

as you have smiled on me, letting him hang over your chair, or absorb you in confidential chat. Lowther can be very fascinating when he likes."

"But he is not Wyatt Hemsley. Oh! it is cruel of you to doubt me!"

As Mamie showed signs of becoming tearful, her lover apologized, and pledged himself to do just as she pleased.

"I will imitate you precisely," he added, a little maliciously. "When Lowther squeezes your hand, I will press Miss Hardress's taper fingers, and gaze in her eyes."

"Indeed, sir, you'll do no such thing! Do you want to make me hate her? That is going beyond your instructions with a vengeance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" croaked grandmamma Esdaile's pet-parrot. "How very absurd we are!"

For once Poll's observations was so well-timed that the lovers laughed and were reconciled. The letters were written and despatched, eliciting on the following day telegrams from both recipients.

"Will be with you to night," Mr Lowther wired. "You shall see me to-morrow," was Miss Hardress's message, and the delighted conspirators kept the secret of their engagement from everyone but Mamie's father, lest it should interfere with the success of their plot.

The Esdailes had gone to dine with some old friends when Gerald Lowther arrived at the abbey, but Captain Hemsley was there to welcome him; and they spent a very pleasant evening in the library, sometimes talking, sometimes examining the rare old books and manuscripts with which its oaken cases had been filled by a former squire.

"But you have not told me anything respecting your betrothed," said Gerald, presently.

"You shall see her to-morrow. I think you have met before," replied the young officer.

"Is she the daughter or niece of Mr. Esdaile?"

"What made you think that?" queried Captain Hemsley, evasively. "Miss Esdaile is a dear little girl, but she has not the brilliant mind of Sibyl Hardress."

Mr. Lowther started, stammered something unintelligible, then thrust his hands into his pockets and fell into a brown study.

What strange contrarieties in human nature he was continually encountering! Who could imagine his gay, scatter-brained, military friend worshipping at the shrine of a modern Minerva!

Mamie drove her ponies to the station to meet Miss Hardress.

"I hope," said the latter, "you haven't a house full of people."

"Dear me, no. Just our own family, grandmamma, one of my uncles, who is helping papa make his plans for draining those marsh lands by the river; Mr. Gerald Lowther—you have heard of him?—and his *fidus Achates*, Captain Hemsley. Don't fall in love with young Hemsley, Sib, because a little bird has whispered to me that he is engaged."

Miss Hardress curled her finely chiselled lip.

"Those military men are generally sad fiends, but the warning was not needed. I shall never marry; but devote my time and money to good purposes."

"How angelic of you! For my own part I am more unselfish. Instead of making myself a name as a great female philanthropist, I shall be content to be the mistress of some happy household, with a dear good husband loving and praising me as the best of wives."

"Yours is a very sweet and womanly ambition," said Sibyl, with a sigh; "but you might have ascribed to me better motives for my plans."

"Dear Sib, it is not wise to plan at all. Let both of us be content for a wiser Hand to rule our destinies."

"But how grave we are," Mamie added the next moment. "Here comes papa to meet us, and the gentlemen are with him. I do so hope you will like Mr. Lowther! For my sake, you know."

Both Sibyl Hardress and Gerald Lowther assured themselves that they were very pleased to renew the acquaintance under circumstances that enabled them to be on the best of terms without any danger of misunderstanding, and once again they glided into intimacy; they read the same books, discussed favorite topics, and held long arguments with an increasing respect for each other's mental powers.

It was only when Gerald was smoking his last cigar, or Sibyl was brushing her tresses at night, that he would marvel how she could bestow such a heart as hers on a thoughtless boy who took no interest in her pursuit, and she would feel vexed with Mamie for her frivolity. Why did she not fit herself to be the companion of the clever man who had chosen her for his wife?

"I am afraid we are in a maze and don't know the way out," Wyatt Hemsley confided to his betrothed one morning when they had stolen away to the conservatory, while Gerald and Sibyl bent their heads together over a pamphlet on the Semitic stone. "They are the best of friends, but no sooner give either of them a hint of our scheming than they will fly apart and no earthly power will bring them together again."

"Cannot we trust to circumstances?"

"You see," objected Mamie's lover, "I am awfully tired of playing hide-and-seek. I want all the world to know that you are mine and I am thine."

"We must not do anything rashly," Mamie decided. "I am going down the village after luncheon. If you like to go too and carry my charity basket, we can have a nice quiet talk, and perhaps hit upon some plan for bringing matters to a climax."

