THE LOOM OF GOD.

Day's curtains blue are furled; their muf-

fling glare,
That shuts Infinity from eyes of earth,
Is drawn saide; and now, august and bare,
The loom of God in majesty stands forth.
O swift and sure the shining shuttles fly,
Yeaving apace the web of destiny;
Tet neither throb nor jar nor snapping
thread

Breaketh the awful hush where God doth

tread;
And I, an atom's atom, still am hurled
Onward and onward with this fleeing
world,
I know not where, nor why; the vast de-

sign
Benumbs, engulfs, each struggling thought
of mine;
I tremble in the starry stillness grand
That powerless I stand.

Yet with the web a weft sublimer still

Is wrought—as flowers bloom on warp
and woof.

So bloom God's thoughts in man if he but
will,

Nor from his holy purpose hold aloof.

O, swift and sure as planets' swerveless

Drawing the threads that bind the Infinite,

Drawing the threads that bind the Infinite,
Our days go flashing-shuttles in the loom,
Weaving the web whereon God's thoughts
may bloom;
For living souls to rhythmic sun and star
The meaning give that doth complete or
mar
The plan Divine; and whatsoe'er it be,
The mystic thread shall span eternity!
I tremble in the stillness, that one strand
I hold in mine own hand!

-Mrs. Frances Moore Geiger, in N. Y. Observer.

35050505050505050505 THE STURGIS WAGER A DETECTIVE STORY.

By EDGAR MORETTE Copyright, 1899, by Frederick A. Stokes Co. たりだりにりにりにりにりだりだっ

CHAPTER XX.-CONTINUED.

There was a brief silence, broken at tast by Sprague, who asked: "Has he escaped?"

Sturgis hesitated. That depends upon how we look at ft," he said, gravely, at length; "he has paid the penalty of his crimes."

"What do you mean?"
"He is dead," answered the reporter,
"Dead? But I tell you I saw him—"
"I know; but he has died since."

"Suicide?"

"No;" the reporter's voice sank to a

whisper; "murder."
"Murder?" repeated the artist, star-"But how do you know that?" "This lump of lead tells the story," said Sturgis, holding up the shapeless piece of metal which he had taken out

of the vat. "What is it? A bullet?"

"Yes; the bullet which Chatham carried in his arm from the time that he was wounded by Arbogast, the bullet which has enabled me to trace him step by step, from his flight from the over turned cab to Dr. Thurston's and finally to his death in this very room; th bullet whose peculiar shape is recorded in this shadow picture taken by Thurston by means of the Roentgen

So saying, he handed Sprague the photograph. But the artist had ceased

"In this very room?" he mused aloud. looking about him with awe.

"Yes. The story is simple enough. The man whose instrument Chatham was is not one who would care to be Tumbered up with tools, which become positively dangerous as soon as they cease to be useful. This man, totally unhampered by pity, gratitude or fear determined to destroy the accountant, whose discovery might have imperiled his own welfare. What mattered a human life or two, when weighed against the possible loss of his own life or liberty, or of his high social standing and his enormous wealth; for and he appears to have brought whole-

sale murder to a science."
"Do you mean to say that wholesale murder can be indulged in with im-punity in a city like New York, at the end of the nineteenth century?" asked

Sprague, aghast.
"Yes: when it is done in the systematic and scientific manner that has been employed here. For this murderer is the most remarkable criminal of modern times. He has not been satisfied with killing his victims; he has succeeded in completely wiping them out of existence. Criminals have often at-tempted to destroy the bodies of their victims, but they have never before suc ceeded as this man has. He is a chemist of remarkable talent, and he has discovered a compound in which bone as well as human tissue is rapidly and totally dissolved. There it is in yon-der tank. See how completely the liquid has destroyed the bone handle of this knife."

Sturgis, after showing the damaged knife to his companion, resumed his whittling upon the cover of the box on which the artist was seated.

"Chatham's body has been dissolved In that tank within a very'short time. It has entirely disappeared; this flat-tened bullet alone is left, lead being one of the few substances which are not soluble in the contents of the tank. Fortunately he overlooked that fact. Genius has its lapses."

Presently Sprague ventured to sav: "If numerous crimes have been committed here, as you intimate, I do not understand how it is that suspicion has never rested on this house be

"The author of these crimes has taken every precaution to render the chance of discovery quite remote. His dwelling-house on one street, and the bogus Chemical company on the other, are in communication through this underground passage, while apparently having no connection with each make frequent use of this death chamber. That does well enough as a last resort, when he is obliged to commit the murders with his own hands; but I suspect that this man has other agents like Chatham, who do the dirty work for him and then quietly

You are sitting upon one of these bodies now."

