riding all her life, and it was a joy to see her sweep along on a lithe little pony. Fearless and graceful, her cheeks flushed and a light in her dark eye, she held Bert to her side. John met them at the gate, and gave them the "run of the house," he said, warning them that there was a Bluebeard's chamber. They went all over the chamber. They went all over the queerly built little cottage, peered into Dr. John's skeleton closet and his studio, where his big-horned owl was nodding and his yellow cat purred on the table on an open book upon ana-They even peeped into the Blue-

beard's chamber, against which he had warned them, and found it to be the loveliest little room, fitted up in gold and white-a shrine waiting for its They rambled over the old orchard and peeled late peaches, sitting on the low boughs or in the long grass. They came back before sunset. There were tokens of a change in the sky. Clouds had gathered, and the sun was setting luridly. But the light from the windows of Live Oaks shone brightly. The drawing-room was gay with fresh flowers. Florence and a young girl cousin had gathered them and filled the vases and baskets. Florence, dressed in white, stood at the parlor door to receive them. The day's mail lay on the table, and Belle and Bert and Dr. John and Miss Gray were soon tearing open letters. Fannie had half a dozen dainty, perfumed envelopes to break. Only Irma had no interest in the mail.
"Miss Brazeale, I have never known

you to get a letter," Fannie Gray said. "I have no correspondents." she an-

"I wish I had none," Bert said. "Here's a fellow writing that he is coming here to see me, to stay, he

"What sort of fellow?" asked Miss Gray, looking up with interest.
"Oh, he's a clever chap enough, a pany in New Orleans once, and he helped me in a matter in which I wild have found it hard to get on the why are you not glad he is

oming?"
"How do I know if he is the kind of fellow one would like to have domesticated in one's home, where there are women folks? I had bachelor rooms in town when I invited him. I can

write to him about the change."
"Do nothing of the kind. Let him come. If he proves to be dangerous we beck," said Miss Gray with decision. 'And, now, Bert, read the paper to us before tea. I am glad John is having a fire made, a little aesthetic wood-fire. It has turned cool, and it is raining.

Bert unfolded the newspaper and began to read. Irma was not interested. She was about to slip out of the room, when her attention was suddenly, fearfully arrested.
"Why, what a pueer tragedy!"
cried Bert. Papa you know Solon

cried Bert. Papa you know Solon Vanhorn—the rich, cranky old cotton—merchant? Well, he has been killed by a woman he had just married.

"'A SINGULAR TRAGEDY. "'For some time, our well-known fellow citizen, Mr. Solon Vanhorn, has been missing from his place of business on Levee street. It was not known what had become of him. His friends conjectured he was carrying out some large business operations in New York; but now comes the startling news of a strange tragedy of which Mr. Vanhorn has been the victim. For some time he has been engaged to a young girl, the daughter of one of his cotton partners living in Black Bayou, in the parties of St. Simon. He had gone to consummate the marriage, and it had taken place smoothly and quietly when, as the bridegroom turned to kiss his newly made bride, she suddealy stabbed him in the neck, nearly severing the artery. The blood poured from the wound, and Mr. Vanhorn fell, crying that he was killed. The girl gave one look at him and fled from the house. It was supposed she drowned herself in the bayou. A part of her dress was found at the water's edge. There was no boat known to have been at hand in which she might have made her escape.
"'Mr. Michael Vanhorn, however,

brether of Solon, from whom we get these particulars, does not believe that the girl drowned herself. He has heard that a woman in a boat was seen both on the bayou and on the river at the time when she would have been making her escape. He has forwarded a minute description of the young would-be murderess to the police authorities here, and they are at work on It seems that she is a brunette of verv peculiar type. She is handsome and accomplished—particularly in music and French. Her victim was not dead, at last accounts, but there is scarcely a shadow of hope that he can recover, as he lost a great quantity of blood and a low fever has

last. She had been in the act of leaving the room when the first words ar-rested her steps and seemed to turn

her into stone. She stood listening with dilated eyes, her fingers crushing the flowers she had been carrying to her room—flowers Bert had gathered for her from John's garden. She heard Mr. Fontenoy's comments upon her deed, his speculations as to whether the girl were mad or simply a deliberate criminal. She heard, but they made no impression upon her. The words of the newspaper article "No hope that he will recover; police burning in her brain:

at work on the case.' A gasping breath betrayed her. Bert eked up and sprang to her side.
"Miss Brazeale, what is the matter?

