

MR. TEDDY

CHAPTER I

It was with a certain sense of shock that Edward Heaton remembered, as he began applying his razor this morning to his pink well-lathered face, that it was his birthday, and that in consequence he was no longer in his thirties, but had arrived at the fortieth milestone in the pleasant vale (miscalled 'of tears'). Luckily the shock was not so great as to make him cut himself, but he judged it prudent to hold the razor for a moment suspended in front of his upper lip, on which he was just about to begin operations, in case his hand might have suffered some temporary loss of steadiness. Certainly he had known for a year now that he was thirty-nine, and indeed had thought himself quite content to be soon forty, but the actual hard fact of being forty was here now, and as he proceeded to shave himself he scrutinized with an egoism that was most unusual to him both his face as it emerged strip by strip from the lather and the internal picture of his own mind, and saw what they made of the fact of which he was as yet but a freshly introduced acquaintance.