A Dark Night's Work.

Consisted from 1st page.

The next town being Crossville, hither the photographer had come, hoping by inquiry and investigation to trace the processory of the secret, without which only a blind such could result for the hindern box of tracests.

There were about fifty houses in Crossville, a botel, a tevern, and the usual meager array of small shops and stores to be met with in every hundrum, way-need remained. Armed with the maille anvelope and the three bits of paper it contained. Armed with the hundred strip, presumably written at Crossville, Le Britta set out to locate the author.

He first visited the hotel, then in turn

The cold-blooded schemer chuckled, serenely. He cut savagey at the presty flowers by the readside as he strolled along. He hated boauty—despised nature. It had no charms for him. As he mutilated the glowing buds, so would he crully orush every for to his interest who dared to cross his path.

"As to that meddling photographer, he won't appear again in a hurry," continued Durand. "I checked his mad create the many in a hotel, a towern, and the usual meager array of small shops and stores to he met with in every hundrum, way-hoot rune settlement.

Le Britta had a very fair description of the tramp in his mind. To his care, also, Doctor Milton had intrusted the proceeds of the estates lest misadventure are completed. It propose to bring affairs to a climax, money matters to a basis. I intend to begin lining my nest from the proceeded straight to the office of the lawyer the minute he reached the village.

He first visited the hotel, then in turn

sculated.
"Didn't you?" persisted Le Britta.
"I did, for a fact."
"Was that part of what you wrote?"
Le Britta exhibited the half-obliterate ratting from the tramp's manilla enve

pe.
The constable examined it.
"Yes," he admitted, "that's it."
"You see it is almost crased?"
"Yes, I's ce it is."
"Gan you remember what it w

Le Britta thanked the man H's infor, He explained that the tramp had got hurt, and that he was looking up a memorandum he had made, of considerable importance to himself and others.

"Then he returned to the city, feeling that he had scored a material point in the case in hand. From the description given, he was sure that he could find the hidden treasure-box.

A pleasant time he passed with the knights that evening, and the next morning, with quite a party of them, he repaired to the photographer's, to take their pictures.

An hour will be ample time," responded Le Britta, and it was, for he got through with his friends, and left orders with the photographer as to the disposition of the pictures upon completion, just as several ladies entered the waiting room.

little time, but at last Le Britta came out into the operating room.

Well, good-by," he said. Ah! excuse me. I thought you were alone."

The photographer was behind his camera, and seated near a screen was a veiled lady, evidently a member of the dramatic troupe he had referred to.

Lift your vell, please," he said to the latter. I am all ready."

The lady obeyed him.

"Meroy" ejaculated the petrified Le Britta, starting heat half-a-dozen feet in sheer surprise and bewilderment.

Staring blankly at the fair features revealed, he steed like one in a trance.

The lady at the mement happened to gaze at him.

gaze at him.

With a violent start, she turned pale as death, and areae to her feet as she evidently recognized him.

Then, with a wild cry, she recled where she stood, and fell senseless to the floor.

CHAPTER XXIII -- CHECKMATE. The new master of Hawthorne villa and got up late. Moneyer, he had arisen rish a headache, the result of too free unfulgence in strong drink the previous light.

quent potations of his favorite liquorrum.

"Theres! I feel like a man again," he
muttered, complacently, as the strong
drink flushed his face and tingled in his
blood. "I'm going it a little too strong,
though: Durand, old boy! this won't do
The master of a fortune and a rare old
establishment like Hawthorne villa,
must go slow, respectable-like. Just
now, pure dash and defiance have made
every one in sight take to flight or concealment, but they may mass their forces
anew. Yes, I need to be wary, vigilant,
indomitable. If I drink too much I may
get careless, I may be taken unawares. I
must have a cool head, fron nerves, a
never sleeping eye. No more drink in
excess, old boy! until I perfect my
plans."

"But old Vernon, a wealthy man,
possessed of an enormous estate, as his
memoranda show!"

"I will explain. Mr. Vernon did own
all the real estate listed, but I find that
one week ago, unknown to me, he
proserved, started to walk toward the
distant village.

"Yes, It was made to a firm in the
form of family leaver to his senses"

"Yes, It was made to a firm in the

sossessed, started to walk toward the distant village.

