

building and endowing a "Home for ugly and sorry-looking children."

I laughed at that part of the letter and felt pretty comfortable now; my fraud had succeeded and my father's fortune would be secured to the family after all; in two or three months Gerty would be again a mother and when my father returned I should be able to present him with a genuine grandson—or daughter—which vanity made me think he would not call, "an ugly little beast."

Three months after I stood beside a newly made grave in Greenwood Cemetery, a broken hearted man; for beneath the fresh soil lay all that was dear to me on earth, my own precious Gerty; and reposing on her bosom was the form of a little girl whose spirit had been long enough in this world to accompany its mother to a better land. My sin had brought its own punishment; the Doctors said that some serious strain on the nervous system had so weakened Gerty's constitution that she was unable to stand the fatigue of childbirth. I knew very well what it was; it was that horrid little fraud who had tormented her almost to death during the four months we had him; I knew it and in my heart I cursed the horrid little wretch, and myself for ever thinking of perpetrating such a fraud.

My father never lived to hear of Gerty's death; the Demerol fever carried him off before the news could reach him; and all his fortune went to build the "Home for ugly and sorry-looking children."

That's all my story. Perhaps you don't think it's much of a story after all? Well, I never told you it was, I told you at the beginning it was, "A Perfect Fraud."

THE BROOK'S MESSAGE.

BY KATE HILLIARD.

Little brook, that glideth through the meadows, rustling past the clump of tufted reeds; Deep and quiet 'neath the alder shadows, Swirling round the tangled water-woods; Little brook, to me a happy presage In thy steadfast pressing toward the sea, On thy constant waves a little message, Bear my love from me.

Seek him where those waves, grown slow and weary, languish through the dull streets of the town; Where, instead of flowers, faces dreary peer into thy mirror stained and brown. Tell him that beside thy crystal fountains, Where the shy bird dips and flies away, In the purple shadows of the mountains, Waiting him, I stay.

Tell him, little brook,—but whisper lowly, Lest the gossip breeze hear thee toll,— That amid this mountain silence holy Quiet hearts may find thy lesson well. Tell him I am patient, though so lonely, For the brook, how some one loves him—only Tell him, brook, how some one loves him—only Do not tell him who!

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TO THE BITTER END.

By Miss M. E. Braddon.

AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

William Vallory was dumbfounded. He had suspected nothing, seen nothing. There had been a few accidental meetings at flower-shows in London. Hubert Walgrave had been among the young men most frequently invited to fill up the ranks at the Acropolis-square dinner parties; he knew a good many people in Miss Vallory's set, and had happened thus to meet her very often in the course of the London season. Then came an autumn invitation to Mr. Vallory's villa at Ryde; a great deal of idling on the pier, an occasional moonlight stroll, a little yachting—most fascinating of all pleasures; during which Augusta Vallory, who was never sea-sick, looked her handsomest, in the most perfect marine costume that a French dressmaker could devise.

It was while he was on board Mr. Vallory's yacht, the Arion, one balmy August morning that Hubert Walgrave told himself for the first time that he was in love with Augusta. She was sitting opposite him, making a pretence of reading a novel, dressed in blue and white, with a soft cashmere scarf floating about her tall slim figure, and a high-crowned hat with a bunch of white-and-blue feathers crowning the massive plaits of black hair.

"Why shouldn't I marry her?" Mr. Walgrave said to himself. "The notion looks preposterous at the first showing, but I really think she likes me—and she must marry some one. Her fortune would be an immense assistance to me; and over and above that, she is a woman who would help her husband to get on in life, even if she hadn't sixpence. She is the only woman I have ever really admired; perhaps the only woman who ever liked me."

At this stage of Hubert Walgrave's career he had no very exalted idea of that passion which makes or mars the lives of some men and counts for so little in the careers of others. He meant never to marry at all unless he could marry to his own direct and immediate advantage. If he married he must marry money, that was clear. The income which was ample for all his wants as a single man would be ridiculously small when set against the requirements of a wife and family. He was very positive upon this point, but he was no hearse-hunter. Not the wealth of Miss Klimanegg would tempt him to unite himself to a fright or dowdy, a woman who dropped her hair or was in any manner unrepresentable. Nor did he go out of his way to seek Miss Vallory. Fate threw them together, and he merely improved his opportunity. Of all the men she had ever known he was the one who treated her with most nonchalance, who paid least court to her beauty or her wealth. Perhaps it was for this very reason that she fell in love with him, so far as it was in her nature to fall in love with any one.

