

"Well," he exclaimed.

"I am not laughing with you, my friend. He was thinking thus his luck, if luck it was, had somehow so opportunely befriended him.

"Densham added, leaning over the apron of the cab, "it is not always the man who wins the first track who scores the game."

The cab drove off, and Wolfenden was left a little surprised, but on the whole he was glad.

"Those fellows must be very hard on you," he said to himself softly. "I have known Densham surely called 'The King of the Turf' by his friends. You may go home, Densham, but I shall not."

Wolfenden started on his way home, having added to his stock of life experiences. When he got out on the Embankment the rain had ceased and the stars were shining. Yes! there was about it, he thought. He had obtained what, to his somewhat epicurean turn of mind, was a distinct and subtle luxury. He had accepted it with regard. As he had said to himself, "I shall not go home," Densham, he was hard hit—hit very hard, indeed. For the first time he had lost the memory of a woman so thrilling. He had drawn color into a life which was on the eve of becoming monotonous. He walked along in the joyous steps and an unwonted brightness to his world. It was not half such a bad place when you feel like that!

Suddenly he came to an abrupt halt. He knew not what instinct it was, which led him to look on with more than ordinary curiosity into the fate of the man who, with

was out of keeping with the place and the times. He was probably a little mad.

"You excite my curiosity," Wolfenden said, with a faint smile. "Let me ask you to tell me more about him. What is his name?"

"That I shall not tell you!"

"The lady, then?"

"That I do not know! She is his companion for the time. That is quite sufficient for me."

Wolfenden was silent for a moment or two.

"You are not disposed to be communicative," he said, in a remark which he presumed that I should be alluding to a delicate subject if I asked you why you made that little attempt to niggle."

Felix smiled curiously.

"There are," he said, "three distinct and different reasons why I should take his life. Three, that is, so far as I am concerned."

There are others besides me who owe him more than they can pay. I have not been his only victim, nor is it so easy to get the life of a man out of peril of his life. But he bears a charmed existence. Did you see his stick?"

"Wolfenden nodded.

"Yes, I saw that he had a stick. There was a curious jewel set in the handle. It looked like a green opal in the electric light."

"Yes!" he was assented gleefully.

"Yes! It was the stick with which he struck me. It was given him by an admirer, and he would not let it go. It was a weight in gold, and it was long as a walking stick. It beat me down against a wall."

ed. "What do you propose to do now? We can't wait outside here for an hour or two!"