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No. 149

# A GOLD MINE

A Play in Three Acts

BY

BRANDER MATTHEWS

AND

GEO. H. JESSOP

—•••—  
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AND GEORGE H. JESSOP  
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BRANDER MATTHEWS AND GEO. H. JESSOP

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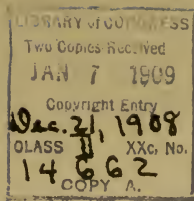
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 1908

# A GOLD MINE.

## Characters:

- SILAS K. WOOLCOTT, of Grass Valley,  
 California ..... Mr. Nat. C. Goodwin
- GERALD RIORDAN, M.P., of Bally-  
 nockslottery, Ireland..... Mr. E. J. Buckley
- SIR EVERARD FOXWOOD, Knt., senior  
 partner of Foxwood & Co., Change  
 Alley, London..... Mr. Robt. G. Wilson
- GEORGE FOXWOOD, his son..... Mr. Harry Eversfield
- JULIUS KREBS, his confidential clerk.. Mr. John T. Craven.
- WILSON, the butler..... Mr. Thomas H. Burns
- THE HON. MRS. MEREDITH, sister of  
 Sir Everard..... Miss Kate Forsythe
- MISS UNA FOXWOOD, his daughter.... Miss Nanette Com-  
 stock.
- MRS. VANDERVAST, formerly Miss  
 Grace Strangeways, "The Only  
 Juliet"..... Miss Ida Vernon.

## TIME :—

ACT I.—February 14th.

ACT II.—July 4th.

ACT III.—July 5th.

SCENE.—Sir Everard Foxwood's house at Kew.

# A GOLD MINE.

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## ACT I.

SCENE: *Drawing room in the house of SIR EVERARD FOXWOOD at Kew. Door L. to library. Door R. to conservatory, with palms grouped about a garden seat. Circular sofa c. Archway opening on staircase at back. Settee against wall L.*

DISCOVERED: WILSON, *lighting lamps and giving final touches to room.*

WILSON. (*looking round*) If art is the object to be pursued in this mansion, then art let it be, and if this is not artistic, I can't 'elp it. (*crosses R.*)

(*Enter GEORGE, C.*)

GEORGE. Anybody here yet, Wilson?

WILSON. Not as yet, Master George. Art is like an owl, sir, and only flies at night; and it's early yet. Shall I light the lamps in the conservatory, sir?

GEORGE. I'm sure I don't care whether you do or not. I don't know anything about it.

WILSON. Perhaps it would be as well to light up, sir? (*going towards conservatory*)

GEORGE. I dare say it would, and in the picture gallery as well. Not that it makes any difference to me.

(*Exit WILSON to conservatory, R. 3 E.*)

Art is a bore—receptions are a bore—everything's a bore. I wish I were dead.

(*Sits on sofa c., and buries face in hands.*)

Why do people want to come here to enjoy themselves when I am so miserable?

(Enter UNA from passage L. through c.)

UNA. Ah, there you are, George! How do you like me?

GEORGE. As well as I do anybody, just now. When will Aunt Florence arrive?

UNA. She came almost directly after dinner. She will be down presently.

(Enter WILSON, c.)

WILSON. Mr. Krebs, Master George, to see Sir Everard. (*crosses L and into library and exit*)

GEORGE. (*aside, alarmed*) Krebs! What does he want here now?

(Enter KREBS, R. C.)

GEORGE. (*with affected ease*) Hello, Krebs, is that you? The Governor will be here soon.

KREBS. (*speaking precisely, and with a slight German accent*) Thank you, Master George, I am not in a hurry. (*sits c.*) Good evening, Miss Foxwood. (*bows*)

UNA. You look tired and harassed this evening, Mr. Krebs. I trust you have no bad news from Mentone?

KREBS. I am glad to say that my wife is better now, and mending daily. I have no words to tell my gratitude to your kind aunt, for her great generosity, which under Providence has proved the means of saving my wife's life.

UNA. I'll let papa know you are waiting, if you like, Mr. Krebs?

KREBS. If you would be so good, Miss. (UNA goes to door)

GEORGE. The Governor won't much like being disturbed of a reception evening.

(Exit UNA, c. off L.)

KREBS. Master George. (GEORGE moves uneasily) Something must be done.

GEORGE. (*helplessly*) I know it, Krebs, I know it, but for Heaven's sake, what can I do?

KREBS. You must raise the seven hundred pounds.

GEORGE. You might as well tell me to raise the dead. If the Governor thought I had lost the money on a horse-race, he would turn me out of the house. (*dropping on chair*)

KREBS. But if you——

(Enter SIR EVERARD from library, L. 2 c., followed by WILSON, and WILSON exits c. Both rise.)

SIR E. Well, Krebs, you want to see me, I am told?

KREBS. (coming forward) Yes, sir, I——

SIR E. (haughtily) You know I have a decided objection to being followed home on business. (to GEORGE, who is going) You may remain, George.

KREBS. (producing document) If you please, Sir Everard, I desired your signature to this statement which is to go before the Directors of the South Palestine Bitumen Company, Limited, to-morrow morning.

SIR E. (glances over papers) Tut, tut, tut, this is not a very hopeful showing, Krebs. I shall have to send out a special agent to Palestine. Meanwhile I must see what can be done to create an artificial market. Till I can get this off my hands, I cannot manage my gold mine to advantage.

KREBS. Then Mr. Wolcott has sold, sir? (GEORGE closes his memo. book and rises)

SIR E. Not yet. But, I shall have that gold mine all in good time. Sir William Butler, and I have already taken the preliminary steps to incorporate a company for its purchase. (signs document) There, you can take it away, Krebs, and you might hint to the Directors to-morrow that in the present state of Eastern Europe it would be inexpedient to make anything regarding the affairs of the Palestine Company public. (to GEORGE, who lounges down towards him) You have heard what I have been saying, George?

GEORGE. Yes, sir, that it would be inexpedient to make anything public regarding the affairs of the Palestine Company.

SIR E. Exactly, and as a general rule the advice will apply to the affairs of any company. (laughs) That will do, Krebs, you can go. (KREBS goes to door c.)

GEORGE. (following him and whispering) I will do my best, Krebs. I think I have found a way. (exit KREBS, c. to L.)

(RIORDAN enters.)

Hello, Riordan, glad to see you. The Governor's here. This is Mr. Riordan, sir.

SIR E. I am glad to meet you, Mr. Riordan. I hope we may see as much of you in the future as your parliamentary duties will permit.

RIORDAN. Thank you, Sir Everard. I can't say an Irish M. P.'s berth is exactly a sinecure.

SIR E. Legislature duties, sir, ought never to be a sinecure.

RIORDAN. I know it. Poor fellows must work. It is only one of you city men, who can roll in riches like a cow in clover.

SIR E. By making a few judicious speculations now and then a large fortune may be amassed very rapidly.

RIORDAN. And scattered quite as fast. Many a man has found Capel Court a short cut to the County Court. (*sits on sofa c.*)

SIR E. I said *judicious* speculations, Mr. Riordan.

RIORDAN. Ah, but who is to be a judge of judiciousness? Nothing succeeds but success.

SIR E. Why do you not try your own fortune?

RIORDAN. I've a hatful of reasons. In the first place, I don't know how. In New York, once I did "Wall Street" for the "Herald" for six months, but here in London I haven't the remotest idea how the cat will jump or who is going to let her out of the bag.

SIR E. That is only one reason.

RIORDAN. And I've another. A man has to raise the wind before he can fly kites. Now, I've no money. (*GEORGE indicates that he has none*)

SIR E. (*persistently*) Your position is your capital. In the first place, you are a member of Parliament—

RIORDAN. Elected for the purpose of breaking it up, to start a new one somewhere else.

SIR E. Then you have another hold on the world of finance—you are a correspondent of a leading Transatlantic journal.

RIORDAN. (*smiling*) I do a cable letter every Saturday for the *Gotham Gazette*, but that's worth only fifty dollars a week.

SIR E. (*rising*) It is worth as much as you choose to make it worth. I'll give you an instance. There is the South Palestine Bitumen Company—you shall have a prospectus before you go—I am buying in as fast as I can spare the money. Owing to local complications

it is very low just now. Of course I am not telling you this for publication.

GEORGE. Yes, I heard the Governor tell old Krebs just now that it was inexpedient to make the affairs of the company public. (*rises, crosses up*)

SIR E. (*glancing at RIORDAN*) Exactly so, George, but from a friend, as I trust Mr. Riordan will suffer me to call him—(*RIORDAN rises, bows*) I can have no secrets. If you will do me the favor of stepping with me into my den—(*goes L. and opens library door*)

GEORGE. (*low*) Snuggest room in the house, old fellow—and such cigars and brandy.

RIORDAN. (*going L.*) I'm at your service, Sir Everard, and faith, I won't say but that Bitumen sounds like a dry subject that would stand a deal of moistening.

SIR E. (*pushing door open*) After you. (*RIORDAN bows and exit L., followed by SIR E.*)

GEORGE. That may be a good thing, though. The Governor's shrewd enough and he seems hot on it. I wonder if I couldn't pick up a hundred in the Bitumen stock, or even a thousand. There's lots of fellows would carry an account for me on my name, and—by Jove! I have a great mind to try it.

UNA. (*entering c. from L.*) George, here's Aunt Florence!

(*Enter MRS. MEREDITH C. from L.*)

MRS. M. Well George! (*GEORGE goes to her, she embraces him*) My dear, dear boy, I am delighted to see you! (*holding him off at arm's length*) You're not looking as well as I could wish. You need change of some kind.

GEORGE. (*aside*) I need a good deal of change—about seven hundred pounds' worth.

MRS. M. (*examining UNA'S costume*) And I shall have to take you back to Paris with me, too, if it is only that you may learn how to dress.

UNA. Oh, Aunt, I am Undine.

GEORGE. What rot! Una is always trying to be some one else! She wants to sit to some artist fellow as a model.

(*Enter SIR E. L from library.*)

SIR E. (*speaking back into library*) I beg you will

make yourself perfectly at home. If you need anything, ring for it. (*advancing*) Ah, Florence, I am charmed to see you here.

MRS. M. And I am glad to see myself here. (*they shake hands*) What victim have you got in your toils yonder now?

SIR E. In the library? That is Mr. Riordan, a young Irish journalist, a member of Parliament—home rule, of course—but he seems a very clever young fellow for all that.

UNA. Yes, papa, isn't he nice?

GEORGE. He's no end of a brick, I know.

SIR E. That is a courtly phrase I cannot but appreciate.

GEORGE. You're always snubbing a fellow, Governor.

SIR E. Well, Florence, I hope you won't fly back to Paris till the season is over. I intend to entertain more than usual this year.

MRS. M. For Una's sake. Perhaps you are right. Una is a little eccentric, and eccentric girls—even when they are pretty and have money—don't always go off well.

UNA. Oh, Aunt, you are simply dreadful.

MRS. M. (*to SIR E.*) This evening sees the first of your entertainments—an art reception, isn't it?

SIR E. Yes, a portrait of mine has come home, and I thought—ah—ahem—

MRS. M. You thought it your duty to gratify your friends with a view of it. Perhaps this Irish journalist is an art critic?

UNA. You will be sure to like him, aunty.

MRS. M. I'm not so sure of that, for I dislike an Irishman next to an American.

SIR E. By the bye, I expect an American here to-night.

MRS. M. He or she?

SIR E. A gentleman, with whom I have had some little business and expect to have more.

MRS. M. (*smiling*) Then he has a strong claim on my pity.

SIR E. I trust that you will be civil to him and make him at home.

MRS. M. I shall certainly be civil. I haven't different



manners for different nationalities; and as to making him at home, why, if he does not do that for himself, he will be the first American I ever met who did not. (*rising, crosses to R.*)

SIR E. This Mr. Woolcott has acquired a valuable piece of property under the strange laws of his country, and I may—ahem—purchase it. I have invited him here to meet my friend, Sir William Butler, who may—ahem—be concerned in my business transactions with this Mr. Woolcott.

MRS. M. (*sits*) Well, I wish both you and Sir William Butler joy of your American. (*fans herself*)

UNA. What a beautiful fan; I wish I had one like that.

GEORGE. Fancy Undine with a fan!

SIR E. We must be moving now; our friends will be arriving presently.

MRS. M. And your Irishman yonder? (*pointing L.*)

SIR E. I left him writing out a dispatch for his paper with some information I gave him about the state of affairs in South Palestine. Come, Una. (*up to C.*)

(*Exit L. C. downstairs with UNA on his arm.*)

GEORGE. How jolly to have you here, aunt. There is no one like you.

MRS. M. (*rising and leaving fan on seat*) I want you to think of me as the best friend you have, George.

GEORGE. (*offering his arm*) By Jove, you're a brick, Aunt Florence, and m—I'm—

MRS. M. You're what, George?

GEORGE. (*aside*) I wish I had the pluck to make a clean breast of it to her, but—(*aloud*) I'm an awfully lucky fellow to have an aunt like you.

(*GEORGE and MRS. M. meet WILSON coming on as they go off.*)

MRS. M. Are you looking for anyone, Wilson?

WILSON. No, ma'am. Sir Everard told me to go and get a telegraphic despatch, ma'am, that a gentleman is writing in his library.

MRS. M. Very well. (*to GEORGE*) It's the journalistic Home Ruler. Come, dear.

(*Exit with GEORGE C. off L.*)

(Enter WOOLCOTT from conservatory R.)

WOOLCOTT. Well, this is the queerest place to get into I ever struck; all through the vines and palm trees like the entrance to the Garden of Eden.

WILSON. (*aside*) Who's that gent? I don't know 'im and I never saw 'im here. (*aloud*) I beg yer pardon, sir.

WOOLCOTT. Don't mention it.

WILSON. Might I ask who you was a-looking for, sir?

WOOLCOTT. Certainly, no secret about that. I'm after old Everard.

WILSON. Sir Everard, sir?

WOOLCOTT. That's his full style and title, I guess.

WILSON. Strange way to come, sir, in through the conservatory.

WOOLCOTT. Oh, that's the conservatory, is it? The cabby must have mistaken me for a hot-house plant.

WILSON. The front door is—

WOOLCOTT. Oh, there is a front door. I thought it odd when the cabby set me down opposite a kind of little wicket in the garden-wall; but it wasn't my place to be critical, so I just pushed ahead.

WILSON. Might I ask your name, sir?

WOOLCOTT. I ain't ashamed of it. Silas K. Woolcott of Grass Valley, California, U. S. A.—sorry I left my card case in my other pants, but that's the full printed description. And now, who are you? (*puts hat and coat on chair R.*)

WILSON. Butler, sir.

WOOLCOTT. The very old chap Everard was talking to me about. Shake, old man. (*WILSON hesitates*) Oh, come now; don't be so stiff and stand off. If we do business together, it may be money in your pocket yet. (*WILSON shakes hands*) So you're Butler, eh? William, isn't it?

WILSON. Wilson, sir.

WOOLCOTT. Thought it was William the old man said. Never mind, Wilson's near enough.

WILSON. Shall I tell Sir Everard?

WOOLCOTT. That I'm here? Oh, he'll find it out fast enough. I'll try and worry along with you, by way of change. Sit down and let us have a sociable time.

WILSON. Oh, I cawn't, sir.

WOOLCOTT. What's the reason you "cawn't"? Got a stiff joint? (*forces WILSON into seat and sits beside him*)

WILSON. (*aside*) Remarkable affable gent!

WOOLCOTT. And now—don't you want to buy a gold mine?

WILSON. A—ah—a—I beg your pardon, sir?

WOOLCOTT. Don't mention it. Now, this is biz—do you want to buy a gold mine?

WILSON. Ah, now, sir, you're chawfing me!

WOOLCOTT. I suppose you object to talking business at an evening sociable?

