

THE USURPER

Lavarick was not a digger, had never had a claim or taken a pick in hand, and seeing that he did no work of any kind, nor kept a store, and that he had never been caught actually stealing, some slight curiosity was felt by the camp as to how he lived. But it was only slight. Persons living in glass houses are not only careful not to throw stones, but shut their eyes when they pass one. Some said that Lavarick did a little gold dealing now and then, and that he made a little with the cards. He wore what had once been a suit of black broadcloth, and the wit of the camp declared that Lavarick had "done" six months in England by making off with the money he was collecting at the door of a dissenting chapel. He looked something like a broken clerk, and had been infrequently called the Undertaker. He edged and glided among the crowd until he had reached the end of the table, and with his left eye still on the girl, listened to Lockit and the two men with an intent expression of suppressed eagerness and excitement, and when Lockit shouted: "Three pounds nine—going, going!" he got a handy parrot maid in the future, cheap as dirt. Going, going! Lavarick held up a dirty paw, and with a sickly smile of assumed indifference, said: "Three pounds ten!" "Hallo!" exclaimed Lockit, "here's another. Bravo, Undertaker! But ain't you rather premature? It's a live orphan we're disposing of."

The roar that followed drowned a faint cry of terror that escaped the girl's quivering lips; but Neville heard it, and his face grew pale and his eyes flashed.

He pushed aside the men in front of him and stepped forward.

"Four pounds!" he said, quietly, but his voice was clear and distinct enough, though low, to be heard by all; and there was a ring in it that caused the laughter to stop suddenly and draw every eye to him.

The child, after that one glance at Lavarick, had turned and hidden her face against the breast of the woman to whom she was clinging; but she moved her head and looked over her shoulder at Neville, and he caught the look of anguished entreaty in the big gray eyes.

"And the young un, too! Cupid versus the Undertaker and Long Ned! And four pounds!" he roared, with a flourish of his hand, and he turned to the rickety table, looking at each other; Lavarick with the same sickly smile on his face, and the suppressed eagerness about his ill-shaped mouth. Neville with his lips set square and his blue eyes stern and determined.

The burlesque had died out of Lockit's manner, and a grim seriousness had taken its place. Every man in the crowd recognized that a change had come over the spirit of the dream and that what had begun as a piece of fun had developed into terrible earnest.

"One hundred!" said Lavarick.

The crowd exchanged glances of amazement, and waited breathlessly.

"Has he got the money? And where did he get it?" ran round.

"One hundred and fifty!" said Neville.

"He's got the money or he wouldn't bid. He's straight enough, the young un; but where did he get it?"

"Two hundred!" dropped from Lavarick's lips.

Quick as a thought, Neville retorted with: "Two hundred and fifty."

Lavarick raised his eyes and looked at Neville with a cunning suspicion.

"Is it a game of bluff?" he said. "Is the young un just a drawing me out for the fun of the thing?"

"I should recommend any gentleman inclined to play the game to drop it," remarked Lockit, grimly. "We are serious now. This is business, eh, boys?"

A shout of assent arose.

"Oh, I'm all right," said Lavarick. "I've got what I bid. I'm not bluffing. I'm not."

Neville did not condescend to ask his solvency.

"Is the bid against me?" he asked, looking up at the auctioneer. "If not, I claim—"

"Three hundred!" broke in Lavarick.

"Four!" was the sharp response from Neville.

The crowd drew a long breath.

"We shall want that lunatic asylum, anyhow," remarked the wit, dryly, but no one laughed at the sally.

"Five!" snarled Lavarick.

Neville bid six.

The crowd pressed close up to the two men and the excitement became feverish.

Lavarick, his face pale and distorted, peered a moment, then said: "Seven."

A roar went up, but as it died away, Neville's voice was heard with the "Eight."

He, too, was pale. He had weighed his nugget. There was not a thousand

pounds in it say nine hundred and sixty, after deducting the agent's charges. It was just possible that Lavarick possessed more—he was a "dark horse"—and would overbid him. He could see the girl's eyes fixed on him as if she had not power to withdraw them, as they seemed to be burning his heart, and sending fire instead of blood through his veins. He would save her, if it cost him every ounce, every pennyweight, of his precious nugget.

Lavarick stood, his hands writhing at his sides, his eyes looking first at Neville and then at the child.

"Eight hundred and fifty!" dropped slowly from his lips.

The crowd waited the auctioneer stood with upheld hand.

"Going at eight hundred and fifty," he said, grimly. "Going, going!"

