THE FLOWER GIRLS -OF-**Marseilles!**

(Continued.)

In due time, all the clerk's predictions francs !' were fulfilled point by point. Berard was sentenced for simple failure to a his countenance rosy, his bearing easy Marseilles his joyous, rich man's whims of service. Never would he have believ- sobs. He clinked his gold in the clubs, the ed that his neighbor could have been He wept scalding tears in his hands cumstances prevent you from putting me

very ground before him. CHAPTER XIV.

A DEFAULTER.

Marius went mechanically to the harbor. He walked straight on, not knowing whither his feet led him. He was as if stupified. A single idea surged in his empty head, and that idea repeated, like the murmur of a bell, that he must have fifteen thousand francs at once. He cast around him that vague look of helpless people, he seemed to search the street to see if he could not find between the two paving-stones the sum he needed.

At the harbor, a desire for wealth came to him. The merchandise heaped up reigned in the office. The manufacturer to lead a holy life like an honest man. Monsieur Philippe consents, his brother in fortunes, the noise and the stir of the crowd which was making money irritated him. Never before had he felt his poverty. For a moment he was envious. rebellious and full of jealous bitterness. He asked himself why he was poor, why others were rich.

And constantly the sound of the bell murmured in his ear. Fifteen thousand francs! Fifteen thousand francs! The very thought of them nearly burst his skull. He could not return with empty hands. His brother was waiting for him. He had only a few hours to save him from infamy. And he could find nothing; his benumbed intelligence did idea. He twisted in his powerlessness; chiefs. he racked his mind vainly; he struggled As M. Daste looked him in the

Pardon,' resumed M Daste, with great quainted with you. If you have commit- assume, she murmured, in a tone of politeness; 'I see that my words amaze ted a folly, admit your blindness; you will lamentation : you.' cause those who have had esteem and He pointed to the stout gentleman and friendship for you to suffer less by frank-

ly accusing yourself and showing sincere to urge him to speak. Revertegat concontinued: 'Monsieur is the commissairs de police repentance.' of the quarter, and I have just summoned Marius spoke in a gentle and convinc- compassion. They saw that a struggle him to arrest Charles Bletry, who, in two ing tone. Bletry, whom the sharp words was taking place in him. Finally, com-

years, has stolen from us sixty thousand of the commissaire had left mute and ing to a decision, he said to Marius: confusedly irritated, bent beneath the

'Listen, Monsieur: My vocation has Marius, on hearing Charles accused of austere indulgence of his former friend. not so hardened me that I am insensible robbery, understood everything. He ex- He thought of his mother; he thought of to the grief of deserving people. I have month's imprisonment, A year later, plained to himself the young man's reck- that esteem and those friendships which already told you why I sold you your less expenses. He thanked Heaven that he was about to lose, and a keen emotion brother's freedom, But I would not have and insolent, he displayed throughout he had not in the past accepted his offers took him by the throat. He burst into you think that I am influenced only by the love of money. If unfortun te cir-

'Oh! how hard, how hard !"

restaurants and the theatres-everywhere guilty of a base action. He well knew which he held over his face, and for sev- at present beyond reach of want, I will in fact, where pleasures were to be that there was in Marseilles, as in all the eral minutes only his terrible groans of none the less open the door for Monsieur bought. And, upon his path, he always great centres of industry, unworthy em- despair were heard. It was a complete Philippe. You can help me later, you found toadies or dupes who bowed to the ployees, young men who robbed their confession. Everybody remained silent. can pay me the fifteen thousand france 'Yes!' cried Bletry, at last, in the midst sou by sou, when you are able.'

love of luxury; he had often heard of of his tears, 'I did steal and I am a Fine, on hearing these words, clapped clerks who received a hundred and fifty wretch ! I did not know what I was her hands. She leaped up on her uncle's frances a month and who yet found the doing. I took at first a few hundred neck and kissed him full in the mouth. means to lose enormous sums at the francs; then I wanted a thousand, two Marius became grave.

