In America! The sisters exchange

sible from his intention.

disappeared.
And Sir Victor?

their affairs at a little distance.

A voice answered—only one word, "Yes," softly spoken, but Sir Victor Catheron started as if he had been shot. The long

show-room lay in semi-twilight—the gas not yet lit. In the twilight another girl

advanced, took the rose-velvet robe and

written card. The light flashed upon her figure and hair for one instant— then she

He sat like a man suddenly aroused from

figure and head; he had heard the voice

Was he asleep or awake? Was it only a

blances had been, or was it after all-after

He rose to his feet, that dazed look of

sleep-walker, suddenly aroused, on his

"Now, then, Sir Victor," the sharp, clear voice of Lady Portia said, at his side,

"your martyrdom is ended. We are ready

He led her to the carriage, assisted her and the young ladies in. How he excused himself—what incoherent words he said—

after a minute that the carriage had rolled

in hand, on the sidewalk in front of Madame Mirebeau's; that the passers-by

were staring at him, and that he was alone.

"Mad!" Lady Portia said, shrugging her shoulders and touching her forehead. "Mad as a March hare!"

"Mad?" Miss Howard repeated softly. "No, I don't think so. Not mad, only very—very miserable."

He replaced his hat and walked back to

the shop-door. There reason, memory returned. What was he going in for? What should he say? He stood still suddenly, as

though gazing at the wax women in elegant

ball costume, swinging slowly and smirk-ingly round and round. He had heard a

with dark, silken hair-a tall, slender girl's

his darling, the wife he had loved and left—for whom all those weary,

endless months he had been searching an

He did not know-no one knew. Since that

dark, cold autumn morning when she had fled from Powyss Place she had never been

seen or heard of. She had kept her word-

she had taken nothing that was his-not a

farthing. Wherever she was, she might be starving to-day. He clenched his hands

"Oh!" his passionate, despairing heart cried, "let me find her—let me save her,

He had searched for her everywhose, by night and by day. Money flowed like water—all in vain. He went to New York

—he found the people there he had once known, but none of them could tell him any-

thing of her or the Stuarts. The Stuarts

had failed, were utterly ruined—it was un-

derstood that Mr. Stuart was dead-of the

others they knew nothing. He went to Sandypoint in search of her father. Mr. Darrell and his family had months ago sold out and gone West. He could find none of

them; he gave it up at length and returned to England. Ten months had passed; many resemblances had beguiled him, but

to-day Edith was as far off, as lost as ever.

The voice he had heard, the likeness he

had seen, would they prove false and empty too, and leave his heart more bitter than ever? What he would do when he found her he did not consider. He only wanted to find her. His whole heart, and life, and soul were bound up in

He paced up and down in front of the shop; the day's work would be over presently and the work-women would come forth. Then he would see again this particular work-woman who had set his heart beating with a hope that turned him dizzy

Where Oxford Street nears Tottenham

and teeth as he thought of it.

and-let me die !"

-he had seen a shapely head crowned

away, and that he was still standing, hat

he never knew. He was only consci

eak but one little word, "Yes; '

lelusion, as so many other fancied res

than any laborer on his estate—I doubt whether he ever could have been. I meant to try—who knows how it would have ended? I married Sir Victor Catheron for his ed? I married Sir Victor Cather for the rank and riches, his title and rent-roll—I married the baronet, not the man. And it has ended thus. I am widowed on my wedding-day, cast off, forsaken. Have I not earned my fate?"

She laughed drearily—a short, mirthless

tions—I don't battle with my fate; I throw up my arms and yield at once. But this I would like to know. Madness is hereditary in his family. Unworthy of all love as I am, I think—I think Sir Victor loved me and unless he he mad I can't oved me, and, unless he be mad, I can't derstand why he deserted me. Lady Helena, answer me this, as you will one day answer to your Maker-Is Sir Victror

dreadful question—a pause in which the beating of the autumnal rain upon the glass, the soughing of the autumnal gale sounded preternaturally loud. Then, brokenly, in trembling tones, and not looking up, came Lady Helena's answer:

"God pity him and you—he is not mad." Then there was silence again. The lder woman, her face buried in her hands and resting on the table, was crying silently and miserably. At the window, the tall, slim figure of the girl stood motionless, her hands clasped loosely before her, her deep bright eyes looking out at the slanting rain, the low-lying, lead-colored sky, the black trees blown aslant in the

high October gale. "Not mad?" she repeated, after that long pause; "you are quite certain of this, my lady? Not mad—and he has left me?"