"Nine hundred!" said Neville.

A shout arose.

Lockit commanded silence. A dense stillness fell instantly, and all eyes were fixed on Lavarick.

He turned red, then white; his lips opened as if he were about to speak, then with a sinister smile, he turned aside.

"Going!" cried Lockit.

The tent shook with the roar that rose in a deafening volley, and rose again as Neville grimly unbent his coat and dropped the nugget on the table.

The crowd pressed forward with a renewed shout—this time of amazement and delight in the dramatic finale.

"Bravo, young un! Bravo!" they yelled, and a dozen grimy hands were thrust forward toward him.

"Tell us, young un, is it your pile, or is there more behind?" "When did you get it?" "What's its weight?"

These and a score of similar questions were yelled at him.

Neville held up his hand for silence.

"There's no more. It's my pile," he said, as quietly as usual. "There's nearly a thousand pounds in there."

He laid one hand on the nugget and beckoned to the bank agent with the other.

"I leave it in your charge, Mr. Smith," he said. "Pay for my bid and hand me the rest to-morrow."

The agent nodded, and he shrank back, and the crowd closed round the nugget, staring at it.

Neville turned to the group of women, and held out his hand to the child.

"Will you come with me?" he said.

The great eyes stared at him for a moment vacantly, and with no sign of sense or comprehension, then something in his pitying blue eyes seemed to awaken the intelligence which the prolonged terror had numbed and almost slain, and she leaned toward him.

He took her hand. It was cold as ice, and quivering like a leaf in the wind, but she staggered, and he shrank up in his arms bodily and strode toward the opening of the tent.

As he did so Lavarick glided out sideways with a hand thrust in his breast pocket.

Neville slung the child quickly but gently over his left shoulder, leaving his right hand free, and quietly drew out his revolver.

"Go back and stop there," he said.

Lavarick, with an affectation of surprise, drew out the remnant of a pocket-handkerchief, as if he had only intended blowing his nose, but he shrank back and Neville passed him, and with the child still over his shoulder and the revolver still in his hand, went into the open air.

CHAPTER III.

The night air cooled Neville Lynne's excitement somewhat, and as he made his way over the rough, uneven ground toward his hut, walking as quickly as he could, he began to realize what he had done. He had spent his whole fortune buying a few pounds, in buying the young girl lying across his shoulder, and he asked himself the question which many a man has asked upon finding himself the purchaser of some "lot" at a sale. "What on earth shall I do with it?"

Nine hundred pounds! His all! He laughed grimly, and yet if it had to be done again he would have done it. Standing opposite that cadaverous, evil-looking face of Lavarick's, with the child's wonderful grey eyes burning their way into his own heart, he had felt that he would have laid the clothes off his back before Lavarick should have had her.

She lay quiet motionless and inert against his heart, and Neville deemed it best to say nothing to her. He could feel her heart beating against his, and her breath coming and going in tiny little pants against his neck, and once, when a digger stumbled past them, her hands clutched Neville's shirt spasmodically.

The inspired idiot who invented the copybook headings says that the truly courageous are always humane, and young Neville Lynne, with the pick of a bulldog, possessed the tender heart of a woman.

They reached the hut, and at the sound of his foot-step Mrs. Meth appeared in the doorway, holding the tallow candle above her head and peering at them.

"Is that you, young un? Law's sakes alive, what yer got there? A sack o' meal?" Then, as she saw what it was, she uttered a scream and nearly dropped the candle. "Why, it's a girl! Is she dead?"

Neville looked down at her, all the tenderness and pity in his heart showing in his blue eyes.

"She's right down pretty, ain't she?" whispered old Meth, in his ear. "Never see such 'air in all my born days. Like a waterfall, ain't it? And soft as silk. And them black lashes. Don't often see them kind o' brows with that colored eyes. Reckon she's a born lady, too. But born ladies eat as much as other folks, young un, and—"

He mentioned her to silence, and, closing the door, knitted up his peajacket.

"I'm going to sleep outside to-night," Meth, he said.

CHAPTER IV.

Neville rose the next morning, had a wash in the river, and returned work in the tent which yesterday he had said "Good-by" to, as he thought forever.

When he went in to see if any breakfast happened to be about he found Sylvia making the coffee and old mother Meth "tidying up," but looking over her shoulder now and again at the slim, girlish figure in a kind of wonderment.

Sylvia glanced about to ransack him with her large, expressive eyes as he entered, but she said nothing, and proceeded to lay the breakfast of cold pork, meal cakes, and coffee on the table of rough deals supported by trestles.

