

One of the men he had displaced,

CHAPTER IV.

the man on the right, gave a kind of chair. He was an evil-looking felboard. Talbot Denby scarcely glanc-

There were many such piles in front simply appalling. of the players: it was astonishing

For a time Talbot Denby' luck ed to choke him, the two men were

becoming white and strained, and that the black eyes were glowing like points of fire under the half-lowered

wung backwards from good to bad; swiftly locked in a fierce embrace and swaying to and fro, overthrew the table. There were no shouts; indeed,

"Shentlemen, shentlemen!" he hiss-

ing at his throat and glaring at the

a cur baulked of a bone.

In springing back, the soft felt hat which had partly concealed Talbot

blood-shot eyes with haughty indiference, and turned away contempt-

He stood for a few minutes leaning against the wall, his arms folded, his eyes downcast. The table had been

Talbot Denby waved his apologies aside and left the place. As he emerged into the cool air of the June morning, he drew a long breath through his closed teeth and shrugged

"The cursed luck!" he muttered. "I shall have to go to the Court after

It was characteristic of him that he had forgotten the thief, the struggle cian, the heir to the Earldom of Lynborough, was a born gambler of the worst and most vicious type.

CHAPTER V. "Are there any more letters?" ask-

She was seated at the bureau in the

window of the library, the earl lying back in his big chair beside the fire. Veronica managed his correspondence as well as ran the vast place and it was her custom to come to him

"Thanks: there is nothing else. think," he replied. "Ah, yes, there is this note from Talbot! He is coming lown to-morrow—that is, if you care

answer his letters for him.

"Why not?" she said. "It is a long while since Mr. Denby has been here.' It was noticeable that she called him 'Mr. Denby" instead of "Talbot." Though she was a niece of Lord Lynborough's and Talbot Denby's cousin her pride never allowed her to forget that she was a dependent, living on the caprice of the great earl and lia-

Isaacs rushed towards them, wav- two saying that Lord Lynborough ing and wringing his fat, dirty hands. would be glad to see his nephew

"If you are sure that is all, I think

"If you are walking, you might go down to Burchett's and tell him that he may engage that young fellow. It

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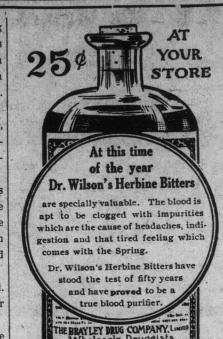
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rcumstances, I should have sent the fellow packing; but you appeared to the place of whom you do not know anything, good or bad. I hope your protege will turn out well."

A faint color rose to Veronica's face. "He is scarcely a protege of mine, Lord Lynborough," she said. "He. behaved very well the other day and risked his life to save a dog, and

"My dear Veronica," he retorted, with his cynical smile, "that kind of courage is of the commonest, and is

"He did not look like a scoundrel,"

"Nine out of ten don't," retorted the earl. "Tell Burchett the man may stay until he detects him stealing the game or planning a burglary up at

Veronica laughed softly at this characteristic speech, and soon afterwards left the house. As she had bot, though he sat a nark back with grace and ease, was not a sportsman:

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