"My dear child," said the judge may be." with emotion. "So' next morning we started for the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington station. We were in good time, and were just comfortably seated in one of the best cars when Lord Vincent caught sight of someone on the platform. And with a muttered curse he started up and hurried from the car, throwing behurried from the car, throwing behind to me the hasty words, 'I'll be back soon.' Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, and he did not come.
And while I was still anxiously waiting for him the train started. It was the express, and came all the way through. And that is why myself and attendants are here alone. "All this seems very strange, Claudia," said the judge with a troubled

'Yes, very. 'What do you make of it? Of course you, knowing more of the circumstances, are better able to judge than I am."
"Papa, I do not know."

countenance.

Who was it that he caught sight of on the platform?" "A tall, handsome, imperious look ing woman between thirty and forty years of age, I should say; a sort of Cleopatra, very dark, very richly dressed. She was looking at him in-

tently when he caught sight of her, and rushed out, as I have said.' 'And you can make nothing of it?' "Nothing. I do not know whether he missed the train by design or ac-cident; or whether he is at this moment on board the cars steaming to Washington or aboard one of the ocean packets steaming to Liver-

"A bad, bad business, C laudia: all this grieves me very much. You have been but two months married, and you return to me alone and your husband is among the missing; a bad business, Claudia," said the judge,

very gravely. 'Not as bad as your words would seem to imply, papa. At least, I I am inclined to think that the detention was accidental; and that Lord Vincent will arrive by

"But how coolly and dispassionately you speak of an uncertainty that would drive any other woman almost mad. At this moment you do not know whether you are abandoned or not, and to be candid with you, you do not seem to care," said

the judge, austerely. erty for-this rank. I mean-is safe And so whether he goes or stays I am Lady Vincent; and nothing but death can prevent my becoming Countess of Hurstmonceux and a peeress of England," said Claudia, defiantly, as she arose and drew her shawl around her shoulders and looked about herself.

"What is it that you want, my dear?" enquired the judge. 'Nothing; I was taking a view of the old familiar objects. How much has happened since I saw them last. It seems to me as if many years had passed since that time. Well, papa, I suppose Ruth has unpacked and put away my clothes by this

time, so Iwill leave you for the pres-And with a weary, listless air she left the room and turned to go upyou the rooms on this floor have been prepared by you, said the judge, who followed her to the door. With a sigh Claudia turned and crossed the hall and entered the

parlor chamber, as the large bed-

room adjoining the morning room was called. Ruth was hanging the last of the dresses in the wardrobe, and Jim was shouldering the last of the Imperial Bank empty trunks to take it away. " all "I have left out the silver grey grace, for you to wear this evening, if you please, my lady," said Ruth,

ndicating the dress that lay upon That will do, Ruth," answered Capital Authorized ... \$5,000,000 wounded, bleeding, and almost dying on that very bed. CHAPTER IX.

HOLIDAY. Ha, like a kind hand on my brow Comes this fresh breeze, Cooling its dull and feverish glow, While through my being seems to The breath of a new life-the heal

ing of the seas. Good-by to pain and care. I take Mine ease today; Here where these sunny waters break

And ripples this keen breeze, I shake All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away. With every nerve, vein and artery throbbing with excitement Ishmael

hurried away from the house that The solitary walk through the hick woods calmed his emotions behe reached Woodside. He found a tidy room, a tempting

"That's my boy," exclaimed Reu-n, coming forward and grasping hand; "I telled Hannah to keep the tea back a spell, 'cause I knowed you wouldn't disappoint us."
"As if I ever thought you would Ishmael. Reuben is always prophe sying things that can't fail to come true, like the rising of the sun in the east every day, and so forth. And he expects to get credit for his

foresight," said Hannah, taking her seat before the steaming teapot and calling upon the others to sit down. "Well, that was eayther a surprise as met you and the judge, when you comed home from church, wasn't it?' enquired Reuben, as he began to cut slices from the cold ham. "You knew of the arrival, then?"

"Why, bless you, yes. Why, laws, you know the carriage passed right by here, and stopped to water the horses before going on to Tangle-wood. But, look here. There was nobody in it but Mrs. Vincent—blame my head—I mean Mrs. Lord Vincent and her city maid.'

excesses excesses times will I have to tell you that?" said Hannah, impatiently "All right, Hannah my dear. I'll member next time. Ishmael, my poy. I think you got all your inerlects from Hannah. You sartain-y didn't get 'em from me. Well, as was a-saying of, there was no one inside except Mrs. Lord—I mean Mrs. Lady Vincent and her city waiting maid. And on the outside, a-sitting along of the driver, was a gentleman as Jim as happened to be here interduced to me as Mr. Frisbie, Lord .........

Vincent's vallysham, whatever that "Body servant," said his moni-

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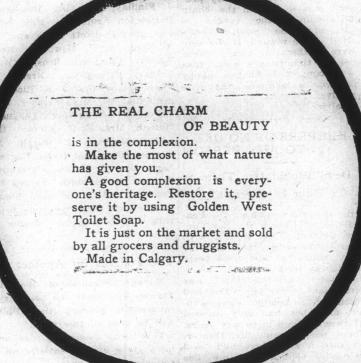
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