By the author of "Violan's Victory," Coals of Fire," "A Blighted Curse," de-

"One hundred thousand dollars!" exclaimed Mr. Seemons, his mouth and eyes very round. "Why, my dear sir, it is a large fortune?" "Undoubtedly," was the laconic reply of the nale young man who sat opposite him. "And what on earth will she do with it—a girl like that?" continued Mr. Seemons, savely, "It is simply absurd?"

"She will enrich some fortune hunter—they always do," was the tranquil reply, "After all, it doesn't matter to you what becomes of her hundred thousand dollars. Ultimately you will get some pretty little pickings out of it before it slips through your hands, I dare ""

"No fit is a grand opportunity, certainly," replied John Flintop, with a suppressed sneed. "You have only a credulous girl and a weak-minded man to deal with, and both trust you."

"Come, Mr. Flintop, you are putting things a little too strongly," replied Mr. Seemons, with dignity. "I was old Clay's attorney for thirty years, and it is but natural I should have the management of this affair now. I made the very will that leaves Miss Lillie her

fortune; I was present in the house when her grandfather died, and almost his last words to me were—"take care of the poor little girl, Seemons she has no friends. That was an appeal to your chivalry, Mr.

Seemons."
"I don't pretend to be chivalrous, sir, but
I wish to be just. My services are worth so
much; I can't afford to work for nothing, as
Mr. Clay know. If she employed another attorney, he would take advantage of her inexperience, whereas I shall protect her against
others, and take care of her in the best sense, without neglecting my own interests. I appeal to you, as a man of the world, if more

can be expected of me than that?" "As a man of the world, I answer 'No"; but there is another side to the question, Mr.

Seemons. ouestion, my dear siri but I think we are owed to adopt the one that combines our inerests and those of our clients at the same

"I think it would be safer to keep them apart, Mr. Seemons," The attorney eyed him uneasily. John Flintop was one of those men who, having no need to exert himself, had drawled and lounged through the world, giving no sense of sup-

ment without, as it appeared, any thought of As an idler he had inspired Mr. Seemons with the deepest disdain, but now he began to think is possible there were depths in the Joine man he had not yet sounded—that he

could be roused and even wax dangerous.
This aspicion filled him with slarm when
he reme abered the candor of his admissions at the beginning of their conversation, and he hastened to answer, in a pleased tone—
"A joke is a joke, Mr. Flintep, but it may

be carried too far. There has been nothing, I think, in my conduct or professional career so far to justify your insinuation."

"I am not aware that it was an insimuation," replied. Flintop quietly. "I just stated a fact, or, rather, a belief of my own, that an atterney is bound to consider his client's in-

"And is also your belief that an attorney is bound to give his time and brains for noth-"Certainly not, You have as much right

"Certainly not. You have as much right to what you carn as any other man."

"It would be devilish hard if I weren't," getorted Mr. Seemons, with a sudden loosening of the tight rein he had kept on his temper; "and what right have you to dictate to me, John Flintop.

"Nous whatever," responded Flintop, with such tranquility, "It was you, I fancy, who breeched the subject."

"That may be, but I can't remember having seked your advice,"

Flintop smiled half-disdainfully.

"If you had I should have spoken differently."

"Ah! what would you have said then?"

"I should have said 'Don't play with edged tools, Mr. Seemons. Perhaps Miss Lillie is not entirely without a protector after all."

"I see, you are a candidate for the post." retorted the attorney, sharply.

"I never spoke to Miss Lillie in my life."

"Parhaps I don't want to repair it. I should not quite care to be confounded with the fortune hunters whom I was anathematizing just now. A girl with that fortune will look to make a grand match, and I am a comparatively poor man, as you know. Besides, a million of money would not tempt me to marry a girl I did not love."

"Vory fine sentiments!" sneered Mr. Sec-mons. "But don't you think it would be easy to love a girl with one hundred thousand dollars."

Again he colled out the figures, smacking wis lips afterwards as if they had a pleasant fincte on the tongue, and Flintop replied, with Fl-veiled contempt—

"No; I think it would be confoundedly describ, unless she were such an angel of

essent, unless she were such an angel of gendross, and grace she made you forget har disadvantages?" repeated Mr. Scemens, not sure that he had heard aright.

"Her disadvantages," repeated l'intop, with emphasis. "A woman has no right to be

This sentiment gave Mr. Seemons such a soor opinion of his companion's sense and intellect he did not care to pursue the subject turther. After all it was a confort to know

"Anvhow," he answered, sententiously, "I consider Miss Eillie a very fortunate girl. And now I wouldn't waste any more time in gosasp. I am afraid my morning's work is only fast herein."

