

The Career of Mrs. Osborne

left them calm as glass, till one night in April, when Mrs. George Wilton by the light of one composition candle read and re-read a paragraph in *Vanity Fair*.

It was a small thing to rouse the spirit of the Declaration of Independence in a woman who had married because she was asked to marry, and had borne tacitly with the rule of a mother-in-law because she was asked to bear with it; but rouse that spirit it did. Jane Egerton had married with a Background, a gorgeous tapestry of life with one figure in it. Even on her wedding day her husband had been as a faint etching hung on the splendid color, the too bold lines of that never forgotten Background. And here—the paper shook in her shaking hand—the Background was alive again; was “become a multi-millionaire by the tragic death of his unmarried uncle in the ill-fated *S. S. City of Perth*; had taken a house in Grosvenor Crescent and would entertain largely during the season.” The new millionaire was but thirty-three and unmarried.

“Miles,” said Mrs. George Wilton to her-