

decisively. "The whole thing is a community broom-sweeping storm. It will pass."

"The criminal charge," began John, feeling relieved and yet looking serious.

"Nothing to that at all," answered the practical Mitchell, with quick decision. "Ridiculous! You're morbid from brooding over all this. From the minute the woman comes to you with her admission, you must have just ordinary horse sense enough to see that between us all we can find a way to stop that prosecution without making it necessary to expose anybody at all."

Mitchell, observing Hampstead closely, saw that he was rather careless of this; that in fact he only thought of it when he thought of Bessie; that the one thing gnawing at him now was the action of the church. That was something outside of Mitchell's experience. Whether the church more or less unfrocked his future son-in-law was a small concern. He was a man who thought in thousands of miles and millions of people.

"Come, Bessie," he called, "we must be getting back to the hotel."

"You will stay for dinner, Mr. Mitchell?" suggested John.

"No, I'll be getting back to mother. I just came to tell you that I am with you. My attorneys will be your attorneys. My friends and my influence will be your influence. Some of these newspapers may bark out of the other corner of their mouths after they've heard from me. Come on, Bessie!"

"But," demurred Bessie, "I'm not coming. I am going to the church to-night to sit beside John."