# ON THE\_ BRINK OF A CRIME.

" Bad luck darling! Of course not -, all superstition,—vulgar superstition! Why dearest, you are quite pale and are trembling! This mustn't be! Look up. I am your husband now, little one, and, remember, you have just promised to obev me. Here we are, by Jove!"—as the brougham drew up at a quiet hotel where luncheon had been ordered previous to catching the Continental express. "You are hungry and tired : a good luncheon and a glass of champagne will soon set you right, and bring back the roses to these white cheeks.'

And so sweet Mavis Carolin took the first step along the new path, which seemed to her of roses, and, if Adrian's heart smote him sometimes, he made no sign, and life Mountjoy, thoughtfully. 'Has it occured to her, who was by his side, appeared an to you Helen, that her cousin seems much earthly paradise.

" By Jove ! Carolin, who would have thought of meeting you here? You of all at the wily grouse-in fact, doing anywhich, by the wey, isn't a bit gay just at present. Phew! how late.'

And for the better,' put in her husband,

The speaker who thus addressed Adrian Carolin was a man some three years younger than the latter.

A handsome debonnaire-looking fellow, with a countenance trank and open as the day, blue eyes, truthful and honest as genial giant on whom to rely.

Both men and women liked and trusted

Arthur Bertie and their trust would not be mispladed.

pleased at the meeting.

'Nothing-that is-oh !-er- nothing. Awfully pleased to see you, old chap. have—the truth—is I have—a lady with me. Ta-ta, see you again.'

And Bertie, looking after him in much astonishment at his unusual embarrrassment, saw his friend join a young and very beautiful girl, who at that moment emerged from one of the boxes at the Odeon The-

'What a lovely face,' he thought, as his eyes rested on Mavis Carolin. 'I do not think I have ever seen such perfect beauty, combined with an expression so innocent. I wonder what Carolin is up to-not his old tricks again surely. She looks as good as she most certainly is beautiful.'

And, as Arthar Bertie strolled through the brilliantly lighted streets of the gay city, he thought more than a little of the exquisite face, of which, after all, he had had but a fleeting glance.

'Who was that you were speaking to, Adrian? He had a nice face,' said Mavis. as they drove towards their hotel. 'I am so glad if it is an old friend you have met, darling. Sometimes, I have feared, you must be very dull, with only me to talk to.' And she sighed.

Alas! aiready she had detected the fatal signs of boredom-fatal indeed, in a man of Adrian Carolin's disposition.

'He is a man I know; I do not call all my many acquaintances friends, Mavis,' replied her husband coldly; 'and I must beg that, another time, you will remain quietly in the box till I come for you. Do not stand in the doorway alone; it is not the thing, and I do not like it.'

'Oh, Adrian! I had taken your arm before your-your acquaintance saw me' exclaimed Mavis, the ready tears springing to her eyes as she noticed the look of displeasure on the face of her idol. 'I did not mean to displease you,' she added, simply.

'There! say no more about it-be careful another time, that is all,' said Adrian, impatiently, who knew he was in the wrong and resented it. 'For Heaven's sake doat cry!You know I hate tears and scenes Here we are at the hotel. They will think with their pigheaded foreign ideas that I've been ill-treating you.'

Mavis dried her eyes, and in silence, they entered their private suite of apart ments, where a choice supper was awaiting them

For the second time in her short life Mavis Carolin sobbed herself to sleep. A presentment was over her, which

haunted her even in her dreams. Was it a foreshadow of the future?

### CHAPTER VII.

It was Christmastime -a veritable oldfashioned Christmas-sharp frost, white and sparkling like the icing on a weddingcake, powdering the fields and count y lanes-glittering icicles pendant from branch and house-tops alike.

On the big ornamental lake, trozen se veral inches deep, a large and merry party was skating.

