

CHAPTER XXIX

RICHES AND REPENTANCE

THERE was considerable excitement in Laurence Avenue when a few mornings later Mr. Alfred Burton, in a perfectly appointed motor-car, drew up before the door of Clematis Villa. In a very leisurely manner he descended and stood looking around him for a moment in the front garden.

"Poky little place," he said half to himself, having completed a disparaging survey. "Hullo, Johnson! How are you?"

Mr. Johnson, who, with a little bag in his hand, had just trudged a mile to save a penny, looked with something like amazement at the apparition which confronted him. Mr. Alfred Burton was arrayed in town clothes of the most pronounced cut. His tail coat was exactly the right length; his trousers, although the pattern was a little loud, were exceedingly well cut. He wore patent boots with white gaiters, a carefully brushed silk hat, and he carried in his hand a pair of yellow kid gloves. He had a malacca cane with a gold top under his arm, and a cigar at the usual angle in the corner of his mouth.