Flin ap rose at this very promptly—only too and to be let off—and reached the door before the bade Mr. Seemons arion. He resolved

that, whitever happened, nothing should in-duce him to touch that a mishing should in-face him to touch that a mishing again. He was I ways suspected him, and now he fancied to had the certainty he had sought; and Sec-cans had given a chimpse of his, true self. The Mastelline all a were not safe in his fands, i'll a p was a misunderstanding.

Chat he me out to from it is own nest, and being resolved to circumvent him.

And you what right had he to act as Miss tallie's champion? He had seen her once and one only, and had never someth as spoken to ber, into the glimpse of that fair, sad in he fare, too pale for heanty, and yet more at active than any beauty's he had ever seen, all Flintop's dormant chivaley.

He must, he would help her somehow. The mach never know wher her friend had been a thin he would help her somehow. The nach never know wher her friend had been as thin he had saved her from a come, and to on he could preed the reward of the form he could have on his way, still allent, are leave her to the happiness of a hielong leave.

Very Quixotic all this for a mineteenth-cenyoung man, no doubt, but if Flintop
only have been seen at the interview
on followed his exit he would have seen
in find set man if a very difficult task
into have drawned until he heard the
are open, and then he rang his bellammuons was manyered by a recy-

There was ten minutes delay; the captain wanted to finish his cigar, and then the door opened and the young officer lounged in. "Well, what do you want with me?" he asked, rather aggressively. "You know how I abominate the musty, fusty old place. Why don't you retire? You must have made money enough by this time?"

"You forget that you have been spending almost as fast as I have been saving Harry," observed his father, mildly.

"Nonsense, dad! I don't spend half what the rest of our fellows do."

"Perhaps they are richer.

"Some of them, but not all. What is the use of your working so desperately hard if you can't afford for me to keep up my position in the regiment?"

the regiment?"
"I didn't say that," replied Mr. Seemons, glaneing with justifiable pride at the tall, soldierly-looking young man opposite.

And undoubtedly Harry Seemons was a handsome fellow. He inherited the beauty of the young mother who had died in giving him birth, and he had his father's inches without

his father's stoop.
But then Harry had never bent over a desk day after day, and had been well drilled besides. His complexion was pale, his eyes had a certain languor which betokened dissipation, but this did not detract from their beauty; and in addition to his other charms he had a sweet smile and an air of tender gallantry when talking to the other sex which had misled many a girl to her cost.

anny a girl to her cost.

Altogether the father's glanced, if partial, was not unjust, for Harry lookeb a very fitting subject for the experiment the other wanted

him to try.

Having flung himself into an arm-chair rather sulkily, Harry said, in a discontented

"If my spending represents your saving I am deucedly sorry for you, or I should be, rather, if it weren't your own fault. You never told me I was going too fast."
"I don't tell you so now, my boy. I love to feel you are enjoying yourself, and I don't care a straw how hard I work if you are the happier and better for it. But nas it never struck you, Harry, that I am getting old?"
"Humbug!" said the captain.
Nevertheless, he looked at his father with mere interest than usual, and noticed for the first time that there were a good many white

incre interest than usual, and noticed for the first time that there were a good many white threads in the black of his hair, and the temples were much belined.

"But I am," pursued Mr. Seemons. "I know that by many signs. A hard day's work begins to tell upon me; and there are many things that were not only possible but many things that were not only possible but easy five or six years ago which try nie sadly now. One must look the truth in the face,

what then?" inquired his son,
"Well, then, there will be no more savings—that is all." "And even admitting that you are right,

that is all."
"But there will be the interest of those that have gone before?"
"Which will bring in from eight to ten thousand dollars a year."
"Whew!" whistled Harry, "is that all? Why on earth did you let me go into the

army?"

"Because I thought if I gave you a good start you would be able to help yourself along afterwards by a brilliant marriage?"

"Nothing has ever come in my way yet that could tempt me into the supreme folly of matrimony!" ejaculated Harry, with fervor. "I like my bachelor freedom far too well to surrender it for anything less than—"

"One hundred thousand dollars?" put in the storney, eagerly.

"One hundred thousand dollars?" put in the attorney, eagerly,
"West, that might, perhaps, tempt me, supposing the girl were young, pretty and modest, without being a fool. But I never knew an heiress who wasn't confoundedly ugly. Generally they have red hair and a squint, and give themselves airs enough to make the fortune of an organ-grinder. No, dad; you may depend upon it, heiresses are a mistake."