Christmas was being kept up in the good old style at Montjoy Park, and today being Christmas Eve, saw the house-party there assembled, and largely augmented by

will cure Biliousness, Constipation, all Liver com-plaints. They expel impurities from the blood. Delicate women find sure relief from using them

To Cure Sick Headache and remove impurities from the stomach and bowels. Put upin glass vials. Thirty in a bottle; one a dose. Recommended by many physicians everywhere, as the best Liver Pill made. Sixtyfour page book sent free by mail. Sold by all Druggists, or sent post-paid for 25 cents in stamps. I. S. JOHNSON & Co., Boston, Mass.

contingents from neighbouring country farm houses, disporting themselves to their hearts content upon the smooth, care-

fully swept surface of the ice. The bright costumes of the ladies wrapped in velvet and furs, gliding hand-inhand with their attendant cavaliers, formed a pretty picture, and so it evidently seemed to two, older and more sedate, who paused now and again to gaze and comment on the animated scene.

'How particularly well dear Celia is looking to day, John. Don't you think so? —and so happy,' remarked Lady Mountjoy to her companin who was also her husband and the owner of Mountjoy Park.

'She does indeed, my dear,' replied struck with her?'

'It has most certainly, and I will own it has caused me some uneasiness. You know the dislike I have to the idea of first people in the world, out of the season, too! cousins marrying. Still if her affections how is it that you are not treading your native heather, stalking the deer, popping it—and Lady Mountjoy cast a significant cousins marrying. Still if her affections glance towards the lake-'why, then, I thing but stewing in 'Gay Paree,' should be inclined to forego my opinion on

with whom Adrian Carolin was a prime favorite. 'That unfortunate affair of his youth thank Heaven, so providentially ended, was a sad and severe lesson for a young man. It has borne its fruit, however-his wild osts are sown, and Adthough they could not lie, a sunburnt, rian will, I have little doubt, settle down into an excellent husband, to whom I shall have no hesitation in giving our child-always provided he asks for her."

"He will ask for her," said his wife 'What are you doing here?' he repeated smiling. "Trust a woman for being a as Adrian was silent, being indeed, utterly true prophet in matters where the heart is taken aback, and looking none too well concerned. Here they come. What a handsome couple they make !" exclaimed Lady Mountjoy, involuntarily.

> They did indeed. Both tall, and with that air of perfect health which makes even the plainest at-

Adrian in the prime of his manhood, she his junior by seven years—tall also, and fair-not with the delicate, rose-tinted fairness of her unknown rival; but a regal blonde-auburn haired, with velvety-brown eyes, that could flash with sudden anger, as well as droop beneath the passion of a lover's glance.

High-bred, haughty features : a delicious mouth, which, at this moment, was smiling, parting to disclose two rows of even white

In very truth, Lady Celia had earned deservedly her title as "Beauty of the County."

And she was clever, too—well-read, and an admirable musician, with a voice of great purity and power.

She had been trained by the first teachers, both in England and abroad; and, were it not for her rank and position, would hava made her fortune upon the operatic stage. Adrian Carolin adored music; he also admired fair women.

'None of your black-browed, swarthy beauties for me,' he was wont to say. 'A woman should be fair and gentle-looking.' 'But I am not gentle-looking,' said his Cousin Celia, to whom, one day, he made

the remark. 'No; but you are fair and queenly, and could and would be gentle to one whom you loved. You are my ideal of what a woman should be, and how a woman should

look,' and then he remembered Mavis. But on this particular winter's day, Adrian was not thinking of Mavis. She had no place in his thoughts—for the time being | point. she was forgotten.

The glamour of the beauty of Celia Mountjoy was upon him. Again he was tace to face with tempta-

That he admired her immensely was evident to all. That he loved her, she hoped and be-

lieved. The whole love of that great heart of hers had gone out to him-to her cousin Adrian Carolin-and with tell-tale eyes she stood before her parents, looking up into his dark

handsome tace. 'Not tired yet?' said his lordship, smiling down at her from the bank above. 'Oh, no,' she answered; 'Adrian is such a perfect skater, I feel as though I was skimming through space—it is no exertion

at all-with him.' 'And you, too, are a perfect skater—our steps go as though we had practised together all our lives; and yet I never saw

you till two months ago." This from Adrian, in a lower tone, and it was true. Circumstances had been such that, until

recently, the cousins had never met. That false step of Adrian's, years ago, had driven him from his home, and Celis too, had been much abroad; and so, unless in name, they had been strangers to each oth r. \*\*\*

There was a big dinner-party that night at Mountjoy Park, served in the great hall, with its thousand historical associations. Adrian sat beside his cousin, who looked radiantly beautiful.

