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If you are discouraged with your condition, weak, tired, subject to headaches, backache, bearing down sensations, weakness of bladder, constipation, hot flushes, melancholy, tendency to cry over trifles, nervousness and loss of interest in things generally, I want to help you to better things.

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"A GOLD LADEN DERELICT"
OR
The Impecunious Adventurers.

CHAPTER XVII
THE FORGED INVITATIONS.

"Don't talk rot, Radman. I only want a couple of thousand, and you know perfectly well that you and Montagu can easily raise that. Lillas is bound to win her case, and you can have it back out of my share. There'll be plenty for all of us."

"No, my dear fellow, I don't gamble in futures," said Radman decisively. "Especially futures which depend on a lawsuit. I'm afraid I must say no."

"Then," said Ashley, rising abruptly, with an angry flush on his face, "there's nothing more to be said, I suppose?"

"Not as far as I can see," said Radman, taking out his watch, "and I have an appointment at three. Good afternoon."

Ashley walked out of the room without replying. When he got into the street he walked slowly southward toward Broad Street, where the offices of Montagu & Co. were situated.

He was in a desperate position, and therefore inclined to do desperate things. It was quite plain that he had nothing more to expect from Radman, except a continuation of the tyranny which he seemed to delight in exercising. He felt, too, that he must get possession of the acceptances and the policy of underwriting, at all hazards, for he knew perfectly well that if, as he ardently hoped, he succeeded in marrying Miss Belinda Vanderieen and her goodly pile of money, Radman would keep the forged papers and blackmail him unmercifully.

Meanwhile he wanted eight hundred pounds very badly. To various tradesmen he owed hundreds, which didn't give him the slightest anxiety. He belonged to that class which apparently has little or no sense of commercial honor. He would take clothes and jewelry, and flowers and knickknacks, from men whose property they were, and who had themselves paid for them, whether he knew that he could pay them or not. That never worried him. But money lost at cards or on a race horse, that was a very different thing. That must be paid, under the penalty of social ruin and ostracism, and so he must have those eight hundred pounds, even if he had to commit a crime to get them.

Ashley's first thought was to go and put the matter before Mr. Henry Montagu, who could write him a check for a thousand and make him a present of it without feeling that he

was any the poorer, so he observed the impulse and quickened his pace toward Broad Street.

He found him in, but just getting ready to go home.

"Hello, Ashley, my boy," he said cheerily, as they shook hands, which he always insisted on doing with everybody. "What's a man of fashion like you going in the city at this time?"

"Business," said the other, as he sat down. "The fact is, Monty, I've had a lot of bad luck lately, and I'm in a hole."

"Well, my dear boy, since I had the honor and pleasure of your acquaintance, I don't think I ever knew you out of one. How deep is this one?"

"About eight hundred feet," laughed Ashley.

"Yes, I understand," said the Jew. "How do you propose to extricate yourself?"

"That's exactly what I've come to ask you about. I've just been to Radman, but he's in one of his filthy tempers, and just laughed at me, and so I came to ask you to lend the money to me."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Montagu, opening his round, prominent eyes with a jerk. "You ask me to lend it to you, as you call it. I should say give. Well, of all the— Look here, my boy, you ought to have done a lot better than you have. A nerve like yours ought to be worth five thousand a year to anybody. Now, if you could bring me a bill for a thousand, with a really good name on the back—a real one, mind—I'd let you have the money like a shot; but you seem to have played that game out. No, my son, I'm afraid I can't help you that way. But I tell you what I will do."

"And what's that?"

"Well, you know," the other continued, "you have helped us a good deal in one way, among the bigwigs of the West End, getting directors for our companies, and they say you know everybody that is anybody. Now do you know Lord and Lady Beauclerc?"

"Very well," he replied. "In fact, I was at school with young Harringford, the eldest son, you know."

"Then perhaps you will be going to her ladyship's great reception next week?"


"I dare say I shall, but I've not had an invitation yet."

"No, but you will have," said Mr. Montagu, in a low, persuasive tone which at once conveyed a meaning to Ashley's quick intellect. "Now look here, my wife, as you know, is just clean mad on getting into what is called society. I don't care about it, except so far as it's useful in business, but I don't like denying my Rachel anything. If she can get to that reception, she can get anywhere, and the price to you for two invitations will be five hundred pounds for each, cash down when she gets them. It's a long price, but I don't mind paying it for her sake."

"I'll do my best," said Ashley, who knew that he might as well ask the Countess of Beauclerc for invitations for Mr. and Mrs. Montagu as for their fishmonger and his wife; still, he might have a try; perhaps his old schoolfellow would help him.

The next afternoon he called at the Beauclerc mansion, in Belgrave Square, and found her ladyship alone in the little drawing-room in which she received her personal friends, seated at a table, busy initialing cards and directing envelopes.

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"Dear me, Lady Beauclerc, have you commended yourself to hard labor? Has Beauclerc no secretary, and you no companion?"

"My dear Arthur, you know how particular I am about these things," replied her ladyship. "I always do this myself, although it is rather hard work. Now, Lady Caversham leaves everything to—well, to others—and at one of her receptions, or I'm not sure that it wasn't a dance, two perfectly unspeakable people got in. Of course, some one had been bribed to send them invitations."

At this moment there was a discreet tap at the door, and a gorgeous footman appeared.

"If you please, my lady, the head nurse would like to speak to you particularly."

"Oh, dear," said Lady Beauclerc, getting up from the table, "I suppose I must go. Don't you go, Arthur; I'll be back in a few minutes. I want you to help me with this affair next week."

