kitchen door.

"Go in, Annie," I whispered, "your father is there!" Then I opened the door, and, leaving her on the threshold, returned to my post of observation at the window to see what took place.

For a moment, Annie swerved and half turned, as if about to fly, then she laid her hand upon the door and sobbed, "Father!"

I saw my uncle start nervously and drop the book upon his knee; then he rose, and, with a piercing cry of joy, held forth his arms.

What followed I don't know. I rushed to the kitchen door, and when I reached it I saw poor Annie lying half fainting upon her father's breast.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was a sight to bring tears to the eyes of a strong man. The poor old father—white-haired, haggard, trembling like a leaf, and feverishly clasping the child who had been the darling of his days. He looked into her face—his smoothed back her hair with his wrinkled hand—he murmured her name—while, sobbing and moaning, she clung to him and entreated his forgiveness. I stood looking on, almost terrified. As I did so, my aunt brushed past me, and, entering the kitchen, uttered a cry of surprise.

"Annie!"

The tone of her voice was harsh and cold, and her face was stern indeed. Releasing herself from her father's embrace, my cousin turned to her mother with outstretched arms.

"Yes, mother! I have come back!"

But my aunt, with the same stern expression, repulsed her, and the poor girl fell back with a piteous moan.

"Bide a bit! Wha brought 'ee? Did you come back alone?"

"We came home together," I said, stepping forward.

"Let me look at 'ee!" cried my aunt, suddenly approaching her daughter, who hid her face and sobbed. "What, can't 'ee look your mother in the face? Naw? Then away wi' 'ee, for you'm na daughter o' mine!"

My uncle, who had sunk trembling into a chair, looked up, amazed, as she continued:

"Look at your father! Look at the shame and trouble you'm brought upon him! A year ago he was a happy man, and I were a happy woman; but now—look at us both now! Better to be dead and buried than to come back yar, bringing sorrow on folk that once held their heads up wi' the best!"

I was lost in amazement at my aunt's severity; for never for a moment had I anticipated such a reception. Hitherto, indeed, my uncle had seemed to take the affair most to heart, and it was his attitude toward Annie that I had most dreaded.

"Come, come, aunt," I said. "You must not talk to Annie so. There has been trouble, no doubt; but it is all over now, and everything can be explained."

"What has she been all this while, tell me that? She left o' her awn free will, and she comes back o' her awn free will; but till I know what she ha' done, I'll ne'er sit down or break bread wi' her again."

"I told you how it would be!" cried Annie, addressing her words to me, but still hiding her face. "Let me go! I wish I had never come!"

And she made a hurried movement toward the door, as if to fly. Seeing this, my aunt relented a little; though her manner was still harsh enough. At this moment, my uncle rose.

"Annie," he said, "dawn't heed mother. She dawn't mean it, my lass—she dawn't mean it! Whate'er you'm done, this is your home, and you are my child—our little lass." Then, turning to his wife, he added, "Speak to her, wife! speak kindly to her! Maybe she'll tell 'ee all her trouble."

His broken tones, so pleading and pitiful, melted the mother's heart. With a wild cry she sank into a chair, the tears streaming down her face.

"Oh! Annie, Annie! may the Lord forgive 'ee for what you ha' done!"

Suddenly mastering herself, my cousin uncovered her face and looked at her mother. Then, drying her tears, and speaking with tremulous determination, she said:

"I know I have been wicked. I know I should never have gone away. But if you have suffered, so have I. I never meant to bring trouble upon you or father; I loved you both too well for that. But if you can't forgive me, if your heart is still bitter against me, I had better go away. I don't want to be a trouble or a burden. I have made my bed, I know, and I must lie upon it; and if I had not met my cousin Hugh I should never have come home."

"Tell me the truth, Annie Pendragon," said my aunt. "Wha took thee from home? Was it him as is lying, dead and murdered, in his grave?"

Annie opened her eyes in wonder. My uncle started, and then, curious to say, averted his face, but stood listening.

"I have already asked her that question," I said; "and she denies it. I saw my uncle start again. He was still eagerly listening.

"No, mother," said Annie firmly. "Naw? Ye were seen together 'n' Falmouth; all the folk think the overseer took 'ee away fro' home."

"Then it is not true."

My uncle turned; his face, which had been troubled before, now glashed beyond measure.

"Annie, Annie, my lass!" he cried, "dawn't deny it! Speak the truth, and we'll forgive 'ee! It were Messter Johnson—say it were, Annie, say it were!"

His voice was pleading and full of entreaty. I alone of all there, guessed why. But Annie shook her head sadly, as she replied:

"No, father. Him you speak of was nothing to me."

My uncle had turned away, like a man mortally wounded, and, leaning against the lintel of the window, was looking wildly out.

