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F. C. Taylor.

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The profits of this old and reliable company are larger than any other Life Office doing business in the Dominion, and its ratio of expenses to income are less than that of any other Canadian or British Office. The policies of this company are indisputable on any ground whatever after two years, and Policies becoming claims are paid at once. The rates charged by this company are as low as any lirst-class effice. All forms of policies are saued.

F. C. TAYLOR, Lindsay, Feb. 24th, 1885.—81.

The Canadian Lost.

LINDSAY, FRIDAY, SEPT. 17, 1886. "SELF OR BEARER.

BY WALTER BESANT.

Author of "All Sorts and Conditions of Men."
"The Captain's Room," etc. (Continued from last week.) Having got so far he remained here, un-

able to get any further; in fact, he came back to it again and again.
"Myself and Norah," he thought. "It

must lie between us two-it must lie between us!" The office boy watched him curiously.

From his position at the other side of the Brenlace he looked, so to speak, over Dick's shoulder, and could watch him unseen and pasuspected. There were certain special reasons-in feet, they were concealed in the pocket of his jacket-why the office boy thought that something was going to happen. There were oth r rasons, such as a great increase in Mr. Richard's suikiness, a jumpy manner which had lately come over him and his radeness to Miss Cronan, which made this intelligent boy believe that some thing was going to happen very soon. Then Mr. Murridge had been shut up with his son for three-quarters of an nour. That meant things unusual. And now Mr. Richard, instead of drawing girls' heads, was sitting in moody thought.

You know how strangely, when the mind is greatly exercised and strained, one remembers some little trifle, or forgets some little habitual thing, such as brusning the hair or putting on a collar. Dick's eves fell upon his pocketbook, which lay upon his desk. It was a diary-one of the diaries which give a certain small space for every day in the year and a pocket for letters. It belonged, like his purso and his bunch of keys, essentially to his pocket. Yet he could not remember when he had last carried it in his pocket. Consider, if you are accustomed to a bunch of keys in your pocket, you do not feel their presence, but yet you miss them when they are no longer there. Dick became suddenly conscious that for some time-perhaps an hour, perhaps & whole day, perhaps more-he had not the presence of the pocketbook. But his mind had been so much occupied by certain pressing anxieties which beset him about this time, that he had noticed the absence of the book half consciously. Now that he saw it gan turning over the pages, at first confidently and then hurriedly, as one looks for something lost. There was something lost, He shook out the leaves; he looked through them again; he searched the empty pocket.

The boy behind him watched with a broad grin of satisfaction, as if he understood the

Then he searched his own pockets.

cause of this distress.

Then Dick sprang from his chair and looked under the table, on the floor, in the blotting pad, in the letter rack and in the drawers. Then he legan all over again. No Greek mime ever expressed more vividly the anxiety, dismay and terror of one who has lost a thing of vital importance. The boy felt as if he should like to roll on the floor and scream. "Have you picked up anything, you boy?"

Dick turned upon him flercely, so that he was fain to repress the smile upon his lips and the light of joy in his eye. "Come here, you little devil! The boy obeyed with composed face, and,

in fact, with considerable trepidation, because there was something in his jacket pocket which he ardently desired to conceal from Mr. Richard. "Have you picked up anything at all!" he

asked again.

"What is it?" the boy asked, by way of reply. "Is it money dropped?"
"You measly little devil! Why don't you answer? Have you picked up anything? It is something of no importance to anybodya bit of pink paper."

"I haven't picked up nothing," replied the boy, sullenly.
"I've a great mind to search you," said-

Dick, catching him by the coat collar. "You're as full of tricks as you can stick." "Search me, then. Oh, yes! Search me. I'll go and call the guv'nor and ask him to search me, if you like. You just lemme go

of I'll scream, and bring out the guvinor, and ask him to search me." Dick dropped his coat collar instantly. "Look here," he said. "Do you know this

pocketbook?"
"Never saw it before in my life." This, I regret to say, was a falsehood. The boy had seen it many times before. Every day Mr. Richard drew that book from his pocket and wrote in it, and then put it back-"You came here before me this morning.

Was it on my desk when you came? Don't know. Never saw it there Never saw it before in my life." Dick began to think that he was wrong. The book must have been in his pocket; he must have taken it out without thinking.

