

whatever else he might intend to do, it would all end in lamentable failure, and he would be certain to do the wrong thing at the wrong time. He recognized, with a sigh of resignation, that he would make a perfect fool of himself under any circumstance. His greeting would be too artificially effusive, or too constrained, anything but natural.

After what seemed an interminable period of suspense, Ethel came into the gallery. She sat down, without unloosing her Otter boa, or withdrawing her hands from her muff. An Astrakan cap, patterned identically after the service cap in vogue among the soldier lads of the Queens Own Regiment, was jauntily set in a profusion of blonde curls. The silvery brown boa and jet black Astrakan emphasized Ethel's clear complexion. A faint tinge of color in her cheeks redeemed her face from pallor, and imparted the glow of health. Altogether, with her glorious dark hazel orbs, that, at certain times and in certain lights were as dark as sloes, and which filtered through long silken lashes, with her light golden locks and pure milky skin, she presented that fascinating combination in hair, eyes and complexion so rarely seen, and to most men so perfectly irresistible in loveliness. As Archer looked, he only saw her profile—clear-cut as a cameo, and delicately moulded in lines proclaiming a soul, refined in taste, strong in loftiness and nobility of aim, chaste as an icicle in purity of purpose. Small marvel that he had lost his heart to such a winsome picture of beauty.

Fairlie had been speaking to her, and Archer, vaguely wondering whether Ethel would have any recollection of him, walked over.

He could scarcely believe his eyes. Could it be true? A glad welcome sparkled in her eyes, and there seemed to be a satisfied look, as if she had long expected something that had come at last. She extended her hand in unreserved geniality of manner, and Archer tenderly, yet diffidently, clasped it.

His misgivings vanished. He was self-composed, his veins seemed to be innoculated with an infusion of confidence.

"Ah! Miss Grant, I am so glad you haven't forgotten me. I am so grateful, for it is now fully a year and a half since I saw you at Pine Bay." Archer paused with a smothered malediction at his blundering, in stumbling at the very outset on the dangerous ground he most wished to avoid.

"You little expected to see me here in the guise of a reporter," laughingly responded Ethel, with tactful inconsequence and ignoring any allusion to Pine Bay.

"Seeing that you are such old friends,

I will leave you to reminiscences," exclaimed Fairlie.

"I am sure you will like it," ventured Archer, after Fairlie had walked away, and desiring from a sense of delicacy to refrain from any reference to Ethel's loss of fortune.

"Yes," she said reflectively, "I expect it will be congenial enough, but this class of work will be strange at first, and Mr. Archer, any suggestions will be gratefully accepted. My great regret is the probability of losing my year at college. You know, I should have graduated last year, but deferred taking my 'final' through a most aggravatingly inopportune illness. Daisy Fielding, however, has been obliging enough to volunteer daily transcriptions of the lecture notes, also the loan of a few text books. I wonder if any of our books on the college course are in the public library here. But then, perhaps, my newspaper work will not permit of any time for reading."

"Oh! I hope you will contrive in some way to take your final next May. I know so many instances, where undergraduates have irretrievably lost all chance of a degree by dropping out just for one year. So manage, if you can, Miss Grant, to take the approaching exam." he said with evident concern.

A few days following, Archer met Ethel on her way home after an adjournment. Since the last conversation, he had been stuning how he might assist her in any way, so as to afford her more leisure for reading up the curriculum work.

When they had been walking for some distance, and discussed indifferent topics, Archer nerved himself and broached a scheme by which Ethel might hold her position at Ottawa, and still go up for exams. After a struggle, he resolved to introduce his project, still, cautiously feeling his way, as he was uncertain how Ethel would receive the proposition.

"You will feel very much put out, if you—cannot—write in the spring.—will—you—not, Miss Grant?" Archer began tentatively.

"Oh! I desire to graduate very much, and besides, with the prestige of a degree, I may obtain a place in some Collegiate Institute," answered Ethel unsuspectingly.

"Now—I have given—your difficulty some attention, and—I think I have lit on something that will exactly fill the bill; that is—if you will—accept any assistance from me,"—and Archer paused.

Ethel having experienced the embarrassment attending one of Archer's former experiments in the way of suggestion, hesitated, intuitively anticipating that he was about to precipitate some awkward predicament.

"Well," she said, after some moments

had spent themselves in silence, and feeling that Archer had fair warning, and that he would have to bear all blame for any clumsy speech. "What is it?"

"Merely this," answered Archer, "and you mustn't think me forward. I proffer my idea with the best intentions, so kindly do not misinterpret my meaning. Could you consent—to—ah—let—me—send—you my—'copy' every day, and you could—'scalp' it at pleasure. You see—if this is agreeable to you, you need not attend to your reporting at all, and—ah—and could give you entire time to study."

"Thank you very much, but I really cannot see how I can entertain such an idea. I am sure you mean well, but it would never do. How could I possibly square with my conscience at such a fraud on my employer? You would be doing my work, and I receiving the pay," Ethel replied; pursing her brows at the utter impropriety of such a step.

Archer used every persuasion to induce her to consider his suggestion, but to little avail. He said that he used a typewriter for transcribing his shorthand notes, and he could with equal facility make a duplicate, and as for Ethel regarding it in the way of an imposition on her paper, why, at the worst it was only a pious fraud.

Ethel could not dismiss Archer's idea from her mind, and after the lapse of a few days, finding that he still advocated his suggestion with undiminished insistence, yielded,—after being assured that it would entail no inconvenience or increased work on Archer.

He was elated at his success in gaining Ethel's acquiescence. The scheme as advised was carried out to the letter, and she was not wearied by tiresome debates, and her paper at the same time received its tri-weekly contributions of Ottawa news.

As she was staying with her aunt, Mrs. Downley, all questions about the manner in which Ottawa society would treat her, should have been satisfactorily disposed of.

The Downley's, though in moderate circumstances, being numbered amongst the oldest of Capital City residents, managed to keep in the social swim, and were included in any important event. But then society affects to lay down rigid lines of demarcation between the fatuous pretensions of wealth, striving to masquerade itself in the distinguished garb of cultured ease, and that other world, where necessity imposes labor for bare existence—labor which, by the truly great, is always esteemed ennobling, but which so-called society, with its false assumption of superiority, with its shallow artificialities, its supercilious airs, its vanity and conceit, through the pages of history, through all the phases of every-day life, seeks by