

gently. 'Why, you're ever so much fatter, darling, already. I'm sure you'll get well in no time, now, Ernest.'

'Upon my word, Edie,' Ernest answered, kissing her white forehead tenderly, 'I really and truly believe I sha l. It's my opinion that Sir Antony Wraxall's an unmitigated ignorant humbug.'

A few weeks later, when Ernest's remarkable article on 'How to Improve the Homes of the Poor' appeared in one of the leading magazines, Mr. Herbert Le Breton of the Education Office looked up from his cup of post-prandial coffee in his comfortable dining-room at South Kensington, and said musingly to his young wife, 'Do you know, Ethel, it seems to me that my brother Ernest's going to score a success at last with this slum-hunting business that he's lately invented. There's an awful lot about it now in all the papers and reviews. Perhaps it might be as well, after all, to scrape an acquaintance with him again, especially as he's my own brother. There's no knowing, really, when a man of his peculiar ill-regulated mercurial temperament may be going to turn out famous. Don't you think you'd better find out where they're living now—they've left Holloway, no doubt, since this turn of the tide—and go and call upon Mrs. Ernest?'

Whereto Mrs. Herbert Le Breton, raising her eyes for a moment from the pages of her last new novel, answered languidly: 'Don't you think, Herbert, it'd be better to wait a little while and see how things turn out with them in the long run, you know, before we commit ourselves by going to call upon them? One swallow, you see, doesn't make a summer, does it, dear, ever?' Whence the acute and intelligent reader will doubtless conclude that Mrs. Herbert Le Breton was a very prudent sensible young woman, and that perhaps even Herbert himself had met at last with his fitting Nemesis. For what worse purgatory could his bitterest foe wish for a selfishly prudent and cold-hearted man, than that he should pass his whole lifetime in congenial intercourse with a selfishly prudent and cold-hearted wife, exactly after his own pattern?

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### OUT OF THE HAND OF THE PHILISTINES.

ERNEST'S unexpected success with 'London's Shame' was not, as Arthur Berkeley at first feared it might be, the mere