

Seaton replied in accents of courteous and soft aloofness, "I am not certain if there's any river to fish in."

The other glanced at him, made a slight grimace at the window, and then continued reflectively: "I wonder if our host has any grouse here? Ireland, if properly managed, might be the best sporting country in the world. But it's never been the fashion. God knows why—but it hasn't. Ah," he exclaimed, his face suddenly lightening, "there she is! That woman," he went on confidentially, "has the finest figure in London. If you'd known her, as I did, in the school-room—by Gad!—you'd never have expected it. It's astonishing how they fill out—some of them."

The object of this eulogy had hardly caught sight of the speaker when Glanville made his appearance, with another lady preceding him. She was dressed in deep mourning. Her handsome face was thoughtful; and Seaton, the moment he saw her, experienced a sensation of relief. "My dear Mr. Glanville," he heard her say to her host, with a quick glance at the gentleman of the turquoise stud, "I'd no idea I was to meet such very smart company as this."

"Never mind," replied Glanville in a soothing voice, "he's only here for a night. To-morrow he joins his yacht—he and several others." Then, coming up to Seaton and laying a hand on his arm, "I see," he said, "you've already made acquaintance with Sir Roderick Harborough. Here is Mrs. Vernon, who tells me she's an old friend of yours."

Seaton started; he looked at the lady in black; and then was aware that his hand was being grasped by hers, whilst her cordial voice was recalling the pleasant fact to him that seven years ago she had met him at his uncle's house in Lanarkshire. Their incipient conversation, however, was promptly interrupted by Sir Roderick, who, feeling that the times were out of joint when anybody of importance overlooked him, claimed Mrs. Vernon's attention as something properly belonging to himself.

Mrs. Vernon responded with a graciousness that had some-