HAPTER 1.

Kenneth Maybin, somewhere about the middle of the long line, found himelf, suddenly drawn, dancing, into , high, arched doorway, and along a amp-lit corridor with raftered ceilng, stone pavements and stuccoed valls.

To the stranger, fresh from his feet. saic matter-of-fact existence in a variety into a new and strange lips. vorld.

I prefer Paris. Or even New York!" Kenneth's outstretched palm. he added gayly. "But you may not stop to sniff the must and mould of she said with a sweeping curtsy. It now, Kenneth. Come on, old man. They are waiting for us."

a tender sky.

numbering some twenty-five or thir- stone bench there listening, ostensi- he needed no information. A newspaty young people of both sexes, station- bly to Chicot, Odette's mocking-bird, per received within six months after ed in the slitlike alley of St. Antoine, singing in his cage upon one of the that absurd parting in the dusky Le opened with a noisy welcome, and rose-wreathed balconies. closed around the newcomers. May- "And I am really your King?" whis- announcement of Mademoiselle Le speech which assailed his guide, while hand on her knee. he bowed right and left in response | "But you pay for your royalty, Ken- Henri Dansereau for their new home to rapid introductions. A moment neth, my boy," cried Gaston, who had in France. later, marshalled by Lorio himself, stolen upon them unperceived. they went sweeping down Royal "The universe itself--" began May-Street.

selle? Where are we going?" He simply plan for your Queen, within old Le Breton mansion, he saw swingput the question awkwardly, trying the month, some little fete in return ing from the wrought-iron railing of to frame the French syllables with for your Royal honors-" grammatical exactness.

informed you?" smiled his companion. white-robed companion. "It is the Epiphany-Twelfth Night, you know. And we go to cut a under his direct gaze. King's cake at my cousin, Miss Le to her English.

freely, his Ollendorf slipping, like and a persistency which took his own he had sat that first night with Od-Christian's burden from his shoulders, breath away whenever he paused to ette. The paths where he had walked as they sped on in the wake of the think of it. The month sped like a that last night with his Queen were others.

And so it was that at length a had uncoiled its swaying length, a gay to Grande Cousine, the stately maiden she is happy. And I sincerely trust chorus had burst upon the night air, lady who presided over Le Breton that Monsieur Henri Dansereau has and Lorio was leading the breathless mansion. And he sighed, a little en- proper respect for Chicot." farandole along the flagged corridor, viously. across the moonlit court, up a crooked

ceremoniously around the circle tion. of elders, was brought at length to the orphaned chatelaine of the house.

"Miss Le Breton, Mr. Maybin, Od-Maybin. Make him welcome."

the sudden blaze of gaslight; his mind was confused by the variety of lovel impressions crowded into it. But the mere sight of the young girl refore him restored him with somethe was so different, he naively de- also keep his Queen. pided, from all other women in the world!

low, the innocent, startled look of a knell! he blooded colts in his father's pastte Le Breton.

He guided her hand boldly when it tenderly reproachful, "Chicot is my ame her turn to cut a slice from the reat brown, shining, hollow ring of 'Here?" she questioned, with a side- would like to tie his head up in a ong glance at him from her luminous

"No, here," he replied, moving her white and supple wrist ever so slighty with his brown fingers. Truth tress, releasing her hand from her to tell, his keen eyes had detected suspicious bulge in the porous ring. His heart was beating painfully, he would not have told why, as she pressad the knife downward, catching her ander lip between her white teeth and frowning portentously.

Sure enough, there was the bean! She held it in the rosy palm of her pressed about her. Kenneth did not me?" understand the pretty game, but he "I certainly do, Mr. Kenneth May- dog's bark, the thump of the police- knee. "What have you to plead to

future depended upon some decision which a girl, barely known to him by name, was about to make.

"Come, little cousin, choose me!" shouted Gaston, darting around the table to joggle her elbow.

"Look at me, Odette. I am the man," laughed another tenth or twentieth cousin.

"Non! Non! Moi! Moi!"

"I! I!" A chorus of gay voices, young and old, caught up the cry with clapping of hands and stamping of

Kenneth grew absolutely pale. His astant State, the experience was be- nostrils dilated; his blue eyes flashed vildering. Hurried out of the hotel a defiant look around and fixed themlining-room half an hour earlier by selves upon the flower-like face before is old college-chum, Gaston Lorio, he him. "Choose me, Odette," he heard kid been plunged without a moment's himself murmur with unconsiouss

Odette flushed to the roots of her "Yes," Gaston had remarked, steer- hair. She, too, glanced defiantly ng him rapidly along the narrow from one to another in the shricking, street under the shadow of overhang- teasing circle; then she took the trong galleries, "this is indeed that old phy-a heart-shaped, wine-dark sea- places, his interest in the dim corrijuarter of New Orleans about which beam-between a dainty thumb and dors with their glimpses of Edenlike you others are so curious. Myself, forefinger and dropped it lightly in gardens beyond, the mysterious jeal-