"I'll wake them up—I'll bring that old for of a family lawyer to his senses" he muttered. "No time like new. Gladys has been scared away—I know how to bring her back. She must come back? Her return is essential to my plots. First, there are certain little legal formalities that west a thorough right in me for handling the estate that she must tacitly sanction; next, if I see the fortune slipping from my hands, I must proceed to externe measures. She might make a wiff and die, leaving me sole heir. She might marry—me. What an idea! but, as I hold her in mortal tersor, why not? With the proofs to send her lever, Sydney Vance, to the gallows, with evidence that I control."

"Do you want a truthful reason?"

The wave shearing first promoted from concess ammanally, I childrenessed the hard with a new years, and the many in the state of the situation of the state of the situation of the state o

"Quite a plum."
"Next the mines at Leeville—" Better still! next!"

"Better still! next!"

"Real estate in St. Louis, unimproved boulevard lots—"

"Would bring"

"At least affey thousand dollars."

"It's piling up" gloated the delighted plotter. "I want it all turned ever to me. As trustee, I do as I please with it —invest, it, speculate, bank or devote to improvements."

"Unfortunately, under the very lax conditions of the will, you may."

"Never mind that. Now then, old Vernon of course left lots of ready cash securities, bonds, jewels and the like!"

"He had such, yes, before he died. I see on this memoranda, that the day before his death, he listed his personal alongings at a clear hundred thousand dollars."

"That's all right. I can get the order this morning—soon as court opens."
"Very well."
"You'll have the property in shape?"
"Yes, what there is of tt?"
Ralph Durand started. There was a str...uge intonation in the lawyer's voice, a peculiar expression of latent triumph and vindictiveness in his face.
"What do you mean by that,?" remarked Durand.
"I mean what I say."

detect, disaster, in the lawyer's sphyax-like face.

"No."

"And why not?"

"Because," replied the lawyer, impressively, "the estate of Gideon Vernon is a complete wreck.!"

CHAPTER XXIV .- A MYSTERY. Ralph Durand looked much like an eager fox-hunter suddenly checked in his mad career of further progress, by an insurmountable barrier, with a shock.

"The estate a wreck!" he gasped, faltering! alteringly.

His were the white face, the trembling

The new master of Hawthorne villa had get up late. Moneover, he had arisen with a headache, the result of too free indulgence in strong drink the previous night.

The mask of even ordinary civility was sown now. Alone, unwatched, the lax muscles of his face, the ugly, malignant glare of his sinister eyes proclaimed Raiph Durand to he a very bad and a very dangerous man.

He kicked over a pretty ottoman, the handwork of gentile Gladys Vernon he smashed a dainty perfume case in his impatience at a wry collar, and then, half-dressed, hurried to the dining-room to brace his shattered nerves with frequent potations of his favorite liquor—rim.

"There: I feel like a man again," he muttered, complacently, as the strong drink flushed his face and tingled in his control of a shattered nerves with frequent potations of his favorite liquor—rim.

"There: I feel like a man again," he muttered, complacently, as the strong drink flushed his face and tingled in his control of a shattered nerves with frequent potations of his favorite liquor—rim.

"There: I feel like a man again," he muttered, complacently, as the strong drink flushed his face and tingled in his control of a shattered nerves with frequent potations of his favorite liquor—rim.

"Yes."

"To provide against the very contingency that has occurred—to so cripple the estate temporarily, that whoever became executor, would have to work for his salary, keeping the estate in order, instead of pilfering from it,"

Durand bit his lips with suppressed anger at the lawyer's candor.

"But the money"

"What money"

"The mortgage proceeds."

"The mortgage proceeds."
"That," announced Mr. Munson,

rimly, "has disappeared."
"Disappeared!"
"Exactly." 'You say he received it?" 'Undoubtedly?''
'Did he not bank it?''

Then his support the first state of the heart-broken flances of Sydney

The heart-broken flances of Sydney

Tancal

the heart-broken fiancee of Sydney Vance!
How had she come here? What fate had sent her across the path of the man who had sought so vainly, face to face, at a critical moment in the destiny of all concerned in the strange case, where villainy and avarice were waging a merciless battle against innocence and right?

Before Le Britta had fully regained his wits, the photographer had summened a lady assistant. The insensible girl was removed to an inner apartment, the excited and breathless Le Britta sank to a chair.

