

Better than Gold

'PPS.—Should C. F. elect to come—and if he's not already booked for the army he will be foolish if he doesn't—tell him to start at once, and bring as little luggage and as much coin as possible. We can buy a complete outfit suitable for the climate (which is dreadful) at Victoria.'

'Well, what do you think of that?' asked Sir Robert, as I handed him back the letter.

His keen grey eyes were fixed intently on my face as if he would read my answer there before it was spoken. I knew that a crisis in my life had arrived. He liked me well; but he had one weakness—he was avaricious. Money was his god. He knew that I admired his daughter, and had a strong suspicion that the attachment was mutual, but he also knew that I was only a younger son in a large family, without any prospects worth mentioning, although my father held a very good position in the county. Hence the fact that hitherto he had not encouraged me to visit the Priory, notwithstanding my school and college friendship with his younger son Louis—the elder was married and lived in London, acting as resident manager to the shipping business.

The look which Grace had given me when she thanked me for saving her life flashed through my mental vision at that moment, and,