Mr. Seemons began to think that all the young men were going mad. He had not expected to hear Harry echo John Flintop's absurdities, but rather to snatch eagerly at the glittering bait held above his head. He with difficulty suppressed his impatience as he answered:

"There are exceptions to every rule, and the heiress I mean—"
"Oh! then you have one in your eye!" interrupted Harry, with quickened interest.
"Of course I have, and a heiress in a hundred; a rara avis, in fact."
"Young?"
"Eighteen at the utmost."

"Eighteen at the utmost."

"But not pretty, of course!"

"Charming! Picture to yourself a delicate blonde—I know you admire blondes—with large blue eyes and golden brown hair, regular features and a delicious complexion."

"By Jove! she must be something out of the common way to inspire you with such a description. A delicious complexion, you say, and golden brown hair! When are you going to trot her out for me to look at dad!"

"I think I had better trot you out for her to look at, Harry!"

look at, Harry!"

"Is she awfully difficult to please, then?"
A girl who has just left school is not generally difficult to please."

"I am afraid she is a bread-and-butter miss, without character or spirit," said Harry plaintively. "There must be a reverse to the

"What I am afraid of is that she has too much character," replied the attorney, remembering suddenly the shrewd questions which Miss Lillie had put to him after the will had been read, on the day of her grandfather's funeral. "She strikes me as a young woman with a decided mind of her own."

"Isn't that rather against your plan?"

"No; just the contrary—there is no one so unmanageable as a fool. A girl of strong character is sure to love strongly, and if once Miss Lillie cared for you she would marry you, even if you were the devil himself."

"Come, dad, that's putting it pretty strong," laughed Harry. "There would be nothing to hinder her, would there, supposing she felt inclined?"

"She would have to ask the permission of her

"She would have to ask the permission of her guardian and trustee, Sir Peter Cooper,"
"Sir Peter Cooper," repeated Harry, with evident dismay, "Why, that's the uncle of one of our fellows, and a mean old duffer, I know, for Joe never has a cent to bless himself with a week after allowance day,"
"Plut's his fault, not Sir Peter's, I should me."

"No; he has such a heastly poor allowance, he says."

"No; he has such a heastly poor allowance, he says. And, after all, he is the heir."

"Perhaps Sir Peter thinks that he will want something to keep up the title with when he comes into it," responded the attorney, dryly.

"Aurhow, this doesn't concern us."

"I am not sure about that," replied Harry, who was quite as chrewd as, and more farseing than, his father. "Joo is on the look out for an heiress to pay his debte,"

"The old man would never dare do that," said Mr. Seemons, grasping the possibility hitted as auddenly.

"Why not! Everything is fair in love and year, and then it would be an immense relief to him. There Joe would be sure to make love to her in right good carnet, for he makes overy pretty girt he seem and I couldn't make love to her in right good carnet, for he makes overy pretty girt he seem and I couldn't make love to her in right good carnet, for he makes over pretty girt he seem and I couldn't make love to her in right good carnet, for he makes over pretty girt he seem and I couldn't make love to her in right pool carnet, for he makes over pretty girt he seem and I couldn't make love to her in right pool carnet, for he makes over the love to grater it in the limit in my

"Yes, she may be," assented Mr. Seemons;
"but you'll be first in the field, and if you win
her heart I don't think she'll give you a 'Nay,'
shough she be tempted ever so much. Anynow, will you try your chance?"
"Let me see her before I answer that ques-

"Very well. I am going over to the Grange to-morrow, and there is no reason why you should not drive me instead of Mullis. You can make the excuse that you want to look at the shooting, which she has told me to let."
"Does she live at the Grange alone, father?"
"No; she has a former schoolmistress staying with her just now as chaperone."
"Then I shall have to make love to her,

"You needn't. She is no especial favorite of Miss Lallie. She is a prim, stiff woman of about 50, of the 'prunes and prism' type-a person of the most rigid propriety, I make no doubt; but not genial or motherly. I shouldn't wor der if Miss Lillie married early on purpose to get rid of her."
"She might get rid of her in an easier way,

Sir Peter approved of the appointment and might not sanction any change: but Miss Artifield is not our difficulty, Harry, and need not be considered at this stage of the proceed-

"I don't know about that. Chaperons are sometimes voev evilly-disposed women, and require a lot of conciliating and dodging," returned the captain, with an air of profound conviction. "I shall look her over to-morrow, ever well as Miss Lillie. And now, if the at li-ence is over, I'll go and have a brandy and soda; I've talked so much I feel quite ex-

"That is all I want to say at present," re-turned Mr. Seemon, putting on his spectacles. And he went back to his papers well satis-fied that the seed he had sown would take root and fructify, whilst he felt a little thrill of pleasant anticipation as he pictured himself drawing up the settlements between Captain Scemons and Miss Lillie of the Grange, New

CHAPTER II. Harry Seemons had been cold and indiffer-

Harry Seemons had been cold and indifferent enough when his father had first spoken to him of Miss Lillie; but as he sat over his pipe and grog that night in the solemn silence that broods over a sleeping house, he began to take very kindly to the idea.