She had selected for her dinner-dress gown of the thickest, purest, white silk, whilst her ornaments were the priceless sapphires of the Mountjoy family.

'I wish you were to wear them to-night, my child," her mother had said, placing the casket containing the jewels in her hand. at our death, or when you marry. We have no son," she added, with a half-sigh.

And well, indeed, did they become the rich beauty of the girl who wore them, and all eyes were turned upon the couple, who sat side by side, seemingly engrossed with

"Is the engagement about to be an-nounced?" whispered Captain Braye to his

"I should think so," answered the lady aud Lady Mountjoy have set their hearts | beautiful figancee. upon it, I believe. The two thus discussed appeared bliss

fully unconscious of such like remarks. They gazed into each other's eyes, and tenderest love into the small pink ear. what they read there was all-sufficient. Atter dinner, Celia sang. She chose an

Her voice was a pure, true soprano, clear as a bird's, and as the liquid notes rose and fell, Carolin's fickle heart went out to the singer, and he resolved upon a great crime. He saw Celia Mountjoy through a haze of passion.

The scent from the waves of her glorious hair intoxicated his senses; he seemed in a

" Sing something, Adrian."

Italian love-song.

His aunt's voice roused him to the pres-He bent nearer to the girl, whose head was drooped, so that he could not see her face, but he knew that the spell was upon

her also. She trembled, and her white jewelled hands fell nerveless upon the keys of the

'Tnis?' and he placed a song before her, 'What shall I sny to thee, heart of my heart? How can I prove thee my passion and pain? How shall I tell thee that now we must pert? Seeing I never shall see thee again.

What had possessed him to choose that ong, with its passionate words and music? Did a thought of that other rise before is mental vision—of her whose claim upon him was surely the most sacred of all claims? -or did her better angel hover near, bidding him say farewell to the woman before him ere he took a deeper step into the mire of deceit and crime ? Who shall say?

The song was sung and finished. The greatest compliment that can be paid to a singer was paid to Adrian Carolin. There was perfect silence for at least a

'I had no idea you sang so well, Adrian, emarked his uncle, at length.

'It must be the theme. It is evident Carolin's whole heart was in the words.' drawled Captain Braye, with a laugh.

Adrian heard him, and never knew, till that moment, that he hated inoffersive Captain Braye.

The remark jarred bim. 'Come away from these fools, Celia,' he whispered in her ear. 'Come into the con-

Amid the buzz of conversation resumed, they disappeared unnoticed, and silken yellow curtains dropped behind them, shutting out the world, and leaving them tace face to face-alone.

When Adrian Carolin and his cousin reentered the drawing room, they were pledged to each other.

Passion had gained the day. The evil angel had triumphed once again, and Adrian's better angel had spread her white wings sadly and departed.

### CHAPTER VIII.

To saythat Lord and Lady Montjoy were pleased at the announcement of the engagement of their only child to her cousin, the heir of Carolin was putting it mildly.

They were simply delighted. Her ladyship's sole objection took to

tself wings as though by magic. 'It isn't as though they had been brought up together like brother and sister, as cousins often are. Why, they might be strangers for all they have seen of each

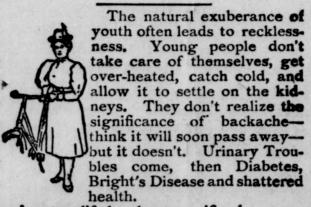
other,' she told her triends, apologetically. Though how her theory worked out, it would be hard to say. At any rate, it did so to her own entire

satisfaction, which was after all, the chief

'Nothing could be possibly better in every respect,' said his lordship, mightily pleased. 'Celia will be near us. We will offer anything for that piece of land of Saunders' and then the properties will join each each other. It will be a great relief to my mind to have the child so happily married. I am getting old now, and want to see an hier to the old place before

'Aye, we shall see our grandchildren around us, I trust, before many years are over our heads,' replied his wife complac-

## outhful Recklessness.



A young life has been sacrificed. Any help for it? Yes!

## DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS.

These conquerors of Kidney Ills are making the rising generation healthy and

Mrs. G. Grisman, 505 Adelaide St., London, Ont., says:
"My daughter, now 13 years old, has had weak kidneys since infancy, and her health as a consequence has always been poor. Two boxes of Doan's Kidney Pills have removed boxes of kidney trouble, and restored

Lord Carolin was written to, and returned from from his beloved Riviera to bestow his blessing on the betrothed. There were public interviews, and pri-

vate consultatiins, and at last everything was satisfactorily arranged.