"You boy," he said, "If you are lying, I'll

affect does not terrify mm in the reast. Nobedy's bones are broken nowadays. It is true that every father has the right to whack and wollop his own son, and some-times does it, but with discretion, otherwise the school board officer will find him out. "I don't care. Call the guv'nor, and tell him what you want. I dun know what you've lost. What is it, then?"

"I've lost a-a paper. It was in this book."

"What sort of a paper."

Dick made no reply. Perhaps the lost paper would be in his own room. Stung by he thought that it might be lying about comewhere, he put on his hat and turned "What sort of a paper was it?" asked the boy. "If you give over threatening. I'll help ook for it. What sort of a paper!

"Hold your tongue. You can't help. I've ooked everywhere. "Perhaps," said the boy, persuasively-

'perhaps it was the housekeeper."

Very few people think of the housekeeper. Yet there is always one in every house let out for offices. She is always elderly-nobody ever heard of a housekeeper in the city dying-and she is generally a grandmother with a daughter, also a widow, and three or four little children-they are always little. Frandmothers and children always, in the ity, remain at the same age. All the week ong the children are hidden away some where in the basement; on Saturday afternoons and Sundays they come up and have a high old time, because the front door is closed and the place is deserted, and the whole nouse is their own. Then the office doors are brown open, and the children run races in he most sacred apartments, and open all the drawers and ransack their contents, and nake themselves acquainted with the clerk's

themseives with steel pens, penholders, blot-ting paper, note paper, letter paper, foolscap, ndia rubber, envelopes, and, in ill-regulated offices, with postage stamps as well. Dick rang the bell for the housekeeper. she declared, which was quite true, that she had found nothing and carried away no parers. She had children in the house, but, unlike children in some offices she could ame, her children were never allowed in her offices on Saturday and Sunday.

secrets and the chief's hidden decanter of

herry, and read all the private journals, and

pick up the odd lead pencils, and provide

So she withdrew again, and the lost paper Perhaps Dick had left it in his own room at home. Pierced by the thought, as with in arrow, he seized his hat and left the

ard's chair, and put his hands into his trousers pockets, and spread his legs out and grinned from ear to ear.

"It's coming fast," he said. "Lor'! I wish ie had searched me. What would the guv'nor have said when this little envelope was found in one jacket pocket, and this enrelope was found in the other jacket pocket? and what would Mr. Richard have said! I'm a measly little devil, am I! And Miss t'ronan, she's a Sapphier, which rhymes with liar, and goes with Ananias. I've often eard a boy called Ananias, but never a girl called Sapphier. Sophy I know, but not Sapphier. He could not resist the temptation of

lrawing out the two envelopes and looking tion. Further, he observed that Dick lost at the contents. "Shall I," he said, "knock at the guv'nor's loor and give him these two envelopes at

nce, or shall I wait! I think I'll wait.

Ha! The time will come. Then I shall

jump upon him. Then I shall make him wriggle. Then I shall see him curl." This boy had it read the "History of Spring-heel Jack" in vain. But neither at house nor anywhere could

CHAPTER V

and the loss of it filled him with anxiety.

A STEADY YOUNG MAN'S EVENING. That secluded corner of London which lies midden behind the three great stations, and is separated from the rest of the world by the Hampstead road on the west, and the St. Pancras road on the east, contains many houses and harbors many families whose hi tories, were they known, are as romantic and wonderful, and as deeply laden with pathos and interest, as any moated grange

r shield of sixteen quarterings. One of these houses-for reasons which vill be immediately obvious it is not necesary or advisable to name the road in which stands-is devoted, so to speak, to the nightly conjuring of the emotions among those who are privileged to enter its walls. No melodrama ever placed upon the boards of a theatre arouses more fiercely and more certainly the passions of terror, anxiety, rage, despair and frantic joy than the simple passes of the great magician who practices nightly in this house. It is nothing more han a tavern-a simple corner house, with

a sign board and a bar of many entrances. The spells, magic and mystery are worked on the first floor, which is let off for a club which meets here every evening, all the year round, except on Sundays. The members would meet on Sundays as well if it were

At seven o'clock the club opens every vening. It is not a political club, for politics are never touched upon; nor is it a social club, for the members do not converse ogether after the manner of ordinary morials; nor is it a club founded for the idvance of sny cause, or for the promotion of any art, or for any scientific or intellectual objects whatever. Yet it is a club where conversation is always animated, and even interjectional, though sometimes monotonous. It is also absorbing, and it brings all heads bent together; it makes all eyes eager; and it is so witty, so clever, so biting and egigrammatic, that at everything that is said some laugh and shout, and some sigh, weep and even curse. It is, lastly, a club which contains everything which the memhers want to make them completely happy, hough, unfortunately, the members cannot iways get what they want and what they

