

and cheese when I need them, and no ceremony, these are the terms, and I've left the sovereign on the mantelpiece. It'll pay for the week. By the end of that time I'll have a job, I hope, or I'll know the reason why, and meanwhile's mum's the word."

She put her finger on her lips and nodded sagaciously. When he bade her good-day she entered the sitting-room and watched him walk out to the end of the Crescent. He certainly did not look like her old master. He had discarded the frock coat and silk hat and now wore a somewhat shabby suit of dark blue serge and a bowler hat. He looked like a clerk out of work.

It was the most amazing experience that had ever come into Mrs. Webber's life, and it seemed to quicken her interest in everything. Not the smallest qualm regarding the moral aspect of the affair troubled her.

Her old master, from whom she had received untold kindness, to whose help she really owed her present position, was in trouble and had besought her help. Such as she could give him was most heartily at his disposal; such were the ethics of the position supposing they had been called in question. Mary Anne therefore passed a most interesting and singularly short day in contemplation of the new element that had come into her existence.

Reedham, now Thomas Charlton, walked out into the Camden-road and there mounted to the top of a yellow omnibus moving city-wards.

It was a beautiful and sunshiny morning; comforted and refreshed by his safe shelter, good sleep, and wholesome breakfast, and perhaps most of all by the sympathy of the only living being to whom he had spoken more than a few words during these horrible days, he was conscious of some slight lifting of the terrible gloom in his soul. Someone got on the omnibus with him, a man in clergyman's dress, with a fine, strong kind face and a mobile mouth, which had almost a woman's sweetness. The top of the omnibus being nearly full, they had to share a seat, and the clergyman bade him a pleasant good morning.

Reedham at first scarcely responded. For the moment all men were his enemies, and he feared ulterior motives where none could possibly exist.

"London is a pleasant place on a morning like this," said the clergyman, apparently unconscious of any unresponsiveness on the part of his fellow passenger. "And this is quite a pleasant neighbourhood. The Camden-road on a morning like this is hard to beat."

"Going down as a neighbourhood, I should think?" observed Reedham brusquely. "If one is to judge by the number of notice boards on the houses."

"It has gone down of late, but possibly we may have a renaissance later on," observed the clergyman cheerfully. "People come back after they have tried other parts of London. It has many advantages and conveniences."

"You live here, I suppose?" hazarded Reedham.

"Yes, I am the Vicar of St. Etheldred's in Seton-square. If you look along the first opening to the left you'll see the square tower of my church."

They passed it at the moment, and Reedham nodded as his companion pointed out a singularly ugly tower of dull smoke-bitten brick.

"A poor neighbourhood, and my people are wholly of the working class, but I would not change it. Yes, I could have moved several times in the last ten years, but I am still here. Are you a stranger to London?"

"No, I have lived in it all my life."

The clergyman regarded his clear-cut profile with the interest peculiar to the real and discriminating student of human nature. He gathered from his speech and manner that he was an educated man, and a certain suggestion of power was in his face. But he seemed to be under a cloud. A quickened interest in him filled the good man's soul; it was his business to heal and help and save, and his name was known as a friend to the troubled far beyond the bounds of his own parish.

"Ah, then you know something of the stress of London life. Yet it has its charm. I could not live, I think, outside of it now, unless I happened to get