

known to ease! How proud I felt when I received the returns from my first shipment of vegetables to the nearest market! I counted it over and over, it seemed to possess a value that I had never attached to money in the old days when father had lavished it so freely upon me. Then I would have thought nothing of spending such a paltry sum upon the trimmings of a single dress; now every penny was hoarded with miserly care, for we had resolved upon having a home of our own. Well, to be brief, each year I attempted something more—first a poultry yard, then the culture of bees, and so on—until before we were hardly aware of it our home was paid for, and we were in easy circumstances.

"I had carefully concealed every trace of our adversity from my parents. I think I would have died rather than gone home—a beggar. Now that the dawn of prosperity had set in, I wrote asking them to come and see the little silken-haired girl that, like a sunbeam, danced through our home. They came. Father, accustomed to his broad acres, was astonished at the products of my small plot of ground. He declared I was the best farmer he knew of, and should have greater scope for my powers. He bought a fine large tract of land adjoining our grounds, that happened to be for sale just then, and made me a deed for it. This is the origin of the country-seat you visited last summer and admired so much. Belle is a fine horticulturist and an accomplished housekeeper. Should she ever be thrown upon her own resources in the country, she could make a living, and I wish her to be equally as independent in town. We came to town to superintend her education. She thinks her forte is journalism, and desires, in addition to this, to become a practical printer. And now can you wonder, Mrs. Ellis, after my experience, that I am trying to have her avoid the errors that well nigh made my young life a failure.

"No, indeed, Mrs. Morton, and I honor you for it. I have been greatly benefitted by the narration of your early troubles, and I think you will see the result of it in the future training of my own daughters."

THE BRIDGROOM'S WAGER.

"But I'll bet you five hundred pounds—I will!" said Paul Rylander.

He looked round with a lazy, self-sufficient sparkle in his eyes, as he spoke the words—a handsome, regular featured man, of about

thirty, with silk-soft whiskers, delicately arched brows, and a rich red and white and brown blending of color in his complexion—one of the Adonises of real life, who seems fated to bear their own way in love, war, and business affairs, while the three or four who were standing in the whist-room of the club-house, and heard the words, laughed in chorus.

"What is it upon which this important wager depends?" asked Major Markland, who had just entered. "Just this," Hugh Maurice answered. "Paul is to marry an heiress, as we all know, if not exactly a beauty; and Miss Dotterell solemnly declares that her husband in future shall never use tobacco in any of its forms. While Rylander isn't himself, unless you view him surrounded by a halo of smoke!"

"For all that," said Mr. Rylander, quietly looking down at handsome Albert-shaped nails that finished off his aristocratic hands, "I shall smoke, as you will see."

"Then we shall be edified with a divorce in fashionable life," said Mr. Maurice.

"Nothing of the sort. Jeannette herself shall extend the weed to my lips."

"I don't believe it."

"I dare say," Rylander answered with a shrug of his shoulders. "But seeing is believing!"

"Miss Dotterell is celebrated for liking her own way."

"So am I."

"And a bride is always a privileged person."

Mr Rylander smiled in that calm, provoking sort of way that always implies, "You will see."

"Very well," Maurice laughingly responded; "remember the wager—five hundred."

"Five hundred that you will see me smoking, unobjected to, in Jeannette's very presence, within a month of my marriage day!"

Mr. Maurice took out his tablet and already registered the wager.

"Now, there can be no mistake about it!" he said, calmly replacing the memorandum.

Paul Rylander was duly married to Miss Dotterell, the great heiress.

There was a grand wedding—a bridal arch of white japonicas and strongly-scented tuberose, a superb reception, and a long description in the papers, wherein the fair Jeannette was described as "bewilderingly beautiful," although she was marked by the small-pox, had a cast in one of her eyes, and no complexion to speak of—in fact, everything went off exactly as it should.