

Mabel, who glares back at him with infinite promise of a future settlement of all their disputes in her ethereal eyes.

" 'Twas *my* salt-cellar, not hers!"

"Ladies first—pleasure afterwards," says his father somewhat idly.

"Oh *Freddy!*!" says his wife.

"Seditious language *I* call it," says Jocelyne with a laugh.

"Eh?" says Mr. Monkton. "Why what on earth have I been saying now. I quite believed I was doing the heavy father to perfection and teaching Tommy his duty."

"Nice duty," says Jocelyne, with a pretence of indignation, that makes her charming face a perfect picture. "Teaching him to regard us as second best! I like that."

"Good heavens! did I give that impression? I must have swooned," says Mr. Monkton penitently. "When last in my senses I thought I had been telling Tommy that he deserved a good whipping; and that if good old Time could so manage as to make me my own father, he would assuredly have got it."

"Oh! *your* father!" says Mrs. Monkton in a low tone; there is enough expression in it, however, to convey the idea to everyone present that in her opinion her husband's father would be guilty of any atrocity at a moment's notice.

"Well, '*twas my* salt-cellar," says Tommy again stoutly, and as if totally undismayed by the vision of the grandfatherly scourge held out to him. After all we none of us feel things much, unless they come personally home to us.

"Was it?" says Mr. Monkton mildly. "Do you know, I really quite fancied it was mine."

"What?" says Tommy, cocking his ear. He, like his sister, is in a certain sense a fraud. For Tommy has the face of a seraph with the heart of a hardy Norseman. There is nothing indeed that Tommy would not dare.

"Mine, you know," says his father, even more mildly still.

"No, it wasn't," says Tommy with decision, "it was at *my* side of the table. *Yours* is over there."

"Thomas!" says his father, with a rueful shake of the head that signifies his resignation of the argument; "it is indeed a pity that I am *not* like my father!"

"Like him! Oh *no*," says Mrs. Monkton emphatically,