So one moonlight night on the little lawn at Ryde—a grassy slope that went down to the beach—Mr. Walgrave proposed, in a pleasant, gentlemanlike, unimpassioned way.

"Of course, my dear Augusta," he said in conclusion, "I cannot be blind to the fact that I am a very bad match for you, and that I am bound to do a good deal more than I have done towards winning a position before I can reasonably expect any encouragement from your father. But I am not afraid of hard work, and if you are only favourably disposed towards me I shall feel inspired to do anything—push my way to the woolstack, or something of that kind."

And then, little by little, he induced Miss Vallory to admit that she was favourably disposed towards him—very favourably; that she had liked him almost from the first. That final confession was going so far as any well-brought-up young person could be expected to go.

"You have not been so absurdly attentive as other men," she said, "and I really believe I have liked you all the better on that account."

Mr. Walgrave smiled, and registered an unspoken vow to the effect that Miss Vallory should have ample cause to continue so to like him.

It was rather a long time before Mr. Vallory quite got over the shock occasioned by his daughter's astounding announcement; but he did ultimately get over it, and consented to receive Hubert Walgrave as his future son-in-law.

"I will not attempt to conceal from you that it is a disappointment," he said; "I may say a blow, a very severe blow. I had hoped that Augusta would make a brilliant marriage. I think I had a right to expect as much. But I have always liked you, Walgrave, and—and—if my daughter really knows her own mind, I can hold out no longer. You will not think of marrying just yet, I suppose?"

"I am quite in your hands upon that point, my dear sir. My own desire would be to make an assured position for myself before I ask Augusta to share my fortunes. I couldn't, on any consideration, become a dependent on my wife; and my present income would not allow me to give her an establishment which should, even in a minor degree, be the kind of thing she has been accustomed to."

"That's all high-flown nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Vallory rather impatiently. "If you marry Augusta, you will marry her money as well as herself. As to waiting till you've a silk gown—well, you may do it if you like, and if she likes. I shall be glad to keep her near me as long as I can. But you will be as old as I am, I take it, before you can hope to win a position that would be anything like what she has a right to expect. She has made a bad bargain, you see, my dear Walgrave; and there's no use in you or me trying to make-believe that it's a good one."

Hubert Walgrave's dark face grew just a shade darker at this, and the flexible lips tightened a little.

"If it is so very bad a bargain, sir," he said gravely, "it is not at all too late for you to rescind your approval, or for me to withdraw my pretensions."

The great William Vallory looked absolutely frightened. His only child had a will of her own, and a temper of her own; and he had more than one unpleasant scene with her already upon this question.

"No, no, my dear fellow!" he answered hastily; "bless my soul, how touchy you are! Haven't I told you that I like you? My daughter's feelings are involved; and if she likes to marry for love, she can afford to do it. It will not be love in a cottage; or, if it is, it will be a cottage of gentility, with a double coach-house, and so on."

Thus Mr. Walgrave found himself accepted much more easily than he could have supposed it possible it should be. He was engaged to a young woman with three thousand a year in the present, and unlimited expectations of future wealth. It seemed like some wild dream. Yet he bore this sudden fortune with the utmost equanimity. Indeed, it scarcely surprised him; he made up his mind from the beginning to prosper in life.

Once, and once only, William Vallory ventured upon some slight inquiry as to his future son-in-law's connections.

"I have never heard you speak of your family," he said one evening, as the two men sat alone in the spacious dining-room—an apartment that was almost awful in its aspect when sparsely occupied—with a Pompeian claret-jug between them. "I need scarcely say how pleased I shall be to make the acquaintance of any of your people."

"I have no people," Mr. Walgrave answered coolly. "I think you must have heard me say that I stand quite alone in the world. Augusta will not receive many wedding presents from my side of the house; but, on the other hand, she will not be troubled by any poor relations of mine. My father and mother both died while I was a youngster. I was brought up in Essex by a maiden aunt. She too has been dead for the last twenty years, poor soul! She was a kind friend to me."

"Your father was a professional man, I suppose," hazarded Mr. Vallory, who would have been gratified by a more communicative spirit in his future son-in-law.

"He was not. He lived upon his own means, and spent them."

"But he left you fairly provided for."

