

pounds each we should all wish we had another. Though I am not grasping, not really grasping I mean, I never yet had a thing I liked without wanting another of the same, and I should think that would be particularly the case with a million pounds. Those large round sums must be so satisfactory. Just like big pearls."

"Nonsense, a million is enough for anybody. It is even enough for two," said Lady Stoakley, so sharply that Mrs. Montgomery put down her glasses.

"You are thinking of Percy Gerard?" she asked.

"Of course I am. So are you. We all are. It is supposed to be vulgar to desire or to envy wealth. That is one of those absurd delusions which are confined to the wealthy. In my opinion, it is infinitely more vulgar to pretend not to desire it, besides which no one will believe that one does not. As for the *nouveaux riches*, it is absurd to pose as despising them. Who was it who remarked so excellently that there was no real difference between them and the old poor?"

"I don't know who said it. What did he say, in any case? I should have thought there was all the difference in the world between them."

"No; one seeks to get position by means of its wealth, the other seeks to get wealth by means of its position. It is quite true: there is nothing to choose between them."

Mrs. Montgomery suddenly took up her opera