

under Sir George Newnes, a master journalist; and, secondly, the financial security of "Pearson's Weekly."

"Nothing succeeds like success" is a trite enough saying, but such instances as that of Mr. C. A. Pearson have helped to make it so. He had an excellent model to work upon in Sir George Newnes, and many of the latter's big journalistic ventures have been duplicated by his one-time junior clerk. The "Strand Magazine," for instance, has its counterpart in "Pearson's Magazine," just as "Tit-Bits" has in "Pearson's Weekly." And there are plenty of other comparisons between the output of the two big publishing houses.

Mr. Pearson, besides keeping his business eye on the publications of the Newnes firm, has always been mindful of the doings of the Harmsworth group. The "Daily Mail" was practically the herald of the halfpenny press in England, and Mr. Pearson soon followed it with his "Daily Express," on the same lines. Then he founded the "North Mail" in New-

castle-on-Tyne, and bought and remodelled the "Gazette and Express" in Birmingham. His next conquests were the London "Standard," the "Evening Standard," and the "St. James's Gazette,"—the two latter were afterwards amalgamated, with successful results—and now he has "capped" all his previous performances by securing the managerial control of the "Times."

Mr. Pearson is a vice-president of the Tariff Reform League, and was vice-chairman of the Tariff Commission, in which capacities, with his several papers to back him up, he has become one of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's chief henchmen. Mr. Chamberlain well knows the value of Mr. Pearson, and has paid him the high tribute of being "the greatest hustler I have ever known."

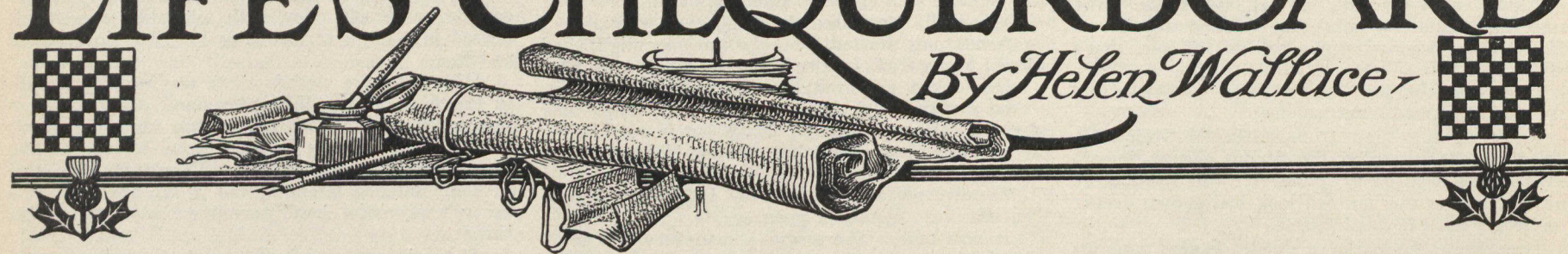
It has been stated that, in obtaining control of the "Times," Mr. Pearson was acting for a party of wealthy Tariff Reformers, but this statement Mr. Pearson will not admit. Colour was lent to the rumour by the announcement that Sir Alexander

Henderson, who is a large holder of shares in the "Standard" group of papers, is also financially interested in this new move of Mr. Pearson's. Sir Alexander Henderson is also a prominent Tariff Reformer, and was, like Mr. Pearson, a member of the Tariff Commission. Following Mr. Pearson again, Sir Alexander is an entirely self-made man. He is an exceptionally able business "head," and, as chairman of the Great Central Railway, has had a great deal to say in the making of that company's reputation as one of the greatest and most progressive of the English railroads.

At present, it is understood, Mr. Pearson is going to confine his attention to reorganising the business side of the "Times." He has plenty of ideas of his own, and, what is more, abundant energy and ability to carry them through. Exactly how much he will have to do with changing the character and policy of the "Times" remains to be seen.

LIFE'S CHEQUERBOARD

By Helen Wallace



Resume: Lady Marchmont and her grandniece, Lesley, are visiting the former's nephew, Richard Skene, at "Strode," his Scottish home. They withdraw from the dining-room, after Lady Marchmont has pled with her nephew to forgive an erring member of the family. Mr. Skene's lawyer, Dalmahoy, ventures to refer to this injury of many years before. The offender, Adrian Skene, the son of Richard's cousin, had refused years before to marry Lesley and the old lawyer advises his friend to alter his will. Mr. Skene tells of how Adrian had won Mary Erskine, the girl whom he had loved, and the emotion called up by this recital of past wrongs proves too much for his failing strength. He falls to the floor and dies of an attack of heart trouble. Lesley Home, after her uncle's death, dreads the prospect of meeting Adrian again. Adrian arrives and is greeted warmly. At the reading of the will it is found that the property is left to him, on condition that he marries Lesley. Otherwise the latter becomes owner of "Strode." In the excitement following this announcement, Adrian's wife appears. Lesley wishes Adrian to accept position of manager of the Strode estate. The latter accepts and informs his wife, Alys, a shallow and rather disappointing young person, of his new position with which she is naturally delighted since Adrian had not been successful as a London journalist. Sir Neil Wedderburne, one of the trustees, is dissatisfied with Adrian's management and shows plainly that he desires Lesley to become his wife. In the meantime, Alys becomes restless and discontented with the quiet life of "Strode."

ready to conclude that, having got her wish, she would be satisfied, though experience might have taught him the direct contrary. He had all the business of a great estate to learn anew, and though he set himself to his task with dogged determination, he was acutely conscious of his inexperience and the mistakes into which at times it betrayed him.

