

secret as possible. Only two hours had elapsed since he was certain of being a millionaire, and he knew Dakins was as likely to set the St. Lawrence on fire, as to reveal a secret of his employer.

"How the"—(the reader may supply the omission) "did you know I am worth a million? and who are you?" angrily enquired Krell.

"Oh! I am familiar with all your affairs, Krell, and yourself also, in the most natural way imaginable; but the nature of that way, and who I am, you must excuse me from telling you just at present. By and by you will know all about it." And the stranger laughed quite loudly.

Krell's usually haughty manner again tried to assert itself,—but failed. As he was in the act of rising for the purpose of ejecting the stranger, the latter rose and gently pressed him back in his chair. "Its no use, Krell," said he, "to order me away. Your conduct at this festive season is most inhospitable. You must be quiet, and let us pass this Christmas-eve together in a social manner." Here Krell actually sighed, folded his hands, and determined to await the consequences.

"So you have really made a million, Krell! What a successful man you are! How pleased you must be with yourself!—ain't you?"

"I suppose," replied Krell, with a modest air; "I have no great reason to be dissatisfied with myself."

"Dissatisfied!" ejaculated the stranger, with a tone of surprise. "I should say not. You ought to congratulate yourself. Just think of it. Thirty years in business, commenced on nothing, now worth more than a million dollars, acquired by your unaided exertions! Do you remember the day you first entered old Connell's office, on a salary of eighty dollars for the first year? You were a lad then. And how rich you felt when the first quarter was paid you! How many a golden castle your

imagination built out of that twenty dollars! And then your salary was increased yearly, and when it reached to four hundred, in a moment of youthful weakness you fell in love!" Here the stranger grinned, and nudged Krell in the ribs; but the latter did not appear to see the joke, and looked very uncomfortable.

"What was her name, Krell? Janet Key, wasn't it?"

"Yes," he meekly answered.

"Yes, as I have already said," continued the stranger, "you showed then a phase of weakness, but nobly you overcame it. I had never any doubt of your success after the termination of that short struggle; for it was during this love episode you resolved to become rich, and this girl was poor. I admit, as some excuse, that she had what is called beauty, and amiability, and all that sort of thing. But none of these qualities have any appreciable value in the 'prices current,' or on the Stock Exchange. Had you married her, you would have had to support her, and perhaps a family in addition, and these considerations induced you, with Spartan fortitude, to terminate the engagement, and to bear the taunts of her friends that you had broken her heart! Faugh! Broken hearts are frauds! Never saw one. Don't believe in them. Do you, Krell?"

"I assure you I did not," interposed Krell.

"Stop, Krell. Don't attempt to explain or apologize for your conduct in this affair, or I shall never forgive you. You acted with perfect consistency; and consistency is not inaptly compared by one of these half crazy poets, called Shakespeare, to a jewel, on account of its rarity."

"Indeed," said Krell, "I think I have heard of that name before."

"Well, Krell, having surmounted this weakness, you henceforward resolutely set to work for wealth, and you wisely determined that no other object should