"I knew the murdered man," she con d. "Indeed he was somewhat of a ve: I was much shocked." mail that morning informed him the contingency had arisen. His impulse was immediately to pre-for his departure. His second that was, if he went the coroner "Very naturally."
"Who committed the murder?"

not have him for a witness, and atter of public duty he ought to

"Who committed the murder?"

"Oh, that is wrapped in mystery. The authorities are at a complete standstill; they have not a single clewof any value."

"But you saw the man, according to the newspaper account."

"Yes, at a distance. Indeed, I saw him closely, but did not then observe him

Then is thought that while the client as a minuble one, nevertheless the attention to be performed were of the simplest character—the superintending of the signing of papers and contracts already drawn—so be called in a neighboring young lawyer to whom he often tendered business, and who consented to full consciousness of his existence by seeing him seize the man he met by the arm, and then striking him down; the Had Holbrook gone this story would been have been written.

During the morning Holbrook received note from a lady in whose good graces wished to stand high, asking him to lil grown between the set of the straight of the st

I heard the cry from a third."

"Was the third man connected with the attack? I saw he was arrested."

"I think not. He gave a clear account of himself, and his statements have been wrifted by the police; he was released this morning."

A shade of vexation passed over the face of his charming companion, and Holbrook's atonishment was further increased by the face.

"Were not the authorities foolish in letting him go?" she asked, after a brief month of the payed toward a dozen or more of the young gentlemen with whom he was in rivalry.

the murderer."
"Impossible," said Holbrook. "I saw
the man strike his victim and then run
into the park, and saw the other twenty

planed toward a dozen or more of the young gentleman with whom he was in really.

Her name was Flora Ashgrove, and the was spoken of in the clube as "The handsome Flora."

Rumor did not credit any man with laving the favor of the fair lady. Her coquaintances of her own sex said the angled for suitors and failed despite her beauty. Twenty men knawshe had be the darty. The darty men secont to the purnt and a seat upon the most distinguished coach in the purnder at them most distinguished coach in the purnder at them persistently: consequently fairs her booth turned in twice the money any other did.

These were hard nuts for her dear fomile friends to crack, but they hammered at them persistently: consequently and the most of others he could now wars a self contained young man, whose good opinion of himself was mily equaled by his good looks, and upon that core he was well content. While not of a very ardent nature, still he admitted to himself the darty had been the thinkelf that if the diver blora had not more pleasure in his attentions hum in those of others he could quite shall full in love with her; but until the did he proposed to keep himself, a some others he could rame had done. The note of others he could quite shall not on the proposed to keep himself, as one others he could fair the diverse he was made a follow himself. Were you not imagine you saw a man running away?"

The note had driven from his mind all recollection of the button and his visit to the corner, and, disposing of his buries as well of the mind and the corner, and, disposing of his buries as well with the corner, and, disposing of his buries and the proposed to keep himself, the shall be not or the button and

when ushered into the richly furnished parlors he was made aware that it was the summer season. The furniture was covered, and so were the ornaments, statusry and most of the picture.

Then he remembered he had wondered how it was that Miss Ashgrove was in the city at that time of the year.

But one picture was exposed, and from

The lady shot an angry glance at him.
"It is you who forget now. I told you that Mr. Templeton was a friend and a relative, though a remote one. Why should I not feel an interest in his mur-But one picture was exposed, and from that the cover had been thrown back over the easel upon which it reste. This was the portrait of the lady herself.

He fell to a study of it, waiting the coming of the lady who had summoned him to her presence.

He thought it would be a fine thing to have so handsome a head at his table. Other lovers would probably have given rein to other thoughts but Holbrook was one of those young men who get on in the world, less given to entimental considerations than to those of a practical nature.

While thus engaged the original of the picture entered the room introduced him to her presence.

While thus engaged the original of the picture entered the room introduced him to be present. This was the portrait of the lady herself. It is there anything surprising in my desire for justice and vengeance? I can tell you I have little fath in your police. He is an unusual stupid criminal who cannot escape your detectives. Still, I may be entirely mistaken. You may have been fully conscious that you saw three men, not dimly."

The sneer conveyed in these words was unmistable. Before Holbrook could recover himself from this indignant rush of words, she spoke again in strangely altered tones:

"After all, I suppose you are right, and I am silly to set up my judgment sgainst those who were present."

Holbrook noticed that she was making a violent effort to compose herself, and he gave her time by not replying; when

She stopped for a moment, placing a shapely white hand upon the back of a chair, steadying herself. Her footfall had been so light upon the soft carred that she had not attracted the attention of her visitor. She observed him intensity for a moment.

As she stood there a gracious picture in the half light, it could be seen that her eyes were gray, luminous and large, but cold, even hard, and greatly at variance with the full and sensuous lips and the voluptuous curves of her face and the folds of her neck,

Finally she moved up and said:

a violent effort to compose herself, and le gave her time by not replying; when she spoke again, it was with an obvious titempt to speak lightly.

"See what sympathetic creatures we of the weaker sex are; here am I working myself into quite a fever over poor Templeton's death, even disputing with you as to what you did or did not see. But the man who ran away? Was he a tail man?"

"Yes, I think he was."

Alarm quickly passed over her face, but not so quickly that Holbrook, whose but not so quickly that Holbrook, whose senses were now all alive, did not ob-

Alarm quickly passed over her face, but not so quickly that Holbrook, whose senses were now all alive, did not ob-Finally she moved up and said:
"I hope you admire the art of my old rofessor, Mr. Holbrook?"
"And : "And :

"And slight in figure?"

"Whether the flying man was slight or not Holbreak did not remamber, but he quickly recovering his self possession epiled:

"I was less engaged with the art of the picture than with the beauty of the middle."