"He has left you. O my child! if I dared only tell you all—if I dared only tell you how it is because of this great and passionate love for you, he leaves you. If ever there was a martyr on this earth, it is my poor boy. If you had seen him as I saw him last night—worn to a shadow in one day, suffering for the loss of you until death would be a relief-even you would have pitied him.

"Would I? Well, perhaps so, though my heart is rather a hard one. Of course I don't understand a word of all this—of course, as he said in his letter, some secret of guilt and shame lies behind it all. And yet, perhaps, I could come nearer the 'Secret' than either you or he think." Lady Helena looked suddenly up, that

terrified, haunted look in her eyes. "What do you mean?" she gasped.
"This," the firm cold voice of Edith said, as Edith's bright, dark eyes fixed themselves pitilessly upon her, "this, Lady Helena Powyss: That the secret which takes him from me is the secret of his mother's murder-the secret which he learn. ed at his father's deathbed. Shall I tell you who committed that murder ?"

Her ladyship's lips moved, but no sound came; she sat spellbound, watching that pale, fixed face before her. 'Not Inez Catheron, who was imprisoned for it; not Juan Catheron, who was suspected of it. I am a Yankee, and consequently clever at guessing. I believe that Sir Victor Catheron, in cold blood, murder-

ed his own wife !" There was a sobbing cry whether at the shock of the terrible words, or at their

truth, who was to tell? "I believe the late Sir Victor Catheron to have been a deliberate and cowardly murderer," Edith went on; "so cowardly that his weak brain turned when he saw what he had done and thought of the consequences; and that he paid the penalty of his crime in a life of insanity. The motive I don't pretend to fathom—jealousy of Juan Catheron, perhaps; and on his dying bed he confessed all to his son."

meet again in the world, remember is no thought in my heart of you not one of affection and gratitude.

With face blanched and eyes still full of

would that be any excuse for Victor's conduct in leaving you?"

"No!" Edith answered, her eyes flashing, "none! Having married me, not ten thousand family secrets should be strong enough to make him desert me. If he had come to me, if he had told me, as he was bound to do before our wedding day, I would have | now." pitied him with all my soul; if anything could ever have made me care for him as a wife should care for a husband, it would have been that pity. But if he came to me now, and knelt before me, imploring me to return, I would not. I would diesooner!" She was walking up and down now, gleams of passionate scorn and rage in her

dark eyes.
"It is all folly and balderdash, this talk of his love for me making him leave me. Don't let us have any more of it. No secret on earth should make a bridegroom quit his bride—no power on earth could ever convince me of it!"

"And yet," the sad, patient voice of poor Lady Helena sighed, "it is true."

Edith stopped in her walk, and looked at her incredulously.

"Lady Helena," she said, "you are my kind friend—you know the world—you are a woman of sense, not likely to have your brain turned with vapors. Answer me this -Do you think that, acting as he has done, Sir Victor Catheron has done right?" Lady Helena's sad eyes met hers full. Lady Helena's voice was full of pathos and

earnestness, as she replied:
"Edith, I am your friend; I am in my sober senses, and, I believe in my soul Victor has done right."

"Well," Edith said after a long pause, during which she resumed her walk, "I give it up! I don't understand, and I never shall. I am hopelessly in the dark. I can conceive no motive—none strong enough to make his conduct right. I thought him mad; you say he is sane. I thought he did mad; you say he is sane. I thought he did
me a shameful, irreparable wrong; you say
he has done right. I will think no more
about it, since, if I thought to my dying
day,'I could come no nearer the truth."
"You will know one day," answered Lady
Henela; "on his death-bed; and, poor fellow, the sooner that day comes the better
for him."

Edith mode on imposition gesture.

Edith made an impatient gesture.
"Let us talk about it no more. What is
done is done. Whether Sir Victor Cather-

on lives or dies can in no way concern me

on lives or dies can in no way concern me now. I think, with your permission, I will go back to my room and try to sleep away this dismalday."

"Wait one moment, Edith. It was on your account Victor came here last night to talk over the arrangements he was making for your future."

A curious smile came over Edith's lips. She was once more back at the window, locking out at the rain-beaten day.

