

### 312 THE DOUBLE LIFE OF

when he had picked it up, he stood looking at her with his mouth a little open.

"You don't seem to understand, Ellen," he said. "Listen. I've come back home. A share of that motor-car is yours."

"Come back home," Ellen repeated slowly.

"Exactly," he admitted, complacently. "I am afraid this is rather a shock for you, but good news never kills, you know. We'll motor up to the band presently and I've asked the Johnsons to supper. If you've nothing in the house, we'll all go up to the west-end somewhere. . . . What's the matter with you?"

Ellen was looking at that moment positively handsome. Her cheeks were scarlet and her eyes ablaze.

"Alfred Burton," she declared, "the last few times I've seen you, I've put you down as being dotty. Now I am sure of it. The sooner you're out of this, the better, before I lose my temper."

"But, my dear Ellen," he protested, soothingly, "I can assure you that what I am telling you is the truth! I have become unexpectedly rich. A fortunate stroke of business — the Menatogen Company, you know — has completely altered our lives. You are naturally overcome —"

"Naturally over-fiddlesticks!" Ellen interrupted. "Look here, my man, I've had about enough of this. You come down here, thinking because you've come