

## VII

IN spite of envy, jealousy and malice, a certain curiosity greater than all these drew everybody to the Princess Zut-Ski's ball. Lady Fitz-Fulke was there in virgin white, looking more youthful than ever, in spite of her sixty-five years and the card labelled 'Fresh paint' which somebody had playfully placed upon her enamelled shoulder. The McFecklesses, the Pyles, Flossy, the doctor, and the Chevalier—looking still anxious—were in attendance.

The mysterious Nubian doorkeeper admitted the guests through the same narrow passages, much to the disgust of Lady Pyle and the discomfiture of her paunchy husband ; but on reaching a large circular interior hall, a greater surprise was in store for them. It was found