UNDER A SHADOW

Continued from 1st page.

was one which closes the gates of society trieved, this one never. When a woman once forfeits her innocence nothing can restore her-no repentance, no tears; it is forfeited forever, and all privileges are lost with it. Darling, there remains for us nothing save to look this shadowed life boldly in the face. We must leave England; it is useless taking to our hearts the false hope that our story will not be known-Lady Blanche will take care of that; it will be known everywhere, from the queen on her throne down to the servants who open doors and blacken shoes-it will be on every lip: and you, my darling, with all your beauty, your genius, your fame, your goodness, you would be blackballed-society would close its doors against you; and, let it ner of a deserted old barn. cost what it may, we must say good-bye to England forever, and make our home where no calumny or scandal can reach

'But you will not like that,' she said. You love your home.'

'Yes, I love the Towers,' he replied, 'but I love you better.' He did not tell her that, in giving up his home, he was giving up the hopes and the dreams that made his life. 'I have thought it all over,' he continued; 'we must leave Eng- door locked-that I will, or else land. Nugent will marry Lady Eva, and know the reason why. Do you think they must live at the Towers.'

for you!'

'I must make it,' he replied, trying to mistaken finely, I can tell you.' no son of my own, so that he may as well pale face. have the Towers now as in twenty years' time. We will make the best of our at last. shadowed life, my darling, we will make a home for ourselves 'over the hills and far away;' we will travel over the wide scolding so quietly. world, and see all that is best and brightest in it.'

like a sob in his voice, and bending cherished where they might have smit-

rangement. Lady Eva and Nugent can get out of books. Off with you! dead by the hand of his friend Roy she will swear me to death!' Avenham were married almost immedi- Here's the basket.' ately-a quiet little ceremony, at which no one was present except the duke, the ting her great eyes wander from the vard must be gone; he moves again; and the duchess, Lady Bleseaton, and her young- to the deserted country lane, 'and then girl will awaken. So, Bruce Gardyne, est daughter. As Nugent had foreseen, there's 'Madman's Prift' to pass.' this marriage prevented, more than any thing else could have done, the spread of tening down the basket-lid vigorously. the form of the man he had called Roy

self. The news of her broken engage- poor fool?' ment made some little sensation, but people got hold of the wrong end of the sign of mercy in her aunt's face. . story: they would have it that Sir Richard had quarreled with her because she 'Any message?' had invented these stories against Lady Carlyton. Sir Richard himself married she wants the next lot of eggs. Now. shortly afterward a widow lady of ample don't stay long; there's the boy's supper horror he covered his face with his fortune, and he never ceased to thank to get, and I'm worked to death.' Heaven for his escape.

again, and never allowed her to enter his into the lane. house: if the duchess wished to see her, she had to seek an interview elsewhere. she hurried along; anger and weariness the tree, then leaned against it, faint and The time came when she owned, with of spirit, as her mind turned to her aunt, bitter tears, that she ruined herself while under whose care she had lived ever seeking to ruin another. She became since she could remember; disappoint. She seemed yet to be living in a hideous plainer than ever; indeed, a few years ment at leaving the beautiful story in nightmare, till, looking round, her eyes later on there were all kinds of reports— her book, and fright of the dark lonely fell on the kneeling man and the dead terrible! one of them was that Lady Blanche of path which grew greater at every step body. ten sought refuge in an extra glass of she took. wine. She grew more envious, more with her.

She tried in vain to set herself straight with society; they would not have her. Carlyton's name. The last few years of welcomed him with open arms. the Countess of Bleseaton were made miserable by the presence of her daugh. open waste of land. ter, which rankled like a thorn in her

of every year with Lord and Lady Carlyton.

