INCONSTANCECONSTANCE

(Continued from page 3)

Who was the man that bet on the florse and hedged afterward?" He inusched the question as if it were a physical

"Who was it," he went on, "at the stable at 12 last night with all of us and who never came in until 4 this orning-climbing in by the window, that no one should know he'd been

ere was a pause, during which the en looked at one another and wonlered who was to be denounced and shether Sedden's ill luck or the whisky he had drunk had turned his brain. "Would you like to know the man who did it?" he succeed.

"Ob, do shut up," began Stanford. out his voice was drowned. The ramatic forefinger was pointed at lorton Brinton.

There he sits!" Briaton calmly examined his finger

"This is all rot. Sedden!" cried Stan-lers. "We're all sold now that Wing-lest didn't win, but it's crazy to sup-see he's been poisoned."
"Grange says it."
"Grange be dashed! He isn't a vet."

"He's nearly as good, though," inter-posed another man, who was reputed to know something about horsedesh. "If he says it, it's likely to be true, and thing must be gone into between But we needn't drag in personali-"he added, with a glance at Brin-who still continued to look bored, edden was less delicate in his refer-

"Ask him!" he cried. "Did you er did you not bedge, Brinton?" Brinton pulled his mustache. "I hedged."

"Se that you stood to win if Wing-

"So that I stood to win if Wingfoot

"You hear, Stanford? And did you or did you not stay out last night until 4 of the morning?

"I stayed out." "And climbed in by the window, for Grange tells me he saw you," concluded Sedden triumphantly. "And, now, what were you doing out all that time? speak up. We'll all listen to you."

What the dickens were you up to, Brinton?" one of the men asked. "Ob, just answer, for form's sake. Brinton," said Stanford in a friendly

"Go on, Brinton!" cried Stanford. Tell us what you were doing! This m awful, man! Can't you see?"

"He can't tell you because he was ctoring Wingfoot," said Sedden pas-

Brinton looked up, arose, walked to-"You err," he said. "I could tell, but

Miss Winthrop broke in on Mrs. Sed-

I am not going to."

"Mary!" she cried. "Oh, Mary! Such ameful news! Wingfoot did not run air! He was poisoned last night be-ween 12 and 4! And who do you think did it-hedged his bets and crept in by ture for the sake of some miserable

money? Ob, Mary"-"Wingfoot poisoned? Poisoned? Who

"The man you said was not so bad!

early in the morning. Poor Wingfoot! That strong, beautiful creature, Mary,

"Did he say he had done it?" Mrs. Sed-



TEARD WHAT THEY WERE SAYING. "No; he hadn't the honesty. But he wouldn't say what he had been doing. which was tantamount to confessing Every one will cut him now. I'm gladbeast that he is!"

Miss Winthrop in her indignation was pacing the room. Mrs. Sedden put out her hand to stop her.

Connie, don't! Between 12 and 4 Mr. Brinton was with me. Miss Winthrop stood, one speechless

"lames came in at 12." Mrs. Sedden and all and I will tell everyone their said. "He was drank—oh, quite drank. I was asleep, and he woke me. He assumed me of—of taking too much with young Stanford, of—of firting, of—of I don't know what. He struck me. Then he turned me out of my room and chased and down the steps and out of the house, lost as I was. Mr. Brinton had been smoking in the veranda. He caught up with me as I ran and saw that I got safe up to Mrs. Martin, of the lodge. I was II of the Moder House, 680 Commer all night, and he forward things from the "James came in at 12." Mrs. Sedden all night, and he found things from the cial street, rooms 1 and 2.

Name drug store. Mrs. Martin-I should consulation free at Asto

Consulation free at Asto

un? Gear one alrs. meetic, of whom I been made such ton. And then, when I was better, he came back and climbed into the house by a window and opened the door to me so that no one should know. He promised he would not tell. So did Mrs. Martin. If James heard, I think he would

When after a long silence Mrs. Sedden locked up. Miss Winthrop was gone.

For a moment she steed in the passage outside the door, her heart throbbing.

