

regards his nationality ; for, though he called himself Ellison, which is a sufficiently Christian name, there was Jew stamped on every feature as plainly as though it had been written on his forehead. He was a diamond merchant in the City, and specimens of his wares glistened in the midst of his satin cravat, and on his stubby, thick, awkward fingers. There was such an unpleasant *empressment*, besides, in his bearing towards Miss Marchmont, as he walked by her side, that I, although without any particular feeling for the girl, longed to kick him. She was walking around the garden between her uncle and his guest, apparently as pensive and silent, and bored as usual ; but when she stood on the steps, and Mr. Ellison, from his mail pheaton, made her a bow, which he evidently meant to be particularly killing, her eyes gleamed with an expression of indignation and contempt, which did not augur very well for that gentleman's chance of success.

It was about two evenings after the Ellison episode that as I was sitting at my window, I heard the tramp of horse's feet, and, looking down the lane, I perceived a man slowly riding towards me, whome I recognized at once as Piers Bulteel. Piers Bulteel was the greatest swell in the Tax office, a man who used to ride his hack in the Park, had been presented at Court, went into excellent society, and, it was currently repeated among us, had spoken to a duchess. I was not in his set ; indeed, when we met either in the office or out of it, he was in the habit of acknowledging my presence by one of the most freezing nods. I was therefore considerably astonished when I saw him leisurely riding up the lane, and wondered what could have induced him to take the trouble to call upon me.

I had begun to wonder too soon. As soon as Piers Bulteel and his horse appeared in sight, I saw Miss Marchmont slip out of a little side-door in the wall, about fifty yards from the principal entrance, and turn down a little narrow lane—a mere bridle-path—leading into the fields. Piers Bulteel rode past my window without looking up, and, evidently unconscious of my proximity, turned his horse's head down the little bridle-path, and in a few moments I saw him dismount and, with the reins hanging over his arm, walking by Miss Marchmont side, and evidently talking earnestly to her. In about an hour's time, I saw Miss Marchmont come stealing back to the side-door alone and in a few minutes afterwards the noble Piers, lounging leisurely on horseback, came out of the bridle-path and turned down the lane. As he passed my window he chanced to look up, and saw me sitting there smoking my pipe. He was so taken aback that he scarcely knew what to do, and he gave me one of his short insolent nods, and rode by ; but when he had gone a little distance, he turned his horse's head and rode up under the window, addressed me in his most winsome manner—he had a wonderful winning manner when he chose—and asked me what on earth brought me into these parts. I went down to the door, sent one of my landlords boys to hold Bulteel's horse, and brought the great don up into my room, where he condescended to have some brandy and soda-water, and to make himself very agreeable, notwithstanding that the conversation was incessantly diverted by his looking over the wall at Miss Marchmont and her uncle, who, having woken from his after-dinner nap, was walking in the garden with his niece.

It would be tedious and quite unnecessary to describe how Piers Bulteel and I became intimate friends, how he took me into his confidence as regards to the love affair that existed between him and Miss