There were eight or nine small tables about the room, each provided with a pair of candles, and each occupied by two men. There was a sideboard, or buffet, with deanters and glasses, cigars, cigarettes and the usual trimmings, behind which stood a roung lady of bar-maidenly loveliness. For the look of the thing there were champagne bottles, but the customary drink was whisky or bottled stout. A dozen men were standng about the bar, drinking or talking to the girl. They were those who had come too late for a place, and were waiting their The atmosphere was thick and heavy tobacco smoke. There was also an

open piano, but no one regarded it. Among the tables and those who sat out there moved continually a man rather small of stature, but of good proportions, of straight and regular features, and very carefully dressed. He was now advanced in ife, being perhaps sixty years of age. His hair was white, and he wore a heavy white mustache. A cigarette was always between his lips; his voice was soft, gentle and he seemed to have something friendly to say to every one of the members; his smile was kindly; his eyes benevolent; he laughed easily and musically; and there was not a man in the room who did not believe that the count was his own private, personal and particular friend. They called him, to show their great respect, the count. He did not himself claim the title, though perhaps he was a count in his own country, or even a prince, for he was by birth an Italian, and nis card bore the simple name of Signor Gluseppe Piranest. He had lost the fore-finger of his right hand—in a duet, it was

erstood, about a lady, so doubt a

Everybody believed the count had princess. Everybody believed the count had been, in his day, a terrible breaker of ladies' hearts.

In plain words, the place is a gambling club, run by this Italian who was so good a friend to all the members. Among the players at the middle table sat Dick Murridge.

His father was right in mistrusting a boy who went about his work like a machine, and seemed to have no passion, no pursuit, no ambition-who committed no small follies and had none of the headlong faults of ardent youth. Dick had a pursuit. It was absorbing and entrancing; he followed it with ardor every evening of the week. It was a pursuit which brought into play, to a very remarkable degree, the maxims which his father had taught him. It requires, for instance, no law of honor, except that if you conceal cards, or play false, or do not pay up, you are out-kicked. It makes no fooisish pretense about friendship, philanthropy, charity, or any stuff of that kind. At the baccarat table every man is for himself. No skill is wanted; no dull working and daily practice in order to acquire dexterity, which would not be of any use; the whole object of the pursuit is to win money.
Of all the eager and noisy crew who sat at

that table there was not one who was more absorbed in the game than Dick Murridge. The others shouted and swore great oaths when they won or lost. Dick made no sign. His face betrayed no emotion. The quiet gambler is the most determined and the most hopeless. By the side of Dick sat-alas!-young Daf-

fodil Cronan. He was by no means a silent player. His face was flushed with excitement, his hair tossed; his lips were parted and at every turn of the cards he gasped whether it brought him victory or loss, only, if he won, he laughed aloud.



By the side of Dick sat young Daffodil. This evening it might have been remarked that the count was a good deal engaged in watching Dick's play. He observed two or three things. When Dick won he put his winnings into his pocket without a word or a sign of satisfaction. When he lost he saw the stake raked up without the least emonearly every time. The luck was dead against him from the beginning. And this circumstance afforded him a certain satisfaction, but why, one could hardly explain. At ten o'clock Dick rose from the table and laid his hand upon his friend's shoulder. "Come," he whispered: "they will be ex-

perting you at home." The boy rose unwillingly. He was winning, and for the first time in his life his dragged him from the table

"My young friends," said the count, as

they left the table, "you leave us too early But perhaps it is best to be home in good time. I hope you have not lost?" He spoke very good English, but with slightly foreign accent, and he spoke as it he really did take the deepest interest in

their fortune. "As for me," cried Daffodil, eagerly, "I've won a pot. "Look here! He pulled out a handful of shillings. "It's glorious!" The count laughed encouragingly.

"Good," he said, "very good! Luck is lways with the boys. At your age I should have broken all the banks. Come again oon. I love to see the boys win. And you,

"It doesn't matter to any one except inyself," Dick replied, gloomily, "whether I win or lose."

"He is silent," said the count, "I watch him at his play. When the others laugh, or when they curse, he is silent. No one can tell from his face whether he has won or lost. A good player should be silent, Will you drink before you go!"

