

manner had lost all trace of that of the curate of St. Kitts; it was rather the manner of the Senior Chaplain of the *n*th Canadian Division, that of a person set in authority.

"I have been at Windermere's," he announced abruptly. "He wants to marry Mrs. Cadwallader, but can't finance it. If she marries she loses her pension. His motives throughout have been of the best. He promised Mrs. Cadwallader's husband before he died to look after her. I want you to help me to find him something suitable to do, so that he can manage to get married."

The rector removed his spectacles, and placed them between the leaves of the book he was reading.

"It seems to me," he observed austere, "that the proper thing for Mr. Windermere to do is to get married first, and then ask for help afterwards."

"He is not asking for help," snapped China; "it is I who am insisting on his taking it. I don't regard him as at all in the wrong. What's wrong is our criminal pension arrangements. Here are two young people, one of whom has lost his health in the service of his country, a complete cripple, the other of whom has lost her husband and sole means of support; and their grateful country provides them with pittance on which neither of them can support a decent existence. They ought to be lapped in luxury for the rest of their lives. When I think of them, and when I compare them with the able-bodied war profiteers and their wives, whom one sees rolling about in opulent motor-cars, people to whom this war has meant nothing but gain, I confess I see red. The source of the unfortunate position in which Windermere and Mrs. Cadwallader find themselves does not lie in any fault of theirs; it lies in the shameful injustice of their treatment by the Government of this country. I am not able to change the laws of the land; but I intend to do what I can in this case to mitigate their pernicious effects."

"But," expostulated the rector, "the laws of the land have not compelled these two people to live together as though they were man and wife."

"That is precisely what they have done, and at the same time they have made it impossible for them to obtain the consecration of marriage by the Church. It is only by living together that they can pay their way; but if they marry, they lose half their source of livelihood, meagre as that is."

"I admit," said the rector, "that it is a difficult and unusual case. Perhaps I have been hasty in judging it. I am glad to discover that there are what the lawyers call extenuating circumstances. But I find it difficult to compromise with sin, wherever I meet it. What do you want me to do in the case?"

"To try and discover some means by which Windermere can earn a living. He is useless for manual labour, and he cannot stand long hours in an office or constant application."

"What education has he had?"

"He was a student at the law school when the war broke out."

"Then he must have had a fair schooling at least." The rector hesitated. "I should suggest that he should try writing. In my younger days, I used to obtain a very respectable addition to my income by writing occasional articles; and the market for such compositions is better to-day than it was then. Even if one has but average talent, one can always make money by writing boiler-plate; and if one has exceptional ability, there is always the chance of catching the public ear, and doing very well by oneself. They tell me that some publications nowadays pay fabulous prices for articles and stories. It is, of course, a precarious life; Sir Walter Scott used to say that literature was a good stick, but a poor crutch. But it might be worth while for your friend to try it. I could perhaps give him some letters of introduction to publishers and editors."