"My future!" she slowly repeated; "in what possible way can my future concern Sir Victor Catheron?"

"My child, what a question! In every

which descends to him, its pleases you—the title and wealth for which you wedded are still yours. For himself, he intends to go abroad—to the East, I believe. He retains nothing but what will supply his travelling expenses. He cannot meet He retains nothing but what will supply his travelling expenses. He cannot meet you—if he did, he might never be able to leave you. O Edith, you blame him, you hate him; but if you had only seen him, only heard him last night, only knew how inevitable it is, how he suffered, how bitterer than death this parting is to him, you "You want forgive him.

"You think so," the girl said, with a wistful, weary sigh. "Ah, well, perhaps so. I don't know. Just now I can realize nothing except that I am a lost, forsaken wretch, that I do hate him; that if I were dving, or that if he were dying, I could not

dying, or that if he were dying, I could not ay 'I forgive you.' As to his liberality, I ever doubted that; I have owned that I

married him for his wealth and station. own it still; but there are some things not the wealth of a king could compensate for. To desert a bride on her wedding-day is one of them. I repeat, Lady Helena, with your permission, I will go to my room; we won't talk of my tuture plans and prospects just now. To-morrow you shall know my decision."

She turned to go. The elder woman looked after her with yearning, sorrowful

eyes.

"If I knew what to do—if I knew what to say," she murmured hopelessly. "Edith, I loved him more dearly than any son. I think my heart is breaking. O child, don't judge him—be merciful to him who loves you while he leaves you—be merciful to me whose life has been so full of trouble." Her voice broke down in a

tears. Edith turned from the door, put her arms around her neck and kissed her.
"Dear friend," she said; "dear Lady Helena, I pity you from the bottom of my heart. I wish—I wish I could only comfort

"You can," was the eager answer. "Stay with me, Edith; don't leave me alone. Be a daughter to me; take the place of the son

But Edith's pale, resolute face did not "To-morrow we will settle all this," was her reply. "Wait until to-morrow."

Then she was gone—shutup and locked in her own room. She did not descend to either luncheon or dinner—one of the housemaids served her in her dressingroom. And Lady Helena, alone and miserable, wandered uneasily about the lower rooms, and wondered how she spent that long rainy nay.

She spent it busily enough. The plain black box she had brought from New York, contained all her earthly belongings, she drew out and packed. It was not hard to do, since nothing went into it but what had belonged to her then. All the dresses, all the jewels, all the costly gifts that had been given her by the man she had mar-ried, and his friends, she left as they were. She kept nothing, not even her weddingring; she placed it among the rest, in the jewel casket, closed and locked it. Then she wrote a letter to Lady Helena, and placed the key inside. This is what she

"DEAR FRIEND: When you open this I shall have left Powyss Place forever. It will be quite useless to follow or endeavor the world to make my own way. With youth, and health, and ordinary intelligence, it ought not to be impossible. The things belonging to me when I first came here I have packed in the black box; in a week you will have the kindness to formost glad to hear it."

"Then that hings didded young man stoke and on his wedding day."

"It serves him right," said Lady Gwendoline, her pale eyes kindling. "I am almost glad to hear it." ward it to the Euston station. The rest I leave behind-retaining one or two books as souvenirs of you. I take nothing of Sir Victor Catheron's-not even his name. You must see that it is utterly impossible; that I must lose the last shred of pride and self-respect before I could assume his name or take a penny belonging to him. Dear, kind Lady Helena, Good-by. It we never meet again in the world, remember there is no thought in my heart of you that is

EDITH." Her hand never trembled as she wrote terror, her ladyship looked at the dark, contemptuous, resolute speaker.

Ther hand level definited as show whole this letter. She placed the key in it, folded, sealed, and addressed it. It was dark by this time. As she knelt to cord and "And if this be true—your horrible surmise; mind, I don't admit that it is— lock her trunk, she espied the writing-case within it. She hesitated a moment, then took it out, opened it, and drew forth the packet of Charley Stuart's letters. She took out the photograph and looked at it with a half-tender, half-sad smile.

"I never thought to look at you again," e said softly. "You are all I have left she said softly.

