

He sent two pages on his own errand. Then a messenger, a sedate personage with a corrugated brow, who looked as if he were carrying the very cares of the Premier himself, instead of the Premier's messages, was interrogated.

"Why, he's gone long ago!" said this worthy. "I got a cab for him and two other gents. that wanted to catch the Winnipeg Express. One of them was a senator, Senator Humbug, I think; and they went out of the Senate door. They was all down at the bar together."

Hilton returned and retailed this information, excluding the last sentence. To his surprise, Miss Riding, though chagrined, appeared relieved.

"You were not going away yourself?" he ventured.

"Oh, dear no! I merely wished to see that he got away all right. I can't thank you enough for the trouble I have caused you; though I think we should both blame Papa."

"Trouble? It has been a pleasure, though I have been unsuccessful!" murmured Hilton. He felt as if he were treading on air. Then he thought of the faint-hearted adage again. Glancing at a list printed in large, clear type that hung nearby, Hilton saw that Riding *père*, M. P. for North Dutton, lived when at the Capital, on a quiet street some blocks away. So he said:

"Perhaps you will let me have the pleasure of being of further assistance to you, Miss Riding. May I call a sleigh to take you home? I may say that I have, in a political sense, so to speak, a right to ask the right; since I have come from your father's constituency."

"Do you, really? Then I suppose you have. But I should prefer to walk, as the night is fine and I like the exercise."

"I always take a walk before turning in," remarked the happy Hilton; which indeed, was not remarkable, since his lodgings were some distance from the House, and the average newspaper correspondent's purse is not heavy to carry.

So they stepped out of the tepid atmosphere of the great building into the crisp air of the February night.

"You must tell me what you thought of Papa's speech," said Hilton's fair companion. "It was his first; that is, his

first of real importance. Though, of course, they are all important!"

"It was remarkably clever," said Hilton, gravely. "I saw that you were deeply interested, which was, of course, natural."

"Of course, all the papers will be full of it," said Miss Riding, (aged eighteen,) with ingenuous and delightful assurance. "Oh, by the way, Mr. Hilton, what paper do you represent? You see, I know your name—I asked a page when you went to look for Papa."

Hilton thrilled. "*The Guiding Star*, of Bramley," he answered modestly.

"*The Guiding Star*!" echoed his companion, with a start. "Why, that's a terribly Grit paper! It's been desperately opposed to Papa all along. You don't—you don't mean to say you represent *that* paper, Mr. Hilton?"

"I'm afraid I do, Miss Riding," answered the Ottawa correspondent of *The Guiding Star*, in tones of misery.

"And—and you sent a report away to-night of Papa's speech, of course?"

"Oh, of course! I had to, you know!"

"Had to? Why, of course you had! How could you help it? But what did you say? You didn't dare to—to criticise Papa's speech!"

"Oh, no, really! I didn't say much!"

"Didn't say much, Mr. Hilton! As if I didn't know what sort of a report of Papa's speech the editor of *The Guiding Star* would want! Horrid old thing! Oh, I am so disappointed! I am more than disappointed!"

This last declaration should have been gratifying to Hilton; but he was deeply pained.

"Look here, Miss Riding!" he exclaimed with a burst of pathetic earnestness. "I assure you I didn't abuse him, or anything like that, really! And the editor of the paper isn't such a bad fellow! The paper used to be Conservative, you know!"

"Yes, but that was before Papa was elected. What good is that now? Poor Papa!" They had now reached 'poor papa's' house, and Miss Riding was standing on the lower step, her eyes a few inches above the level of Hilton's, that looked up at those of his companion with contrition.