A Dark Night's Work.

BY PAUL INGELOW.

Continued from 1st page. In brief terse sentences he related how it had come into his possession. In calm measured tones he followed the erayen's eves and read the chronicle of the

It was a strange repetition of the last will and testament of dead Gideon Vernon. The schemer, stared listened, trembled. He was a bold defiant knave when he held the reins of power but just now he seemed to realize the weakness of his position.

The effect of the revelation upon Durand was far more startling and satisfactory than Le Britta had hoped to accomplish. His experiment was complete success.

Ashen-faced, baffled, criminal Ralph Durand became convulsed like a man in the incipient stages of paroxysm.
"Show it to me!" he hissed hoarsely flinging out his trembling hands. "Let me read inspect for myself."

With one hand Le Britta forcibly pushed back the all too eager knave. Not for a moment would he trust that precious article the tell-tale negative in his unscrupulous hands. He placed the little piece of glass upon

the table slanting it against two books so that as a perpetual menace fully visible to Durand it might continue to impress and influence him. Then he strode between it and the

it and its owner. "Bah! a trick to frighten me" gurgled in Durand's throat. "You know better" responded Le

Britta sternly. "Your face betrays you. your trembling frame reveals your terror. your conviction. That is proof one. It disposes of the will affair. I ask you ere I proceed further to here and now resign your trust as Gladys Vernon's guardian. Durand did not reply. He felt that he could gain nothing by a confession or a compromise. This calm, resolute man meant what he said. Divest him of the room and the house, uttering a power of guardianship, what gurantee | single bitter, ominous, echoing word of had Durand that his next step would not be to land him in a felon's cell as the murderer of Gideon Vernon?

He calculated silently the chances of defeating Le Britta's designs. He realized the full value of that tell-tale negative. Proficient in all the quirks and turns of the law, he knew that the story of the making and disappearance of | fiery brandy, little reckoning of a change reputation, would evoke the interest, suspicion and mediation of a court of justice, if nothing more, and cause a rigid surveillance of his actions as

frightened him. It was a powerful weapon in the hands of a determined adversary, but the old crafty expression returned to those sinister eyes, as Durand recalled Le Britta's story of the accidental discovery of the picture in the what have you to say?

demanded the photographer.

Burand smiled—a ghastly, sickly smile. The corners of his mouth twitched nervously, his brow furrowed with disquietude and uncertainty. "Say?" he gulped. "Why, you've

played me a trump card." "An ! you confess that, do you?" "Yes. I suppose old Vernon's lawyer just chuckled over your discovery." This was a clever feeler-a hint to lead on his antagonist to reveal more that the schemer wished to know.

Blunt, straightforward, the honest and honorable Le Britta was no match for his adroit foe in the line of tactics the latter had resolved to adopt. Confident in his strength and the integrity of his position, he did not discern the trap into which Durand was leading him. "The lawyer?" he repeated, vaguely.

"I have not shown it to the lawyer Ralph Durand's eyes glittered with a flerce, sinister triumph. That innocent admission raised his depressed hopes like "Nor the doctor, either, I suppose?" he

ventured. "Nor the doctor, either.

"Why, continued the crafty schemer, leading his opponent on deftly, "I should have thought that the first thing to ... after you discovered your vaunted class to all my guilt and your own superb smartness"-here he sneered audibly, the more effectually to throw Le Britta off his guard and distract him from guessing his true intentions-"I should have thought that the first thing you did was to perfect your negative, print a score of copies, and send them to the

judge, the lawyer, all your friends and "No," spoke Le Britta, bluntly. "1 hastened here at once to see if I could not reason you into the right thing.

There is time abundant to attend to all that." Ralph Durand half arose in the armchair. His shrinking helplessness slowly became the crouching attitude of a tiger

posing for a sudden spring. "Yes, an abundance of time. But, we waste words"-"And that picture, that half-developed

negative, is all the chronicle you have of

this alleged will?" "Is it not enough?" "It might get lost, disfigured, broken." "I have an offer to make you."

