

IV

WE MAKE AN ENEMY

THE station homestead was a long, low house with deep verandahs, shaded by picturesque, graceful palms and tall trees, from which trailed magnificent passion vines ablaze with scarlet, white and purple blossoms.

"I daresay there are many things here, Mr Maitland, you will think primitive and crude," said Madge to the tutor; "but remember, you in England have had all your beautiful old places made for you, while we have had to make ours out of the wilderness."

"And Nature has nobly backed you," I said, admiring the magnificent vegetation and the lawn-like stretch of green turf that led up to the front of the house.

We were led under a deep, cool verandah with a bark roof, and there we found the General's sister-in-law, Mrs Taylor, widow of his late brother, and Madge's mother. She looked what she was—a woman of refinement and capacity for work, one who in a new country had taken the rough state of affairs as a matter of course, who had not sat still and sighed for comfort and luxury left behind in a distant land, but had courageously tackled the work around like a true gentlewoman. She had made