BY MISS M. E. BRADDON.

They descended the steps side by side, and traversed the winding pathway, followed by Toby.

At the door of the carriage Gilbert Margrave clasped the Octoroon in his arms, and, pressing her to his heart, exclaimed with emotion, "farewell, my beloved! Even this brief parting is pain and anguish to me. May Heaven bless and guard you."

There had been a slient spectator of the interview between Gilbert Margrays and Cora.

Gerald Leslie had been standing behind the striped blinds in his apartment, which overlooked the terrace, watching the meeting of his daughter and her

He saw them descend the terrace steps, and he thought that Cora had readily consented to depart.

He heard the carriage wheels roll away upon the smooth gravel road, and the bitterness of his feelings utterly overcame him. "She is gone!" he exclaimed; "gone, without casting one regretful look upon the home she is leaving. She is giad to fly with this man; she loves him; she is his! Ungrateful girl! But what then, was it not my wish? She is saved at last. Thank Heaven for that! She is saved, and I am alone! I shall never see my child again.

Overpowered by his grief he sunk into a chair, while his head fell forward on his clasped hands.

He had remained thus for some moments, when the door behind him was gently opened, and a soft footsrep stole toward him. He raised his head, and beheld his daughter kneeling at his feet.

She twined her arms about his neck, and he clasped her to his heart with passignate emotion. "Cora," he exclaimed; "Cora, is it

you? "Dearest father, how could you think that your daughter would consent to depart without you !"

"Alas, alas, my unhappy child!" murmured Gerald. "But, my father, why this terror, this

agitation? What is it you fear?" 'Nothing, nothing, Cora. Shall not I be here to guard and save you? My Cora, my darling, you love me then, you forgive me?" Torgive you: my menes, to m I wise

would ask forgiveness.' Once more the planter strained her to

"This moment repays me for all I have suffered," he exclaimed, "Oh, Heaven, I am too happy!" Then rising with a gesture of terror, he cried, "Happy, did I say? Happy, when—hark!"
He paused, clasping Cora in his arms,

and listening intently. The voices of several men were to be heard in the vestibule below, and at the same time hurried footsteps sounded on

the stairs. Toby rushed breathless into the room. "Oh, massa, massa, the dreadful day has come at last! Mr. Craig is below with the sheriffs; he has come to take possession of the estate-of all?" "Already?" exclaimed Gerald Leslie;

"then we are lost." The agitation of the morning had ,00 much for the Octoroon; this last shock completely prostrated her, and she sunk, fainting, into her father's

"My daughter!" cried Gerald: "my child—Toby, the child you nursed—is there no escape, no way to save her?" The mulatto wrung his hands in silent anguish; then, with a gleam of hope illuminating his dusky face, he ex-

cialmed-"Stay, massa; the garden below this communicates with the plantation; if we could reach that they could never find us. They are all below in the ves-

tibule-wait, wait!" He rushed from the room, leaving Gerald Leslie in utter bewilderment as to what he was about to do; but in three minutes he appeared at the open window of the apartment, standing at the top of

a ladder. "See, massa," he cried, "we will save her yet. Give her into Toby's arms, and he will save her, though his own life pays the price of her liberty."

It was too late. As the faithful mulatto stretched forth his arms to receive the prostrate form of the unconscious girl. a harsh voice in the garden below exclaimed:

"What are you up to, there, you nigger? I see you. If you don't come down quicker than a streak of greased lightning, I guess you'll get a bit of lead in your precious carcass that'll bring you down a sight faster than you went Come down, you old cuss, will

The speaker was one of the men employed by the sheriff, who had crept round from the vestibule to the gardens to see if there were any doors or windows by which some of the live stock

The LIVE STOCK" is the name given to the slaves upon a plantation. Human beings, with hearts capable of

grief and affection, fidelity and love-but in the eyes of the auctioneer, mere cattle to be knocked down by his hammer to the highest bidder.

Amongst the live stock was counted Cora, the Octoroon, the lovely and ac-complished daughter of Gerald Leslie, the destined bride of Gilbert Margrave.

CHAPTER XXIV.



LL hope of escape was over. The mulatte slowly descended the ladder, muttering to the mau below that he had only been making some alterations in the

window shutters. Corn Leslie reopened her eyes to be-hold her father bending over her, his face almost ghastly with agitation.

