

but a little cross work is necessary to our job sometimes, so as not to get left too far behind by the professionals."

Then very swiftly, after a little tinkering, but no fumbling, the policeman had the door of the stable open, and soon the horses were placed in comfort that bitter night.

"It looks as if we would have to share their hay," said Hearne, glancing up at the long row of black windows. But the chief knew better.

"We can get in yonder," he said, jerking his thumb in the direction of Egham Castle. "I know houses under repair. There is always a heap of sand or of bricks under an unhasped window, generally in the proximity of the kitchen!"

And the chief guessed rightly. Even so, by such a window did the eight men penetrate the darksome, half underground kitchen flat of Egham Castle.

"Now, your lantern—quick!" said the chief, addressing the policeman who had opened the stable door.

By a slight further infraction of Baby Lant's property, and upon Hearne's volunteering to stand good for the damage, the chief and he obtained creature comforts for the cold and wearied men. As they were partaking of these, there came, clear and manifest from above, the shuffling tread of a foot. Then a cough—yes, of all things in the world—a cough.

I think there was no one among them who did not quail, at that dead hour, in that dead house, and . . . with a dead man trailing his white-wrapped limbs tardily above looking for a scarlet dressing gown.

Of course they did not believe in ghosts—not a man of them. It must be Hammer, they knew that. But still, they had no objections to the other fellow going first. Finally the chief, as became his office, snatched the lantern; and made for the staircase which led from the kitchens to the hall and from