"I make you my King, Monsieur,"

breathless with mock compliment and sometime friend, Gaston Lorio, had "They! Who?" demanded Kenneth, circling dance, finally left them in been living for a couple of years in pausing to stare up at the twin tow- peace, the newly made King-follow- his beloved Paris; and that the Le ers of the Cathedral outlined against ed his Queen-treading on air !-down Breton family had suffered financialthe century-old stair and into the per- ly from the failure of a local bank. As he spoke, the expectant group, fumed courtyard. They sat on a Concerning his sometime sweetheart

bin's half-comprehending ears drank pered Kenneth, longing yet not daring Breton's marriage to Monsieur Henri in eagerly the soft babble of foreign to take into his own the little white Dansereau; and the notice of the de-

bin fervently.

"But, I may keep the bean?" de- ing the legend: "My brother, Gaston, then, has not manded Kenneth, turning to his

Breton's." The slight twist of her prophesied exultantly under his greenery in the court was dusty and Creole tongue added a piquant flavor breath. This, indeed, seemed likely forlorn; a slatternly looking woman yours?" enough. His wooing, so boldly begun, with a pan of vegetables on her knee "Oh!" Kenneth breathed more proceeded thenceforward with a dash was sitting on the stone bench where lightning flash.

stair, and into the vast salon above, summers," responded Grande Cous- and outs of a complex will case which The stranger, having been passed ine with a soft, fluttering suspira- had its roots in New Orleans. But he mighty high-jinted pusson. Mek lak

Twenty-two and eighteen were at that moment pacing the prim walks

The supreme hour had struck. They ette, this is my old friend, Kenneth were discussing the final arrangements for the little return fete which, Kenneth's eyes were still dazzled by the same evening, was-nominally-to end the King's brief reign.

"But I shall keep the bean, you know," he said.

"Yes." She returned, faintly, the significant pressure of his hand. Both thing like a physical shock to himself. knew in their hearts that he would

Alas! the Cup and the Lip!

Chicot, facetiously known as the A slender, dainty figure, robed all Queen's Fool, was singing in his cage n purest white; gray eyes with long, on the rose-wreathed balcony. His lark lashes, dusky hair falling over song, rapturously exultant, might er forehead, and giving her, some- have been an epithalamium. It was

"I wish--" said Kenneth, pausing ture at home-this is as far as Ken- abruptly-"I wish Chicot would stop with ever got in a description of Od- his noise! I cannot hear myself talk." "But, Kenneth," murmured Odette,

bird !" "I do not care," returned Kenneth, , King cake on the dining-table, half in fun, yet half nettled, too; "I

towel, or choke him with one of my guitar strings!" "Mr. Maybin! How you ought to be ashamed!" gasped Chicot's mis-

lover's clasp and moving away from Needless to set down the extravagant steps by which the foolish quarrel climbed to its explosive conclus-

selle," demanded Kenneth at length, of his forgotten mate calling from her apron, and a plaid chignon-Mrs. July hand, letting her gaze travel slowly pale with unaccustomed wrath, "that nest in the dew-scented magnolia tree; Ann Baxter, in short, who sat on a around the laughing circle which you prefer your fool of a Chicot to a passionate love-lilt, varied by mus- bench in the crowded court-room,

trembled visibly, feeling that all his bin," retorted Odette; "and I regard man's staff on the banquette, the call the charge?"

you," she added deliberately, "as no better-than-an-assassin!"

"Then, Miss Odette Le Breton, let me say good-by-forever!"

the tunnel-like corridor. The next no matter! moment the street door opened, and closed with a reverberating bang.

"Mon cher Chicot. Tresor de mon coeur," murmured Odette, lifting a pallid face toward the hidden cage and pressing a white hand against her slender throat.

laughed Kenneth bitterly, as he sped night being impossible. northward in the railway train at the very hour set for the Queen's fete.

CHAPTER II.

Five years later Kenneth Maybin strolled once more down the quaint street by which he had first entered the French Quarter. This time it was in broad daylight, and this time, by reason of many journeyings about the world and much prying into strange ousied galleries, and the many-colored peaked roofs, was somewhat abated.

A casual inquiry had put him in pos-When their boisterous subjects, session of the information that his Breton_courtyard had contained the parture of Monsieur and Madame

The wound inflicted by this announcement, he assured himself, had long since healed. Nevertheless he felt "What is it, may I ask, Mademoi- "Oh, the price is not so costly! You a distinct pang, when, passing the fine the veranda a square carboard bear-

> "Chambres garnies a louer." (Furnished Rooms to Rent.)

