

parting, he said carelessly : ' My friend, you are going to the casa of Mannersley to-night. I too have the honour of the invitation. But you will be my Mercury—my Leporello—you will take of me a message to thees Mees Boston, that I am crushed, desolated, prostrate, and flabbergasted—that I cannot arrive, for I have of that night to sit up with the grandaunt of my brother-in-law, who has a quinsy to the death. It is sad.'

This was the first indication I had received of Miss Mannersley's advances. I was equally surprised at Enriquez' refusal.

' Nonsense ! ' I said bluntly. ' Nothing keeps you from going.'

' My friend,' returned Enriquez, with a sudden lapse into languishment that seemed to make him absolutely infirm ; ' it is everything that shall restrain me. I am not strong. I shall become weak of the knee and tremble under the eye of Mees Boston. I shall precipitate myself to the geologist by the throat. Ask me another conundrum that shall be easy.'

He seemed idiotically inflexible, and did not go. But I did. I found Miss Mannersley exquisitely dressed and looking singularly animated and pretty. The lambent glow of her inscrutable eye as she turned towards me might have been flattering but for my uneasiness in regard to Enri-