

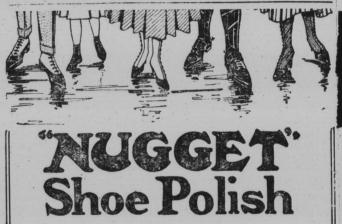
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CHAPTER XXV. Lord Barminster conducted Mr. Harker to the Octagon room, so-nam-ef from its peculiar stape. "If you will wait here," he said courteously, "I will have some re-freshment sent up to you and the ladies, when they arrive." "Thank you, my lord," returned Mr. Harker gratefully.-Seating himself, he waitel patient ly for the arrival of Miss Lester and Jessica, secretly congratulating him self on the success of his interview. The time passed quickly; and, while waiting, Lord Barminster and Morti-mer Shelton hell a hurried consulta-tion with him as to the best method of exposing Vermont. Long before they had finished. Miss Lester and her-niece had arrived, the former flushed with excitement and triumph at the prospect of at last, as she expressed it, "getting her own back," with Jas-per.-Lord Barminster and Shelton demer Shelton held a hurried consulta-tion with him as to the best method of they had finished, Miss Lester and her niece had arrived, the former flushed with excitement and triumph at the prospect of at last, as she expressed it, "getting her own back," with Jas-per. Lord Barminster and Shelton de-scended to the terrace, where they found Lady Constance; and almost immediately after, came Adrien, with his inevitable companion, Jasper Ver-mont. Lord Barminster had already ar ranged for his three visitors to be in the morning-room, which opened on to the terrace, as hey would there be within call, and, also within earshot. "A word with you, Mr. Vermont," began Shelton sternly.



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melton grasped his

"One minute," he said, "before you

"One minute," he said, "before you sneak away." "Keep your hands off me, you monied fool," tried Vermont, wrench-ing himself free from the other's grasp. "I know nothing about this City business, you must apply to Harker himself. It is your name that is forged, not mine—though I suppose you want to screen the real criminal and fix on me as a scape-goat."

criminal and ne on the order of the second o conduct. I ask you to give me the reason." There was a dead silence as the gentle words were spoken. Jasper raised his eyes to the pale face of the man he had so basely betrayed, and bit his bloodless lips in dogged silence. At this moment a commotion was heard at the lower end of the terrace. Some of the servants were trying to prevent the approach of a man, who was striving to get hearer to the lit-tle group. But he was too strong for them; with a bound he had freed himself from their restraining arms, and sprang forward, as if about to strike at Adrien. But Shelton thrust himself forward and bore him back. "Who is this? Are we to have all the scum of the earth in here? Do you know this man, Leroy?" he asked hotly. "Yes, I do," answered his friend in the low, restraining tones so habitual o him. "Yes, T should just think you do!" exclaimed the man, struggling to push past Mortimer's outstretched arm. "It isn't likely as you'll forget Johann Wilfer. Adrien Leroy, nor me you either."

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Wilfer, Adrien Leroy, nor me you either." "This is too much!" cried Shelton, now thoroughly enraged at this fresh interruption, and again he made as if to thrust the man away. "Stop," said Adrien, glancing al-most sadly at Constance, who smiled lovingly back. "Let him speak, since he is here. Come, sir, why have you forced your way in like this? What do you want of me?" (To be continued).

There will no doubt be a good de-mand for rhubarb this Spring, after the Winter's shortage of fruit; it should pay to force a portion of the stalk by setting an old nail keg or crete over the roots. crate over the roots.

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