

"No questions, my lord."

Highest pitch of sensation yet attained.—

"My lord, may I speak now?"

"Yes, if you please, now is the time for you to open your case for the defence."

Suffocating, morbidly poignant interest. Oh, oh—short gasps for breath,—he has risen to address the court, to address the wide listening world.

"Now, Lord Brentwood."

Then he made his speech. No one had assisted him in its preparation; it was delivered without a single note; and it was the best speech of his life.

"My lord, this is not a defence, but a statement of my position. With regard to the claim of this shareholder—I am prepared to accept judgment for the plaintiff, subject to his making an absolute and unconditioned withdrawal of his suggestion of fraud or intentional misrepresentation. I desire in the most emphatic manner to repudiate this unworthy imputation against my honour, and to put on record the solemn asseveration of my entire innocence of any base motives.

"But, my lord, beyond the plaintiff, there are all the other shareholders in this unlucky company of which I was the chairman and ostensible head. If I demand that they acquit me of fraud or want of honesty, I do not ask them to acquit me of ignorance and want of care. In this second respect—carelessness and ignorance,—I accept the fullest responsibility, I ask for no lenity. I shall make the only reparation possible to me. Fortunately I am a rich man—and I will give every penny I possess to the shareholders. I paid death duties on a little over two millions—and if I fetch what I am supposed to be worth, I shall realize enough to pay all the deficiency reported by the Official Receiver. Already I have issued the necessary orders, already the realization has begun.—The money, as it comes in, can be handed to the Official Receiver, or paid into court, or dealt with, my lord, in whatever way may be proper." . . .

That was the end of the case.

Applause—not easily suppressed; sensation—expressed by shuffling of feet, rustling of petticoats, smelling of salts, and