"What is it?" demanded Le Britta, suspiciously.

"I will buy it of you." "Yes. I offer you for that little piece of glass one thousand dollars cash. Come,

be reasonable! You are concerning yourself in the welfare of people you scarcely know. Take the thousand dollars, deliver up the negative, and leave people to fight their own battles.' Jera Le Britta flushed scarlet. "You insulting scoundrel," he cried.

with flashing eyes, his fists slowly closing and unclosing. "You deserve an honest man's best efforts at thrashing you. Enough! I will dally no longer with you. I take my evidence of your guilt to the courts of justice.' "No, you never will!" The declaration was a ringing hiss.

Quick as a flash, Ralph Durand sprang forward. He had but one idea in his mind-to reach the precious negative, secure and destroy it. Upon it hinged all his hopes of fortune; he knew it, he realized it fully. His move, sudden as it was, however.

was intercepted by the guarded Le Britta The photographer divined his purpose. He met the fierce onward rush of the scoundrel ere he was half-way to the table: he seized him by the shoulders. Ralph Durand was a powerful man, an

adroit man, too, in tricks likely to baffle and beat an unwary foe. The man however who had never weakened a splendid constitution with over-indulgence in liquors and tobacco was fully a match for a rum-wrecked

nicotine-poisoned adversary. Seizing Durand by the shoulders he fairly flung him straight back into the arm-chair he had just left with a shock that made the craven's jaws come together like the springs of a steel trap. There he sat a picture of baffled villainy, a huddled-up mass of breathless

jarred humanity. "You sit still if you are wise!" warned the photographer sternly. "Once more and for the last time, will you resign your trust as guardian of Gladys Vernon, go your way until the law finds you out for some new villainy, or shall I purpose. He remained at the village that

take that negative to a court of law and force you to do so?" "Give me time to think!" pleaded the breathless, baffled Durand He sat scowling, trembling with rage, his eyes glaring balefully at the man who had beaten him back at every point.

Watching him wearily, Le Britta awaited his decision. Suddenly Durand sprang to his feet; just near to hand was the fireplace, and strive to locate the missing Sydney lying across its fender was a short,

heavy iron poker.

down in a dozen. Never! never! never! He poised the iron missile. Le Britta, supposing that he meditated a murderous assault upon himself, dodged, advanced, sought to get near enough to his nimble

Then it left the hand of the rascal but not to descend on the head of his

hended the full sinister purpose of his The glass negative, not its possessor interest just then. The whirling missile of iron swept

lear past Le Birtta's dodging head; it grazed the table, straight as an arrow struck the tilted fac-simile of Gideon Vernon's last will and testament. The next moment the precious glass

negative was shattered into a thousand CHAPTER XVII.-A NEW SUR

PRISE. "You scoundrel!" Fairly blinded with anger, the dismaved and routed Le Britta sprang forward to wreak summary vengeance on

the sly, dissimulating rogue who had a led his skill completely. With a groan of anguish the photogapher comprehended the terribly tim trous denouement of the scene that had began with an augury of certain

Raiph Durand had sank back into the arm-chair, with the gloating, exultant face of a fiend rampant and satisfied. "Ha! ha!" he chuckled, jeeringly, "who is master now, my smart picture peddler? Your work goes for nought!"

"Let me sea. I offered you on thousand dollars for your picture. I would not give one thousand cents just baffled villain, who glared alternately at low! Gather up the fragments, my over-sanguine meddler! They will sell for old glass.'

