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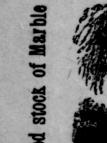
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all this kind of thing now." "Do you mean an end to the school?" asked Lady Margaret. "I do indeed. I always thought it a

should be taken away at mid-summer, being partly moved thereto by a letter from the Doctor, in which he was told that his boy was not doing any good at the school. It was a week after that that Mrs. Stantiloup wrote the following letter to her friend Lady Grogram, after she had returned home from Buttercup hall. Lady Grogram was a great friend of hers, and was first cousin to that Mrs. Talbot who had a son at the school. Lady Grogram was an old woman of strong mind but small means, who was supposed to be potential over those connected with her. Mrs. Stantiloup feared that she could not be efficacious herself, either with Mr. or Mrs. Talbot; but she hoped that she might carry her purpose through Lady Grogram. It may be remembered that she had declared at Buttercup Hall that young Talbot was not to go back to Bowick. But this had been a figure of speech, as has been already explained.

the Momsons at Buttercup. It was awfully defend him by strict laws of right and duil. He and she are, I think, the stupid- wrong. I have advised him to go back to matter of great regret that Augustus est people that ever I met. None of those America and find out if the man be in should have been sent there, after the Momsons have an idea among them. They truth dead. If so, let him come back and scandalous treatment that Bob received." Bob was the little boy who had drunk

"My Dear Talbot,-You may be quite sure that I shall not repeat to any one ber the answers to in a lifetime. what you have told me of Mother Shipton. I knew, however, pretty well what she was doing, and what I had to expect from her. It is astonishing to me that such a woman should still have the power of persuading any one, —astonishing, also, that any human being should continue to hate as she hates me. She has often tried to do me injury, but she has never succeeded yet. At any rate she will not bend me. Though my school should be broken up to-morrow, which I do not think probable, 1 should still have enough to live

than her unfortunate husband can say for himself. "The facts are these. More than twelve months ago I got an assistant named Peacocke, a clergyman, an Oxford man, and formerly a Fellow of Trinity;-a man pidity. quite superior to anything I have a right to expect in my school. He had gone as a classical professor to a college in the United actual disease. States ;- a rash thing to do, no doubt,and had there married a widow, which was rasher still. The lady came here with him and undertook the charge of the schoolhouse, -with a separate salary; and an admirable person in the place she was. Then it turned out as no doubt you have heard, that her former husband was alive when they were married. They ought probably to have separated, but they didn't. They came here instead, and here they were followed by the brother of the husband,-who, I take it, is now dead, though of that we know nothing certain. "That he should have told me his position is more certain than any man has a fight to expect from another. Fortune

upon,-which is more, by all accounts,

has been most unkind to him, and for her sake he was bound to do the best that he "My dear Lady Grogram,—Since I got your last letter I have been staying with self to be angry with him, though I cannot



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SNOWBALL.

left of its popularity now. Keeping that abominable woman under the same roof with the boys! No master of a school that wasn't absolutely blown up with pride,

would have taken such people as those Peacockes without making proper inquiry. And then to let him preach in the church! I suppose Mr. Momson will allow you to send for Augustus at once?" This she said turning to Mrs. Momson. 'Mr Momson thinks so much of the

exercise.

Doctor's scholarship," said the mother, apologetically. "And we are so anxious that Gus should do well when he goes to Eton.'

the champagne and required the carriage

"But I always heard that the school was

"I think you'll find," continued Mrs.

Stantiloup, "that there won't be much

quite popular," said Mrs. Rolland.

"What is Latin and Greek as compared to his soul?" asked Lady Margaret. "No, indeed" said Mrs. Rolland. She had found herself compelled, as wife of the Bishop, to assent to the self evident proposition which had been made. She was a quiet, silent little woman, whom the Bishop had married in the days of his earliest preferment, and who, though she was delighted to find herself promoted to the society of the big people in the diocese, had never quite lifted herself up into their sphere. Though she had her ideas as to what it was to be a bishop's wife, she had

never yet been quite able to act up to them. "I know that young Talbot is to leave," said Mrs. Stantiloup. "I wrote to Mrs. Talbot immediately when all this occurred, and I've heard from her cousin Lady Grogram that the boy is not to go back after the holidays." This happened to be altogether untrue. What she probably meant was, that the boy should not go

back if she could prevent his doing so. "I feel quite sure," said Lady Margaret, "that Lady Anne will not allow her boys to remain when she finds out what sort of inmates the Doctor chooses to entertain." The Lady Anne spoken of was Lady Anne Clifford the widowed mother of two boys who were trusted to the Doctor's care, "I do hope you'll be firm about Gus," said Mrs. Stantiloup to Mrs. Momson.