He would rather have had another five years of bachelor freedom and pleasure, certainly; but heiresses are not as plentiful as blackberries, and it was not likely Miss Lillie would wait for him. He must strike whilst the iron was hot, or another man might be the iron was hot, or another man might be

more proupt and carry off the prize.

After all, if there were sacrifices to be made there would be compensations as well. A bundred thousand dollars was a pretty large sum, and the shooting at the Grange was good,

of course he would have to give up the army, settle down as a country gentleman, and stand for Congress. Later on he would grow portly and wheezy, and when his face had puffed out like an ancient cherubim's and his igure had lost its symmetry, people would say, with surprise:

"Is it possible that this is the handsome Harry Seemons of the "th?"

And he should answer, cheerfully—
"Of course it is, my dear fellow, but then you see I married one hundred thousand dollars?"

He stretched out his arm to give emphasis to his words, and over went the little table that was holding his lamp and grog, like Almaghar's hasket of crockery. It was not worth while to light up again, and so, laughing a little and swearing a good deal, he groped his way to the door and stole softly up to bed.

It was not often that Harry felt any doubt of himself or his own attractions—he had always been so spoilt by women; but this morning his room was strewn with the ties he had tried on and rejected, and it took him exactly half an hour to decide upon what suit he

But he was tolerably satisfied with the result when he descended at last to breakfast. The attorney had been in his office nearly two hours, but the captain found an elegant little repast ready for him when he rang, for Blackwell had no greater pleasure than to humor his young master, whom he considered an ornament to the house and a credit to himself porsonally.

Having fortified himself with a good meal, Having fortified himself with a good meal, his confidence in his powers began to return, and when Mullis drove round to the door Harry was in the highest spirits, and pictured himself taking the heiress by storm, exactly as if she were a citadel. They did not talk much on the road. Mullis sat behind and would have heard their conversation, and they did not care to triffe. But as they neared Reading Mr. Seemons pointed out a wood to his son, and said, meaningly:

"That is Miss Lillie's. There would be heaps of game, I fancy, if it were preserved; but old Clay never took any trouble about it, and never even had a keeper the last years of his life."

"I suppose there are plenty of poachers about," observed Harry, who was looking about him with interest.

"I daresay; but he wouldn't have minded so long as they left him enough game for his own table, and he was sure to have that. But here we get the best view of the old Grange, Harry. I think it is one of the prettiest places in the state, seen from this point; the oaks at the back are so fine."

"True; but there are too many trees, father.

Harry. I think it is one of the prettiest places in the state, seen from this point; the oaks at the back are so fine."

"True; but there are too many trees, father. I should out a few down just to lighten the place if it were mine."

"The old Clays would haunt you for a certainty," replied Mr. Seemons, with a grim smile. "He loved every bough of them, and in the last letter he wrote to Miss Lillie he asked her to let them stand, as the greatest respect she could pay to his memory."

"Then, of course, she couldn't touch them; but if she had a husband it would be different. Besides, they would bring in a pretty penny, as well as make room for others. You can surely see they are too crowded?"

"Perhaps; but I think I share the old man's weakness, Henry. However, it would not concern me whatever happened, and Miss Lillie can do as she likes, of course."

They stopped at the gate now, and Mullis jumped down to open it. The avenue they passed up was particularly fine, although it had a gloomy feeling about it somehow, to Mr. Seemons mind, perhaps because the last time he had passed from sunshine into shadow so abruptly he had been following a corpse to its last resting place in the churchyard.

But he shook off the sensation quickly and with a certain shame. He did not helieve in presentiments, or, indeed, in anything but dollars and cents.

As they drove up to the door they saw a siender, black figure moving about among the rose trees, and Mr. Seemons cautiously touched his son's arm. Harry leant forward eagerly. Hearing the sound of wheels, she turned and fixed a pair of calm, grey eyes on Harry's face. She did not look at Mr. Seemons or she would have recognized him, of course; her attention seemed to be concentrated on the young man. Then she dropped her basket of roses, and, as if impelled by some strange magnetic attraction, moved to wards them with a graceful, swaying step, her black skirt uplifted in her ungloved hand. We paused within a few steps of the buggy, and Mr. Seemons raised his hat.

"Oh ! it is yo

Miss Lillie laughed brightly.