Sprague started to his feet; and, following the direction in which Sturgis was pointing with his open knife, he vaguely discerned, through the opening which the reporter had what-tled, a small surface of what had once been the features of a human

After gazing for some minutes in horror-stricken silence at the distorted face, the artist asked in a low

"How did Chatham meet his death?" "I don't know yet," answered Stur-gis, gravely; "this man is no ordinary criminal. His work is clean and leaves no blood-stains and no disorder to tell of its accomplishment. He takes life with his own hands only when he is forced to do so; but, when he does, his method is masterly. was easier to make away with Chat-ham than to pay him the price agreed upon for his complicity in the Knick-erbocker bank embezzlement; and so

his life was taken. I hope to discover how before I leave here." Sprague started as the reporter

ceased speaking.
"The price of his complicity?" he claimed, laying his hand upon Sturgis' arm and looking earnestly into his

"Yes," replied the reporter, steadimeeting his friend's gaze, "his

daughter's hand.' Sprague looked away from the honest eyes of the reporter, as if he dreaded to read in them the answer

to his next question. "Who is this fiend incarnate, who is willing to traffic in his own flesh and blood, and with whom murder is a science?"

"The man who is capable of these crimes, and of any others which might serve to remove an obstacle from his way is—"

The reporter did not finish his sentence. He suddenly grasped his companion by the arm and stood transfixed, his eyes dilated, his neck craned in a listening attitude, every muscle tense like those of a wild animal in ambush about to spring upon its ap

proaching prey.

Presently a click was heard as though a bolt had been shot from its socket.

"Draw your revolver!" Sturgis whispered hoarsely to his companion. "Quick!—Look there!"

At the same time he drew his own weapon and pointed in the direction of the door at the head of the stairs. The door opened and a man entered,

quietly smoking a cigar.
"Dr. Murdock!" exclaimed Sprague with horror.

Murdock, still holding the door ajar, eyed the two men for an instant, his impassive face betraying not the slightest sign of emotion. Then, tak-

ing his cigar from his lips:
"Ah, gentlemen," he drawled, in his ironical way, "I am delighted to see you. I trust you will make yourselves perfectly at home for a few minutes shall return directly. You can continue to work out your little prob-lem in the meantime, Mr. Sturgis."

With these words he calmly turned to leave the room.

"Stop!" shouted Sturgis, leveling his revolver at Murdock's head; "stand where you are or I fire!"

The reporter's shot rang out almost

before he had finished his sentence; but Murdock, unscathed, passed out of the room, closing the door behind Sprague, dazed by the rapidity with which this scene had been acted, stood rooted to the spot, without having

made any attempt to use the revolver which he had drawn at Sturgis' bid-The reporter sprang up the stairs and threw his weight against the door. But it was doubtless intended to withstand great shocks, for it re-

mained unshaken. "Check!" came the sound of a mock ing voice from the other side of the

Then, rushing down the stairs again, Sturgis shouted to his com-

"Come quick! We must get out of

And he led the way through the subterranean passage toward the cel-lar of the Manhattan Chemical com-

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DEATH CHAMBER.

Before the men had gone many steps a grating sound reached their ears from the direction of the sky-They looked up and saw sliding steel shutters slowly and ponderously close, like grim jaws; and sud-denly they felt themselves cut off

from the outside world.

Sturgis, taking up his lighted candle, made his way to the door of the subterranean passage and tried in

Sprague. "We are caught like rats in a trap,"

end, old man. I have bungled, and I fear the game is lost. If our lives are the forfeit, you will owe your death to my stupidity."

abandon the fight.

"Don't worry about me," he said, kindly; "I came here of my own free will. But," he added, as a vision of Agnes Murdock flashed upon his mind, As I have already suggested, he has ship the bodies here for annihilation. "I have no intention to die just yet, made some perhaps excusable missit was intended should be done if I can help it. Are we not both able-

with Arbogast's. Ah! yes; I thought | bodied men and armed? What can one man do against two?"

"It is not an open fight," said Sturgis, "but I am glad to see your spirit. I do not give up; but I want you to realize that we are in a critical situation, with the odds enormously against

"Why, what can Murdock do?" "Perhaps what he did to Chatham. It will probably not be long before we

discover what that was.' "But there must be some way of opening that door from the inside,"

aid Sprague.
"There evidently is none," Sturgis; "he probably controls these doors from the outside by electrical

connection." The men were back in the square chamber. Sturgis' eyes were roving restlessly over the walls, ceiling and floor in search of a loophole of escape.

"There is no chance to reach the sky-light without a ladder; and even if we could reach it, we should be no fur-ther advanced, as it would be impossible to make any impression on the steel shutters. That leaves the register and the speaking tube. While ! examine the register, suppose you try the tube. If it connects with the Manhattan Chemical company's office there is a bare chance that we may at tract the attention of the detectives whom we left there."

