

unreasonable, prejudiced little mortal that you are. I like honesty, and you are honest. I like people to think for themselves, and you do that with a vengeance. But still, I repeat and maintain, you are cruel and unjust to Laurence Longworth.

"I think Monsieur Longworth is here," says Reine, suddenly.

She has chanced to glance round and see him standing there, not three yards off, examining the long yellow buds of a tea-rose. She turns quite white for a moment, and her face takes a startled look; the next instant a flash of proud defiance leaps into her eyes. She faces him resolutely, with lips compressed.

"You have heard every word," that fiery glance says; "you know how I scorn and despise you, and I am glad of it."

"Good afternoon, ladies," says Mr. Longworth, placidly, taking off his hat. "I trust I see you both well after the fatigue of last night?"

Neither speaks. Miss Hariott measures with her eyes the distance at which he has stood, and thoroughly as she is accustomed to his cool audacity—or, as Frank puts it, "the stupendous magnificence of his cheek,"—on this occasion it for the first instant renders her dumb. The pause grows so embarrassing that Reine rises to go.

"Mademoiselle," the gentleman says, "if my coming hastens your departure, Miss Hariott will have reason to regret my very ill-timed visit."

"Your coming does not influence my departure in the least," responds mademoiselle, coldly and proudly. "Mees Hariott,"—she turns to that lady, a laugh in her eyes—"you cannot imagine how much good my visit has done me. I go away with conscience lightened and a mind relieved, and I will return to-morrow, and all the to-morrows, if you will let me. Until then, give me one of your roses as a souvenir."

"I wonder you care to have it. Mrs. Windsor's specimens are the finest in the country round."

"They are not half as sweet as these. Adieu, then, madame, until we meet again."

She passes Mr. Longworth in silence, with a stately little bow. Mr. Longworth, also in silence, gravely and pro-

foundly responds. Miss Hariott goes with her guest to the gate, and when she returns, finds Longworth comfortably in the chair the young lady has just vacated, and (need it be said?) lighting the inevitable cigar. With sternest majesty in her eye, the lady faces him.

"Laurence Longworth, how long had you been standing eavesdropper there?"

"Let me see," says Longworth, and pulls out his watch. "I can tell you to a minute. I opened your gate at twenty minutes to four, now it is five minutes past. I must have been standing there examining that yellow rose (the rose-worms are at it, by the way) full twenty-five minutes. But was it eavesdropping, Miss Hariott? And is it your habit and Mademoiselle Reine's to discuss family secrets in the open air, and in a tone of voice that he who runs may read? I ask for information?"

"You heard every word she said?"

"Every word, I think and hope."

"Very well," says the lady, with some grimness. "At least you verified the adage that listeners never hear any good of themselves, and you have found out how cordially Mademoiselle Reine detests you."

"Very true; but don't you know that is not always a bad sign? Somebody who ought to know says, in fact, that it is best to begin with a little aversion."

"Begin what?"

Longworth laughs, and puffs a volume of smoke into the rose bushes.

"That elder sister is an exceedingly pretty girl, Laurence."

"Exceedingly pretty, Miss Hariott."

"You paid her very marked attention last night, I observed."

"Did you? Perhaps you also observed that very marked attention was paid her by every other man in the house."

"And she will be very rich."

"And as one of Mrs. Windsor's heiresses—naturally."

"Larry," goes on Miss Hariott, filling her basket with dead leaves, "I observed, likewise, that Mrs. Windsor watched you two with very friendly eyes. Do you think you can do better than become her grandson-in-law?"

"I don't think I can."

"And it is time you married."

"So several persons have informed