Neville saw that she had been crying, but she had dried her eyes, and was now simply gravely shy.

"Why, you're quite a little housekeeper, Sylvia," he said. "What splendid coffee!"

His sally was not very successful. She looked at him intently, her lips moved, but she had dried her eyes, and was now sound came, and he ate his breakfast and got back to his claim as quickly as possible.

After he had been at work half an hour he saw Lockit approaching.

The two men exchanged nods.

"Get that nugget out of this, young un!" said Lockit.

"Yes," replied Neville, cleaning his spade.

"A rare slice of luck, young un! And you went and planked it down for that girl! Well, I admire your pluck, I do. But, pard, that fellow Lavarick has been at me this morning—you know what we're going to do with the money—the nine hundred?" he broke off.

Neville shook his head.

"No. It doesn't matter to me."

"Well, we've reckoned to divide it square and fair, share and share alike all round."

"All right," said Neville, indifferently.

"But, young un, Lavarick has made the boys an offer."

Neville leaned on his pick, and looked up at the man attentively.

"He's offered a thou—goodness knows where the money is—but he's offered it for the girl. Seems to take an interest in her, somehow. Says if you'll take his money he'll send her to England to school, and—dashed if I ain't forgot the word. Oh, adopt; adopt her, that's it. What do you say? Strikes me he's not a bad fellow. Reckon you were just playin' it off with that nugget last night and 'ud be glad to see it back, eh, young un? Better take the undertaker's offer."

Neville's face reddened—that is to say, his tan grew dusker and his blue eyes darker.

(To be continued.)

He stretched himself on the threshold, his revolver in his hand, but it was dawn before he fell asleep. His brain was too full of his new purchase.

Did he dream and sigh over the loss of that little farm in green and smiling England, the farm he had "swapped" for the orphan of Lora Hope?

Bulletin No. 156, from the Wisconsin experiment station describes "A Simple Test for Casein in Milk, and its Relation to the Dairy Industry." At the outset we would say, once for all, that it seems to be another case of "I told you so."

The conclusions reached by the author of the Bulletin are the same as those we put forward about 15 years ago. This seems quite a long time to wait before one's views on an important question are accepted by others, but it is at least some satisfaction to know that the truth will out in some cases before a man shuffles off this mortal coil. If we could see a few men repenting because of the stand they took in this controversy fifteen years ago, we should be ready to exclaim, like one of old, "Now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thee." The following extracts from the introduction in the bulletin have a more or less familiar look:

"But the proposition that the percentage of fat is also a measure of the value of nearly all milks for cheese production has not been generally accepted."

"This clearly shows that for cheese production, the amounts of casein and fat should be known to both producer and the man who buys the milk—and the man who buys the milk should know the amounts of casein and fat."

"In the milk of individual cows there is certainly no definite and constant relation between the amounts of fat and casein."

"On the basis of cost of production, it is a fair assumption that it has caused the feeder to much to produce a pound of casein as a pound of fat. The proteins to which casein belongs are nitrogen-containing bodies, and are the farmer's most expensive nutrients. When the farmer sells casein he is selling nitrogen, but when he sells fat he sells his cheapest source of nutrients, the air and water. It appears that there is something irrational and unbalanced in the relative commercial values of these two products. From the farm point of view the sale of casein represents a greater agricultural drain than when the fat is sold, and from this viewpoint alone it would appear that these two milk constituents should at least have a closer commercial value."

With all of which we heartily agree, yet we find persons talking and writing as if the value of milk for all purposes depends upon the fat contained. We trust that the management of our farms will not concede any more points to me yet better than the place of casein for those who are continually clamoring for more value to be placed on milk fat. For butter production fat is undoubtedly the constituent of milk which determines its value, and for butter making, fat is all that we need consider. But the making of butter is a comparatively small industry in the Province of Ontario. The great bulk of the milk is used directly as a food, or is manufactured into cheese. All public tests, based on production, should take into consideration the fact that the bulk of the milk produced in Ontario is used for the manufacture of cheese. To place too much importance on the fat alone is more or less an injustice. This is not written in a controversial spirit, nor with the object of "hitting" anyone, but with the hope that those responsible will see the justice of the foregoing and not cater any further to the "fat" cry.