WILSON. (*rising*) If you'll excuse me, sir—

WOOLCOTT. (*pulling him down*) Now, sit down, Butler, and make yourself miserable for a minute. Hasn't Everard told you anything about the mine?

WILSON. 'Taint no wise likely Sir Everard should tell me anything of the kind, sir.

WOOLCOTT. Likely or not, he told me he would, and asked me here to-night especially to talk it over with you.

WILSON. To talk it over with me, sir?

WOOLCOTT. Sure.

WILSON. Most astonishing!

WOOLCOTT. You're Butler, ain't you?

WILSON. That is my position, sir.

WOOLCOTT. Position's good! William Butler, eh?

WILSON. Wilson, sir.

WOOLCOTT. Of course—sir Wilson Butler.

WILSON. (*rising*) I 'umbly beg your pardon, sir—

WOOLCOTT. Don't mention it.

WILSON. Sir William Butler is expected here to-night.

WOOLCOTT. Brother of yours, eh?

WILSON. I am *the butler*—Sir Everard's—ah—ahem—principal retainer, sir.

WOOLCOTT. Oh, the devil!

WILSON. No, sir, the butler.

WOOLCOTT. (*irritably*) I wish to-goodness you butlers wouldn't get yourselves up so confoundably respectable. How was I to tell you from a baronet?

WILSON. I'm sure I cawn't say 'ow, sir.

WOOLCOTT. (*putting his hand in his pocket*) Here's

one way. (*produces coin*) Do you know what that is?

WILSON. It's a 'alf sovereign, sir.

WOOLCOTT. If I offered it to you—

WILSON. I'd thank you 'umbly, sir.

WOOLCOTT. (*giving it*) No baronet about him. Now, go and tell old Everard I'm here.

WILSON. One moment, sir. (*goes off l. 2 E.*)

WOOLCOTT. All I know about the home life of the British Aristocracy I've picked up from looking at the society drama at home. Now, they always dress their flunkies there in blue or red coats and silk knee-breeches, so it's comparatively easy to tell 'em from the real swells. But, with a fellow like that—he might be anyone from a duke to a dancing master.

WILSON. (*entering l. with despatch in his hand. Crosses to R.*) All right, sir, I'll order a 'ansom to take it directly, sir.

WOOLCOTT. And tell Everard I got past the man at the door and I'm here.

WILSON. I beg your pardon, sir. Will you favor me with your name again, sir?

WOOLCOTT. Cert. I'm Silas K. Woolcott of Grass Valley, California, U. S. A. Try and have it by heart this time.

(WILSON *exits c.*)

RIORDAN. (*entering from library*) And is it Silas K. Woolcott I see before me?

WOOLCOTT. (*R. doubtfully*) It isn't anyone else. (*recognizing him*) Gerald Riordan, as I'm a living sinner!

RIORDAN. (*shaking hands*) I'm devilish glad to see you again, old fellow.

WOOLCOTT. The same to you and many of them. And what brings you here to London?

RIORDAN. I'm a member of Parliament, returned in the National interest for my native borough of Ballynocksloottery, and hard at work freeing Ireland by constitutional means.

WOOLCOTT. Good thing?

RIORDAN. Is what a good thing?

WOOLCOTT. Any money in it?

RIORDAN. Why man, it is patriotism, not filthy lucre!

WOOLCOTT. And don't you get anything for it?

RIORDAN. The devil a ha'porth, my boy, save and except always the reward of an approving conscience and the left-handed blessing of the ministry.

WOOLCOTT. Then I'd like to know what is done with all the money we have been subscribing in America?

RIORDAN. And what is it brings you here?

WOOLCOTT. I have come to sell a gold mine.

RIORDAN. Honest?

WOOLCOTT. Honest? Well, I should dump a claim! The Treasure Trove is as honest as they can make them; and that's the cold truth. (*insinuatingly*) Now, don't you want to buy a gold mine?

RIORDAN. Couldn't buy an inch of one, if they were selling like eggs at eighteen pence a score.

WOOLCOTT. Come have a gold mine with me.

RIORDAN. Have you talked to Foxwood about it?

WOOLCOTT. Scarcely talked to anybody else. I've got him on the string, only it isn't long enough. He has offered me fifteen thousand.

RIORDAN. Pounds or dollars?

WOOLCOTT. Pounds Sterling, Bank of England, gilt edge, extra dry.

RIORDAN. And you won't take it?

WOOLCOTT. Not if the court knows itself, and it thinks it—do.

RIORDAN. Faith, and it must be a very pretty thing.

WOOLCOTT. It is just the biggest thing on ice. Do you know Grass Valley, California?

RIORDAN. Well?

WOOLCOTT. That's where it is. Things are just booming in Grass Valley now, and the Treasure Trove is on top of the heap. Old Foxwood knows all about it.

RIORDAN. He wouldn't offer you money for it if he didn't. You seem to have struck it rich.

WOOLCOTT. I have for a fact, and it was about time, for I have had to rustle around pretty lively since I saw you. After that trouble in New York about my brother—  
(*pause*)

RIORDAN. (*quietly*) I remember.

WOOLCOTT. You managed to keep the worst of it out of the newspapers for me, and I've not forgotten it, Riordan, and never will—(*shakes hands*)

RIORDAN. (*sits on sofa*) And after that?

WOOLCOTT. (*sits on sofa*) It took my bottom dollar to close up that account, so I went back to Colorado and turned cowboy. I rounded up cattle for a while; then I tried a little speculation in land and made some money, but luck went back on me again, and my cash and that of a lot of other tenderfeet went to keep up the carriage of the receiver of a railroad I helped to build. Then I went to prospecting. To make a long story short, I stumbled on the color in Eureka county—and the quick way I grabbed the treasure wasn't slow.

RIORDAN. Quartz?

WOOLCOTT. Quartz, of course. If it was a placer, do you think I'd be letting Foxwood cut into my pie? But, quartz takes capital to get it.

RIORDAN. That's what a countryman of mine used to say whose income could seldom carry him beyond pints. (*arising, crosses to L. GEORGE enters up c. looking for fan*) Here's the son of the house.

WOOLCOTT. He's a good-looking young fellow.

GEORGE. I say, Riordan, have you seen a fan? (*as he looks up, WOOLCOTT starts and grips RIORDAN'S arm*)

WOOLCOTT. Don't you see a likeness?

RIORDAN. There is something—

WOOLCOTT. They are as like as a Yankee boy can be to a Britisher.

GEORGE. (*finding fan*) Ah, here it is. (*going*)

RIORDAN. George, this is my friend, Mr. Woolcott of Grass Valley, California.

GEORGE. (*eagerly*) I've always wished I could go over to see California and the diggings and the big trees—and everything.

WOOLCOTT. (*shaking hands heartily*) Walk across some day—I shall be very glad to show you round. I know it from Alfred to Omaha.

GEORGE. (*to RIORDAN going up*) He seems a good sort, that Yankee.

(*Exit down stairs c.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*looking after him*) Poor Charley! He might have been as light-hearted and as happy as that boy is—if I'd got to New York twenty-four hours sooner.

RIORDAN. (*sits on chair R. of table L. during preced-*

*ing specch*) Don't get thinking of it, old man. Tell me how you made out afterwards.

WOOLCOTT. (*sits*) Luck played it pretty low down on me for a good while, but I've got a drop on it now. Making money is a tough job, but spending it is as easy as rolling off a log; and when I sell the mine, I'll just paint the town red.

RIORDAN. I suppose you'll cut a great swell.

WOOLCOTT. I wouldn't cut any swell unless he put on frills and most of them do. There seems to be dead loads of them here to-night. Are you reporting the orgy?

RIORDAN. I am here trying to enjoy myself. Besides, there is a girl here that I am afraid I'm in love with.

WOOLCOTT. That's interesting. A man in love is more fun than a barrel of monkeys. Who is she?

RIORDAN. I don't know who she is to-night. The first time I met her she was Mary Queen of Scots. Since then I have seen her as Pocahontas, Joan of Arc, Helen of Troy, and a dozen other interesting personages.

WOOLCOTT. You must find her a little confusing. What's her name?

RIORDAN. She is the daughter of Sir Everard Foxwood.

WOOLCOTT. I've no use for that man except to sell him the Treasure Trove; he is a hard old file.

RIORDAN. He hasn't tried to rasp me yet. He entertains well though. To-night's soiree is in honor of a new portrait of himself, and if you want to get into his good graces, you might say that it doesn't do him justice.

WOOLCOTT. To do that, they would have to hang him on the line, if half I hear about him is true.

RIORDAN. If you take to judging men in this off-hand way you'll never get on in London.

WOOLCOTT. I don't want to. I want to sell my mine and go home—I've had London enough in mine; it's too far from the Bowery. (*rises*)

(RIORDAN *rises*.)

RIORDAN. Wait until you get into society a bit, you'll like it better. You'll meet some handsome women here to-night.

WOOLCOTT. Not half as many as I can meet on Broadway any matinee afternoon. I did see a beauty to-day, though. I came up with her on the cars from Dover, and attempted a little travel talk with her, but she squelched me with the regular stony British stare.

RIORDAN. (*standing L.*) You didn't make much progress, then?

WOOLCOTT. No, maybe I'll meet her again. I'd like to know her.

RIORDAN. She must have made an impression. But London's a pretty big place, recollect.

WOOLCOTT. Too big and too selfish—all body and no heart.

RIORDAN. That complaint comes oddly from a man of the world.

WOOLCOTT. You are a man of the world and I'm not. I'm a stranger from way-back. Just tell me who's who and give me a few stray hints. (*they go up to ballustrade*) Say, Riordan, who is that?

RIORDAN. Which?

WOOLCOTT. The handsome woman with the large fan—she's a daisy.

RIORDAN. The lady that Butler is speaking to?

WOOLCOTT. Damn that Butler! There, see with the fan! Now, she's moved away. That's the very lady I was telling you about—in the cars.

RIORDAN. You are in luck; you will have a chance now to get acquainted.

WOOLCOTT. (*waves handkerchief*) Howde!

RIORDAN. Ah, there's Miss Foxwood, the daughter of the house. She's got up as a water nymph of some sort. I must find out just what she represents or I'll get myself into hotter water than she is supposed to have come out of. Ah, there is the only Juliet!

WOOLCOTT. Who?

RIORDAN. You see those two ladies coming out of the music-room together, one with a fan—

WOOLCOTT. That is the one I asked you about just now.

RIORDAN. And the other elaborately upholstered in black and gold, she is the only Juliet.

WOOLCOTT. And who is the only Juliet, when she is at home?



RIORDAN. (*coming down together*) She is Mrs. Vandervast; she was Grace Strangeways, and the old critics swear we haven't had a *Juliet* since she left the stage. And she thinks so, too, and is always ready to spout Shakespeare to you at the shortest notice—she can never forget she was once the toast of the town.

WOOLCOTT. I wonder what took her to Dover?

RIORDAN. She may have been in Paris. She's nothing to do but amuse herself and she's always dodging about. She left the stage to marry a Dutchman, the senior partner in Vandervast, Schriften & Co., and she is now the happiest of sublunary mortals, a wealthy widow, and likes to speculate now and then. (*crosses down L.*)

WOOLCOTT. Do you suppose she wants to buy a gold mine?

RIORDAN. (L.) Faith, I don't know. You might try it. There is no difficulty in getting into her good graces if you approach her adroitly. Greet her as *Juliet*, play Romeo yourself, and draw on your memory and your imagination for all the hyperbole you can call up.

WOOLCOTT. (R.) She is a beauty—and no mistake!

RIORDAN. She *was* a beauty. If you think her beautiful now, you must be looking at the wrong woman.

WOOLCOTT. "How silver sweet sound lovers tongues by night." If she will only come up here on the balcony, we can begin the scene at once. But, perhaps I had better wait until I have shed some of my wild Western ways.

RIORDAN. Never think of it, my boy. Be as American as you can. The English like the humor of it. They are getting to be very fond of the Transatlantic flavors over here. Stick to your Yankee twang, as they call it. Leave to the dudes in New York, all attempts at the English accent, and give full flow to all your Americanism.

WOOLCOTT. Then I will venture an allusion to the venerable chestnut made by the Governor of North Carolina to the Governor of South Carolina. Which was that: "It's a long time between drinks."

RIORDAN. Sir Everard has made me free of his private supplies in his library here and he told me to make myself at home. (*going to library door L.*)

WOOLCOTT. Then perhaps he has a soul to be saved after all.

(As RIORDAN and WOOLCOTT go L., SIR E. enters from R. U. E.)

SIR E. (C.) How do you do, Mr. Woolcott? We can steal five minutes from social engagements and perhaps conclude our negotiations for your gold mine. What do you say?

WOOLCOTT. (c., *aside to RIORDAN*) I say I am euchered out of my drink. (*aloud*) At your service, Sir Everard.

SIR E. I'll introduce you to Sir William Butler presently. You haven't met him, I think?

WOOLCOTT. No; I thought I had, but he got away.

SIR E. Young Butler—Sir William's son—has just finished a course at the engineering school. Sir William talks of sending out to examine the property. Now, Mr. Woolcott, what do you think of going back to California with him?

WOOLCOTT. What for?

SIR E. To go over the property.

WOOLCOTT. I know it by heart, and I should think you would by this time. Still, I'm always glad of an excuse to go home for a spell.

RIORDAN. The girl I left behind me—is that the idea, Mr. Woolcott?

SIR E. Your wife resides in California, Mr. Woolcott?

WOOLCOTT. No, sir, she don't reside anywhere. I've had no leisure for courting in my life. When a man's making love, he's no time for making money.

SIR E. You are a bachelor, then?

WOOLCOTT. (C.) Yes, always. I'm a bachelor by nature. I was born so.

SIR E. (R.) But you have no objection to going over to California?

WOOLCOTT. Not in the least.

RIORDAN. (L.) I don't think he likes London, Sir Everard. (*going up L.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*aside to RIORDAN*) Say, Riordan, don't finish the bottle.

RIORDAN. Trust me. (*exit in library*)

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) Trust you! Trust an Irishman with a whisky bottle!

SIR E. (*sits*) I will see young Butler here this evening and ascertain how soon he will be ready to start.

WOOLCOTT. (*sits*) He can't start any too soon to please me. I wish you would make me a fair offer for the mine and let me finish the business right here.

SIR E. I am willing to give you fifteen thousand pounds.

WOOLCOTT. I'm not willing to take it. Come, be sporty, Sir Everard! You know the mine's worth every shilling of twenty thousand pounds.

SIR E. I must consider that when you get back from Grass Valley.

WOOLCOTT. The mine will be neither richer nor poorer, and I won't drop a dollar in my price. You can't hatch a china egg, Sir Everard, if you set on it till the robins nest again.

SIR E. Well, perhaps we can settle it by correspondence.

WOOLCOTT. No, sir, you can write around me every time. Before I'd start to do business with you by letter, I'd argue with a mule when his back is turned.

SIR E. (*haughtily*) A mule!

WOOLCOTT. (*rising*) Nothing personal, Sir Everard. You're a kick above a mule for you're open to conviction, and I've something here that will convince you if anything will. (*crosses to his overcoat and returns with quartz specimen*) Just see the veins running through that!

SIR E. (*adjusting glasses*) Very pretty, indeed!

WOOLCOTT. And no picked specimen, either. (*Returns it to his overcoat*)

SIR E. Well I will see young Butler. This can wait till your return, but remember, Woolcott, my offer of fifteen thousand pounds is open any time you choose to close with it. Shall we go down stairs?

WOOLCOTT. It seems to me my friend Riordan may be lonesome in there.

SIR E. Not at all. He's probably enjoying a cigar and a glass of brandy and water.

WOOLCOTT. Look at the luck some fellows have! That's just what I've been pining for.

SIR E. By all means, step in and try some.