Daffodil went to the bar and had a drink; Dick refused. "Do you want another advance, my friend?" asked the count.

Dick shook his head, but with uncer-"What is the good?" he asked. "My infernal luck follows me every night. I'm

cleaned out again." "Dear me! I am very sorry. Let me see your account. You have given me three checks, each for twelve pounds. They were passed"—he glanced quickly at Dick's face without question."

"Why the devil should they be que tioned!" Dick asked. "Ah, my friend, yours is the face for the gambler. You can keep your countenance, whatever happens. It is a great gift, Steady eyes-look me in the face-full, steady eyes, and fingers"-he took Dick's hand in his, and squeezed the fingers critically-"fingers that are sensitive and quick. Sometimes I think that fingers are alive. Why, if a devil was to enter into one of these

fingers, and persuade it to-well, to imitate another person's handwriting-" "What do you mean?" asked Dick. "Steady eyes-steady eyes! Why, that the finger would imitate that writing to perfection. Well, as to our account. You owe ine, my young friend, twenty-four pounds. Shall I make you another advance? Well, come here to-morrow morning at eleven. Can you spare the time? Come! We shall be quite alone, and I shall have something to say. Steady eyes, delicate fingers, hard and cold face. These are the gifts of the

true gambler." "What then?" said Dick. "What, indeed! I fear they are gifts which may be wasted. Some day, when you are in trouble-some day, when you

"I always want money."
"You are in trouble also; my friend; I read trouble in your face." He dropped his voice to a whisper—a soft, friendly, mur-murous whisper. "You are in trouble now. Confide in me. Those three checks,

"No, no! The checks are all right, I tell you. Why do you keep herping upon the "I rejoice to hear it; I was afraid you might have been decaived. But you are in

"I didn't say that; I said I wanted money If you can teach me how to make it- But you can't, else you would make it for your-self. Why should you teach me!"

The count looked at his mutilated hand.

"I could make it for myself once, but I am I am old, perhaps. I know how it is to be made, easily, by handfuls, and I can teach you how to do it, too,"
"Nobody ever gives anything. What am I to pay for the knowledge?" Come to merrow, and I will tell you what you are to pay. Come here at eleven o'clock, when we shall be quite alone and the

nere is my new friend. My dear boy, I re-joice when my young friends win. It is our turn to lose. We are the old boys. The world of pleasure is all for the young. Come here and win more—win all we have! Then go and spend your money gayly. There are plenty of pretty girls who love boys with money. Go—sing—love—dance—drink! Then come here again and make more money. Happy boy—happy youth!"

"Come along, Dick," said Daffodil, laughing. "I have won fifty shillings, at least. Hooray! What a splendid game it is!"

CHAPTER VL THE TEMPTATION.

The soft voice of the man, his measured speech, his calmly prophetic assurance that trouble was on the way, affected Dick Murridge at this juncture of his affairs very disagreeably. He could know nothing. Yet he spoke as if he knew.

For now the trouble was actually come. In a few days his father would expect some thing from him, a report, a clew, a theorysomething which might be followed up. If there was nothing he would himself take up the case. "Come to me," said the count, "when the trouble falls upon you. Come to me to-morrow, and let us talk." He kept that appointment; he found the

count in the club room, which, by day, with its tables put together and covered with a green baize cloth, looked like a board room, or a room for the coroner and the jury, or, at least, like a room for a friendly lead. "So," said the count, "you are here. I expected you. Has the trouble come!" "There is no trouble coming," Dick replied.

"It will come very soon, if it has not already come. However, let us talk business. You owe metwenty-four pounds. You have borrowed from time to time sixty pounds, and you have paid me in three checks thirtysix pounds. You want to borrow more. Last night you lost ten pounds, or therecbouts." "How do you know?"

"I watched you all the evening. That is simple, is it not! Do you wish to borrow more money!" Dick made no reply. He had lost more

than ten pounds out of the check which Daffodil cashed for him-there was, in fact, half a crown left. Half a crown out of twelve pounds! "All the young men who come here fall

into trouble sooner or later, my dear Richard. I have seen your trouble coming for a long time. What do you expect. You want to enjoy life. Very well, then. Nature says that those who enjoy life must have money. It is reasonable. These who have money are kings. Those who have none are slaves. If you win you spend your winnings on your pleasures. If you lose, you-well, you get into trouble."
"I never do win," said Dick.