She put the picture in her bosom, replaced the rest, and locked the trunk, and put the key in her purse. She sat down and counted her money. She was the possessor of twelve sovereigns-left over from Mr. Stuart, senior's bounty. It was her whole stock of wealth with which to face and begin the world. Then she sat down resolutely to think it out. And the question rose grim before her, "What am I

"Go out into the world and work for your daily bread. Face the poverty you have feared so much, through fear of which, two days ago, you sold yourself. Go to London—it is the center of the world; lose yourself, hide from all who ever knew you. Go to London. Work of some kind can surely be had by the willing in that mighty city.

That was the answer that came clearly. She shrank for a moment—the thought of facing life single-handed, poor and alone in that great, terrible, pitiless city, was over-whelming. But she did not flinch from her

facing life single-handed, poor and alone in that great, terrible, pitiless city, was overwhelming. But she did not flinch from her resolve; her mind was made up. Come woe, come weal, she would go to London.

An "A.B.C." railway guide lay on the table—she consulted it. A train left Chester for London at eight o'clock a.m. Neither Lady Helena nor any of her household was stirring at that hour. She could walk to Chesholm in the early morning, get a fly there and drive to the Chester station in time. By tour in the afternoon she would be in London.

No though of returning home ever recurred to her. Home! What home had she? Her step-mother was master and mistress in her father's house, and to return, to go back to Sandypoint, and the life she had left, was as utter an impossibility almost as though she should take a rope and hang herself. She had not the means to go if she had desired, but that made no difference. She could never go back, never see her father, or Charley, or Trixy more. Alone she must live, alone she must die.

The flood-gates were opened; she suffered this last night as women of her strong, self-contained temperament only suffer.

"Save me, O God! for the waters are come into my soul!" That was the wild, wordless prayer of her heart. Her life was wrecked, her heart was desolate; she must go forth a beggar and an outcast, and fight the bitter battle of life alone. And love, and home, and Charley might have been hers. "It might have been!" Is there any anguish in this world of anguish like that we work with our own hands?—any sorrow like that which we bring upon ourselves? In the darkness she sank down upon her knees, her tace covered with her hands, tears, that were as dreadful as tears of blood, falling from her eyes. Lost—lost I all that made life worth having. To live and die alone, that was her fate!

So the black, wild night passed, hiding

The gray dawn of the dull October creeping over the far-off Welsh Edith in shawl and hat, closely

hills as Edith in shawl and hat, closely veiled, and carrying a dand-bag, came softly down the stairs, and out of a side door, chiefly used by the servants. She met no one. Noiselessly she drew the bolt, opened the door, and looked out.

It was raw and cold, a dreary wind still blowing, but it had ceased to rain. As she stood there, seven struck from the turret clock. "One long, last, lingering look behind"—one last upward glance at Lady Helena's windows.

"Good-by!" the pale lips whispered; then she passed resolutely out into the melancholy autumn morning and was gone. CHAPTER XXI.

Half-past four of a delightful June afternoon, and two young ladies sit at two large, lace-draped windows, overlooking a fashionable Mayfair street. The two young ladies are, with the exception of their bonnets, in elegant carriage costumes.

elegant carriage costumes.
Young ladies, I have said; and being unmarried, they are young ladies, of course.
One of them, however, is three-and-thirty.
It is the Lady Gwendoline Drexel. Her companion is the Honorable Mary Howard,

just nineteen, and just "out."

Lady Gwendoline yawns drearily over a book and pulls out her watch impatiently "What can keep Portia?" she exclaims, with irritation. "We should have been gone the last half-hour."

The Honorable Mary looks up from her Parisian fashion-book, and glances from the window with a smile. "Restrain your impatience, Gwendoline," e answers. "Here comes Lady Portia

A minute later the door is flung wide by a tall gentleman in plush, and Lady Portia Hampton sweeps in. She is a tall, slender lady, very like her sister; the same dully fair complexion, the same coiffure of cop per-gold, the same light, inane blue eyes. The dull complexion wears at this moment an absolute flush: the light, lack-lustre eyes an absolute sparkle.

