

the woman whose image he had cherished in his wanderings, and for whose sake he had encountered a thousand dangers and accumulated a fortune at the risk of his life. And these were the words of greeting she had for him :

"Jack Denham ! What does he amount to ?" he heard fall from the lips of Julia Fawcett. "His father died a pauper, and his mother is now subsisting on charity. When he returns, if he ever does, he will have to go clerking to earn the bite he eats. It is nothing short of a slight to mention him in connection with me, Mr. Hartley."

Jack felt his brain boil, the room swam round him, and he dropped heavily into a chair. His father dead, his mother living on charity and—and—. Then, Jack recollected himself. He was intruding on the premises of another. This, the home of his childhood, was his home no longer. He must get out of it without being observed—but how ? He knew the place well. One of the library windows was hung on hinges. He drew the bolts, opened it, and stepped out into the darkness.

Where was he to turn next ? A happy thought struck him. Hurrying around to the front, he rang the bell vigorously. Almost immediately, a servant answered it.

"I wish to see Mr. Denham," Jack said.

"He don't live here," was the reply.

"Then, who does ?"

"Mr. Hudson."

"Well, I will see Mr. Hudson," and Jack stepped inside.

This time there were several persons in the hall, most of whom were old friends of his. "This," thought he, "will be a good time to test their friendship, for they have all, no doubt, heard of my father's downfall." Walking over to where an old college chum of his stood, he held out his hand and said :

"Well, Will, old man, how are you ?"

The young man thus addressed, stared him in the face an instant, and then said with withering scorn :

"I don't know you, sir !"

"Don't know me ?" and Jack laughed, "you surely discredit your intelligence, Will. But it don't matter, here comes Mr. Hudson."

"You wished to see me ?" Mr. Hudson said.

"Yes ; I have just returned after almost a year's absence and find that I am without a home ; that is to say, I don't know where my home is. I thought you might, perhaps, be able to tell me where I can find my father.

"He is in Heaven, I trust," the other replied.

"Then you mean he is——"

"Dead."

"And my mother ?"

"Is destitute !"

"My mother destitute, and I a millionaire !"

What a change these few words produced in the group that had gathered round him ! Every one remembered him now, and a whole chorus of voices were offering words of sympathy. Yes, even his old chum who had snubbed him a few minutes before, now came up with outstretched hand, declaring :

"Why, Denham, old fellow, I did not know you when you came in first, but now I can see it is yourself. How have you enjoyed your trip ?"

But need I dwell on this scene. It is but a common every day occurrence in so called high life. Then, suffice it to say, he was soon supplied with the location of his mother's home, and, glad to be rid of so much hypocrisy, he hurried out of the house. In a very few minutes he found himself at the cottage where his mother lived. It was a modest dwelling in an unpretentious locality, but, within its walls, there was more real worth than in the palace he had just left. The curtain on the front window was slightly raised, and, on glancing in, Jack beheld a sight that caused him to start in amazement. He rubbed his eyes, he shook himself. No ; he was not asleep and dreaming—there, sat Bessie Fawcett, keeping his poor, lone mother company, while her sister was whirling around mid a throng of gay companions. Who said Bessie was ugly ? Jack thought he had never before seen anyone so beautiful. What a fool he was to have ever preferred heartless Julia to this beautiful girl. "How wonderfully she has changed in appearance," he thought. But, though Jack may not have been aware of it, he was not looking at Bessie's person, now. It was her heart,