"My friend, listen carefully." The count sat down and drew his chair quite close to Dick. "I have watched you for many nights, I say to myself, 'I want a pupil. Here is one who may be a credit to me.' Very good; as for the others I let them go. They may help themselves; but I am willing to help you. For you are different. I have found that you are hard and you are brave; you have no foolish, soft heart, and you have fingers-beautiful fingers, delicate, full of sense and life, which can be taught to handle cards."

"What do you mean?" Dick cried, with the feeling of attraction which a butterfly feels woward the candle. The first lesson was the most wonderful

thing which Dick ever learned. Yet it was a very small thing; nothing but a simple method of turning up the king whenever he was wanted, and a simple explanation of the fact that in professional gambling the outsider plays with the man who knows how to turn up the king, and therefore must, in to turn up the king, and therefore must in the long run, lose. "Come again, to-morrow," said the count:

"meanwhile practise. Oh, I can teach you! But this is nothing. Understand that what you have learned to-day is only the very beginning of the art—the first elements. Persevere, my son, and I will place an unheard of fortune in your hands,' "What am I to give you for it?"

"That you will presently discover. I shall not teach you much, you may be sure, unless we understand each other."



"I want a pupil." The lesson lasted until about three o'clock It was so strange and so delightful that the young man actually forgot the trouble. That

thinking. He called it thinking. In reality it was putting before himself in lively im agination all the terrors of the situation. In the evening he went to the club. The count lent him three pounds, and he won a small sum. But how could be hope to win hack all he owed, and if he did, how would that help him with those checks?

On Saturday morning he spent another hour or two with the count, and learned more. He now understood for the first time that he who plays at a public table has to do with a man who must win as often as he pleases, or as often as he dares, because he can do what he likes with the cards. For some reason of his own, the count was teaching him the secrets of the cards. The Saturday afternoon he spent in "thinking" as before. And on Saturday evening he went again to the club, and again he won; but not much. On Sunday morning he awoke, full of apprehensions. Four more days; he must invent or make up something which would keep his father quiet. He was so full of fears that he resolved to tell every-

thing to Calista. It has been seen that he told her nothing. The reason was, partly, that he bethought him, on the way, of the pain and shame with which she would hear his story; and partly because, as he went on the top of an omnibus from Camden Town to the Mansion house, and again from the Mansion house down the Commercial road, there went with him a voice. There may have been something belonging to the voice, a disembedied spirit, a demon, an afreet—I know not what. But he heard the voice, and he did not see the afreet.

Said the voice: "To-day is Sunday. You have four days—only four days. What can have four days—only four days. What can you make up that will satisfy your father on Thursday morning? Four days only left. If you go empty-hauded he will himself take up the case. If he does he will get to the bottems of that case somehow or other, before he less it go. As for the count, you can keep him quiet. He wants you for some purpose of his own; he will teach you all he knows, and you can buy his silence. No-

He could think of nothing. He was ready with no explanation, report, result or any thing at all. In this nagging, uncomfortable manner the voice went on all the way from Camden Town to Shadwell High street,

which is, as the crow flies, four miles and a Then while Calista was talking to him the voice began again: "It lies between you and Norah. It must have been either you or Norah. One of you two did it. If you are not suspected she must be." Well, he, for his part, would not be suspected if he could

avoid it by any means. This was the reason why he spoke in so strange a fashion to Calista about what would happen. He was answering, though she did not know it, this voice which she could not hear.

He left the hospital, and got back to the early Sunday dinner at two. His father, for once, was almost genial, and talked freely with his son, which was unusual with him. His success in the matter of the Clonsilla inheritance pleased him. He was a landed gentleman; he had an estate in Ireland and another in England; he spoke of the land as one who has a stake in the country, and pointed out to his son that he was now an heir, and must acquire a knowledge somewhere of the law as regards land. This was all very well; but he proceeded to talk of the robbery, and of the care with which he himself would tackle the case if he had the time, or if he was obliged to take it in hand. This kind of talk made his son writhe.

