

A MODERN BELLE.

BY MISS L. O'LOANE.

Dora Fenton was trying to get her tennis hat firmly fastened on. Not that the hat was a protection from the sun, nor that she wanted such protection, but that it was becoming. Though she had, that "glory of a woman," long hair, it was, in color, like hay that has been exposed to rain and sun. Dame nature seemed to have favored that tint at her birth, for her complexion, with some warmer touches on the cheeks, repeated the coloring, in a lighter shade; the scarlet hat was artistic in this neutral setting, she thought. It was difficult to adjust the hat properly because of a golden dagger that she wore thrust through the coils of her hair—a handsomely chased dagger of rare workmanship—for a time it seemed as though one or the other must be sacrificed, but at last mind triumphed over matter, the poise of the hat, the position of the dagger left nothing to be desired, the glow of conquest was hers.

Dora Fenton had youth, but not beauty, strength, but not grace, muscle, but not the softly rounded limbs of Demeter's fair daughter. Neither witty nor clever, she despised wits and savants. Though considered a model of amiability, she despised this quality too, but having observed that it was very easy for most people to be disagreeable, she determined to be an exception.

As she took down her racket she felt that in three points, she need give place to none—she had money, perfect physical health, equally perfect self-control, and all at twenty. The refractory dagger had delayed her, but when she reached the court, only one person was there, a good-looking young fellow of about twenty-five; his tennis suit, shoes, curled mustache, pointed beard were correctly

perfect, and perfectly correct. So too, his graceful lounging attitude, as well as his manner of raising his hat, which was in strong contrast to the indifferent abrupt nod with which Dora greeted him.

"The first, Mr. Van Dusen?" Dora said, "Yes." He answered, "but you are late." "The others, later," Dora said laconically. "Oh" Conrad Van Dusen replied, "you know, Jack's friend from New York came last night, Jean is bringing him in place of Jack, and she will have to spend ages before the glass." "Why?" Dora sweetly asked, as if she had not been fully informed of the presence of "Jack's friend," and had not spent "ages" herself, before the glass,—such is femininity. Because the fellow has half a dozen millions or so, I suppose.

Mr. Van Dusen looked down at his shapely foot as he said this, and impatiently tapped the toe of his shoe with his racket. 'Tis hard to confess that there are others who have something stronger than anything we possess. Especially if we have been making love to two charming young ladies, and see if not "the course of true love," our plans destined not to run smoothly.

Now Dora had known without much observation these plans, and enjoyed his discomfiture, as she stood idly watching the light dappling, the tennis court with shining spots as the neighboring branches swayed to and fro. But his further remark was prevented by the arrival of the truants Jean Fraser and Harold Macintosh. There was little ceremony about beginning the game, Mr. Macintosh had come to play tennis, and played. "What are we waiting for?" He would certainly have queried, but the tender "smothered kiss, and stifled sigh," would not have suggested itself.