#### A Dark Night's Work.

BY PAUL INGELOW.

Continued from 1st page. He had stepped on a dry twig, and its crackling had startled the girl. Rapid as a flash she turned. Quick as lightning the tramp dropped to an attitude of the most abject servility, with bent face and extended hand, assuming the pose and bearing of a professional mendicant. The girl was startled, more, frightened. She uttered a little cry of alarm, shrank back, gazed wildly about her, as if bent on speeding precipitately from the

and dread, she gasped incoherently:—
"Who are you? What do you want?" The man whined out some unintelligible words. The girl, her hands crossed nervously over her palpitating heart, seemed to strive to regain her composure. Jera Le Britta, a spellbound spectator of the scene, saw the tramp's shaded eyes glow from beneath the impromptu mask he wore like those of a baleful basilisk. "Oh! is it alms?" murmured the fair look poor, hungry, tired. Here, I have

maiden in a gentle, pitying tone. "You not much. You are welcome to that." She drew forth a tiny, jeweled purse. Her fingers trembled as she extended the few coins that it contained. The tramp edged nearer. His great

rough hand closed over the coins and her dainty fingers as well. She shuddered and drew back, for it was evident that the man had made slow work of securing the money, in order to take a keen. sweeping survey of her features.

"Thanks!" he grated forth, hoarsely. "Tell me, lady, though, your name?" "My name?" repeated the girl, flushing indignantly. "Why should I do

"So I can remember my kind benefac-So palpable a sneer was manifest in the accents, that the girl started with suspicious dislike and positive alarm. With quiet dignity, however, she bestowed a cold look on her pensioner, and

"My name cannot be of any interest him," assented the photographer. "That to you, and I do not care to publish a man certainly means mischief to your trifling charity." "But I want to know!"

Of a sudden the tramp's bearing changed. He arose from his crouching attitude of mock servility. Aggressive, insolent, threatening, he "And I will know!" he blustered. "Charity? Bah! Take back your gold,

the almshouse. Keep it, and may it sink lightly. "Do not be alarmed, Mr. spot, or you either, my proud lady!"
With a scornful swing of his hand, the tramp had flung the money in his grasp disdainfully on the ground at the feet of his astounded almoner. Now, coming nearer to her,

"I'd know that face from a picture I saw. I've watched you and saw you come from Hawthorne villa. You are Gladys dreadfully pale, and, sinking back

The girl grew pale. Her eyes told that the man had made a correct conjecture. "If I am," she faltered, "what is that

"You shall see. If you are Gladys Vernon, you are the niece of old Gideon Vernon. It's not you I care to know about. I can guess that you have been lucky enough to be adopted as the favorite of that crotchety old miser, but there's some questions about him I'm going to ask, and you're going to an-

The girl's face had grown steadily whiter. Defiance, fear, played alternately across her colorless features. Le Britta, about to spring forward and relieve her from the presence and distressing importunities of the insolent intruder, restrained himself, as some intuitive instinct told him that the man's

later actions might reveal his motive in thus interrogating her, and afford her friends a clue to his designs. "First," announced the man, "I want to know if old Vernon is not pretty near

"My uncle is quite ill," spoke the "Good! He'd ought to die!" was the heartless rejoinder. "Now then, has he altered his will lately?"

The tramp fairly hissed the words. So intense was his malignity of expression, that Miss Gladys Vernon recoiled with a ery of terror.
"I will not tell you. You are some villain seeking to learn his secrets, to do him harm. Release me! help! help!

help!"
For the villain had seized her white, shapely wrists in his brutal grasp. "You shall tell me!" he glowered, flercely. "Quick! Has he changed his will? Speak! I will know!"

"You scoundrel, lie there!" The man who could paint pictures, and write poetry, and dream over sunny landscapes, could fight, as well.

All the chivalry of his energetic na-

ture aroused, Jera Le Britta had sprung His good right arm shot out like a His sinewy fist landed squarely betwen the eyes of the insolent boor before him. And the next moment, as the fair

young girl clung frantically to the measured his length on the ground at

CHAPTER III.—A STARTLING RECOGNITION.

Jera Le Britta was a practical man, and had led a prosaic life. That is, only sentiment and a love for the artistic had been the main diversity in his existence from plodding, everyday routine.

The hour for action had arrived, however, and he was not found lacking. A gentleman, a friend to distress wherever

found, his heart had responded like magic to the call of beauty unprotected.

