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Lord Somerton's Ally. CHAPTER XII.

They left the church, laughing and talking, and he heard the jingle of the Sir John Sterne and a man who was keys. Then Ernscliffe and Miss Sterne advanced toward him, and he tried to compliment the baronet's daughter upon her playing. He walked with hastily penned a letter to Lord George them a little way, and remarked at Somerton length:

"Are you leaving Blairwood, to light, Mr. Ernscliffe?" "I desired to do so, but fear that

mannot catch

Colin was quick to notice the rector's perturbed manner.

lance, "can you spare me half-an-hourto-morrow afternoon at the Park? I have a little matter of business to discuss with you."

on's town house, whither he had re turned that day. She did so with a flush of pleasure, conscious that she was doing something for the annuity my lord had promised her upon his marriage with Miss Sterne. Lady Helena ,with all her middle aged "gush" and outward simplicity, had a keen eye to the main chance. She knew that her business as chaperon was practically drawing to a close, and she had no liking for the position

"Yes," replied Elsie, brightly. "Try and come to Lady Helena's five o'clock tea. I am sure that we shall be delighted." "I will come, but what I have to say is for your ears alone," was the grave

reply Colin turned away. He knew that the rector's "business" referred to

himself. Mr. Vallance looked after them when they had exchanged good-evening with him and were walking down of a mere housekeeper.

She went downstairs, and sent the the hill. letter to the post by a special messer "A handsome couple!" he murmured. "but I must know more of this ger, and it was a great relief, halfan-hour later, to hear that the rector artist. I must learn if Sir John knows anything of him, and how long this

intimacy has been rinening into love. "What can bring him here at this Can it be possible that Sir John overhour?" she thought, with a little thrill looked this one item? No-no! And it of pleasure. "He has heard of Elsie's would appear that Miss Sterne had abominable conduct."

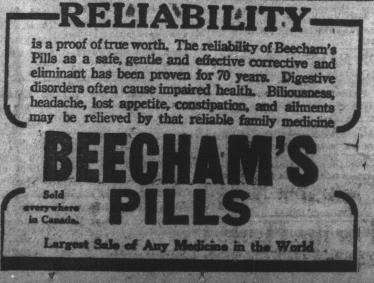
been guilty of a little deceit. I can Mr. Vallance met her gravely. He hardly believe it of her, but must had been unable to rest, after what he credit what has passed before my own had seen in church. He felt that he eyes! I will try and learn all to-mor- was neglecting a serious duty by derow, and upon that must base my fulaying until the next day. ture conduct toward Miss Sterne. The

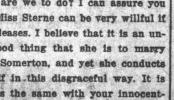
charge I have undertaken is a serious one, and God help me to act upright-11v." ena elsewhere.

CHAPTER XIII.

Lady Helena was both surprised and him effusively. mortified that Miss Sterne should con-

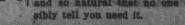
fess to having walked to the church Lady Helena," he said. "I promised with a comparative stranger, and re- Miss Sterne that I would see her toturn hame in the gathering twilight, morrow, but upon consideration I





Miss Sterne." groomed effect to your hair-that The rector went away a little later,

final touch to good dress both in busi and looked into the west drawingness and on social occasions. room as he passed the door. He disdoes not show on the hair bec tinctly saw that Mr. Ernscliffe was is absorbed by the scalp, therefore holding one of Elsie's hands, and that your hair remains so soft and pliable she was looking up at him with a and so natural that no one can pos-



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