After dinner Mr. Murridge, on Sundays, always had a bottle of port. His son took one glass, and he himself drank the rest of the bottle. With each glass he became more pleased with his cleverness in outwitting the doctor, and more eager for revenge in the matter of the robbery, so that he mixed up his own astuteness with the craft of the forger—his ducats with his acres. "Find him, Dick. Find him for me-

make haste! "I am doing the best I can," said Dick 'Don't hurry a man." 'Have you got a clew yet?' his father "Don't ask me anything. You gave me a week. I am not going to tell you any-

thing before Thursday morning." "Ouite right, Dick, Nothing could' be better. hate prattling before a case is ready. But there no harm in a word of advice. Now, if I had the co fuet of the case I should advertise a substantial reward for the discovery of the three persons who pre-sented the checks; once find them, and the thing is done. To be sure, there may be a ring of them—one to forge the checks, one to steal the check books and one to present them, and they would stand by each other. I wonder bank clerks haven't made a ring before new. They might use it merrily for a time. But I don't think there is a ring, Dick. The checks have been taken out of the book and given to some one who has copied my signature, and got the checks cashed by people he knew. Now, one of them is a foreigner, old and gray-headed, and wanting a fore-finger on the right hand-wanting a forefinger, Dick. There can't be many men in London answering to that description, can there? Very well, that's my idea. You will act on it or not, as you please. But find him, Dick: let me jut him in the dock. Let m see him going off to his seven years. It begins with a year on a plank, I believe, and solitary confinemen on bread and water or skilly. The law is a righteons law which condemns one who steals hard-carned money to solitary confinement and a plank bed. But he ought to be hanged, Dick, Nothing bu hanging will meet the merits of the case." Presently Dick escaped, and wandered about the streets of Camden Town. One thing he clearly per-ceived must be done at any cost—he must keep his

father from taking up the case.

To him who thinks long enough there cometh at the last a suggestion. To Dick it seemed to come from without. It was a truly villainous and dis-graceful suggestion, black as Erebus, crafty as the serpent and cowardly as the skunk. It had been whispered in his ear at the hospital. Now it was whispered again. "You must accuse some one. It is

me one who knows your father's habits in draw

Not the office boy. There cannot be a proof. or a shadow of proof, against the office boy. Who else comes to the office?" Dick waited while that question was put to him a hundred times. "Who else but Norah? There is no other. Norah Cronan.' Dick Murridge had known this girl all his life. When she was five and he eight, they played together; when she was ten and he thirteen, he teased and bullied her after the manner of boys; when she was sixteen and he nineteen, he began to perceive that she was beautiful; only a fortnight before he had told her that he loved her. And now he could harbor the thought of accusing her in order to say himself. Said the voice in his ear:
"The first rule of life is seif-preservation. Before

that everything must give way. A man must save himself at any sacrifice. Honor, love, friendship, truth-what are they! Shadows. The first thing is self-preservation."

His father had taught him this precept a hundred times. What was it he was going to do but to pre-How would his father take it? Why, that made the thing all the more easy. She was, if any one, a favorite with him. He trusted her more than any other person in the world—more than his own son. other person in the world—more than his own son. If he interested himself or cared about any one, it was about this clever, quick and industrious girl clerk, who for seventy-five pounds a year did the work of two men cleres at double the salary. If his father could only be persuaded that it was Norah, he would probably say nothing more about it. He would forgive her, and all would go on as before. Here Dick was wrong. Mr. Murridge, and men who, like him, trust few, and those not unreservelly are like him, trust few, and those not unreservedly, are far more dangerous if they are betrayed than men who trust lightly and easily. He thought over this villainv all the evening. The longer he thought of it the more easy and the more likely it appeared. He saw a way of making the

charge plausible and possible. He made up his mind what he would do and how he would do it. At the ame time he resolved to keep on with the count. It might be well, in case things turned out badly, to listen to the proposals at which he kept hinting, with promises of wealth unbounded. It was past ten when he went home. He took his andle, and, without seeing his father, went straight

"Of course," he said, "I would not have her tried, to prison, or anything. It will be quite enough for my father to think she's done it. They can't send her to prison, or any one else, if there are no forgeries to convict with. Then suddenly came brilliant idea. "They must have a forkery to go upon. Suppose a man says a check was eashed which he did not draw; very well, then, where is your check?" Produce your check." He did produce a little heap of checks and a check book. He placed them in the fineless has nem in the fireplace, he struck a match, and he saw them quickly consume into asies, "There,' he said, "where's your proof now? Where

is your fergery? The worst that can happen to Norah now, when she says I gave her the check, is not to be believed. It's all right now. They can't prove anything." He was so pleased, pacified and easy after this act of decision that he went to bed, and for the first time for many weeks slept soundly, and without any apprehensions, nightmares, or dreadful dreams.