The Octoroon was terrified by that pale and horror-stricken countenance. "Is it all a dream?" she murmured, passing her hand across her forehead; "speak, dearest father, what has happened?"

"I am ruined, Cora," answered Gerald Leslie, in a hoarse whisper. "But come the worst, we love each other. There is no dark cloud between us now. We may be penniless, but at least we are

The reader must understand that, as yet the Octoroon was unaware of all the miseries of her position. Educated in England-reared upon a free soil, where slavery is unknown, she never dreamt that she would be sold because of her father's insolvency. She had nef-ther seen nor heard of a slave sale. How

nurtured, tenderly beloved, was to be sold with all the other goods and chattels upon the estate?

"Come the worst, dearest father," she repeated, "we will never part again." Gerald Leslie was silent. He had no power to speak. Taking

his daughter by the hand, he led her down stairs into the largest apartment in the Pavillon, where Silas Craig, with the sheriff and his assistants, were as-The hardest heart might have been melted as the father and daughter en-

tered the room. Cora, pale and trembling, yet levely in her paller, robed in white, and graceful as those Illies which seemed the best emblems of her delicate

Gerald Leslie, proud, calm, and erect, although despair was stamped on every

feature of his face. But the brutal nature of Silas Craig was incapable of pity; he felt only a flendish joy in the humiliation of one who had always despised him.

"I expected to see you, Mr. Craig," said Gerald, addressing the lawyer, with icy contempt, "but I thought that you would come alone. May I ask why you are accompanied by these people?"

"Merely as a matter of precaution," answered Silas; "I have no doubt these gentlemen will find their presence useless; for of course you are prepared to meet your engagements. You have not forgotten that this is the day that your acceptance for a hundred thousand dolfalls due. Mr. Horton has given me full power to act in his name as well as my own. Have you the money ready, my dear Mr. Leslie?"

Gerald Leslie felt the sting of the mocking sneer with which these words were accompanied.

"I am not yet prepared with the money," he answered; "but I have every reason to hope that the New York steamer will bring the required sum before night.'

"It is from the house of Richardson you expect the money, I believe," said "It is.

"In that case I am sorry to inform you that a telegram has just reached New Orleans announcing the failure of that house. Gerald Leslie clasped his hands in si-

lence. "Was that your only resource, Mr. Leslie?" asked Cralg

Still the planter made no reply, "You see, then," continued the lawyer, "that the presence of these gentlemen is not altogether useless. You can proceed at once to business," he added, turning to the men. Cora Leslie wondered at the silent de-

spair of her father. "Why bow your head, dearest father?" she said, "if your ruin leaves no stain upon your honor. We do not fear pov-Let us go! Craig looked at the Octoroon with a

gardonic smile. "I could have wished that your father had explained to you why you cannot follow him from this place, Miss Leslie," he said; "it will be a painful disclosure for me to make.' "What, sir?" exclaimed Cora, looking

alternately from the lawyer to her father. Gerald Leslie clasped her in his arms. "My daughter was born in England,

Mr. Craig," he said. "She has nothing to do with this business!" "Your memory fails you this morning. Leslie," answered Silas; "your daughter was born on this plantation,

and is the child of a certain Quadroon slave called Francillia. The proofs are in my possession." "What of that?" asked Cora; "what matters whether I was born in England

The lawyer took a memorandum-book from his pocket. "Since your father will not enlighten

or Louisiana?"

you, Miss Leslie," he said, "the law must answer your question." He opened the book and read aloud from one of its pages: " The children of a slave belong to the

owner of the mother.' In other words,' added the lawyer, as he replaced the book in his pocket, "Mr. Leslie is your master as well as your father; you are, therefore, his property, or that of his creditors. "Father!" cried Cora, wildly; "do you

hear what this man says? You are silent! Oh, heaven, it is then true!" For a moment her anguish overcame

her; then, turning to Craig, she said: "What, then, would you do with me, "Alas, my poor child," answered Silas, with affected compassion, "you will be

sold with the others."
With a shrick of horror the Octoroon buried her face upon her father's breast.

"Sold!" she exclaimed, in a stifled voice; "sold!" The mulatto Toby stood by, contemplating the scene with mute despair.