WOOLCOTT. Well, Sir Everard, I won't say no, for I've a thirst on me I wouldn't take ten dollars for.

(WOOLCOTT and SIR EVERARD off L.)

GEORGE. (off c.) Now, lean on me, Mrs. Vandervast. There is no one here. You will have quiet and air and you will be better directly.

(Enter c. upstairs GEORGE and UNA bringing on MRS. VANDERVAST, who is faint and assist her to chair down c.)

UNA. (fanning her with MRS. M's fan) There now, how do you feel?

MRS. VAN. Better, my dear, better. Ah, this reminds me of the last night I played Juliet—it was before your time, my dears. It was a command night from a very great personage, and the theatre was crowded to suffocation. What with the heat and the applause and the excitement I fainted after the potion scene, and the first thing I remember was, hearing a very distinguished voice saying: "So even *Juliet* is mortal!" Pretty, wasn't it?

UNA. (fanning) Very.

MRS. VAN. And gratifying. You need not fan me any more, dear; I am quite restored.

(UNA rises; gives fan to MRS. VAN. and goes R. GEORGE gets to table and picks up book.)

(Enter RIORDAN L.)

RIORDAN. Good evening, fair naiad!

UNA. Good evening. I'm Undine to-night.

RIORDAN. And Undine is a naiad with all the modern improvements. But, what do my eyes behold? "It is the east and Juliet is the sun!" Don't arise, fair sun! (stopping MRS. VAN. who would rise to greet him) But let the humblest of your slaves kiss your hands.

GEORGE. (aside) What rot! (crosses in front of table to chair L. of table)

MRS. VAN. Ah, 'tis you, is it? Fair *Mercutio*—somehow, you always remind me of *Mercutio*—I fear you are a sad flatterer.

UNA. Indeed he is, Mrs. Vandervast.

RIORDAN. (R. C.) This from Miss Foxwood! I cannot tell a lie.—I never flatter.

UNA. (R.) I believe gentlemen on your side of the channel call it "blarney." (*sits on chair R.*)

RIORDAN. Faith, blarney is the only butter we have to spread on the dry bread of conversation. The wisest and greatest of men have been indebted to it. Solomon was the wisest man that ever yet was known because he swam to Ireland and kissed the blarney-stone.

MRS. VAN. Indeed! Is that historical? How interesting!

RIORDAN. And was there ever such a past master in the art of blarney as your own friend Romeo?

MRS. VAN. (*sighing with pleasure*) Ah, time has been, Mr. Riordan.

RIORDAN. Of course it has, and it has ceased to be, having been conquered by an alliance of genius and beauty! "See even she leans her cheek upon her hand, would I were a glove upon that hand that I might touch that cheek."

GEORGE. (*aside*) Rubbish!

(*Strain of music heard off.*)

RIORDAN. Hark! They are dancing!

UNA. They are getting up a set of quadrilles.

RIORDAN. Quadrilles are respectable if slow—a sort of tacit protest against the immorality of dancing. Will Undine honor me? (*offering his arm. She hesitates*)

MRS. VAN. Run along, dear, and enjoy yourself. Don't mind me. George will take me into the conservatory and I shall do very well. (*GEORGE turns to run*)

RIORDAN. Thrice happy George! Ah, madam, if it was only a question of saraband or even a minuet.

GEORGE. (*to RIORDAN*) You won't get into the set if you don't look sharp.

RIORDAN. Fair Juliet, adieu. "Parting is such sweet sorrow that I could say good night till to-morrow." Come, Miss Foxwood.

(*UNA and RIORDAN exit c. down stairs R.*)

GEORGE. Did you say you'd like to go into the conservatory, Mrs. Vandervast? It's awfully jolly and romantic and all that, you know, when the lamps are lit.

MRS. VAN. I think I should. (*GEORGE offers her*

*right arm*) No, the other arm, George. In escorting a lady, you should always offer her the left arm, leaving the sword arm free to defend her.

*(They go towards conservatory R., meeting MRS. MEREDITH entering c. up stage to R.)*

MRS. M. You are better, I trust? I got away as soon as I could to see how you were.

MRS. VAN. Thank you, I am distinctly better, and my kind young friend is taking me to the conservatory. So, I can return the fan now with many, many thanks.

MRS. M. You are sure you do not need it?

GEORGÉ. Oh, she's all jolly now. Aren't you, Mrs. Vandervast?

MRS. VAN. Indeed yes, I assure you.

*(Exit with GEORGE into conservatory R.)*

MRS. M. *(seating herself on sofa)* I am beginning to be tired, I confess. Even a woman cannot travel all day and play the hostess in the evening without feeling the fatigue. *(fans herself)*

*(Enter WOOLCOTT from library L.)*

WOOLCOTT. *(aside)* There's the only Juliet—fan and all! Great scott, but she's a pretty woman. There was excuse for Romeo. *(shuts the door)*

MRS. M. Here is Everard's Home-Rule Irishman! Why, it's the same man I came up from Dover with this afternoon. *(rises)*

WOOLCOTT. Ah, good evening. I had the pleasure of seeing you on the train to-day.

MRS. M. I saw you.

WOOLCOTT. Did you? It seemed to me that you were looking right through me, as if my face was a pane of glass and my back hair a landscape.

MRS. M. I believe I have a sense of humor.

WOOLCOTT. So have I. Some day or other I mean to come over here and start a funny Punch.

MRS. M. That is rather cruel to the present publication. *(bows slightly and as she moves away drops her fan)*

WOOLCOTT. *(stepping forward and restoring it to her)* Sweets to the sweet.

MRS. M. *(surprised)* Sir!

WOOLCOTT. There's a blunder to begin with. That's Hamlet, and it's Romeo and Juliet she's struck after. (*aloud*) A pleasant reunion our friend Sir Everard has here to-night.

MRS. M. (*amused*) I find it amusing—now: Have you known Sir Everard long?

WOOLCOTT. Not a great while. Quite a little man, isn't he?

MRS. M. Why, what should he be?

WOOLCOTT. Nothing, nothing. Is he a great admirer of Shakespeare?

MRS. M. I think he appreciates Shakespeare and the musical glasses.

WOOLCOTT. (*embarrassed*) Of course, of course. (*aside*) Now, what is she talking about? Musical glasses? That's a little high for me!

MRS. M. (*aside*) Either he's been taking a glass that wasn't musical or he's a little touched in the head—or perhaps he's only an Irishman. But he is amusing.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) My recollection of Romeo is very rusty—and besides I can't recall that he ever tried to sell Juliet a gold mine. (*aloud*) How long is it since you left the theatre?

MRS. M. Left the theatre? I haven't been to the play this evening.

WOOLCOTT. Of course of course—I mean since you left it—gave it up.

MRS. M. I have not been to the theatre since my poor husband's death.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) If I don't strike a lead soon, the conversation will not pan out very profitably. (*aloud*) So, you are a widow?

MRS. M. Yes. (*aside*) This is really amusing. The man is an original!

WOOLCOTT. Seeing you so beautiful, I might have guessed that some man had died for love of you and left you his widow.

MRS. M. (*aside*) Here is Irish blarney with a vengeance. (*aloud*) You are very complimentary.

WOOLCOTT. "Oh, thou dost teach the torches to burn bright. Thy beauty hangs upon the brows of night like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

MRS. M. Haven't I heard that somewhere before?

WOOLCOTT. Of course, of course. That's Romeo and Juliet, isn't it?

MRS. M. It is very pretty indeed—but I do not greatly care for second-hand compliments.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) She's mighty bright woman—and not half as crazy after Juliet as Riordan said.

MRS. M. (*aside*) Now he can tell me if he will. He is a Home-Rule M. P. and I have long wanted to know if these fellows are really patriotic or altogether selfish. (*aloud*) May I take the liberty of asking you a question or two on a subject which interests me greatly?

WOOLCOTT. Any information I can give is entirely at your service.

MRS. M. And you will answer me truthfully?

WOOLCOTT. (*puzzled*) Of course, of course.

MRS. M. And you will not be offended?

WOOLCOTT. Certainly not.

MRS. M. Well, then—about this movement—how shall I phrase it—this business of yours that brings so many of your countrymen to London—how does it get on?

WOOLCOTT. Not so fast as I could wish. There's a great deal of shilly-shally and hang-back about your leading men over here.

MRS. M. So I should have supposed. But, assuming you are successful, do you, individually expect to make money out of it?

WOOLCOTT. Well, I should smile.

MRS. M. Excuse me, but what does "I should smile" mean?

WOOLCOTT. It expressed enthusiastic assent.

MRS. M. Then you do expect to make money out of it?

WOOLCOTT. Of course—of course—

MRS. M. (*aside*) They are as mercenary as I thought!

WOOLCOTT. Why should I bother about it if I didn't hope to make my pile?

MRS. M. Very true, why indeed? That is candid at any rate. Then you do not fight for the principle of the thing at all?

WOOLCOTT. Certainly I do. It is my *principal*, and I propose to turn it into cash if I can.

MRS. M. Sell it, in fact?

WOOLCOTT. To the highest bidder. To yourself, Madam, if you make me a good offer.



MRS. M. Thank you, it is quite out of my line, and I only asked as a matter of curiosity.

WOOLCOTT. Hold on! I'll give you a specimen. (*rises; makes for his coat*)

MRS. M. Never mind it. After what you told me, your oratory would fall rather flat.

WOOLCOTT. My oratory! I wasn't going to preach a sermon over it. But, it's good! You don't know what you might make out of it.

MRS. M. (*aside*) I don't know quite what to make of him.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) Perhaps if I gave her a little more Juliet and Romeo——

MRS. M. Apart from the money then, you take no interest at all.

WOOLCOTT. If I am paid a lump sum, I shall have no occasion to take interest.

MRS. M. No doubt you know best; but that does not seem to me a very patriotic way of looking at the matter.

WOOLCOTT. Patriotism has nothing to do with it, as far as I can see. To me, it is a mere matter of business—just a gold mine, neither more or less.

MRS. M. A gold mine, of course; and I have no doubt it will prove a profitable one.

WOOLCOTT. (*rises*) Thank you, ma'am, I hope it will. I need it in my business.

MRS. M. I thank you for your kindness—and your candor. (*rises*) I've never had so close a view of the Irish question before. (*going up R.*)

WOOLCOTT. There's nothing so Irish in a square trade. (*aside*) She mustn't go before I have a chance to soften her heart with a little more Romeo. (*aloud*) I answered your questions, now, won't you do me a favor?

MRS. M. If I can.

WOOLCOTT. Just run through a scene or two of Juliet for me.

MRS. M. (*surprised*) Juliet!

WOOLCOTT. Don't refuse me. I know you gave up the stage long ago.

MRS. M. (*astonished*) What?

WOOLCOTT. You are famous on the other side of the water, and when I go back, I'd like to be able to say I

had gone through the balcony scene with the only Juliet!

MRS. M. The only Juliet! (*aside, much amused*) The man takes me for Mrs. Vandervast. Now, I understand his high flown compliments. (*laughing*) This will be the death of me.

WOOLCOTT. (*persuasively*) Just a few lines——

MRS. M. You must prompt me then, for it is a long while since I have read the play.

WOOLCOTT. All right! (*aside*) By Jove, I wish I could speak the lines on my own account. (*aloud*) You hold your face as if you had the toothache. See, how she leans her head upon her hand. Oh, would I were a glove upon that hand, that I might kiss—or touch—is it? Is it kiss or touch?

MRS. M. Neither if I know it.

WOOLCOTT. Anyhow, there is “cheek” in the line.

MRS. M. And it is a word you are thoroughly familiar with!

WOOLCOTT. Then you answer—“Oh, Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?”

(MRS. VANDERVAST and GEORGE enter from R.)

MRS. VAN. They are trying over the balcony scene. This is the position. (*adjusting MRS. MEREDITH*)

(SIR EVERARD enters L.)

SIR E. Mr. Woolcott, what do you mean—kneeling before my sister like a confounded idiot?

WOOLCOTT. Your sister!

SIR E. My sister, Mrs. Meredith. (WOOLCOTT staggers back to sofa)

MRS. M. Mr. Woolcott and I have managed to fall into acquaintance.

WOOLCOTT. Well, Mrs. Meredith, all I can say is, I hope we shall never fall out.

(Enter WILSON, C. from L., with a tray of ices. He hands them around.)

MRS. M. Allow me to introduce you to the genuine, the only Juliet. (WOOLCOTT and MRS. VANDERVAST bow)

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) That's different. Good-bye, Romeo.

(UNA and RIORDAN enter c.)

WILSON. (*handing WOOLCOTT tray*) Ice, sir?

WOOLCOTT. (*taking one*) Thank you, I could stand an iceberg just now. (*mopping his face*)

SIR E. Well, Mr. Woolcott, as I was about to say, when this absurd scene put everything out of my head—

MRS. M. Don't scold, Everard, it has given me the best laugh I've had for months.

WOOLCOTT. (*recovering*) I'm glad I amused you, Mrs. Meredith. I suppose now, you'll look on me as a mountebank to the end of the chapter.

RIORDAN. That won't be long, if you're going right back to California?

SIR E. Young Butler says he can sail Saturday. You will be ready then, I suppose, Mr. Woolcott?

MRS. M. Are you going away so soon? What a pity!

WOOLCOTT. Think so? Then I won't go at all.

SIR E. Not go—why I've arranged it all with young Butler.

WOOLCOTT. Butler can go without me. I've changed my mind. (*looking at Mrs. M.*)

(*Music of waltz heard.*)

RIORDAN. Our waltz, Miss Una. (*offers his arm and they dance up*)

WOOLCOTT. (*to Mrs. M.*) May I have the pleasure?

MRS. M. (*aside*) Well, he is amusing. (*aloud*) Yes.

CURTAIN.

## ACT II.

SCENE: *Five months later. Plays July 4th. Same set as Act I. Early afternoon.*

WILSON brings on KREBS, c., upstairs L.

WILSON. Sit down here, if you've a mind to, Mr. Krebs, but you may have to wait a goodish bit. Master George was gone to Lords to-day, playing in a cricket match.

KREBS. (*sits L.*) A cricket match. These English are a strange people, they would leave their house burning to go to a cricket match.

WILSON. (R. c.) Which they know the duty they owe, sir, to their country and their eleven.

(*Enter GEORGE c., dressed in cricketing flannels; his left hand bandaged and arm in sling.*)

GEORGE. (*coming down c.*) Hello, Krebs, is that you?

KREBS. (L.) I wanted to see you. I hope no accident has happened.

GEORGE. (c.) Nothing much. Enough to send me home though. I have been playing cricket and managed to split two of my fingers. But, you wanted to see me, Krebs?

KREBS. There is a little matter of business— (*points and looks at WILSON*)

GEORGE. (*understanding*) Wilson, will you go down and dismiss that cab. I haven't any money in these pockets— (*aside*) —and precious little anywhere else. (*crosses R.*)

(*WILSON exits downstairs, R. c.*)

GEORGE. (*after watching him off*) What is it? I gave you that seven hundred pounds months ago to settle up with.

KREBS. (*rising, coming c. to GEORGE*) That is all

settled. This is something else. Do you know who was in the office this morning?

GEORGE. (R.) No.

KREBS. (L.) Mr. Selover of Sharp and Selover.

GEORGE. The stockbrokers! Good gracious! Did he see the Governor?

KREBS. Sir Everard's not been down to-day. Mr. Selover spoke to me, sir, and——

GEORGE. I know—I know! Lord, what a precious fool I have been.

KREBS. This is a very serious matter. Mr. Selover said it was close upon ten thousand pounds.

GEORGE. So much as that? I had no idea. They have been carrying stock for me, Krebs, and——

KREBS. Mr. Selover told me all about it. He said they had no objection to continue to carry you, if Sir Everard said it was all right, but it is a very heavy account for so young a gentleman, so he thought he would ask if Sir Everard approved.