Alison's story was made known; it was a nine-day's wonder, a sensation; then it she still lived in a world of fairies, evil died away and was forgotten. Still they spirits, and phantoms. never returned to England; and that their lives.

fused to believe in anything of the kind; called aunt. then, becoming convinced, he wrote a All the village girls regarded this pale

it. He said to himself that he should her beautiful eyes and a sob from her to me, and I shall be-be hanged as a begin to believe in goodness, for that the lonely heart. sins of a man's youth found him out, and

became lashes to scourge him. are churches now in Italy and Eugland crammed with weird stories of knights risen, and was shining down in silver where her pictures shine like jewels), so and chivalry that pleased and excited that she was not unhappy. As the years her. rolled, she averred to herself that, although the judgment of the world was closed eyes, and gave a sigh of gladness hard, it was correct—that a woman who when she was once safe away from it. has once lost her place in the ranks of the good and the innocent can never regain it; that not even tears of blood can slower as she entered the wood which rest on him standing with hands clasped wash out the stain of lost innocence; that | led to the back of the Castle. not even the life of a saint could make up for that one error; that the sin she more settled, it gave one leap into her committed was one which Ged, in His mouth; she clutched her basket, staggered goodness pardons, but men never forget. to a tree, and then waited and listened. was a genius; she did untold good; but was the only sound in her ears at first; and darkened it.

Young eyes read my story-eyes that 'You see, Alison, my love, your error believe good and true. The wind that rustles in the trees, the stars that shine against you. Many faults can be re- in the skies, the flowers that bloom, all

> mention marriage.' [THE END.]

CHAPTER I.

Alice! Alice! Alice! The shrill tones resounded through fell into his arms in a swoon. the chill evening air. They reached the

with a sigh, and rising slowly, made her barn to the yard.

A woman stood here—a coarse stout woman, with arms akimbo. 'Where 'ave you been, idle vagrant pale lins.

that you are!' she cried loudly, as the girl crept down the ladder. 'In the barn,' Alice answered.

'In the barn,' indeed! I'll have that I've got nothing to do but keep you in 'But you,' she cried-'what a sacrifice food and drink-to let you idle your days through as you like? If you do, you'er

speak lightly. 'I shall have you, and Aiice stood silent as the angry woman love you best in the world. You see, scolded on; her small hands were clasped be better? He does not even remember Alison, Nugent will be my heir if I have tight together, a mute look was on her

The woman ceased. Never before in move. Good-in one moment more.' her remembrance had Alice taken her

Martha Brown with an angry laugh. form. voted himself to carrying out that ar- just stuffed with all the nonsense you is complete. Eustace Rivers is dead-

'Well, what of it!' asked the other, fas-

'Give me the basket,' she said suddenly.

Alice turned away without a word, She had her revenge but it cost her She pulled her thin cotton jacket close Oh, Eustace, my friend, my almost dear; she lost a wealthy husband, a good round her supple young figure, for the brother, dead, and by my hand!. position. The duke never spoke to her autumn night struck chilly, and stepped

Her thoughts were a tangled mass as

'Oh, if Sam were only here!' she said disagreeable; she was even glad at last to herself as she hurried on, not daring to flirt with a curate. but the time came to glance to the right or the left for fear when even the curates declined to flirt of seeing phantom forms her vivid ima- 'Where do you come from? Answer at deep breath. 'Yes, there is one way,' he said gination supplied.

> Sam was one of the farm-helps. Under any other circumstance Alice

She left the lane, and approached ar It was the dreaded Madam's Drift.

A sudden break in the road at one side Nugent Avenham and his beautiful showed a steep incline and chasm, down young wife lived at the Towers; they which the unfortunate man who gave his through his mind. This girl might have save me ifwere very happy, and spent one month name to the spot had sought his death. quivering with fear.