He would have gone with her, making her lean on his arm, but she would

"I am quite well, now," she said. She threw herself on the bed and lay there motionless. Her temples burned, but her limbs felt chill and

"I shall soon strike on the rocks," she said to herself. When the tea-bell rang she rose and removed her riding-habit and tried to get yeady to go lown for appearance' sake. She could not bear to have him suspect her yet. But her fingers trembled too much to pin collar or bind hair. She gave up the idea of going to tea. The thought of the bright room and questioning eyes was too much for her. But she could not be still any more. A spirit f restlessness seized her. "I will go and walk till I am quiet,"

she thought. She threw a hood over her head and without any wrap she went down-stairs and out into the yard by a back way. As she ran down the steps, she became conscious that it was raining-a soft, misty rain. She only thought:

will cool my head." The moon was nearly full, and the rays struggling through the veil of uds made a soft twilight.

Irma made her way to the mulberry-trees which extended across a part of the back yard at a little distance from the house. The thick, green leaves nearly sheltered her from the rain as she walked from one end to the other of the mulberry colonnade. For a time she could think of nothing coherently. Images of blood and violence, of exposure, disgrace and imprison-ment whirled dim and fast through her brain. After a time, she became conscious of present conditions. She heard the sounds of talk and laughter coming from the parlor. Presently the sound of music—of singing, Florence Bellamy's voice—how well she sang noy singing with her? In her fancy she could see the two, so handsome and assured in their manners-so gently proud—as they had a right to be. They had no dark secret in their lives. They were not hiding under a false They were well fitted to each other. They had a right to love and marry. Oh! how gayly they were all talking. Nobody thought of her, no-body cared. She did seem to hear her name called awhile ago, but it was loubtless a mistake. Or it was Maddie, who needed help in her French lesson. No; nobody wanted her. Nobody but the detectives who were hounding

her out. She started as a tall figure stood before her in the semi-darkness. In her state of nervous excitement the sudden apparition almost evoked a scream of But she soon recognized Bert. "Mr. Fontenoy, I did not expect to have any one follow me here," she said

"Forgive me for the intrusion. was afraid you would make yourself ill. It is chill and misty, and I brought you a wrap, the first one I could find."
"You are kind," Irma answered gently.

She let him fold the shawl around "Thanks, and do not let me keep

"But will you not come in? It is very pleasant in the parlor. We have a little fire of fragrant cypress wood that crackles merrily."
"I am not cold, and I am not fit to

be a talker or a listener to-night." "That means that you do not want me here, and I will go away presentwriter, a newspaper man, a born detective. I found him capital company in New Orleans of the Com He took her hand and drew k through his arm.

You said you were not cold: see "But my head is burning," Irma said. She had pushed the hood back, and rings of her dark hair were showing beneath the fluffy crimson border. Through an opening in the boughs the struggling moonlight came and showed Bert her shining eyes, her scarlet

"You are ill; you must let my brother prescribe for you." "There is nothing the matter with me," she said impatiently; "only I am a little restless. I take that mood some-

Bert was silent. There was some thing the matter with her, and he felt It was mental trouble, too, not physical. He had been watching her closely for days. He had noted her changeful moods, her girlish gayety suddenly quenched as by some haunting thought, the shadow of nath that came into her eyes, her restlessness, her occasional startled look. And to-night, what was the meaning of her fit of sudden agitation in the parlor? It came while he was reading of Solon Vanhorn's tragic wedding. But she could have nothing to do with the murderous bride of Black Bayou. There was some mystery about this girl-this strange child-queen girl, who was not like any other woman he had ever

He looked at the pale, repressed face under the scarlet hood "It is no evil mystery," he thought. "I would stake my life on her purity! It is a sorrowful secret, perhaps; I wish she would confide in me !" He longed to take the cold little hand that lay on his arm. He longed

to ask her to let him be her friend. He had no thought that he was falling in love. He expected to marry Florence Bellamy some time. It would gratify his mother, who idolized him, and please his father's pride. Besides, Florence loved him, and he was concious that he had many times been too tender for mere brotherly friendship. She was high-spirited, too. Neither she nor her family would brook being trifled with.

