

time past ; nevertheless I shall get off at Liège and telegraph to him that I am not bringing the document to London."

"I will send the telegram for you when we reach there ; but, if I remember rightly what you told me of his purpose, he can't be very deeply disappointed. I understood you to say that he did not intend to publish the document, even if he got it."

"That is quite true. He wished to act as the final messenger himself, and was to meet me at Charing Cross Station, secure the envelope, and take it at once to its destination."

"I must confess," said the young man, with a bewildered expression, "that I don't see the object of that. Are you sure he told you the truth?"

"Oh, yes. The object was this. It seems that there is in the Foreign Office some crusty old curmudgeon who delights in baffling Mr. Hardwick. This official—I forget his name ; in fact, I don't think Mr. Hardwick told me who he was—seems to forget the *Daily Bugle* when important items of news are to be given out, and Mr. Hardwick says that he favours one of the rival papers, and the *Bugle* has been unable, so far, to receive anything like fair treatment from him ; so Mr. Hardwick wanted to take the document to him, and thus con-