

the dense blue haze of the room they saw some shadowed forms softly indistinct save where the light from the ceiling outside shone down upon a group of coiffured heads. A noise of mingled coughing and laughter specifically completed the introduction.

"Oh, I 'm—it 's unendurable in there," spoke the voice of the hostess. "We *were* coming in to smoke with you," she called out through the cloud, "since you would n't stop with us."

"Come along!" answered Thorpe, cheerily. He strode to the end of the room and raised a window. From the same corner he turned on some added lights.

Under this more effective illumination, the lady of the house advanced, with Miss Madden and the Hon. Winifred close behind her. "Frank has gone to bed," she explained to the Duke, who had risen. Then she turned to her husband a bright-eyed glance: "You don't mind—our coming?" she asked.

"Mind!" he called out, with robust impressiveness. "Mind!" As if to complete the expression of his meaning, he threw his arm loosely about her, where she stood, and brought her to his side. They remained standing thus, before the fireplace, after the others were all seated.

"Mr. Thorpe has been outlining to me the most wonderful plans," said the Duke, looking from one face to another, with a reserved smile. "It seems that philanthropy fails unless it is combined with very advanced politics. It is a new idea to me—but he certainly states it with vigour. Do you understand it, Edith?"

"Oh, perfectly," replied the wife, smilingly. "I am his first convert. Behold in me the original disciple."

"The worst of that is," commented Thorpe, with radiant joviality, "she would subscribe to any other new doctrine of mine just as readily." He tightened the arm