#### THE FLOWER GIRLS

## Marseilles!

(Continued.) les, of their vanity and their insolence; quering. they have become devotees and hypopany pay him the price of this strange simply obeying an iron will. his fill from the administration; another mother. dupe.

M. de Girousse's breath failed him. opened and his smile was less bitter:

he, mildly, to Marius, who had listened pers as were able to get in. The others He did not seek to excuse that which bought roses of me every morning, and to him with pain and surprise; 'I see were obliged to stand in the doorways, was culpable in his client's conduct; he my heart beat as if it would burst when everything in sombre colors. The rea- in the lobbies and even upon the steps represented him as an ardent and ambi- I gave him my bouquets. I know now son is that the idleness to which my title of the Palais. And every instant there tious man, who had allowed himself to be where those flowers went. I was told condemns me has permitted me to study arose from that crowd murmur and led astray by hopes of ealth and love. one day that he had fled with you. the pollutions of this district. But know shouls, the sound of which penetrated But, at the same, he maintained that the wept; then I thought you leved him and that there are some honest people among into the court room and was augmented accused could not be convicted of abduction that he would be happy. But you have us; if they would rise in a body, they ther disturbing the tranquil majesty of tion, and that the affair in itself exclud- put him in prison. Let us not speak of could easily crush the scoundrels. I the place. pray God every night that this civil war The ladies had invaded the gallery. The speech of the Procurens du Roi She paused, panting; then she conof virtue against vice may break out at an They formed up there a compact mass of was terrible. The defence had counted tinued, going close up to the girl, burnearly day. As for you, count only upon anxious and smiling faces. Those who upon a certain mildness, and the official's ing with her hot breath Blanche's icy the equity of the magistracy; you will find in it a firm support, independent and loyal. Its members do not crawl like slaves at the bidding of the rich and powerful. I have always had for the obscrity, mounted packed rows of rosy publicly exposed in one of the squares of man, we do not say afterwards that he magistracy a fanatical respect, for it is the faces, the bodies belonging to which Marseilles. The gardener Ayasse was took advantage of our weakness. We representative of truth and justice on earth.'

Marins took leave of M. de Girousse, words he had heard. He foresaw that The commencement of the proceedings was set down for the following day.

#### CHAPTER X.

PHILIPPE'S TRIAL.

little towns, where the curiosity of the announced violent appetites, had a quiet idlers has not each day a new ailment. success. The women, who had come to Nothing was talked of but Philippe and judge of Blanche's taste, doubtless Blanche; the adventures of the young thought the young girl less guilty when lovers were related in the open street; it they saw the lofty stature and bright was loudly asserted that the accused was convicted in advance, and that M. de Cazalis had, either personally through his friends, demanded his conviction of each juror.

was, so to speak, the master. These possession of him, even in the face of priests strove by visits and shrewd pro- justice. ceedings to bind the hands of the magistracy, the upright and firm spirit of which was feared. They succeeded only in M. de Cazalis was holy.

this task. They believed themselves in girl had been abducted by violence, that honor bound to crush Philippe Cayol. They she had clung to an almond tree, and regarded him as a personal enemy, who that, during the entire flight, the abduchad dared to make a criminal attempt tor had been compelled to employ against the dignity of one of their num- intimidation to cause his victim to follow ber, and who had thus insulted them in him. Finally, a most serious matter a body. To see the comtes and mar- was brought forward on the affirmation quises agitate themselves, get angry and of Mile. de Cazalis; she claimed that she unite together, one would have thought had never written to Philippe, and that that the foemen were at the gates of the two letters presented by the accused town. The matter in hand was simply were antedated letters which he had to cause the conviction of a poor devil, forced her to write at Lambesc as a preguilty of love and ambition.

Philippe also had friends and defenders. of some plain citizen like himself; but, tially subdued voices. Outside. while condemning his actions, they crowd uttered veritable howls. known in the town that Blanche, before re-established. the Judge d'Instruction, had denied her love, and the girls of the people, true then proceeded with. Provencales, that is to say devoted and courageous, treated her with insulting customary questions and had repeated to She is alone, and you are a hundred contempt. They called her 'the rene- him the points of the accusation against against her! God has no need of your gade;' they assigned infamous motives him, the young man, without argument, howls to punish her! Let us pass!' for her conduct, and did not hesitate to said, in a clear voice : cry out their opinion in the public squares, in the energetic language of the by a young girl!'

in the secret of the drama which was phrase, altogether foolish and absurd as glance, she saw that she was about to interested in having the accused con- exact truth. The President remarked sheet, and striding towards the women