No; he would marry her some time, but just now he was more interested in his littl sister's music-teacher. It must be her eyes that attracted him so—their sphinx-like mystery and melancholy. Or was it her voice? How thrilling were its intonations just now when she said:

They are singing something that sounds very sweet! Go in and hear them. It is so much pleasanter than "I had rather stay in the mulberry "But it is damp, and I am a dull

"I do not find you so. Your mere presence is magnetic. Magnetism radiates from the tips of your little fin-He just touched them as he spoke, but he felt a thrill through all his

He had spoken lightly, but there was an under-current of earnestness which Irma felt. It embarrassed her; and, to break the silence, she said: Who is singing with Miss Bellamy I thought the other time it was you." "It is some gallant from the town. There are two of them who came in.

I have not sung to-night; I have been hunting for you, Madcap and I. We hunted for you disconsolately from room to room. At last the bright idea occurred to me of going out on the back veranda. There I caught a gleam of a red hood as a ray of light fell upon Without a word to Madcap, out I

"Bertrand!" called a shrill, sweet voice from the house. "That is your mother's voice. Let us go in," Irma said, seeing that he would not go without her. "Miss Brazeale, what is the matter?

Are you ill?"

She made a desperate effort and shook her head. She tried to smile.

"I rode too fast," she said, huskily.

"I am a little tired. I will go to my

"Dear me! what a night to choose for promenading!" she cried. "How

Bert gave her a look which expressed ne thought it was none of her busi-less. Irma felt that Belle's disapprovng eyes were upon her, and that Mrs. Fontency was looking at her wonder-

went out into the fresh air; I saw her, and carried her a shawl," Bert explained, curtly, in reply to his mother's

"She is feverish," Dr. John said, gently laying his fingers on her pulse. "I fancy you have taken too much exercise, Miss Aimee. A good rest will set you right."
"I have no doubt of it," she said.

and, with a bend of her head, she passed on upstairs.

"She looks like the heroine of a romance," Miss Gray said. "I wish to goodness something tragic would turn up about her, just to break the monotony of Live Oaks. We will all stagnate here. By the way, Bert, you did

not tell us the name of your self-in-"He is not exactly self-invited, I told you. His name is Harold Vane." "Harold Vane!" she repeated, quickly, a flush leaping into her soft cheeks. Yes; but he writes under the name of Cyril Thorne. Do you know him ?"

'I-have-seen-him," she answered For awhile she was silent—a rare thing with her.
"Who is this Vane? Where did you

pick him up, Bert ?" "Don't you remember, sir, that young journalist who helped us ferret out the frauds in the cotton-burning business on the 'River Queen '? He was reporter then for The New Orleans 'Picabut he is a natural detective and he told me he often exercised his talents in that direction. I liked him first-rate. He is a capital story-teller, and he proved himself a sharp one in that cotton business." ' We paid him, I remember. But I

feel under obligations to him all the same. Write to him to come. I suppose he is respectable ?" "I should say so," struck in Miss Gray. "Harold Vane is a pet in literary circles. I could endure him myself. He is rude; he puts on airs of in-

"To women," said Bert. "I think he is not much of a lady's man, goodlooking as he is.' Upstairs, Irma, looking her fate in the face, was wondering how long it would be before the end came, and her glass bark shivered on the rocks. "Oh! to think I killed him! I did not mean to. Of course, they will find me. It will be easy to trace me here. If they had only believed I was

Then, after a little pause The young man on the bank did not betray me. Why, I wonder? I took his boat; I would not let him come with me. They offered a reward for information about me. Why did he not speak? Was it through pity?"

