

and fell, light as a mustard seed, upon his master's desk. At once he felt removed from a world of strife; peace and security held him in fee; soon his lids obscured all save a gleaming stripe of eyeball. A sunbeam fell on his broad flank, burnished the copper markings on the pale gold hair. He furred his tail about him; his squat head sank to the great paws which, one after the other, he folded. Slowly, as a singer humming to himself, he began to purr.

II

As Sir Hugh, a little after his womankind, sat down to lunch, Lady Oakley cried out:

"Hugh! Cradoc says he won't go."

"Oh," said Sir Hugh. "No soup, Sutton, please."

"Oh, do have some hot soup," said Louise Douglas. "You've been out in the wet all the morning."

"Perfectly scandalous!" said Lady Oakley. "That man's had every chance to join up. In '14 you said you'd let him off his rent. When the Derby scheme was on I went to see him myself. But he didn't attest, and now compulsion's come he says he won't go. Hugh, we can't let it go on. We don't want—*what* do they call it, a conscientious objector in the village. You must make him enlist."

"After the soup, dear," said Sir Hugh negligently.

Louise and Monica began to giggle, and Sir Hugh, looking up, caught a gleam of merriment in the eyes of Lee, who stood by the tortured marble-topped Louis XV table, preparing to carve the joint. He looked away hurriedly, but a warmth of friendliness rose between him and the old butler, who had played with him when he was a small boy; the room was filled with a hint of amiable