But this was done during their absence. Grandmamma Esdaile, though too deaf to hear a word without her trumpet, still retained the keenest of eyesight. She had seen the love-glances exchanged between her pet Mamie and Captain Hemsley: she had watched and approved their growing affection, and was first dismayed, then furiously angry, when she saw the gallant

captain's place by Mamie's side usurped by the pale, reserved scholar, whom she looked upon as the wisest of men.

Something must be done to rescue Mamie from the spells cast upon her by this second Mephistopheles, and grandmamma looked around her for a more useful *confidante* than Mamie's easy-tempered indolent mother.

At last her choice fell upon Sibyl Hardress, to whom she drew such a moving picture of the happy understanding that reigned between Mamie and Captain Hemsley before that wicked Mr. Lowther came to the abbey, than when the agitated Sibyl made her escape she flew to the library to ponder over what she had heard.

Here, however, her tears and her trouble were witnessed by the scholar, who made his presence known by hurrying to her side.

"Dear Miss Hardress, something or someone has grieved you. Can I be of any assistance?"

"Yes," she answered, frankly; "you can tell me how you, so wise beyond other men, can reconcile it to your conscience to wrong your friend, and win away from him the affection of the innocent girl who loved him till you came between them."

"That is a strange charge! Who is my accuser? That I have loved you, Miss Hardress, with all my heart and soul, I will not deny."

"I am not speaking of myself," cried Sibyl, crimsoning with shame; "but of Mamie and Captain Hemsley. They were on the point of an engagement when you—"

"Impossible!" cried Gerald Lowther. "I only arrived here a few hours before you, and Hemsley told me—at least he hinted—that you were the lady of his choice. As for Miss Esdaile, it is true that I have held several conversations with her, but the subject has always been you."

"Then grandmamma has made a ridiculous mistake, and—what must you think of me?" cried poor Sibyl, hiding her face in her hands. "I will go away to-morrow, and never again will I be induced to meddle in the love affairs of others."

"And I will go away too, lest I grow envious of the happiness it is not my lot to share."

He kissed Sibyl's hand, relinquished it with a sigh, and she took a couple of steps towards the door, then came back, having made a desperate resolution.

"Mr. Lowther, why did you leave Edinburgh so suddenly?"

"Miss Hardress, why did you suddenly grow cold to me?"

"Because some vile slanderer hinted that my fortune was my only attraction in your eyes."

"Go, then, and found a college with it. When you have done that, I shall be free to say, Sibyl, I love you for yourself."

"Ah, say it now!" and she threw herself into his arms.

When Mamie and her captain returned from the village and sought their friends in the library, there was a little laughing and crying on the part of the young ladies, and the heartiest of handshakings on the part of the gentlemen. Then grandmamma was fetched, and first bewildered, then delighted, with the tidings that her congratulations were being asked for two pairs of lovers instead of one.

## DRY GOODS!

STAPLE & FANCY

FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC.

GREAT VARIETY.

New Goods continually arriving at

PRICES LOWER THAN EVER

—AT—

"The BRANCH"

JOHN W. WALLACE,

CORNER GRANVILLE & DUKE STS.

T. C. ALLEN & Co.

Offer best advantages

To Buyers of

COMMERCIAL STATIONERY

Office Requisites.

SOCIETY STATIONERY:

Wedding and Visiting Cards.

Colour Stamping.

Copperplate Printing.

General Job Printing.

T. C. ALLEN & Co.,

124 & 126 Granville St.

## MAPS!

MACKINLAY'S MAP OF MARITIME PROVINCES,  
5 ft. 6 in. x 4 ft. 6 in.

MACKINLAY'S MAP OF NOVA SCOTIA,  
3 ft. 3 in. x 2 ft. 8 in.

MACKINLAY'S POCKET MAP OF N. S.,  
2 ft. 6 in. x 2 ft.

A. & W. MACKINLAY,  
PUBLISHERS.  
HALIFAX, N. S.

James Roue,

MANUFACTURER OF

GINGER ALE,  
LEMONADE,  
SODA WATER, &c.

Also—Agent for the celebrated Wilmot Spa  
Springs Natural Mineral Water,

"SPADEAU."

For full particulars address P. O. Box 408, or  
WOODS' WHARF, HALIFAX, N. S.

## DENTAL

CYRUS K. FISKE,

Doctor of Dental Surgery,

Having Removed to more central and commodious  
offices, is now prepared to attend to his numerous  
patients.

All branches of Dentistry attended to.  
Irregularities and treatment of children's teeth a  
specialty.

Rooms, 83 Hollis St., (Victoria Terrace).