

CHAPTER II

OUT OF THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH

"**A**M I late?" she inquired, a trace of anxiety in her smiling blue eyes. She was clasping the hand of the taut little Marchioness, who looked up into the lovely face with the frankest admiration.

"I have only this instant finished dressing," said her hostess. "Moody informs me we're in for a blizzard. Is it so bad as all that?"

"What a perfectly heavenly frock!" cried Lady Jane Thorne, standing off to take in the effect. "Turn around, do. Exquisite! Dear me, I wish I could — but there! Wishing is a form of envy. We shouldn't wish for anything, Marchioness. If we didn't, don't you see how perfectly delighted we should be with what we have? Oh, yes,— it is a horrid night. The trolley-cars are blocked, the omnibuses are stalled, and walking is almost impossible. How good the fire looks!"

"Cheerful, isn't it? Now you must let me have my turn at wishing, my dear. If I could have my wish, you would be disporting yourself in the best that Deborah can turn out, and you would be worth millions to her as an advertisement. You've got style, figure, class, verve — everything. You carry your clothes as if you were made for them and not the other way round."

"This gown is so old I sometimes think I *was* made