

till she could command her voice sufficiently to tell what had just passed between her and Kimball.

Marian continued to be amused by it. In the flush of her re-Anglicization, she said it was a very American affair. But she added, that something ought really to be done for the chivalric simpleton, and that she was going to tell Ray about him.

During the week that Helen spent with the Butlers, before she was to take her place in Zen's Pearson's Photographic Parlours, as he called them, the wisdom of her decision was tested by another incident or accident—one of those chances of real life which one must hesitate to record, because they have so much the air of having been contrived. From her life in the Port, she had contracted the suburban habit of lunching at restaurants, so alien to a Bostonian lady proper; and one day, when she was down-town alone, she found herself at a table in Parker's so near that of two other ladies that she could not help hearing what they said. They were both dressed with a certain floridity, and one was a fearless, good-humoured beauty, who stared a great deal about the room and out of the window, and, upon the whole, seemed amused to realize herself in Boston, as if it were a place whose peculiarities she had reflected much upon, without being greatly awed or dazzled by them. "We used to see a great many Bostonians in California when the Pacific road was first opened. They came out there in shoals and I afterwards met them in Japan—men, I mean, of course. I had had quite a flirtation with one—the pleasantest one I ever met." The lady breathed, above the spoil of the quail-on-toast before her, a sigh to the memory of this agreeable passage in her life. "Yes, a regular flirtation. It was on the steamer coming to San Francisco, and he was on his way home to be married, poor fellow, and I suppose he thought, Now or never! The steamer broke her shaft, and had to put back to Japan, and he took passage home on a sailing vessel that we hailed, and she was lost, and