"He left me three hundred a year, thanks to the good offices of a friend who had considerable influence over him. The money was settled upon me in such a way that my father could not touch it. I should have begun life a beggar, if it had been in his power to dispose of the money."

"You don't speak very kindly of him."

"Perhaps not. I daresay I am somewhat wanting in filial reverence. The fact is, he could have afforded to do a good deal more for me than he did do, and I have not yet learnt to forgive him. He was not a good father, and, frankly, I don't much care about talking of him."

This was like a conversational dead-wall with "No thorough-fare" inscribed upon it. Mr. Vallory asked no more questions. Hubert Walgrave was a gentleman—that was the grand point; and it mattered very little how many uncles and aunts he had, or if he were totally destitute of such kindred. He was clever, energetic, hard-working, and tolerably sure to get on in the world.

"I am not marrying my daughter to a drone, who would stick a flower in his button-hole, and live on his wife's fortune; that is one comfort," the lawyer said to himself.

He had, indeed, no reason to complain of any lack of industry in Hubert Walgrave. From the hour in which his engagement to Miss Vallory became a settled thing he worked harder than ever. That which would have tempted most men to idleness urged him to fierce effort, to more eager pursuit of that single aim of his existence—self-advancement. He wanted to win a reputation before he married; he did not want people to be able to say, "There goes that lucky fellow Walgrave, who married old Vallory's daughter." He wished to be pointed out rather as the celebrated Mr. Walgrave, the Queen's Counsel, and his lucky marriage spoken

of as a secondary affair, springing out of his success.

With this great end in view—a very worthy aim in the opinion of a man of his creed, which did not embrace very lofty ideas of this life—Mr. Walgrave had very nearly worked himself into a galloping consumption; and while going this high-pressure pace had been brought to a sudden standstill by that perilous illness which had led to his holiday at Brierwood. Skilful treatment, and a naturally good constitution which would bear some abuse, had pulled him through, and he was what our forefathers used to call "on the mending hand," when he went down to the old farmhouse, to fall sick of a still more troublesome disease.

CHAPTER XIII.

"THE SHOWS OF THINGS ARE BETTER THAN THEMSELVES."

Mr. Vallory came in just before dinner, bringing a visitor with him—rather a dandified-looking young man, of the unmistakable City type, with faultless boots, a hot-house flower in his button-hole, carefully-arranged black whiskers, a good-looking supercilious face, a figure just above the middle height, eyes like Augusta's, and a complexion that was a great deal too good for a man. This was the junior partner, the seventh-share man, Weston Vallory.

"I found your cousin Weston at the office, Augusta," said Mr. Vallory, "and brought him home to dinner. You must excuse his morning dress; I wouldn't give him time to change his clothes."

"I always keep a dress suit at the office, and Pullman the porter valets me," said Weston. "I only asked for ten minutes; but you know how impatient your father is, Augusta. So behold me!"

He kissed his cousin, and gave the tips of his fingers to Hubert Walgrave. There was no great affection between those two. Weston had fully intended to marry Augusta, and had been both astounded and outraged by her engagement.

They dined at eight, and the banquet was not especially lively—a little over-weighted with attendance, and plate, and splendour; a large round table, with a pyramid of gaudy autumnal flowers—Japanese clematis and scarlet geranium, calceolaria and verbena—in the centre; four people scarcely able to see each other's faces without an effort, and three solemn servants waiting upon them. Mr. Vallory and his nephew talked shop. Augusta asked her lover little commonplace questions about commonplace things, and gave him small shreds and patches of information respecting her stay at Ems. He caught himself on the brink of a yawn more than once. He thought of the dusky garden at Brierwood—the perfume of the flowers, the low music of Grace Redmayne's voice, the tender touch of her hand. He thought of these things even while Augusta was entertaining him with a lively description of some outrageous costumes she had seen at Ems.

But presently he brightened up a little, and made it his business to be amusing, talked in, O, such a stereotyped way, like a creature in genteel comedy. He felt his own dreariness—felt that between him and the woman he was to marry there was no point of union, no touch of sympathy. She talked of Parisian dresses; he talked of the people they knew, in a semi-supercilious style that did duty for irony; and he was miserably conscious of the stupidity and narrowness of the whole business.