Although grown out of her childhood

As she stole through the dusk, with her absence from the home they both loved pale face peeping from beneath the mass so well was the shadow that darkened of golden curls, her small hand clutching the basket as if for support, she looked and I don't remember what else. I must For some time afterward Lord Car- almost a fairy herself—a strange frail have fainted.' dyne was coldly received. His own sur- flower to belong to so coarse and comprise was unbounded. At first he re- mon a woman as the farmer's wife she groan. He moved with slow steps to the

long letter, manly and frank in its way, slender creature with contempt. She was to Lord and Lady Carlyton, but it was so white and poor-looking beside their buxom charms—fit for nothing but books. your words. You tried me so bitterly— now. Can you join me early? We will be The world was merciful in one way— Alice heeded not their contempt. She but I would give all that I hold dear to married at the registry-office, before—before no one was cruel enough to tell Lady would have been happy-with her be-Cardyne. Even Lady Blanche shrunk loved books, but she had a hard lifefrom that; she never knew the story- nothing but scoldings from Martha ly, still gazing at the dead man. 'Now never knew why the noble, beautiful we Brown, jeers from the boys and maids you will never speak again-you are dead man she loved so dearly was exiled from about the farm for her strange quiet England; the world spared her that ways, and heavy work for her young Lord Cardyne was very unhappy about hands, which brought the tears often to

When work was over and she was alone in her bed, she turned once more Alison resumed her painting (there to her beloved books, and her mind was

She crept past the Madman's Drift with

with her excitement, and her steps grew

Suddenly, as her heart was growing

She was beautiful, liberal, famous; she The rapid thump, thump, of her heart I brought this shame on your head. the sin of her youth shadowed her life, then came more terrible ones-muffled but for you, mother, it is different, and her hair was white, her face gentle, yet proud; Mrs. B. Atherton, Prop groans and confused noises, then just there is no escape.'

before her she saw two men, one uttertill he sank to the ground and lay mo- that Alice shrank back. tionless.

Alice, leaning against a tree, saw all this, yet it seemed to her like a hideous the worst at once. Were you alone whenwhisper the same warning to you, and it dream; she was cold and sick almost to when-death came to him, or-were others death. Her basket slipped from her with you?' 'Never believe and never trust a man arm-she had no power to stop it-and who talks to you about love and does not fell with a crash, causing the man who was stooping over the body to start, utter a loud curse, then stride toward bravely; 'few people would come this way by I mean to have my way.'

glimpse of a dark face, with cruel eyes, not with anger, a torn collar, and marks of blood on his cheek, to hear his low hurried words, 'A girl, by all that's execrable!' and she lost all remembrance, her eyes closed, her head dropped, and she

'Good,' muttered the man as he placed ears of a girl reading, curled up in a cor- her gently on the ground; 'she will know nothing; as for you poor fool,' moving At the angry tones, she closed her book back to the prostrate form of the man 'you have served my pnrpose-revenge way to the step-ladder that led from the for which I have waited so long has come

at last. Ah, you move.' He bent over the man and listened to the muttered words from between the

'Eustace-give-me - your hand; Ido not believe it. You will not takemy hand! What-she is false-you say -you villian-you black-hearted scoun-I'll drel-take that! Good God!-he is dead! Eustace-speak to me-speak-he is dead-I-have murdered him.'

The listener rose; there was curious light on his face.

'What!' he whispered to himself; 'he thinks it was his hand. Could anything it may pass when he wakes to his senses. 'What do you want me for?' she asked I must impress this belief on his brain by stronger evidence. The girl does not

He glanced round and stole through the hedge. In a few seconds, a curious 'Get on your hat, and carry me this sound might have reached the ears of basket up to Mrs. Grey at the Castle; it the two silent forms, but they were dim Even as he spoke there was something ought to have been there this hour past.' The man emerged again, he was drag-'To the Castle,' faltered Alice shrink- ging something with difficulty; it was a down, she kissed the kindly hands that ing back, 'to-night? Oh, Aunt Martha!' body, the misty light of the moon shone with his own. 'What, are you frightened?' said Mrs. on a dead face—on a limp inanimate

Darrell; there is evidence enough to damn 'It is so dark,' murmured the girl let- an angel, and he will die for it. Now I your revenge is complete.