> Le Britta was too overcome to speak. The helplessness of his position, the wild victory of his opponent, the uselessness of further discussion all occurred to his mind, as a glance at the glass-littered carpet showed the wreck and ruin wrought by the weil-directed iron missile in the brawny hand of Ralph Durand. He glared once at the scoundrel, whom he could have annihilated with a look. Then, turning, he slowly walked from warning-

Ralph Durand laughed mockingly and gleefully. He rubbed his hardened palms together, he gloated over his enemy's downfall, he chuckled, he capered. Long after Le Britta had got out o sight of the villa, he sang and danced, negative, together with Le Britta's verbal and poured down liberal potations of

dreams ere many days of his worthless, scheming existence had passed away. As to Le Britta, that tramp back to the village was the bitterest walk of his life. He blamed himself for all that had occurred. He reproached and deprecated now the blind over-confidence that. tempting him single-handed to oppose a crafty foe had led him into the greatest

error of his life. But all that was past now and added to pity for wandering Gladys and his keen sense of justice was a smarting sense of defeat that spurred him on to here.' take up anew the cudgel against Ralph Durand as a personal foe against whom he bore an especial personal grievance. What should he do what could he do? The old will giving Durand full control of the Vernon fortune and therefore an

undisputed censorship over Gladys Vernon herself could never be annulled now. The unscrupulous swindler was free by clear sanction of the law and Gideon Vernon's expression of utter confidence in his power to wreck this royal estate, render its rightful legatee an outcast, and defy her helpless friends. Oh! it was bitter, torturing, cruel to realize; and, worst of all, the object of his persecutions, Gladys, was a wanderer, a fugitive. Her lover, Sydney Vance, had disappeared, and the threads of their lives commingled in a tangled skein

the solution to which the crafty Durand There was an element of the indomitable | missing lover, Sydney Wance. and stubborn in Jera Le Britta's nature. It had marked important and vital issues saw the initials, for I remembered all in his life in the past. Just now it you had told me about this strangely spurred him on to action. His duty was to mysterious case." to right a great wrong and had failed but along. he could not confess himself beaten; he ould not endure the thought that he ad undertaken a great task and had failed in its accomplishment and must and now knows where he is."

perforce shrink from the field with drooping colors. "I will learn the truth. I will evolve consistency from this tangled complica- the villa.' tion!" he uttered forcibly, and just arrived at that conclusion he came face

to face at the edge of the town with the village lawyer. Mr. Munson greeted him cordially.

more than that, effusively. His thoughtful eyes glowed with excitement as he intuitively traced in Le Britta's presence there a subtle connection with the Vernon interests.' "What news?" he queried expectantly.

"None of any great cheer or encouragement" replied the photographer in depressed tone. "And you?" "The doctor and myself have sent a

detective to trace and bring back poor Gladys. "Has he found her?" "Not yet. Another officer is looking out for her lover Sydney Vance. Rome

was not built in a day. It takes time to follow an obscure trail. We shall have some word shortly.' "I hope so" murmured Le Britta. "I referred to him. Listen." have something to tell you. "Yes?"

"But not of a very inspiriting nature. "Your face tells me that." Le Britta related his story of the di covery and fate of the glass negative. The lawyer looked startled at the villa thrilling recital.

"Too bad!" he commenced when the photographer had completed his graphic narrative: "too bad indeed!" cry over spilled milk. That scoundrel of studied the man. For days I have been a Durand is a desperate man but we shall catch him napping yet."

"The sleekest rogues forget to their doors, sometimes. "He is always on his guard." "You talk hopelessly."

"I doubt it."

"Of finding out something by remaining quiescent?-Yes. I believe in personal effort, Mr. Munson; I do not pretend to any particular detective ability, but I am going to try to see what I can do by watching this knave. For all we know, he has tracked Gladys. He may have her a captive somewhere, he may connive at her death. He may have some scheme to later come in and inherit or claim the property personally. The stake he plays for is a large one, and he will win, if The lawyer looked impressed and

"You are talking sense, Mr. Le Britta," he remarked, gravely.

"Of course," pursued the photographer, "I am a comparative stranger to Miss Vernon, but I have a heart, sympathies, that impel me to do my duty. I must, I shall, find this poor girl. I cannot rest until I know her fate. I shall make all my arrangements to devote a week, or months if need be, in her behalf." "In other words, you will personally take up the trail?"