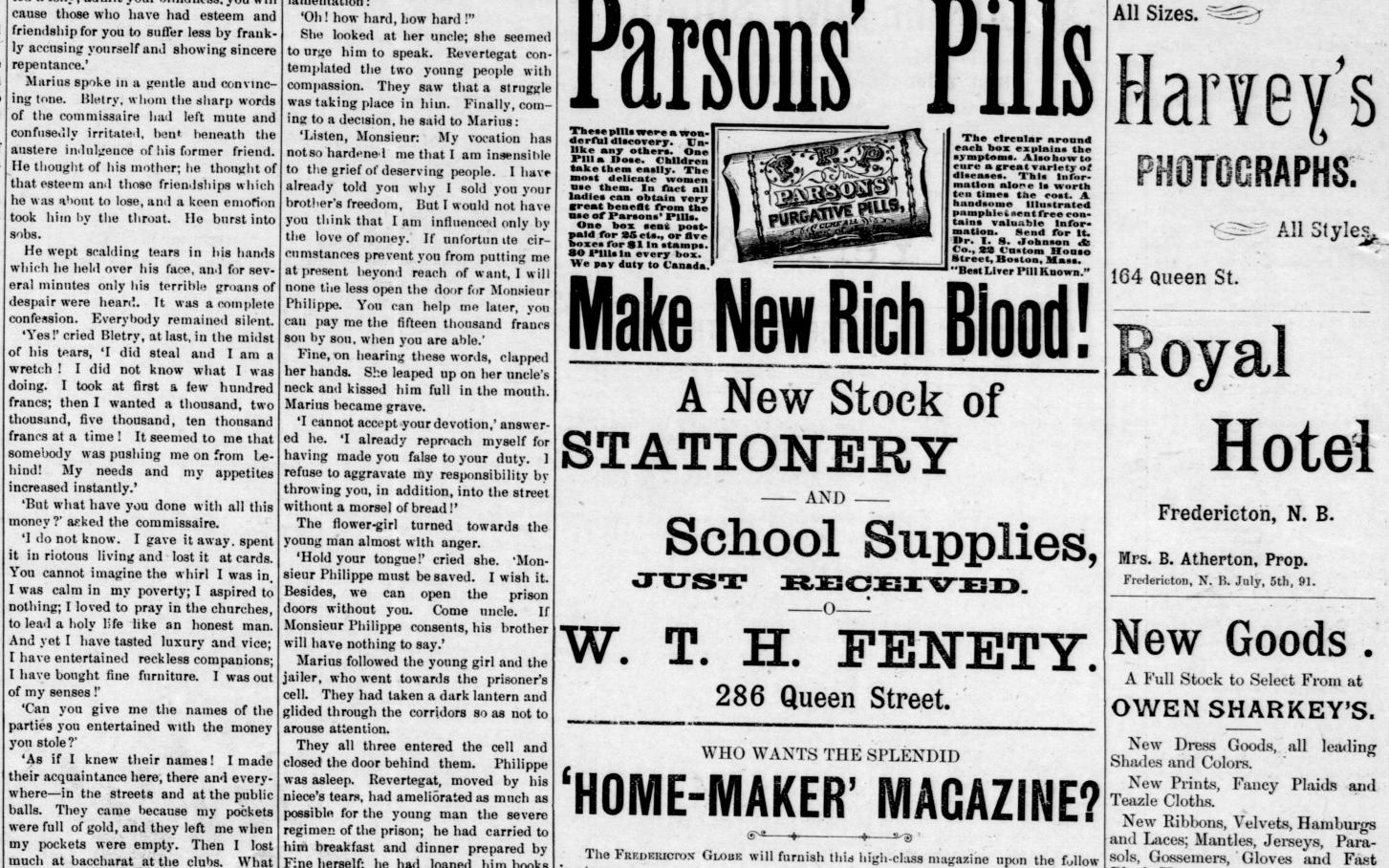
'I cannot accept your devotion,' answerthrowing you, in addition, into the street

The flower-girl turned towards the

'Hold your tongue!' cried she. 'Monsieur Philippe must be saved. I wish it. of this drama. He could not do other- I was calm in my poverty; I aspired to Besides, we can open the prison wise. For half an hour a dull silence nothing; I loved to pray in the churches, doors without you. Come uncle. If Marius followed the young girl and the as if half asleep, gazed vaguely before I have bought fine furniture. I was out jailer, who went towards the prisoner's cell. They had taken a dark lantern and

