

coarse voice, and vulgar manners, like all those East India Company men ;” and she shuddered affectedly, and looked at her companion’s face. It betrayed neither interest nor sympathy.

“ Well, as I told you, Helen, Captain Lathom has a very high opinion of you, for, of course, he has not failed to see how very attentive you are to me. And he thinks that you are absolutely truthful. Indeed he has said as much.”

“ Captain Lathom has always been most kind and generous to me, madam. It is not in his nature to be otherwise to any one. Even the men in the chain gang know that.”

“ The horrid creatures ! Please don’t talk about them. One of them threw a hammer at him once and tried to kill him, and yet he was so foolish as to overlook it instead of having the man sentenced to two hundred and fifty lashes—the minimum penalty.”

The girl made no answer. She knew the story, and knew how the kindly-hearted Lathom, and the equally compassionate Surgeon Haldane had represented to the authorities that Convict No. — was mentally deranged, as was indeed the case, — so saved the unfortunate wretch a fearful punishment.

“ As you say, he is very considerate and kind, Helen ; and gives such a lot of attention to his official duties. But—I am sure I can trust you, can I not ? ”

“ I am a convict, madam.”

“ How tiresome you are ! ” and Mrs. Lathom’s blue eyes flashed angrily ; then in another moment she smiled sweetly.

“ I want you to do something for me, Helen. I will reward you well for it.”