The lawyer's eyes sparkled with genuine admiration, and he grasped Le Britta's hand warmly. "You are a noble man, Mr. Britta!" he murmured, with strong

emotion. "I can rely on you. Command my co-operation and my bank account. I feel now that we will succeed. Once started on a case, Jera Le Britta was a hard man to dissuade from his day and the next, "looking over the ground," as he called it.

What he learned he did not impart to

either the lawyer or the doctor, for it consisted of trivial suspicions and sug "To-morrow," he said to the lawyer that night, "I shall obtain a suitable disguise; to-morrow I shall take up the trail at Hawthorne villa. First, I shall Vance.

"And not Gladys?" ejaculated the This he had seized, this he now waved above his head.

"No; for she, I am sanguine, is "No; for she, I am sanguine, is "No; for she, I am sanguine, is "The tramp is positive," continued the doctor. "He says his curiosity was Gideon Vernon!" sure, is a prisoner in the power of Ralph evoked, and he hid and then followed Durand, or has been murdered by him. Mr. Vernon. His cupidity was aroused Fasten such a crime on Durand, or find as he saw him open the cover of the box. Vance and get his story of the death of and a royal store of jewels and bank-Gideon Vernon, and we have a tangible notes showed. Mr. Vernon hurried

No. with a gram of alir n and startled | gang or ag dis.nay, too hate Jera Le Britta compre- Britta rended that evening For, on the eve of devoting all hi ehergies toward probing the great Vernor mystery personally, that very evening was the source of all Ralph Durand's | the clerk at the hotel handed him a sealed envelope. It was a telegraphic dispatch and was dated that afternoon from his home. "Return at once" read the mystifying message. "Vernon case. Important." And it was signed, stranger still, by his old-time friend Dr. Richard Milton.

> CHAPTER XVIII.-"FINDERS KEEPERS."

Jera Le Britta was surprised more than that, absolutely startled as he perused the innocent-looking message that bore so strange and unexpected a revelation. Its mandate advising urgency was peremptory, its wording mysterious. At first, he feared that it might indicate trouble in his business. A year previous, a fire had caused havoc and disruption of business temporarily in his studio, and he had experienced anxiety ever since on the same score. Illness in his family, too, might be imminent. But, no! neither business nor domestic complication had incited the telegram, the photographer felt sure of that after a second perusal. for the mystic interpolation, "Vernon case," betrayed the real, actuating influence behind the action of his friend Doctor Milton.

"What can it mean? Vernon case!" cogitated the startled Le Britta. "Doctor Dick is no sensationalist, no alarmist. He's too cool and methodical for that. He knows all about the Vernons. for I told him. Can it be possible that he has made some important discoverysome new evidence in the camera? Pshaw! that is impossible. Has he found a trace of Gladys accidentally? Scarcely; what then? The only way to find out is to return home. Yes, I must leave affairs in abevance here for a few days. I must learn what Dick has discovered.

Le Britta took the first train homeward-bound. Late as the hour was when he reached his destination, he went straight to the office of his friend. A light showed at its outside window. Tap! tap! "Come in." "Jera!"

"Dick!" "You got my message?" "I would not be here if I hadn't for I was deep in mystery and work. What is it," queried the photogapher, eagerly.
"What I telegraphed you, the Vernon

"Why! Dick"-"You wonder how I come to discover anything about it, way off here, away from its center of operations." "It puzzles me, I must confess." "Still, I have." "Ah! a trace of the girl?"

"You mean that you have found out where she is hiding?' "Not at all." "Then"-"Yesterday," and Doctor Milton drew newspaper from a table near by, "I

chanced to look over a journal published

"Primarily, yes."

in a city not a hundred miles from "Glancing over its columns, I came apon a queer-reading advertisement."

"Read for yourslf." Doctor Milton folded down the paper. and his finger marking a column headed "Personal," indicated one of the advertisements under that heading.