"Mr. Craig," said Gerald Leslie, "will not all that I possess suffice to pay the debt I owe? Why this useless cruelty? Do you fear that the produce of the sale will not be enough to repay you? If it should be so, I swear to you that I will employ the last hour of my life to endeavor to liquidate your claim. If, then, there yet remains one sentiment of pity in your heart, do not rob me of my child; "If I were disposed to grant your prayer,

Mr. Leshe," answered Silas, "the law is the tornine. An must se sum. "No, no; who could question your right to do as you please in the matter!" "You forget," answered the lawyer; "you forget the lifty thousand dollars

due to Augustus Horton; I am here to represent his interests as well as my "Augustus Horton," erled Cora; "you

hear, father, you hear. It is to deliver me to him that they would separate me from you. "Reassure yourself, Miss Leslie," said Silas Craig: "the law requires that the

slaves upon a property shall be sold by public auction. That auction will take place at noon tomorrow. Mr. Leslie has only to repurchase you-if he can command the means.

But Cora heard him not. The name of Augustus Horton awakened all her terror of the persecution of

a base and heartless profligate. She imagined herself already in his power-his slave-his to treat as his vile passion prompted. Wild with terror, she clung convulsively

to her father. "No. no." she cried; "do not abandon me. I shall die; I shall go mad. Do you forget that that man is the murderer of

my mother?" "Silence, silence!" whispered Gerald "unhappy girl, do not infurlate him." "I hope, Mr. Leslie," said Craig, as

Cora still clung to her father, "that you will not oblige us to have recourse to violence. "Kill me, kill me, sooner than abandon

me to that man," cried Cora.

The mulatto drew a knife from his pocket and handed it to the agonized father. "Kill her, master," he whispered:

better that than she should meet the fate of her mother.' Gerald Leslie pushed the slave from him with a gesture of horror. "No, no! Le exclaim: "sil hope p = tet lest

thing can be done. I will see Gilbert. We will save you, Cora, my beloved; we will save you.

八年のようないのはちものはちからからからからないというとうというとうとう

Two of the men approached the father and daughter to take the Octoroon from Gerald's arms.

But Corn only clung to him more con vulsively. "Father, father!" she shricked.

At a gesture from Craig they seized her in their arms and dragged her away. Happily for the wretched girl, consciousness once more deserted her, and she sunk fainting in the arms of the brutal wretches whose business it was to secure her.

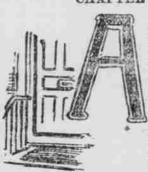
Silas Craig looked on at this heartrending scene with an evil light shining in his red, rat-like eyes.

"For years and years, Mr. Gerald Les-He," he said, "you and the like of you have carried it with a high hand over me. But my turn has come at last, I guess. You look rather small today. It's a hard thing for a man to be so poor as to have to sell his favorite daughter."

'Wretch!" cried the agonized father; "this is your hour of triumph; but remember that Heaven suffers such as you to prosper for a while that it may the better confound them in the end. A being capable of infamy such as this must also be capable of crime. Guilty deeds long forgotten are sometimes strangely brought to light, and it may be your turn to grovel in the dust and ask for mercy of me." In spite of his hardihood in crime the

color forsook Silas Craig's face, and left it of a dusky white. The random shot of guilt trembled.

CHAPTER XXV.



LL things went on at the Villa Moraquitos as calmly as if nothing out of the ordinary course had happened. Camillia and her father met constantly and the Spaniard still displayed his love absorbing

for his daughter; but, a few days after the scene in the gambling house, he announced to her his intention of making Pauline Corsi his wife.

nouncement knew no bounds. Nothing could have been more remote from her thoughts than the possibility of her father's marrying a second time. She knew of his devotion to her mother -knew the anguish that had been caused

The young girl's surprise at this an-

to him by Olympia's early death, and to hear that he was about to wed the young and frivolous Frenchwoman filled her with bewilderment. This, then, was the fulfillment of the

ambitious hopes to which Pauline Corsi had alluded. Being utterly without avarice or mercenary feelings of any kind, the announcement of her father's marriage gave no pain to Camilia.

On the contrary, it pleased her to think that he should win a companion for his declining days, and her only prayer was that Pauline might prove worthy of his affection and might learn to make him happy. Her innocent mind could little dream

of the terrible secret which was involved in this intended marriage.