The tableau that ensued to his speedy interference in the scene at the wildvine bower, was a dramatic one. His fine face aglow with indignation and resolve, he formed a fitting companion for the innocent girl, who trustingly recognized him as a valued protector, and a strik-

ing contrast to the enraged and discomfited boor at his feet "Leave!" he ordered, making a second advance toward the prostrate ruffian, but Miss Vernon interposed a restraining

"You have punished him enough," she faltered, tremulously "Let him depart

"Peace!" snorted the tramp, struggling to his feet and scowling frightfully "I'll show you, my haughty lady. You, too, you insolent interferer. I'll"—— 'Go, if you are wise!" ordered Le Britta, warningly.

With a malevolent scowl, the subdued knave shrank from the spot. "Do not tremble so, you are safe now, spoke the photographer to his companion. "He frightened me!" quavered the girl, apprehensively "He hinted at such dreadful things about uncle! He has

Le Britta smiled confidently. "He will do wisely to keep out of my path in the future," he said. "And now, Miss Vernon''-"What! You know my name?" said the

threatened even you!"

girl, with surprise. was a witness to your interview that malignant scoundrel," explained the artist. "From his lips I learned your name. You reside near

She pointed across the valley, to a pretentious mansion gleaming white and massive among the trees on the other

slope.
"I live with my uncle," she mur-

mured, "and I must hasten home. He will be anxious about me. I had been to the village on an errand, was caught in the shower, and sought shelter here.' "And joined the birds in singing a bright welcome to the returning sunshine?" remarked Le Britta. The young girl flushed with embarras-

"You heard me," she faltered. "That song led me to you," replied the photographer. "One moment, Miss Vernon, till I secure my traps, and I alarm. Vernon's nerves were at a fright- and evaded a reply, by saying, with "Oh! I could, not think of troubling

you," she said. "It will be a pleasure to me, perhaps a protection to you," responded Le Britta.
"That scoundrel may seek to trouble you

"But he has disappeared." "Perhaps only temporarily. I do not wish to needlessly alarm you, but that

man is no tramp." "Then"-"He was disguised."

"For wi at purpose?" "I know not, only his questions evinced a familiarity with your family history. He means your uncle harm, I

"Oh! I hope not," murmured the girl, concernedly, clasping her hands in frantic anxiety. "Uncle is so low and nervous that the least thing will startle him. He has some secret care all the time, and this rude fellow would alarm. terrify him! Yes! yes! If you will accompany me; if you will explain to uncle. He may know the man. You can warn him, enlighten him."

other traps. Miss Vernon, leaning spot, and then, quivering with timidity lightly on his arm, they took the path leading toward the villa she had indicated. The great honest heart of the artist went out in sympathy toward his fair companion as they walked along the liower-spangled path. The consciousness of duty done made

Le Britta had secured his camera and

nim content. A keen interest in the girl led him to hope they should know more of one another ere they parted. his expansive nature ever took a delight in deeds of chivalry and kindness; and, as she told him of the lonely life she led at the sequestered villa, he marveled that so fair a face had not long since attracted the loving attention of some kindred spirit.

Opulence and stability showed on every side, as Gladys led the way into the extensive grounds of Hawthorne villa. Grandeur, tinged with gloom, haunted the massive rooms within the house with their rich adornment. Miss Vernon indicated a chair in the

drawing room, and said she would see if her uncle was able to receive a visitor. The latter could hear her speak in low. gentle tones to some one in the next apartment beyond the closed doors. Then a more masculine tone answered faintly, and then she reappeared with her soft, pleasing smile. "Uncle will see you, Mr. Le Britta,"

she said. "I want you to tell him all about the man I met; only do not excite h m too much. "I think you are wise in enlightening

uncle. "Uncle, this is Mr. Le Britta, 8 gentleman whose friendly kindness served me in a situation of peril to-day." "Peril!" repeated a startled voice, and Le Britta found himself bowing to an blocked her way, as she uttered a cry of austere, white-haired old man, propped up among pillows in an arm-chair near the open window.

"Embarrassment, Miss Vernon should scatter it to the pauper brats down at have said," interpolated Le Britta, you and all about you, but you tell me Wernon. I am a photographer on a what I want to know before I leave this wayward tour, and I chanced to interfere with the insolence of a tramp a short time since.'

With shrewd finesse, the photographer proceeded to relate the incident of the hour. He told the story simply, robbing the narration of all exciting details as far as possible. To his surprise, however, as he concluded the recital, Mr. Vernon grew

among the pillows, uttered a worried "Trouble-peril!" he gasped. "Yes! Yes! It means something. Oh! must my life be ever filled with fear? Gladys, this man was no tramp."

