

A CHANCE MEETING

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lish and gave a free translation of it to the station master. But he was bluntness itself. His wife was waiting for him, and he had the law on his side.

I turned to the girl again and said, trying German this time: "They have curious laws in this country, and one of them requires the station to be closed."

Her face lighted with unmistakable relief and she answered in the same language: "My servant has gone to make some arrangements, I only wish to wait for a train."

I interpreted this also; but the man was obdurate. "She cannot wait here. No one is allowed—by law."

"But I *must* wait," she broke in, and blushed vividly and trembled at having given away the fact that she understood him.

"Let me offer a suggestion. I am an Englishman, Robert Anstruther, and if you will permit, I will wait with you outside until your servant returns. These officials are obstinate just now because of some plot that has been discovered; and he will only send for the police if you do not comply."

At the mention of the police she rose quickly, all the colour left her face and her lips quivered.

The stationmaster beamed his thanks upon me as he bowed us out and turned the key upon us.

"These little officials are very touchy," I said, when we stood outside and I saw she was quite undecided what to do.