M. de Cazalis had, without shame, her from her jailer!' crites; they have deceived even the hon- dragged his niece to Aix. During the

himself adroitly discredited it. all the on the point of hurling stones at the stock of a company of which he was the uncle and niece. The women especially superintendent; another by sinking a showed exasperation; they did not com- lowing day, which was set apart for hear and almost going upon her knees, she ship loaded with stones instead of mer- prehend that the young girl was not al- ing the statements of the witnesses. chandise, and making the insurance com- together to be blamed and that she was That evening, the town was in confu-

ment, by refusing to share the hazard She bowed her head that she might not treated him with more or less severity have murdered me!" of an operation as soon as that operation see those women who glared at her with and the masses defended him with became bad; another by hiding his as- fiery yes. She was conscious of gestures energy. sets, making two or three failures and of contempt behind her; she heard hor- The next day, the crowd at the doors you, to beat you! living afterwards like a man of means; rible words which she did not under- of the Palais-de-Justice was larger and another by selling for wine extract of stand, and her limbs quaked beneath noisier than before. The witnesses were logwood or beef's blood; another by fore- her; she clung to her uncle's arm that nearly all witnesses for the prosecution. in your cradle! stalling grain on the ocean during the she might not fall. Pale and quivering M. de Girousse had not been summoned; years of scarcity; another by defrauding she returned to her dwelling one day, they feared the rude freedom of his wit, astonishment. She drew herself up, the revenue on a large scale, by striving declaring that she would go out no more. and, besides, he should rather have been her aristocratic instincts rebelled and to corrupt the employes and by stealing The poor child was about to become a arrested as an accomplice. Marius him- her lips grew slightly pale with dis-

by placing on notes forced signatures of Finally, the proceedings began. From himself in the case. He, like his adver- face, the one with all her frail grace, the relatives or friends, who were afraid to early in the morning, the doors of the saries, feared the violent spirit of the old other in her fresh and energetic beauty. deny them on the day of maturity, and Palais-de-Justice were besieged; groups comte, who by a whim might spoil every- They contemplated each other silently, paid rather than compromise the forger; form d in the midst of the Place thing. another by himself burning his factory des l'recheurs, gesticulating and talking There was but one deposition in favor classes and hearts. ships, insured beyond their value; in loud tones. People grew noisy over of Philippe, that of the Lambesc inn You are beautiful, you are rich, reanother by tearing up and throwing into the probable issue of the trial: they dis- keeper, who declared that Blanche gave sumed Fine, bitterly; 'why did you steal the fire the notes he snatched from his cussed the culpability of Philippe and her companion the title of husband. my lover from me, when you knew that creditor's hands on the day of payment; the attitude of M. de Cazalis and Blanche. This deposition was effaced, so to speak, in the end you must despise and hate another by gambling at the Bourse with The court room filled up slowly. Several by those of the other witnesses. Mar- him? You should have sought in your the intention of not paying if he lost, and, rows of chairs had been added for per- guerite, the milkmaid, stammered and own sphere; you should have found a in fact, by refusing to pay, which did not sons provided with tickets; these persons said that she could not recall having stripling as pale and as cowardly as prevent him from enriching himself, a were so numerous that nearly all of them carried Mile. de Cazalis' letter to the yourself, who would have satisfied your week afterwards, at the expense of some were cempelled to stand. In the crush accused. Thus all the witnesses but little girl's love. See here; if you aristo lawyers, officials-in short, all the notable through fear or stupidity and lack of and white faces for you!" He maintained a long silence, allowing personages of Aix. Never had an ac- memory. his anger to cool. Then his lips again cused drawn such an audience. When The speeches began and necessitated Blanche, again seized by fear. the doors were opened to allow the gen- another session. Philippe's lawyer de-'I am somewhat of a misanthrope,' said eral public to enter, only a few curious fended him with appropriate simplicity. then: I loved Monsieur Philippe. He

were on the first row fanned themselves, energetic accusation produced a disas- cheeks: could not be seen. These rosy faces sent to prison for a few months only. were as if buried in the midst of laces, A confused tu nult arose in the court him. Ah! if Monsieur Philippe had ribbons, silks and satins; here and there room. Without, the crowd muttered. altogether overwhelmed by the fiery sparkled the sudden flash of a jewel. when one of the heads was turned. And his brother would be pitilessly convicted. from that noisy and garrulous crowd fell pearly laughter, soft words and sharp

little cries. The ladies were at a play. When Philippe Cayol was brought in. there was a sudden silence. All the ladies devoured him with their eyes: some of them pointed opera glasses at All Aix was excited. Gossip bursts him, examining him from head to foot. out with strange energy in those quiet This tall fellow, whose energetic features looks of her lover.

