

Mrs. Stockson: My dear, do you mean to say you think I owe you eight and nine pence? Of course, if you think so, I'd pay it to you again rather—

Mrs. Wilkings: My dear, it isn't paying it again. I think you'll find you haven't paid it once yet. But of course, if you don't think you owe it to me—

Mrs. Stockson: O, if you say I do, my dear, I must pay it. I couldn't have anybody think I owed them anything that I wanted to get out of paying. (Opens her purse.)

Mrs. Wilkings: O, but I don't want to take the money unless you're quite satisfied about it. I'm perfectly sure in my own mind—

Mrs. Stockson: Well, if you're sure dear, that's enough. I can only say that I cannot remember it at all. And I'm most particular in these matters, because I know—let me see, eight and nine pence, you say? Here's nine shillings. Have you got any change? (Handing her the money.)

Mrs. Wilkings: O, yes, I've got three coppers. (Taking the money and giving the change.) I do hope you're satisfied about it, dear, as I'd much rather not take it if you've any doubt about its being owing.

Mrs. Stockson (a little stiffly): O, I'd rather pay it, thank you, dear. I daresay it's all right. Only it does seem strange that I should have forgotten about it, doesn't it?

Mrs. Wilkings: O, you've had so many other things to think of and—

(A servant announces Mrs. Tattleton.)

Mrs. Stockson (greeting the new arrival): So pleased to see you dear. You know

Mrs. Wilkings, I think. No? I beg your pardon. (Introduces them.)

Mrs. Wilkings (to Mrs. Stockson): Well, dear, I must be going, I've already stayed too long. (Takes leave and goes.)

Mrs. Stockson (to Mrs. Tattleton) I thought you knew Mrs. Wilkings.

Mrs. Tattleton: No,—that is, only by sight. I don't think she is quite my style. Still, if she's a friend of yours—

Mrs. Stockson: Now you mention it, there is something about her I don't quite like. Of course, you'll never let it go any further, will you? But I must tell you—quiet in confidence between ourselves you know—that I don't think she's very strict about money matters. She came in just now and said I owed her eight shillings or so for an account she paid for me.

Mrs. Tattleton: And didn't you?

Mrs. Stockson: I don't like to say that I didn't; but its very strange that I don't remember anything about it. Of course, I paid her the money, as I should never dream of owing anybody anything, especially an old friend—

Mrs. Tattleton: I never did like the look of that woman.

Mrs. Stockson: Wouldn't you remember if you owed anybody eight shillings like that?

Mrs. Tattleton (who knows nothing whatever of the circumstances): I do not believe you owed it to her. I should be very careful in dealing with people of that sort if I were you.

(Left discussing Mrs. Wilkings).

A. G.