

gone away from his face. "You will remain with us one year, anyway?"

"If my husband wishes it, I am very willing," she said, "and very grateful to you."

"Ha!" said the lieutenant, "I can see wonderful things now—waggons, camp fires, supper parties; and a glass of wine to drink to the health of our friends away in England. Lady Sylvia, your husband and I will write a book about it—*A Year's Hunting in Colorado and the Rocky Mountains.*"

"I hope my husband will have something else to do," Lady Sylvia said, "unless you mean to shame us altogether."

"But no one can be working always. Ah, my good friends," he said, addressing the remaining two of the party, "you will be sorry when you start to go home to England. You will make a great mistake then. You wish to see the Alleghany Mountains in the Indian summer? Oh yes, very good; but you could see that next year; and in the mean time think what splendid fun we shall have—"

"Ask Bell," said Queen T—, with a quiet smile, "whether she would rather return with us now, or wait out here to hear of your shooting black-tailed deer and mountain sheep?"

At this point a message was brought into us, and it was unanimously resolved to ask Bell's business friend to come in and sit down and have a glass of wine with us. Surely there were no secrets about the doings of Five-Ace Jack unfit for us all to hear? We found Mr. T. W. G—a most worthy and excellent person, whose temper had not at all been soured by his failure to find the philosopher's stone. It is true, there was a certain sadness over the brown and wrinkled face when he described to us how the many processes for separating the gold from the crushed quartz could just about reach paying expenses, and without doing much more; and how some little improvement in one of these processes, that might be stumbled on by accident, would suddenly make the discoverer a millionaire, the gold bearing quartz being simply inexhaustible. It was quite clear that Mr. G— had lost some money in this direction. He was anxious we should go up to Georgetown, when we were at Idaho, to see some mines he had; in fact, he produced sundry little parcels from his pocket, unrolled them, and placed the bits

of stone before us with a certain reverent air. Our imagination was not fired.

He had known Colonel Sloane very well, and he spoke most discreetly of him; for was not his niece here in mourning? Nevertheless, there was a slight touch of humour in his tone when he told us of one of Bell's mines—the Virgin Agnes—which led one or two of us to suspect that Five-Ace Jack had not quite abandoned his tricks, even when his increasing riches rendered them unnecessary. The Virgin Agnes was a gulch mine, somewhere in the bed of the stream that comes rolling down the Clear Creek canon and it was originally owned by a company. It used to pay very well. But by-and-by the yield gradually diminished, until it scarcely paid the wages of the men; and, in fact, the mine was not considered worth working further. At this point it was bought by Colonel Sloane; and the strange thing was that almost immediately it began to yield in a surprising manner, and had continued to do so ever since. Mr. G— congratulated our Bell on being the owner of this mine, and said he would have much pleasure in showing it to her when she went up to Idaho; but he gravely ended his story without dropping any hint as to the reason why the Virgin Agnes had slowly drooped and suddenly revived. Nor did he tell us whether the men employed in that mine were generously allowed by Colonel Sloane to share in his good fortune.

He asked Bell whether she proposed to start for Idaho next day. She looked at her husband.

"Oh no," said the lieutenant, promptly. "We have a friend arriving here on Saturday. We mean to wait for him."

"Pray don't delay on his account," Lady Sylvia said, anxiously. "I can very well remain here for him, and come up to you afterward."

"Oh we shall have plenty to do in these three or four days—plenty," the lieutenant said; "I must see about the ladies' saddles to-morrow, and I want to buy an extra rifle or two; and a revolver, and a hunting-knife. And then this list of things for the house at Idaho—"

No doubt there was a good deal to be done; only one would have thought that three or four days were pretty fair time in which to prepare for a short trip up the Clear Creek canon. It was not, however,