GEORGE. Approved! If he hears of it, Krebs, I don't know what he'd do. He'd—oh, Heavens. (*walking up and down R.*)

KREBS. Sir Everard has sold nearly all his Palestine Bitumen shares.

GEORGE. (*bitterly*) He has sold them to me, and he sold me with them! (*strong*)

KREBS. And that will not make him more amiable when he discovers it.

GEORGE. But he must not discover it. Oh, what am I to do?

KREBS. We must try and get a little time from Sharp and Selover till you can turn round and get the money.

GEORGE. (*bitterly*) Oh, that'll be easy. I found it so simple to get seven hundred pounds that there'll be no trouble at all raising ten thousand. But, I'll see what can be done. I'll—oh,—I don't know what to do! (*distractedly*)

KREBS. You may count on me, Master George, to help you all I can. I will go straight to their office. (*gets hat at table L.*) I will telegraph to you at once to say whether or not, they will give you till the end of the week.

GEORGE. That's the most they'll let me have, I suppose?

KREBS. It is more than I expect they will let you have.

GEORGE. I shall be on pins and needles till I get your telegram. (KREBS *going*) Oh, I say— (KREBS *goes back to GEORGE again c.*) If Una sees it, she's safe to open it—she can't believe a brother has any secrets from his sister. Put it this way, if they will give me till Saturday before they see the Governor, wire "Two runs to spare" or if it's a case of to-morrow: "Bowled out." Then if Una does get hold of it, she'll think it something about a cricket match.

KREBS. "Two runs to spare," or "Bowled out." I will remember. (*sees UNA coming—motions GEORGE to be still.*)

(*Enter UNA from conservatory R. She wears a dress very like MARGUERITE'S in "FAUST."*)

UNA. (R. c.) Oh, George, what is the matter with your hand?

GEORGE. It's nothing, I hurt it at Lord's.

UNA. Oh, you poor dear boy! Let me see it.

GEORGE. (*annoyed—crossing R.*) I can't untie it for you to peep at.

UNA. (*seeing KREBS*) Good afternoon, Mr. Krebs. Did you want to see papa? He's not well to-day, and has gone for a walk, but he'll be back directly.

KREBS. I cannot wait any longer, but it is of no consequence

UNA. And how is Mrs. Krebs?

KREBS. Greatly better, thank you. She owes her life to your dear Aunt—Heaven bless her! I expect her home to-night, and she will take an early day to express her gratitude to Mrs. Meredith.

UNA. I am so glad to hear she is improved.

GEORGE. (*fidgitting*) I'll walk down with you to the corner, Krebs, and see you on your bus.

UNA. But ought you to walk, George, with your hand?

GEORGE. I don't walk with my hands, you little goose! (UNA *annoyed, goes to table L. and stands*) Come, Krebs— (*they go up*)

UNA. (*sitting R. of table L.*) I can't think what is

the matter with George. He seems so strange—as though he were worried about something. And I don't believe Mr. Riordan meant to come at all. Here it is nearly 3 o'clock, and he promised me last night that he would call early, and see how I was after my fatigue—as if a ball fatigued me. Still, I wish he'd come all the same. It's too bad to dress for nothing, and I could have lounged away the whole afternoon in my Marie Antoinette.

(Enter RIORDAN L. C., unperceived.)

And I dressed as Hibernia last night, just out of compliment to him, and because the tiresome florist could not send me any shamrock, and I had to wear laurel instead, he took me for Daphne. (RIORDAN *steals up, and kisses her hand*)

RIORDAN. Fair Marguerite, I kiss your hand!

UNA. (*with a little scream*) Oh, Mr. Riordan, how you startled me! Who could have expected you so early?

RIORDAN. Is it early? I thought it was late.

UNA. I wish you could feel how my heart is beating?

RIORDAN. I wish I could. I didn't intend to startle you. I'm not Mephistopheles. I've got you right this time, haven't I—you're Marguerite?

UNA. Of course, I'm Marguerite, but I wonder at your knowing it. I should have supposed that you would have taken me for Daphne again.

RIORDAN. Not twice in twenty-four hours. But my mistake last night was excusable enough. But, you looked charming.

UNA. Did I? It was a delightful ball. But, what possessed you to go as the Toreador?

RIORDAN. Because you told me you were going as Carmen.

UNA. That's pretty. But, fancy an Irish bull-fighter!

RIORDAN. An Irish John-bull fighter would be more appropriate, would it not?

UNA. You mustn't abuse England to me.

RIORDAN. Then you mustn't abuse Ireland to me. To paraphrase Cowper, I will say: "Ireland, with all thy faults, I love thee still!"

UNA. Mr. Riordan, what can you mean?

RIORDAN. I mean I love you. (UNA *turns from him still seated*) Oh, don't turn away your head, Una.

Won't you give me an answer? Can't you say "Yes?" Just one little "Yes?"—from your sweet lips is all I need to make me the happiest man in the universe this minute.

WILSON. (*at c. announcing*) Mrs. Vandervast! (*exit c.*)

RIORDAN. (*jumping up*) The devil!

MRS. VAN. (*coming airily forward*) Ah, young people! I am not spoiling a tete-a-tete, I hope?

RIORDAN. (*aside*) You're spoiling my temper.

MRS. VAN. But I must positively have someone to compare notes with about the ball last night. Don't ask me to take off my things, because I'm going to. (*taking off shawl, parasol, sits c.*) Where is Mrs. Meredith?

UNA. (*L. c.*) Aunt has gone out.

MRS. VAN. How provoking! I hope you enjoyed yourself, dear? I saw you, and you were looking lovely! Didn't you think so, Mr. Riordan?

RIORDAN. Miss Foxwood knows what I thought of her last night— (*aside to UNA*) and always.

UNA. Yet he mistook me for Daphne.

MRS. VAN. Did he? How very stupid! If Mercutio will excuse my saying so, I knew you at once—Cordelia—and admirably you were made up, my dear— (*RIORDAN laughs*) What are you laughing at, Mr. Riordan? I have played the part, and I am sure I ought to be competent to express an opinion on Cordelia's costume—Now, what did you think of me?

RIORDAN. Madam, I found you, as I always do, the most charming impersonator of Juliet, heart could desire, either on or off the stage. (*pointedly*) Will you subscribe to my declaration, Miss Foxwood?

MRS. VAN. To be sure she will, dear girl, only too partial to her friends. Did you see old Lord Vavasour speaking to me? A dear old man! The bouquets he used to send me thirty years ago! Do you know what he said to me last night—"If Grace Strangeways ever carried the charms of Juliet to adorn private life, I had hoped her new initial would have been "V."

UNA. And so it is.

MRS. VAN. Exactly so, my dear, but that was not exactly what Lord Vavasour meant, and he intended it for a compliment, poor fellow.



RIORDAN. When Mr. Vandervast proposed to you—you'll stop me if I am impertinent—how did he do it?

MRS. VAN. I don't say you are impertinent, but it is an odd question. Why do you wish to know?

RIORDAN. Because I have been thinking of proposing myself, and I am collecting all the methods of successful suitors of modern history with the view of selecting one for my own use.

MRS. VAN. Dear me, that is ingenious, and worthy of Mercutio. Well, Mr. Vandervast borrowed a prompt copy of Romeo and studied the whole part. He had a sad Dutch accent, poor fellow, which rather marred his delivery when the time came, but after all, Romeo was a foreigner too.

RIORDAN. I am afraid that precedent—even with the sanction of its distinguished success, (*bowing to MRS. VAN*) would hardly answer my case.

MRS. VAN. You had better woo as Mercutio than as Romeo, but I hope you will succeed.

RIORDAN. Will you echo that wish, Miss Foxwood?

MRS. VAN. Of course, she will, the dear child.

RIORDAN. (*impatiently*) Can't you let her answer for herself, Mrs. Vandervast?

MRS. VAN. There now, Mr. Riordan, you have made her blush. "Love's ensign yet is crimson on her cheeks!"

RIORDAN. Do you think I shall speed in my wooing, Miss Foxwood?

UNA. (*hesitating*) If you are wooing in earnest—(*looking up and catching RIORDAN'S gaze, he makes gesture of solemn asseveration. She looks down again*) I think you have won your suit.

(*RIORDAN jumps up joyfully and seizes UNA'S hand behind MRS. VAN'S back.*)

MRS. VAN. What did I tell you? And I do believe the girl's right. I think you have certainly got past the proposal. Tell me, in confidence, now when is the happy day?

RIORDAN. I must have an opportunity to consult with the lady before I can answer that question. (*telegraphing to UNA*) I wonder what she will say?

UNA. You ought to be ashamed of yourself!

RIORDAN. (*laughing*) Do you think she'll make me wait long?

UNA. (*stamping*) She'd make you wait forever, if she knew that you dared to laugh at her.

MRS. VAN. Not she. She may send me away the first time, but not far. But there, there! If Mrs. Meredith is not in, I think I will go.

UNA. Surely not so soon, Mrs. Vandervast. But if you really must—you know—here are your things—let me put them on for you.

MRS. VAN. Thank you, my dear.

RIORDAN. And this is your parasol. Shall I see if your carriage is at the door?

MRS. VAN. I ordered the coachman to remain, as I only ran up here for a minute.

RIORDAN. (*aside*) Ye gods! What a minute she chose! (*going L., then back*) Allow me! (*offers arm*)

(*This is said as he goes up, as if to take her down stairs.*)

MRS. VAN. (*re-seating herself*) By the way, dear, are you going to Lady Caldecott's this evening—?

UNA. I am—no—yes—I believe so.

(*RIORDAN up stage is expressing agony of impatience.*)

MRS. VAN. Because if your people are not going, I have an extra card and I will be most pleased to call for you.

UNA. Thank you ever so much, but we have all got cards, and I am ever so much obliged to you. And now I shall never forgive myself if I keep you from your drive for a moment longer this lovely afternoon.

(*RIORDAN fidgeting L. forced smile*)

(*Enter GEORGE C., meeting MRS. VAN who is being escorted off by RIORDAN.*)

GEORGE. How do you do, Mrs. Vandervast? (*they shake hands*)

RIORDAN. This looks like a positive conspiracy.

GEORGE. I beg your pardon, Una—

MRS. VAN. But what is the matter with your hand?

GEORGE. Nothing to signify. I hurt it at cricket. I say, Una, has a telegraph come for me?

UNA. Not that I know of. If you expect one, you had better ask down stairs.

MRS. VAN. And you can give me your arm down to the carriage. I will excuse your right arm this time, my poor wounded knight. Good-bye, dear, and all possible success to you, Mr. Mercutio.

(RIORDAN down L. UNA is down R. GEORGE and MRS. VAN exeunt C., downstairs L.)

RIORDAN. Thank Heaven, she's gone.

UNA. I thought she'd never go.

RIORDAN. I wish she had not come. At last!

(Rushes down to UNA, embracing her.)

So, you do love me!

UNA. Just a little, though you do not deserve it, making me so uncomfortable with your hints and innuendos.

RIORDAN. I will let you scold me as much as you please now you have confessed that you love me. (*kisses her*) Did you know I loved you?

UNA. I thought so. In fact, I've been expecting you to propose for about two weeks now.

RIORDAN. Two weeks wasted. I must make up for lost time. (*kisses her*)

UNA. You must not do so, Mr. Riordan.

RIORDAN. Call me Gerald.

UNA. Well, one kiss a day is enough, Mr. Gerald.

RIORDAN. Not Mr. Gerald, just plain Gerald.

UNA. I can't call you plain Gerald, you're too good looking. See how you've fidgeted yourself into a state of untidyness. Stoop down and let me settle your tie.

RIORDAN. Una—

UNA. Yes—Gerald.

RIORDAN. Do you think it's right for a young lady to keep what doesn't belong to her?

UNA. Certainly not.

RIORDAN. Then, I'll trouble you to give me back those kisses I gave you just now.

UNA. Oh, Gerald, I can't.

RIORDAN. Just one. It is quite easy when you've once made a beginning. (*draws her to him*)

UNA. Only a little one. (*kisses him*)

RIORDAN. Sure, I'll be generous and won't keep it.  
(*kisses her*)

(*Enter WOOLCOTT C.*)

(*UNA crosses L. and turns; RIORDAN goes R.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*shaking hands*) How's yourself, Miss Una? Well, Riordan, you haven't blown up Parliament with that dynamite speech yet, I see?

RIORDAN. The explosion is set to come off to-night.

WOOLCOTT. The Fourth of July is just the day for fireworks and oratory. I've an appointment here with Sir Everard, but it goes against the grain to be doing business on the Fourth. Yet we can hardly expect a Britisher to take stock in that anniversary.

RIORDAN. So it is the Fourth of July! I hadn't thought of it.

WOOLCOTT. Of course, of course, you're only an alien.

UNA. And what is the Fourth of July remarkable for?

RIORDAN. It is the birthday of your favorite Pocahontas.

UNA. Not really!

WOOLCOTT. He's chaffing you. (*oratorically*) It is the greatest day of the year in America, for it is the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. It is on the Fourth of July that the spread eagle of America flaps its wings and soars into the blue empyrean—

MRS. M. (*entering c. up-stairs*) Is Mr. Woolcott making what he would call a stump speech?

WOOLCOTT. Of course, of course. (*aside*) That woman shuts me up like a jack-knife, only I'm not half as sharp.

MRS. M. (*sinking on sofa and fanning*) What a warm day it is. Una dear, take my bonnet off.

RIORDAN. (*to WOOLCOTT*) You are not going?

WOOLCOTT. Why not?—as Mrs. Meredith says, it is a warm day. Why should I stay to be roasted?

RIORDAN. You don't mind her chaff, do you?

WOOLCOTT. I like it. I could not live without it, but it is like a cold shower bath, invigorating in the end, but a great shock at first.

RIORDAN. I like to see a handsome widow with a good flow of spirits.

WOOLCOTT. I like this handsome widow, but a man has no more chance with one than a trading schooner

has with a privateer. They all sail under the black flag, and if they do happen to marry again, they are still no better than pirates who only hoist the white flag that they may get within arm's length of the foe.

*(During above, UNA has been removing her aunt's bonnet and otherwise assisting her.)*

MRS. M. Thank you, dear, that's better. Yes, you can have that bud if you admire it. *(UNA takes flower from MRS. M's. breast)* Do you know, I think we are the most inconsistent people in the world, living in London through the dog days, and going to the country only when it gets too cold to be agreeable there.

WOOLCOTT. Now we do exactly the reverse in America, we——

MRS. M. Now don't talk about America. I see the thermometer stood at 102 in the shade in New York yesterday.

WOOLCOTT. Ours is a great country, ma'am, and we like a big thing, whether it is a circus, or a railroad, or a hot spell—we get all we can.

MRS. M. And here in London we do all we can, till we can't do any more. Consider my day's work. I left the ball about one o'clock, and from two till nine I enjoyed a little rest and blessed oblivion. At nine I was downstairs giving my dear boy his breakfast. Then I wrote letters—thirteen of them. Then there was luncheon to eat and dinner to order. Then the carriage comes round and off I go alone. The streets are muddy where the sprinkling cart has passed and an inch deep in dust anywhere else. This is London in the season. And there I am at last, after spending an hour and a half at the meeting of the patroness of the Charitable Eye and Ear Infirmary.

WOOLCOTT. *(drily)* I did not know there was a charitable eye or ear in all London. How's that? *(shakes hands)*

MRS. M. *(rising, sweetly)* Evidently when we need a charitable tongue, we can import it from America. *(crossing to UNA L.)*

RIORDAN. How's that? *(shakes hands)*

WOOLCOTT. *(aside to RIORDAN)* I knew I should catch it. I always do. After two minutes' talk with

her, I am a regular Saint Sebastian, all stuck full of arrows like a pin-cushion.

RIORDAN. There why don't you keep out of range?