"As we were saying, Mr. Sturgis—" The words came in Murdock's mock-

ing tones.
Sturgis quickly held the lighted candle above his head and peered in the lirection whence came the sound. A panel of the door at the head of the stairs had been pushed up, revealing a small opening, covered by a strong and closely-woven wire netting.

"As we were saying, 'murder will out!' Nevertheless, it is sometimes easier to weld a chain, even of circumstantial evidence, than it is to pre-dict who will be bound in it."

Sturgis and Sprague stood in the glimmering light of the candle, silentwatching the glowing eyes behind the screen.

"Mr. Sturgis, you are a clever man." continued Murdock, "an uncommonly



"AH, GENTLEMEN, I AM DELIGHTED TO SEE YOU.

clever man. I frankly admit that I had underrated your ability. But then we are all fallible, after all. I made my share of blunders, as you seem to have discovered; but you will doubtless now concede that your own course has not been entirely free from errors. And now that we have reached the conclusion of this interesting game, I have the honor to announce: 'Mate in one move!' Perhaps you are surprised that I should take the trouble to explain the situation to you so clearly. I do so in recognition of your superior intelli-gence. I see in you a peer. If matters could have been so arranged, I should have been proud to work in harmony with such a man as you; and indeed when a short time ago I invited you to my laboratory, it was my intention to offer you a compromise which I hoped I might be able to persuade you to accept. I felt that you would prove an ally who could be trusted. But, alas, that is impossible now, on account of your friend's presence. With all due respect to Mr. Sprague, as an amiable man of the world and a prince of good fellows, it may be said that he is not one of us. Much to my sorrow, therefore, I am left no alternative to the course I am about to adopt. The fault, if anybody's, is your own, after all, Mr. Sprague. There is a homely but expressive adage concerning the danger of 'monkeying' with a buzz saw. Why, my dear friend, did you 'monkey' with Mr. Sturgis' buzz saw, instead of stick-

ing to your palette and maulstick?
"But I fear I am growing garrulous,
gentlemen. If I had time, I should like to explain to Mr. Sturgis the details of some of the more important, and, in my humble opinion, more brilliant schemes of which I have been the—ah vain to open it; the heavy iron bolt—the promoter; for I dislike to be remained immovable in its socket. Judged by the bungling operations Inch by inch he scrutinized the door which have so nearly caused me to lose with growing anxiety. At last he this latest little game. But this can abandoned the search and returned in not be. I shall have to continue to conthe direction of the square chamber.
"That explains why he wanted to have done for years, the interesting shut me in here when I was in his office," he muttered under his breath. markable career, which I hope wil "What is the matter?" asked some day, after my death, find their way in print to public favor. My dream has always been that some such man replied Sturgis. Then with feeling he as Mr. Sturgis might ultimately edit added: "I do not know how this will these memoirs; but, alas, the fondest of human dreams are seldom destined to be realized.

"Now, then, gentlemen, before finally parting with you, I wish to honor-Sprague looked at his friend, as if surprised to hear him apparently abandon the fight.

aby carry out the terms of my wager with Mr. Sturgis. I concede the fact that, to all intents and purposes, he

the other right, 'a detective has a lifetime in which to correct a blunder.' A lifetime! It is not in accordance with Mr. Sturgis' usual practice to use so vague a term. A lifetime is not necessarily a very long time, Mr. Sturgis.

During this tirade Sturgis and Sprague had remained standing with their eyes fixed upon the gleaming carbuncles which peered at them from behind the grated peephole at the top of the stairs. The artist seemed to realize that the fight was lost. His attitude was that of a brave man accepting, with calm despair, an unpleasant but inevitable doom. The reporter had drawn his revolver at the first sound of Murdock's voice, but had immediately returned it to his pocket upon realizing that the chemist was protected by a bullet-proof grating. Now, pale and collected, he remained inscrutable. It was impossible, even for the sharp eyes of Murdock, to determine whether he was at last resigned to his fate, or whether his active mind was still on the alert for a loophole of escape.

The bit of candle which he held in his hand had burned so los that at last he was unable to hold it without risk of burning his fingers. Whereupon he coolly set it down upon the stone floor, where presently the wick fell over into a pool of molden paraffine, and the flame sputtered noisily, sending fitful gleams through the darkness.

"Well," continued Murdock's voice, "it is at any rate a great satisfaction to play a game with an adversary worthy of one's steel. You have played well, Mr. Sturgis. I think you would have won modestly; and you are losing as I would myself have lost, had our positions been reversed. Good-bye."

The gleaming eyes disappeared from the grating and the sliding panel closed with a metallic click.