"If we're not to put down this kind of so many parts of the United States."

Bishop's wife.

are just as heavy and inharmonious as their name. Lady Margaret was one of the party. She would have been better, only that our excellent Bishop was there

too, and Lady Margaret thought it well to show off all her graces before the Bishop and the Bishop's wife. I never saw such a dowdy in all my life as Mrs. Rolland. He is all very well, and looks at any rate like a gentleman. It was, I take it, that which got him his diocese. They say the Queen saw him once, and was taken by his man-"But I did one good thing at Buttercup.

got Mr. Momson to promise that that boy of his should not go back to Bowick. Dr. Wortle has become quite intolerable. I think he is determined to show that whatever he does, people shall put up with had lately fallen to her share. I mention it. It is not only the most expensive es- this for the sake of explaining that she has tablishment of the kind in all England, but also the worst conducted. You know

Bowiek, absolutely living in the house, calling herself Mrs. Peacocke, while the man she was living with has gone off with her brother-in-law to look for her husband ! Did you ever hear of such a mess as that? "And the Doctor expects that fathers and mothers will still send their boys to such a place as that? I am very much mistaken if he will not find it altogether deserted before Christmas. Lord Carstairs is already gone." (This was at any rate disingenuous, as she had been very severe when at Buttercup on all the Carstairs family because of their declared perverse

friendship for the Doctor.) "Mr. Momson, though he is quite incapable of seeing the meaning of anything, has determined to take his boy away. She may thank me at any rate for that. I have heard that Lady Anne Clifford's two boys will both leave. (In one sense she had heard it, because the dear little boy will not be allowed to return to such contamination as that! Fancy,the man and the woman living there together; and the Doctor keeping the woman on after he knew it all! It is really so horrible that one doesn't know how to talk

about it. When the Bishop was at Buttercup I really felt almost obliged to be si-"I know very well that Mrs. Talbot is

there

Most sincerely yours, 'Juliana Stantiloup.'

marry the woman again before all the world. I shall be ready to marry them, and to ask him and her to my house afterwards.

"In the meantime what was to become of her. 'Let her go into lodgings,' said the Bishop. Go to lodgings at Broughton! You know what sort of lodgings she would get there among psalm-singing greengrocers who would tell her of her misfortune every day of her life! I would not subject her to the misery of going and seeking for a home. I told him when I persuaded him to go, that she should have the rooms they were then occupying while he was away. In settling this, of course. I had to make arrangements for doing in our own establishment the work which

NEW got nothing to do with the school. No Household doubt the boys are under the same roof how all this matter about that woman with her. Will your boy's morals be the stands now. She is remaining there at worse? It seems that Gustavus Momson's will. You know the father; do you not? I Circular wonder whether anything will ever affect his morals?

"Now I have told you everything. Not that I have doubted you; but, as you have been told so much I have thought it well that you should have the whole story from myself. What effect it may have upon the school I do not know. The only boy of whose secession 1 have yet heard is young Momson. But probably there will be others. Four new boys were to have come, but I have already heard from the father of one that he has changed his mind. I think I can trace an acquaintance between him and Mother Shipton. If the body of the school should leave me I will let you know at once, as you might not like to leave your boy under such circumstances.

"You may be sure of this, that here the lady remains until her husband returns. suggestion had been made by herself at I am not going to be turned from my pur-Buttercup.) "I do hope that Mr. Talbot's pose at this time of day by anything that Mother Shipton may say or do. "Yours always,

"Jeffrey Wortle." CHAPTER XIII.-MR. PUDDI- with one of our

COMBE'S BOOT. It was not to be expected that the matter should be kept out of the county

newspaper, or even from those in the met-ropolis. There was too much of romance