He stole gently away, and gradually 'A place where a madman put an end to Darrell moved from the ground, with Lady Blanche's revenge recoiled on her- his life. Dead men do no harm, you trembling hands he raised his weak body speak.' to a kneeling position, then let his eyes, Alice shuddered, but there was no dszed with faintness and horror, wander

> They rested on the figure of Alice with wonder and scarce comprehension; then 'No; unless you ask Mrs. Grey when they moved slowly on till they rested on the dead man, and with a shudder of hands and groaned aloud.

'It is no dream; it is the horrible truth! His hoarse whisper fell on Alice's ears-

She was recovering. She helped herself to rise by the aid of weak; to try and think.

Her basket lay unheeded at her feet.

She uttered a faint shriek, and in another moment Roy Darrell was standing

before her, glaring into her face. 'Who are you?' he asked hoarsely.

than spoke the girl. 'Oh, do not hurt of this crime. I know-I feel it. Oh, for and she did not dare even mention Lady shunned him, but now she would have me, sir! I was on my way to the Castle one instant's clear memory! But all is dense

faltered. He grasped her hand.

'What?' he demanded huskily. He would know the truth.

For a moment a flash of joy went grace. You are the only witness. You can seen the fatal blow struck, the hand that Alice crept towards the dreaded place, took the life of his friend Eustace. She might have seen that phantom third form that haunted his memory.

'I saw you struggling with that man.' Alice said, speaking almost with difficulty; 'your arms were round him; you threw him to the ground. Then you came to me, you said something to me,

The man released her arm with a

dead body. 'Eustace,' he said in tones of acute agony, 'my friend-forgive me. God have mercy! I was mad-mad with were going to Nestley; I must push on there listen to them from your lips again, for then you would live; now'-he rose slow--and I have killed you !'-he drew back and leaned against a tree, then started suddenly-' and they will trace this back common murderer! A Darrell on the scaffold Oh, mother, forgive your son!

Alice stood in silence. It was night-time now; the moon had rays on the strange scene.

The girl forgot everything in the flood of pity that came over her as she watched the remorse of the man.

The lateness of the hour, the fallen Her arms ached, her limbs trembled basket, her mission, her aunt's angerall were swept away as she let her eyes together, and white haggered face.

His lips moved, and she could hear him murmur from time to time:

der!' Oh, that I could have died before Castle. mother! For me life henceforth will be death, for there is blood on my hands.

He glanced round in the agony of his grow lighter for a lover's coming. Young ing faint cries, while the other's arms mind, and a sudden thought seemed to girls read it, whose greatest happiness were wound round him, grasping him come to him; he moved to her so rapidly To tell you the truth, I was beginning to fear

'Do not shrink from me,' he muttered pas- you were tired of me.' sionately; 'but speak to me. Let me know

'I was alone.'

Alice shook her head.

Roy grasped her hand.

He turned.

'You swear it?. night,' she added softly, touched by the She had only time to catch a fleeting misery in his face. 'They fear the path too

'I was sent on a message to the house keeper at the Castle.' 'Ah! Do they know you are coming?'

'I think not.' Roy Darrel stood immovable, his face blanched with the burden of his sorrow. Cold perspiration trickled down his haggard cheeks. Watching him thus, the memory of that other face that had been before her just as she faint-

ed came to Alice. 'You are not dark,' she said almost invol untarily.

'What do you mean?' he gasped hurriedly. his warm brown hair and golden moustache. 'You looked so dark before,' the girl said blood on your cheek; you have none now,'

'God bless you!' he murmured faintly: whoever you are, you have done me the greatest blessing a human creature can do for another-you have taken as load from my heart, a weight of deadly pain from my head. I was right, there was another, but how did he come? Where is he now? Tell me again,' me. Stay, let me think—this is delirium; he cried, turning to her swiftly, 'it was not my face you saw.'

Alice looked at him steadfastly; she was growing faint and ill with the horror of the scene, but she forced herself to speak.