He remembered himself roaming in the gardens at Clevedon Hall—along the moss-grown paths, by the crumbling wall where the unprotected cherries ripened for the birds of the air, among the dilapidated cucumber-frames, in a wilderness of vegetable profusion, where the yellow pumpkins sprawled in the sunshine, by the great still pond overhung by a little grove of ancient quince-trees, in and out amidst waste, neglect, and sweetness—with Grace Redmayne by his side. Was it really the same man seated at this table, peeling a peach, with his eyebrows elevated languidly, and little cynical speeches dropping now and then from his thin lips?

Augusta Vallory was quite satisfied with her lover. He was gentleman-like and unobtrusive, and had nothing kindly to say about any one or anything. She had no admiration for those exuberant hearty young men from the Universities, great at hammer-throwing and long jumps, who were beginning to overrun her circle—youths with loud cheery voices and sunburnt faces, hands blistered by rowing, and a general healthiness and joyousness, of aspect. They only bored her.

After dinner when Vallory senior and Vallory junior were playing a game of billiards in a room that had been built out at the back of the house over some offices, half-way between the dining and the drawing rooms, the fair Augusta amused herself by questioning her lover about his life in Kent. It must have been infernally dull. What had he done with himself? How had he contrived to dispose of his time?

"Well, of course, said Mr. Walgrave dreamily, "that sort of life is rather monotonous. You get up and eat your breakfast, and walk a little and write a little and read a little; and, if you happen to be a man with that resource open to you, you smoke a great deal, and eat your dinner, and go to bed. And you hardly know Monday from Tuesday; if you were put in a witness-box you couldn't swear whether a given event happened at the end of the week or the beginning. But to a fellow who wants rest, that kind of life is not altogether disagreeable; he gets a honey-cumb for his breakfast, a dish of fresh trout now and then, and cream in his tea. And then you see," concluded Mr. Walgrave, making a sudden end of the subject with a suppressed yawn, "I read a good deal."

"You read a good deal! When the doctors had especially forbidden work?"

"O, but it wasn't hard work, and I don't believe I did myself any good by it; I only a desultory kind of reading. I was, at last, about Cardium versus Cardium, a Chancery case in which your father was called to make a figure; and I read up some old precedents bearing on it. There was a man in the reign of James II, who went in against his next-of-kin on exactly the same grounds. And I read a novel of Anthony Trollope's."

"There could be no harm in your reading a novel. You must have read all the novels of the season, I should think, in seven weeks." "No; I did a good deal of fishing. I made the acquaintance of a jack that I mean to bring to terms at some future date. It wasn't to be had this year."

Miss Vallory asked a great many more questions; but it was astonishing how little Mr. Walgrave had to tell of his Kentish experiences.

"You are not a particularly good hand at description, Hubert," she said at last, somewhat displeased by his reticence. "If it had been Weston, he would have given me a perfect picture of the farm-house life, and the queer clod-hopping country people, with an imitation of the dialect, and all that kind of thing."

"If I were good at all that kind of thing, I should write for the magazines, and turn my gifts into money," replied Mr. Walgrave superciliously. "I wish you'd play something, Augusta."

This was a happy way of getting out of a difficulty, suggested by a glance at the open piano.

"I'll sing you something, if you like," Miss Vallory said graciously. "I was trying a new ballad this morning, which is rather in your style, I fancy."

"Let me hear it, by all means."

He went to the piano, adjusted the candles, which were lighted ready, waited while the performer seated herself, and then withdrew to a comfortable easy-chair. Never during his courtship or since his engagement had he fatigued himself by such puerile attentions as turning over the leaves of music, or cutting open magazines, or any of those small frivolous services by which some men render themselves precious to their womankind. Indeed, in a general way, he may be described as scrupulously inattentive. If this girl chose to give him her wealth, she should bestow it spontaneously. There should be no cajolery on his part, no abasement, not the smallest sacrifice of self-esteem.

Miss Vallory sang her song. She had a strong mezzo-soprano voice of the metallic order—a voice that is usually described as fine—without a weak note in its range. She had been taught by the best masters, pronounced every syllable with undeviating accuracy, and had about as much expression as a musical box.

Hubert Walgrave thought of "Kathleen Mavourneen," and the soft sweet voice singing in the twilight, "O, do you remember?" "The Meeting of the Waters," "The Light Guitar," and all Grace Redmayne's little stock of familiar old-fashioned songs. The ballad was something of the new school; the slenderest thread of melody, caked out by a showy accompaniment; the poetry, something rather obscure and metaphysical, by a modern poet.