"I really believe you think I want one man self, Mr. Seemons, you look so shocked; I the young man is superior and has seen bet days, and I was very thankful to give him helping hand, having been poor myself, see. And then, I am sure it will answer

ly you may. I am going to sell the "Did the superior young man who has nown better days suggest that idea?" in-nired Mr. Seemons, who could not forego his

know property so well."

"Of course you do, but I want to have some one who is always at my beck and call, and whom I can order about as I like," with a pleasant smile. "You have so many clients, it is clear that you can't always be attend-

ing to me. "I could have found time for all that was absolutely necessary, I am sure, except the shooting, and my son would have taken that off your hands."

"I did not know you had a son, Mr. Seemons; and if I had known I should hardly have liked to propose this," she answered, with a sly glance towards Harry that was simply adorable.

"I wish you had consulted me in any case, Miss Lillie. You see you are young and inexperienced, and might get yourself into a scrape. If this young man is superior, how comes it he can't earn his living in the ordin-

ary way?"
"He was ill and lost his situation, poor fellow?" she answered in a tone of genuine sympathy. "Now the doctor tells him that a wholesome, outdoor life is the only way of keeping well, and he is glad to find anything he can do."

"Then he is not to be a regular keeper?"

"Not he is to be a sort of steward, really."

"And may I ask what salary he demands for these extraordinary services, Miss Lillie?"

"Five hundred dollars a year and a cottage. At least, that was what I offered him, she hastened to add. "He wanted me to wait and see what he was worth before fixing any sum."

"Humph!" grunted Mr. Seemons; "he appears to be a very disinterested young man!"
"I really think he is," answered Miss Lillie,
simply. "And then, of course, the sort of
situation he wanted was very difficult to find."
"I suppose you advertised, then?" said Mr.
Seemons, catechising her as closely as if she
were a witness in the box, and he was the ex-

"No; he came to me yesterday of his own accord. I daresay he had been told in the village I was on the look-out for something of the sort —country people are such gossips. But do come in, Mr. Seemons. I've been gossiping, too, I'm afraid, and forgotten to be hospitable. Luncheon will be ready in ten minutes, and I am sure we shall both attend to business better after we have had a cutlet and a glass of wine.

She looked towards Harry as if to include him in the invitation, and this settled the question at once. Mr. Seemons accepted with a gracious air, and, handing the reins to the man, they both followed their young hostess into the house.

Miss Armfield was in the morning-room, sitting very upright in a high-backed chair, her thin hands encased in black mittens, a

pair of spectacles on her severe nose, her whole ttitude and appearance expressive of the curtsied formally to Harry, giving him a suspicious glance at the same time. It was evident that Miss Armfield thought he was a wolf in the fold. But Harry was equal to the occasion. He dropped into the seat beside her, and said, with his most insinuating air:—

"I am sure I needn't ask if you are a relation of Colonel Armfield, Miss Armfield. The likeness between you is startling. He dined at our mess about a month ago, and we were all delighted with him. He has such particularly pleasant manners."

Miss Armfield had no reason to suppose them was the most distant connection even.

there was the most distant connection even-between the Colonel and herself, but she did not feel bound to "deny the soft impeach-ment." And, indeed she began to think it possible she did belong to the same family since the resemblance was so startling, and

Miss Lillie began to think Harry had used some unholy charm when she saw the grim

gracious smile:

"You do see most extraordinary likeness carried from generation to generation, and it is always interesting to note. I knew a family once who had the same nose for three hundred years."

"It must have been repaired very often in the time," observed Harry, cheerfully.

Miss Armfield could not see a joke, which was fortunate in this case, as she disapproved of them, and she answered, with a gravity that nearly upset Miss Lillie, who had a strong sense of humor herself—

that nearly upset Miss Lillie, who had a strong sense of humor herself—

"You mean that there were little divergencies from the original here and there—that, of course. For instance, the females had a modified bump, whereas in the males this peculiarity was so marked—"

"They resembled camels, I suppose?"

"Oh! no," affably. "There was nothing so very decided as that, Captain Seemons. But it was remarkable enough to pass into a proverb, and one knows a Smith by hisnose' was quite a common saying in our part of the

was quite a common saying in our part of the

world."

At this minute Harry caught Miss Lillie's eye, which was gleaming with fun and mischief, and saved the situation by pretending to be seized with a violent fit of coughing. Miss Armfield rushed off to fetch him some lozenges, and he had time to recover himself. But this little episode had established a certain intimacy between himself and Miss Lillie, and presently they were talking as easily and pleasantly as if they had known each other for years instead of for hours.

The heiress had no little airs or graces, and seemed to Harry a bright, unaffected girl, a little wilful and resolute, perhaps, but warmhearted withal. Altogether Miss Lillie was by far the most presentable heiress he had ever seen, and though he should have preferred the hundred thousand dollars without any encumbrance, the conditions attached to it were much more endurable than he could have loped.

it were much more endurable than he could have hoped.

