

"Your man is the challenger," said Mainwaring. "If he is satisfied . . ." He paused, and walked over to his principal, who was awaiting with his sword-point dropped, the result of the colloquy. So was his opponent, whom his second approached, and spoke with in an undertone.

"This quarrel is none of my provocation, Mainwaring, and you know it. This man's daughter is her own mistress—a free agent. She has suffered no wrong at my hands. If Mr. Mauleverer is *satisfied*, need I say I am?" Did Sir Oliver mean the other to overhear his words—to attach an exasperating meaning to them? If not, why that raised voice and mocking manner?

Mauleverer's second had urged him to accept what had passed, as amends for the wrong done him. He had wavered, was wavering, before the earnest pleadings of his friend, when the tone of Sir Oliver reached him, if not his actual words. Then he spoke in a quick undertone to his second, who again approached Colonel Mainwaring.

"Mr. Mauleverer will consent to press this matter no farther now, in consideration of Sir Oliver Raydon's temporary disablement. But Sir Oliver will no doubt be ready to meet Mr. Mauleverer again as soon as it is removed."

Colonel Mainwaring appeared to consider for a moment, seeming to refer to the many rings on his left hand for enlightenment; then looked up and said curtly: "I need not consult Sir Oliver. I can answer for it that he will not avail himself of Mr. Mauleverer's indulgence."

And almost before the signal was given the swords had crossed once more, and the encounter was renewed. But this time on other lines. Whatever slight remorse of conscience had made the younger combatant hang back, possibly with a wish to steer clear of killing the man he had wronged, whose hospitality he had most villainously abused—for you can guess the story of it—that was a