

dreamed of her boy, bayed and decorated, marrying the most distinguished woman in all Europe, whoever she might be. Mr. Jones had had no dreams at all, and had put the boy to work in the shipping department a little while after the college threshold had been crossed, outward bound. The mother, while sweet and gentle, had a will, iron under velvet, and when she held out for Percival Algernon and a decent knowledge of modern languages, the old man agreed if, on the other hand, the boy's first name should be George and that he should learn the business from the cellar up. There were several tilts over the matter, but at length a truce was declared. It was agreed that the boy himself ought to have a word to say upon a subject which concerned him more vitally than any one else. So, at the age of fifteen, when he was starting off for preparatory school, he was advised to choose for himself. He was an obedient son, adoring his mother and idolizing his father. He wrote himself down as George Percival Algernon Jones, promised to become a linguist and to learn the rug business from the cellar up. On the face of it, it looked like a big job; it all depended upon the boy.