Again, she remembered that no donbt her fortune would be much reduced by this unlooked-for event: there would be, therefore, less objection to her union

This thought filled her with hope, and

with Paul.

she seemed to recognize the hand of Providence in the turn which events were taking. But we must retrace our steps, in order to throw a light upon the timely appearance of Paul Lisimon, Captain Prendergills, and the sailor Joe, in the secret

gambling-house in Columbia street. It will be remembered that Camillia Moraquitos had recognized the coppercolored visage of the sailor in the pit of the crowded Opera-house. The beautiful Spanish girl had also

been recognized by honest-hearted Joe, whose breast was overflowing with gratitude for the noble handful of dollars which she had only that morning given him. The Amazon was anchored in the harbor of New Orleans, and Joe had been commissioned by Paul Lisimon to de-

liver the letter to Camillia, and had at the same time received his Captain's permission to take a night's holiday on With his pockets full of money the

sailor was determiened to enjoy himself, and, attracted by the blaze of lights and brilliant crowd, he had strolled into the Opera-house. Here, the entertainment being not very much to his liking, he amused himself

by staring at the audience. It was then that he perceived Camillia Moraquites. From the moment of recognizing her he scarcely ever took his eyes from the box in which she was seated.

Was she not the sweetheart of his Captain's particular friend, the new first mate of the Amazon, and was it not therefore his duty to look after her? He saw Augustus Horton leaning over Camillia's chair, and immediately set him

of Paul Lisimon. By and by he saw the planter leave the box to order the carriage at the close of the performance.

Determined to watch to the last, he guitted the pit at the same moment, and reached the portico before the theater in time to see Augustus and Camillia enter the carriage that was waiting for them. He also heard the brief dialogue that passed between them at the door of the

But the indignation of the honest sail or was unbounded when he saw Augustus take his seat in the carriage by the side

of Camillia. He thought that his Captain's new friend was betrayed, and immediately resolved to know the truth.

As the carriage drove off, he flung himself into the roadway, almost under the hoofs of the horses of other vehicles, in order to follow that which contained Camillia and the planter.

In this manner he pursued it until it turned out of the principal thorough-Then, favored by the obscurity of the

street and the darkness of the night, he sprang forward, and, clambering like a monkey, contrived to seat himself on the board at the back of the vehicle. He was sufficiently well acquainted with New Orleans to recognize the quarter through which they drove; and when the carriage stopped, he slipped noiselessly from his position, and, lurking in

the shadow, watched Camillia and Augustus as they entered the gambling-He saw enough to convince him that some description of treatnery was on foot, and that in any case, Paul List-

mon's happiness was in danger. The carriage drove off without the black coachman having noticed Joe; and the sailor had ample time to examine the exterior of the house, and the street in which it was situated.

Then, without a moment's hesitation, he ran to the quay, and got a boat to con-

ver him on board the Amazon. Late as it was, neither Paul nor the Captain had retired to rest. They were both scated in the cabin.

with a pile of charts before them, and the young lawyer was taking a lesson in navigation.

Jos lost no time in relating what he had just witnessed; and ten minutes afterward Paul Lisimon and Captain Pren-

The captain knew the house on Colum-

dergills were on shore.

bla street. "Many a dollar have I lost within its accursed walls," he said, as the three men hurried through the deserted city; but that's in our favor now, for the keepers of the house know me, and I know the trick of the door, which is a secret only confided to the habitual visitors of the house; so we shall get into the infernal den without any difficulty, and once in we'll find out what all this means, and whether Don Juan's daughter is deceiving you."

"She deceive me!" exclaimed Paul, in-dignantly; "she is all truth, all purity; but if the man who was with her is he whom I imagine, she is the victim of treachery as vile as that from which I am a sumerer. Thanks to Captain Prendergills, they

had no difficulty in penetrating the mys-

terious building. A man, seated in a little antercom on the stairs took their hats from them, and told them which way to go to the gambling-saloons; but at the very mohad struck him too forcibly. The man | ment they reached the top of the principal staircase the thrilling shrick of Camilla Moraquitos echoed through the

> The ear of Paul Lisimon sharpened by anxiety, told him whence this shriek proceeded. It came from a long corridor to their left.