She recalled his face in that one chimpse she had of it by the lightninglash. What if she knew that at this moment they were discussing the same man down-stairs: that he was soon to arrive at Live Oaks; that he was a born detective, and that he was often employed in that line! It was long past midnight before Ir-

ma's excited brain found rest. youth and nature asserted themselves. and she slept at last, a sweet, dreamless sleep, which lasted until the sun, streaming in at the window, wakened her. A mockingbird was singing in the orange tree below. She threw on a wrapper and went to

the window. A singular cavalcade met her eve. Madcap on her bob-tailed pony, and behind her, clinging to her with a frightened grip, a sallow mite of a girl, who lived in a cettage not far from Live Oaks, whom Maddle had taken under special patronage. A litle netgro in a ragged jacket and brimless hat, mounted on a tall, bony

nule, acted as outrider, and the dog Gitup and two other curs of low degree brought up the rear. The Madcap saw Irma and waved her hand to her. "I'm taking Pansy out to ride for her

health. health. She's got fever-cake, and Maum Viney says nothing will cure it but to ride a hard trotting-horse Goodness knows, Flea is hard enough. He's a regular churn!" Irma laughed before she knew it, merry little laugh. Then she started guiltily. How dare she laugh? And

yet, what was the use of yielding to despair before the crash came? Why not take all the brightness life offered. and then when the night of misery fell bear it with what courage she might! This was her philosophy, taught by her own buoyant instincts. She thrust back her gloomy apprehensions and lived only in the

There was much to divert her. Her school duties were not arduous, and after these she mingled with the household as one of them. Mrs. Fontency would tolerate no slight to the daughter of her best friend. And yet Mrs. Fontenoy watched her son's increasing interest in Irma with no little anxiety. she had set her heart on Bert's marrying a woman with family position and money. And she had selected Florence

Bellamy. diversion was at hand. One day Maddie burst into the room with cheeks aflame. "We are going to have a new sensa-

tion at Live Oaks. Belle is going to have an entertainment—a religious benefit. You must know Belle is very religious. She snubbed my poor, dear tutor because he refused a professorship to go into the itinerant Methodist ministry. But she is a worshipper of Dr. Richards, the showy pastor of her church—the Episcopal. He had a big name and was in charge of a church in New Orleans. It was a hard struggle to get him here, he stood out for so much salary; but the big-bugs—papa among the rest—raised the bid and he came. But he turns up his Greek nose at the Parsonage, and so does his fair little statue of a wife. Belle has undertaken to have it repaired and refurnished, and this is her first effort in that direction—an entertainment here. It is not to be the stereotyped concert Cousin Fannie vetoed that. We are to have some good music and scenes from the best plays, acted in costume on a stage with a drop curtain and dressing-rooms—only think! And we are to have a few tableaux. Belle is making out her programme. You are to sing a duet from 'La Favorita' with Mr. Green, the slim tenor who has the sickly moustache and sings in the Cousin Fannie is in two of the selections, and Florence Bellamy has part, and Miss Pepton and Bert and- But I am all out of breath; I must tell you, though, where it is to be. You can't guess! In the long hall downstairs with the shell floor. It's just a grand place, isn't it? Kind of out of doors, because the arched windows are so big and open to the ground; and they are all hung with ivy, so the Jap-anese lanterns will show so prettily among the green. There is to be a large

hundred people or more. Won't it be It sounded grand to Irma, who had never seen anything of the kind in her life. She had an instinct for the drama. She had read Shakespeare's plays with her mother, and all the old British dramas. In the deep bayou forest she had often declaimed passages of these and acted parts of them that struck her imagination. She had listened, thrilled to the core, to her mother's account of the acting of Forrest and Charlotte Cushman. Of course this entertainment would be but a pale shadow of the stage, but the thought of it ow of the stage, but the thought of She was present at the first rehear-

stage at one end, and seats for five

sal, and her intelligent look made Bert turn to her for suggestions. She forgot timidity in her interest, and gave her ideas of how passages should be ren-dered and movement carried out. They were always good, because they were true to uature and to a strong and pure