"Now, then," said Sturgis to his companion, "the last chance lies in the speaking tube. But first help me move this box.'

"What de you want to do with the box?" asked Sprague, who, however, did as he was bid.

"It may help us to gain a little time. Put it down here." Sturgis struck a match and pointed

out the spot.
"On the hot-air register?" "On what looks like a hot-air regis-ter. Did you ever see a hot-air register with no apparent means of shutting off the heat?

Sprague, who stood almost over the register, suddenly threw back his head and gasped for breath.

You have discovered the secret of this death trap," said Sturgis, observing him.
"Gas!" spluttered the artist.

"Yes, he is going to asphyxiate us. Now, quick, to the speaking tube! The box will somewhat retard the rush of gas; but, at the best, it is only a question of minutes before the air becomes so charged as to render respiration

[To Be Continued.]

HAD A TOOTH TO PICK.

The Ludicrous Mistake of an Oriental Diplomat Whose English Was Weak.

"In earlier days," said H. L. Wilson, of Washington, D. C., relates the New York Tribune, "a diplomat came to us from out the east who was a source of joy and never ending pleasure while he sojourned among us. His short, wellbuilt figure was surmounted by a head out of all proportion to the body be-neath, which to maintain a perfect symmetry should have been joined to a far larger trunk. This disproportion of head to body led a certain young wit of the capital to remark on first catching sight of the newcomer: 'He looks as if he'd picked up his head on a battlefield, doesn't he?' The visitor from the orient signalized his advent into the social life of Washington by giving a dinner, at which, he being a bachelor, the wife of a fellow-member of the corps acted as hostess. To her as she entered his house, adhering to a certain custom of the east, with a deep salaam he presented a salver which rested some bread and salt and a highly chased key of pure gold, which edly gave entrance to his treaschest, the whole combination tes tifying hospitality and confidence. Now, this key was very beautiful, and the wife of his fellow diplomat, having regarded it with a covetous eye when she found it presented to her, promptly put it into her pocket, and left it there, to the manifest and ill-concealed chagrin of her host.

"In his first days in Washington, but after he had learned sufficient English to maintain a running conversation, he became ambitious, and essayed the idiom of the newly-acquired tongue with something of disaster to himself, for at a ball one evening he went up to a deb-utante and greeted her with: 'Ah ha!

I've got a tooth to pick with you.'
"He has gone from us now, but he
has left a vacant place behind him, for he was a good fellow, and clever as well, and you were always sure that he would furnish constant food for talk the season through."

Swett Knew the Origin.

The late Leonard Swett always prided himself on his ability to trace expressions to their derivatives. On one oc-casion a man speaking to him referred to another as "a son of a sea cook." Mr. Swett turned abruptly about and said: "That expression is not correct. You mean the son of a sekawk, which is a perversion of the Indian name se gonk, which means skunk, and is usually pronounced 'sekawk.' Few people ever use the term correctly or comprehend its meaning."—Chicago Chronicle.

Confirmatory.
Old Friend-Lucilla, do you rememper you used to say all the nice men were married?

Young Wife (of about a year's standing).—Yes, and I have found out now that they were .- Chicago Trib-

Homeseekers' Excursion Tickets.

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Kind of the Kid.

Jones—Come, be honest; when you have to walk the baby don't you swear a little? Smith—Possibly, but then the baby makes such a noise with his crying that nobody can hear me.—Boston Transcript.

A Map of the United States for 15 Cents.

Our map, which is 48x4 inches, mounted to hang on the wall, is particularly interesting and valuable, as it shows in colors the different divisions of territory in America acquired since the Revolution. The original thirteen states, Louisiana Purchase, the Texas Annexation, the Gadsden purchase, the cession by Mexico and the Northwest acquisitions by discovery and settlement. It will be sent postage prepaid on receipt of price, 15 cents. P. S. Eustis, General Passenger agent C., B. & Q. R. R., Chicago, Ill.

He Did It-With a Slam.

"I am willing to do anything," said the applicant for work.
"All right," said the hard-hearted merchant. "Please close the door behind you when you go out."—Somerville Journal.

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ing, old man?
Landlubb (seasick, very weakly)—Why,
I could die yachting!—Puck. Jell-0, The New Dessert,

pleases all the family. Four flavors:—Lemon, Orange, Raspberry and Strawberry. At your grocers. 10 ets. Try it to-day. "He insulted me!" she exclaimed. "He contradicted me in a most brutal way. What have you to say to that?" "Why, I-er-I-that is to say, I-er-admire his nerve, of course," answered Mr. Meekly.—Chicago Post

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Wisdom has an un-hill fight against a

Wisdom has an up-hill fight against a fool.—Chicago Daily News.

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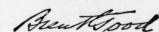
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