The door had scarcely closed before a couple of the blank tickets and a couple of the crested envelopes were in Ashley's pocket. It was a desperate risk to take, but he had either to have that thousand pounds within a week, or be posted in the clubroom and on the turf as a defaulter.

And so it came about that Mrs. Henry Montagu, to her astonishment and delight, two days later, received two cards which were practically tickets of admission to one of the most exclusive circles in London.

CHAPTER XVII
A PUZZLING DISCOVERY.

After the house and furniture at Wimbledon had been sold, for Mrs. Markham and Kate had insisted on parting with everything except their own personal belongings, and the presents that had been made by friends on such occasions as birthdays and so on, they had gone down to Eastbourne for a month, while Kenneth was getting a little house ready for them in Bedford Park. By this time the long vacation was approaching, and there was little chance of the great Eversley will case coming on till it was over.

This proved to be the fact, and so as soon as he had disposed of a couple of other cases he was engaged in, he went down for a week's rest and recreation by the sea.

When he got on the platform at the Victoria Station, he saw, with a pleasure which he hardly cared to explain to himself, Lillas and her aunt, standing by the open door of a first-class car, talking to Arthur Ashley, whom he did not see with the same pleasure. He had taken one of those instinctive dislikes to him which sometimes come to the best and most broad-minded men without their knowing why, and which they are quite unable to resist. Certainly the sight of Ashley, talking, as it seemed to him, somewhat familiarly to Lillas, and looking, as he thought, unnecessarily closely at her upturned face, inspired him with a vague desire to kick him, although he had never heard a word against the man, and, for all he knew, he was just as good and honorable a gentleman as himself.

"Good morning," he said, raising his hat as he approached them. "May I hope that you are going to Eastbourne, too?"

"Yes," replied Lillas, looking up at him with one of her bewitching smiles, "at least, aunt and I are. Mr. Ashley has been kind enough to come and see us off."

"Then perhaps I may hope for the pleasure of a seat in your car, if there's one to spare?"

"Oh, yes," said Miss Holroyd, "there are two left, and you had better take one at once, but it isn't a smoking car, you know, Mr. Markham."

"I don't smoke much in the morning," replied Kenneth, with a smile, "and even if I did, I should naturally choose the greater pleasure before the less."

He got into the car, and put his light overcoat and a little hand bag which had a certain legal look about it into of the vacant seats opposite the one in which he recognized a gray mackintosh which he had seen Lillas wear.

When the train had started, and Ashley had turned away in the direction of the refreshment room, he murmured to himself:

"Now, I think that was not at all badly managed. What a charming little family they'll have down. We could have done without Miss Morde Reynolds and that lumbering brute Asharsley; but still, if the fair Lillas doesn't go in and win now, she ought to—"

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Why wait? Your druggist sells a tiny bottle of Freezone for a few cents, sufficient to rid your feet of every hard corn, soft corn, or corn between the toes, and without soreness or irritation. Freezone is that much talked of discovery of the Cincinnati genius.

The journey down was something more than pleasant to Kenneth. There was not very much conversation. Lillas did not care to strain her voice to pierce the rattle of the train. But every now and then a few words passed, and they were accompanied by smiles and glances which were worth any amount of the brightest small talk. Miss Holroyd read and dozed, and behaved with all desirable discretion; while Kenneth indulged in furtive glances at the lovely face opposite to him over the edge of his unread newspaper.

At Eastbourne he was met by Kate, Mercia, and Ackersley, who had his own reasons for thinking the air of the place particularly salubrious just then.

Kenneth promptly took advantage of the opportunity to introduce Lillas and Miss Holroyd. Their reception was polite, of course, but it did not strike him as being particularly cordial. After lunch he said to his sister: "What do you think of Mrs. Ashley, Kate? I suppose you see know that my attempt at description didn't do her anything like justice."

"She is very beautiful," replied Kate, in a tone which indicated but little interest. "Indeed, I think she is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen; but, for all that, I don't think I could ever be very great friends with her."

"Just like a woman," laughed Kenneth, a trifle sharply. "You form a sudden prejudice and call it intuition."

"My dear Ken, in such things as this you will find a woman's intuition worth the judgment of half a dozen men, even if they were as clever as yourself. However, I quite recognize that, under the circumstances, we owe her kindness and hospitality, and she shall have both."

There was a little chilliness in her tone, which caused Kenneth to say: (To be Continued.)

Order out is an excellent lubricant. Every dinner should include salad. Casserole dishes are great money savers.

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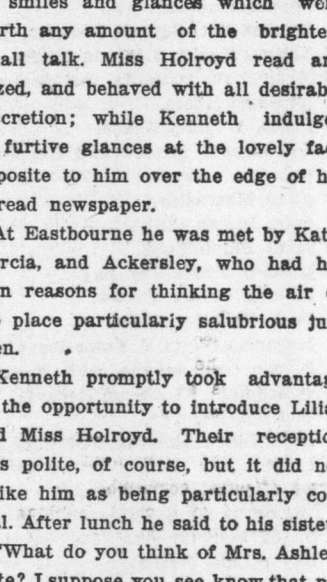


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The Pattern is cut in 7 Sizes: 34, 36, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. Size 38 will require 2 1/2 yards of 44 inch material.

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A GOOD STYLE FOR A SCHOOL DRESS.



Pattern 3151 was used for this model. It is cut in 4 Sizes: 4, 6, 8, and 10 years, 3 yards of 36 inch material will be required for an 8 year size. As illustrated, brown serge was employed with black braid for decoration. The style is good for all wash fabrics as well as silk, velvet and cloth.

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NOTE.—Owing to the continual advance in price of paper, wages, etc., we are compelled to advance the price of patterns to 15c. each.

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