"You must have been on the stage," sneered Miss Gray, After the rehearsal was over Bert came over to the window where she

was sitting. "I wish to heaver you had Miss Pep ton's part, or Florence Bellamy's," he said, leaning over her. "They are nice girls, and, as Belle says, drawing cards because of their society influence, but they are perfect puppets. They have no power to throw themselves into a fine part. Have you acted much? Your part. Have you acted much? Your looks and movements in every-day life somehow suggest the romantic and tragic drama to me. I wish you would tell me of your past. I wish I knew all

"It would not edity you. I had rather talk of anything elie." And she began to speak of Miss Pepton's beauty, and how lovely she would look as Portia in the casket scene, and how saucy she would look as Lady Gay Spanker.

Bert shrugged his shoulders. He found more beauty in the face he look-

ed on then, with the moonrays lighting its poetic curves and strange, sad eyes. Daily he became nore fascinated by to be. All his thoughts were of her-wondering as to her past. He plied his mother with questions about her, until pushing the hair from her white forehead and looking athim with eyes that "Bert, you are falling in love with

Aimee Brazeale." "What nonsense!" he exclaimed with an impatient backward toss of his head. Then he added, "What if I were falling in love with Aimee Brazeale Is she not worthy to be loved?"
"Yes," sighed the mother, "but you are my only son. I had a right to expect that you would marry to please

You can have a wife with money "Florence Bellamy you mean. She is not worthy to be the hairdresser of Aimee Brazeale. Aimee Brazeale is a woman to win a man and hold him. "She has been trying to win you. I

am surprised at het, disappointed in "She has done nothing of the kind. She has avoided me, I doubt exceedingly if she would accept me if I offered myself to her. "You doubt it? You are not sincere,

"I doubt it. I repeat. I have had a thought of testing it, but you and Florence Bellamy have managed it so that I hardly feel like a free man. But if I were wholly free, and asked this girl to be my wife, I should feel very doubtful of her answer."

"As if she would be so mad as to refuse him," murmured the doting mother. " I am sorry I brought Aimee Brazeale here. I car see her strange charm myself. Bert speaks the truth She does not seem to try to win him, when he came to her side. But that is natural. I must find some pretext for sending her and Maddie away—to my aunt's on the Teche."

The night of the entertaiment came. A feeling of foreboding came upon Irma, but she resolutely shook it off. She went to her room to iress. She knew her tableau costumes would be provided for her, but she expected to wear her black lawn to sing in. She lighted her lamp, though the afterglow was still rosy outside. There, on the bed, shimmered something white and silvery. She took it up It was a dress of nun's veiling and white silk. The with silver cor Pinned to it was a little note :-

"Miss Aimee Brazelle will please as tope it will dit; I hel her measure, "jankel Fontenoy."

Irma never had yorn so beautiful a dress. She never had worn one that left bare her beastiful bust and arms as this did but for the filmy lace. "Do put it on it once!" cried Mad-die, running in it her school dress. "To think Belle kept it a secret from me until half an tour ago; and then I found it out by chance. I thought you would never go to your room. Here are your flowers—al white—roses, jasmine and lilies. Bert gathered them. Now for your dress."

It was put on, and the flowers put in their place. Irma could not help looking at herself with pleasure and blushing at Maddie's enthusiastic exclama tions. She meant to wear nothing on her neck, but Maddle, who had been kneeling by the little trunk, brought up a locket set with pearls. "Oh, not that!" exclaimed Irma, pale and suddenly reme

ing all she wanted to forget. The locket contained a picture of Aimee Brazeale's mother. Irma had never worn it. "Oh! but she must, must she not, celle?" appealing to Miss Fontenoy, who had just stopped at the door, peerless in white silk and old lace. "Let me see it. Why, it will just suit