Eagerly Le Britta perused the little item. It read :-"G. V.: Communicate with me at H. V. immediately. I and I alone have news of S. V. Would you save him? Then do not delay. R. D.'

Le Britta looked up with an excited "You understand?" queried the doctor, in an impressive tone. "Yes; a message from Ralph Durand "Exactly. It struck me the minute

return home. He had done all he could | "It proves what I have surmised all "And that is?" "That Ralph Durand was instrumental

in the disappearance of Sydney Vance. "It looks that way." "Durand knows that through Vance only can he influence Gladys to return to

"But why should he wish, it?" "That his future plottings willishow. And this was why you telegraphed me?" "Not at all'. "Eh!" ejaculated Le Britta, vaguely. There is something else?"

"What? Hello! What's that, Dick? A visitor-some one overhearing our conversation!" Le Britta had started quite violently. for just then from the next apartment echoed a faint sound like the mean or sigh of a human voice. "No listener, no fear of that Jera, but some one is there."

"The man whose strange discovery caused me to send that telegram." "Ah!" exclaimed Le Britta, excitedly. You put me on nettles, Dick!" "When I mentioned the Vernon case in my telegram," pursued the doctor, "I

Briefly, Doctor Milton told the the injured tramp. He explained how he had come to take him from pity under his own roof, and dwelt particularly on the sufferer's ravings about being rich about his secrets, and about Hawthorne

"It startled me, Jera," explained the doctor, "to hear a tramp, a stranger, mention names fresh in my memory from your lips in connection with the "The negative was an important clue?" Vernon case that very same day. It "Decisive I should say; but we won't puzzled and interested me. I watched, I working over him. This morning I attempted a great experiment to save his arm. To-night, the symptoms of brain suffering were so definite, that I fear he is beyond surgical aid, and I sent

for you" "Then you have made some new dis covery about him?" "Yes; early this afternoon he had quite a lucid spell. He made me tell him all about his injuries. When I had done so he moaned despairingly, and told me that while he knew my experiment might have saved him from becoming a cripple had he lived, he felt that he was

doomed." "And you think so." "I fear it. The injury to the brain is permanent. Then I began to question him about his singular reference to Hawthorne villa." "And what did he say?"

"At first he fought shy of making any revelation. He kept muttering that 'finders were keepers,' and that he was 'rich. rich, rich.' Then, some sudden twinge of pain caused him to think of his dreaded death. He grew affrighted, then grateful for the great kindness of an utter stranger, as he chose to consider my slight services, and then he burst into tears, and said that he would tell me all his story." "Dick, you interest me deeply!

exclaimed the absorbed Le Britta, startled and hopeful at the same time. "He was a tramp, he said," continued Doctor Milton, "and a tramp with rather a low estimate of honesty. A certain night, and, Jera, he named the very night that Gideon Vernon was murdered at Hawthorne villa, he was in its ylcinity. He said it was about dusk, and, as he was just going around to the back door of the mansion to beg a mouthful of food, he saw a man, an old man, Gideon Vernon himself, he afterward ascertaind to a certainty, climb from the window of his sick-room out into the

"Oh! that is impossible," ejaculated the incredulous Le Britta. It seemed so to him, for the photographer had not been aware of the tragic incident of the last hour of Gideon Vernon's life—of his dread and discovery of the lurking Durand, of the strong stimulant he had taken, of how he had sought to remove the iron box from the pabinet, so that the lurker by no chance

foe to disarm him.

The poker swayed aloft, cutting the air in a swooping circle until it whizzed like the cuttoms of events at Hawtherns will.