'Can you give me the names of the glided through the corridors so as not to

They all three entered the cell and 'As if I knew their names! I made closed the door behind them. Philippe A sound of footsteps was heard; the where-in the streets and at the public niece's tears, had ameliorated as much as balls. They came because my pockets possible for the young man the severe 'Here is our man,' said M. Daste, rising. were full of gold, and they left me when regimen of the prison; he had carried to Charles Bletry entered, suspecting my pockets were empty. Then I lost him breakfast and dinner prepared by nothing. He did not even notice the much at baccharat at the clubs. What Fine herself; he had loaned him books ing terms :made me a thief was seeing certain and had even given him a supplement-'Do you wish to see me Monsieur?' young men belonging to fine fami- ary coverlet. The cell had becomehabi-



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clubs, to throw twenty-franc pieces to thousand, five thousand, ten thousand beggars and to eat at restaurants and francs at a time! It seemed to me that ed he. 'I already reproach myself for cafes. But Charles had seemed so pious, somebody was pushing me on from Le- having made you false to your duty. so modest and so honest, and had played hind! My needs and my appetites refuse to aggravate my responsibility by the role of hypocrite with so much art increased instantly.' that Marius had been deceived by these appearances of probity and that he had money?' asked the commissaire. his doubts even yet, despite M. Daste's formal accusation.

employers to satisfy their vices and their

He sat down, awaiting the denouoment You cannot imagine the whirl I was in had begun to write. The commissaire And yet I have tasted luxury and vice; will have nothing to say.' de police and the two agents, mute and I have entertained reckless companions; them, with a terrible patience. Such a of my senses !' spectacle would have given honesty to Marius had he lacked it. Nothing could parties you entertained with the money arouse attention. have been more sinster than those three you stole?" impassible men; they looked like the inexorable law awaiting crime.

door opened gently.

persons who were in the office.

'But what have you done with all this without a morsel of bread !' 'I do not know. I gave it away, spent young man almost with anger. it in riotous living and lost it at cards.

CHAPTER XV.

PHILIPPE REFUSES TO ESCAPE.

asked he, in that drawling tone which lies throw money out of the table, and Philippe was not too weary of not furnish him with a single practicable employes assume when speaking to their windows and wallow in wealth and idle- it; he knew, besides, that preparations ness. I wished to have, like them, boon for his flight were being made.

anions, noisy pleasures, nights of He awoke, and put out his hands

with rage and anxiety.

Never would he have dared to ask his employer, M. Martelly, for fifteen thousand francs. His salary was too small to guarantee such a loan. Besides, he knew the ship-owner's rigid principle, science. M. Martelly would indignantly refuse him the money.

started in hot haste for his apartment on more !" the Rne Sainte.

In the same house, upon the same landing as himself, dwelt a young em- from you. Of what do you accuse me?' The two young men being neighbors, a agents guarded the door. sort of intimacy had arisen between them. Marius had been won by Charles' gentle- Daste, 'be kind enough to tell me under such feelings might lead. ness; Bletry was an assiduous frequenter what circumstances you detected the of the churches, his conduct was exem- defairations which the Sieur Bletry has, plary and he seemed to be of the highest as you assert, committed to your detri- now but an hour left him to find the probity.

For two years, however, he had indulged in heavy expenses. He had introduc- robbery. He said that his cashier had ed veritable sumptuousness into his little som time been extraordinarily slow in apartment, purchasing carpets, hangings, making certain returns. But, as he had mirrors and handsome furniture. Since unlimited confidence in the young man, this change, he came in later at night he had attributed these delays to the bad and lived more luxuriously; but he had faith of the debtors. The first defalcaalways remained gentle and honest, tran- tion must have been made at least quil aud pious.

his neighbor's expenses; he could not com- having failed, Daste himself went to deprehend how an employe on a salary of mand the payment of a sum of five eighteenhundred francs could buy such thousand francs, and learned that Bletry costly things. But Charles had told him had collected the amount several weeks that he intended soon to give up his sit- previously. The manufacturer, frightenuation to live like a psosperous citizen. He had even put himself at his disposal and convinced himself by running over offering him his purse without restriction the cashier's books, that he was nearly Marius had refused.

Now he had thought of this offer. He was going to knock at Charles Beltry's to question Bletry. The young man, door and ask him to save his brother. taken unawares and being unable to A loan of fifteen thousand francs would deny the facts, invented a ridiculous not, perhaps, embarrass that young man, story. who seemed to throw money out of the windows. Marius counted upon repaying him little by little, persuaded that his neighbor would grant him the ne- Then I began to take money to take cessary time.

