

surprise. "I presume you're serious?" the latter said with an effort. "You are rasher than I thought you can make this offer good."

"I can certainly make it good. You had better apply to the bank manager if you have doubts."

For a few moments Hayes studied Kit, who looked quietly resolute. Then he said, "You are determined to oppose me if I don't consent?"

"Yes," said Kit. "I mean to buy all the land Mr. Osborn has pawned. If you want it, you'll have to pay the price I fix, since it must be a public sale. Don't you think it would be prudent to accept my offer?"

Hayes clenched his fist, but with an effort preserved his self-control. "I am forced to agree."

"Very well. Take the documents to my lawyer, and as soon as they are satisfied I'll give you a check."

Hayes nodded silently, and bowing to Mrs. Osborn, went out. When he had gone, Osborn got up.

"We have not been good friends — Kit," he said with some emotion. "Old prejudices are hard to conquer, but mine have broken down at last — you have beaten me. Well, I suppose I would not admit that the code I clung to had gone for good, but now I'm dropping out, I don't know that I could find a better man to step into my place." He paused and gave Kit his hand. "After all, Tarnside is not lost to us. Grace will follow me — she belongs to the new school, but I think your children will rule the old house well."

Then Mrs. Osborn advanced and kissed Kit, who went out with her and found Grace waiting in the hall.

"Hayes has gone," Mrs. Osborn remarked. "Kit has forced him to agree, and your father is reconciled. We have had much trouble, but I think we shall all be happy yet."

Grace looked up and her eyes shone. "Ah," she