He could only wait. The photographer,

"I see it all," he murmured. "She fied from home—she sought to earn her own living. She hoped to put to account her rare elocutionary powers in the dramatic line, she hoped, doubtless, under a new guise, an assumed name, to hide her identity:" and as Le Britta learned that the company was on its way to Callfornia, he discerned that Gladys determination to hide herself was a fixed one. "She ventuped to remain somewhere near to Hawthorne villa disguised on the stage, veiled on the stage, veiled on the stage, veiled on the stage, the country consented to have her ploture taken, because she could not very well evade it. She saw me. The shock of recognition overcame her, and she

"Gone!"
"Yea."
"When—where!"
"Fully twenty minutes since. She recovered, begged of her friends to get her away from here, and—they went."
"What way? To the street, while I sat dumbly waiting!" exclaimed Le Britta, concerpedly. "She wishes to evade me; she is determined that she will not see her friends. Poor child! Amid her terror and uncertainty, she files from those who have her interests at heart.
But I must find her, and at once!"
"Easily said—difficult of execution! It took Jera Le Britta an hour to find out at which of the crowded hotels the dramatic company was stopping.

He learned that it had disbanded temporarlly, to reorganize in San Francisco in two weeks.

Beparting in sections, by different routes, for different cities of visitation, ere the journey began, he was utterly at a loss to trace Gladys and her new-found friends. Special trains were being run for the day tof the concleve, and the valindad officials were busy, confused and unsatisfactory in their answers to his anxious queries.

"It is useless to follow the many blind trails suggested," he decided. "If I found her, would she consent to abandon her evident determination to remain away frum home while that willian Durand is in power? To San Francisco she is surely sone. These she

trails and the exclaimed, with a gasp of comprehension, "I never thought of it! Gladys Vernon, has repure home—she saw Ralph Durand's advertisement.

CHAPTER XXVI.—BLOCKED.

The next train on the central left in two hours. Le Britta's decision had been quickly suggested and formed—he would go to Hawthorne villa.

When Gladys had fied from her home, she believed her lover's the algorithm of the many different cities of visitation, ere the journey began, he was utterly at a loss to trace Gladys and her new-found officials were busy, confused and unsatisfactory in their answers to his anxious queries.

"It is useless to follow the many blind trails suggested," he decided. "If I found her, would she consent to abandon her evident determination to remain away frum home

factory in their answers to his anxious factory in their answers to his anxious queries.

"It is useless to follow the many blind trails suggested," he decided. "If I found her, would she consent to abandon her evident determination to remain away fr.m home while that willain Durand is in power? To San Francisco she is surely gone. There she can be found later. It would take half-adozen detectives to hunt her up just now. I am worried, but she is comparatively safe. I have no right to control her moreoments. I will work at the case until I get a clear deck for action—until she can safely return; then she will not refuse.

Thus Le Britta tried to decide, but an hour later his anxiety far Gladys Vernon overcame his former judgment. Inquiry had given him a new clue. He had met the manager of the dramatic company. By describing Gladys' two lady companions at the photograph studio, he was enabled to learn that they were the soubrette and the leading lady of the company. "They started for St. Louis an hour trends and the leading lady of the company. "They started for St. Louis an hour factory in the lead of the constant of the conclave, who, like Le Britts, was a photographer. They had met that day, and some moments were consumed in mutually explaining how neither the started for St. Louis an hour treatment of the conclave, who, like Le Britts, was a photographer. They had met that day, and some moments were consumed in mutually explaining how neither the started for St. Louis an hour treatment of the conclave when the started to learn that they were the soubrette and the leading lady of the company. They started for St. Louis an hour treatment of the conclave when the same value of the conclave when the same value of the conclave when the conclave when the conclave when the conclave when the same value of the conclave when the conclave whe

soubrette and the leading lady of the company.

"They started for St. Louis an hour ago," spoke the manager. "Is it something important?"

"Yes. I have a very vital message for the lady who is with them."

"Oh Miss Raven? the new lady who has engaged to play some minor parts."

That meant Gladys, and Le Britta nodded affirmatively

"I don't think she went with them to St. Louis. I am quite certain not."

"Can you find out?" asked Le Britta anxiously. anxiously.
"Yes. Come back in two hours."

