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## **Mistress of Darracourt.**

\_\_\_OR, THE\_\_\_

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Head was an honest lawyer and fellow, and he did not rest conwith performing his legal duhegin with the owner of all was virtually alone in the could not go and live in that huge place which had fallen to her without a companion. He advertised for a middle-aged lady, and secured that pink of perfection and propriety-Mrs. Dalton. Then he bethought him that Lucille would need a companion of younger years and mood and he asked Lucille

errace, a feeling of loneliness, earning for something she could not into words, smote upon her as stinctly as if the wind had suddenly nopped from south to east and chill-An instant after she felt ashamed it is the "four-in-car." of the thought, and turning from the

went quickly across the room nd rang the bell seek "blood" in horses, "I have everything I could desire. they now seek "class" in murmured with a half laugh o tires. Hence, Dunlop

now, how contented and hap she would be! While I-now what it I do want?" and she stretched

out her arms and laughed again. Susie came in response to the bell:

matter of fact, and with all a girl's delight in the task, spread out the dresses which had been purchas

ed in Paris, under Mrs. Dalton's guidand-just for a minute or two. "I beg your pardon," said Lucille,

There was a plain white muslin with a faint blush. "I think I was with a black sash among them, and

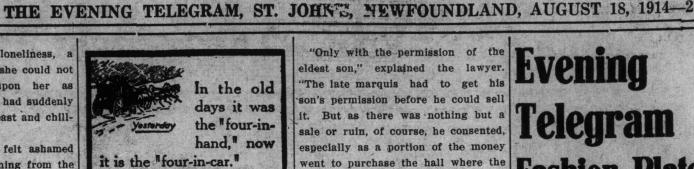
Lucille chose that, · principally be Mr. Head bowed respectfully. cause it was the simplest. With the "I hope I have not disturbed you," exception of the sash the dress was e said; "but Miss Verner insists that without ornament, and Lucille shook should communicate a piece of famwhen Susie unlocked the history.

jewel casket. with it don't!" exclaimed Marie suites of pearls and dia Pray don't begin in that way, or we also bought in Paris unde shall all go asleep at the commence Mrs. Dalton's directions: and Susie nent. Let me tell Miss Darracourt, lthough she would have liked to and if I go astray you can correc have decked her young mistress in all the glories of the Orient, and was

Mr. Head bowed. a little disappointed, could not re-"You will tell it much better than press a little smothered cry of wonshall, Miss Verner." ler and delight, as her eves rested "At any rate I shan't put in any pon her handiwork. In all her life aforesaids,' as you would probably had not seen anything-not do," she retorted. "Lucille, we were ven a picture in the Illustrated Lontalking of the marquis. I can't talk on News-so beautiful as her young

or think of anything else! That's benistress with the thick, golden-brown cause I've never seen a real live marquis before. A great bell startled Lucille by its

"My dear Miss Verner," murmured sudden clangor, and a moment or two rs. Dalton, rebukingly. "If you afterward Marie Verner knocked at



present marquis now lives." "And is the present marquis th only son?" asked Mrs. Dalton. Mr. Head had his wineglass to hi ins at the moment and he naused second before replying, while a very faint line wrinkled his forehead. "The present marquis was the next

In the old

days it was

the "four-in-

hand," now

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ofthe

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many.

in succession," he said, slowly, and with a certain gravity.

Lucille, who was listening intently, noticed the hesitation and the tone of the reply; and Marie Verner's sharp eyes glanced at the lawyer's

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"There is something behind; tell us he whole of the story, Mr. Head." He looked toward Lucille. "There is something behind," he

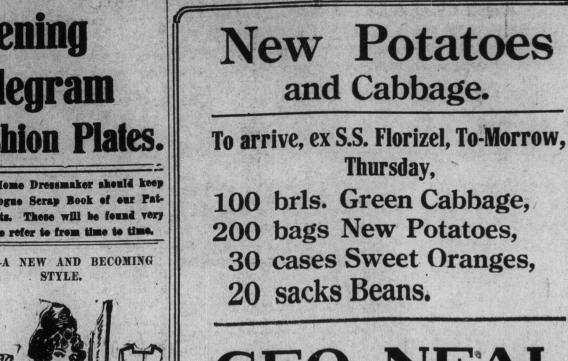
said, gravely-"a dark shadow which rests upon the house of Merle. Some other time," he said, biting his lips. "Well, as it is beyond the power of nortal man, to say nothing of three oor women, to force anything from a lawyer. I suppose we must possess

patience." said Marie Verner, lightly, eeded in throwing a still more ro nantic halo round the interesting narquis, Mr. Head. I'm more en tirely lost than ever."

"I think we had better leave Mr Head to the enjoyment of his wine,' said Mrs. Dalton, primly, and Lucille ose and led the way into the drawing

Marie Verner ran to the piano and struck a chord.