But Alys had no interests or resources of her own, and she perversely refused to widen her outlook or to seek distraction or occupation in the pursuits of others. In her empty hours she had but too much time to brood over her grievances, and in the congenial soil of fretful, self-absorbed idleness the seeds of doubt and suspicion soon germinate and spring to a giant growth. With them there rose up a hard anger, a determination to assert herself and somehow to make her presence felt. She would no longer sit silent as she had done at Wedderburne; she would glide about like a shadow on sufferance no longer. "The role of the modest violet is played out long ago—sit in a corner and you'll be left there." So her father used to say, and he was quite right. She was a fool to have let herself be thus thrust aside. She would begin at once.

Next day Mr. Dalmahoy came from Edinburgh on some business which occupied him and his fellow trustees so long that they stayed for dinner. Dr. Campbell, the minister of the old cathedral kirk, and his wife had been added to the party, which was the largest which had assembled at Strode since what good Mrs. Campbell had already irritated Alys by always referring to as "the bereavement." The party had been waiting for some time with that growing sense of injury which a delayed dinner always arouses, when Alys at last entered the drawing-room with no further apology than a careless "So sorry to have kept you waiting."

Her entrance attracted all the attention she could have desired. The effect of her white gown, with its black velvet shoulder-straps, was audacious in the extreme. Her copper-hued air—and now Adrian recognised the change which had puzzled him for some time—no longer demurely framed her face, but was swept up to the top of her head in flamboyant waves, above which was poised a huge butterfly with outspread wings of glittering jet.

Adrian regarded her in dumb wonder, while the others accorded her a glance of astonishment before hastily pairing off together to the dining-room.

The party was not a very lively one, in spite of Alys's high-pitched chatter to Sir Neil, who did not respond over-graciously, since he felt himself rather injured by being paired with Mrs. Adrian instead of Miss Home. Lord Palmont considered that the chief business of dinner was to dine, and devoted himself to the menu. Adrian could indulge his preoccupation, as Mrs. Campbell, who was fond of recalling that she had known him in short frocks, required only an occasional "Yes" or "No" to keep the stream of reminiscences or kindly gossip flowing. He was tired and jarred after the long meeting of

the afternoon, and now there was added the pain and perplexity with which he listened to his wife's would-be easy talk, which only succeeded in being flippant.

What had come to the child—was this Alys, who, amid the riot of tongues at Halcyon Villa, had always seemed so retiring and gentle? He seemed to be seeing his wife to-night with other eyes—as if she were a stranger. Was it merely the effect of her new environment which might well affect an excitable nature, or was it those very surroundings, so homely and familiar to himself, which had at last forced him to see his wife in a new light, as a different background may throw the foreground out of perspective and destroy all harmony of colouring.

To Mr. Dalmahoy, the memories of the last evening he had dined at Strode with his old friend were keenly present. Again he seemed to see the crimson stain spreading upon the white damask, and the tall, thin figure standing in the window and gazing out into the night.

Poor Rich, if he could but have waited. Truly the pair seemed made for each other, glancing from Lesley, talking to Dr. Campbell with serene, easy grace, to Adrian's fine, dark face at the other end of the table, for, by his cousin's wish, he took the place of host. If Richard could but have had patience, sighed Mr. Dalmahoy again, the lad need never have taken up with this "flibbertigibbet," glancing round with distaste at Alys's slim, uncovered shoulders and the towering masses of her hair. Eyes, lips, hands, arms, and those slight shoulders were all employed in grimace and gesticulation while perforce she held Sir Neil's attention.

"She's come out of her shell with a vengeance since her first Lydia Languish appearance," he thought in secret wonder, recalling the pathetic apparition of the library. "I wonder how our friends here like it, and, above all, Master Adrian. Marriage is a queer affair, but I shouldn't have thought this little carrot-headed minx would have been his fancy."

"Ah, you are thinking so, too," said Alys's light, high voice at his side. Mr. Dalmahoy turned to find the grey eyes fixed on him with an expression which he could not read. Sir Neil had wrenched himself free, and had plunged boldly into Lesley's talk with Dr. Campbell.

"Thinking what?" the lawyer asked blankly.

"It was in this room Mr. Skene died—you were with him," she glanced with a slight shiver round the glossy, glowing walls. "If he could see us all here to-night, don't you think it might seem to him that his wish had been fulfilled?" With an odd laugh, she in her turn looked from Adrian to Lesley. "He must have set his heart very much on it to have been so keen about it. I sometimes wonder how Adrian had the courage to stand out against him. Perhaps he wouldn't do so now," she added musingly, again voicing Mr. Dalmahoy's thoughts, while he sat silent, too surprised to speak.

He looked at the "flibbertigibbet" now with a



HAT would they be doing at home just now? To her amazement she found herself recalling with longing the scrambling teas at Halcyon Villa, where one burned one's face as well as the bread trying to make toast at the drawing-room fire, and then the rush to get dressed for the theatre for which somebody had given

Dad tickets, and perhaps there would be a supper afterwards. Dust, dilapidation, selfish exactions were alike hidden for the moment by the merciful haze of memory, which threw a roseate veil even over Mostyn Mansions. If she could be happy there, how much happier she might have been here if—if she were not left so much alone—and bitter brooding would find its climax in a burst of angry tears. Her plight was no uncommon one, she had got her desire, but with it leanness had entered into her soul.

Adrian Skene, whatever Alys might think, was far from indifferent to his wife's comfort and pleasure, but since he had himself no time to be dull, he had, man-like, accepted at their face value her assurances that she could not and would not be dull at Strode. In spite of occasional doubts he was