"Dawn't speak to me!" he said; "dawn't, my lass! I can't bear it!"

I thought it time to interfere; so, gently taking Annie by the hand, I led her to my aunt, and made them shake hands and kiss each other. Thus some sort of reconciliation was established, and presently the two women, mother and daughter, went upstairs together. Directly we were alone, my uncle turned and faced me. I saw that he was still greatly agitated, and fancied that I guessed the cause.

"Hugh, my lad," he said, "I know I can trust 'ee. Ever sin you was a little lad, you'm been a'most a son to me."

With the tears standing in my eyes, I wrung his hand. I pitied him, with my whole heart and soul; for indeed I loved him like a son.

"Hearken, then, Hugh, my lad. Did you hear what poor Annie said about heren and the overseer? Be it truth, think 'ee?"

"I think so—nay, I am certain."

He drew his hand across his brow, where the perspiration stood in beaded drops.

"I think you'm right, lad; I dawn't think my Annie would lie. But it has always been on my mind, d'ye see, that Johnson were to blame; and only last night abed, dreaming like again, I thought I had my fingers at his throat."

"As he spoke, he raised his voice to a cry, and a strange mad light, such as I had never seen there before, began to gather in his eyes."

Terrified at his words, I moved to the kitchen door, and closed it quickly.

"Hush! For heaven's sake, don't speak so loud! Some one may hear you!"

He was quiet in a moment. Subdued and gentle, he let me lead him to a chair. Then our eyes met, and though we exchanged no word, he saw that I guessed his secret, and groaning painfully, he buried his face in his two hands, and called on God to forgive him for his sins.

(To be continued.)

PLATE IS SELDOM STOLEN.

Tableware Made of Platinum Is Valuable, but Difficult to Dispose Of.

One kind of valuable plate quite abundant in New York is seldom stolen by burglars, though the metal of which it is made far exceeds silver in cost. Every college chemical laboratory and scores of factory laboratories have costly vessels made of platinum. The plain metal is usually worth about its weight in gold and made up into crucibles and other vessels used in laboratories it is much more valuable than in its ordinary form. The makers of such ware, in fact, must earn large profits, for their charges are high, although the metal is made into the simplest forms, without decoration of any sort. A tiny crucible holding perhaps only a gill is worth \$8 or \$10, and some of the larger vessels used by chemists are worth several hundred dollars each.

The value of these vessels is so great that they are locked up every night in a safe in any well-conducted chemical laboratory and frequently counted. Damaged vessels and even the smallest scraps of platinum wire are carefully treasured and sent to the factory from time to time in order to be made over into new vessels. A chemist has somewhat the same feeling toward his platinum plate that a housekeeper has toward her solid silver, but the chemist's plate is worth far more than any, but the most elaborately wrought silverware. It is also much more liable to damage.

The presence of a small quantity of lead in a hot crucible of platinum is likely to bring about a puncture of the crucible. A punctured crucible must go to the factory, and repairs are very costly. Much of such ware used here is made in a little Pennsylvania town by a single firm, and there are few workmen who understand the art of handling platinum.

Treated with care, platinum vessels are almost indestructible. They seem to suffer nothing from the high temperatures to which they are exposed in the laboratory, and however long in use a brisk rubbing renders them as beautifully bright as on the day when they came from the factory. They are ordinarily cleaned, however, by the application of hot water and acid solutions, as they gradually lose in weight by rubbing.

One reason why platinum implements are seldom stolen by burglars lies in the fact that they are not easily disposed of. The metal is hard to melt and a large vessel is not easily hammered out of recognition. Pawnbrokers are shy of accepting articles of platinum, because such articles, having a comparatively narrow use, are not hard to trace. Small crucibles and platinum wire and rods do occasionally disappear from laboratories, but the larger articles are rarely stolen.

When a man presents himself in a shop with a metal worth in the neighborhood of \$250 a pound for sale he is naturally expected to tell how it came into his possession.—New York Times.

Fortress at a High Altitude.

The Italian government has just erected a fortress on the great Chaberton summit, opposite Brincan, for the defense of the Simplon tunnel. This fort is 10,000 feet high and is believed to be the most elevated fortified point in the world.

The proportion of Chinese to Indians in the United States is as two to three.

THE TOILERS.

All day the toilers sigh for rest,
Nor find it anywhere.
The sun sinks in the darkling west,
And they forget their care;
Tired hands are folded on each breast;
The Lord hath heard their prayer!

Through all our lives we pray for rest,
Nor find it anywhere.
Then comes the Night, with balmy breath,
And soothes us unaware.
I wonder much—"And is it Death,
Or but an answered prayer?"
—Century.