The writer goes on to say: "One animal may yield a milk containing 2.7 per cent. casein and 6 per cent. fat, while another produces a milk of 2.7 per cent. casein and 4 per cent. fat, and still another a milk carrying 3.5 per cent. casein and 6 per cent. fat. Expressed in other way, we have milks where, for every 100 pounds fat, there may be anywhere from 40 to 73 pounds of casein. Surely it is clear that, for cheese production, the relative commercial value of the two constituents. Both casein and fat are important foods, casein belonging to that generally more expensive class of nutrients—the proteids, and popularly called the flesh-builders. Yet at prevailing prices at our creamery a pound of fat is worth 25 cents, while a pound of casein, as allowed for skim milk, at 30 cents a hundred, is worth 12 cents. If we allow the same value for fat in cheese as it commands in butter, then the casein per pound in cheese is worth 18 cents. On the theory that the feeding or nutritive value of these two constituents depends on the amount of heat they can produce, the fat could have about double the value of casein, but nutritive value and heat-producing capacity are not with certainty to be so closely co-related."

We should like to emphasize the latter part of the preceding sentence. In our humble opinion the method of valuing goods according to the heat produced is far from satisfactory. As anyone knows, the proteids or muscle formers are the most expensive forms of foods. The workman in Great Britain has found Canadian cheese at sixpence a pound the very cheapest muscle-former he can buy. He may not know much about the chemistry of food, but he knows that cheese "keeps up his muscle" better than any other food, considering cost, hence he buys and eats cheese in large quantities. If he could not get it at sixpence he would be willing to pay more, but none can blame him for getting it as cheaply

A New Orleans woman was thin.
Because she did not extract sufficient nourishment from her food.
She took *Scott's Emulsion*.
Result:
She gained a pound a day in weight.

ALL DRUGGISTS: 50c. AND \$1.00

BANISH PIMPLES AND ERUPTIONS

Everyone Needs a Tonic in Spring to Purify and Build Up the Blood.

If you want new health and strength in spring you must build up your blood with a tonic medicine. Indoor life during the long winter months is responsible for the depressed condition and feeling of constant tiredness which affects so many people every spring. This condition means that the blood is impure and weak. It is what causes pimples and unsightly eruptions in some, others have twinges of rheumatism, or the sharp, stabbing pains of neuralgia. Poor appetite, frequent headaches and a desire to avoid exertion is also due to bad blood. Any or all of these troubles can be banished by the fair use of such a tonic medicine as Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Every dose of this medicine helps to make new, rich, red blood, which drives out impurities, stimulates every organ, strengthens every nerve and brings a feeling of new health and new energy to weak tired out, ailing men and women. Here is proof that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is the greatest of all spring medicines. Mr. Henry Baker, Chipman, N. B., says: "Last spring I was so weak and miserable that I could hardly drag myself about. My appetite was poor. I did not sleep well, and dreaded work. My blood was in a terrible condition, which caused pimples and small boils to break out all over me. This would itch and pain and cause me much trouble. I tried several medicines, but without the least benefit, when one day a friend asked me why I did not try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. He spoke so highly of this medicine that I decided to take his advice and give the pills a trial. I got a half dozen boxes and the result was that by the time they were finished I felt like an altogether different man. They purified my blood, built up my whole system, and I have not had a pimple on my flesh, not a sick day since. For this reason I can highly recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills as a blood-builder and purifier." Sold by all medicine dealers or by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Finesse.

Mr. Quinby called up his wife by telephone.

"Arabella," he said, "I'd like to bring a friend home to dine with us this evening. Have something good."

"All right," responded Mrs. Quinby.

"Jason," she said, "you told me you were going to bring a friend to take dinner with a good meal. Where he?"

"Arabella," answered Mr. Quinby, "I said I'd like to bring a friend. I couldn't find any to bring. If dinner is ready let's eat. I'm hungry."

Quick-Growing Seed.

A turnip seed increases its own weight 15 times in a minute. On peat grounds turnips have to be found to increase by growth 15,999 times the weight of their seed each day they stood upon the soil.

DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS

FOR ALL KINDS OF BRIGHT'S DISEASE, GRAVEL, NEURALGIA, RHEUMATISM, MIGRAINE, HEADACHE, BACKACHE, AND ALL AFFECTIONS OF THE URINARY ORGANS. Sold only in London, England.

THE STAGES OF LIFE.

Dangers Which Threaten Every Human Being.

The question, "What is life?" has been asked many times, but it has seldom been answered in the manner chosen by a Parisian medical man in the French Journal of Health.

He has defined life in terms of disease, and his analysis proceeds thus:

First year—Infantile complaints and vaccination.

Second year—Teething, croup, infantile cholera and convulsions.

Third year—Diphtheria, whooping cough and bronchitis.