"Well?" Lady Gwendoline says.
"Gwen!" her sister exclaims 'whom do you suppose I have met?" "Being five o'clock of a sultry summer

day, I don't intend to try. Tell us at once, Portia, and let us go.' "Then—prepare to be surprised! Sir Victor Catheron

a deep, long sleep. He had not seen the face; he had caught but a glimpse of the "Ah! I thought the name would interest you. Sir Victor Catheron, my dear, alive and in the flesh, though, upon my word, at | first sight I almost took to be his own ghost. Look at her, Mary," laughs her sister derisively. "I have managed to interest her after all, have I not?" For Lady Gwendoline sat erect, her

a look akin to excitement in her apathetic "But, Portia-Sir Victor! I thought it was an understood thing he did not come to

turquoise eyes open to the widest extent,

"He does, it appears. I certainly had the honor and happiness of shaking hands with him not fifteen minutes ago. It was driving up St. James Street, and caught a glimpse of him on the steps of Fenton's Hotel. Such a pallid shadow of his former self. Yuu used to think him rather handome Gwen-you should see him now! He has grown ten years older in as many months-his hair is absolutely streaked with gray, his eyes are sunken, his cheeks are hollow, He looks miserably, wretchto bring me back. My mind is made up. I recognize no authority—nothing will induce me to revoke my decision. I go out into their hearts," said Lady Portia, going over to a large mirror and surveying "then that misguided young man broke his

> Her faded face wore a strangely sombre and vindictive look. Lady Portia, with her head on one side, set her bonnetstrings geometrically straight, and smiled

"Ah, no doubt—perfectly natural, all things considered. And yet, even you might pity the poor fellow to-day, Gwendoline, if you saw him. Mary, dear, is all this Greek and Hebrew to you! You were in your Parisian pensionnat, I remember, when it all happened. You don't know the romantic and mysterious story of Sir Victor Catheron, Bart." "I never heard the name before, that I

recall," answered Miss Howard. Lady Portia details at length the story of Sir Victor's marriage with Miss Edith Dar-

"The story, though they tried to hush it up, got in all the papers—'Romance in High Life,' they called it. Everybody talked of it—it was the nine days' wonder of town and country. The actors in it one by one disappeared. Lady Helena shut up Powyss Place and went abroad; Sir Victor ished from the world's ken; the heroine of the piece no doubt went back to her native land. That, in brief, is the story, my dear, of the interesting spectacle I met to-day on the steps of Fenton's. Now, young ladies, put on your bonnets and come. I wish to call at Madame Mirebeau's, Oxford street, before going to the park, and personally inspect my dress for the

Ten minutes later and the elegant barouche of Lady Portia Hampton was bowiing along to Oxford street.

"What did you say to Sir Victor, Portia?" her sister deigned to ask. "What

did he say to you?" "He said very little to me—the answers he gave were the most vague. I naturally inquired concerning his health first, he really looked so wretchedly broken down; and he said there was nothing the matter, that he had been a little out of sorts lately, that was all. My conviction is," said Lady Portia, "that he has become dissipated. Portla, "that he has become dissipated."
Purple circles and hollow eyes always tell of late hours and hard drinking. I asked him next where he had been all those ages, and he answered briefly and gloomily, in one word, 'Abroad.' I asked him thirdly, where, and how was Lady Helena; he replied that Lady Helena was tolerably well, and at present in London. 'In Lon-don!' I exclaimed, in a shocked tone, 'my dear Sir Victor, and I not know it! He explained that his aunt was living in the closest retirement, at the house of a friend near St. John's Wood, and went nowhere. Then he lifted his hat, and walked away. Never asked for you, Gwendoline, or Colonel Hampton, or my health, or anything."

Lady Gwendoline did not reply. They had jnst entered Oxford Street, and amid the moving throng of well-dressed people on the pavement, her eye had singled out one figure—the figure of a tall, slender, fair-haired man.

"Portia!" she exclaimed, in a suppressed voice, "look there! Is not that Sir Victor Catheron now?"

"Where? Oh, I see. Positively it is—yes—he sees us. Tell John to draw up, Gwendoline. Now, Mary you shall see a live hero of romance for once in your life. He shall take a seat, whether he likes it or not— My dear Sir Victor, what a happy second rencontre, and Gwendoline dying to see you. Pray let us take you up—oh, we will have no refusal. We have an unoccupied seat here, you see, and we all insist

ed thoroughfare. Still he followed. The throng was even more dense here than in Oxford Street, to keep her in sight more difficult. For nearly ten minutes he did it, then suddenly all strength left him. For a ner. Lady Gwendolire's primrose-kidded nend was extended to him, Lady Gwen-doline's smiling face beamed upon him from the most exquisite of Parisian bonnets. Miss Howard bowed and scanned him minute or two he felt as though he must fall. There was a spasm of the heart that was like a knife-thrust. If a caught at a lamp-post. He beckoned a passing hansom by a sort of expiring effort. The cab whirled up beside him; he got in somehow, and fell back, blinded and dizzy, in the uriously. Lady Portia was not to be re-used—he knew that of old. Another stant, and the barouche was rolling away
Madaine Mirebeaus and Sir Victor of her rose-silk and point-lace parasol she could see for herself how shockingly he was changed. He talked little—his responses to their questions were monosyllabic.