SCARED OUT OF A WIFE

THE narrative which I am about to write was told to me one bleak night, in a country parlor. It was one of those nights in midwinter, when the wind swept over the land, making everything tingle with its frosty breath, that I was seated before a blazing fire, surrounded by a jolly half dozen boys and an old bachelor, a Peter Green, about forty and eight years old.

It was just the night without to make those within enjoy a good story, so each of us had to tell his favorite story, save Mr. Green, and as he was a jolly story-teller, we were somewhat surprised to hear him say, "I have no story that would interest you," so we had to find other entertainments for a while, when one of the boys told me to ask him how it happened that he never got married. So I did.

"Well, gentlemen," he began, "it does not seem right for me to tell how that happened, but as it is about myself, I don't care much. You see when I was young we had to walk as far as five miles to church, and singing school, which was our chief enjoyment. But this don't have anything to do with my not getting a wife, but I just wanted to show you that we had some trouble them days in getting our sport."

"John Smith and I were like brothers, or like 'Mary and her lamb.' Where one went the other was sure to go. So we went to see two sisters, and as we were not the best boys imaginable, the old gentleman took umbrage and would not allow us to come near the house, so we would take the girls to the end of the lane, and there we would have to take the final kiss."

"We soon got tired of this sort of fun, and I told John, on our way to singing school one night, that I was going to take Sadie home, and that I was going into the house, too. He said the old man would ruin us if I did."

"I told him I was going to risk it anyhow, let come what would. He said he would risk it if I would."

"So home we went with the girls. When we got to the end of the lane I told the girls we proposed going all the way."

"They looked at each other in a way I didn't like too well, but said they (the old folks) would be in bed, so they didn't care if we did. They were a little more surprised when I told 'em we thought of going in a little while, but all was quiet when we got to the house, as we had no trouble in getting into the kitchen. Then and there we had our first court, and I made up my mind to ask Sadie to be my wife the next time I came."

"It was now past the turn of the night, and as we had four miles to walk, I told John we had better be going. So we stepped out on the porch, but just then the sky was lighted up by lightning, and one tremendous thunder peal rolled along the mountain sides. Its echo had not died away in the far off vales until the rain began to pour from the garnered fullness of the clouds. We waited, or it to stop until we were all sleepy, when the girls said we could go to bed in the little room at the head of the stairs which led out of the kitchen, as their father did not get up early we could be at home before the old folks were astir. So after bidding the girls good night, and wishing them sweet dreams, and promising them to come back on the next Saturday night, we started to bed."

"We didn't have far to go, as the bed stood near the head of the stairs. John was soon in bed, but as I was always a little slow and full of curiosity, I was looking around the little room."

"At last I thought I would sit down on a chest, which was spread over with a nice white cloth, while I drew off my boots, so down I sat, when, stars of the East! I went plump into a big custard pie!"

"I thought John would die laughing, for he said I smashed the custard into a shapeless mass and the plate right in two. You see we had to be awful quiet, so the old man would not hear."

"I was now ready to get into bed, so I put the light out and picked up my boots, thinking to put them in a more convenient place, when down one of my legs went through a pipe hole, which had been covered by paper, up to my hip."

"Now one part of me was up stairs while the longest part of me was in the kitchen. As my leg was very long, it reached a shelf which was occupied by dishes, pans, coffee pots, etc., and turned it over with a tremendous crash."

"The girls had not retired, and we could hear them laugh fit to split their sides. I felt awfully ashamed, and was scared until my heart was in my throat, for I expected the old man every moment."

"I extricated my leg from the confounded hole just in time, for the old lady looked into the kitchen from the room door and asked what all that noise was about. The girls put her off as best they could and I went to bed."

CHICAGO UNION STOCK YARDS, "THE WORLD'S BIGGEST BUTCHER SHOP."

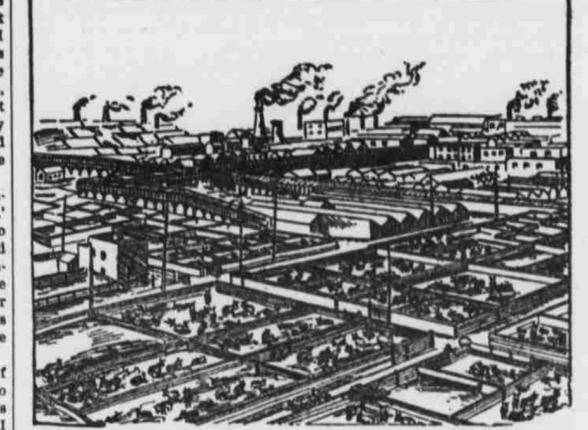


ENTRANCE CHICAGO STOCK YARDS.

have made "Packing Town" famous. The combined investment of the 100 firms within the yard is over \$100,000,000.

