

glasses, as a shooter puts his gun to the shoulder when a bird rises, and let fly a snap-shot into a box opposite. She put them down again with an air of disappointment, as if she had missed.

"There is something in that," she said, "but there is not everything in it. Poor Lord Lanborne, whose blood is so blue that he always looks as if he was freezing, hasn't succeeded very well. He was made a director of some mine, you know, desiring to get wealth, I suppose, by means of his position, and, being conscientious, he thought he ought to go out to the Rand, or Rhodesia, or Rum-ti-foo, or wherever it was, and see the mine. He is one of our more particular peers. But he fell down a shaft, I think they call it, and broke his leg. Within a fortnight the company broke too, and they say the fracture is compound."

"Which—his leg or the company?"

"Both, dear," said Mrs. Montgomery, again seizing her glasses.

Lady Stoakley laughed.

"He and his company are failures, that is all," she said. "If you instance the failure to a rule, you reverse the rule."

"The *nouveaux riches* never fail," murmured Mrs. Montgomery. "Percy Gerard will never fail. There he is; he has just come into the house. How absurdly young he looks."

"He is absurdly young," said Lady Stoakley; "he is only twenty-four, and you see by his grand-