The poker swayed aloft, cutting the air once deposed, do not fear but that behind it, and suddenly disappeared behind a rock. By some secret ledge until the cuttoms of events at Hawtherns will. the outcome of events at Hawthorne villa known to the tramp, he reached a spot from a distance, rest assured of that." "The best-laid plans of men and mice | the place-the rock, the shelf of stone,

Mr. Vernon returned empty-handed. He | ten about that, amid the statutage. could scarcely stagger back to the house | portance of his reference to the marker. for weakness. Evidently fearing Durand. he had hidden, his available treasure. out some wooden pegs from the worn The tramp still followed him. He saw stle of the tramp's shoe. him return to the house. The next morning he came to locate the ravine. out a flat, folded envelope. intent upon finding the treasure. Then he heard of Mr. Vernon's murder. It

character, hanging around the villa LINK. They might suspect him." "What did he do?" "Fled from the place; first, however, carefully noting the spot in the vicinity his companion. of which the little iron box had surely been secreted. Mr. Vernon had died manilla envelope. with the secret of its hiding-place locked "But it has in his breast. The tramp felt that he inclosure. had a right to it. He decided to remain "I shall soon learn." away until the 'murder-scare,' as

this graphic narrative. He realized how reasonable it all was. But what did the box contain? Was it really valuable? "The tramp," began Dector Milton again, "then told me that this box he could direct me to. He bequeathed it to me, if he died. I smiled at the idea of consenting to receive other people's money, but I knew how glad you would be to secure even this faint clue to a new complication in a case that so interested points of vantage on which to base new you. About to tell me something more. operations. the tramp fell back, insensible, again,

under the heading, 'finders keepers,' "

frightened him. Here he was, a suspicious

fainting shocks. I thought it best to send for you, and telegraphed you." And the man?" "Has lain in a state of coma ever since. "With his secret half told?" "As you know."

"Doctor," spoke Le Britta, energetic

ally, "you must revive him!"

"It may be impossible."

box of valuables."

He cannot stand many more of these

"Temporarily?" "I can try it" "He must tell us definitely where that box is hidden!" Doctor Milton took up a medicine case, extracted a small, delicate, hypodermic syringe, and filled it with some colorless liquid from a phial. "Come," he said, "I will try to revive

the man. I will try to secure the secret

of the hiding-place of Gideon Vernon's

CHAPTER XIX.—THE TRAMP'S SECRET.

Noiselessly Dr. Richard Milton and his companion entered the sick-room. Jera Le Britta stood curiously viewing the outlined form upon the couch. As the doctor carefully turned up the lamp, its rays plainly illumined the object that centered the attention of the photog-

The face of the tramp-patient was white and bloodless, his unkempt shock of hair and straggling beard looked not at all confidence-inspiring, but from a survey of his features to his injured arm. Le Britta gazed with wildly-distended

The arm was strapped at wrist and shoulder across an iron frame. It was bare save for a piece of almost invisible gauze, saturated with some oily wash, and it looked like a mottled checkerboard in its strange, puzzling appearance. "Why! Dick!" murmured Le Britta. 'that arm''-"Was the injured member. It was in a shape that no ordinary surgical care

could adjust. It was either amputation or a crippled member for life, so I set myself to work to experiment." "You mean?" "Skin grafting." Le Britta started intelligently. "Yes," continued Doctor Milton, his face kindling with professional pride and

confidence. "I wanted to save the poor fellow months of suffering. Yesterday gave out through the town what I intended to do. Humanity and curiosity to Gladys Vernon, telling her to write to alike brought me all the people I needed. Hawthorne villa if she would save her From each I took an inch of cuticle, and transplanted it in patches on my patient's arm. You see how it is covered? I have given him what nature cannot supply in this instance, a new cuticle, consisting of one hundred and forty-two adhesive plasters of other people's skin-farmers' cuticle, ministers' cuticle, girls' cuticle, boys' outicle; a mixture, but all necessary. If the man recovers, he will owe his perfect arm to the kindness of a large number of fellowbeings. If there is a moral as well as a physical transplanting, may be he will

assimilate some better qualities in that sadly-neglected nature of his." Jera Le Britta did not reply to his friend's half-jocular exordium. admitted and appreciated his genius, and marveled at the deftness that admitted of his scientifically supplying a man denuded of vital accessories to perfect cuticle-exudation, with a practically new

He watched silently as the doctor bared the other arm of the patient.