Before luncheon was more than half over he had made up his mind that he would sit as master at the elegantly-spread table ere many weeks had gone by and make its mistress his slave. Meanwhile, Miss Lillie was gracious and attentive, and seemed, Mr. Seemons thought, certainly at racted by the handsome soldier, on whom fell the chief burden of the conversation, for his himself retired altogether into the background that the young man might shine.

he himself retired altogether into the background that the young man might shine.

Harry was accustomed to fashionable society, and could make himself very agreeable
when he chose. Of course, he did choose today, and when later on he bade Miss Lillie
good-bye, he had not only secured Miss Armfield's favor, but the heress herself gave him
her hand with a charming smile, and said:

"I am sorry about the shooting, Captain
Seemons; but pray come over for a day whenever you feel inclined. And remember we
always lumer at half-past one."

"Very good for a beginning," said Mr.
Seemons, with a grim chuckle, as they drove
back to Vineland in the cool of the afternoon.

"Only don't go again to soon."

"I thought I was to strike whilst the iron
was hot."

Miss Lillie meanwhile was standing at one of the windows in the long corridor upstairs watching the carriage as it wound its way slowly through the green lanes. There was a strange mixture of expression on her face—but presently amusement cleared all the others away, and she burst out laughing unrestrainedly.

"I like a man who has some fun in him—to talk to, at any rate," she said to herself; "but I shall have to suppress the peerage for a little while in case Miss Armfield should want to look out her noble relative. I wonder what made him so civil to her though, a plain, primold maid, without any attractions of character or manner."

And Miss Lillie went off into a long speculation—partly ethical, partly metaphysical, the end of which brought a shadow into her expressive eyes and made her almost wish she were noor again for the general state. were poor again, for, to a generous nature, sus-picion is torment indeed; and she was already learning that the world was not so disinter ed as she had once pictured it.

Some women, even when quite young, look best in shadow; often because their coloring is too vivid and bright, occasionally for the reason that complexion is not their strong point; but with Lillie the sunshine seemed to bring out hidden beauties, turning her redbrown hair to burnished gold, intensifying the blue of her eyes, and showing plainly little dimples at the corners of her mouth which you had never been quite sure about before.

As she stood this morning close to the library window, poring over a musty tome she had

As she stood this morning close to the library window, poring over a musty tone she had just fetched down from an upper shelf, she made a pretty picture, and her unconscious attitude increased the charm.

When the door opened, and the butler announced "Mr. Howes, ma'am," Lillie turned, quietly put down her book, and bowing graciously to her young steward, advanced towards the table and pointed him out a chair. "Please sit down," she said, rather as if she were addressing an equal than a dependent. were addressing an equal than a dependent. "You have brought those plans to show me, I

hope?"
"The superior young man," as Mr. Seemons had sneeringly called him, unfolded some papers and laid them down on the table before

"I have only made a rough sketch, madam, he said, in a respectful tone, which was, how-ever, entirely devoid of obsequiousness. "I thought you might wish to make some sug-

Edith was silent a moment, examining the drawing, which, if rough, was masterly, and showed a true artist hand; but presently she "You seem to have thoroughly grasped my meaning, Mr. Howes. Your cottages look comfortable as well as picturesque, and will be an immense improvement on those wretched hovels they are to replace. When can I be-

"As soon as you like, madam. I spoke to Lingard and Jones to-day." "That is right," and she smiled approval:

she liked promptitude and energy. "As each cottage is to cost five hundred dollars? "They contract for that amount." "Are they respectable tradesmen, whom can trust?" she asked, pr have heard that there is a good deal of cheating possible in their trade, and I don't want my model cottages to have damp walls and smoky chimneys, or let in the daylight any-where but through the windows. They are my thank-(ffering for great mercies vouch-safed to me," her voice softening, "and I should feel like Ananias and Sapphira if I

should feel like Ananias and Sapphira if I held back any part of the money that was intended for that purpose."

Mr. Howes stole a furtive look at her. Her color had deepened, her face was full of enthusiasm, and yet there was the softness in her eyes that had just sweetened her voice, and though she was not much more than a pretty though she was not much more than a pretty girl usually—and some people would not even admit that—she looked beautiful at this mo-

girf usually—and some people would not even admit that—she looked beautiful at this moment with the beauty that appeals to all that is tenderest and worthiest in a man's heart. He dropped his eyes as she raised hers, and answered in a grave, studied voice—

"I have made enquiries, madam, and find that Lingard and Jones bear an excellent name as straightforward, conscientious tradesmen. They mentioned five hundred dollars a cottage themselves, and as I thought it a fair price I did not try to beat them down, so they have no excuse for what is called in the trade jerry-building."