'It was not you,' she answered with a is his home.' shudder of remembrance; 'it was a dark cruel face, with eyes that looked like a beast's, and blood on his cheek. I can see him plainly these days Eustace will marry, and then they

for the matter of that.' 'What can I do? He is gone, and I must bear the penalty of his crime. They know place at the table. So it was settled, and Lord Carlyton de- 'What are you fit for, Alice? Your head's 'Now,' muttered the worker, 'now all we left the Castle together, they will find his 'Well, because he is too selfish. Under-

'What will they do to me?' she whispered. so much, and Eustace will give up nothing.' 'To you, child? Nothing; but your word will go against me. There is nothing to save and did not see the look of pain that crept me. I shall die a disgraced, dishonored man !' 'Die !' cried the girl, 'Oh no, no. You must not. They will not do this, I will not

'They will make you. Your friends know them to go to Nestley? I cannot understand of your walk through the wood. You must it at all.'

'But,' murmured Alice, white with horror -poor child! her strength seemed fast going -'but that other. I will tell of him.'

'It will be useless. Where is he? No; he pointing to the still dead form, and sinking his voice to a whisper-' he and I were friends. We had quarelled. Everyone knew there was a coldness between us. You saw a struggle. He lies murdered. I shall be convicted.

Alice sank back against a tree. She had no thought, no remembrance of aught but the horror of the moment. The faint sound of a clock striking roused her. 'It is getting late,' she said, glancing at him standing with sunken head. 'If I do not go, they will send to look for me. Oh, what can I do? Do not let them make me speak. I cannot bear to think of it; it is so

Roy Darrell looked at her thin pale face, out of which her great eyes shone like stars. 'Poor child ! you can do nothing-nothing, he said, slowly; then, as if a ray of light had come to him, he checked himself, and drew a thickly-one way you can help me, not for 'I am Alice Dornton,' gasped rather myself, but for my mother. I am innocent for my aunt, when, when--' Her voice and misty. I must have been stunned, for I can recollect nothing, save that I know the death blow did not come from me. But all is' dark against me. I shall be convicted. My N. HARRIS, mother will sink below the horror and dis-

He grasped her slender left hand. 'You are free,' he murmured. 'It is a great

'Whatever it is, I will do it,' Alice said in a dream. 'I am in your hands.'

'A wife can give no evidence against her husband. Will you become my wife?' Alice staggered back, a blush gathered for an instant on her cheek, then her eyes fell on his haggard anxious face, on the still dead

body, and terror banished all other feelings. 'I will,' she answered swiftly. Roy Darrell bent and kissed the girl's hand; she had spoken the words that gave him hope

'Let me think,' he said hurriedly; 'we-we this secret may be discovered; it is a hard thing to ask you, but life or death hangs in

the balance. Will you be there?' 'I will be there,' repeated the girl, 'early. 'Now we will part for a time,' he said slowly, 'and God bless you for your promise!' Alice turned away; something urged her to look back as she left the wood with faltering

Roy Darrell was kneeling by the body of his dead friend, and the girl who had promised to become his wife pushed bravely onon to face the long dreary road with all its dark night terrors; on to face the wrath of her aunt; on to sit and watch till morning came. bringing work for her slender hand and gentle heart in its golden sunbeam.

CHAPTER II. 'Valerie, you will not leave me, dear?' The question was put in a loving tender

Valerie Ross turned her proud imperious head. She was standing at one of the win-'Murder! A Darrell hanged for mur- dows in the lofty morning-room of Darrell

An old lady was seated at the table, glittering with silver and china for the early meal; she smiled as she met Valerie's dark eyes,

'I shall be so lonely,' she continued.

I had extended my visit too long, and that

Lady Darrell stretched out her slender white hand, and the tall beautiful form left the

window and knelt at the elder woman's feet. 'Now I shall scold you, Valerie. How often have I begged for this visit and you would not come. Do you think I shall let you cur-'I swear it,' Alice said, meeting his eyes tail it just when you like? No, no, my dear;

Valerie bent and put her warm red lips to the white hand.