Fourth year—Scarlatina and meningitis.

Fifth year—Measles.

By now, he says, half the children are dead. The others live on as follows:

Seventh year—Mumps.

Tenth year—Typhoid.

Sixteenth year—Chlorosis and spinal irritation.

Eighteenth year—Neurasthenia.

Twentieth year—Cephalalgia, alcoholism and vertigo.

Twenty-fifth year—Marriage (included among the diseases).

Twenty-sixth year—Insomnia (probably the first baby).

Thirtieth year—Dyspepsia and nervous asthenia.

Forty-fifth year—Pneumonia.

Forty-fifth year—Lumbago and falling eight.

Fifty-fifth year—Rheumatism and baldness.

Sixtieth year—Amnesia, loss of teeth, hardening of arteries.

Sixty-fifth year—Apoplexy.

Seventieth year—Amblyopia, deafness, general debility, loss of tone in the digestive organs, gouty rheumatism.

Seventy-fifth year—Death.

HEALTH FOR THE BABY

A mother who has once used Baby's Own Tablets for her children will always use them for the minor ailments that come to all little ones. The Tablets are the best medicine in the world for the cure of indigestion, colic, constipation, diarrhoea, teething troubles and breaking up colds. And the mother has the guarantee of a government analyst that this medicine contains no poisonous opiate or narcotic. Mrs. Wm. F. Day, St. Eleanor, P. E. I., says: "I have used Baby's Own Tablets with the best of results and know of nothing to equal them for the cure of stomach and bowel troubles. I do not feel safe unless I have a box of Baby's Own Tablets in the house." Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box from the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Does Ma Wish She Was Pa?

"I wish I had a lot o' cash."
"See pa, one winter's night."
"I'd go down south and see a while."
"Where days are warm an' bright."
"He set an' watched the fire die."
"Till ma brought some fresh pine knots."
"An' made a cheerful blaze."

"I wish I had a million shares."
"I stock in Standard Oil."
"See pa, 'I wouldn't do a thing."
"Ma made the kettle boil."
"An' mixed hot biscuits, fried some ham."
"An' sugar (smack good, you bet!)"
"Fetched cheese an' doughnuts, made the tea."
"Then pa—set down an' eat!"

"I wish I was a millionaire."
"See pa, 'I'd have a snag."
"Next door the furnace, we heard a snore."
"Pa—at his evening nap!"
"Ma did the dishes, shook the cloth."
"Brushed up an' put on her way."
"An' fed the cat, then started up."
"Her plans for baking day."

"She washed an' put some beans to soak."
"An' set some bread to rise."
"Unstrung dried apples, soaked 'em, too."
"All ready for her pie!"
"She brought more wood, put out the cat."
"Then darned four pairs o' socks."
"Pa woke, an' sez, 'tis time for bed."
"Ma, have you washed both cloths?"
"—Mary F. K. Hutchinson, in March Woman's Home Companion.

TO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY

Take LAXATIVE BROMO Quinine Tablets. Druggists refund money if it fails to cure. W. GROVE'S signature is on each box. 25c.

What He Wanted to Say.

"Hello!"
"Hello!"
"Hello," confounded you! What do you want?"
"Is this 6445?"
"Of course! Why don't you go ahead and talk?"
"Oh, you needn't get mad about nothing."
"Well, my time's worth money! I can't stand here all day jabbering 'hello' to somebody!"
"This is about the first time I ever used a telephone, and—"
"Did you call me up just for practice?"
"No, of course not."
"Did you call me up to tell a funny story?"
"No, I—"
"Well, why don't you go ahead then with your business?"
"You don't give me a chance. As I was saying—"
"There you go again! Say, how long are you going to keep me standing here?"
"You can sit down if you want to."
"I'll sit down on you if this is supposed to be a poke! Who are you, sir?"
"My name is Brown. I moved in directly opposite you a few weeks ago."
"Well, Brown, I'm sorry I have spoken so harshly to you, but I'm not feeling just up to the mark to-day. Hope you will pardon me."
"Oh, certainly."
"What was it you wished to say to me?"
"Why, I wanted to tell you that your house is on fire."—Success.

A large area of peat land has been found in Madison county, Montana. The owner of a farm in the peat region has experimented in drying the peat, and samples of the fuel distributed in Virginia City have met with much favor. The fuel will be prepared in large quantity and can be sold at a low figure. A coal famine, due to lack of cars, has been threatening the region and the discovery of so cheap and efficient a substitute just at this time is considered a godsend.

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