She nodded assent, blushing again He hurried on with one furtive glance down the familiar corridor, for "I shall keep my Queen also!" he the arched door stood wide open. The strewn with unsightly debris.

"He has the ardor of his twenty- "What an idiotic youngster I was!"

"She has the heart of her eighteen having come South to study the ins him, shaking her head indignantly. though it had become; nor with some of the court below in the falling dusk. denuded, shabby genteel Le Bretonperhaps, he shuddered, Grande Cousine herself!

He found precisely the place he wanted; the topfloor of a tall house in Royal Street, a stone's throw from the Cathedral and the ancient building beside it where the court records of a century and a half are stored. There was a small court-yard below, half filled with a mossy cistern and a ramshackle bench, and a pleasant outlook upon a mass of flowering geraniums, in a dormer-window which jutted like a grav hood from the roof of a house just across the street. He took possession at once.

"I shall get on capitally here," he decided, looking over at the Cathedral towers and hearing vaguely the distant hum, like wind-stirred forest leaves, of children's voices in the convent school near by. "I shall look up data during the mornings and write my brief o' nights."

But he calculated without that unknown quantity which is said to lurk behind all human reckoning.

The same night he seated himself at a table, spread out before him the fair pages of legal cap, dipped his pen in the inkstand,-and pushed his chair back with a frown of annoyance.

A mocking-bird somewhere in the

neighborhood had begun to sing. To others listening in holiday mood, for the time was hard upon Christmas, the song was a flood of melody He looked from the affidavit in his tender, wooing, joyous, sad-a cap- hand to the colored lady dressed in "Do you mean to tell me, Mademoi- tive's song of the green wood, and guine-blue calico, with a white waist, ical and mischievous imitations, of a balancing a large bird cage on her

of the milkman, the long-drawn cry of the praline woman.

tal, insistent, outrageous. He had His flying footsteps sounded along never liked mocking-birds since-but

offender, as he had instantly divined, was swinging in a huge cage,-Mayly-in the dormer-window opposite. He slammed his own blinds ostentatious-

question, or so, at least, the irritated ing performances began with unfail- tribullatium." ing regularity a little before nightfall each day, and continued throughout the livelong night, now enveloped in the effulgent glory of a waxing moon; while Maybin's hard-sought notes accumulated the legal cap gathered dust, and dust only, on its pristine purity, and his always-impetuous temper steadily rose.

At length, after some four or five days of constant feeding, the temper reached a white heat. Move? Never He liked his quarters, he had a most important brief to write, he needed at least ordinary quiet-that infernal honey!" bird should be hushed!

or of the house itself.

His ring was answered by a fat old negress with a shrewd, good-humored |

"How do you do, Auntie?" began Maybin with easy familiarity. "I wish to see the lady of the house." He handed her his visiting-card as he spoke. "Yes, suh," she bobbed an old-time

plantation "curchy," "U'm de lady of de house. Mis' July Anna Baxter, suh." She had the rich, unctuous voice of the plantation darky, "Oh!" Maybin gasped for breath.

"Then I suppose, Mrs .- eh-Baxter, that the bird on the top floor is

"No, suh. I keeps roomers. Dat mockin'-bird is de propitty o' one o my roomers.

"Very well, Mrs. Baxter. Please present my compliments to the roomer-a lady? I thought so-and tell her that the bird's noise is extremely anhigh, arched door had swung open, two years, this young American," com- he muttered smilingly, yet strangely noying to me. I shall be infinitely gottre, cancer, insanity, epitepsy and hand had caught hand, the human line mented one of the gray-bearded uncles stirred. "Dear little Odette, I hope obliged if she will remove bird and cage to another part of the house."

Mrs. July Ann Baxter opened her lips to speak, but Maybin was already He was in search of lodgings himself recrossing the street. She looked after

"Hump!" she ejaculated, "dat's a had no mind to lodge with the mem- he de marster. But he ain't marsterory of a lost love-vague and shadowy in' July Ann Baxter. An' I ain't gwine ter tell her nothin'! Hump!"

And so it befell that the mockingbird sang on unmolested in his geranium bower, while his baffled foe ramped and roared in vain for a day or two longer; then the lawyer sent over to the invisible roomer a note couched in the politest language, but the writer. He watched the messenger hand this to Mrs. Baxter herself, and saw the portly form of that highturbaned dame disappear, with stride majestic, down the corridor, as if conscious of the importance of her er-

Absolute inaction on the part of the roomer, with increased volubility on the part of the bird.

A second note, frigid, stiff, peremptory, threatening. Result, the same; which is to say, no result at all.

Maybin by this time had worked himself into a frenzy which amounted almost to madness. A fellow-lawyer, listening to the recital of his wrongs, laughed:

"Have 'em arrested, man! Bring the whole kit and caboodle into court !"

