

contest of words ; besides, she had a surer way of punishing the man.

It was some three weeks after this that, as Raymond sat by his study-fire, poring over his book, a loud knocking at the street-door alarmed him. It was rapidly opened, and a strange voice enquired for the master of the house.

“ This way, sir,” said Raymond.

The new-comer was a young man apparently about twenty years of age, well-dressed and smelling strongly of tobacco.

“ Sir,” said he, without farther preface, “ an accident has taken place on the London and Dover. Several persons are hurt, and amongst the wounded is a lady whose cards bear the address of this house. I have been sent to fetch you. We can go by the special train that leaves in a few minutes.”

Raymond was staggered. His wife on her way to Dover ! He could not understand it. She had left him at six o'clock, saying she was going to see a friend, and might be late. On his proposing to go and fetch her, she had refused. “ Some one would take care of her,” she said in her biting way.

The messenger of evil did not guess at the real cause of George's astonishment. He put it all down to the horror of his news.

Fast sped the “ special,” bearing officials and doctors to the scene of disaster. Faster sped the husband's thoughts, as he revolved in his mind every possible solution of the mystery. Lights moving about, a confused noise, forms passing rapidly here and there ; the train stopped, and the pair made their way as quickly as they could to a house.

Raymond entered—saw three or four bodies covered over—raised the sheet—the features of a man he knew well met his gaze—a dreadful suspicion fell on him—he passed to the next—“ Jane !”