"An enemy, then. Yes, yes"-"Uncle, I pray you do not get excited!" exclaimed Gladys, solicitously. "You know the doctor forbade any agitation." "But this man—he knew your name. He threatened me! He asked about my

"I think not."

"He may have been some prying rogue bent only on terrifying Miss Vernon," suggested Le Britta, soothingly. "No!" cried her uncle, forcibly. "There is a plot here. Ah! I feared it. Quick, Gladys! describe him." The young girl did so to the best of her ability. There was no sign of recognition in old Gideon Vernon's ashen face as she concluded, however. "I must know who that man is," he cried, in a sharp, querulous tone. "I am satisfied that peril menaces us. Who can

"Ah! I had forgotten it." Le Britta arose suddenly to his feet as he spoke, a latent excitement in his eyes. "Forgotten what?" demanded Mr. Vernon, wonderingly. "You would like to know who the tramp was?"

"I shall know no rest till I find out." answered the old man, anxiously. "Will his picture do?" "His picture?"

"Have you got it?" inquired the old man, eagerly. "I have" "Where? Show it to me!"

"It must be developed first. Allow me to explain. I was taking a snap-shot picture with my camera of Miss Vernon. Just then the tramp came into view. His face, as well, will show clearly on the

"What fortune? Where is it" "In my camera, but I can develop a negative quickly, only I must have a dark room in which to perfect it."

Le Britta soon made his interested and excited auditors comprehend what he had to do in order to produce a distinguishable picture.

Soon, too, he was shown to a dark apartment. Here, with ruby lamp, trays photographer's free arm for support, the trampish knave who had insulted her, Old Gideon Vernon's hands trembled with excitement as he saw him reappear, bearing the glass plate between his

> "It is a perfect picture," spoke Le Britta, as he held the plate between the old man's range of vision and the light of the open window. "See, Mr. Vernon, there is your niece, and here is the tramp. Do you recognize him?"

With staring eyes the old man glared at the outlines on the plate. Then, with a hollow groan, he threw up his thin, white hands, and sank back a huddled, senseless heap among the pillows, with the agonized utterance:-"It is he-the dead alive. Act, Gladys!

act! or—all is lost!"

CHAPTER IV .- FROM THE PAST. Jera Le Britta looked startled as he observed the wealthy and aged Gideon Vernon sink back insensible, uttering those ominous words-

"Act, Gladys, act! or all is lost!" statement on the girl, was to drive every vestige of color from her face. "He is dying!" she shrieked, bending over the limp and motionless figure of her uncle. "The shock has killed him." "No, no, Miss Vernon," said Le Britta, quickly. "He has only fainted. You really must not excite yourself. Allow me to give him the attention he

needs. Bring some water." The young photographer knew much of chemicals, something as well about medicines. He hastened to examine a medicine case outspread on the table, Selecting a phial, he poured a few drops into the goblet which Gladys presented with a trembling hand and fear-filled face, and then, approaching the invalid again, he forced the stimulant between

the ashen lips of the old man. Watched with haunted, frightened eyes by the girl, and speculatively by the more composed artist, the invalid slowly rallied. A sigh escaped his lips, his eyes opened, glared wildly about him, and

then, with a shudder, he gasped "Where is he-that man-Ralph "Is that the name of the tramp?"

"He is no tramp." "I suspected as much." "He is a scoundrel of the deepest dye, an enemy, a man to fear, a being to chain, as you would a wild beast; and I thought him dead! I rested in fancied

"You may be mistaken; a fancied resemblance." hazarded Le Britta. "No " cried the old man, definitely "I am not in error. It is no fancied resemblance. There is but one Ralph Durand in the world, and he has appeared in this vicinity to-day. The picture you showed me is his. Do you

Le Britta regarded the hollow-eyed from the open window whither with invalid and his increasing agitation with fixed intensity it had just been directed,

ful tension. "It means plot, peril, crime, and the will-all! I see it all. I must be calm, I must act with promptness and prudence, or we are lost. Gladys, I must see you alone to direct you. You must hasten to the village at once. This stranger must not be harassed with our family

"Mr. Vernon," interrupted Le Britta, gravely, "it is true that I am a stranger, but I am deeply interested, and deeply seen the evil, malignant face of the

sympathize in your troubles You are in a dangerously weak condition. Too much excitement may prove fatal to you I beg of you to be calm, to composedly tell me your story, and allow me to aid you in any way I can. You surely would not think of sending your niece back into danger of meeting that villain again?' "Trust a stranger?" mused Vernon.

dubiously. "Yes, uncle, you can trust Mr. Le Britta," spoke Gladys, with a grateful, confident glance at her rescuer. "I will," announced Vernon, resolutely. "Mr. Le Britta, I depend solely on you to aid me to protect this fair young girl who will soon be friendless, as she is an orphan."