Adrian went to town, and returned with and a most suitable match, too. Lord a magnificent present of jewels for his

He brought, too, an engagemen-ring, and, as he placed the glittering circlet on Celia's finger, he whispered words of

As he did so, the memory of another face-another and a plainer ring-rose before him.

His hand shook, his face paled; the costly ring fell to the ground. 'Surely this is not an ill omen,' said

Celia, but she smiled as she said it. Almost the identical words from other Small wonder that the betrayer trembled

and that his heart sank ; but for all that his determination wavered not one jot. Presents and congratulations were the order of the day.

When the bells rang in the New Year, the engagement of Lord Mountjoy's heiress was made public.

There was teasting for the tenantry on the adjoining estates, and great rejoicings were held, only to be rivalled, it was said, when the wedding should be an accomplished fact.

This date of this was fixed for Easter week. which, this year, fell in April. " None too long," said the bride elect's mother, " to get the trousseau, the jewels reset-for I shall not wear them again when Celia is married—the settlements drawn up, and, oh, heaps of other things!"
And Celia Mountjoy, how did she take

it all? What were her feelings whilst those around her arranged all for her present and future happiness? Happy indeed was she.

Her love given, as she fondly believed,

to one worthy of it. Celia was no flirt-no woman to give lightly to the first that asked. In all her twenty-three years of maidenhood she had not loved, or even, as many

a girl does fancied that she loved ; therefore, when her heart was given it was given " Adrian," said Lord Carolin to his son.

as they walked together in the woods of Carolin, where every tree and path was as a stab to the younger man by reason of memories, "Adrian, are you not full of thankfulness that you are free to take Celia for your wife? That fatal folly over, there is now no bar to a happy and prosperous

"The coffers of the House of Mountjoy are fuller than those of Carolin, it is true. but our name is, it anything, an older one than theirs. It is, indeed, a suitable match and one entirely atter my own wish. Had you wedded again with one beneath you in station unknown, obscure, you would have broken my heart-I should have washep my hands of you. I could not have borne it again, Adrian, dear as you are to me,' and the proud old man looked as though he meant

Adrian made an appropriate answer, and

turned away. In spite of Celia and her love, he was as was but natural, miserable. It was now February, and he had not

seen Mavis since before Christmas. At this moment, in his pocket, lay an imploring, piteous little letter, begging, entreating him, her husband, to come to

It was directed to his club, the only address he permitted her to use.

He was worried to death, he told himself-never reflecting that he had brought it all upon himself by his weakness and wickedness.

Suppose Mavis should see the announcement of his approaching marriage in one of those wretched society journals that grew fat upon the doings of the aristocracy, true and untrue, and came down to Carolin Towers and there made a scene !

But, no; she would never dare do that under any circumstances, although she loved him with a love of which, as we have seen, he was already tired.

She also feared him.

She recognized in him her master. In the brief time that they had lived together, he had made her understand he must be obeyed implicitly, and he trusted to this to help him in the crisis that he saw

was inevitable. For Adrian intended to see Mavis again once and for all, before he perjured himself before God's altar, before he told the great lie in the sight of Heaven.

Celia sometimes wondered at the uncertainty of his spirits. She had heard but dimly of the folly and errors of his youth.

The past-what had she to do with the Was not the future hers? So, alas, had another said before her!

One morning, a bright, beautiful day, with a suspicion of spring in the air, Adrian rode to Mountjoy Park, early, as was his custom, to see what his lady love's will and pleasure for the spending of the day should

He had, but an hour or two previously, received a letter from Mavis telling him she was ill, wretched; would he come? Even he felt that the hour had arrived when he must meet the woman he had de-

ceived so cruelly. 'Darling,' he said, to Celia, and her quick eyes noted the lines of care about his handsome mouth: 'darling,' I must leave you for a few days-perhaps a week.' He intended, it Mavis were tractable-

gave him no trouble, in fact-to give her a week; one short week, out of his whole life to his wite! 'Can you spare me ?' and he held his cousin to him, fondly.

