

though the very furniture must not hear such a word so applied.

"It was so obvious," I observed, with a carelessness more affected than real.

He sat in silence for some moments as he fingered the paper, and then striking a match burnt it with great deliberation, watching it jealously until every stroke of my writing was consumed.

"You say Charlotte has had this nearly a week?"

"The date was on it. I am always methodical," I replied, slowly. "I meant to prove to you that I can read things."

His eyes were even harder than before and his face very stern as he paused before replying with well-weighed significance:

"I fear you are too clever a young woman to have further charge of my two daughters, Miss Gilmore. I will consider and speak to you later."

"I agree with you, of course. But why later? Why not now? My object in coming here was not to be governess to your children, but to enter the service of the Government. This is the evidence of my capacity; and it is all part of my purpose. I am not a good teacher, I know; but I can do better than teach."

He listened to me attentively, his white finger-tips pressed together, and his lips pursed; and when I finished he frowned—not in anger but in thought. Presently a slight smile, very slight and rather grim, drew down the corners of his mouth. And then I