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His face was the colour of a Blackfoot's, and she could see the darkness of his neck above the loose-fronted shirt and a bare blackened arm that was raised to hold the tired beasts to their task. Their trampling and the crash and rattle that swelled in slow crescendo drowned the murmur of the wheat, until one of the machines stood still, and the leader, turning a moment in his saddle, held up a hand. Then those that came behind swung into changed formation, passed, and fell into indented line again, while Colonel Barrington nodded with grim approval.

"It is very well done," he said. "The best of harvesters! No newcomers yonder. They're capable Manitoba men. I don't know where he got them, and, in any other year, one would have wondered where he would find the means of paying them. We have never seen farming of this kind at Silverdale."

He seemed to sigh a little, while his hands closed on the bridle; and Maud Barrington fancied she understood his thoughts just then.

"Nobody can be always right, and the good years do not come alone," she said. "You will plough every acre next one."

Barrington smiled dryly. "I'm afraid that will be a little late, my dear. Any one can follow, but since, when everybody's crop is good, the price comes down, the man who gets the prize is the one who shows the way."

"He was content to face the risk," said Miss Barrington.

"Of course," said the Colonel quietly. "I should be the last to make light of his foresight and courage. Indeed, I am glad I can acknowledge it, in more ways than one, for I have felt lately that I am getting an old man. Still, there is one with greater capacities ready to step into my shoes; and though it was long before I could overcome my prejudice against him. I think I should now be content to let him have them. Whatever Lance may have been, he was born a gentleman, and blood is bound to tell."

Maud Barrington, who was of a patrician parentage, and would not at one time have questioned this assertion, wondered why she felt less sure of it just then.

"But if he had not been, would not what he has done be sufficient to vouch for him?" she said.

BARRINGTON smiled a little, and the girl felt her question was useless as she glanced at him. He sat very straight in his saddle, immaculate in dress, with a gloved hand on his hip and a stamp which he had inherited, with the thinly-covered pride that usually accompanies it, from generations of a similar type, on his clean-cut face. It was evidently needless to look for any sympathy with that view from him.

"My dear," he said, "there are things at which the others can beat us; but, after all, I do not think they are worth the most; and while Lance has occasionally exhibited a few undesirable characteristics, no doubt acquired in this country, and has not been always blameless, the fact that he is a Courthorne at once covers and accounts for a lot."

Then Witham recognized them, and made a sign to one of the men behind him as he hauled his binder clear of the wheat. He had dismounted in another minute and came towards them, with the jacket he had not wholly succeeded in struggling into loose about his shoulders.

"It is almost time I gave my team a rest," he said. "Will you come with me to the house?"

"No," said Colonel Barrington. "We only stopped in passing. The crop will harvest well."

"Yes," said Witham, turning with a little smile to Miss Barrington. "Better than I expected, and prices are still moving up. You will remember, madam, who it was wished me good fortune. It has undeniably come!"

"Then," said the white-haired lady, "next year I will do as much again, though it will be a little unnecessary, because you have my good wishes all the time. Still, you are too prosaic to fancy they can have anything to do with this."

She pointed to the wheat, but though Witham smiled again, there was a curious expression in his face as he glanced at her niece.

"I certainly do, and your good-will has

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