He was discouragingly absent and distrait. It came out by chance that the chief part of the past ten months had been spent by him in America.

In America! The sisters exchanged

before he received an answer; then "Fenton's Hotel" came faintly to him from his ghostly looking fare. The little aperture at the top was slammed down, and the han-

swell's drunk, or 'aving a fit," thought the Cad, as he speeded his horse down Totten-Cad, as he speeded his horse do ham Court Road.

To look for her further in

lances. She was there, no doubt. Had hey met? was the thought of both. They eached the fashionable modiste's. To look for her further in his present state, Sir Victor felt would be useless. He must get to his lodgings, get some brandy, and half an hour's time to think what to do "You will come in with us, Sir Victor," Lady Portia commanded gayly. "We all have business here, but we will only detain next. He had found her; she was alive, she was well, thank Heaven! thank Heaven for that! To-morrow would find her again at Madame Mirebeau's at work with the

have business here, but we will only detail you a moment."

He gave her his arm to the shop. It was large and elegant, and three or four deferential shop-women came forward to wait upon them and place seats. The victimized baronet, still listless and bored, sat down to wait and escort them back to the carriage before taking his departure. To be exhibited in the park was the farthest possible from his intention. At work—her daily toil! He covered his wasted face with his wasted hands, and tears that were like a woman's fell from him. He had been weak and worn out for

him. He had been weak and worn out for a long time—he gave way utterly, body and mind, now.

"My darling," he sobbed; "my darling whom I would die to make happy—whose life I have so utterly ruined. To think that while I spend wealth like water, you should toil for a crust of bread—alone, the direction in this great city. How Lady Portia's dress was displayed-a rose velvet, with point-lace trimmings— and found fault with, of course. Lady Gwendoline and the Hon. Mary transacted elder ladyship the train did not suit her, the bodice did not please her; she gave her poor, friendless, in this great city. How will I answer to God and man for what I orders for altering sharply and concisely.
The deferential shop-girl listened and wrote the directions down on a card.
When her patroness had finished she carried robe and carp down the long room and

CHAPTER XXII.

The last night of the July day had faded out, and a hot, murky night settled down over London. At Poplar Lodge, St John's Wood, this murky. summer night all the windows stood wide. In the drawing-room two women sat together. The elder reading aloud, the younger busy over some feminine handicraft. Both wore deepest mourning—the elder a widow's weeds, the hair of the youngest thickly streaked with gray. They were Lady Helena Powyss, and Inez Catheron, of course.

"Eight," the elder woman said, laying down her book with a sigh as the clock "If he were couning to-night he would be here before now."

"I don't give him up even yet," Inez an-wered cheerfully. "Young men are not to swered cheerfully. be depended on, and he has often come out much later than this. We are but dull company for him, poor boy-all the world are but dull company for him at present, since she is not of them?" 'I begin to think Edith will never be found," said Lady Helena with a sigh. "My dear aunt, I don't. No one is ever lost, utterly, in these days. found, believe me, unless—" She will be

" Well ?" "Unless she is dead." "She is not dead," affirme 1 Lady Helena; 'of that I am sure. You didn't know her, Inez, or you wouldn't think it; the most superb specimen of youth and strength and handsome health I ever saw in my life." "Perhaps so, and yet suffering tells-look at poor Victor."

"Ah, poor Victor indeed! But the case is different—it was only her pride, not her heart, that bred. He loved her—he loves her with a blind, unreasoning passion that it is a misfortune for any human creature to feel for another. And she never cared for him-not as much as you do for the sewing in your hand."

