

"Not at all," said George. "I deserve it, and I like home-truths. But," turning again to Claire, "you must know me well enough now to know that I would rather be a tombstone than a husband."

"Then I shall write the inscription," she said. "Will this do?"

'Here Lies
George Grange, Scotchman,
Who died through not knowing that
He had a kind heart.
Possessed of many suits of clothes
He was always a Gentleman,
Never a Man.
His only perfect actions were his Pictures;
For these there is no tombstone.
Erected by his affectionate friend, Claire.'

George laughed, but in his heart were tears.

Claire walked home with a dainty glove on his arm, the other glove on Pourgot's. She was delighted with herself. Never had she been so brilliant. This skill in epigram was a new discovery. She must cultivate it, must inaugurate a *salon*, and gather round herself brilliant men like George, on whom she could sharpen her wits still further. She was as proud as the day on which she had her hair up for the first time. Oh, she would have the world at her feet some day!

What a pleasant thing life was, with clever men to fetch and carry for beautiful women!

An open carriage rolled past them, in which sat a lady with a toy poodle in her lap.

"Oh, I must have a poodle, too," she cried. "I shall never be happy without a poodle."

"You shall have one," said George. "It will be a living token of my gratitude for your epitaph."

He was as good as his word, and Claire went back to Paris, Diana returning from the chase.