ADMINISTRATORS bared the other arm of the patient, applied the point of the tiny glass instrument in his hand, and hypodermically injected a powerful stimulant into the laggard veins.

The sufferer on the couch winced, shrank and moaned. Watched breathlessly by doctor and photographer, his lips began to twitch, his evelids quivered. There was a noticeable dilation of the nostrils, his pulse quickened, his respirations grew faster, he sighed, opened his eyes, fixed them on vacancy, then on the doctor, and then, an expression of

"I've got to die!" "Calmly, my friend, calmly!" urged the doctor in gentle tones. "You are doing remarkably well." "Yes, but this weight on my head— this horrible throbbing! No! no! I am doomed. Doctor, I didn't tell you"— "Do not concern yourself about any- ASK FOR thing. Think placidly, talk slowly." "Yes, but maybe I have only a few minutes to live!" shuddered the tramp.

o, yours was the long years, the aid me in the long years, the unselfish act from the heart. You shall be rich—rich! In the sole of my left shoe the paper that tells—the secret—the long years.

Steel spasmodically, his breath came short and

"Wait!" murmured Doctor Milton. mandatorily, as Le Britta moved to "Ah! I forgot." Again the sufferer started up, this time a piteous, haunted expression on his face. "Doctor! they can't' drag me into the net for murder if I didn't do it, can they?"

"Certainly not, my poor fellow."
"And if I tell you, to unburden my coward conscience, and I should happen to live, they can't say it was a lie, and, as I was there. I must have done the murder myself, the murder of that old man, Gideon Vernon?" "Mercy! what is all this?" gasped the startled Le Britta.

"No! no!" urged the doctor, soothingly "tell me what it is. You saw him "Yes. I was at the veranda, watching. A man stole in at the window, I saw

him. Another young man came in to find the old man dying a minute later, but he did not do the deed. He ran after the real murderer, the man dressed as a tramp. "Ah! Ralph Durand!' ejaculated Le Britta. "Do you hear, Dick? This man's evidence would hang Ralph Durand!' "Hang? no, they shan't hang me! Who are you?" shrieked the tramp, for the first time noticing Le Britta. "Save me, doctor! save me, save-" He sank back. Rigid, lifeless, lay upon the couch.
"Is he dying, Dick?" breathed Le

"These fainting shocks weaken his Ah! I feared it! the fever again." "If he could only be revived to recognize Ralph Durand?" "Impossible. I will not have hi disturbed again. His life, his re quiver in the balance even now not know if I can save him, but I

"No, but I fear"-began Doctor

Britta, anxiously.

Milton, gravely.

"Try, try, indeed!" urged the photrapher, earnestly. "For his own sa for Gladys Vernon's sake, for he alone knows the hand that struck The doctor watched his patisome moments. Then he went out the next apartment, whither Le

had preceded him. In his hand he bore one of the which belonged to the tramp. "Oh! the paper he talked about, to secret document that tells where the bo of treasure is hidden!" exclaim Britta, interested. "I had almost forgo.

Silently Dr. Ricard Milton Grow **BATH GLOVES** "Here it is." he announced, taking

CHAPTER XX. -THE MISSING

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self in the business of a general

for elsewhere.

"What is it?" queried Le Britta. pressing eagerly forward to the side of "So far, only a dirty, wrinkled heavy

Le Britta was beginning to get excited. be termed it, was over. Then he would That day had held so many startling Mackenzie's Medical Hall, return, secure it, and enjoy a fortune | episodes in store for him, that he felt which, to his loose code of morals, came | neither hunger nor fatigue. He could not but recognize the strange fatuity of Jera Le Britta was deeply startled at circumstance. Here he had been delving | May 18, 1896. at Hawthorne villa for facts and his friend, miles distant, had discovered clues that seemingly encompassed the most vital issues of the case in hand. If the outcome of these revelations was ample, and as expected, the fortunes of Gladys Vernon would soon be bettered and brightened. Arranging them in order, Jera Le Britta realized that he had three distinct