He did not find the clerk in his apart- to win and reimburse the firm.' ment on the Rue Sainte, and, as he was pressed, he determined to go to the soap perplexed him and forced him to conmanufactory of MM. Daste et Degans. tradict himself. Bletry tried another This soap manufactory was situated on lie. the Boulevard des Dames.

Charles Bletry, it seemed to him that the The truth is that I myself was robbed

saw the commissaire whom he knew by thousand frances a year and made but girl. sight. He grew frightfully pale: he realeighteen hundred. Then I stole.' ized that he was lost, and his whole body quivered with shame and fear. He had let himself fall upon a chair. Marius hurled himself headlong into a trap. approached M. Daste, who himself was quickly. and feared his reproaches should he ad- Seeing that his terror accused him, he moved, and begged him to be indulgent. mit to him that he wished to buy a con- stroy to appear calm, to recover a little Afterwards, he hastened to withdraw; coolisess and audacity.

'Yes, I wish to see you!' cried M. Bletry in a sort of stupor, a kind of ner- his brother accept this flight, which he Suddenly, an idea came to Marius. He Daste, violently. 'You know why do you yous prostration. A few months later had deemed it his duty to refuse. would not discuss it with himself, and not? . Wh! wretch, you will rob me no he learned that the cashier had been sentenced to five year's imprisonment.

'I do not know what you mean,' stammerel Bletry. 'I have stolen nothing ploye, named Charles Bletry. Bletry Tie commissaire had seated himself in causing him to witness Bletry's arwas attached as cashier to the soap at the manufacturer's desk to commit the regt. Several hours before, at the harbor manufactory of MM. Daste et Degans. facts of the case to writing. The two he had had evil thoughts of fortune; he

> And, suddenly, he remembered why he went to the soap manufactory. He had

riment.' Daste then related the story of the save his brother. to apply. One does not borrow fifteen eighteen months before. Finally, on the At first, Marius had been astonished at preceeding day, one of his customers merely a clerk.

his brain aching, finding nothing in his ed, hastily returned to the manufactory piece. sixty thousand francs short.

When the young man reached th The commisaire afterwards proceeded Cours Belzunce, hopeless and brought to a stand by necessity, he resolved to return empty-handed to Aix. The dili-

on the imperiale was left. Marius took 'One day,' said he, 'I lost a pocket-book that place joyfully; he preferred to recontaining forty thousand francs. I dared main in the open air, for anxiety was not admit this large loss to M. Daste. stifling him and he hoped that the broad country horizons would calm his fever. money to gamble at the Bourse, hoping It was a sorrowful jour ney. In the

morning he had passed the same trees, The commissaire asked him for details him smile then threw a mild and delicious brightness over the fields and hil-

locks. Now, he again saw the same 'You are right,' resumed he : 'I lost no When he reached it and asked for pocket-book. I prefer to tell everything. scenes and imparted to them all the sadness of his soul: the country seemed funof

'Have you come for me?' asked he with The wretch, stifling, choking with grief a smile. 'Yes,' replied Fine. Press yourself

Marius was silent. His heart beat with great thumps. He feared lest an this scene made his heart bleed. He left ardent desire for freedom might make 'So all is understood and arranged resumed Philippe. 'I can escape without When Marius found himself in the fear and without remorse. Have you street, he felt greatly relieved. He real- paid the money promised? Why don't ized that Heaven had given him a lesson you answer me Marius?'

Fine hurriedly interposed. 'I told you to make haste !' cried she. 'What are you uneasy about?' had felt a sort of hatred for the rich. He She had gathered up the young man's 'Monsieur,' said the commissaire to had just seen whither such thoughts and garments; she threw them to him, adding that she would wait in the corridor. Marius stopped her with a gesture. brother to remain in ignorance of our fifteen thousand francs with which to misfortunes.'

> And, despite Fine's impatience, he re peated the particulars of his journey to Marseilles. But he offered no advice; he wished to allow hfs brother full freedom

of choice. Marius mentally acknowledged that he 'Then,' cried Philippe, overwhelmed, was powerless. He no longer knew where jailer! We are without a sou!" thousand francs in an hour, when one is

'Don't trouble yourself about that,' said Revertegat, approaching. 'You can pay He passed slowly down the Rue d'Aix me later.'