"Do you call that thing a ballad, Augusta?" he cried contemptuously, at the end of the first verse. "For pity's sake sing me *Una voce*, or *Non piu mesta*, to take the taste of that mawkish stuff out of my mouth."

Miss Vallory complied, with tolerable grace. "You are so capricious," she said, as she played one of Rossini's symphonies, "there is no knowing what you will like."

She sang an Italian bravura superbly, looking superb as she sang it, without the faintest effort of distortion of feature. Mr. Walgrave watching her critically all the while.

"Upon my soul, she is a woman to be proud of," he said to himself; "and a man, who would sacrifice such a chance as mine would be something worse than a lunatic."

The two lawyers came into the room while Miss Vallory was singing, and Weston complimented her warmly at the close of the scene, while her plighted lover sat in his easy-chair and looked on. He new very well that the man would have liked to take his place, and he never felt the sense of his triumph so keenly as when he was, in a manner, trampling on the neck of Weston Vallory.

"The black-whiskered scoundrel," he said to himself; "I know that man is a scoundrel, whom necessity has made respectable. He is just the kind of fellow I should expect to make away with his clients' securities, or something in that way. Very likely he may never do anything of the sort, may die in the odour of sanctity; but I know it's in him. And what a delightful thing it is to know that he hates me as he does, and that I shall have to be civil to him all the days of my life!"

And then, after a pause, he thought, "If I were capable of getting myself into a mess, there's the man to profit by my folly."

The unconscious subject of these meditations was leaning over the piano all this time, talking to his cousin. There was not much justification in his appearance or manners for such sweeping condemnation. He was like numerous other men to be met with daily in middle-class society—good-looking, well-dressed, with manners that could be deferential or supercilious according to the occasion. He had plenty of acquaintance who called him a first-rate fellow, and he was never at a loss for invitations to dinner. Only in those eyes of his, which were so like his cousin's in colour, there was a hard glassy glitter, a metallic light, which was not agreeable to a physiognomist; nor had the full red lips a pleasant expression—sensuality had set its seal there, sensuality and a lurking cruelty. But the world in general took the black eyes and the black whiskers as the distinguishing characteristics of a very good-looking young man; a man in a most unexceptionable position; a man to be made much of by every family in which there were daughters to marry and sons to plant out in life.

Mr. Walgrave allowed this gentleman to engross the attention of his betrothed just as long as he chose. He fully knew the strength of the chain by which he held Augusta Vallory, and that he was in no danger from Weston.

"I believe poor Weston was brought up to think that he was going to marry me," she said to her lover one day, with contemptuous compassion. "His mother was a very foolish woman, who thought her children the most perfect creatures in the world. But Weston is really very good, and has always been quite devoted to papa and me. He owes everything to papa, of course. His father quarrelled with my grandfather, and got himself tumbled out of the firm. I have never heard the details of the story, but I believe he behaved very badly; and if papa hadn't taken Weston by the hand, his chances of advancement would have been extremely small. He is an excellent man of business, however, according to papa's account; and I think he is grateful."

"Do you? Do you think any one ever is grateful?" Mr. Walgrave inquired in his cynical tone. "I never met with a grateful man yet, nor heard of one, except that fellow Androcles—no, by the bye, it was the lion who was grateful, so Mr. Spectator's story counts for nothing. However, your cousin is, no doubt, an exception to the rule—he looks like it. Was the father transported?"

"Hubert! How can you be so absurd?" "Well, my dear Augusta, you said he did something very bad; and I inferred that it was defilement of some kind, tending towards penal servitude."

"I believe the quarrel did arise out of money matters; but I should hope no member of my family would be dishonest."

"My dear girl, dishonesty crops up in all kinds of families; a dukedom will not protect you from the possibility. There are rogues in the peerage, I daresay. But I am not at all curious about Mr. Weston Vallory's father. The man himself is enough—I accept him as a fact."

"You really have a very impertinent manner of speaking about my family," Miss Vallory exclaimed under an aggrieved air.

"My dearest, if you expect that I am going to bow down and worship your family as well as yourself, you are altogether mistaken. It was you I wooed that sweet summer night at Ryde, not the whole race of Vallory. Upon that point I reserve the right to be critical."

"You seem to be quite prejudiced against Weston."

