

THE LADY OF THE CROSSING

right when you told me, a long time ago, that I was moved by sentiment."

"When did I say that?"

"Don't you recall a lecture you delivered in Webley's garden?"

"Oh, sure! But that was no lecture! I was trying to tell you, on the side, that I meant to win Mildred Henderson!"

"What—I—fail—to—see," said Sam, slowly, "is how you are going to act when you go down again. Everyone will be talking of it, and she'll be sure to think you did it for her, and——"

"So I did!" commented Marsden with a grim chuckle. "She'll be sure to think we both did it for her. But I'm not going to leave it like that. I'm going to call. I'm going to call and say to her: 'Miss Henderson, I've been up to the top, squatted in a bucket like a fool kid. I did it because you kind of challenged. I've done it, and it was a crazy thing for you to want a man to do just to flatter you. And I've called to tell you, so as to let you know my mind now, same as I've let you know it all along, that—I—won't—trouble—you—any—more!'"

He paused, staring ahead.

"And she will make a twist," replied Sam, "or a move—neither you nor I can hazard a guess at what kind of twist or move—but it will put you off your base again, and you'll come away all tangled up."

"You surely seem to know a lot about it!" said Marsden. "You seem to be a whole lot con-