

a burden on those who were overburdened without him. Robert, though despondent enough himself, tried to keep up his courage, by reminding him that the wheel of fortune could not be expected to move without a little time to start. But Edward expected nothing from the wheel of fortune, or any other wheel.

Great excitement prevailed in the establishment of Burke & Company in the last week in which Robert Gray looked for some favorable change. Instead of forgetting the promotion in store for some one, he thought more of it every day; fearing to hear the decision, though he knew what that decision must be, yet wishing to have it ended, for the suspense seemed harder to bear than an adverse certainty. Many conjectures were whispered about as to whether Markham or Gray would get it, and who would get the other vacant place, for the promotion went down through all ranks. Everyone expressed the hope that Markham would be disappointed. "Hard times for some of us if *he* gets Elliott's place," was the general remark.

There were many whispered consultations carried on in quiet corners,—at least as far as was possible under the eagle eye and hook nose of Mr. Markham, who seemed, probably in view of his impending rise in life, to have redoubled his vigilance in the matter of hauling forth and shouting at all delinquents. Evidently his heart

"Beat high with hope elate."

Whether from some private and good reason of his own, or the quiet, almost dejected, manner of his rival Gray, Mr. Markham seemed to consider the situation his already, and comported himself accordingly. His voice and eyes were sharper, and his nose larger than ever; his commands more numerous and more difficult of execution, and when he could get nothing to do, say or find fault with—a state of things that seldom happened—he employed himself walking up and down in a dignified, leisurely manner, very much as his employer was accustomed to do; even to customers, the change extended in a slight degree,—that is to the poor ones: those who were obliged to suit their taste

to a small purse. Mr. Markham had no hesitation in telling them that they had no right to expect the same choice of goods as those of larger means. But to the rich, whom he always took care to serve himself, with an eye to the time when he should be in business on his own account, he was the same personification of fawning obsequiousness. To such his voice and smile were still the same combination of milk and honey.

But as one day after another passed and nothing was heard of promotion, the suspense began to tell on Mr. Markham. Could it be possible that Mr. Burke was thinking of giving that to a stranger? Mr. Markham was troubled. At one time he displayed all his accustomed activity; at another he was slow and absent-minded. He became hard to get along with, though that could be said of him at the best of times with all truth, and very irritable. He thundered at any one he took for a beggar, who showed an inclination to approach him, in such tones that, without venturing to appeal to any other person, they turned and fled, fear lending them wings. The lady collectors he dismissed with very short answers, not even examining their books to see what everyone gave—a thing he never failed to do before. Very different this from the usual persuasive smile and bland regrets that, "really calls of this kind being so numerous, and money at this time of the year so uncommonly tight, he really did not see that he could feel it his duty to do anything for them on this occasion, much as he would like it; some other time, perhaps, he might,—at least he hoped"—Here Mr. Markham would lay his hand on the front of his coat and pause, while the lady collectors took the opportunity to withdraw. What Mr. Markham's hopes had reference to no one had been able to discover. It certainly was not to any future subscriptions, for this was his invariable answer to all these troublesome people. It had been conjectured once by some one who did not know him very well that as it was a lady he was speaking to, he might be referring to something quite out of the money line. This idea in connection with Mr. Markham