self. It was the worst kind of madness

convict-with not even the ro-

A convict—with not even the ro-mantic interest of a great conviction. A mean larcenist, for all the polish of his address, and the gay humour of those honest eyes of his. Her brother would go to the coast in search of the River of Stars. Pos-sibly he might find it: she was suffi-ciently blessed with the goods of this world not to care whether he did or not. She would like her father's judgment vindicated, but here again she had no fervency of desire to that end. end.

end. Her father had been a vague shadow of a man, with little or no concern with his family. His chil-dren, during the rare periods he stayed in the same house with them, had been "noises" to be incontinently "stopped."

All her love had been lavished on All her love had been lavished on her brother, her struggles, in the days before the happy legacy had placed her beyond the need for struggling, had been for his comfort and ease. She had been willingly blind to his follies, yet had been fran-tic in her efforts to check those follies from degenerating into vices . . . She remembered she had been on the verge of tears the first time she met Amber, and almost smiled at the re-Amber, and almost smiled at the recollection.

Francis would go out, and would come back again alive: she had no doubt about this: the tiny ache in her heart had an origin foreign to the question of her brother's safety. All this passed through her mind,

as she stood by the table pretending to listen to a conversation which had

as she should by the table pretending to listen to a conversation which had become general. She became alert when Lambaire returned to a forbidden subject. "I don't know why he has inter-fered," he was saying, answering a question Sutton had addressed to him; "that night he came into the Whistlers—" A warning caught from Whitey brought atm on to an-other tack. "Well, well," he said benevolently, "it is not for us to judge the poor fellow, one doesn't know what temptations assail a man: he probably saw an opportunity for mak-ing easy money," another cough from Whitey, and he pulled out his watch. "I must be getting along," he said, "I have to met a man at Paddington: would you care to come? I have one or two other matters to talk over with you." with you." Sutton accepted the invitation with

alacrity.

What impelled Cynthia Sutton to take the step she did it is difficult to say. It may have been the merest piece of feminine curiosity, a mis-chievous desire to hinder the free ex-change of ideas; the chances are that another explanation might be found, for as Sutton left the room to change his coat she turned to Lambaire and asked—

his coat she turned to Lambaire and asked— "What is Mr. Amber's history?" Lambaire smiled and glanced signi-ficantly at Whitey. "Not a very nice one, eh, Whitey?" Whitey shook his head. "I am a little interested," she said; "should I be a bother to you if I walked with you to Paddington—it is a beautiful afternoon." "Madam," said the gratified Lam-baire, "I shall be overjoyed. I feel that if I can only gain your confidence —I was saying this morning, wasn': I, Whitey?" "You were," said the other instant.

"You were," said the other instant-

ly. "I was saying, 'Now if I could only get Miss Cynthia......"" "Miss Sutton," said Cynthia. "I box your pardon, Miss Sutton, to

"Miss Sutton," said Cynthia. "I beg your pardon, Miss Sutton, to see my point of view . . ." "I won't promise that," she said with a smile, as her brother re-turned. He was inclined to be approved

He was inclined to be annoyed when she walked ahead with his pat-ron, but his annoyance was certainly not shared by Lambaire, who trod on air.

". Yes, I'm afraid Amber is a bad egg—a wrong 'un, ye know. He's not Big." Her heart sank as she recognized the echo of her own thoughts. It was absurd that the mediocrity of Amber's criminal attainments should fill her

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