The prisoner was mute. He thouget benumbed thoughts. Money troubles no more of flight; he thought of poverty are terrible; one would rather struggle and of the sorry figure he would cut against an assassin than against the thenceforth upon the promenades of eluding and overwhelming phantom of Marseilles. No more elegant garments, poverty. Nobody has, up to the present no more idling about, no mcre love aftime, been able to invent a hundred-sou fairs! Besides, he had chivalrous feel-

ings and poetical ideas which prevented him from accepting the jailer's devotion. He returned to his miserable bed, pulled the coverlet up to his chin and said, in gence was about to start; only one place a calm voice :

'Well, I will stay where I am !' Marius' face was radiant. Fine stood as if stupefied

Recovering herself, the flower-girl urged the necessity of the flight; she spoke of the public exposure, of the infamy of the pillory. She grew animated: the same hills, and the hope which made she was beautiful in her anger and Philippe gazed at her with admiration. 'My pretty child,' replied he, 'you, perhaps, might make me yield if I had not become blind and obstinate in this cell. But, truly, I have already committed

with cutting contempt, he turned and gaming and revelry. I needed thirty effusively to his brother and the flower- already paid for, and get the 'Home-Maker' Magazine one year, beginnget credit for the 'Fredericton Globe' for one year from the time they have Cloths, Tweeds, Pantings, and Furing immediately.

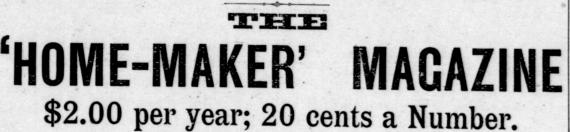
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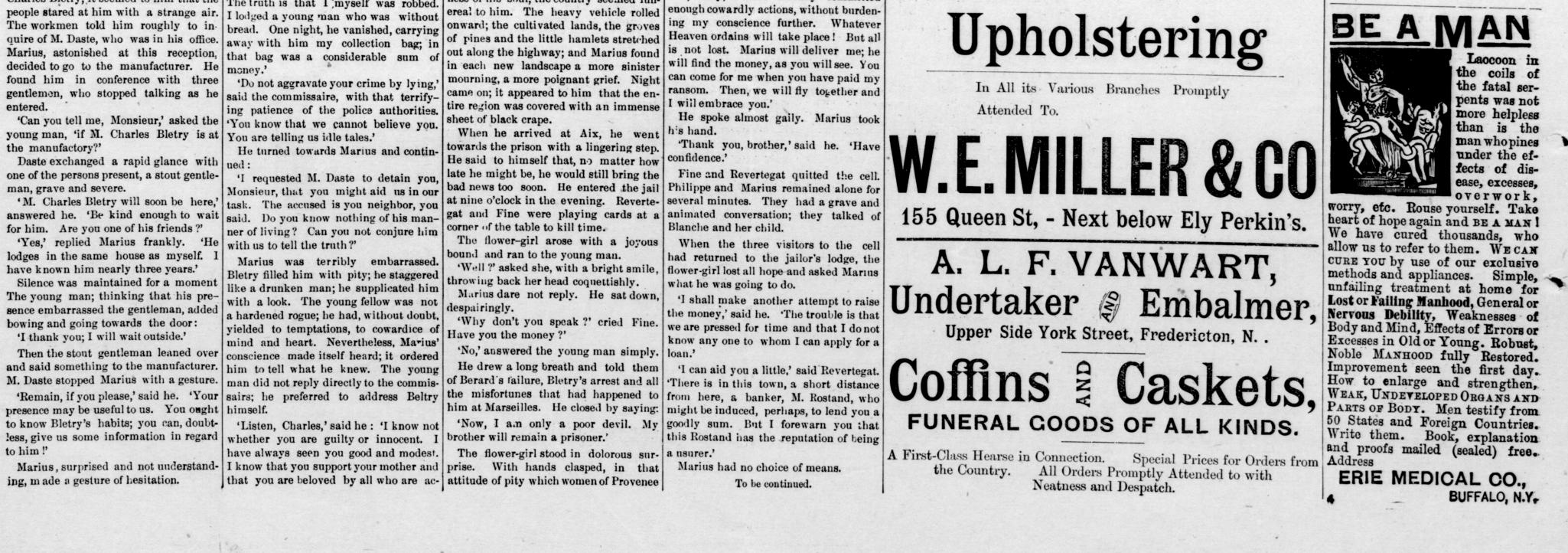
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