Philippe's attitude was calm and appropriate. He was clad wholly in black, He seemed to ignore the presence of the two gendarmes who were beside him; he The clergy of Aix lent its support to straightened himself and sat down with the deputy, feebly enough, it is true; that the grace of a man of the world. Occaclergy then contained eminent and hon- sionally he glanced at the crowd, tranorable men to whom promoting an injus- quilly and without effrontery. He sevtice was repugnant. A few priests, eral times raised his eyes to the gallery, nevertheless, yielded to the influence and each time, smiled tenderly in spite coming from the religious society of of himself; his incorrigible habits of Marseilles, of which the Abbe Donadei loving and wishing to please resumed

The bill of indictment was read. This document was very severe on the accused. In it the facts, according to the persuading the jurors that the cause of depositions of M. de Cazalis and his niece, were stated in an able and terrible The nobility strongly aided them in manner. It was asserted that the young cautionary measure.

When the reading of the bill of indict-All the people declared frankly for him. ment was finished, the court room was The lower classes blamed his conduct, filled with a noisy murmur of conversacensured the means he had employed, tion. Each person, before coming to the and said that he would have done better Palais, had a version of the affair, and to have loved and wedded the daughter the official recital was discussed in parnoisily defended him against the pride President threatened to order the court and hatred of M. de Cazalis. It was room cleared, and silence was gradually

The questioning of Philippe Cavol was

When the President had asked him the

about to be played. Those who were it seemed, contained nevertheless, the become a mother. She grew white as a vited did not even take the trouble to that the abduction of a man of thirty by in the first row, said in a louder tone: conceal their proceedings, being certain a young girl was something unheard of.

save Marins' brother, feeling themselves Philippe, tranquilly, 'or a young girl of that you will kill her child!' weak and disarmed, found solace in sixteen passing along the public high. She repulsed a gross huckster who was shouting, happy to irritate the powerful ways, traversing towns, meeting hun-sneering. All the other women drew Those men make a display at Marseil- people whom they had no hope of con- dreds of persons and not thinking of back. Fine's words had suddenly ren-

a word, they form an aristocracy of their hibiting her upon the Cours. He pro- dation of which he was accused. At each with shame, clung with fear to her comwealth probity of recent date. Well, I which the crowd attached to the young to quit him, to demand aid and relief; it steps. will tear off the masks. Listen: This girl's flight; he seemed to say to all: she followed him, it was because she The flower-girl, to avoid the Rue du one has made fortune by betraying a You see that a clown cannot harm a had consented to flight and marriage. Pont-Moreau, then full of people and friend; another by selling human flesh; Cazalis. My niece still towers above you Besides, Philippe displayed the greatest noise, took the little Rue Saint-Jean. On another by selling his wife or his daugh- from the height of her title and fortune!' tenderness for the young girl and the rea hing the Cours, she led Mile. de ter; another by speculating on the mis- But he could not long continue such greatest deference for M. de Cazalis. He Cazalis to her hotel the door of which was fortunes of his creditors; another by re- promenades. The crowd grew angry at admitted his errors; he merely asked open. During the walk, she had not utdeeming at a low figure, after having his attitude; it insulted Blanche, and was that they should not make him out a tered a word. base abductor.

The court was adjourned until the fol- bule, and there, partially closing the door

were to be seen the flower of the nobility, one served the deputy's interests, either crats take our men, we will tear your pink

leane lover, allowing their gloved hands trous effect. The jury brought in a verto rest upon the red velvet of the balus- dict of guilty. Philippe was sentenced to love. We love with all our flesh, with trade. Behind them, in the partial an imprisonment of five years and to be all our courage. When we elope with a

### CHAPTER XI.

BLANCHE AND FINE FACE TO FACE.

Blanche, hidden in the depths of the gallery, heard Philippe sentenced. She was there by order of her uncle, who wished to crush out whatever tenderness might be lingering in her by showing be my friend-shall I open my heart to her her lover between two gendarmes like a thief. An aged family relative had been instructed to take her to this edifying spectacle.

As the two ladies were waiting for their carriage on the steps of the Palais. the crowd, precipitating itself from the building, suddenly separated them. Blanche, dragged into the middle of the desert me, every hour of your life the re-Place des Precheurs, was recognized by the huckster women, who began to shout at and insult her.

'It is she, it is she!' cried these women "The renegade, the renegade!"

The poor child, dismayed, not knowing where to flee, was dying with shame and fear, when a young girl with a powerful posh scattered the howling group which sa rounded her and planted herself at

It was Fine.

The flower-girl also had witnessed the conviction of Philippe. For nearly three hours, she had endured all the agonies of hope and fear; the speech of the l'rocureur du Roi had over whelmed her, and she had wept frantically on hearing your husband, tell him of my tears. the sentence pronounced.

