

himself to himself for his participation in anything so puerile; and then opened it slowly.

But the moment he read the contents his manner changed completely. His clear-cut features set, his expression grew suddenly tense with astonishment, his lips were pressed close together to check the exclamation of surprise that rose to them; even his colour changed slightly, and his eyes were like two steel flints for hardness as he looked up from the paper and across the chessmen at me.

I enjoyed my moment of triumph.

"It is your Excellency's move," I said again, lightly. "It is a most interesting position. This knight——"

He waved the game out of consideration impatiently.

"What does this mean?" he asked, almost sternly.

"Oh, that!" I said, with a note of disappointment, which I changed to one of somewhat simpering stupidity. "I was trying my hand at adapting the French proverb. I think I put it '*Cherchez le Comte Karl et la Comtesse d'Artelle*,' didn't I?"

"Miss Gilmore!" he exclaimed, very sharply.

I made a carefully calculated pause and then replied, choosing my words with deliberation: "It is the answer to your Excellency's question as to my opinion of the solution. If you have followed my formula, you have of course found the jewels. The Count was the thief."

"In God's name!" he cried, glancing round as