her dress. And this picture—is it not a portrait of your mother? Certainly you will wear it. Let me clasp it on. There was no demurring when that imperious voice gave command. But frma felt as though the millstone of the Bible were fastened about her neck. When she was alone. Belle having taken Maddalon off to dress, she flung open the window and gaspingly breathed the fresh air. Dark fears tugged at "Leave me, leave me!" she cried to

them. "The after days, the sleepless nights, shall be for you and me, but let me have this hour, this night free of your vulture beak !" She went out on the upper balcony to divert her thoughts by watching the arrivals. It was now dark. The sky was full of stars. The grounds below were illuminated with colored lanterns

and large stands of blazing pine and

bouses and the glittering fountains looked like fairyland to Irma's eyes.

The people had begun to arrive. They came not only from the town, but from the surrounding country. An entertainment at Live Oaks was an unusual thing, and this, it was rumored, would

be something unique.
"Our auditorium will be filled to
overflowing," announced Belle, with more excitement than her calm, statuesque face and soft, controlled voice had ever been known to show. "It will soon be time for the performance to begin. Are all our force

She looked around at those marshaled about her in the brightly lighted upper hall. Irms saw them plainly through the window of the verandah. How fine they were in their stage costumes! How beautiful the girls with their picturesquely dressed hair and glowing complexions! Fannie Gray ong the first who had to appear on the stage. It was in the garden scene of the "Lady of Lyons." Her handsome Claude was carrying her bouquet and fan, and she looked happy. Florence Bellamy, as Desdemona, wore white gauze over silver. Miss Pepton, as Portia, wore gold-colored Pepton, as Portia, wore gold-colored satin with slashings of crimson velsatin with slashings of crimson velvet. There were five young ladies and some girls of twelve and fourteen dressed as maids. There were six young men, most of them in showy costumes of knee-breeches and velvet tunics with gold lace and plumes. Irma could see how Bert surpassed them all in grace and beauty. He was standing by Florence Bellamy, and she was talking to him but he smiled in an about talking to him, but he smiled in an absent way, and his eyes wandered about as though in search of some one. Fre-sently his little sister appeared on the scene looking very girlish and simple in her white frock and long halr

"Come here, Madcap!" he cried. He

bent down and kissed her, at the same time he whispered in her ear :"Where is your little music teacher" Where is Miss Aimee Brazeale?"

"She went out there on the verandah awhile ago," answered Maddie. Madcap never could whisper properly, her brother always declared. Her answer was heard by Florence Belamy. She gave Bert a keen look and turned off. Disregarding it, he slipped away from the group and wart out. away from the group, and went out on the verandah. Irma stood looking out at the brilliant grounds below. The vari-colored lights fell upon her. Bert started when he saw her. He had never seen her in evening dress before. He approached her almost shy-ly. He was dressed as Claude Melnotte and he filled Irma's ideal of the character. He came close to her, and took a little box from his pocket.

"I have not forgotten," he said, "that you told me—a week ago—that to-day is your birthday. I have brought you a little gift to show that I remem-He held up a gold bracelet set with

"I cannot, indeed I cannot take it," she said. "But you must. It was made for you. See, the pearls form your name. You would not hurt me by refusing

He took her round, white arm, and clasped the bracelet upon it. "You must not refuse to take it," said in a voice half-entreaty, halfcommand. "And you must let me talk

to you to-night. I will not consent to be put aside for the new friends who will be sure to gather around you." Belle was calling him. He hurriedly pressed Irma's hand to his lips, and was gone. She stood there feeling guilty and unhappy. She must put an end to this. It was sweet, oh, it was inexpressibly sweet to be loved by this ardent, handsome, graceful man; but it was a sin to allow it, a base sin of ingratitude against the people whom she had already deceived, and against this young man, who thought her innocent and true. Would he not shrink from her if he knew she was the daughter of an ignorant and unprincipled man-if he should dream that was the murderess of whom he had read and for whom the police were hunting? If he even knew she here, an impostor, receiving kindness because of the name and identity she had stolen, he would surely despise her. The thrill of his kiss upon her hand and the beauty of his gift—inscribed with the name of Aimee Brazeale-were mixed and marred with pain; and yet when she descended to the hall below her color had deepened, and the soft glow in her eyes had brightened so that John Fontenoy was speechless with surprise as he looked at her. He thought he had never seen such strange, bright loveliness. He stood at the foot of the stairs, and took her hand as she came down, saying, as he drew it through his arm :-"Belle sent me for you. She wants you to come behind the scenes and help her with the stage management. and all that. You know what a task it is to manage amateurs. They are