'It isn't a case of 'can,' Adrian. If you

And o all went merrily as a marriage must go, you must; but, how I 'shall miss ell.

'Shall you, my own? God bless you. Celia! Promise me, sweetest, that you will never believe any word against me. unless I tell it you with my own lips; no

scandal, nothing--'Of course not, Adrian; no one would dare, to me!' she said proudly. My husband to me is beyond reproach,' she added. Then, indeed, did Adrian Carolin feel

#### CHAPTER IX.

what in truth he was-a black-hearted

A small, but well-furnished room, bright lamps, rose-shaded, casting a subdued light on the pretty chintz-covered furniture. Evidences of refinement and comfort everywhere, if not of extravagance or

The room contained one occupant-s woman—and in her we recognise Mavis Carolin, changed, indeed, by weeks-nay, months-of weary waiting and watching; but still Mavis, tair and sweet as on that summer day when she hearkened to the fatal words and promises that tell from the lips of the man who, even now, would betray her stilly further.

He was expected.

All was in readiness. The excitement of anticipation had given to the pale cheeks a rose tint that rivalled the carnation blooms upon the

Mavis had prepared everything with her own hands, and now she sat awaiting her lord and master in a state of mind almost

hysterical. 'It is getting late, and he has not come, Martha,' she said, piteously, to the kindlooking elderly woman whom Adrian had provided as her sole servant and companion in the days when the girl was his idol and

And thea had become attached to each other, these two-so dissimilar in age, and

in all else. Martha had been a wife herself. She knew the world well-too well. In her youth she had married a soldier. He had deserted her years ago, and whether he was living or not she neither knew nor cared. She pitied Mavis from her heart. She could read the ending of her happy

'Late, ma'am! Lor' bless you, 'tain't so late. It I don't a hansom outside the garden gate a-stopping this very blessed minute!' she exclaimed, running to the door, which opened into a small, trim, walled garden.

The tiny house, of which Adrian was master, was situated in St. John's Wood. and had been chosen chiefly because it possessed a garden and because of its

Sure enough it was Adrian Carolin, and

Mavis flew to meet him, flinging her arms in rapture round his neck. 'There! that will do,' he said, peevishv. 'Let me get into the house first, at any rate; and, by Jove! there's the cabby grinning! Can't you see the gate is open? You behave like a child, Mavis!'

And this was his greeting after long

This to repay her for months of weary The tears were in her eyes as she re-

entered the little drawing room. 'Don't cry, ma'am,' whispered Martha. You know how master hates what he calls 'a scene.' The brute!' she added, beneath her breath.

Mavis knew it too, and controlled her-

'I am going up to wash some of this confounded dust off; and let me have something to eat!' and Adrian went up stairs. Mavis did not dare follow him. What was coming?

A vague, dread presentiment seized her. The choice dinner was partaken of in silence, relieved only by generalities. Later on, in the drawing-room, there

was also silence—in very truth, Adrian Carolin knew not how to deal the blow to one so fond and trusting. At last he said, and his voice was harsh

'Mavis, why did you not write and tell me about-that,' and he looked at her significantly. In plain words, Mavis Carolin was about

to become a mother, and at no very dis-

and unlike his own-

'Because-because-somehow, I thought you would not like it; that—that—Adrian it would vex you; but you are glad? Oh, darling! say that you are glad.

And she got up and bent over him, as he lay back puffing away at his cigar savagely, 'I cannot say that I am glad, Mavis. I am vexed-more vexed than I care to admit. You should have told me.' In his heart of hearts Adrian was furious-

Here, indeed, was a new and unpleasant complication. Mavis herself might have been managed

-portioned off, but a child, perhaps a on—an heir! Mavis was silently crying. The disappointment was too cruel. Adrian was thinking.

In those few moments of swift thought his resolution was taken. To his credit, however, be it said, that he would sooner have faced the cannon's

mouth than do what he had to do. 'Mavis,' he said, with his face turned from her, 'dry your eyes, and listen to me, I have done you a great—a grievous wrong. You think you are my wife. You believe so, do you not ?'

'Yes, Adrian, I am your wife-your own wife,' the girl replied, wonder i gly. (CONTINUED ON FIFTEENTH PAGE.



