

ditch obstacles, there was no danger of their being stopped by English fences after the stiff posts and rails of their native land. They looked forward to glorious performances when Reggie would be able to escort them.

‘Don’t expect too much, my good Vanda,’ said Hermione; ‘he’ll be too nervous about Corisande’s getting hurt, to trouble about you and me. A *fiancée* counts for ever so much more than the dearest sisters.’

‘I can hardly believe that; but we must make allowances. If Corisande accepts him, we may be thankful. He might have been caught by some smart colonial girl. Some of them are very good-looking.’

‘Are they, indeed? Who is a snob now? as you sometimes say to me. And what are we but colonial?’

‘Oh, but we’re different!’

‘I can’t see it. Dad has been lucky, and we are ever so rich—of course “in the swim,” and so on; but as for being anything that entitles us to look down on our countrywomen, the idea is ludicrous. Don’t let people say we can’t stand our oats.’

‘I apologise, and promise not to offend again. Of course it’s absurd to talk as if we were anything but middle-class people, though of course the Banneret family is as old as the Heptarchy.’

‘That’s very well to know; but the less we bother about family descent, the more people will think of us. The Honourable Corisande is a good sort, and an Earl’s daughter. Rank, when