

able appearance that she might be one to indulge in soft raiment and fine linen, he rattled off a list of articles which she would have done well to have left behind her.

"We've got to protect our merchants, madam. If you've brought any description of silk gloves, kid gloves, mitts, silk plush, netting used for manufacture of gloves, we'll assess you. If you've any silk cords, tassel girdles, silk velvets except church vestments——"

"That's a very likely thing for me to have," she interrupted indignantly.

"Silk manufactures," he said, "including gros grains, satins, sarcenet, Persians, poplins, ribbons, shawls, ties, scarfs, bows, handkerchiefs, mantillas, ——" and he gabbled on till his breath failed him.

Mrs. Macartney was speechless for the first time in her life. She turned from him with a shudder, as if to say, you are a dangerous man, and hailed an agile young official who was pursuing a comet-like career over trunks and boxes and leaving a trail of white chalk marks behind him.

At her signal he bore down upon her box with bewildering rapidity, opened it, and with long cunning fingers extracted therefrom every dutiable article. The new gloves still stitched together, the silk and linen and dainty trifles still in the wrappers in which they had come from the Dublin shops, lay in a heap before him.