WOOLCOTT. I can't: she makes me miserable when I'm here, and I make myself miserable when I'm not here. She's a true woman—there's no living either with her or without her.

MRS. M. Now, Una, what are you going to wear to-night?

UNA. I have not quite made up my mind, aunt. I was thinking—(*glances at RIORDAN*)

MRS. M. Why do you look at Mr. Riordan? Do you think he is as great an authority on woman's dress as he is on land tenure? (*RIORDAN rises*) Let me look at you! Blushing, I declare. Una, what is this?

RIORDAN. (*looking at his watch*) I must say good-bye, Mrs. Meredith; I have an engagement this afternoon in the city—

MRS. M. Here—here—your city friends can wait. City people are rich enough to afford anything, even time, if they only thought so. Now, Una tell me—

UNA. (*kisses her*) Oh, Aunt. (*hiding her face*)

MRS. M. So you have an engagement here, too, Mr. Riordan. It's fortunate you're an M. P. or my brother wouldn't listen to you for a moment. (*rise*)

WOOLCOTT. I congratulate you, my dear fellow. (*shakes RIORDAN'S hand*) I wonder if you will have the same opinion of Home Rule next year?

MRS. M. Now, you can go if you wish. I've found out all I want to know, and you musn't keep your rich friends waiting, and I'm very glad, Una, and God bless you, dear, and I hope you may be very, very happy.

UNA. Thank you, aunt.

RIORDAN. I must go really, for my city appointment is a solid fact and not a lover's fiction.

UNA. I'll go down stairs with you. I'll be back directly, aunt.

(*Exit UNA AND RIORDAN down stairs.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*hums*) "There's nothing half so sweet in life as love's young dream!"

MRS. M. It is a little too sweet to be wholesome. Do you fall in love in America, too?

WOOLCOTT. I never fell in love till I came to England.

MRS. M. That's rather unpatriotic, isn't it? I thought the American girls were so pretty.

WOOLCOTT. I thought so myself, once—once!

MRS. M. How is the gold mine? Sold yet?

WOOLCOTT. Not yet. Your brother won't come to my terms, and I'm afraid I can't come to his.

MRS. M. (*laughing*) I never think of that gold mine without laughing at our dreadful game of cross purposes the first time I met you. Poor Mr. Riordan! (*laugh*) I thought him the most mercenary patriot I had ever heard of.

WOOLCOTT. And poor Mrs. Vandervast. For one brief half hour I thought I really understood Romeo.

MRS. M. Pooh! Romeo was in love! I have no sympathy with lovers. With you men, love is like the tide—when it reaches the flood, it begins to ebb.

WOOLCOTT. And with you women, love is like the moon that causes the tide—it has a new man every month. And yet, I have seen such a thing as a perfectly happy marriage.

MRS. M. Yes, there has to be one every now and then, like the great prize in a lottery, to encourage speculation.

WOOLCOTT. When a woman gets a lover—oh, I've watched lots of them—she likes to purr and play with him as a cat does with a mouse, letting him go for a while, just for the cruel pleasure of catching him back again.

MRS. M. I suppose in America, it is considered polite to liken a lady to an old cat.

WOOLCOTT. She's rather apt to get her back up if you do.

MRS. M. You Americans respect nothing—not even an old family tree.

WOOLCOTT. Well, I've noticed that an old family is often like an old tree—the best part of it is underground.

MRS. M. But you do respect the roast beef of Old England?

WOOLCOTT. I worship it, though it has come from Chicago.

MRS. M. Mr. Woolcott, when I told you I had met one of your Senators who ate with his knife, you bounced out of the room like a tornado.

WOOLCOTT. Now, there's one of your contracted insular ideas. You don't know a tornado when you see one. What would be a mere spring zephyr in America, becomes a hurricane over here in this little island of yours.

MRS. M. Indeed! And what would an American hurricane do in England?

WOOLCOTT. It would tear the island up by the roots, ma'am—blow it clean across the Atlantic and sink it in the Hudson river, where it wouldn't even prove an impediment to navigation.

MRS. M. And you Americans would be desolated, because you couldn't come to London next year, having no Liverpool to land at, and no London to visit.

WOOLCOTT. You've an answer to everything, so give me one to this question: wouldn't you like to see America?

MRS. M. Don't you think I can form a more favorable impression from listening to you and believing you—when I can.

WOOLCOTT. When you can— But aren't you a little curious?

MRS. M. I can't say I am in that direction.

WOOLCOTT. I thought all women were in every direction.

MRS. M. I confess that woman is the most curious of all created beings—after a man.

WOOLCOTT. Then you confess woman generally is after a man.

MRS. M. That is only because the man is rude enough to go first.

UNA. (*enters c. up-stairs*) Quarrelling as usual, you two.

WOOLCOTT. It takes two to quarrel, and all I am doing is to suffer under my customary castigation.

MRS. M. Didn't you deserve it?

WOOLCOTT. Didn't I receive it humbly? But, I have had as much as I can stand for one day. With your permission, I will stroll down to the river with a cigar. (*goes up stage, UNA crosses to table. MRS. M. comes down. To UNA.*) May I beg you to tell your father that I am waiting to see him? (*going*)

UNA. I can't think what keeps him so long.



WOOLCOTT. (*up c.*) Good afternoon, ladies.

(*Exit c. downstairs L.*)

UNA. Why are you so hard on poor Mr. Woolcott? I like him rather. I think he is a rough diamond.

MRS. M. That's why I want to cut him.

UNA. Gerald calls him "a white man" as they say in America.

MRS. M. (*indifferently*) I thought they were either red men or black men, like the knaves in a pack of cards.

UNA. He certainly seems fond of George, aunt.

MRS. M. Perhaps he is in his queer way—that's a point in his favor, but, then, who wouldn't be fond of that dear boy? (*enter GEORGE C. upstairs L.*) Oh, George, what's the matter with your hand?

GEORGE. Oh, nothing, Aunt, only a hot one at point. (*anxiously*) Haven't seen anything of a telegram for me, have you?

MRS. M. It is important?

GEORGE. No—yes—it's rather interesting to me.

(*Enter WILSON from library L.*)

WILSON. A telegram for you, Master George. (*GEORGE seizes it and tears it open, reads it at a glance and is greatly overcome*)

WILSON. Any answer, sir?

GEORGE. No, no answer. (*exit WILSON c. downstairs*) Oh, what am I to do?

MRS. M. What is it, George? For pity's sake, what is the matter?

UNA. (*picking up telegram*) "Bowled out." Oh, it is only about the cricket match.

MRS. M. Tell me the truth. What is the meaning of this?

GEORGE. Oh, aunt, if I could—if I only dared!

MRS. M. My dear boy, I am your friend, if you have one in the world. Whatever your trouble, it will be made no lighter by concealment. Perhaps I may be able to help you. Shall I send Una away?

GEORGE. There is no need—and I can't tell you—you couldn't help me—it is too much.

MRS. M. Is it a money trouble? (GEORGE *nods*) Your father doesn't know? (*he shakes his head*) Now out with it, George—how much is it? The whole truth, mind!

GEORGE. (*dismally*) It is about ten thousand pounds.

MRS. M. Ten thousand pounds!

UNA. Oh, George dear, how did you manage?

GEORGE. I knew it was no good telling you. What's the good of making everyone wretched as well as myself? I ran behind about six months ago, aunty, and I've been trying to make a little money on change, and everything went wrong—and now it's come to this.

MRS. M. (*resolutely*) To whom do you owe this money?

GEORGE. Sharp & Selover, the stockbrokers. They've been carrying the account for me, but unless it is made good to-morrow, they'll take it to the Governor.

UNA. Oh, George, papa will never forgive you!

GEORGE. Oh, if I were only out of this, just this once! (*goes up R.*)

MRS. M. I wonder if I went to my brother—

UNA. It would be no use, aunt. He paid George's debts once—a little insignificant sum compared to this—and he said if such a thing ever came to his knowledge again, he would wash his hands of George; get him a clerkship in the Demarara house, and never see him again.

GEORGE. And I know he meant it. If you had seen him—

MRS. M. I am afraid we shall have to manage it without your father, unless we make up our minds to see you go abroad—(GEORGE *goes to* MRS. M.) and I can't bear that, my boy. I wonder what is best to be done?

GEORGE. I think there's nothing for me but to jump off Waterloo Bridge.

MRS. M. Don't talk nonsense to me—I'll see what can be done.

GEORGE. But, if I don't make good at Sharp & Selover's to-morrow—

MRS. M. A great deal may be done before to-morrow.

SIR E. (*without*) Wilson! (*all rise quickly*)

MRS. M. Here's your father. Run away, children. I must speak to him alone.

(UNA and GEORGE exit into conservatory R. as SIR E. enters from library L.)

Are you disengaged, Everard? I want to speak to you.

SIR E. I have an appointment with Woolcott, and I'm rather late. I thought I should find him here.

MRS. M. He is about the place somewhere, but he said he was in no hurry. Can't you give me a minute? My business is immediate.

SIR E. (*seating himself*) Well, what is it?

MRS. M. I wanted to ask you about my money.

SIR E. As your trustee, I am ready to answer all questions, though I don't see that the matter is pressing.

MRS. M. You have thirty thousand pounds invested for me, have you not?

SIR E. Only about eighteen thousand at this moment, for I have twelve thousand pounds on hand which I shall re-invest at the first favorable opportunity.

MRS. M. Then there is no difficulty—I want ten thousand pounds immediately.

SIR E. (*surprised*) You want—I beg your pardon, I do not think I can have understood you.

MRS. M. I spoke plainly enough. I want ten thousand pounds.

SIR E. What do you want it for?

MRS. M. That is my business.

SIR E. (*firmly*) And it is mine also. I am your acting trustee, and responsible under my father's will, and your marriage settlements to my co-trustees, and to my own conscience.

MRS. M. I am not a baby.

SIR E. (*smiling*) Then, why not be business-like? If you see an investment for the sum you mention, tell me, and if I approve, you shall have the money to-morrow morning.

MRS. M. I want it to-day.

SIR E. Tut, tut, tut, that is quite absurd. You ask for ten thousand pounds as a girl asks for a shilling cab fare. You must know I cannot give up the money in this way.

MRS. M. (*turning to him*) If I were to go to law about it, I presume you would have to pay it?

SIR E. If you were to pray for a dissolution of the trust, you possibly might succeed, unless you were ad-

judged a lunatic on my testimony as to this conversation. Can't you tell me what you want to do with the money? It is your own, and I have no wish to withhold it from you.

MRS. M. I cannot tell you, and I do not think it is very gentlemanly of you to press a woman for a reason which she declines to give.

SIR E. Tut, tut, tut, you ought to be able to see that my only aim is to do my duty.

MRS. M. (L.) I think it is monstrous that I should not be allowed to do what I will with my own. I shall sue you for that money.

SIR E. And in case you are successful, you may hope to receive it, minus the costs, about this day three years.

MRS. M. But I want it now.

SIR E. 'Till you can be more business-like and explicit, I am afraid you will have to wait it.

(Exit L. to library.)

MRS. M. This is intolerable! It appears my fortune is mine only as the child's sovereign, which is given to it on Christmas day—"It is yours, my dear, but you must not change it or spend it." Poor George! Must his father be told, now that I have just seen how pitiless he can be?

(Enter GEORGE and UNA from conservatory.)

UNA. (peeping) Is the coast clear?

MRS. M. Come to me, George; I had hoped to have been able to help you, but it seems that I cannot even do what I will with my own.

GEORGE. (gloomily) There is nothing for it, but for me to—

UNA. To what, dear George?

GEORGE. To drop myself into the river the first dark night.

MRS. M. You must not talk like that, George. It is wicked and it makes me shudder. Go and write Krebs. He must see these people and gain time. Krebs used to say there was nothing he would not do to serve me.

UNA. He said so again to-day. He is devoted to you, aunt.

GEORGE. What a comfort it is to a poor devil so clean bowled out as I am to have a friend like you, aunty. By jove, you're a—a—a jolly good brick. (embraces her)

MRS. M. Who should help you, if I shouldn't, George. Now, write that letter and let me see it when it is done.

GEORGE. I won't lose a minute.

(*Exit c. off.*)

MRS. M. It breaks my heart to see the boy in such trouble and not be able to help him. He is so afraid of Everard that sooner than it should come to his ears, George would do something desperate. You heard what he said about the river?

UNA. That's only his talk. He couldn't mean it.

MRS. M. You do not know what desperate things people do when they are in trouble. I feel as if I could commit a murder—or a marriage—for ten thousand pounds down this minute. And this has been harrassing the poor boy for nearly six months. (*breaks down in tears*)

UNA. Don't worry so. I am sure it will come right in time.

(*Enter WOOLCOTT c. upstairs L.*)

MRS. M. Where's my handkerchief? That Yankee will see I've been crying.

WOOLCOTT. Pardon, ladies, if I intrude, but Wilson told me Sir Everard was asking for me. (*seeing Mrs. M's emotion*) Can it be possible, Mrs. Meredith? Tears in those lovely eyes!

MRS. M. Hasn't the man even tact enough not to see that—(*aloud*) Put them down to the East wind.

WOOLCOTT. The East wind indoors, and on the Fourth of July? Never mind, East wind goes. (*mopping his forehead*) It drove me in just now. I couldn't stand it any longer. It just sat back on its hind legs and howled.

MRS. M. (*going R.*) And if you were as sharp as the East wind, Mr. Woolcott, we should probably find more point in your remarks.

(*Exit into conservatory R.*)

WOOLCOTT. Crushed again! I've riled her, haven't I, Miss Una? I'm always doing it, and never meaning it. (*UNA is going*) Don't go; I want to speak to you. Is anything the matter?

UNA. Oh, no; why?

WOOLCOTT. That's a pretty flower you have there.

UNA. This? Aunt Florence gave it to me.

WOOLCOTT. Aunt Florence did, did she? Nobody ever gives me flowers.

UNA. You can have this if you wish.

WOOLCOTT. Can I? You're a very kind, sweet little girl. (*takes flower*) Now look me in the eye, Miss Una. Tell me, what's the trouble you're in?

UNA. Oh, thanks, Mr. Woolcott, we're in no trouble. (UNA R. C.)

WOOLCOTT. (*sit L. C.*) Don't dare to tell me that with your pretty eyes full of tears and your chin quivering like a shape of jelly. If I'm meddlesome, say so. I don't mean to be. You've all been kind to me, and I'm fond of you all; and how far I would go to serve some members of this family won't be known till I'm tried.

UNA. Thank you, but I'm afraid you can do nothing. We are in—a—little—trouble. (*sobs*) But, there's no help for it, I'm afraid.

WOOLCOTT. Now, look here, little girl. I'm nearly old enough to be your father, and I have a shrewd guess as to part of this difficulty. I happened to see your brother George—fine young fellow that—and I like him—I saw him just now trying to write a letter that didn't seem any too easy to write. I come up here and find your aunt in tears. Now, two and two make four all the world over. The trouble is George's trouble, and from what I know of the breed of young men, George's trouble is money—

UNA. But, even so, Mr. Woolcott—(*rises, goes R.*)

WOOLCOTT. You don't see how I can help you? I don't either. I am not rich, and even if I was, I suppose even the friendliest offer of money would be looked on in certain quarters—(*unconsciously glances R.*) as an insult. But, I've known cases where a word of good advice counted for more than dollars, and I'll tell you a story, if you don't mind listening, Miss Una. Sit down, won't you? (*music. They sit on ottoman*) I had a brother—a good deal younger than I was—a fine, manly fellow. Oh, how proud I was of that boy, Miss Una. He went wrong; he—he—got to speculating, and he used money he had no business to use. He was in a New York bank; I was out West at the time. He didn't write to me—I don't know why. God forgive me if I ever gave him

reason to think that I wouldn't have stood by him in trouble. Somehow, he shrank from applying to me. Maybe he was ashamed. (*pause*) When he couldn't hide his trouble any longer—he—he went to his room and put a bullet in his heart. Now, if he'd had a friend to advise with, I believe he'd have faced me with his story instead of facing that cruel pistol. That's why I say good advice is sometimes better than dollars. I came on East and settled up with the bank. It left me poor, but I've often been poor before then, and since, and I didn't mind that. But, I had lost my brother.