never ready."
"It is a novel task to me," said It was, indeed, but she took to it intuitively, and proved a ready assistant. It required all Belle's coolness and decision to make things move smoothly. She was much worried by the nonarrival of the blonde tenor, who was to sing, with Irma, the duet from "La Favorita." At the last moment he

sent an excuse—a sore throat. "If we had known before, we might have provided a substitute," said Belie. "But, now, who will take his place? The duet is beautiful. It is "Some one may turn up," said Bert

sensolingly. "I will try to drum up semebody. We have some pretty fair singers in the audience." As he spoke a card was handed to He glanced at it, and then at Miss Gray. you can't endure-Harold Vane." "He is here," she answered, and the

pink that came into her cheeks was deeper than the rose color of her Pauline dress. "He will write some nasty criticisms about us, or he will praise us in his sarcastic way. I wish he had stayed

off till to-morrow. Bert went to receive his guest. He was a slight, well-built young man, with a face that would catch your eye in a crowd for its bright, keen eye, and the color that almost always burned in the dark cheeks.

"I am not in regulation costume," he said. "I had not time to dress. The boat got here only ten minutes ago.' He wore an easy-fitting suit of dark brown, but his quiet, well-bred manner made it seem all right. He had clear-cut features, but there was a subtle, hidden look in his eyes, and a half-sneer on his short upper lip.

"Let me introduce you to my brother John and give you a seat beside him," said Bert. "He will tell you who is who on the stage. I must go back. I am one of them, you see glanced at his dress. "Don't view us with a critic's eye."

"I am in too mellifluous a mood to be critical." Vane said. "Your mother regaled me on Roman punch as soon as He was introduced to Dr. John, and had the seat by him. The curtain was up for the garden scene from the

"You know the lady," asked John, indicating his betrothed. "I have met her," answered Vane. He was looking at her through his opera-glass. Presently he caught her eye. He smiled to himself as he saw the nervous change in her manner. The scene over, the programme called next for a song—an aria from some opera. Irma Brazeale came out to sing it in her white, soft dress, with

the white flowers on her bosom. "Who is she?" Vane asked.
"A young teacher of music and
French in our family—Miss Aimee
Brazeale. A lovely girl."
"Aimee Brazeale?"
Vane leaned eagerly forward,

studied the singer's face. He from in a puzzled way, and shook his head. Then he looked again, and the puzzled expression came back, but it passed away, and again he slightly shook his ballad with such wonderful sweetne

that Vane forgot to study her features

"Miss Brazeale sings wonderfully well," he said. "There is a wild sweetness in her notes not often heard. The curtain rose next on the tableau of the "Troubadour," a graceful picture of a knight and a lady. Then there was the tableau of "Judith and Holofernes." As the calcium lights flashed upon the scene, Vane nearly started to his feet. It was a startling picture. The Judith in her rich, dark nobes, and dark, jewelled-bound brow and flowing midnight hair, was wonderful. Then her look, as her eyes were lifted from the bleeding man she ad slain for her country's sake ! That ork expressed stern triumph, but the spressed also a depth of horror at

her own deed. The sight of the blood of the writhing face, had filled her with horror. The Judith was Irma, and that look on her face was a revelation to Vane. He no longer re-garded her with a puzzled look. A light of recognition leaped into his

"It is the Black Bayou girl," 'he said to himself. "That is her very look af-ter she had stabbed old Solon Van-horn. Miss Aimee Brazeale, I know A note was handed to him from To be Continued.

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