"It is natural," said Inez. "Think how she was left-in her very bridal hour, without one word of ex

'No one, perhaps ; it is not for that I feel indignant with her. It is for her ever accepting him at all. She loved her cousin -he would have married her; and for title figure—that was all. He had seen and heard such a hundred times since that fatal and wealth she threw him over and accept-ed Victor. In that way she deserved her wedding evening, and when he had hunted them down, the illusion had vanished, and fate. She acted heartlessly; and yet, one can't help pitying her, too. I believe she lost love was as lost as
His lost Edith—his bride,
darling, the wife he had would have done her best to make him a good wife, after all. I wish—I wish he could find her." "She might be found readily enough," Inez answered, "if Victor would but employ searching in vain. Was she living or dead? Was she in London—in England—where?

the usual means—I allude, of course, to the detective police. But he won't set a detective on her track if she is never found—he persists in looking for her himself. He is wearing his life out in the search. If ever I saw death pictured in any face, I saw it in his when he was here last. If he would but consult that German doctor who is now in London, and who is so skilful in all diseases of the heart-hark !" she broke off suddenly, "here he is at last." The house-door opened, his familiar step

ascended the stairs, not heavy and dragging as usual, but swift and light, almost as it used to be. Something had happened! They saw it in his face at the first glance. There was but one thing that could hap pen. Lady Helena dropped her book, Inez started to her feet; neither spoke. both waited breathless.

"Aunt! cousin!" the young man cried, breathless and hoarse, "she is found!" There was a cry from his aunt. As he spoke he dropped, panting and exhausted with his speed, into a chair and laid his hand upon his breast its heavy, suffocating

"Found !" exclaimed Lady Helene; where-when-how ?"

"where—when—how?"

"Wait, aunt," the voice of Inez said gently; "give him time. Don't you see he can scarcely pant! Not a word yet Victor—let me fetch you a glass of wine."

She brought it and he drank it. His face was quite ghastly, livid, bluish rings encircling his mouth and eyes.

He told them at last, slowly, painfully, of his chance meeting with Lady Portia Hampton, of his enforced visit to the Oxford Street dress-maker—of his glimpse at the tall girl with the dark hair—of his waiting, of his seeing, and recognizing Edith, his following her, and of his sudden giddy faintness that obliged him to give up the chase. beating with a hope that turned him dizzy and sick. Six o'clock! seven o'clock! Would they never come? Yes; even as he thought it, half mad with impatience, the door opened, and nearly a dozen girls filed forth. He drew his hat ever his eyes, he kept a little in the shadow and watched them one by one with wildly eager eyes as they appeared. Four, five, six, seven—she came at last, the eighth. The tall, alender figure, the waving, dark hair, he knew them at once. The gaslight fell upon her as she drew her veil over her face and walked rapidly away. Not before he had seen it, not before he had recognized it—no shadow, no myth, no illusion this time. His wife—Edith.

said; "I haven't an idea how I came to be such a mollicoddle, but I give you my word I fainted dead away like a school-girl when I fainted dead away like a school-girl when I got to my room. I suppose it was partly this confounded palpitation of the heart, and partly the shock of the great surprise and joy."

Then there was a pause. The two women looked at each other, then at him, his eager eyes, his excited, wild-looking, haggard face.

"Well," he cried, impatiently, "have you nothing to say? Is it nothing to you

gard face.

"Well," he cried, impatiently, "have you nothing to say? Is it nothing to you that after all the months—months—great Heavens! it seems centuries. But I have found her at last—toiling for her living, while we—oh! I can't think of it—I dare not; it drives me mad!"

He sprang up and began pacing to and fre, looking quite as much like a madman as a sane one.

His wife—Edith.

He caught the wall for support. For a mement the pavement beneath his feet heaved, the starry sky spun round. Then he started up, steadied himself by a mighty effort, and hurried in pursuit.

She had gained upon him over thirty yards. She was always a rapid walker, and he was ailing and weak. His heart throbbed now, so thick and fast, that every breath was a pain. He did not gain upon her, he only kept her in sight. He would have known that quick, decided walk, the poise of the head and shoulders, anywhere. He followed her as fast as his strength and the throng of passers-by would let him, yet doing no more than keeping her well in sight. a sane one.

"Be quiet, Victor," his aunt said. "It is madness indeed for you to excite yourself in this way. Of course we rejoice in all that makes you happy. She is found—Heaven be praised for it!—she is alive and well—thank Heaven also for that. And

"What next?"

"What next?"

"You ask what next
What next can there be, except to go the

#### What is

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