They rushed down this corridor, and burst open the door at the end as a second shrick pealed through the building. The result is already known to the

The letter written by Silas Craig, which summoned Don Juan Moraquitos from the opera-box, was a part of the planter's base plot, and had been planned between him and the lawyer.

The business relations between Silas and Don Juan were so complicated that it was easy for the artful attorney to occupy the Spaniard In discussing them till long after midnight. The two men sat talking till nearly

three o'clock in that very apartment or-namented with the map of the United States, and communicating with the gambling house in Columbia street. But the two houses were separated by a passage of considerable length, and Don Juan was too far from his beloved daughter to hear that terrible shriek of distress which alarmed every player at

the gaming table.

Upon the day on which Silas Craig, accompanied by the limbs of the law, entered the house of Gerald Leslie, taking with him desolation and anguish, Pauline Corsi and Camillia Moraquitos were once more seated in the boudoir of the Spanish

girl. The Amazon had sailed from New Orleans, carrying Paul Lisimon away from danger of apprehension-away also from her he loved. Matters were rapidly drawing toward a

crisis-within a few days the French governess was to become the bride of Juan But the wealthy Spaniard had little of the aspect of a happy bridegroom. He rarely entered the apartments of

either his daughter or Pauline Corel, but

he spent his hours in gloomy meditation in his study, and admitted no one to his presence. Camillia was cruelly distressed by this change, yet she dared not interrogate the haughty Spaniard. Sometimes she imagined that he re-

proached himself for contracting a sec-

ond alliance which might lesson his daughter's wealth. "If he knew how little I care for the gold which others so value," she thought; if he knew how happy I could be in the numblest home shared with those I love, he would not fear to rob me of a few thousand.'

The confidence commenced between Camillia and Pauline upon the day of Augustus Horton's plotted defeat had never been discontinued, and it was to the Frenchwoman alone that Camilla looked for hope and comfort. Strange anomaly of human nature! The

could rtoop to purchase a wealthy husband by means of a vile and guilty secret, had yet some better feelings left. Pauline loved her pupil—loved her with the light love of a selfish nature it is true, but it is something that one spark of affection remained in her perverted nature. "You are sad, Camillia?" she said, as she looked up from her embroidery frame

to watch the thoughtful face of the Spanish girl. Camillia was seated with her hands lying idle in her lap, her eyes fixed vacantly upon the river, shining through the open window. "You are sad, Camilla?" repeated

Camillia aroused herself as if with an effort. "Can I be otherwise," she said, "when I think of him? When I remember that

Pauline.

he is away -I know not there-his name branded with disgrace, a wanderer and an outcast. "Silly child! Have I not already told you that the day which crowns my ambl-

tion shall also crown your love?" "Ah, Pauline! If I could but believe you!" sighed Camillia. "And can you not believe me? Do I look like one who has no will to accom-

plish her wish? Look in my face, and see if there is one line that tells of weakness there?" Camillia raised her eyes to the face of her late governess with an earnest and wondering gaze.

Youthful as was that countenance, deli-

cate as were the features and complexion,

brilliant though the azure of the eyes,

there was a look of decision, a glance of determination rarely seen in the faces of strong men. There was a power for good or evilterrible, incalculable, if employed for the latter-the power of a great intellect and an unvielding will.

"Pauline!" exclaimed Camilla, "you

are an enigma." "Not so," answered the governess, her clear blue eyes dilating, her lip quivering with suppressed emotion. "Not so, Camillia; I am an injured woman." "Injured!" "Yes. You, whose life has been

smooth as yonder river, sleeping be-

neath the sunshine that gllds its breast

-vou have never known what it is to

writhe beneath a sense of injury-to feel

that your whole existence has been

blighted by the crimes of others. There BTS WIGHES MINE WERE WARREST THE WAR WINGER to a fiend; so do not wender when you see me cold, heartless, ambitious, designing. My nature was poisoned by the events of my youth. I said that I would one day tell you my story. Shall I tell it you now?"

"Yes, raume, yes; it it is not piontul

"It is painful; but I feel a savage pleasure in the pain. I gnash my teeth at the remembrance of the old and bitter wrongs; but I love to recall them, for the thought of them makes me strong. Have you ever wondered at my past history, Camillia?"

