

"I know he is," said Cecilia, quietly. "But he feels it, all the same."

"He's a good son, I know," said Bexley.

"My son Ned is showin' 'em what the Clarendon stock is worth in Burmah," said Clarendon. "Show Sir John his last letter, Ciss. He's running a district as big as England with two men and a boy and the toe of his boot. Full o' tact, Ned is. The niggers fall down in front of him. Rummy show, our Empire!"

They left the table, and Bexley walked out into the garden with Cecilia.

"It's a pity Jack didn't have his own way about the army," said Bexley. "As it is, I suppose there's nothing for it now. I wish he could marry and settle down."

Cecilia picked some flowers and gave some to her guest.

"I kiss your hands," said Bexley. "He thinks a good deal of your opinion, Cecilia, so when you see him, don't rag the boy too much. He has brains enough to know a clever woman when he sees one."

He caught her liquid dark eye, and was astounded to see what a woman was beside him.

"I'm a bit anxious about him, my dear," said Bexley. "You see he's very young, and too infernally handsome to be running loose in town."