

tions?" he demanded plaintively. "I specially told the m-man in the shop to give me ready-made ones. B-by the way, how do you c-come to have heard about Hellenopolis?"

"Well, when you came to lecture at Oxford——" Deryk began.

"Now, don't t-tell me you attended those!" said Manisty, facing his companion squarely. "Great God, that makes five! The Vice-Chancellor and the Regius Professor c-came out of politeness; there was a B-Balliol man, who attended all university lectures on principle, because they were all the same and all wrong; and there was an obstinate old w-widow from North Oxford, who insisted that I was t-talking about the Synoptic Gospels and t-told her friends that I was too long getting to the p-point to be a g-good lecturer. So you were there, too; wha-what a thing is youth!"

"Are you going to take me with you?" Deryk demanded again. "I—I've got a little job of my own; I don't say we shall overlap, but it'll be frightfully good training for me. I think you might!"

"P-put it to your father, my dear fellow. I should have thought, as he's only just g-got you home. . . ."

"He won't mind," Deryk prophesied easily.

When dinner began, he found himself at the foot of the long table between Beryl Oakleigh and Yolande Storn-away. On the far side of them sat Lord Summertown and Valentine Arden, and the party grew graver and older as it approached the high-backed chair in which Sir Aylmer sat with his head drooping forward and his hands on the carved arms. The pink-shaded lamps softened the eyes and rounded the features of the women; the black coats of the men melted into the surrounding darkness, and to Deryk it was as though the room held nothing but white shirt fronts, light dresses, smooth faces and sleek heads collected and bent over gleaming plate; a lingering scent of carnations rose and spread from the heavy cut-glass bowls, and behind the chairs, too deft and silent to interrupt the murmur of a dozen conversations, shirt fronts, blue liveries,