"Never." "I was born beneath a princely roof, cradled in the luxury of a palace; the man I called my father was a duke-the woman, whose gorgeous beauty smiled

upon my infancy, was a duchess!" "They were your parents?" exclaimed Camillia.

"I was taught to think so. They were of the Italian race, and sprang from one of the most powerful families of the south-a family whose pride had become a proverb throughout Italy. "They had been married for some

they had died without posterity, would

have become extinct. Disappointed in

his hope of perpetuating his noble race, the duke had grown indifferent to his beautiful wife; nay, something worse than indifference had arisen-something bordering on dislike, which, in spite of his efforts, he was unable to conceal. The duchess came of a house almost as noble as that of her husband, She was a haughty and imperious woman and she was not slow to perceive this change in the manner of the duke. She discovered, that in the very prime of her youth and beauty she was despised by her kusband. The bitterness of this discovery changed her very nature. Every day she grew more haughty, more exacting, more capricious. She shut here self from the gay world in which she had

a mute but terrible despair.' "Poor woman, she suffered!" murmured Camillia. "She did. She was wronged, but it did not make her more pitiful to others when their time of suffering came. It hardened her nature, and made her merci-

been admired, and abandoned herself to

less, as all injustice must ever do. The duke observed this gloomy silence-this dumb despair. He could not restore to her an affection which he no longer felt; but he sought to revive her spirits by change of scene, and by those hollow pleasures which are the sole resource of the idle."

"Vain solace! Poor lady, she was indeed to be pitied."

"Ay, but her haughty soul would have rejected pity as the direst wrong. The duke left Italy, and took her to Paris, where, in the midst of the gay and frivolous, she might forget her domestic griefs; but in France, as in Italy, she refused to share in the pleasures of the world of rank and fashion, and obstinately shut herself in her own chamber.' "Yet she did not die! Strange that such sorrow could not kill !"

"Sorrow does not kill. Even her beauty suffered no diminution. It was still in the full splendor of its luxuriance, dark, proud, commanding, queen-like. Have you ever heard, Camillia Moraquitos, of the secrets of Paris? Have you ever heard of the mysteries of that wonderful city, in which almost every street has its secret, known only to the initiated in the winding ways of civilized life? Three months after the arrival of the duke and duchess in Paris, an event occurred which changed the whole current of their lives." "And that event was-

"Apparently a very simple one; the lady's-maid of the duchess was a frivolous girl; who had herself been educated in France, but who had never before tasted the delights of the brilliant capital. She was intoxicated with rapture, and she ventured even to express her admiration for Paris in the presence of the young duchess. Amongst the other wonders of this marvelous city, Jeannette, as the girl was called, spoke of a fortune-teller who had related to her some of the events of her past life, and whom she looked upon as a powerful magician.'

"But surely the duchess did not listen to this peasant girl's foolish babble."
"She did! Despair is, perhaps, terribly near akin to madness. She listened at first from pure abstraction, scarce heeding what she heard; but afterward eagerly. She asked the girl a thousand questions about this fortune-teller, and finally it was agreed upon between the mistress and maid that the woman should visit the duchess late on the following night, when the duke was absent at a political assembly, and all the servants of the establishment had retired to rest "

ambitious and unscrupulous being who "Strange caprice!" exclaimed Camillia. "Grief is sometimes capricious. The duchess doubtless, was ashamed of her own folly, but she wished to hear what this woman would say of the future, which seemed so dark. What if she were to prophesy the coming of an heir to that haughty house-an heir whose coming would restore all the power of the now neglected wife? The duchess passed the following day in a state of restless excitement, eager for the coming hour which was to bring the fortune-

"It was nearly midnight when Jeannette admitted the woman by a private door at the bottom of the grand stair-

"There was something terrible in the

look of the woman who crept with stealthy and silent tread over the luxurious carpets of that palace-like abode She was old and haggard; her yellow skin disfigured by innumerable wrinkles. her gray hair falling in elf locks about her low and narrow forehead. He small eyes were surrounded by red and inflamed circles, and almost hidden by the bushy eyebrows which projected over them. Her chin was fringed with terrible gray briefles; her mouth disfig ured by two enormous teeth, which resembled the fangs of a wild beast. She was a creature calculated to inspire disgust and terror, and she seemed still more horrible by contrast with the elegance around her, as she entered the superb apartments of the duchess. There is little doubt that the maid,