CHAPTER VII DOWN WITH THE LANDLORDS.

"We have now," sail Uncle Joseph, regarding his first glass of gin and water with liscontented looks, "we have now, Maria, been members of the peerage-actually of the peerage—the parage of the realm—for nearly a week. Yet I see no change." "No one has called," said her ladyship. "I have put on my best gown every night. But

no one has thought fit to take the least notice Where is the coronet! Where are the robes? Where is the star? Where is the collar!"

The doctor silently filled his pipe and went

on reading his evening paper, taking no

notice of these complaints. Yet it did strike him as strange that a man should succeed to a peerage with so little fuss.
"No message from the queen," Uncle Joseph continued; "no officer of the house of lords with congratulations from that august body; no communications from Provincial grand lodge; no deputations from a loyal mantry; no ringing of bells. Maria, in the whole course of my experience among

the titled classes I never before saw such a "Miserable, indeed," said her ladyship.
"The reason," continued Uncle Joseph, "The reason," continued Uncle Joseph, "is not difficult to find. They are waiting, Maria, for the banquet. How can a noble lord succeed without a banquet? You can't do anything without it. Why, if you initiate a little city clerk you have a banquet over it. If you raise a man to the dazzling height of thirty-third, you must celebrate the occasion with a banquet. And here we succeed to the rank of vicesors. purpose of his own; ne will tenen you as he knows, and you can buy his silence. No-body can prove that he presented the checks unless he comes forward. He is the only dangerous are of the three. But his must be the rank of viscount, and not can a land, O.—88-1y. R. D. Thexton.

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bottle of champagne. Gin and water in the house of the Right Honorable the Viscount There was a full attendance of the house. so to speak. The Honorable Hyacinth was present; the Honorable Norah, with Mr. Hugh Aquila, had just returned from an evening walk among the leafy groves of Camden Town's one square; the Honorable

Terry, Larry and Pat were, as usual, quarreling over a draught board. "Well, my dear," said the doctor at last, "what did you expect?" "I expected recognition I thought that our brother peers would call unou us." "What have we received. Maria." said Uncle Joseph. "The outstretched hand of

brotherhood? Not at all. Cold neglect." "We may belong to the Irish peerage. said the doctor, "but, remember, if you please, that I am still, and am likely to remain to the end of the chapter, a general practitioner, with a lar practice and a small income, of Camden Town. It will be a proud distinction, no doubt, to reflect that we are the only titled people in Camden Town. Well, we must be contented with the pride. You may add to the alderman's robe, my dear, your coronet, when it comes

"We ought," said Uncle Joseph, firmly "to assert ourselves. There ought to be

"At the funeral to-day," the doctor continued, "there was not a single mourner except myself and Daff and Hugh who went with us. Not one. The old lord seems ? have outlived all his friends. He left no will, so that all the property, whatever it is, entailed or not, should have come to me, but for an accidental circumstance which you ought to learn at once" "As the old lord is buried," said Uncle

Joseph, "the time has come for action; of course it would be unseemly to rejoice before the funeral. Now, if my advice is thought to be worth anything in this family-the advice of a man who has shaken hands familiarly, yet respectfully, with earls, and sat next to a prince at a banquetis that we should, without any delay, issue invitations to a large number of our noble and illustrious brother peers for a banquet in robes and coronets at the Freemason's or the Criterion. I will myself superintend the banquet, inspect the menu-at this time of the year, what with lamb, duckling, green peas, salmon, whitebait, turtle, young po tatoes, early apricots and strawberries, the banquet will be unusually choice-choice and toothsome. As for the champagueah!' he gasped, and drank off the whole glass of gin and water, "I will order it. Do not be in anxiety about the champagne, Maria. It shall be my care. When the barquet is over, your health-you will be in the chair, doctor-shall be taken after the loyal toasts. I will myself respond for the craft. Then we will give up this house, which is mean for a viscount's town residence, and we will move to a mansion in the west, where Maria can take that place in society which she was born to adorn." He spoke so confidently, with so much en thusiasm, that her ladyship murnured are

thusiasm, that her ladyship murmured, and even Norah was carried away with the thought of the family greatness. A large house in the West End, with nothing for her father to do, and society—though it is not certain how she understood that word seemed fitting accompaniments to a title.

The doctor listened gravely. Then he

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