

A DAUGHTER OF TO-DAY.

CHAPTER I.

MISS KIMPSEY dropped into an arm-chair in Mrs. Leslie Bell's drawing-room, and crossed her small dusty feet before her while she waited for Mrs. Leslie Bell. Sitting there, thinking a little of how tired she was and a great deal of what she had come to say, Miss Kimpsey enjoyed a sense of consideration that came through the ceiling with the muffled sound of rapid footsteps in the chamber above. Mrs. Bell would be "down in a minute," the maid had said. Miss Kimpsey was inclined to forgive a greater delay, with this evidence of hasteful preparation going on overhead. The longer she had to ponder her mission the better, and she sat up nervously straight pondering it, tracing with her parasol a sage green block in the elderly æstheticated pattern of the carpet.

Miss Kimpsey was thirty-five, with a pale oblong little face that looked younger under its softening "bang" of fair curls across the forehead. She was a buff and grey coloured creature, with a narrow square chin, and narrow square shoulders, and a flatness and straightness about her everywhere that gave her rather the effect of a wedge, to which the big black straw hat she wore tilted a little on one side somehow conduced. Miss Kimpsey might have figured anywhere as a