UNA. (*putting out hand*) And George talked just in that way, and aunt seemed to fear—oh! (*breaks off in tears, rising*)

WOOLCOTT. (*consoling her*) Perhaps out of my own bitter experience I can find good counsel for your brother.

UNA. If you only could. He is so young! He has been foolish, but then papa is so severe. He has been speculating, Mr. Woolcott, and he has lost ten thousand pounds.

WOOLCOTT. Ten thousand pounds! Holy Moses, what has he been doing? (*walks R. then back again*)

UNA. It's awful, isn't it? It seems criminal, almost.

WOOLCOTT. The fault we call an abominable crime in our enemy, is only a trifling error in a friend. All these things are comparative.

UNA. It would seem terrible in papa's eyes. He is so rigidly exact in business.

WOOLCOTT. No doubt. The morality of a man who hasn't been tempted isn't a virtue, it is only a hypothesis. I will see George and talk to him. If he has sound advice, he won't do anything rash. He has wealthy friends who would be willing to help him. Now, go to your aunt, but don't tell her what I have been talking to you about. Just you take heart—and trust the Yankee.

UNA. But we need ten thousand pounds to-morrow.

WOOLCOTT. Well, you shall have ten thousand pounds to-morrow. (*enter SIR E. from library L.*) Leave me now; I have a little matter of business to discuss with your father. (*pushes UNA off R., meeting SIR E.*)

SIR E. I must apologize for having kept you waiting.

WOOLCOTT. I have been pleasantly employed.

SIR E. (*sitting down*) Now, about this mine of yours. Sir William Butler and I have all the arrangements made for incorporation, and—

WOOLCOTT. I don't want to have anything to do with companies, Sir Everard. My mine is for sale.

SIR E. At the old figure?

WOOLCOTT. At the old figure.

SIR E. That is out of the question. Why not take part cash and part in shares of the company?

WOOLCOTT. Because I have had bad luck with shares. I helped to build the Sierra Nevada Central and it came near ruining me.

SIR E. What was the matter? Didn't the stock go up?

WOOLCOTT. No, but the company did.

SIR E. I thought all but the narrow gauge roads in America earned good dividends. What gauge was it?

WOOLCOTT. Mortgage principally. Why, that road could have earned good dividends from the freight on its own obligations—only it didn't have rolling stock enough to carry them all.

SIR E. Where did it run?

WOOLCOTT. Into debt, and then, it went into the hands of a receiver.

SIR E. Was it well equipped—steel rails and so forth?

WOOLCOTT. Well, I hardly think he'd steal rails, but he'd steal most anything else. In a railroad a receiver's worse than a thief.

SIR E. An unfortunate experience.

WOOLCOTT. That's why I want cash down on the nail. Now, will you give me the twenty thousand pounds I ask?

SIR E. As I have told you, that is a prohibitive price.

WOOLCOTT. Well, I have been thinking the matter over, and I've concluded to take the fifteen thousand pounds you offered me.

SIR E. (*aside*) He is pushed for money. (*aloud*) When did I offer you fifteen thousand pounds?

WOOLCOTT. Two weeks ago.

SIR E. Ah, but that was two weeks ago.

WOOLCOTT. The mine hasn't moved since—it is just as good as ever.

SIR E. You declined my offer then, and now I have



reconsidered it. I have not that amount of cash to spare. If you would take shares—(WOOLCOTT *shakes his head*) then, the extreme sum I could offer would be ten thousand pounds.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) The old Shylock! Does he read my heart, that he tempts me with the very sum?

SIR E. You see, the risk is all mine.

WOOLCOTT. You mean that the mine is all risk, but it isn't. And no man in England knows better what that property is worth than you do, Sir Everard Foxwood.

SIR E. And I offer you £10,000. Take it or leave it. It is my final offer. I have plenty of other use for ten thousand pounds.

WOOLCOTT. (*after a struggle, rising*) I've pledged my word to that little girl! (*aloud*) I'll take it.

SIR E. Well, all the examinations of the property have been completed; the papers have been drawn up; nothing remains but to settle the terms of payment. Shall we say four payments, extending over—

WOOLCOTT. We will say one payment, extending over the next twenty-four hours. Cash down, Sir Everard, or no deal.

SIR E. Then you are pressed for funds?

WOOLCOTT. That's my business. If you want that mine, you must press yourself to pay me £10,000 before 12 to-morrow.

SIR E. There will be no trouble about that. I'll give you my check to-day, if you'll step into my study, and sign a memorandum of agreement, or you can have the money in notes to-morrow morning.

WOOLCOTT. Your check is good enough for me.

SIR E. Then the matter is settled.

WOOLCOTT. Settled. I won't go back on my word, and I'll be at your office by ten to-morrow morning ready to assign the mine in due form and to get the money.

SIR E. I need not say I will not go back on my word, as you phrase it.

(*Exit L. to library.*)

WOOLCOTT. No, indeed, you need not say it. You've got a good thing, Sir Everard Foxwood, and you know it; you'll waltz up with your little ten thousand to-morrow, never fear. The money will square the boy and make his aunt happy. It'll break me, though. Well,

I've been broke before. I'll take the first chance that offers; one can never tell where any road may lead to now-a-days; and as for that ten thousand—the widow's worth it—every dollar of it, to say nothing of a boy's life.

(Enter GEORGE C. with letter in his hand.)

GEORGE. Mr. Woolcott, have you seen aunt?

WOOLCOTT. I have, and your sister. George, my boy, I know all about that trouble you're in. It's a bad mess, isn't it?

GEORGE. Oh, Mr. Woolcott, it's awful! If it comes to the Governor's ears, there'll be the devil to pay!

WOOLCOTT. And he's a creditor who always insists on his money.

GEORGE. (R. C.) If my Governor was like any other fellow's Governor—

WOOLCOTT. I know—I know. When a man makes a fool of himself he always likes to think it was some other man's fault.

GEORGE. I don't mean it's his fault; it's my fault.

WOOLCOTT. That's good, that's honest!

GEORGE. But, you see, I hate to tell him anything about it. His principles are so good—

WOOLCOTT. That he hates to wear them out by practice. See here, George! (*turns GEORGE around so that he faces him, puts other hand on shoulder so they are face to face this speech*) I'd like to help you—I want to help you.

GEORGE. You're awfully good.

WOOLCOTT. Well, there are more dollars in this world, than there are boys—though some people don't seem to think so, and when it comes to a question of who's going to the devil—a few dollars or a boy of the right sort—I say let the dollars slide every time. I think a good deal of you. You remind me of a brother I had once—he's gone now—and I like you for his sake and for your own. You need not tell the Guv'nor, as you call him, for the money will be forthcoming to-morroy morning.

GEORGE. The money will be forthcoming! How—where?

WOOLCOTT. Did you think you had no friends?

GEORGE. (*puzzled*) I have you and Mr. Riordan.

WOOLCOTT. And we have friends. You may regard the money as a loan from us, if you like, to be repaid when you can. We'll raise it for you amongst us. You have heard Riordan talk about his rich friends in the city. We'll see if they are any use at a pinch. *You shall have the money to-morrow.* But, don't breathe a word to anyone, not to your sister, nor above all to your aunt, that I have anything to do with the matter. Promise!

GEORGE. Certainly I promise if you wish, but I must tell them something.

WOOLCOTT. Tell them anything that comes into your head, but don't mention me. Hush, here she comes!

GEORGE. All right!

*(Enter MRS. M. and UNA R.)*

*(WOOLCOTT L., sees MRS. M. and UNA approaching, motions GEORGE to hush and points to where they are coming and goes L. to table; bus. picking up books. GEORGE runs up and meets them and down R. C.)*

GEORGE. Oh, Aunt, it's all settled—I shall have the money before 12 to-morrow.

MRS. M. My dearest boy, how? But, take care, George; we are not alone. *(looking at WOOLCOTT)*

GEORGE. *(whistle)* Mr. Woolcott knows all about it. That is—he—he—

UNA. Aunt, I did confide our trouble to Mr. Woolcott. He spoke so kindly to me about it, I couldn't help it.

MRS. M. I am afraid it can hardly have been amusing to Mr. Woolcott. But, this is excellent news, George. Tell me all about it.

*(GEORGE looks at WOOLCOTT. WOOLCOTT looks round, catches GEORGE'S eye.)*

GEORGE. By and by, aunt.

MRS. M. The fact is enough for me. The details will keep. I declare, I could dance for joy. Mr. Woolcott, couldn't you do an American dance for me, a scalp dance, for instance?

WOOLCOTT. You have tied me to the stake, and it isn't the captive who does the dancing in my country.

MRS. M. I have something else to attend to just now,

so I'll leave you in peace, Mr. Woolcott. Come, Una; come, George.

(Exit C. with UNA and GEORGE.)

WOOLCOTT. (*watching them off*) I'm afraid I'm a little further away from her than ever, now. I'm a poor man again. Pshaw! What difference does it make? A man doesn't get perceptibly further away from the moon by tumbling into a well. But, empty pockets are a great bar to conversation.

(Enter SIR E. L. from library.)

SIR E. Oh, here you are still, Woolcott. By the way, you promised to dine with me in a quiet way, one of these days—(*patting WOOLCOTT on shoulders with both hands*) why not make it this evening?

WOOLCOTT. (R.) You are very kind.

SIR E. (L., *in laughing tone*) I have a weakness for entertaining capitalists. You know you are a capitalist, or will be to-morrow.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) Yes, for about a minute.

SIR E. So I may count on the honor of your company? (*stately manner*)

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) I could see her again. (*hesitating*) And yet—but I haven't strength to refuse. (*aloud*) I accept with pleasure, Sir Everard. (*going*)

SIR E. By the bye, I should like that assignment to be made to my clerk, Julius Krebs; it will stand in his name till the company is formed.

WOOLCOTT. It makes no odds to me who has the mine, so long as I have to part with it. (*aside*) But I wonder what this little game is! I guess he's putting up a job on the company. He's a beauty.

SIR E. And if I can aid you with any advice as to the investment of your ten thousand pounds—command me.

WOOLCOTT. Thank you, Sir Everard, it is invested.

SIR E. Invested?

WOOLCOTT. I mean it's forestalled. It is spent already. I haven't a dollar.

SIR E. (*with sudden change of manner*) Really, that is deplorable. I am most pained to hear it. You must have squandered money shamefully.

WOOLCOTT. What I have done, Sir Everard, is my own affair and I require no remarks about it.

SIR E. (*patronizingly*) If you are really destitute, Woolcott, perhaps I could find you something to do. How would you like to go to Palestine?

WOOLCOTT. It doesn't much matter where I go. Any money in it?

SIR E. I am about to send out a special agent to report on the works of the Bitumen Company. I will give you two hundred pounds a year, and traveling expenses.

WOOLCOTT. You are very good. Give me time to think that over.

SIR E. (*patronizingly*) There is no hurry. Let me know your decision when you come to my office tomorrow. Good afternoon.

(*Exit c. downstairs L.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*alone, shakes his hand behind his back*) That man rubs me the wrong way. I'd sooner work for him in Palestine than here. If I get to work at once, I shan't have time to worry. I'll take the job. Here I am, forty years of age, in fair health and sound normal condition—and broke—dead broke—in a foreign country, three thousand miles from home—and without a friend to give me a lift.

(*WILSON enters c. upstairs L.*)

WILSON. Sir Everard's compliments, sir, and he begs you will excuse him from that appointment this evening, as he had forgotten a previous engagement.

WOOLCOTT. (*surprised*) That appointment this evening? Oh, the dinner. (*drily*) Tell Sir Everard I will excuse him—with pleasure. (*WILSON bows and exits*) I didn't think he was quite as mean as that, but misfortune makes a vacuum about a man which human nature does not abhor—just as though bad luck was catching. (*drops into seat c.*) What was it we used to say when we were children? "Pleasant Fourth of July!" Well, I've had it—great Scott, I've had it. (*taking flower from button-hole and looking at it*) But if it was to do over again, I'd do it.

## CURTAIN.

## ACT III.

SCENE: *Same as last set. Afternoon of the following day, July 5th.*

DISCOVERED: *At rise of curtain, MRS. MEREDITH and UNA enter R. from conservatory.*

MRS. M. But, I don't understand it at all, Una. I had no idea Mr. Riordan was so wealthy.

UNA. He isn't at all wealthy. He's just as poor as he can be. Of course, he didn't give George the money himself. He merely managed it.

MRS. M. How did the £10,000 reach him? If we know that, it might afford some clue to his benefactor.

UNA. George was to go the first thing this morning to Sharp and Selover's and promise the money at noon to-day. He was to remain there till it came. He did as he was told and a little before 12 o'clock, a commissioner brought a sealed packet, containing ten thousand pounds in Bank of England notes.

MRS. M. And who was it that told George to go to the stockbroker's and to wait for the money?

UNA. That's just what he won't tell, and he hinted something about Gerald.

MRS. M. I suppose it cannot be anyone else.

RIORDAN. (*without*) Ladies upstairs? All right—you needn't announce me.

UNA. There he is now. (*runs across and exits c.*)

(*Re-enter UNA c., dragging on RIORDAN.*)

UNA. Heré he is, Aunt. Now he shall tell us all about it. Oh, Gerald, I am proud of you!

MRS. M. My dear Gerald, for you must allow me to

give you brevet rank as nephew, and call you so—I hardly know what to say to you. I do not know whether to thank you for what you have done, or to admire in silence.

RIORDAN. You are too kind, and if I were only sure you were not laughing at me—

MRS. M. I see nothing to laugh at. It was nobly done, Gerald, it was bravely done, and it was like a gentleman.

RIORDAN. Really! You overpower me! I had no idea you would take so much interest in my little attempt.

MRS. M. Scarcely anything in my whole life has interested me so much.

UNA. It was splendid, generous, admirable! Oh, Gerald, I am proud of you.

RIORDAN. I am very glad that my first effort in the cause of suffering humanity finds such warm appreciation in the quarter where I value it most.

MRS. M. Who should appreciate it, if we do not? And when I remember on whose behalf the effort was made—

RIORDAN. (*surprised*) I thought they were no favorites of yours, Mrs. Meredith?

MRS. M. They! Who?

RIORDAN. The Irish tenants.

MRS. M. What has put the Irish tenants into your head just now?

RIORDAN. We have been talking about them all this time, haven't we? It was on their behalf I made the effort, which you were pleased to rate so highly. They were the text of my speech last night.

UNA. And a very good speech it was, Gerald. I will compliment you upon it presently. But, just now we are so full of what you have done for George—

RIORDAN. And pray, what have I done for George?

MRS. M. Haven't you advanced him ten thousand pounds?

RIORDAN (*astonished*) No! I wish I had ten thousand pounds, or the tenth part of it.

MRS. M. Haven't you helped him to close his account with Sharp and Selover, and to keep his losses from his father?

RIORDAN. I haven't helped him, because I didn't know he needed any help or had any loss.

MRS. M. Strange!

RIORDAN. It is strange, indeed, and you puzzle me entirely. I don't know what you are driving at.

MRS. M. Yesterday George was in trouble about a speculation and he had to find ten thousand pounds to-day. I tried to raise the money for him and failed. Some unknown friend had found the money for him to-day.

RIORDAN. This is most wonderful! Faith, he was a friend indeed. *I'll* borrow him when *you* are done with him.

UNA. Oh, Gerald, I thought it was you. I wish it had been.

