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opened her eyes and looked up at him, the fear which was their first waking expression changing to one of intense re-

the fear which was their first waking expression changing to one of intense relief, and with a little moan she turned her face closer to him.

"You will soon be better, my sweet," he said softly. "Lie still and rest now, don't try to talk."

"I told you he would do it," she whispered, her hand feeling for his hand, the fear coming back to her eyes. "He never forgets—he never forgives."

"You mean—" Hugh began, but her low hurried whisper continued, almost as if she had not heard him.

"Hermann meant me to be killed—I knew it—when I saw Michael by the gate."

"Michael?" Hugh put in, and the hurried voice went on:

"Yes, Michael, he—was Hermann's servant—he helped—in all the work. I—was at—the gate—and I saw him in the lane—watching me. His eyes were so cruel—oh! I was afraid." Her voice died away breathlessly, and Hugh held a restorative to her lips, and implored her to rest now, to say no more—to wait to tell him the remainder until she was better.

"I—want to tell you now," she inwas better.

was better.

"I—want to tell you now," she insisted weakly. "I want you to know. When I saw Michael's cruel face, when I saw how he smiled at me, I knew he had come to hurt me. I tried to turn and run up the garden,—I—screamed out to you, though I knew you were not there, and he laughed—Michael laughed—a mocking laugh—and sprang at me—and—I saw him lift something bright and shining—and he struck at me—and I can't remember any more. It was all dark and cold—so cold—and so dark," a shiver ran through her, as she uttered the last words almost inaudibly, and then her limbs relaxed, and she relapsed once more into complete unconsciousness.

then her limbs relaxed, and she relapsed once more into complete unconsciousness. Many days went by before she was again able to give any coherent account of what had taken place. She talked continually, but the talk was the wild wandering of delirium, and she babbled on and on of episodes in her past life, of her work with Muller—of places and people she had known, but oftenest of Hugh, her husband: although she did not know him, and would look at him as know him, and would look at him as if he were a total stranger, his touch and voice never failed to soothe her even at her worst, and she was never so quiet and at rest, as when he sat beside her bed, her hand held closely in his. The search for the miscreant who his. The search for the miscreant who had so, nearly taken her life was unavailing. Michael had vanished with a cleverness worthy of a better cause; and moreover, the house in Graham Street where Hermann and his confederates had where Hermann and his confederates had been wont to meet, was, when raided by the police, found to be empty. The furniture, such as it was, still stood in the rooms, but the rooms themselves were tenantless. The occupants had flown, leaving no trace behind them.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

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"THE irony of fate!" Those words leapt unbidden to Giles Tredman's lips, when on a morning in the following May he read the following brief notice in the newspaper:

"A tragic accident occurred yesterday on the high road between Aix les Bains and Chambery. Prince Damansky was driving his own motor at a high rate of speed, when, for some unexplained reason, the wheel skidded, the car rushed into a tree by the roadside, and the occupants were flung out into a field. The Prince was fatally injured, and no hope is entertained of his recovery. His wife, who was with him, received only slight injuries; their servant was killed on

who was with him, received only slight injuries; their servant was killed on the spot."

Tredman laid the paper down, and his eyes looked out across the compound. All the familiar surroundings of his Indian bungalow faded from his view; here longer head the shottering with dian bungalow faded from his view; he no longer heard the chattering voices of his servants in the back regions, nor noticed the harsh notes of a bird which a few minutes earlier had grated intolerably on his ears. Before his mental vision rose a long white road, with meadows on either hand, and beyond the meadows blue mountains against a meadows on either hand, and beyond the meadows blue mountains against a bluer sky. And along the highway, white with dust, a great black motor whirled into sight, bringing with it death and destruction. How plainly he could see it all again. The sinister





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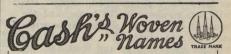
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