The laugh was provoking; it proved to be the last straw, the surcharging feather, the turning hair. For the second time in his life Mr. Kenneth May-

bin lost his head. "Madam, you are charged here with violating an ordinance prohibiting the keeping of a mocking-bird," said Recorder Nolan a day or two later.

Mrs. Baxter stood up, resting the cage upon her hip ; the mocking-bird To Maybin it was simply noise; bru- within, thus haled to the bar of justice, maintained a discreet silence.

"'Fo' de Lawd, Jedge, I ain' guilty !' said Mrs. Baxter, visibly flustered. "I He arose with an angry ejaculation, been raise' in Copiah County, Mis-ippi. and looked out of the window. The mongs de quality; an' I' clar' ter goodness I'll drap in my tracks ef I hatter go to jail! You ain' gwine ter bin could see the outlines of it plain- sen' me ter jail, is you, Jedge? Dish yer mockin'-bird ain' my propitty, nohow. 'Sides, ef any biggaty, high-"It is I who am the Queen's Fool," ly and went to bed, work for that jinted, masterin' pusson"-she cast a withering glance at Maybin - "doan" Work at any time was out of the lak music, whyn't he change his bo'din'-house? Why, Jedge, honey," Mrs. lawyer decided, during the days which Baxter's rich voice became tenderly followed. The mocking-bird, first on persuasive, "dish yer mockin'-bird kin the ground, was evidently there to sing fitten ter lif' up yo' soul when stay-and to conquer. His exasperat- you gits low in de vallew o' sorrer an'

> "The bird is not yours?" interrupted Recorder Nolan.

> "No, suh. Hit b'longs ter one o' my roomers. I rippresent her in dish yer case, I'm ler garjeen. She ain' been able ter come ter co'te-"

"Why?" demanded the Judge grave-

"Becaze, in de fust place, she's a ole pusson. An' she's lame in bofe her laigs an' she's blin' in befe her eyes. 'Sides, she's a lady bawn, dat's what she is, an' she ain' gwine ter be drug ter co'te by no common, lowdown ly'ars-'scusin' o' you, Jedge,

The onlookers roared; Maybin him-Rich, successful, imperious, Mr. self joined in the laugh at his own ex-Kenneth Maybin was unused to being pense. His fury was fast melting in balked in his desires. One morning the humor of the situation. He stephe descended his stair, crossed the ped forward to withdraw the charge; street, and rang at the enemy's door. but the Judge waved him back and So far as he knew, the enemy was in proceeded solemnly in the exposition of sole possession; he had never caught the ordinance. This, he declared, said so much as a glimpse of any other nothing about mocking-birds, except inmate of the dormer-windowed room. as might or might not be constructively construed.

To Be Continued.

INHERITED DISEASES.

Many Supposed Hereditary Maladies Are

Really Acquired. The question of heredity, or the transmission of certain mental traits or physical characteristics from parents to children, is one that has been much studied, but of which as yet too little is known. Formerly the inheritance of disease was believed in implicitly, by physicians as well as laymen, and the list of maladies to which children were supposed to be almost inevitably condemned by the accident of birth was a very long

Among these hereditary diseases were reckoned consumption and scrofula, leprosy, gout, rheumatism, many other nervous affections.

As we learn more about these maladies, however, one after another of them is removed wholly or in part from this category and placed among the acquired diseases.

Undoubtedly some diseases are really inherited, but their number is certainly not large. Many diseases run in families, but are not on that account necessarily hereditary.

Consumption, for example, was only recently regarded as one of the most surely inherited diseases, and is still believed by many to be so. But we now know that it is a germ disease which, while not "catching" in the ordinary sense of the word, is readily transmitted from the sick to the well setting forth plainly the grievance of when the invalid is careless in his habits, especially as regards expectoration. It is also acquired more readily by those of delicate constitution than by the robust.

The children of consumptive parents are seldom robust, and so are predisposed to any of the germ diseases, and living constantly in a house where the germs of consumption are necessarily abundant, they are very likely to become victims of that disease.

This is an important fact. It teaches us that since, as a rule, only the predisposition to the family disease is inherited, and not the disease itself, the chances of the younger generation escaping, if proper care is used, are very great.

The bringing up of a child in a consumptive family should be of a specially hygienic character. The best of food, floods of fresh air and sunlight, not too much study, long hours of sleep in a well ventilated room and, as far as possible, avoidance of exposure to the contagion of the family malady—these are the weapons by which the malign influence of inherited weakness of constitution may be overcome and many precious lives saved.

AN IRISHMAN'S WEIGH.

An Irishman, on weighing his pig, exclaimed, It does not weigh so much as I expected, and I never thought it

BETTER THAN MARRIAGE.

Married yet, old man? No; but I'm engaged, and that's as good as married.

It's better, if you only knew it.