

occupation. He fenced with me for a while, but at last, flinging himself on a sofa, he exclaimed:

"Very well; have it your own way. I am in love—infernally in love!"

"Oh, you'll write the better poetry," said I by way of consolation.

He ruffled his hair with his hand and smoked furiously. George Featherly, standing with his back to the mantelpiece, smiled unkindly.

"If it's the old affair," said he, "you may as well throw it up, Bert. She's leaving Paris to-morrow."

"I know that," snapped Bertram.

"Not that it would make any difference if she stayed," pursued the relentless George. "She flies higher than the paper trade, my boy!"

"Hang her!" said Bertram.

"It would make it more interesting for me," I ventured to observe, "if I knew who you were talking about."

"Antoinette Mauban," said George.

"De Mauban," growled Bertram.

"Oho!" said I, passing by the question of the *de*. "You don't mean to say, Bert——"