Suitable for gingham, percale, cam-"You don't mind my playing?" she bric, nainsook or lawn. The design asked. "Music is the only possible has front and back waist portions cut vent for my suffocating emotions! wide over the shoulders, and caught This lovely place, this dark and mel- in deep tuck darts below the bust, terting in deep plaits at the panel



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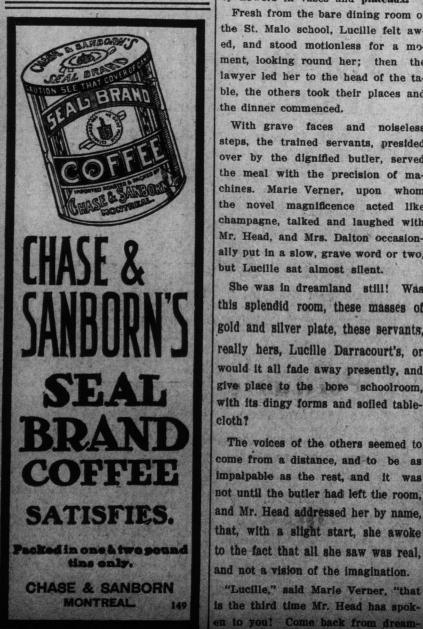
rie Verner, was like Lucille, an orthe door. phan. She was the very opposite of Lucille, and perhaps for that reason, as opposites attract each other. Lucille and she had maintained a friendship. "If Marie Verner will come, I will

take her," said Lucille, and Marie Verner had jumped at the offer. In a week the preparations were complete, and now Lucille sat at the window of Darracourt-her Darracourt-looking out upon the parkher park, as it lay bathed in the bright June sunset.

It was strange and wonderful, and with the novelty and interest of the thing was mingled another sensation a feeling of loneliness and isolation.

A man placed in her position might have been pardoned for feeling lonely, how much more then a young girl, with all a young girl's tender craving for love and sympathy?

They had all been glad to see herthe tenants had cheered, the servants had prostrated themselves, her near est neighbor, the marquis, had con to welcome her; yet, as she stepp out on to the balcony, and leaning over looked along the wide-reaching



such terms are scarcely fitting." "That's the dinner bell, Lucille," "Well, you wouldn't have me say she said. "Are you dressed? Oh, my an artificial marquis!" retorted Madear, that muslin suits you!" and her rie Verner. "Having never seen one, keen eyes roved over Lucille's slim figure. "I thought I looked rather nice, but you-" and she made a sorbed!" she went on. "And such a little mone. marquis, too! If I had met him walking in Regent street I should Lucille smiled "I have got a very good little have known him to be a nobleman of high degree. No one but a marquis maid," she said. Susie blushed with at least could have such eyes and pleasure and curtseyed. such hands! Darracourt is beautiful "Oh, miss," she murmured, "it's and wonderful enough, but to have ou, who are so beautiful. not dress or me who put it on!" such a marquis as next door neighbou "There!" exclaimed Marie Verner.

nair and lustrous, hazel eyes.

dining room

is too delicious!" and her lips went 'As a specimen of rustic compliment, into a curved thin line of red. hat's unique." Lucille smiled. worship," she said, in her musical They went down into the hall. where Mr. Head, in evening dress,

stood waiting for them, and he gave "Wouldn't he? But I haven't finish-Lucille his arm and led her into the ed with him yet! There is just one noble qualification lacking in him;

It was a large room, and the light from what seemed a forest of can-"For a marquis," murmured M dles, for the heavy curtains had been Head, fingering his wineglass. "For a marquis, of course," assent drawn to exclude the sunset, shone ed Marie Verner. "And now for the upon carved oak and Venetian glass.

history. You remember my telling upon the table glittering with some of the famous Darracourt plate, relieved you that Darracourt once belonged to by flowers in vases and plateaux. the Merles?' "Yes." said Lucille.

Fresh from the bare dining room of the St. Malo school, Lucille felt aw-"Well, it seems that the late mared, and stood motionless for a moquis, this one's father, was one of ment, looking round her: then the those gentlemen who enjoy spending lawyer led her to the head of the tamoney, and that, like most men gift ed in that direction, he spent too ble, the others took their places and the dinner commenced. nuch. And so he sold Darracourt to

With grave faces and noiseless your uncle, sold it with all the plate and the furniture and all the 'aforesteps, the trained servants, presided over by the dignified butler, served said.' There, Mr. Head, I've got the word in, and you ought to be satisthe meal with the precision of machines. Marie Verner, upon whom fied. Wasn't that an awful sacrifice' Fancy having to part with this love the novel magnificence acted like ly place. No wonder the present champagne, talked and laughed with marquis looks so melancholy. I Mr. Head, and Mrs. Dalton occasion-Mrs. Dalton would not be shocked ] ally put in a slow, grave word or two. could shed tears of sympathy!" out Lucille sat almost silent. Mrs. Dalton ignored this appeal

She was in dreamland still! Was with a dignified sniff. this splendid room, these masses of "I was under the impression that gold and silver plate, these servants. such properties were entailed." she really hers, Lucille Darracourt's, or said, addressing Mr. Head, "and that would it all fade away presently, and they could not be sold." give place to the bore schoolroom. with its dingy forms and soiled table-

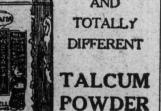
Wise Precaution The voices of the others seemed to ome from a distance, and to be as will prevent the little illness of today mpalpable as the rest, and it was from becoming the big sickness of tomorrow and after. For troubles of not until the butler had left the room the digestive organs you can rely on and Mr. Head addressed her by name. that, with a slight start, she awoke to the fact that all she saw was real, and not a vision of the imagination. "Lucille," said Marie Verner, "that is the third time Mr. Head has spok-

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ancholy marguis with a shadow over edges. The design is cut with square will permit me, I really think that his house, the excitement, and the neck edge. The pattern is cut in 3 sizes-Small, Medium and Large. It brass hand have turned my head! requires 4% yards of 36 inch material And you-" pointing to Lucille, as for a Medium size A pattern of this illustration mailed she stood like a lovely statue in the to any address on receipt of 10c. in centre of the splendid room-"you silver or stamps. alive or dead, before, I am quite ab- can be cool and collected! It passes

> my comprehension!" (To be Continued.)





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