Presently she stole down the stairs, pausing halfway to peep into the hall. The outside preparing to go. His traveling bags stood beside him. Miss Winthrop thought there was a grim look about his

"Mr. Brinton," she called.

He looked up and saw her leaning over the balustrade, and the blood rushed into his face. Deliberately putting down his coat and the hat which he was brushing, he came and stood beneath her.

"I heard what they were saying in the dining room," she remarked.

He hesitated.

"I—I dare say you are glad at this confirmation of your—er—good opinion of

"Where were you last night?" she asked

That was precisely what Sedden wanted to know."
"I promise you I will never tell any

"Oh, a lady's promise"—
"Oh, a lady's promise"—
"Mine," Miss Winthrop replied, betrayed into asperity, "is sacred! But—but won't you tell me? It might make a—a

He continued to smile, but she noticed a still more grim look about his jaws. "I regret," he said, with what seemed to her calm insolence, "that even that supreme inducement cannot unseal my on that point."
was Miss Winthrop's turn to hest-

tate.
"Two just been talking to Mrs. Sedshe said desperately. looked at him with eyes so shy and

tender that an answering spark came into his, and he made a quick movement to-ward her.

ward her.

"Listen, Miss Winthrop." he said engerly. "Wingfoot has not been poisoned. I
saw him run today. No one can fool me
much about horses. He has a cold. It
has been coming on for several days. I
saw it and warned them. They didn't
think so. They laughed at me. I tried
to warn Sedden, but yesterday he angered
me by saying something about—about me by saying semething about-about some one I know. I made up my mind to have done with him. He is-he is really have done with him. He is—he is really rather common, don't you think, in some ways? And I told the other men, but they wouldn't listen, and, then, I'm not very popular, you know. They—they think because I so often win, I suppose, that—that I try to keep myself on the outside, but it isn't that I really do. They never hedge bets, you know, and I do. I'm very extravagant sometimes, and sometimes I have to. I hedged on Wingfoot, you know, I felt sure. I felt almost sure. I—I had staked every penny I could rake and scrape on the horse. I—I wanted to de something that would cost—ob, such a lot of money! I mean I wanted to get tolot of money: I mean I wanted to get to-gether a lot of capital, you see. "It was about—about a girl. I rather

like her. And she has money, and there's a story got about somehow that it's her money I'm after, not her. Can't you see? So I hedged. And I was out, you see, last night between 12 and 4, and I-I didn't want to explain, although I'm not asham-ed of what I was doing, and—and—well, really, it made it rather difficult. But I really, it made it rather difficult. But I wanted you—I mean her—I mean I wanted the girl of whom I have spoken to know that I am not the sort of chap at heart she takes me for, and I dare say I am boring you terribly, but I wanted some one to speak to about it, and, you see. I'm not really what you might call fast at all, enly, only—well, I hardly know how to explain all this to you, Miss Winthrop. You see, I've been extravasant and all that, yet—and, upon my soul, I don't know what It's got to do with what I've just said—yet, as I say, I couldn't explain to those men, and I never shall to any one, about my absence last night, and—and"—
Miss Winthrop interrupted him. She was never afterward able to say whether

was never afterward able to say whether at that moment she had been laughing or

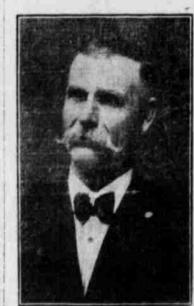
crying.
"I told you that I've just been talking
to Mrs. Sedden," she said, carefully enun-clating each syllable.
"I think I ought to apologize to you"—

that I-as you once sald-insult you by looking at you." He held up his hand at sight of her clouding eyes. "I was jesting," he added. "Had you not better withdraw before I carry my insults far-

Miss Winthrop knew what he mesat. She leaned over the banisters to him as he stretched out his arms. "Gorton!" she said.

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The man you wanted me to marry—Gorbe began hurriedly.

A radiant change came over Brinton as
the looked into the girl's eyes. He lapsed
be looked into the girl's eyes. He lapsed
beck into the drawl as he interrupted:

"You are so charming when you are
to forget
tion.

Course saw him climb in by the window

"I think I ought to apologize to you
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