"Decidedly slight and tall."

She had greater command over features and manner now, but ver voice betrayed intense interest as she said:

"Yes, I suppose so, since he ran so fast as to get away before any one could seize him. He must have been a young man?"

She looked at him most inquiringly.

"And slight in figure?"

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"Holbrook must have been a young man?"

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"Holbrook must have been a young man?"

She looked at him most inquiringly.

"The artist had inspiration in his subject worthy of his greatest skill."

"A truce to compliments." laughed the lady, "but sit here, where we may have light and air," leading the way into a rear apartment. "Indeed, this is the only habitable spot on this floor."

"I supposed until I received your note you were still in the country," he remarked as he seated himself in an easy thair.

"We returned yesterday on some tire-aome business my uncle insisted upon. You see," waving her hand over the room, "we are not living, merely existing for a few days."

"I was delighted to hear from you." as the sake of saying something that would lead to the reason of his summons.

His effort was successful, but some high expectations were tumbled and he was filled with astonishment when he heard her unfold it.

There was a silence by ween them for a little time—Flora eeply absorbed in thought, and he was sessed of an idea. He trembled at its udacity. But he was a man of nerve.

He drew his purse from his pocket, and took from it the diamond button.

"See," he said almptly, "I found something valuable at the place of murder."

CHAPTER V.

THE YOUNG LAWYER IS MYSTIFIED AND

There was no mistaking now. face flushed red and then grew ghastly pale, while alarm was plainly visible. "It is a cuff button."

She stretched forth a trembling hand The moment she possessed it she

plexed.

He read recognition, relief, surprise because the lady and satisfaction strangely blended.

"Have you its mate?" she asked.

"No, I found but this one."

"At the place of murder. Afterward."
"Does it belong to the murderer?" "That is for the police to find out. I

shall turn it over to the authorities."

She handed it back to him and said:
"I have seen"—
The door opened and her uncle, Mr.
Witherspoon, entered.

CHAPTER VI. A BIT OF RETROSPECTION IFE is rapid

New York. Events of yester-day are ancient the tragedy of Union square was forgotten. The coroner had held The strictest in quiry had failed to discover a mo-tive for the deed. Mr. Templeton's

life was an open one and rather commonplace in the exactness and regularity. He attendcircles. He took his pleasures soberly in his hours of relaxation. He had no vices and no entangling alliances.

Neither the clothes cast off by the murderer in his flight, nor the diamond button found by Holbrook, nor the knife left in the body of the dead man,

had proved to be clews of value to the The verdict of the coroner's jury had stabbed with a knife, in the hands of a person unknown."

The police adopted the theory that the man had been struck in mistake, and that another victim had been intended.

Why? That was a secret they guarded, and they worked on that line. A large reward for the detection of the criminal was offered by the authorities. And the affair faded from the newspapers.

The funeral had been a quiet one.

There were but two mourners present— an elderly lady and a younger one closely veiled, both evincing great grief. There were but few attendants from curiosity. Neither Mr. Witherspoon nor Flora Ashgrove were present. Holbrook, who was, noted this fact, and contrasted her intense interest in the murdered man the day after the

murder, with her absence from the fu-

A few of Templeton's business ac-quaintances, and the friends with whom he spent the last hours of his life made up the rest. Apparently the tragedy was of one act, and the drop curtain was down. Holbrook's law office was on the sev onth story of one of those tall buildings which in recent years have become a conspicuous feature of lower New York. His private office was a corner room, and from the window his eye could roam over the roofs of adjacent buildings, across the Hudson river and beyond the

houses on the Jersey shore to the green hills back of them. One afternoon, two weeks after the murder, he was resting himself from his labors and enjoying the extensive view spread out before him.

In fact, he was reviewing that strange

after the murder. ous wrong, and, as well, placing your self in a false position. You forget that I saw the man run away after the blow, throwing off his coat as he ran. Subsequently the coat and other articles used for this disguise were found."

Flora tossed her head incredulously. Holbrook continued:

"The bitterness you manifest surprises me."

atter the murder.

Her manner, her emotion, her eagerness, first anger, all dwelt vividly in his mind, but his perplexity was as great as on the day he left her presence.

What connection, if any, had she with the murder? What did she know, if anything? What relation had existed between herself and the dead man? Why was a particularly the anything? What relation had existed between herself and the dead man? Why did she want to know so particularly the appearance of the murderer? What was at the bottom of the intense anxiety she displayed? And for whom was this anxiety displayed? She was tall and slim, or would be if dressed in men's clothes could it possibly have been herself? Was she the kind of a woman whom jealousy

would impel to such a crime? These were the questions he had asked himself again and again, and never had found satisfactory answers to them. They haunted him like a nightmare, and at every leisure moment returned to vex him, until he plunged deeply into work to escape them.

Of this, however, he was conscious— his feelings toward Flora had undergone a great change. As beautiful as she un-deniably was, he preferred that she should be some one else's wife. In her interview with him she had uncovered a isposition he did not like, and the tormenting questions that would come un-oidden had finally bred in him a fear of her and he had taken alarm. As he was thus musing, a clerk in-formed him that two ladies desired to see

"What are their names?" he asked. "They would not give them; they said they would convey no information. They are dressed in deep mourning-on young, one old."
"Show them in."

[To be continued]

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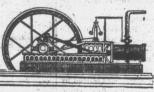
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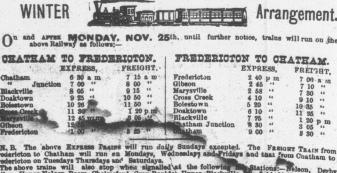
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