

"Then your son is gone? How very unfortunate!" was the reply.

"Frank started for his tour some days ago. I do not quite know where he is now. Had you any particular reason for wishing to see him?"

"How very unfortunate!" again ejaculated Mr. Morgan, without replying to Mr. Brereton's question.

"What is unfortunate? What on earth is the matter?" said Mr. Brereton shortly.

Mr. Morgan still hesitated.

"What is the matter?" repeated Mr. Brereton, impatiently. "Out with it! I hate suspense."

"Prepare yourself then, Mr. Brereton, to hear painful news."

"Out with it, I say," shouted Mr. Brereton. "What do you want my son for?"

"There is a warrant out against him for forgery."

Mr. Brereton turned deadly white. The strong man trembled, sank into a chair, and covered his face. "Good God, is it for this?"

So he sat for five minutes, ten minutes, a quarter of an hour, with his elbows supported on the table, and his face buried in his hands. Half an hour passed, and still he did not move. In vain did Mr. Morgan cough, and walk about the room. Nothing seemed to recall him. At last, growing alarmed, the clergyman walked up to him, and laid his hand on his shoulder. "Mr. Brereton," he said, "shall I tell you about him? Shall I tell you how greatly your son was beloved? Shall I tell you how much we grieve over his fall, if fall it is?"

Then Mr. Brereton roused himself and lifted up an ashen face, which seemed to have had a burden of ten years laid upon it during that one half hour, so strangely was it drawn and aged.

"Mr. Morgan," he said, slowly rising and pushing back his chair, "Mr. Morgan, I swear that if this is proved against him, he shall never again darken my doors. He shall never inherit one penny of the wealth I have striven to amass for him. He shall never succeed to the....."

"Stop," cried Mr. Morgan, seizing his arm. "You do not know what you are saying. Do not take any such awful oath. Who knows? You may repent and wish to break it some day?"

"Take off your hand," exclaimed Mr. Brereton, shaking his arm violently. "Take off your hand, I say, or you will be sorry for it. If he is guilty, I will never repent what I have said. So help me God."

"Had you not better hear what I have to say? Who knows what temptations he has had?"

"Temptations? Pooh! Was not his allowance large enough to satisfy