'No! no! uncle, do not say that,' sobbed Gladys. "It is true. I feel that I cannot long survive this last shock," proceeded the invalid. "I am a wealthy man, Mr. Le Britta, with but one near relative, my darling, faithful Gladys. To her, three years ago, I left by will all my fortune." Ralph Durand have in knowing about discovery. it-what have you to fear from him?" queried Le Britta, wonderingly.

Vernon shivered apprehensively. "Mush to fear at all times," he replied, 'but just now only regarding Gladys' future. This man is a distant relative, a half cousin. Three years ago he was my favorite. Gladys was not with me then. I trusted Durand with the control of my property. I treated him like a son, I had deposited in a bank several thousand dollars which I intended leaving to him when I die. I made a will. Gladys, of course, was my sole heiress. In that will I appointed as her guardian this man Ralph Durand, with rare discretionary powers, until she was of age, for I trusted him implicitly. His fellowtrustee was a friend of mine, Doctor

Winston."

"I understand," nodded Le Britta. comprehendingly. "That will I deposited with my city lawyer. In his safe it has since lain. A unmasked to me. Slowly, doubtingly I grew to believe, and, finally, investigated the dark rumors that reached my ears about his bad habits. I learned that he was a profligate, a gambler of the worst kind, that he openly scoffed at me as a 'golden goose he was plucking' to his evil-minded companions in vice. I found that he was a forger and an embezzler in matters of my estate. I summoned him to my presence, and told him all. I ordered him from my door. He left.
That night he managed to get a forged life and energies. check for a large amount on my banker cashed, and on a second forged order he obtained a box containing some private papers of mine. Among them was a—a the proud, steady progress of a Sarony or a Drake, he had followed the document," and Vernon faltered and paled visibly. "It referred to a family-secret that I wished to guard at all because I wished to guard at all partitions and interest that I wished to guard at all partitions are remarked. The bound is the followed the secret that I wished to guard at all partitions are remarked to the secret that I wished to guard at all partitions are remarked. hazards. I sent detectives on his track, but it was of no avail. Every day dread- field of never-failing delight and surprise ing that from some secure and distant to his keen artistic senses, place he would begin to menace me with giving publicity to the secret, I labors thus far. Jera Le Britta had shuddered and feared. Finally, one day, idolized his work. He saw in the art to in a newspaper I read that Ralph Durand had been killed in a drunken

brawl in a far western mining tavern. I was free. I was only haunted after that with the fear that some one might accidentally find the document he had stolen, and attempt to blackmail me or publish the same. Now," and the old man's eyes expressed a deep anxiety, "he reappears suddenly, mysteriously, he was not dead at all. He has returned to wreak his baleful hate on myself, and the only relative I have in the wide

Le Britta was intensely interested in the strange, graphic recital, but he said. "And, Mr. Vernon, what is to prevent you from sending word to the nearest police official to arrest this knave who

"No! no!" uttered Vernon, quickly. I dare not do that. Too well Ralph Durand understands his power, and he will wield it without mercy. He probably has the compromising document I refer to, and he knows I would rather pay a fortune than have it published." "And that document?" insinuated Le

Britta, curiously. "I dare not tell you. Gladys, too, must never know. Leave all that to me. I will find a means of securing and destroying it, if I live. I will, later, negotiate with this villain for its surrender for a money consideration, but just now there is a far more vital point that agonizes me and demands attention." "And that is?" queried Le Britta.
"The will," ejaculated Vernon,

orcibly and excitedly. "The one you made"--"Three years since. It has never been changed. It lies at the lawyer's, just as I

"What!" exclaimetd Le Britta do not mean that you allowed that important document to remain as it was with that villain Ralph Durand as

guardian to Miss Vernon.' "Yes, I know it was reprehensible, but let me explain. For a time I was so worried over Durand, that I never thought of the will. Then Gladys came MUNYON'S from boarding-school to brighten my life, and it again escaped my mind. One day I thought of it, and arranged new will, appointing a new guardian. That very day I read of Ralph Durand's death. That relieved me of all dread. If he was dead, the mention of his The Newcastle Drug Store, Doctor Winston, a trusted friend, would become successor in trust. The will was

made extra strong and with care, and blind that I was to the future, I never worried about it." "But now," began Le Britta, and

"Now, to be plain, if I should die to-Oh! uncle," murmured Gladys, with a shudder, nestling closer to her beloved

I should die to-night," oursued Vernon, steadily, that man Durand would appear here to-morrow in all his insolence and villainy, your legally-appointed guardian—the guardian of my pure innocent Gladys. Oh! it is terrible to contemplate. Worse than that, in my blind confidence in him I gave Durand, under the terms of the will an

"Then why not send to your lawyer for the will?" suggested Le Britta. "It is in the city. A day's journey there, a day's journey back." "Telegraph to have it destroyed."