'It is dull here, I fear, Valerie,' Lady Darre!l said after a pause; 'especially these two next days while Roy and Eustace are away, but they will soon pass.'

Valerie's face had flushed crimson; now it was very white as she said simply: 'I am perfectly happy, I want no one but

Lady Darrell patted the soft coils of hair that crowned the girl's head. It was glorious hair, of a warm ruddy, brown shade, that matched her eyes almost in color.

The skin was exquisitely fair, tinted with a delicate warmth of rose on the cheeks, and rivalling the fairest marble by its purity.

'You flatter me, Valerie; but now to breakfast. I hope, during the day, to have some A ray of moonlight touched him glinting line from Roy, and I hope also that by this time they have settled their little quarrel. Do you know, Valerie, this is the first time slowly. 'and-yes I am sure of it there was that I can ever recollect a coldness between Roy and Eustace, their friendship has been beautiful in its strength and warmth.'

Valerie rose from her knees abruptly; her back was towards her hostess.

'Does Captain Rivers ever stay with his mother?' she asked, speaking in a hard, dry

Lady Darrell did not seem to notice it, she laughed slightly.

'Well, no dear; I cannot say that he does see much of her. Roy will have him here. Eustace, of course, has to leave us frequently to join his regiment at the different towns in which it is garrisoned, but beyond that this

Valerie drew a sharp breath.

'I often laugh at Roy, and tell him one of must be separated; but Roy does not seem to Wedding. Roy released her hand, and covered his face think Eustace will ever take a wife, nor do I

'Why?' asked Miss Ross quietly taking her stand me, my dear. I am fond of Eustace Rivers. His father was my cousin and friend, Alice started, and pressed her small cold and I cherish the son for his sake, apart from his own. But a man to marry must give up

> She was opening her letters as she spoke, over her guests beautiful face. 'Ah, here is a letter from Lord William; he is coming down to-day. I must telegraph to Roy at once. How tiresome! What induced

> > To be continued.

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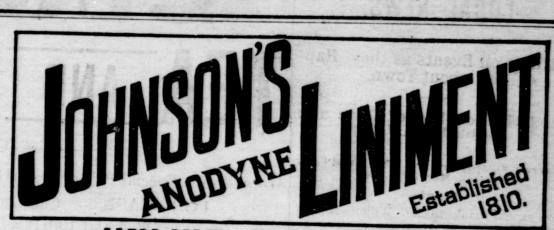
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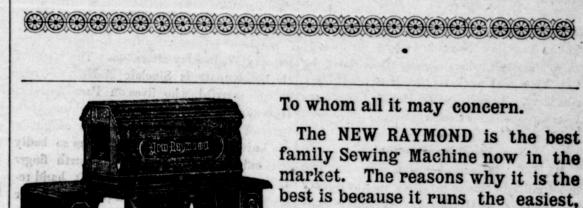
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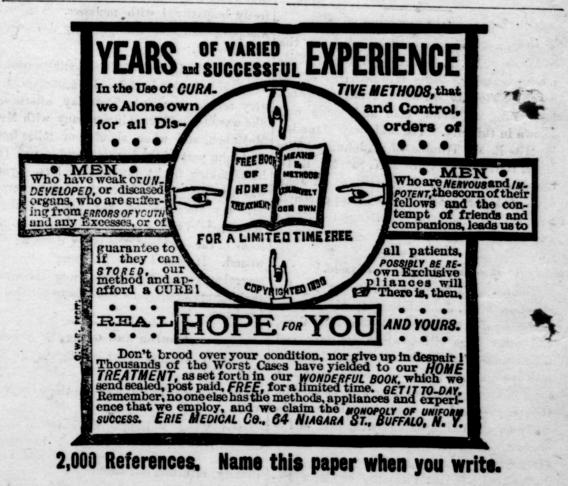
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