

and win my love yet," and her hand lingered in his, while she said :

" You may, he is your friend ; you will be much with u."

" Thank you, for the two-fold kindness. Now gladly shall I be your Mercury. Good-night," and lifting her hand to his lips, he was gone.

" Then you really mean to wed Colonel Haughton ?" enquired Delrose in unsteady tone.

" Come and sit beside me, Kate; you sat beside that other man. Gad ! I feel like shooting the follow."

" Mere bravado ; gentlemen only meet their equals."

" Don't take that tone with me Kate, or by heaven he shall suffer."

" Good-night Major Delrose," she said mockingly. " I leave your presence, *sans cérémonie* as you entered mine."

And with the gaslight lighting up red-ropes, jewels, coal-black tresses and a smile all cruel, she was about to leave him.

" Stay, Kate, I command you. How will it be when I set the London world on their ear, over your parentage, daughter of a nobody, your gold from the Cosmopolitan Laundry."

Kate winced.

" It would be then a Haughton's turn to leave *sans cérémonie* ; make up friends, Kate," and his face softened, and going over he led her, though unwillingly, to a seat beside his own.

" What a bore a persistent lover with a long memory is," thought Kate. " But I cannot afford to quarrel with him."

" You are not serious, Kate. You will never sever the tie that binds us ?"

And bold man, though he was, his voice trembled as leaning forward he strove to read the inmost thoughts of the woman who has played with his affections at will.

" You said you loved me once, Kate, but I fear your