





wrench himself free, his face livid with rage.

with rage.

Margaret, with a swift movement gathered up her trailing gown and fled into the house.

Then the two furious men, with clenched fists and faces distorted by

passion, sprang like wild animals at each other, striking, parrying and plunging till John Grey with a sudden sense of loathing, flung his opponent from him and strode away.

Miss Pragg and her letters were forestten John Grey mind was whirl

Miss Pragg and her letters were for gotten. John Grey's mind was whirling with emotion. Something had come into his life that completely changed its outlook. What, oh what was to be the end of it all?

Reaching his own quarters after his struggle with Manson, John Grey sat for an hour his head in his hands.

for an hour, his head in his hands, motionless, dazed and startled.

Sudden revelation had come to him.
He thought he was fighting to avenge the insult offered to this beautiful girl. In one blinding flash he knew that jealousy, furious, raging jealousy, had driven him on, and that he loved her—loved her—loved her!

He laughed a harsh and exceedingly bitter laugh.

FOOL—fool—and again fool—that I am! That peerless queen amongst women is not for you,

amongst women is not for you, John Grey—oh nameless wanderer!"
He groaned aloud in an agony of despair. How was he to live in her presence and net betray his love? How could he leave and shut himself away for ever from the joy of her? What would she think of the action he had taken on her hehalf?

would she think of the action he had taken on her behalf?

One thing, however, was certain, he and Manson could not both remain.

This question was promptly settled next morning by Miss Pragg. Manson, ornamented by a very black eye and bruised countenance, was summarily dismissed her service, with drastic comments on his behaviour.

John Grey, also carrying a black eye, was not dismissed. Margaret Assitas, turning very pink when she saw him, thanked him in a few well chosen words, and the incident was closed.

closed.

closed.

A few days later Miss Pragg and Margaret took their places in the car with John Grey at the wheel, and set out on their long ride through the south of England. Miss Pragg had no idea of scorching over the distance or doing it in any time limit. She always liked to make the journey a part of the holiday and a very enjoyable part also.

They stopped at all the cathedral

able part also.

They stopped at all the cathedral towns on the way, visiting Exeter, Salisbury and Winchester, admiring the old cathedrals afresh, and putting up for the night at such hotels as Miss Pragg had stayed at before. They flashed through the pretty villages of Dorset, only stopping at a wayside inn for refreshments; often they had a luncheon basket packed and put into the car. the car.

the car.

The few days spent in this unconventional way, imperceptibly drew them together. John Grey became less of an automatic fixture to the car, and more of a human personality to them both. They consulted together about roads and petrol—stopping gypsy fashion on the broad downs to eat their luncheon in the open air.

On one of these occasions, whether by accident or design. Margaret's bare

On one of these occasions, whether by accident or design, Margaret's bare hand rested on Jonn Grey's for a second as he was handing something into the car to her, it was but a fraction of time, so slight as to be barely noticeable, but the man flushed and paled suddenly. Several times during the day he looked at the hand which she had touched, and once, when quite unobserved, lifted it to his mouth and kissed the spot where her soft palm had rested—kissed it reverently and passionately.

He wished that long ride could have lasted indefinitely, and was sorry when at last he drew the car up once more before the White Maisonette.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

#### Man and Maid.

WE must now hark back to our friends Jacob Smilie and his wife, in whose humble home in the mews, near Miss Pragg's London

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