She was leaving the Palais, irritated wild is that I can never convince him that and terribly excited, when she heard the I adore him; he would laugh; he could should of the huckster women. She com- not comprehend the extent of my cowardprehended that Blanche was there and ice. No; do not speak to him of me. that she could take vengeance by abusing her; she ran towards the spot, her fists clenched, with insults on her lips. In her eyes, the young girl was the greatest alprit; she had lied; she had perjured herself and committed a cowardly act. At these thoughts, all Fine's plebian blood mounted to her face and urged her to cry out and strike.

She precipitated herself upon the crowd she scattered it to seize upon her prey.

But when she stood before Blanche, when she saw her bent with terror, the quivering and feeble child filled her with pity. She found her so young, so pretty and so delicately fragile that a generous thought of pardon took possession of her heart. With a violent gesture she drove back the women who were shaking their fists at the trembling girl, and straight- tened up the Cours. As she reached the ening herself up, cried in a loud, sharp Place des Carmelites, she saw Marius in

'Are you not ashamed of yourselves?

She had taken Blanche's hand, and, in 'I am accused of having been abducted ther rage firmly faced the crowd which murmured and came closer together to chastisement; M. de Cazalis wished, above These words made the spectators smile. bar the passage of the young girls. Fine all else, to disgrace Philippe, to render This noise singularly compromised The ladies hid behind their fans to enjoy waited, her lips pale and trembling. And, him forever unworthy of a woman's love. Philippe's cause. The entire town was the joke at their ease. But Philippe's as she reassured her companion with a

'Let us pass, I say! Do you not see of their triumph; those who wished to o 'Neither have you ever heard,' replied the poor girl's condition, wretches, and

summoning the first passer to deliver dered them silent and compassionate. The young girls retired between two And he proceeded to show the utter hedges of women, among whom ran est folks who salute and esteem them. In first days he took a proud delight in ex- impossibility of the violence and intimi- vague murmurs of regret. Blanche, red own; past is forgotten; one see but the tested thus against the idea of disgrace hour of the day, Blanche had been free panion and feverishly hastened her

Blanche forced her to enter the vestisaid in a voice full of emotion:

'Oh! Madememoiselle, I thank you sion; the ladies spoke of Philippe with with all my soul for having come to my cargo; another, a partner by verbal agree. Blanche trembied at the popular fury. affected indignation, the grave men rescue! Those wicked women would

'Do not thank me,' answered Fine roughly. 'I came like the rest to insult

'Yes. I hate you; I wish you had died

Blanche stared at the flower-girl with self had begged him not to compromise dain. The two young girls stood face to feeling surge in them the rivalry of their

'I do not understand you,' stammered

'You do not understand me! Listen. ed all idea of violence and intimidation. that, or I shall get angry and strike you!'

> 'You do not know how we poor girls clasp him tightly in our arms to protect loved me, he would not have been betrayed! But I am an unhappy creature, a beggar, an ugly wretch!'

> And Fine began to sob, as weak as Mlle. de Cazalis. The latter took her her hand, and said, her voice broken by

'In pity, do not accuse me! Will you you? If you only knew how much suffer, you would have mercy. can do nothing; I obey my uncle, wh breaks me in his hands of iron. I know I am am a coward; but I have not the strength to be otherwise than cowardly And I love Philippe; he is always in my mind. Truly did he say to me: 'If you membrance of me will torment you, you will always feel on your lips the fiery stamp of my kisses, and that shall be your punishment!' He is here now; he burns me, he will kill me! A while ago. when he was sentenced, I felt something leap within me which shook me from head to foot and almost tore me to pieces. I am weeping-do you see? I ask mercy

All Fine's anger had vanished; she sustained Blanche, who was staggering. You are right,' continued the poor child: 'I do not deserve pity. I have stricken the man I love and he will love me no more. Ah! in mercy, if day he should become ask him to forgive me. What drives me Let him forget me-that will be best; I shall be the only one to weep.'

There was a dolorous silence. And your child?' asked Fine. 'My child!' said Blanche, wildly. 'I

do not know what will become of it. My uncle will take it from me.' 'Would you like me to be a mother to

The flower-girl uttered these words in a grave and tender voice. Mille. de Cazalis clasped her in her arms in a passionate embrace.

'Oh! how good you are! You can love! Try to see me in Marseilles When the time comes, I will trust in you.' At that moment, the aged female re-

lative made her appearance, after having in vain searched for Blanche in the crowd. Fine withdrew quickly and hasthe distance, talking with Philippe's

The young man was in despair. Never had he imagined that his brother could be sentenced to so severe a punishment. The imprisoment of five years terrified him; but he was still more grievously overwhelmed by the thought of the public exposure in one of the squares of Mar-

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