

I've never lived at a hotel like this before, or in anything like such extravagant luxury. I thought the ten pounds I charged for tuition would be the chief item; instead of which, I see now, you've already paid almost as much as that for me in railway fares and so forth, and I tremble to think how much more you may have to pay for my board and lodging. I can't let you stand me my amusements, too, into the bargain.'

The blonde young man puffed away at his cigar for a moment or so with vigorous good-humour.

'What a devil of a conscience you've got!' he observed at last, in the intervals of the puffs; 'and what a devil of a touchy sense of honour as well, Gascoyne! I suppose it's in the family! Why, it's the regular rule; if you take a vacation tutor to a place of your own choice abroad, you pay his way for him. I call it only fair. You contract to do it. There's no obligation on either side. A mere matter of business.'

'But you come to such a grand hotel and live so royally!' Paul objected with fervour.

'Am I to go to a cabaret and live upon garlic, just to suit your peculiar views of expenditure?' Thistleton retorted with spirit. 'Can I drink sour wine and eat black bread because you like to be economical? No, no, my dear fellow. You mistake the position. I want to come to Mentone for the winter. Beastly climate, Yorkshire; dull hole, the governor's; lovely coast, the Riviera; Monte Carlo always laid on at a convenient distance; lots of amusement; plenty of fun; the very place to spend the Christmas vac. in. If I go and say to the governor: "Look here, old boy: I want a pony or two to run down South and amuse myself, just to escape this infernal dull hole of yours, and to have a turn or two at roulette or something," why the governor'd no doubt advise me to go and be hanged, in language more remarkable for force than elegance. Very well, then; what do I do? I go to him and say, pulling a long face, "Look here, sir, I want to read up for my next examination. Devilish clever fellow at my own college—studious, steady, economical—excellent testimonials—all that sort of thing. Sure to come out a first in 'Greats' next time. I propose to read with him at some quiet place in the South of France—say Mentone,"