

ordered to Bangkok, the capital of the country, and while we were there we saw a good many queer things. But these kings interested me more than anything else."

"But what have they to do with Mary's position?" demanded Mrs. Wingate.

"Oh, nothing, nothing at all, except they believe exactly the contrary of what you have been saying, ma'am," returned the young sailor, with a most gallant bow. "They believe that a man is respected—and a woman too, I suppose—for what he is, not for what he appears to be."

A frown gathered upon Mrs. Wingate's brow; she did not exactly like Frank's tone; was he ridiculing her to her very face?

He noticed the shade, and began hastily to talk again. His sailor stories were a great resource.

"There is the first king, now, his very imperial majesty, who lives in the grandest house, and has a double number of guards, and twice as much gold plastered about the ceilings and the walls of his palace as his rival can show. He wears a crown nigh upon a foot high, shaped something like that candlestick, and glittering with jewels. His ministers approach him by crawling along the ground like snakes, kissing the carpet as they come."

"It is horrid to think of human creatures degrading themselves like that," said Mrs. Wingate.

"Yes, it is, particularly when one remembers that the man on the throne and the men creeping in the dust are made of the same sort of stuff by the Creator in heaven."

"And what about the second king?"

"Well, he isn't quite so grand. But he has a throne, and golden basins, and gilded ceilings, and all the rest of it; only everything is a little bit inferior to the state which surrounds the other one. Yet in one thing they are alike. They both have to be beggars for a bit."

"My dear Frank," said Mary, in surprise, "what do you mean?"

"Exactly what I say, my dear," he answered. "Their