"In an important step like that they might hesitate. No, I have a plan that obviates it all. "May I ask what it is?" queried the

photographer. "Yes; a new will." "I will send at once for the village lawyer, Mr. Munson. You will go for

me, Mr. Le Britta?" "Certainly." "Bring him at once. I will have him draw out a new will, giving all my property to Gladys, but appointing a new guardian. You and the lawyer can witness it. I will deposit it in a safe place. This will invalidate the old will.

Then I can rest in peace, then I can defy this villain, who, I verliy believe, would murder me if he knew how affairs stood -his rude questioning of Gladys proves "You are right Mr. Vernon," spoke Le Britta, comfortingly. "Your clear-

headed plan removes all obstacles from your path. Where am I to go-what is the name of the village lawyer?"

Mr. Vernon directed his guest, and

urged dispatch. For a moment Le Britta busied himself adjusting his camera for future use. Then he announced his readiness to depart on his strange and important mission.

"I can never forget your great kind-ness to us, Mr. Le Britta," spoke Mr. Vernon. "Once the new will is made, I shall feel as if I have a new lease of life. Why, sir, what is the matter?" even uttered a quick ejaculation of surprise, almost alarm. About to speak, he turned his glance

orced calmness:\_\_ "I am ready to depart on my errand, Every pulse was quickened, his nerves were at a high tension, however, as he left the room.

He knew that to reveal the truth to the invalid, would be to startle, alarm him, possibly imperil his life. For, peering in at the window through the thick vines that trellised it, he had THE MARITIME SULPHITE FIBRE CO. LTD.

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pretended tramp, Gideon Vernon's old time enemy-

Ralph Durand!

CHAPTER V-"TINCTURE OF IODINE."

Miss Vernon accompanied the artist to the door. Her eyes expressed gratitude. her working features told of how she valued the kind friend so strangely come to her rescue in a time of direful need. "Watch out closely for that villain Durand," spoke Le Britta, seriously, "I

As soon as Gladys re-entered the house, however, he glided stealthily around the corner of the mansion. "It was no delusion," he murmured. That man, the tramp, Ralph Durand. was certainly at the window. He may have overheard every word of our conversation."

shall not be gone long.'

Le Britta was forced to act with caution. He dared not alarm Mr. Vernon "Then what interest can this villain by telling him of his latest startling He penetrated the shrubbery, he

sought everywhere for a trace of the lurking scoundrel, but none was vouchsafed him "He has disappeared," soliloquized Le Britta. "He surely will attempt no villainy in broad daylight. I can only hasten on my mission, and, returning. aid this poor old man and his niece by Sept. 1st to 8th

village at a rapid gait. His thoughts kept pace with his swift walk. That earnest mind of his was deeply engrossed in the case that a mere trifling accident had made a seeming part of his On Account of the Toronto Exhibition life, a vivid chapter in the book of

destiny. short time after I made it, Durand was profession. It is artistic in the highest sense, yet material. It is the connecting link between the past and the present. It illuminates that past, it sanctifies the present, it makes bright the future. A picture is fadeless. It gives to the dead. It preserves the record of love. devotion and fidelity. In this case, it has that he had systematically robbed me, that he was a forger and an embezzler played the detective, may the results baffle villainy, and bring peace and

> He had made a study of photography. From the wavering steps of Daguerre to until the boundless scope was becoming a He had been a successful man in his

which his efforts were directed, a purpose, a reward in mental and moral development and pleasures, that were beyond mere financial recompense. From such compensations, content and satis faction had been wrought, and, with a pure ambition to excel and elevate his profession, he knew that the hard-earned results would be more than the trivial praise awarded to a man who follows alone the "fad" of the hour, or labors only for folly or amusement.

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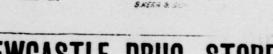
advice and protection." Le Britta hurried toward the distant GOOD FOR RETURN UNTIL

"The camera supplies the clue," be reflected. "It is like the affair where I Sept. 11th to 16th photographed the brain of a murdered man, and that strange evidence played a conspicuous part in the trial that ensued. Ah! the possibilities of my mourner the sweet face of the cherished

[To be Continued.]

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