Jeannette, had told this woman all the secrets of her mistress. Her task, therefore, was an easy one. She described the troubles of the past, and foretold that, before the year had elapsed, a child would be born to the duke and duchess. On hearing this prophecy from the lips of a miserable impostor, the haughty Italian fell at her feet, and burst into an hysterical flood "The woman saw in that moment the

saw the duchess alone, and remained with her for so long a period that Jeannette's curiosity was excited. She contrived to overhear the interview. "Once more the duchess seemed a transformed being. She no longer shut herself from the world. Gay and radiant she re-entered society; and in a rew months the tune was informed that

first dim foreshadowing of a future

crime. A week afterward she came

again at the same hour. This time she

he would ere long become a father. "On hearing this he was eager for an immediate return to Italy, in order that the infant might be born upon the sol which it was by and by to inherit; but the duchess had a strange caprice upon ship point. She was determined not to leave Paris, and her husband could not bring himself to oppose her wishes at

such a time. "Within a twelvemonth from the first visit of the fortune teller, a child was born and reared in the ducal mansion, I was that child. Caressed and indulged from my called lafancy; nursed in luxury and clemane, I was happy, for I had much of the frivolena nature of my native Paris; but, child as I was, I knew lat I was not beloved. "I saw the looks of other women as

they hung over their children, and I knew that such glances of affection never rested upon me. The duke loaded me with presents, but he never embraced me as I had seen other fathers embrace their children and I foll that some contheir children, and I felt that some gom was wanting in the diadem of happiness. Years passed; I grew to early girlhood, and for the first time I knew what it was years, and had grown weary of hoping to love. A young artist, who had been for an heir to the ancient name which, if engaged to paint my portrait, fell in love engaged to paint my portrait, feil in love with me, and his passion was returned. For the first and only time I too loved; devotedly, enduringly. The painter, though handsome, honorable, highthough handsome, honorable, night minded, distinguished, was driven from and conthat ducal mansion with scorn and contumely. What greater sin could be have committed? He had dared to love the daughter of one of Italy's proudest no-

"This was the first bitter wrong of my life. The pride of others trampled on my hopes of happiness, and at sixteen years of age my breast was imbittered by a blighted affection. My lever wrote me a letter of despairing farewell and left the country for America. To this day I know not to what part of the mighty continent he went." "Poor Pauline!"

"A twelvementh after this, Jeannette, the servant of the duchess, died; and on her death-bed she sent for the duke and confided to him a terrible secret. I was not the daughter of the duchess, but a spurious child, born of low parents, and introduced into the ducal mansion by the old Parisian fortune-teller.' "Oh Heaven, how terrible!"
"It was indeed terrible. The fury of

the duke knew no bounds. He was a proud man, and for seventeen years he had been duped, fooled, imposed upon by the child of some wretched Frenchwoman-the child he had introduced into the society of the noblest in the land, and whose beauty and accomplishments had been his boast. He had never loved me; there was no link of affection between us to stay the torrent of his rage. That rage was more terrific against me, the innocent! than even toward the guilty duchess. He drove me from his doors with loathing, and I, the pampered heiress, wandered forth into the streets of Genoa, a beggar and an outcast. Before I reached the gates of the town I was overtaken by the steward of the duke, who brought me a pocket book from his master. It contained notes to the amount of three thousand pounds. My first im-pulse was to cast it in the dirt beneath my feet, and to bid the steward go back and tell his lord how I had treated his generous donation; but a sudden idea took possession of me. This sum of money would enable me to go where I pleased. I might go to America—I might find him I loved. Two months after this I landed in New York. I traveled from city to city, but nowhere could I obtain tidings of him I sought; and at last, wearied by my ineffectual search, my funds nearly exhausted with the extravagant outlay of my travels, I found myself in New Orleans. You know the

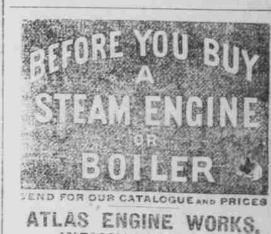
[To Be Continued.]

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