RIORDAN. So do I, with all my heart. But in the name of common sense, how came you to pitch upon me—an out at elbows Irishman—as George's fairy godmother?

MRS. M. I do not know exactly. Una seemed to have it all cut and dried that it should be no one else, and I suppose I fell into her idea unconsciously. But, if it wasn't you—

RIORDAN. And I give you my word of honor it was not!

MRS. M. Who could it have been?

RIORDAN. Could his father—

MRS. M. His father knew nothing of the matter. And it was our great object to keep all knowledge of it from him.

RIORDAN. The money must have come from somewhere. It doesn't snow Bank of England notes in July. Perhaps Sir Everard wished to help the boy out of his scrape without taking any official cognizance of his embarrassment.

UNA. That's not a bit like papa.

RIORDAN. I'm afraid he is not the man to spend ten thousand pounds without an equivalent of some sort, even if he had to take out the value of it in blowing the boy up.

MRS. M. So the identity of George's benefactor is a mystery still.

(*Enter WILSON c. upstairs L.*)

WILSON. I beg your pardon, ma'am. Mr. Krebs is below, and would like to see you.



MRS. M. Ask him to come up. (*exit WILSON*) I suppose his wife has returned.

UNA. She was to have arrived last night, so he told me.

RIORDAN. (*whispering*) I say, Una, can't I have a chance for a word to you alone? Won't you come into the conservatory?

UNA. (*crosses L.*) Presently, presently. Just now, I'm not at all pleased with you.

RIORDAN. Why not? Because I haven't done something you thought I did.

UNA. No, I'm sure you would have done that if you could.

RIORDAN. Well, then—

UNA. Well, there is something else in which your conduct was not at all satisfactory. (*crossing L. and sitting L. of table L.*)

(*RIORDAN follows her and kneels on chair R. of table, talking across to her in pantomime as MRS. M. and KREBS down R. UNA shows that she is much annoyed at something.*)

RIORDAN. You alarm me!

(*Enter KREBS C. upstairs L.*)

MRS. M. I am very glad to see you, Mr. Krebs. How is your wife?

KREBS. She arrived last night—so well, so strong, so much improved. Madam, I can never thank you enough for all you have done for us. Her winter in the South of France has renewed her life.

MRS. M. (*crosses R, sits*) Indeed, I am glad to hear she has benefited by it. I will call and see her tomorrow.

KREBS. It is too much kindness—too much honor. If you will say at what time you will be disengaged, she will wait upon you, and offer you her thanks in person.

MRS. M. Nonsense, she is an invalid—

KREBS. She is an invalid no longer, thanks to your bounty, Madam.

MRS. M. She is the latest arrival at any rate, and I shall take the pleasure of calling upon her.

KREBS. Sir Everard is in Change Alley, Madam. He

has had a busy day. He has just concluded the purchase of the American gentleman's mine.

MRS. M. You surprise me, for Mr. Woolcott told me no later than yesterday that there was no likelihood of their agreeing on a price. He said he could not accept the terms my brother offered.

KREBS. He has accepted less. He has sold to Sir Everard—or rather to me, who act in the matter as Sir Everard's agent—for ten thousand pounds; five thousand less than the first offer, which he refused.

MRS. M. This is very curious! I wonder why he should do that?

KREBS. He had sudden and pressing need of £10,000, I think, Madam. At last, he insisted that it should be paid over in cash before noon to-day.

MRS. M. (*wondering*) Ten thousand pounds in cash, before noon to-day. (*continues to converse*)

RIORDAN. A dream?

UNA. Yes, I dreamed you were in love with another girl.

RIORDAN. But I'm not.

UNA. That's what you said in your dream.

RIORDAN. I'm in love with you.

UNA. That's what you said in your dream.

RIORDAN. Well?

UNA. But, I saw her so distinctly.

RIORDAN. Who?

UNA. The other girl. A sallow-doll-faced thing she was too, not at all pretty—and she wore imitation lace.

RIORDAN. And you saw all this in the dream?

UNA. Yes.

RIORDAN. I'm sure I never did the like of that to her. (*kisses UNA*)

MRS. M. And you say Master George can't tell from what source the money came.

KREBS. He either cannot or will not.

MRS. M. I think I am on the threshold of the secret (*pauses*) How was the money paid to Mr. Woolcott?

KREBS. In £1,000 Bank of England notes.

MRS. M. Exactly. (*pauses, then suddenly*) Mr. Krebs, I have a favor to ask of you.

KREBS. Of me, Madam? You know you have only to name it.

WILSON. (*entering*) Mrs. Vandervast!

MRS. M. Do not say I am at home, Wilson. Una, my dear, you must receive her. Beg Mrs. Vandervast to step upstairs, Wilson. (*exit WILSON as MRS. M. crosses L.*) Come into the library a moment, Mr. Krebs.

UNA. But, aunt—

MRS. M. I cannot be interrupted, Una. I am engaged on most important business. (*exit L. into library with KREBS*)

UNA. Now, isn't this too provoking!

RIORDAN. She is determined that our love making shall have as many crosses as Juliet's own.

(*Enter MRS. VANDERVAST.*)

MRS. VAN. Ah, how do you do, my dear?

RIORDAN. "Here comes the lady!" Welcome fair and ever fair and only Juliet!

MRS. VAN. Ah, Mr. Mercuito, is that you again? Whenever I call here I seem always to find you. No matter, I am glad to have an opportunity of congratulating you. You are a noble, generous man. Mr. Riordan, you have a great and feeling heart, sir, and I could kiss you for it.

RIORDAN. I assure you, it has been all a mistake, Mrs. Vandervast! I have been getting credit under false pretenses about that—

MRS. VAN. (*surprised*) Under false pretenses? And didn't you really make that speech which I read in to-day's paper?

RIORDAN. Oh, the speech! Faith, I had forgotten all about it. (*aside to UNA*) I thought she was off after that ten thousand pounds like the rest of them—

MRS. VAN. You should not have forgotten it, sir, for it was a speech that should be remembered. It recalled to me all that my father was never tired of praising in Flood and Grattan, and the fiery orators of your native land.

RIORDAN. You are very kind to say so, Mrs. Vandervast.

MRS. VAN. You deserve it. You have a career before you, young man, and if you do not mar it at the outset by an imprudent marriage—ah, that reminds me, you were about to apply the touchstone to your fate

when I saw you last—to choose the casket—you have done so—and how have you sped in your wooing?

RIORDAN. I chose the leaden casket, and I found in it the portrait of the lady I have been wearing in my heart. I offered her the heart—and she gave me her hand in exchange.

MRS. VAN. I hope I may have the pleasure of meeting the bride soon.

RIORDAN. You have met her to-day here. (*crosses R.*)

(*Gives his hand to UNA who curtseys shyly.*)

MRS. VAN. Una, is it possible! That child! (*crosses L. C.*) But, I suppose she regards herself as grown up now. Dear me! Dear me! How old we grow! It seems but yesterday I was at her mother's wedding. Well, dear, (*crosses to UNA.* I hope you may be happy. You have an old woman's heartfelt good wishes that every blessing may attend both of you. (*gives hand to each*) 'Tis the union of Cordelia and Mercuito.

UNA. Thank you, dear Mrs. Vandervast.

RIORDAN. I will do my best that your kind wish may be fulfilled.

MRS. VAN. And when is it to be? Ah, you rogue, you were making love to her over my shoulder all the while I was here yesterday. I might have mistrusted something.

UNA. It is all very new as yet. The day has not been decided upon.

RIORDAN. But it will be soon.

UNA. Indeed, sir, how do you know that?

MRS. VAN. (*C.*) I hope it will be an early day. Why you have no reason to delay—Juliet went to Friar Lawrence's cell.

UNA. And now Mrs. Vandervast I want you to give me your advise upon a subject of the highest importance, on which no one's opinion could be more valuable than yours.

MRS. VAN. You are entirely welcome to it, my dear, whatever it may be worth.

UNA. Of course, I shall be married in white. Now, I want your advice whether to be dressed as Sappho or as one of the Vestal Virgins—I can't make up my mind which.

MRS. VAN. Which of the Vestal Virgins? The costumes are all alike, aren't they?

UNA. No, you don't understand, as any of them, or as Sappho.

MRS. VAN. I can't say, my dear. I never played the part. I was married as Juliet.

RIORDAN. It would have been a sacrilege for you to have assumed any other character at such a moment.

WILSON. (*entering c.*) Mr. Woolcott!

UNA. Ask him to come up, Wilson.

(WILSON *turns and meets WOOLCOTT entering c.*)

WOOLCOTT. Thank you, I'm up. Good morning, Miss Una. Fair Juliet, the humblest of your slaves is at your feet. Riordan, how goes it? I came right up, Miss Una, because I have not much time to waste, and I thought I would not spend it on the stairs. I'm going away to-morrow morning.

RIORDAN. Back to the States?

WOOLCOTT. No, I'm going to Palestine.

UNA. To-morrow?

WOOLCOTT. I should have gone to-night, only I thought I'd take an evening to look in and say good-bye to you all.

UNA. Isn't this rather sudden?

WOOLCOTT. I suppose it seems to you so, thought I hadn't thought of it myself till yesterday, I've already had time to get a kind of acclimatized to the idea.

RIORDAN. Then your business here is ended?

WOOLCOTT. Yes, it has come to an end.

RIORDAN. Have you sold the gold mine?

WOOLCOTT. Oh, yes, I have sold the gold mine.

RIORDAN. I give you joy, old fellow, I hope you'll have a pleasant trip.

WOOLCOTT. Thank you, I'm sure to enjoy myself, it will be uncommonly pleasant.

MRS. VAN. Palestine is so full of interesting associations.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) And Bitumen.

MRS. VAN. I know that most Americans consider that they haven't made the grand tour complete till they have, as they say, taken in the Holy Land.

WOOLCOTT. If all I hear is true, the part of the Holy

Land I am going to has taken in a good many people first and last.

UNA. My father is in the City, Mr. Woolcott, but I am sure he would wish to see you before you go.

WOOLCOTT. (*dryly*) Thank you, he has just seen me. I came here straight from Change Alley. (*looking round*) I suppose Mrs. Meredith is not in?

UNA. (*looking at RIORDAN*) I am afraid my aunt— (*hesitates*)

WOOLCOTT. Never mind. I will leave my adieux for her. She won't know I have gone unless some one happens to mention it.

RIORDAN. I am sure Mrs. Meredith would be greatly pained if you left without saying good-bye.

(WILSON *has entered c. and is going to door of library L., when UNA stops him.*)

UNA. Wilson, my aunt is in there, and she said she was not to be disturbed.

WILSON. But the bell rang for me, Miss.

UNA. Oh, in that case, go.

(WILSON *goes to door L. and exits.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*going*) If you have any message for anybody in South Palestine, Carmel, Hebron, Gath or Jerusalem—

UNA. (*crosses R. c.*) Don't go, Mr. Woolcott. My aunt won't be much longer, I'm sure, and if you can give us a few minutes more of your time—

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) Time is all I have to give now. They say it is money—I wish I could change seconds into dollars. (*aloud*) Oh, I can spare my time until to-morrow, it is my own.

UNA. Then, I propose that we all stroll down to the river and back, we won't miss Aunt Florence, for she is not going out again to-day.

RIORDAN. Have with you. Where's your hat, Una?

UNA. I don't need a hat. I'll pick up a parasol as we go through the hall. (*exit*)

WOOLCOTT. Will you be content with my escort, ma'am? (*offers arm to MRS. VAN.*)

MRS. VAN. (*taking it*) Abundantly.

(*Business in pantomime of sword-arm and exit.*)

*(They all go off through conservatory as WILSON enters from library L.)*

WILSON. Signing of documents ain't a thing I've 'ad much experience in, but I 'ope I've done it "A. 1."

*(As WILSON exits c. down stairs, MRS. MEREDITH and KREBS enter L. from library.)*

MRS. M. I can only say again, Mr. Krebs, that you have made me your debtor for life.

KREBS. And I can only say, Madam, that all I have, my life included, is at your service.

MRS. M. I shall see that you are no sufferer by what you have done. If you lose your position—

KREBS. You need not think of that, Madam, if I have been enabled to right a wrong and do you a service at the same time—I will go straight from here and have this transfer properly attested and registered.

MRS. M. And not a word of this till I have given the signal.

KREBS. I shall obey your orders, Madam. *(exit c. down stairs L.)*

MRS. M. *(sitting on sofa and fanning herself)* This is indeed a tangled skein, and I cannot find the clue to my brother's conduct. It really requires an explanation. *(noise heard in conservatory R.)* Who is there? Is that you, Everard?

GEORGE. *(enter from conservatory)* Oh, you dearest and best of aunties, how are you? *(kisses her)*

MRS. M. You do seem in better spirits, George.

GEORGE. In better spirits? Auntie, I am enjoying the first pleasant day I have spent for six months. You have no idea how miserable it is to live with a sharp knife hanging over you that you expect will fall at any moment.

MRS. M. My poor boy, sometimes it is the sword of Damocles which cuts the Gordian Knot, and you have had a narrow escape this time.

GEORGE. And you need not fear my ever getting into trouble again. I've learned my lesson and it has been a hard task, but I've got it by heart now, and there's no danger of my forgetting it. I've decided that it's time for me to make a score off my own bat. Do you know what I want to do, Auntie? I want to go away from

London, to get free from the Governor, who is always down on me.

MRS. M. I'll send you to Oxford myself.

GEORGE. But, I don't want to go to Oxford. I'm not a boy any longer, I'm a man. I want to work. I'd like to go to America to work hard until I have earned enough to pay off the friend who helped me when I was in a hole.

MRS. M. But, you know who it was who gave you the money to get out of the scrape?

GEORGE. I can't tell. The money was sent by a commissioner as I told you.

MRS. M. Who told you to go to Sharp & Selover's and expect the money this morning? (GEORGE *hesitates*) Was it Mr. Woolcott?

GEORGE. Hang it, aunty, how you do cross-examine a fellow. (*crosses R.*)

MRS. M. When I cross-question, I do not want a cross-answer. Was it Mr. Woolcott?

GEORGE. He made me promise not to tell anyone, especially you. And now you have got it out of me.

MRS. M. I knew it before I asked you. How I have misjudged him!

GEORGE. Indeed you have, aunty. I always said he was a brick but you were down on him and never gave him a chance. And yet he was forever watching you, and following you about.

MRS. M. Stop, George, isn't that your father I hear below? Run down and tell him I must see him instantly—instantly.

GEORGE. Aunty, you are not going to blow on a fellow?

MRS. M. Silly boy, haven't I fretted myself gray-haired to keep your secret from him. Tell him I want to see him. (*exit GEORGE c. down stairs. Mrs. M. sits again c.*) I do not know much about business and its methods and usages, it is true, but the more I think of what Everard has done, the worse it appears.

(*Enter SIR EVERARD. Coming down L.*)

SIR E. George tells me you want to speak to me, Florence. What is it now? Another ten thousand pounds, eh?

MRS. M. Yes, Everard, it is another ten thousand



pounds. I hear you have bought Mr. Woolcott's gold mine.

SIR E. I have,—and a very profitable day's work it was.

MRS. M. No doubt. And will you tell me why you bought the mine under another man's name?

SIR E. It was a technicality of business, which you would not understand if I tried to explain.

MRS. M. I am afraid I understand without your telling me. You did it to make money out of the company which you have formed.

SIR E. Florence!

MRS. M. I know the details of the whole transaction—how, Mr. Woolcott asked you twenty thousand pounds for his mine, and how you offered him fifteen thousand pounds, though you had all your plans made for making it over to the company at twenty-five thousand pounds, and when you found Mr. Woolcott was pressed for ready money, you meanly dropped your offer to ten thousand pounds!