Way back as far as 1848 the Chicago slaughtering industry was given an impetus by the establishing of the "Old Bull's Head" stock yards at Madison street and Ogden avenue. It was a great institution for the time, but was overshadowed in 1854 by the completion of a new yard at State and 22d streets. In 1860 a half dozen stock yards were established in various parts of the city and the necessity for a union yard manifested itself, particularly to the railroad interests. It was not until 1894, however, that the Union Stock Yards and Transit Company was organized with a capital stock of \$1,000,000. A tenth of this sum was expended for 320 acres of "worthless marsh land" belonging to "Long" John Wentworth, and it is on this meadow that the greatest packing center in the world is located. The area has been increased since to nearly 500 acres to meet the demands of the rapidly growing enterprise.

Within this yard are twenty-five miles of streets, forty miles of water troughs, 9,000 cattle pens, 5,000 hog and sheep pens, and the enormous buildings devoted to the killing and packing business. The present value



of the property belonging distinctly to the corporation is over \$10,000,000, including the real estate, the exchange building, the National Live Stock Bank building, and the recent buildings used for the annual live stock show. Every railroad entering the city is connected directly with the yards by the company's belt line and over four miles of platforms are used in the delivery of the product to the roads.

A synopsis of the receipts and values for 1903, as taken from the report of the secretary may be of interest:

	Value.
Cattle	\$443,428
Calves	\$154,003,408
Hogs	272,718
Sheep	7,837,949
Horses	109,787,977
	4,580,792
	18,588,657
	101,103
	13,522,526

Totals

some conception of the steady development of the stock yards industry in Chicago may be gained from the knowledge that the figures for 1903 showed a gain of about 9 per cent over the previous year.—Chicago Journal.

while John was strangling himself under the cover to keep from laughing aloud.

"We soon went off into the land of dreams with the hope of waking early. I wish I could tell you my dreams, but it would take me too long. One moment I would fancy myself by the side of my Sadie, and the next I would be flying from the old man, while he would be flourishing his cane above my head. This came to an end by John giving me a kick."

"On waking up and looking around, I saw John's eyes as big as my fist, while the sun was shining in at the window."

"What to do, we couldn't tell, for we heard the old man having family prayer in the kitchen."

"John looked out of the window and said we could get down over the porch."

"Get out and dress as soon as possible," said he.

"So in my hurry my foot got caught in the bed clothes, and out I tumbled, head foremost, turned over, and down the steps until I struck the door, which was fastened by a wooden button, and it gave way, out I rolled in front of the old man. He threw up his hands and cried:

"'Lord save us!' for he thought it was the devil."

"The old lady screamed until you could have heard her a mile. I was so scared and bewildered that I could not get up at once. It was warm weather and I was quite scantily clad."

"When I heard the girls snickering it made me mad, and I jumped up and rushed out of the door."

"Oo, I started for the barn, and when half way through the yard the dogs set up a howl and went for me."

"When I got into the barnyard I had to run through a flock of sheep, and among them was an old ram who backed off a little and started for me. With one bound I escaped his blow, sprang into the barn, climbed up the logs into the mow, and threw myself upon the hay."

After John had slid down the porch into a boghead of rain water, he came to me with one of my boots, my coat, and one of the legs of my pants. He found me completely prostrated. Part of my shirt, my hat, one leg of my pants, my vest, stockings, necktie and one boot were left behind."

"I vowed then and there that I would never go to see another girl, and I'll die before I will."—Family Journal.

SIX TIMES PRESIDENT.

Mexico Again Honors Her Beloved Ruler, Porfirio Diaz.

For the sixth time President Porfirio Diaz has been chosen head of the Mexican republic. General Diaz is nearly 74 years of age. He was first elected President in 1877, and has since virtually guided the destinies of the republic. When he was first chosen to the chief executive's chair the constitution did not allow of him succeeding himself. When his term expired he had General Gonzales elected Pres-



PORFIRIO DIAZ.

The mother of a boy was sitting on the porch. The boy came out eating a big piece of bread and butter. "If that should fall on your toes," the mother said, "it would mash them." dent, while he really directed affairs from another office. He succeeded in having the constitution changed subsequently and has since been regularly chosen to fill the office by his people, among whom he is idolized. He has filled the chair with profound wisdom and along the lines of progressiveness. It is doubtful if he will be able to serve through his six-year term, as he is beginning to age rapidly and the strain of office is perceptibly telling upon him. The Vice President, Romon Corral, may be called upon to discharge the duties of his office before a great while.

Well Paid.

"Does Sue Brett really get as big a salary as she says she does?" "Better than that. She gets almost as big a salary as her press agent says she does."—Philadelphia Ledger.