"I see—thank you," she said, courteously. "I am glad you didn't beat them down. And now about the time—when can they begin?"

"They have promised me their men shall be on the spot at six o'clock on Monday morning."

"And mind, I am to lay the first stone, Mr. Howe; that is a fancy of mine; and, by the bye," as her eyes fell once more upon the spirited sketch of her model cottage, "how very well you draw! Did you never—excuse me for asking—think of becoming an artist?"

"No, madam. I am to poor to wait upon fame as a lacquey waits on a cold and imperious master. Besides, the life I am leading now suits me far better."

"It can hardly satisfy your ambition," she said, glancing at him rather curiously.

"It satisfies the only ambition I have, madam."

"That is to get strong and well, I sup-

"That is to get strong and well, I sup-

He bowed silently.

"Then I hope it may be gratified," she replied; "and oh! I was going to ask you, Mr. Howe, is your cottage comfortable?"

"Perfectly, madam, thank you."

She was silent for a minute, looking straight out of the window, but presently she added—

"Mr. Seemons was over here yesterday with his son. The latter wanted the shooting, but I told him I had made other arangements."

"That was just what I expected," replied Howe, as if involuntarily.

Edith turned right round and looked at him enquiringly.

enquiringly.

"Why did you expect it?" she asked.

Howe colored rather confusedly.

"It is a way Mr. Seemons has, madam.

They call him 'Grab-all' hereabouts. He would like to have you entirely under him, if possible; and would disapprove, I am sure, of my appointment.

possible; and would disapprove, I am sure, of my appointment.

Howe had set a little trap for her, and she fell into it unsuspectingly.

"He highly disapproved, and suggested himself as a substitute. But I told him I wanted someone I could order about."

It was her turn to color and look confused now and try to cough down her inadvertance. The speech was a foolish one, indeed, as she immediately saw. Made saucily to an equal it would not have mattered; but in the peculiar and anomalous position in which Howe was placed it was either a familiarity or an insult. And whilst anxious above all things not to treat Howe with any want of consideration, she was equally desirious to avoid the opposite extreme.

The situation was only endurable on these terms, and everything in his conduct and manner hitherto had shown that he did not aspire to anything beyond, and was grateful to her for a courtesy which, though perfect in its way, could never be mistaken for what it was not.

But now, in her folly, she had spoken to him

But now, in her folly, she had spoken to him as if he had been either a groom or a gentleman, and as he was neither it was awkward in the extreme. But the natural candor of her character helped Edith out of the difficulty far better than any little feminine evasions.

The raised her gree coldly and calmly to his face and said, with the slightest possible tings of handons.

He bowed as he finished speaking, and then alted to see if she had anything more to say. But Edith simply folded up the papers and inded them back to him, and he understood handed them back to him, and he understood then that the interview was over, and bowing again with an air of deep respect, withdrew.

Edith felt exceedingly annoyed at her blunder and inclined, it must be owned, to visit it on Howe's. The very superiority which she had been disposed to regard as an advantage at first, struck her now as a decided drawback, since it forced her to choose her words and regulate her, conduct with so much

Edith walked up and down the library petulantly for about a quarter of an hour, and then she suddenly thought of Mr. Seemons' horror when he heard of her model cottages, and the feeling that she had outwitted an attorney restored all her good humor. The attorney restored all her good humor. The next minute she was in the garden amongst her flowers, singing like a bird, every trace of anneyance banished from her face, and her whole heart given up to thankfulness as she thought of all the pleasant things that had come into her life. In this wholesome mood Tom Howes no longer weighed on her mind.

She had intended to do what was right, and so far the plan had worked well. The poor man had a chance of recovering his health, she had a faithful and conscientious steward, and why, therefore, torment herself about possible complications which might

about possible complications which might never arise, and could be provided for if they

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A month's salary could rid her at any mo ment of Tom Howes, if necessary; but that never would be necessary, she felt sure. If not, he could remain with her until she married—and here she blushed charmingly, just as if she had spoken this thought aloud and someone had heard-and then, of course, her husband would look after things, and that would settle the question naturally.

And then Lillie dismissed Tom Howes alto-

gether from her mind, resolved not to bear him any malice for the blunder she had made. Lillie had not taken Miss Armfield into her confidence concerning the cottages. She was one of those hard, cold, unsympathetic women to whom it was impossible to talk of such a purpose. Full of warm enthusiasm herself, Lillie could not bear to be chilled and preached down, and shrank from the other's common sense as she would have shrunk from a bath in ice-cold water when the thermometer

was at zero. So it was quite alone—unchaperoned and free—that she stole out of the house on that happy summer's morning when she was to lay the first stone of her pretty cottages.