SIR E. (*with dignity*) Tut—tut—tut—Florence. You are taking a tone with me that I do not like and will not submit to. But I excuse you, for you are a woman and you evidently do not in the least understand what you are talking about. The whole affair is a strictly legitimate business transaction and such as any man in the City would gladly avail himself of, were the opportunity offered. It is rarely so profitable a chance arises, though, and I flatter myself that there are few who could handle the matter as skilfully as I have done.

MRS. M. (c.) You expect the transaction to be very profitable, do you?

SIR E. (*smiling with satisfaction*) By that one-half hour's work, I hope to make fifteen thousand pounds.

MRS. M. Scarcely so much, I think.

SIR E. At the very least ten thousand pounds.

MRS. M. You will not make ten thousand pence.

SIR E. The Yankee hasn't cheated me about the yield of gold, has he?

MRS. M. Oh no, he hasn't cheated you.

SIR E. I do not think he could, for I took every precaution. I had the mine carefully examined, and

the expert reported that it was well worth that which Woolcott asked originally, and I have got it for half his first figure.

MRS. M. You haven't got it yet?

SIR E. It is mine, at least, I can have it when I want it. Krebs holds it for me.

MRS. M. (*strong*) It is not yours. You cannot have it when you want it, and Krebs does not hold it.

SIR E. (*alarmed*) What do you mean?

MRS. M. Krebs has parted with it.

SIR E. (*excitedly*) Do you dare to tell me that the scoundrel has been bold enough to play a trick on me?

MRS. M. Who began playing tricks first?

SIR E. Answer me! I insist on your telling me all you know. Answer me! Krebs has disposed of the mine?

MRS. M. Yes.

SIR E. (*choking with rage*) The thief! The villain! I'll have him arrested at once. I'll put him in the dock! I'll have him transported.

MRS. M. You didn't mean him to keep it for himself, did you?

SIR E. (*walking about*) I cannot believe it. I will not believe it. Such base ingratitude—a man who has been a pensioner on my bounty for years. He is worse than a dog to turn on the hand that fed him. (*coming to Mrs. M.*) Say, it is not true!

MRS. M. But it is true.

SIR E. It is impossible. He has had no opportunity. When could he have disposed of it? Where?—to whom?

MRS. M. (*strong*) This very day—in this very house—to me?

SIR E. (*profoundly astonished*) To you!

MRS. M. To me.

SIR E. To you? And pray what can you do with a gold mine?

MRS. M. I can restore it to the rightful owner.

SIR E. You are not going to give it back to the Yankee?

MRS. M. I am.

SIR E. But I have bought it from him.

MRS. M. And I have bought it from you. You need not be afraid that you shall lose anything. I stand ready to pay you what you gave for it. (*crosses L.*)

SIR E. (*baffled*) But I expected to make a profit of fifteen thousand pounds.

MRS. M. Great expectations are their own reward sometimes.

SIR E. (*coaxing*) Come, come, Florence, I am your brother, your only brother. I have been a father to you all your life. Now, I come to ask a favor—let me have that mine.

MRS. M. I shall give it back to the man from whom you conveyed it.

SIR E. And you would rob your brother to enrich a stranger—a man for whom you care nothing. Eh—what? (*looks at her keenly*) You color. You *do* care for him?

MRS. M. Everard!

SIR E. That's it, is it? I see it all! (*sneeringly*) The secret's out at last! You love this Woolcott.

MRS. M. You have no right to speak to me so.

SIR E. And you are willing to rob me to enrich this Yankee adventurer who has got round you with his glib tongue. Viscount Hathway's daughter-in-law is looking high for her number two.

MRS. M. (*rising indignantly*) I am ashamed of you. And I refuse to listen to you any longer. (*starts to go, crosses R.*)

SIR E. (*seizes her hand*) Stop!

MRS. M. Take care, Everard, you hurt me.

SIR E. This is no child's play. I will prevent this villainy if I can.

MRS. M. You hurt me.

SIR E. (*releasing her hand*) Answer me now. How do you know the deed has been made out in proper form?

MRS. M. It was made out on the blank form prepared under your own directions.

SIR E. And witnessed?

MRS. M. Wilson witnessed it.

SIR E. I will discharge him—him—Krebs—and everyone who has had anything to do with this. Where is this assignment? Let me see it.

MRS. M. Mr. Krebs has taken it with him to have it registered.

SIR E. Well, Madam, I shall see if there is any law in England to reach this case. I think Parliament in

its wisdom has framed some statutes to cover conspiracy and the subordination of servants. (*exit L. into library, slamming door*)

MRS. M. (*looking after him*) And this is my brother! Touched in his pocket—his most sensitive point, it seems, his true self stands revealed. And I have misjudged the American as much as I have misjudged Everard. And we might have been good friends now, but for my silly fancy for sharpening my wit on his shoulder.

(*Sinks into chair at door of conservatory R., half hidden by palms.*)

He fell into the sport readily enough, but if I had known his real value, I should have not kept him from me by idle words. (*musings*) And yet, George says—

WOOLCOTT. (*entering c. and coming down L.*) Great Scott, I can't stand any more of that. Congratulations and felicitations as if I were starting out on a wedding trip, and not a poor devil of a commercial traveler in Bitumen, for, as I can see that is about my position. And I can't bear to tell them truth, for that would involve a lot of explanations, and if there is one thing that would rile my present temper more than another it would be to explain. Yet, I'd like to see Mrs. Meredith to say good-bye. Maybe it's just as well I shouldn't see her. I might say more than I could take back— (*sits c.*) for when I'm talking to her, my heart's in my mouth, and some fine day it will slip out and fall at her feet—its proper place indeed.

MRS. M. I wonder where he is? I wonder whether he ever thinks of me when he is away from me, as I am thinking of him now? I suppose he is busy making ready to return to America now that he has sold his mine.

WOOLCOTT. (*on sofa, finding fan*) Her fan! The very one she held in her hand the night I saw her first, here in this room, nearly five months ago. Gracious, how time flies! I see her now as she stood before me that night, laughing at my blunder. And she has been laughing at me ever since, and I have come back again and again to be laughed at. Why, I'd sooner see her laugh at me than any other woman smile on me. I wonder if she ever knew what was deep down in my

heart when I had a light jest on the tip of my tongue? Women are quick to see when they have made a fool of a man, but I made a fool of myself, and she is not like other women.

MRS. M. (*rising*) I cannot bear to think of it all. (*sees WOOLCOTT*) Why, there he is! When did he come in? How long has he been here?

WOOLCOTT. I'm glad I found this fan! I shall keep it. She has my heart and she will not grudge me this in exchange. I shall need a fan in Palestine, they say the climate's rather warm there. I'll keep this. (*kisses it and puts it in breast*)

MRS. M. (*aside*) He kissed my fan, then— (*pauses, then aloud*) So you are there, Mr. Woolcott. (*coming down R.*)

WOOLCOTT. (*springing up startled; L. C., puts fan in pocket, corner out*) Of course—of course. I—how do you do?

MRS. M. (R. C.) You have my fan I see.

WOOLCOTT. (*embarrassed*) Yes, oh, yes, I have your fan. I found it here. I thought I'd take care of it for you.

MRS. M. You are very kind. I'll take it if you wish (*holds out her hand*)

(WOOLCOTT *kisses the hand she holds out as he restores the fan.*)

MRS. M. Mr. Woolcott!

WOOLCOTT. Do not be angry, Mrs. Meredith. I have only come to say good-bye and the occasion seemed to me to demand a little more than the usual shake of the hand.

MRS. M. I supposed you would be going now. I hear you have sold the gold mine.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) Damn that gold mine! (*aloud*) Oh, yes, it's sold.

MRS. M. And am I to congratulate you?

WOOLCOTT. You may suit yourself about that. Personally I'd rather you did not. I've had rather more of that kind of thing than I can stand.

MRS. M. Then I'll refrain. And when do you return to America?

WOOLCOTT. I don't return to America at all—at least, not at present.

MRS. M. No? But I thought you said you came to say good-bye.

WOOLCOTT. America isn't the only place in the world, though a good many folks over there think so. No, I'm going to Palestine.

MRS. M. (*interested*) To Palestine?

WOOLCOTT. Now, for Heaven's sake, please do not wish me a pleasant trip, and congratulate me on my certain enjoyment of the associations of the Holy Land, for I can't stand that either.

MRS. M. May I ask what takes you to Palestine, for I'm sure, it isn't pleasure?

WOOLCOTT. It's business—bread and butter in fact, and mighty little of the butter. Never mind about that!

MRS. M. Why need you go now?

WOOLCOTT. Because—because I must

MRS. M. But why so soon? The season is not over yet?

WOOLCOTT. The season has no pleasure for me—now.

MRS. M. (*aside*) Poor fellow! (*aloud*) But, if you sold the mine—a gold mine too—for a fair price—

WOOLCOTT. (*seriously*) Pray do not press that, Mrs. Meredith. I've had ups and downs in my life, mostly downs, and this is one of them. I parted with the price of the mine before I had it. I can carry off my poverty with a smile before the others, but somehow, before you, I—I—

(MRS. M. *puts out her hand, he seizes it and shakes it.*)

You did that as though you were really sorry for me.

MRS. M. And would that surprise you?

WOOLCOTT. I confess, it would a little.

MRS. M. Don't you think I can be a sincere friend?

WOOLCOTT. Why not? You are always telling me unpleasant truths.

MRS. M. You don't take to heart all I say, do you?

WOOLCOTT. Don't I?

MRS. M. Whatever you may think of me, I know you are a staunch friend, for I have tried you and you were not found wanting. You guard your secret well—but I know it.

WOOLCOTT. (*suddenly*) Who told you? (*pauses*) I mean to say, that I have no secrets.

MRS. M. I know why you sold your mine. I know

to whom you sold it, and the price he paid—the shamefully inadequate price. I would like to apologize for my brother, if I knew how to do it, but——

WOOLCOTT. Stop! Hold your horses! Don't say a word about him! He drove a hard bargain, but—he did more than his bond called for—he's given me a situation.

MRS. M. What do you mean?

WOOLCOTT. He has taken me into his employ. He pays me two hundred pounds a year to go to South Palestine to see what has become of the Bitumen which ought to be there.

MRS. M. And that is why you leave us?

WOOLCOTT. Why, certainly. I'm out of money and out of a job. Sir Everard offers me work—why shouldn't I take it?

MRS. M. You must not go!

WOOLCOTT. Oh, yes, I must—now more than ever.

MRS. M. (*after a pause and shyly*) But, I have asked you to stay——

WOOLCOTT. Great Scott! Do you want to make me speak whether I will or not? Do you want another scalp to hang at the door of your wigwam? All right, you can have mine. And I'm not sorry to have a chance to tell you all that's in my heart before I go away. I love you, don't jump!—and I have loved you ever since I first saw you. I know how unworthy I am of you, but I couldn't help loving you. I have gone on loving more and more even when we were exchanging hard words. I set myself as a target for your jibes just that I might hear the sound of your voice, and feast my eyes with a sight of your face. Now the murder's out, and you can turn me away as soon as you please.

(*Pauses.* MRS. MEREDITH *sits silently, with downcast eyes.*)

You do not dismiss me at once. Then, I'll go on to the end. I'm a poor man now, I'm dead broke—the only wealth I have in the world is my love for you, and it's all I have to offer you. Will you take it? Will you be my wife, Florence?

MRS. M. (*turns to him, raising her eyes and hands to his*) Yes.

WOOLCOTT. (*pulling her up, embrace and kiss*) This is better than Palestine—it's paradise! (*kisses her again*)

MRS. M. Someone might come in—and just fancy two old people like us—

WOOLCOTT. Don't fret! I feel like a boy of twenty—and you look younger than your niece. Let me gaze at you again, a man likes to survey his property. Well, after all, I struck a streak of luck when I found that mine—for it led me to you, and if I haven't the gold mine, I have you.

MRS. M. You have me, and I have the gold mine.

WOOLCOTT. What!

MRS. M. I bought it from Julius Krebs at the same price my brother gave for it. You can have it back again.

WOOLCOTT. What is the odds, my dear? It'll be all in the family. I'll never part with it again. It would be flying in the face of good luck. We'll work it ourselves.

(*Enter UNA and RIORDAN upstairs R. and L. together, racing and running; RIORDAN pulling her dress and down L.*)

RIORDAN. I'm with you.

UNA. Oh, aunt! Stop, Gerald, pulling back isn't fair!

(*WOOLCOTT about to kiss MRS. M., head, turns, sees RIORDAN, kick up stage.*)

MRS. M. What have you done with Mrs. Vandervast?

UNA. (*all out of breath, crosses to L. c.*) Oh, she's coming. We ran on because we had a question for you to settle, and we both wanted to get here first.

RIORDAN. (*out of breath, same bus.*) Una says—

UNA. No, Gerald says—

WOOLCOTT. In fact, you both say—

UNA. Gerald pretends that we can get married this season, and I tell him it is ridiculously too soon. What do you think?

WOOLCOTT. (*aside*) Say this season, and soon too, for, of course, we'll have to make a double wedding of it.

RIORDAN. Go on, Mr. Woolcott, I know you're putting in a good word for me.

WOOLCOTT. And two for myself. What do you think?



(Enter MRS. VANDERVAST.)

MRS. VAN. And what's the decision? These rude young people ran away from me to appeal to you.

MRS. M. What is your opinion?

MRS. VAN. I see no reason for delay. Juliet went to Friar Lawrence's cell and got married at a day's notice.

MRS. M. You are in a minority, Una. We had better say the close of the season.

WOOLCOTT. (*aside to MRS. M.*) And we don't go to South Palestine on our wedding journey either.

(Enter SIR E. L. *from library.*)

SIR E. You are making too much noise out here, you disturb me. (*to WOOLCOTT*) I presume, Mr. Woolcott, that my sister has acquainted you with the result of her scheming with my servants.

WOOLCOTT. Well, I don't know that I should put it that way. Mrs. Meredith has acquainted me with a fact of a very deep interest to me.

SIR E. And you intend to take advantage of her—her generosity?

WOOLCOTT. You bet your bottom dollar I do, every time!

SIR E. That's enough, sir! I have nothing more to say to you.

WOOLCOTT. That settles it.

(Enter GEORGE R. C., *down R.*)

GEORGE. (*going eagerly to WOOLCOTT*) Mr. Woolcott, how can I ever thank you?

WOOLCOTT. (*shaking hands*) Keep out of mischief for the future, and never say a word about it.

GEORGE. But—

WOOLCOTT. (*interrupting him*) There's your lame hand with the bandage looking three ways for Sunday. Go over to your aunt—nephew.

MRS. M. Come here, George, I'll settle it.

(GEORGE *crosses to her.*)

UNA. Papa, as I told you this morning, Gerald and I have—have—

SIR E. I know you have. What then?

RIORDAN. We are thinking of getting married before the close of the season, Sir Everard.

SIR E. It is not to be thought of, sir. Your position is too undecided. You must show a fixed income, a certain position, before——

WOOLCOTT. That'll be all right. I will appoint Mr. Riordan London agent of the gold mine, with a good salary and a percentage of the profits.

RIORDAN. Thank you, old fellow.

WOOLCOTT. We shall need a paymaster and treasurer at Grass Valley. I will give Krebs that position.

SIR E. George, I shall certainly forbid your playing cricket if the result is to maim you and keep you away from your duties at the office.

WOOLCOTT. I think, Sir Everard, the boy will do better away from the office altogether, and away from London. My advice to him would be to go West and grow up with the country. I daresay we can find him a suitable position about the gold mine.

SIR E. (*annoyed*) Tut! Tut! Tut! Your gold mine seems omnivorous, and ready to swallow up all my household. Perhaps my sister will find occupation there too?

WOOLCOTT. (*extending arms to Mrs. M. who crosses to him*) She will. She has kindly consented to come out and take care of the owner of the gold mine.

CURTAIN.









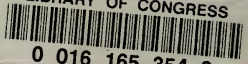


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