

And then there came the gradual awakening to the fact that this was really fame—fame, and perhaps also competence. First in the field, of course, was the editor of the 'Cosmopolitan Review,' with a polite request that Ernest would give the readers of that intensely hot-and-hot and thoughtful periodical the opportunity of reading his valuable views on the East End outcast question, before they had had time to be worth nothing for journalistic purposes, through the natural and inevitable cooling of the public interest in this new sensation. Then his old friends of the 'Morning Intelligence' once more begged that he would be good enough to contribute a series of signed and headed articles to their columns, on the slums and fever dens of poverty-stricken London. Next, an illustrated weekly asked him to join with his artist friend in getting up another pilgrimage into yet undiscovered metropolitan plague-spots. And so, before the end of a month, Ernest Le Breton, for the first time in his life, had really got more work to do than he could easily manage, and work, too, that he felt he could throw his whole life and soul into with perfect honesty.

When the first edition of 'London's Shame' was exhausted, there was already a handsome balance to go to Ernest and his artist coadjutor, who, by the terms of the agreement, were to divide between them half the profits. The other half, for appearance' sake, Lady Hilda and Arthur had been naturally compelled to reserve for themselves: for of course it would not have been probable that any publisher would have undertaken the work without any hope of profit in any way. Arthur called upon Hilda at Lord Exmoor's house in Wilton Place to show her the first balance-sheet and accompanying cheque. 'What on earth can we do with it?' he asked seriously. 'We can't divide it between us: and yet we can't give it to the poor Le Bretons. I don't see how we're to manage.'

'Why, of course,' Hilda answered promptly. 'Put it into the Consols or whatever you call it, for the benefit of little Dot.'

'The very thing!' Arthur answered in a tone of obvious admiration. 'What a wonderfully practical person you really are, Lady Hilda.'

As to Ernest and Edie, when they got their own cheque for their quarter of the proceeds, they gazed in awe and astonishment at the bigness of the figure; and then they sat down and cried together like two children, with their hands locked in one another's.

'And you'll get well, now, Ernest dear,' Edie whispered