

but several times; for it was difficult to awake from the passive endurance of disappointment to the actual realization of his brightest hopes. Mr. Sanderson, in a fit of antagonism against a competitor for the Hampshire property, had determined in favor of that place, to the great joy of his amiable sisters. He had therefore closed, beyond power of retraction, with Mr. Oldham for the property in Westmoreland, for he had actually signed away the house and lands of Woolton Court; and the document, or rather two-fold document, was then on its way to Marseilles, to be counter-signed by the hitherto nameless friend of the lawyer. When Arthur had fully comprehended the fact that his grandfather's signature was the only formality required, except that of an order on the Bank of England for a hundred and fifteen thousand pounds sterling to Mr Sanderson, he fell on his knees with eyes and hands raised to heaven; he then burst into tears, and kissed the ground of his home. After some time he turned his eyes on his own dull letter to Marseilles, full of forced questions, to which, in the first emotions of the announcement from London, his grandfather would find it irksome to reply. He tore it up, and still enclosing the drawing, wrote some rapid lines of congratulation, putting the important question, at what point of the route from Marseilles to Dover, and on what day, the happy meeting should take place. It was late in the night before he closed his eyes. He had not expected to sleep; but the having written to Marseilles, added to all the other soothing influences of the evening, produced a slumber, deep and prolonged, which bore him far into the morning of the following day.

Arthur had resolved to consult the Marquis of Seaham on the expediency of continuing to bear the name of "Bryce" until the arrival of Lord Charleton. To do this it would be necessary to see the Marquis in private, and briefly relate his history. The cross-country between the little private lake of Woolton and the far-famed Windermere was quite unknown to him; he, therefore, thought of procuring a guide and two horses, in preference to taking the circuitous route by the public coach. He started on the fifth, intending to sleep at the little inn on the lake of Windermere, described to him by the guide, and present himself on the ensuing morning about ten o'clock at the residence of the marquis. All this was easily accomplished, and our hero being immediately admitted to the private study of Lord Seaham divulged his secret, and was greeted not only by a warm grasp of the hand, but even folded in a cousinly embrace by the celebrated statesman.

Had Arthur not seen the Marquis of Seaham in this advantageous moment, he might afterwards have been annoyed or repulsed by certain characteristics. The marquis spoke little, but he made others talk, and would suddenly pounce down from his heights of abstraction on the weak points of information or argument that had caught his attention in the circle of his guests. Again, his voracity for information, could only be equalled by the skill with which he drew it forth from the often unwilling giver. He had no compassion for that desire of repose or relaxation, which often leads public or professional men to prefer any other subjects in their leisure hours to that which is their daily labor. His brother ministers might laugh and escape from him; but not so the subordinates in office, who scarcely risk offending him. Still less the military and naval applicant for his favor, the renowned poet, or artist, or scientific man, who found himself under the falcon-eye, and firm mental grasp of the master-spirit of the day.

The only but marked exception to this devouring element, was made in

the society of the fair and weaker sex; the active, acquiring dominant mind, was then, for awhile, content to repose, refresh, and recreate. After a morning spent in snapping at and humiliating half-a-dozen secretaries, or terrifying out of all technical memory some candidate for his patronage, this portentous examiner of other men's wits was, in the evening circle in St. James's Square, his suburban villa, or hereditary mansion in Cheshire, the bland and courteous host, the gently playful brother, and, as years rolled on, the tenderly approving father.

Arthur's intelligent mind watched all these phases during his sojourn on the banks of the Windermere. He also submitted to be passed through the ordeal, and had come forth with the encomium, "Good head."

The first dinner and evening at Rockley Cottage gave Arthur a sample of the rest, although the guests were always changing, with the exception of himself and one or two family friends. He perceived that the brother's house was Lady Clara's home; and this, in itself, gave a charm to the visit, although they seldom conversed together. The marquis had advised him to continue the name of Bryce, until the expected letter should arrive from his grandfather, and during the interval to remain his most welcome guest at the cottage. Arthur consented, and, after taking all precautions necessary for the safe and speedy transmission of his letters, fell into the habits of those around him, as easily and happily as though he had passed his life among them. At dinner, the chief lady guest was, of course, at the right hand of the marquis, while Lady Clara, with her cavalier—whenever he might be—sat opposite. The table was oval, and this quartet occupied the centre of the sides, as in France, which contributed to make our hero feel at home. The chair on the left hand of the marquis, was always left vacant till a certain period of the repast; and the question, "why is this?" occupied Arthur during the first dinner without any solution until the last course, when a beautiful girl of fourteen, the only child of the marquis, came in. She bowed around with esse and grace, and gliding her right hand into the left of her father, began immediately to converse with him, or with whoever addressed her, in a bright intelligent manner, worthy of his daughter and the niece of Lady Clara. Our hero who, as Mr. Bryce, had to yield precedence to apparently greater people, was seated at one of the ends of the oval table, and could, therefore, see and watch at an equal advantage the aunt and the niece. For the first time since his arrival, he was aware that Lady Clara was also turning a scrutinizing glance again and again on his countenance. At length, their eyes encountering more than once, she said, smiling;

"Yes, there is a great resemblance as between a mother and her child."

"Mr. Bryce, said the marquis, "you will become a great favorite with Violet, if you think her like her aunt. She is her model for all female excellence, as she well may be."

"Dearest brother," said Lady Clara, "you have the wisdom, given from above, of supporting the weak, and casting the halo of your own genius on those you wish to honor."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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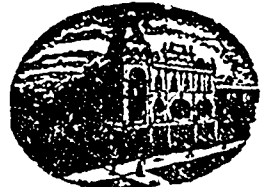
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