

fast one's thoughts travel backward eight years. I remember Haughton Hall was heavily mortgaged and my friend at Baden-Baden getting deeper in debt; the life of a country squire palled upon him, when at his father's death he returned at his mother's wish as heir; pity he was obliged to leave the army. The outcome is this marriage for gold to redeem the place from the Jews, lost for distraction's sake. However, a-something occurred on my yielding to dear little Vaura's wish to go and induce him to return, and he has been a saved man ever since, giving up the dice from the time of his hurried return in consequence of a telegram he received before I reached him; I don't know what the motive power was, as he did not confide and, as a matter of course, I did not force his confidence. The Hall is still in debt but he manages to keep the Jews quiet and to make a decent living out of a few tenants. The lovely Vaura has her mother's portion. 'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good, and his becoming a slave of the ring will be for my good as the old place will again be open and Vaura Vernon, the woman now, will again grace it by her presence, and until she marries, lend a new brightness, a new distraction to my life. Jove! now I come to think of it she will surely marry next season, and I shall not have her long; with her face, form, colouring, eyes and the sweet syren voice that the men are raving of, some one of them will make her say him yea; then the spice of originality about her is refreshing, also having had so much of the companionship of Lady Esmondet, she is a woman of common-sense and of the world, no mere conventional doll. Had Haughton not been blind and have married my friend what a paradise the Hall would have been to me? Until Vaura married I must always remember that contingency. 'Tis absurd of dear Lady Esmondet wishing me to range myself, she knows my resolve not to wed is as earnest as though I was in the garb of a monk. I feel bothered and unsettled; how