

"Pianola?" repeated Mrs. Markham—she was sitting on a fender-stool, clasping her knees, with a generous display of slender leg clad in crimson silk and absurd Russia leather brogues of the same hue—"why it's a super-up-to-date electric auto-fluto-viol-Playelle. It was specially built for Lord Weyford of Millbridge, on Lady Weyford's own instructions, and it cost two thousand guineas. And Schwarzhimers send a special deputation North twice a year to keep it in tune. And that costs—I forget how much . . ." She yawned. "Here's Miss Cherry Bradles herself coming over, she'll tell you."

Preceded by the sound of her own laughter, which suggested the spluttering of an amiable mitrailleuse, the deputy-hostess came up to the hearth and added a patent leather shoe to the assortment spread to the glow.

"Too bad of the weather, to have turned so horrid, isn't it? Why don't you three dears come and see how high you can kick to the music? Lady Pen has just broken the record. But I feel sure you could go one better, Mrs. Markham. Such pretty ankles too!"

Mrs. Markham looked down dispassionately at her limbs, and murmured that she did think her "tock-tocks" rather "pets."

"I never dance in the daytime," said Lady Brooksbury in her tragic voice.

Miss Bradles paused on a splutter. It is difficult for the uninitiated to adapt an ordinary intelligence to the different social atmospheres in which the best cliques move and intermingle. Lady Brooksbury happened to be "all soul." And, as Mrs. Markham, now contemplating her leg from a new angle, cooed sympathetically: "Still dyspeptic, darling?" Miss Bradles forthwith embarked upon an account of Lady Weyford's own specially complicated stomachic troubles and her extra-