In two hours Le Britts returned.
The manager had word for him.
"I telegraphed to the leading lady on the train—had a despatch sent and delivered at a junction," he explained.
"And her reply?"
"Here it is. You can read it for your-

self."

Le Britta surveyed the reply message attentively and with expectation.

It blighted his hopes, and made the whereabouts of Gladys Vernon more a matter of doubt than ever.

For it read:—
"Miss Raven did not leave city with
us. She stated that she would leave company and return to her home."
"Return to her home?" repeated the
mystified Le Britta. "That cannot be—

"You have found a clue?"
"We have accomplished what you
wished. We have traced the girl."
"And found her?"
"No. Our labors end with learning how "No. Our labors end with learning how she left the city—where she went."
"Yes, I understand that."
"Miss Raven, as you call her, after leaving the photographer's studio, returned to the Palace hotel."
"Where the dramatic company was staying?"
"Exactly."
"And then?"
"She took her satchel and hurried to the railroad depot."
"Which one?"
"The Central line. She purchased a

"Unfortunately, under the very lax conditions of the will, you may."
"Never mind that. Now then, old Vernon of course left lots of ready cash securities, bonds, jewels and the like?"
"He had such, yes, before he died. I see on this memoranda, that the day before his death, he listed his personal alongings at a clear hundred thousand dollars."

Ralph Durand's eyes fairly blazed with covetousness. To handle all that in ready cash! His flager ends tingled.
"Now, then," he oried, excitedly, "when can you turn all this property over to me?"
"Do it now!"
"Do to now!"
"On an order from the court."
Durand's face fall, but he said, a moment later:
"That's all right. I can get the order this morning—soon as court opens."
"You'll have the property in shape?" "You'll have the property in shape?" "Yes, what there is of it?"

Ralph Durand's coverage as a search of the dramatic form, he discorrach that Gladys determined that the company was on its way to Callfornia, he discorrach that Gladys determinion to hide herself was a fixed one. "She ventured to remain convening for one of the realized depot."

"The Central line. She purchased a ticket;" and in a few concise words the detective developed the fact that she had secured his assistant. The insensible girl was removed to an inner apartment, the words have a clear her to be avited and treathless Le Britts earnet to Hawthorne Villa. Best to Hawthorne Villa.

Best to a clair. He could only wait. The photographer, in the photographer, in the cast of the said or Gladys, and from excited disjointed bits of company which was new subordinate member of the dramatic on the dramatic on the dramatic or property in the dramatic or property in the dramatic line, she hoped, doubtless, under a new guise, an assumed name, to hide herself was a fixed one. "There is some mystery here."

The cloud depot."

"The Central line. She purchased a ticket;" and in a few concise words the detective detective developed the fact that she had secured that the satistation. A decision undoubtedly forced by

so recently fled.

For over an hour he reflected seriously over the case. He could not get it out of his mind.

More than once he told himself that he

peculiar expression of latent triumph and vindictiveness in his face.

"What do you mean by that,?" remarked Durand.
"I mean what I say."
"The deeds for the real setate are by your hands."
"Yey."
"That settles that part of it, then. Now, then, as to the hundred thousand dollars in ready money—I get of that."
"I'n what!" exclaimed Durand, starting suspectiously, alarmed at the lawyer's seried, a brother."
"What!" exclaimed Durand, starting suspectiously, alarmed at the lawyer's triumphant, satisfied manned, "you suy."—
"Not one cent, Mr. Ralph Durand I must acknowledge you as the executor of the estate of Gldeon Vernon, but I fear you will not welcome the research of the started plotter, realizing some latent of the case.
"No."
"And why not?"
"Because," replied the lawyer, impressively, "the estate of Gldeon Vernon is a complete wreck.""
"She is gone."

peculiar expression of latent triumph and vising that he can will have been seed to have he picture taken, because she could not very well expected to have ye will not welcome the properties. The photographer was to grade the store of the content of the estate of Gldeon Vernon, but I fear you will not welcome the properties. The photographer was to grade the knob. The room beyond was untennated.

"No."
"Because," replied the lawyer, impressively, "the estate of Gldeon Vernon is a complete wreck."

"Because," replied the lawyer, impressively, "the estate of Gldeon Vernon is a complete wreck."

"She is gone."

peculiar expression of the real is have proper to her from a life of the reconstruction of the starting some latent of the results of the results of the results of the room into which Gladys Vernon had been carried.

