

it. She'd forgive me if she knew—yet she mustn't know. Well, perhaps I shall have time to run up to her for a moment, and cook some kind of an explanation—it doesn't matter much what."

He asked the janitor for Major Cayley-Gwynne, and was told that he was at home. The word "In" in red letters also asserted itself under the name of Cayley-Gwynne, and over the letter-box. The flat was on the top floor, two storeys above Cissy's, and the Duke went up in the lift, feeling somewhat guilty as he passed the familiar landing-stage.

Major Cayley-Gwynne's door was opened by a small boy in buttons, who looked awestruck at being told to say to his master that the Duke of Oxfordshire wished to see him, for the old retired soldier was only a club acquaintance of Guy's who had never called upon him in his life.

There was no Mrs. Cayley-Gwynne and the occupant of the flat had been dining alone, whiling away the intervals between courses by reading the evening papers on the Malvern murder case. He was greatly surprised to receive the Duke's name, and, leaving his coffee, came instantly out of the dining-room into the sitting-room adjoining, half suspecting a practical joke played by some too humorous friend. But there was the handsome young Duke of Oxfordshire himself, not sitting comfortably down, but pacing restlessly about, like a tiger in its cage.

A few commonplaces were exchanged, and still the old soldier was at a loss to account for the honor which had been paid him. He could not well demand of the Duke "Why have you come to see me?" therefore it was

a relief when the younger man said: "I daresay you'll think it strange for me to intrude upon you here, at this time of the evening, but I consider myself very lucky to find you dining at home, for I have an important question to ask you. It will be a very great favour to me if you will answer it."

Cayley-Gwynne protested with conventional politeness that any question of the Duke of Oxfordshire's it would be a pleasure to answer. Guy then said, "Will you tell me the name of the man who called upon you an hour ago, or rather more?"

The soldier looked puzzled, and finally shook his head. "Nobody has called upon me" he replied. "I have been alone ever since I returned from the club about six o'clock."

"Surely you forget," said the Duke, hopefully. "A young man, tall, not bad-looking, about my age, with very fair hair, pale skin, slightly freckled, a smooth shaven face, and sleepy lidded eyes."

Had Major Cayley-Gwynne ever seen the man whom the Duke wished to recall to his memory he could not have failed to recognize him from this description, which comprehended all his most salient points. But the old soldier looked as bewildered at the end as he had at the beginning.

"I'm afraid I don't even know any such person," he protested, almost apologetically. "As for a man of that description coming here this evening—well, all I can say is that it wasn't mentioned to me. I'll ring for Sammy, and ask him in your presence, Duke."

"Sammy" was the plump boy with the buttons, and he was very positive that no one had called that evening