

4 THE CARPET FROM BAGDAD

Many of us lay the blame upon our parents. We shift the burden of wondering why we have this fault and lack that grace to the shoulders of our immediate forebears. We go to the office each morning denying that we have any responsibility; we let the boss do the worrying. But George never went prospecting in his soul for any such dross philosophy. He was grateful for having had so beautiful a mother; proud of having had so honest a sire; and if either of them had endued him with false weights he did his best to even up the balance.

The mother had been as romantic as any heroine out of Mrs. Radcliff's novels, while the father had owned to as much romance as one generally finds in a thorough business man, which is practically none at all. The very name itself is a bulwark against the intrusions of romance. One can not lift the imagination to the prospect of picturing a Jones in ruffles and highboots, pinking a varlet in the midriff. It smells of sugar-barrels and cotton-bales, of steamships and railroads, of stolid routine in the office and of placid concern over the daily news under the evening lamp.

Mrs. Jones, lovely, lettered yet not worldly, had