

and I was loud in condemning the English railways, comparing them to those of the continent, of which I had a large experience, having had at different times to seek in foreign lands that protection denied me by my own country.

"It may be as you say," said my rival, the horrid Jenkins, "but for my part I prefer the English lines. You get more attention and civility from the officials."

"I am sorry to say that I do not agree with you," I replied, "and I am sure you would own I am right had you been with me when I was going to Marseilles; or even more so had you travelled with me to Baden-Baden."

As I spoke I saw Sophia glance at me with pride.

"Things may have altered," said Jenkins, "but I travelled both France and Germany for ten years, when I was junior partner to Print, Calicoe & Co., but I never had any civility that I had not to pay heavily for."

I placed my eye-glass in my eye, and surveyed Mr. Jenkins with a look of contempt, at the same time observing that *I* travelled for pleasure, not business.

"I didn't," replied Jenkins; "I travelled for the firm, and very well it paid me. One thing you must own: our men are quicker and more correct."

"Not at all," said I, triumphantly. "Only last week I had to go to Reading, and on leaving the train I entered the refreshment-room and had a cup of coffee; after which I left the station, forgetting to give up my ticket, as no one asked me for it."

"You must excuse my scarcely crediting that, sir," said Mr. Jenkins. "Are you sure you did not give up the ticket before entering the refreshment-room?"

"I am positive of that," I replied, "and to prove what I said is correct I will show you the ticket, which by chance I have with me."

As I spoke I cast a glance of scorn at Jenkins; then turning disdainfully from him, I took the ticket from my pocket, and gave it to Sophia to pass to him.

Sophia glanced at it and screamed, and that brute Jenkins at once snatched it from her hand!

"What's this?" he exclaimed. "This is not a railway ticket, but a pawnbroker's one for a gold watch, £3 10s., Ernest de Vere, 30 Bernard street, Russell Square, dated to-day!"