

Damn everything! One ought to be shot at forty-five—no, at fifty.” And so concluding, he left her to her toil over a complicated account. As he went out, he turned.

“Who the deuce is this Mrs. Hunter Kitty is raving about? Hunter? Hunter? A good name in Virginia and Rhode Island.” The old man’s memory for genealogical details was remarkable and at times perilously competent.

“I do not know,” returned Mary. “Kitty has many sudden enthusiasms about people. They do not last long.”

“You would be better for a few,” he said sharply, and so left her.

“Now I wonder if that be true,” thought Mary Fairthorne, as she turned to her task. “No, it is not true. Kitty’s accounts! He will never see them, or I am much mistaken.” After very carefully revising her arithmetical results, she wrote “Correct” on a slip of paper, and pinned it to the account.

Next she took a fresh sheet, and began to write to Mr. Pilgrim, but, perceiving that the paper bore her own monogram, she tore it up, took a sheet from the other table, and, after a few moments of reflection, wrote to the rising engineer a very formal letter with the signature, “John Fairthorne, per M. F.”