

into cocked hats the minute you appear on the scene."

"I hope not. I don't see any evidence of it," she said demurely. "Get me an ice, will you?"

"Of course I will, if you promise not to let anybody else have my chair," he said jealously. With a good deal of engineering he had managed to secure a chair by Katherine's side at a convenient distance from the throng. Stephen was honestly and very much in love, though she did not give him credit for it. By the time he returned his chair was occupied by the clergyman of the church the Curries attended, a middle-aged man for whom Katherine had the greatest respect and esteem. He rose, however, when Stephen returned, gathering from his expression that he was *de trop*.

But Katherine begged him to stop.

"I have ever so many things to say to you, Mr. Cadell," she said gaily. "Did you see Mr. Currie and me in the front gallery seat last Sunday when you preached at Kensington? I want to tell you that it was the best sermon I have heard since I came to London. I do wish Hampstead were not so far away."

"That would be nothing to Uncle Archie's horses," said Stephen quickly, while a gratified expression crossed the clergyman's face. He was not a *persona grata* at Fair Lawn, and in some unaccountable way had missed his mark at Hampstead. Very little appreciation came in his way; therefore the sincere and kind words spoken by Katherine Wrede warmed his heart.

"May I bring my wife to speak to you, Miss Wrede?" he eagerly asked.

"I will come to her, Mr. Cadell," she said, with a steady grace. "It is only right that I should. Just let me finish my ice, will you?"

Someone sauntered up to speak to the clergyman, and Stephen bent over her reproachfully.

"Why are you so disagreeable to me, Katherine? You know I am only here to-day because you were coming. I loathe this sort of thing."

"Do you? I am sure it is very pleasant," she said quietly.

"And what do you want to go and talk to Mrs. Cadell for? You'll never get away. She'll pin you down for a week with trivialities. I tell you what, the Cadells are the greatest bores I know."

"You don't appreciate them as you ought. I like him sincerely, and I hope he will find his true sphere soon. He certainly hasn't found it in Hampstead."

"Won't you come for a turn round with me now, Katherine? It's really quite pretty at the back of the house, and the roses are out in plenty yet."

"Mr. Cadell may bring his wife to me at any minute, besides I didn't come to walk about with you. I must make myself agreeable to your mother's guests. That's why people come to garden parties."

"Why wouldn't you see me last Sunday when I called," he persisted.

"I had a headache. No, it wasn't any make-up, I assure you. I never came down all the evening."

"Well, I'll come to-morrow."

"Don't, we have three men already coming to lunch; I shall find them enough." She rose as she spoke, handed him her ice plate, and began to move across the lawn. She saw that she must put a stop to Stephen's talk, that it was approaching debateable ground. But he did not mean to be put off. Later on he managed by constant shadowing, observed by much piquant interest by many of the guests, and with inward chagrin by his mother, to get her alone again.

"Look here, Katherine, you're not going yet. Uncle Archie is still enjoying himself, and that awful Mrs. Cadell has got him fast in her toils. If I mayn't come to lunch when may I see you? Will you come down to Richmond with me one afternoon and we'll dine at the Star and Garter, and have a run on the river?"

She opened her eyes wide.

"Oh, Stephen, what will you suggest next? No, I certainly can't do that."

"You're tormenting me beyond endurance, Katherine, but you shan't browbeat me altogether. You know what I'm driving at. You will marry me, won't you?"

She lowered her sunshade until it came between her face and his eyes, and began to walk rather smartly away, but he kept pace with her.

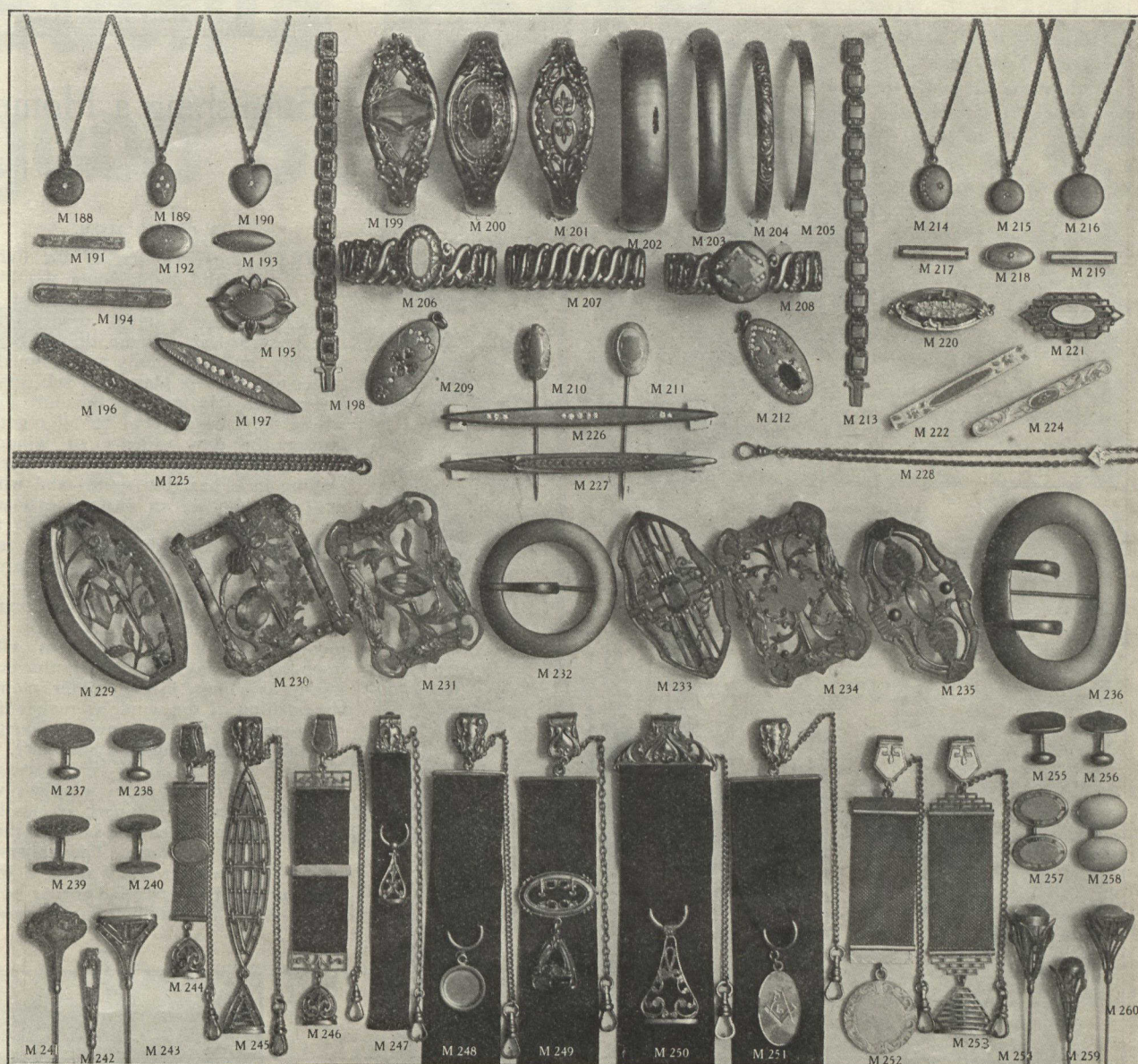
"I mean to have you, Katherine. You've driven me nearly mad of late. You used to be much kinder to me. Do

Continued on page 34

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