"Not at all. I will freely admit that I don't care very much for a man with such a brilliant complexion; but that is a mere capricious antipathy—like an aversion to roses—which I would hardly confess to any one but yourself."

The lovers frequently indulged in small bickerings of this kind, by which means Mr. Walgrave maintained, or supposed that he maintained, his independence. He did not bow down and worship; and it happened curiously, that Miss Vallory liked him all the better for his habitual incivility. She had been surfeited by the attentions of men who thought of her only as the heiress of Harcourt and Vallory. This man, with his habitual sneer and cool off-hand manner, seemed so much truer than the rest. And yet he was playing his own game, and meditating his own advantage; and the affection he had given her was so weak a thing, that it perished altogether under the influence of his first temptation.

In the course of the evening there was a discussion as to where Mr. Vallory and his daughter should go for the next six weeks. The father would gladly have stayed in Acropolis-square, and pottered down to his office every day. There was always plenty of business for him, even in the long vacation, and it was nearer his heart than any of the pleasures of life; but Augusta protested against such an outrage of the proprietors.

"We should have fever, or cholera, or something, papa," she said. "That kind of thing always rages out of the London season."

"The London death-rate was higher last May than in the preceding August, I assure you."

"My dear papa, it is simply impossible. Let us go to the Stapletons. You know it is an old promise."

"I hate staying at country houses; breakfasting with a herd of strangers every morning; and hearing billiard-balls going from morning till night; and not being able to find a corner where one can write a letter; and being perpetually driven about on pleasure jaunts; doing ruined abbays, and waterfalls; not a moment's peace. All very well for young people; but actual martyrdom when one's on the wrong side of fifty. You can go to Halsey if you like, Augusta; I would much rather go to Eastbourne."

"In that case, I will go too, papa," replied Miss Vallory. "It's rather a pity you lent the villa to the Filmers; it would have been nice to have the Arion."

"You can have the Arion at Eastbourne," said Mr. Vallory. "I didn't lend the yacht to the Filmers."

"Very well, papa; let us go to Eastbourne. And Hubert can come down to us—can't you, Hubert?"

"I shall be delighted, of course, to run down for a day or two."

"A day or two!" exclaimed Miss Vallory. "Why shouldn't you spend all September with us? You can have nothing to do in London."

"My dear Augusta, I came back to town on purpose to work. I can never do much good except in my own rooms, with my books of reference at hand."

He rather shrunk from the idea of Eastbourne—the half-mile or so of parade—the band—the dull narrow round of seaside life. Ryde had been very agreeable to him last year, though his life had been the same kind of thing; but to-night he thought of such an existence with a strange aversion. Indeed, it seemed to him just now that nothing would be so pleasant as to bury himself in his chambers, with his books for his sole companions.

"But it is preposterous to think of working all through September," urged Augusta, with a somewhat heightened colour. "You really must come; the sea-air will do you a world of good. We shall have the Arion; and you are so fond of yachting."

"Yes, I am very fond of yachting; but I scarcely feel equal to the gales of a watering-place. I would rather vegetate in the Temple."

"But Eastbourne is not a gay place. It is the place of places for an invalid, if you still profess to be one."

"My dear Augusta, if you command me to come, I will come, at any hazard to my professional advancement."

"Come and go just as you like, Walgrave," said Mr. Vallory. "You're quite right to stick to your books; that Cardium versus Cardium is a great case, and if you come out strong with your precedents, you'll carry everything before you—Don't be jealous of his work, Augusta; he means to make you a judge's wife one of these days. Weston can dance attendance upon you."

"I don't dance," said Weston; "but I shall be happy to be useful to my cousin."

"And, by the way, Weston, as there's not much doing at the office just now, you might run down to Eastbourne to-morrow and see if there's a house to be had that would suit us," Mr. Vallory said coolly. "He had made the young man's fortune, and had a knack of ordering him about in this way."

Weston bowed. "I have two or three interviews for to-morrow," he said; "but I can make Jones attend to the people. I don't know that I'm quite up in a house-agent's duties; but I suppose I shall know instinctively the kind of thing you want."

"Instinctive fiddlesticks!" Mr. Vallory exclaimed impatiently. "Augusta will give you a sheet of paper with a memorandum of the accommodation wanted."

Mr. Walgrave smiled, congratulating himself upon his exemption from house-hunting