The church clock had tolled 6 just two minutes ago as she appeared on the scene in her white morning-dress and shady hat, a bunch of roses she had gathered as she passed through the garden nestling under her chin. She looked flushed and her eyes were shining, but she had a feeling, too, as if she were taking part in a conspiracy, and that the sturdy young workmen gathered around awaiting her orders were members of a secret society, and

could not help giving a little anxious glance at Tom Howes, who was talking to the foreman, and removed his hat at her approach. "Thank you all for being so punctual," said the young chatchaine, with a sort of lofty sweet-ness. "Tell me, please, what I am to do, and

I won't hinder you long."

The foreman respectfully handed her the trowel and showed her her work, which was simply to place the first three bricks in their place and fill up the crevices with mortar. This she did neatly and deftly, smiling all the while and then walked quietly away, giving the men \$5 for beer-a little act which, of course, won all hearts.

the memory of it kept its pleasantness to Lilli all through her life. It was such a perfec morning, and the birds sang so sweetly, and everything was as bright as her own thoughts. What a pity it seemed she should have to go indoors presently and sit down to breakfast op posite Miss Armfield—who would be sure to entertain her, as usual, with depressing plati-tudes, until she felt as if she must break some

However, as luck would have it, Miss Armifield had a bad headache that morning and kept her room, so Lillie could open the window wide and let in the sunshine, and the stray bee or two, and the scent of the flowers a pleasure she had to forego ordinarily, as the other was afraid of catching cold. A long, delightful ride through the country lanes and across the moor filled up the interval between this and luncheon, and then she felt that she had had such a happy time she needed Miss Armfield as a wholesome corrective, and bore the infliction with perfect patience and good humor.

For the first five days after Harry Seemons, visit, Lillie scarcely thought of him at all, and then she began to wonder a little that he was so slow to avail himself of the invitation.

so graciously given, and felt a little piqued as well as surprised. When he did present hims self at last, she received him rather coldly, to his intense satisfaction.

"I thought you had left Vineland," she said.

"You must find the place very dull."

"Not at all," he answered, cheerfully.

suppose I have a happy disposition, for I can generally manage to any see myself wherever I generally manage to amuse myself wherever I

"Even at Vineland?" raising her eyebrows "Why not at Vineland? It is a poor place in itself—a small country town must needs be that—but the neighborhood is good. I have dined out four times since I saw you last."

"I suppose you like dinner parties?" she observed, by way of saying something.

"I like some other things better."

"How many?" enquired Lillie, archly.

"You seem to have a very poor opinion of our sex, Miss Lillie."

"I have no right to an opinion at all," she answered, quietly, "for I don't think I really know one man in the world."

The gallant captain felt snubbed, and looked

know one man in the world."

The gallant captain felt snubbed, and looked out of the window for a new inspiration. His eye fell on the long sweep of cool, green lawn, bordered by flower beds in all their summer bloom, and he said, quickly—

"Do you play tennis, Miss Lillie?"

"I should if I had a ground."

"Why don't you tell that bailiff fellow of yours to make you one? I saw him strolling about the fields as I came along, and he did not give me the idea of being overworked."

"I hope he isn't; but I fancy he has plenty to do, and, anyhow, I am not sure he would care to be put to such work as that," replied Lillie who had reasons for not deeming this expedient, she would not have even hinted to her companion for all the world. companion for all the world.

"May I come and do it, then?" he asked, eagerly. "I am rather clever at that sort of thing, and it would be a real charity to give

"I thought you said just now you were so well amused at Vineland?"
"What I really meant was that the time passed somehow." passed somehow.
"Thanks to your naturally happy disposi-

tion!"

"Uponmy word you sit upon me cruelly, Miss Lillie," he cried, assumin, an air of the deepest distress. "I never knew anyone so severe."

"You see, unfortunately, I haven't pleasant manners," she retorted, mischievously.

At this Captain Seemons permitted himself to laugh, virtually admitting that her suspicious were correct, but he looked a little ashamed, too, fearing she might doubt his motives. But though Lillie tried to look shocked, as in duty bound, there was a lurking smile at the corners of her mouth which not only reassured him at the moment, but encouraged him to persevere about the tennis ground.

ground.
"Well," she said at last, "let us go and see if it could be managed without spoiling my flowers."

And they went out together.

Harry had inherited from his father a certain accuracy of mind and eye, and presently he had the ground planned out in a way to make the most of its natural capabilities, whilst avoiding the disadvantage Lillie had

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