> First, the advertisement for Gladys Vernon, showing conclusively that Ralph Durand knew positively of the Cunard Street, Chatham. whereabouts of her accused lover, Sydney Second, the evidence of the dying RE-LINING STOVE OVENS tramp, proving indubitably the guilt of Ralph Durand as the assassin of Gideor

Vernon. Third, the possession of the document or documents secreted in the sole of the tramp's shee, referring, without question, to a certain iron box, containing, possibly, the bulk of dead Gideon Vernon's ready-cash fortune. Documents these were, or, rathe. slips of paper, three in number.

the encylope, creased and crushed i heavy foot-pressure, the doctor now drew three half-sheets of writing paper. The first was a rude scrawl, evidently indited at the tramp's instigation. situated on the west side of Cunara Street i the town of Chatham, now occupied by J C. T. Arseneau and J. McCallum Deciphered, it read-

"I, Dave Wharton, have made a bi discovery-a box of gold and jewels Finders keepers, as the owner is dead. get a man to write this at Dalton. because I might forget." Dalton was the first town west of Hawthorne villa. Here the tramp in his flight from the scene of the murder had evidently induced some stranger to

scrawl the message. The second piece of paper was in a totally different handwriting. It ran:-"Go to the villa. I know where. Then down the road to where a path strikes the ravine. This is written at Springford, don't let anybody know the whole affair except myself, so I get my secret written in sections.' "Do you see?" exclaimed Doctor Milton looking up. "He was quite clever. Fearing he might forget the description of the place where he saw

the iron box hidden he had different

people write according to his dictation.

The last piece of paper written at the next town on his tramp will probably complete the description of the hidingplace of the treasure. Yes, here it is." The third strip of paper began:--"You go down the ravine north, until you come to a large"-ACCID NT There the chronicle stopped, abruptly, definitely.

Britta. "There is no more to go on with." replied Doctor Milton. "Why not?" "The rest obliterated.

"Go on!" urged the interested Le

"What?" "Yes, see?" "Too bad!" Le Britta observed that the pencil marks, in the remainder of the sheet. had become a blur of vagueness. The tramp had trusted his precious secret to rather an unsafe place of hiding. Dampness had penetrated the thin sole of his shoe, it had, too, reached the inclosure in the envelope. "I declare, this is provoking," commented Le Britta.

"Well, don't fret about it." enjoined the doctor, philosophically. "It may not be so difficult to find by inquiry who wrote the last scrawl of the tramp; besides you have a pretty fair idea that somewhere in the ravine near Hawthorne villa that treasure box is hidden.' [To be Continued.]

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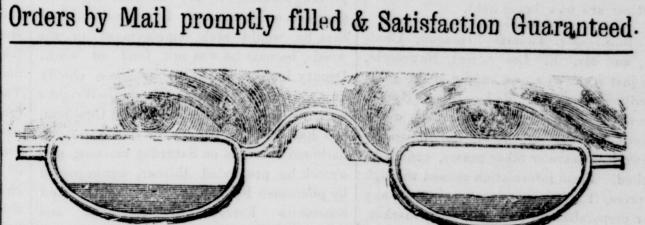
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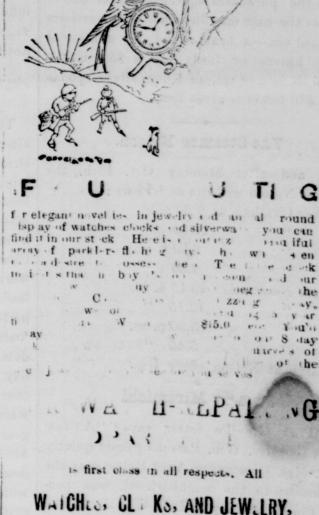
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