

any similar absorbent medium elsewhere. From the very first, indeed, they were both firmly determined never to spend one shilling of the estate upon their own pleasures or their own necessities. But if wealth is to be dispensed in doing good at all, it is best that intelligent and single-hearted people should so dispense it, rather than leave it to the tender mercies of that amiable but somewhat indefinite institution, the Court of Chancery. Warren and Elsie decided, therefore, at last to prosecute their legal claim, regarding themselves as trustees for the needy or helpless of Great Britain generally, and to sell the estate, when once obtained, for the first cash price offered, investing the sum in consols in their own names, as a virtual trust-fund, to be employed by themselves for such special purposes as seemed best to both in the free exercise of their own full and unfettered discretion. So Mr. Alfred Heberden's advertisement bore good fruit in due season; and Elsie did at last, in name at least, inherit the manor and estate of Whitestrand.

But neither of them touched one penny of the blood-money. They kept it all apart as a sacred fund, to be used only in the best way they knew for the objects that Winifred in her highest moods might most have approved of.

And this, as Elsie justly remarked, was really the very best possible arrangement. To be sure, she no longer felt that shy old feeling against coming to Warren unprovided and penniless. She was content now, as a wife should be, to trust herself implicitly and entirely to her husband's hands. Warren's art of late had every day been more sought after by those who hold in their laps the absolute disposal of the world's wealth, and there was far less fear than formerly that the cares of a household would entail on him the miserable and degrading necessity for lowering his own artistic standard to meet the inferior wishes and tastes of possible purchasers, with their vulgar ideals. But it was also something for each of them to feel that the other had thus been seriously tried by the final test of this world's gold—tried in actual practice and not found wanting. Few pass through that sordid crucible unscathed; those that do are of the purest metal.

On the very day when Warren and Elsie finally fixed the date for their approaching wedding, the calm and happy little bride-elect came in with first tidings of the accomplished arrangement, all tremors and blushes, to her faithful Edie. To her great chagrin, however, her future sister-in-law received the news of this proximate family event with an absolute minimum of surprise or excitement. "You don't seem to be in the least astonished, dear," Elsie cried, somewhat piqued at her cool