

him with food for thought as well as all the meat and drink . . ."

"Oh shut up and sit down," said someone in a very loud whisper.

The duke had turned completely round in his chair; people were purposely scraping their chairs upon the parquet floor, were moving their feet, and making the wine glasses clink against the coffee cups.

"I am a working man myself. It is the only title I care about. So you will forgive me for urging the claims of my class. I have four children to support—and I mean them to be working men like their father. They are boys, you will readily perceive. If they were girls, I would bring them up as working women—like their mother. . . ."

At last my lord sat down.

The duke gulped half a glass of champagne which he had previously intended to leave untouched: he drank as one desiring to wash away a nasty taste from the mouth. Almost everyone drank; almost everyone murmured his disgust and stared balefully at Lord Collingbourne,—who sat with eyes glittering behind his goggles, while composedly he picked grapes from a dessert dish.

"Confound that fellow—he has spoilt the evening."

"Greatly to be regretted."

"Infernal outsider! Ought never to have been brought here."

Then the duke rose hastily and announced more music—to drive away the echoes of the inharmonious voice.

"Miss Capland—er—Copland. Miss Gladys Copland will kindly give us another song."

"Copland!" said Mr Malcomson. "My people know a girl called Copland. Wonder if she's any relation."

The girl had come in to sing again; the accompanist was playing the prelude. It was a number that everybody knew—from a successful musical comedy.

"Life is what we choose to make it—vile or pure.  
We can break the chains of habit—I am sure."

The trumpery tune had a good swing to it; the silly words fitted the melody; the recurrent phrase, "I am sure," fell into its place with a noisy effect of climax that was pleasing to the uncritical ear. "I am sure—yes, I am sure"; and the