

assent was readily given to an immediate increase of the town establishment. For an instant the apprehension that Gilbert, as other disappointed lovers have done, might lapse into dissipation crossed her mind, but a glance at his proud, intellectual countenance re-assured her. Could she have read further she would have found that Gilbert's ready acquiescence in her plans was in some measure the result of the spirit-stirring words spoken the day previous by the fiery demagogue at St. James' Hall. "What would he do in our position?" was the question the young landowner had asked of the journalist, and while Mrs. Arderne was detailing her scheme her son recognized that at least it provided one method of putting his revenues to their proper use. When on Thursday he called at the office of the *Piccadilly Chronicle*, and was admitted to Mr. Lieu's sanctum, he found the editor closeted with no less a personage than Jack Escott. They had been discussing the great strike,—doubtless with an intention, on the editor's part, of publishing an interview *more Americano*. When, on being introduced, the agitator and socialist found his hand pressed in a firm brotherly embrace he could not hide his gratification, and his face shone with modest pleasure when Gilbert unaffectedly expressed sympathy with the men on strike. By a kind of intuition both men recognized that in the main they were nearly of one mind, although one was a wealthy landlord, the other a working man.

"Mr. Arderne does not know that I was the first person to bring the news of his

being lost at sea to England," said Escott, "and that my blundering way of telling it nearly sent a young woman into hysterics."

"Indeed, no," returned Gilbert, "you make me very curious; surely we never met before?"

"No, I don't think we ever did," said Jack, and seeing that both auditors were expectant he told the story of his landing at Gorran Haven and of the subsequent experience in the house of the widow Varcoe. When the story was ended Mr. Lieu tried to look archly at Gilbert while saying:

"Fainted, eh? Perhaps she knew you, Arderne; I remember you were often at St. Meva while the yacht was windbound there. Sly dogs you young fellows are, even the best of you. Now I could make a paragraph out of this,—Labby would, that's certain, so would Ned,—but I don't joke at a friend's expense."

"The young woman was delicate,—had been ailing some time, I believe," said Jack, "and my blunt way of blurting out ill news just turned the scale. That was it. Well, Mr. Arderne, I have read all about your adventures since then, and, my hand upon it, but you did your part like a man."

Why was it that the roughly-expressed praise of this son of toil, this man of the people, was sweeter to Gilbert Arderne's ear than the lay of a minstrel would have been or a eulogy in the *Piccadilly Chronicle*? Perhaps it was because he knew that Jack Escott was himself a man prompt in emergency, resolute, self-reliant. And men like this are scarce in every age and clime.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE landlord of the Crooked Billet, Withington, Andrew Mossingill by name, sat smoking a long clay pipe by the open window of his own well-sanded kitchen. It had been a busy day, and now that the twilight had come Andrew, divesting himself of the consequential air he had worn since the morning, was taking his ease in his own inn, at intervals moistening his

clay from a pewter pot of Burton that stood conveniently enough on the window ledge. He was in excellent humor, though undeniably very tired, for on this particular day the eleven of Thuxton had done battle with an eleven of the united parishes on the Withington ground,—a well-kept meadow east of the Priory hill and on the border-line of the two parishes,—and had,