

heard the strongest word ever put into the language of man.

Half-an-hour later he was speeding down the avenue in a taxi. His blood was singing, his heart was bursting with joy,—his head was light, for the feel of her was still in his arms, the voice of her in his enraptured ears.

He was hurrying homeward to the "diggings" he was soon to desert forever. Poor, wretched, little old "diggings"! As he passed the Plaza, the St. Regis and the Gotham, he favoured the great hostelties with contemplative, calculating eyes; he even looked with speculative envy upon the mansions of the Astors, the Vanderbilts and the Huntingtons. She was born and reared in a house of vast dimensions. Even the Vanderbilt places were puny in comparison. His reflections carried him back to the Plaza. There, at least, was something comparable in size. At any rate, it would do until he could look around for something larger! He laughed at his conceit,—and pinched himself again.

He was to spend the night at his sister's apartment. When he issued forth from his "diggings" at half-past seven, he was attired in evening clothes, and there was not a woman in all New York, young or old, who would have denied him a second glance.

Later on in the evening three of the Countess's friends arrived at the Courtney home to pay their respects to their fair compatriot, and to discuss the crown jewels. They came and brought with them the consoling information that arrangements were