He tapped lightly. No reply. He proper the properties of the reason in the raw in the results of the reason of

sudden a quick suggestion had come to his mind. In a flash he discerned the truth,
"Why!" he exclaimed, with a gasp of
comprehension, "I never thought of it!
Gladys Vernon has returned home—she
saw Ralph Durand's advertisement.

the conclave, who, like Le Britte, was a photographer. They had met that day, and some moments were consumed in mutually explaining how neither intended remaining for the last day's gercises. Le Britta did not feel much like talk-Le Britta did not feel much like talking, but his companion was not to be rebuffed. He was a photographer of the old school, and while he was forced takenowledge Le Britta's superior genius from the results it had manifestly attained, they never met but he forced a heated and lengthy discussion as to the merits and demerits of their respective

systems.
"Well, Le Britta," spoke the man, as

they drifted into their usual thems of discussion, "you still hold to your old idea that photography is an arts?"

"You know me too well to doubt it."

"And I continue to hold to the theory that it is a business. I hold that certain processes produce certain results; invariable conditions, and results remain constant. Give me a camera, I give you a picture. If people want fine effects of light and shade, elegant surroundings depicted, and all that, let them hire a portrait-painter. Photography is a business. Tact and talent to advertise, to catch custom, is the key-note of success.

ness. That and talent to alvertise, to catch custom, is the key-note of success. A woman wants a picture of her child. I take it. You high-toned fellows make it look like an angel—pearly complexion, sparkling eyes, unnatural pose, emotional features. What's the use of all that flummery? It makes more work, and a picture is a picture, if it shows the face is it not?"
"Yes," replied Le Britta, with a dry smile. "You might cover yourself with a suit of clothes cut out with a lutchet, but you wouldn't look well. You photog-

suit of clothes cut out with a hatchet, but you wouldn't look well. You photograph a face in a blur of hideous brown, or an ugly back-ground of antiquated screen-work. The face is there, that is true, but robbed of all attractions. I aim to have all the accessories in perfection. I believe in making the counterreit presentment a gen, a treasure. Here is what perfect light can do, here is what proper posing can effect, here is what i e right development of the negative can do. Step by step I try not to rob the picture of naturalness, but to enhance its naturality, to tone down harsh lines, to naturality, to tone down harsh lines, to soften and illuminate. What is the result? We educate people up to a higher appreciation of the service, we cultivate the uncultured, we burish betchwork, and make of the family photograph album as gallery that vies with steel-plate range in fineness, nicety of execu-tion, and gloss of finish. I tell you, my friend, that not one detail, from the merest shade on the hair to the printing on the back of the picture, should be

on the back of the picture, should be neglected."

"All right," was the quick reply.

"You please people, you educate them—what for? To make them demand more, the more they get. You produce fine pictures, they expect fiper ones. You give them too much for their money. Why, Le Brittal a photographer of the class you represent has to think, study, work—be an artist and business man in one. It don't pay"—

"It does pay!" interrupted Le Britts, pointedly. "There is a compensation in it all. We give the public better work at less money than in the past; for what reason? Because invention has aided us in the mission. We are not only working for our patrons, but for ourselves. Every step we advance, we learn. Every experiment we succeed in is for our benefit, and that of the world as well. It is all well enough to make money, but how much greater to soore a victory as an inventor, an improver, to give to the world some new process, some original discovery that beautifies or instructs? Look at the new photographic colors, the latest processes, the advancement in manipulating emulsions, the new ways of developing negatives, the benefit of sensitive printing paper! Why! I myself am experimenting on a new gelatine printing paper that will practically am experimenting on a new gelatine printing paper that will practically revolutionze the art in that line. You stick to the albumen paper, I suppose? Why? Because you blindly persist in shutting your eyes to newer modes. You are ten years behind the times. Some day, a bright, energetic new-process man will come to your town, open a rival establishment, and you will have to learn what I am forgetting, or abandon the business."

learn what I am forgetting, or abandon
the business."

"I begin to think I am a bit stubborn,"
he admitted, finally: "but how do you
keep posted on all these new wrinkles?"

"By studying all current literature on
the subject, by keeping in correspondence
with the lights of the profession, by
emulating and excelling the leaders in
the photographic art; most of all, by
being in touch and harmony with the
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