

CONTRIBUTED.

Whereas.

Hamilton Anvers was a very ordinary man of the period, neither better nor worse, neither more nor less selfish than the rest of his sex. Tendencies inherited from his male ancestors from Adam downward, made it as natural for him to regard Hamilton Anvers as the hub of creation, as it is for a dog to perform those peculiar rotary movements before lying down for a nap in the sunshine. The dog, too, inherits these habits from his wild and undomesticated ancestors. I might carry the metaphor further and say that Anvers' general habit of mind was not less serene and sweetly self-complacent than that of the dog when enjoying the specified relaxation. In just such a contented frame of mind he returned one evening from his office, mounted the stairs, two steps at a time, and began to whistle a lively air. This was his usual method of warning his landlady that he felt an aching void which nothing but the most satisfactory of dinners could ever fill. The sign was evidently well understood, for very soon a maid-of-all-work appeared and proceeded to set forth a satisfying repast.

This was rapidly converted into a vanishing, or rather, vanished quantity, and Anvers threw himself into a wonderful "sleepy hollow" chair, stretched forth his slippered feet to the coquettish blaze, and began to soliloquize—"I always enjoy this half hour or so of meditation. It sets a fellow straight with the world. Now if more fellows would spend every day a half hour or so in thinking things over, how much——."

Here a sound of peaceful regular breathing announced that for the present Hamilton's meditation had

passed from his own personal supervision. Into whose hands he fell next we shall see.

He found himself in a vast hall, lofty but very plain, reminding him strangely of a kitchen except for its unusual size, and the fact that it seemed more lavishly furnished with utensils than any kitchen he had ever seen. Kitchen ranges, bespattered with grease, and with the black lead worn off every inch of their surfaces, were arranged at intervals close to the walls. In the spaces unoccupied by stoves were placed kitchen tables, covered with bake-boards and pile after pile of dishes, all in the last stages of dirt and disorder. From every corner frying pans, pots and kettles all very dirty, grinned at him like little black fiends. A horrid lurid glare diffused itself over all. Written above the door in letters of flame were the words, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." This lugubrious sentence was all the more terrible, because it was only after entrance had been made that the flame resolved itself into significant letters—outside it looked like a beacon of hope and safety. A slight rustle at the other end of the hall startled Anvers into attention. He stood lost in amazement and fear. Stranger sight, I venture to say, has never yet greeted mortal eyes.

There flashed into bright relief at the end of the room, a group of five figures, all women. Their colossal forms bent and swayed and grew distorted in the fantastic and horrible glow of the fateful letters of flame. Ordinarily twice five women would have had no terrors for Anvers, but this was quite beyond the range of his experience. One of the group was seated upon a lofty throne. He knew instinctively that this was Helen of Troy. How he knew it, he could not tell—not by her attire, certainly, and not by her occupation. For she was dressed much as he remembered to have seen his grandmother, in a