

## LADY BARBERINA.\*

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### I.

IT is well known that there are few sights in the world more brilliant than the main avenues of Hyde Park of a fine afternoon in June. This was quite the opinion of two persons, who, on a beautiful day at the beginning of that month, four years ago, had established themselves under the great trees in a couple of iron chairs (the big ones with arms, for which, if I mistake not, you pay two pence), and sat there with the slow procession of the Drive behind them, while their faces were turned to the more vivid agitation of the Row. They were lost in the multitude of observers, and they belonged, superficially at least, to that class of persons who, wherever they may be, rank rather with the spectators than with the spectacle. They were quiet, simple, elderly, of aspect somewhat neutral; you would have liked them extremely, but you would scarcely have noticed them. Nevertheless, in all that shining host, it is to them, obscure, that we must give our attention. The reader is begged to have confidence; he is not asked to make vain concessions. There was that in the faces of our friends which indicated that they were growing old together, and that they were fond enough of each other's company not to object (if it was a condition) even to that. The reader will have guessed that they were husband and wife; and perhaps while he is about it, he will have guessed that they were of that nationality for which Hyde Park at the height of the season is most completely illustrative. They were familiar strangers, as it were; and people at once so initiated and so detached could only be Americans. This reflection, indeed, you would have made only after some delay; for it must be admitted that they carried few patriotic signs on the surface. They had the American turn of mind, but that was very subtle; and to your eye—if your eye had cared about it—they might have been of English, or even of Continental, parentage. It was as if it suited them to be colorless; their color was all in their talk. They were not in the least verdant; they were gray, rather, of monotonous hue. If they were interested in the riders,

the horses, the walkers, the great exhibition of English wealth and health, beauty, luxury, and leisure, it was because all this referred itself to other impressions, because they had the key to almost everything that needed an answer,—because, in a word, they were able to compare. They had not arrived, they had only returned; and recognition much more than surprise was expressed in their quiet gaze. It may as well be said outright that Dexter Freer and his wife belonged to that class of Americans who are constantly "passing through" London. Possessors of a fortune of which, from any standpoint, the limits were plainly visible, they were unable to command that highest of luxuries,—a habitation in their own country. They found it much more possible to economize at Dresden or Florence than at Buffalo or Minneapolis. The economy was as great, and the inspiration was greater. From Dresden, from Florence, moreover, they constantly made excursions which would not have been possible in those other cities; and it is even to be feared that they had some rather expressive methods of saving. They came to London to buy their portmanteaus, their tooth-brushes, their writing-paper; they occasionally even crossed the Atlantic to assure themselves that prices over there were still the same. They were eminently a social pair; their interests were mainly personal. Their point of view, always, was so distinctly human, that they passed for being fond of gossip; and they certainly knew a good deal about the affairs of other people. They had friends in every country, in every town; and it was not their fault if people told them their secrets. Dexter Freer was a tall, lean man, with an interested eye, and a nose that rather drooped than aspired, yet was salient withal. He brushed his hair, which was streaked with white, forward over his ears, in those locks which are represented in the portraits of clean-shaven gentlemen who flourished fifty years ago, and wore an old-fashioned neck-cloth and gaiters. His wife, a small, plump person, of superficial freshness, with a white face, and hair that was still perfectly black, smiled perpetually, but had never laughed since the death of a son whom she had lost

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ten years after her marriage. Her husband, on the other hand, who was usually quite grave, indulged on great occasions in resounding mirth. People confided in her less than in him; but that mattered little, as she confided sufficiently in herself. Her dress, which was always black or dark gray, was so harmoniously simple, that you could see she was fond of it; it was never smart by accident. She was full of intuitions of the most judicious sort; and though she was perpetually moving about the world, she had the air of being perfectly stationary. She was celebrated for the promptitude with which she made her sitting-room at an inn, where she might be spending a night or two, look like an apartment long inhabited. With books, flowers, photographs, draperies, rapidly distributed,—she had even a way, for the most part, of having a piano,—the place seemed almost hereditary. The pair were just back from America, where they had spent three months, and now were able to face the world with something of the elation which people feel who have been justified in a prevision. They had found their native land quite ruinous.

"There he is again!" said Mr. Freer, following with his eyes a young man who passed along the Row, riding slowly. "That's a beautiful thoroughbred!"

Mrs. Freer asked idle questions only when she wished for time to think. At present she had simply to look and see who it was her husband meant. "The horse is too big," she remarked, in a moment.

"You mean that the rider is too small," her husband rejoined; "he is mounted on his millions."

"Is it really millions?"

"Seven or eight, they tell me."

"How disgusting!" It was in this manner that Mrs. Freer usually spoke of the large fortunes of the day. "I wish he would see us," she added.

"He does see us, but he doesn't like to look at us. He is too conscious; he isn't easy."

"Too conscious of his big horse?"

"Yes, and of his big fortune; he is rather ashamed of it."

"This is an odd place to come, then," said Mrs. Freer.

"I am not sure of that. He will find people here richer than himself, and other big horses in plenty, and that will cheer him up. Perhaps, too, he is looking for that girl."

"The one we heard about? He can't be such a fool."

"He isn't a fool," said Dexter Freer. "If he is thinking of her, he has some good reason."

"I wonder what Mary Lemon would say."

"She would say it was right, if he should

do it. She thinks he can do no wrong. He is exceedingly fond of her."

"I sha'n't be sure of that if he takes home a wife that will despise her."

"Why should the girl despise her? She is a delightful woman."

"The girl will never know it,—and if she should, it would make no difference; she will despise everything."

"I don't believe it, my dear; she will like some things very much. Every one will be very nice to her."

"She will despise them all the more. But we are speaking as if it were all arranged; I don't believe in it at all," said Mrs. Freer.

"Well, something of the sort—in this case or in some other—is sure to happen sooner or later," her husband replied, turning round a little toward the part of the delta which is formed, near the entrance to the Park, by the divergence of the two great vistas of the Drive and the Row.

Our friends had turned their backs, as I have said, to the solemn revolution of wheels and the densely packed mass of spectators who had chosen that part of the show. These spectators were now agitated by a unanimous impulse: the pushing back of chairs, the shuffle of feet, the rustle of garments, and the deepening murmur of voices sufficiently expressed it. Royalty was approaching—royalty was passing—royalty had passed. Freer turned his head and his ear a little; but he failed to alter his position further, and his wife took no notice of the flurry. They had seen royalty pass all over Europe, and they knew that it passed very quickly. Sometimes it came back; sometimes it didn't; for more than once they had seen it pass for the last time. They were veteran tourists, and they knew perfectly when to get up and when to remain seated. Mr. Freer went on with his proposition: "Some young fellow is certain to do it, and one of these girls is certain to take the risk. They must take risks, over here, more and more."

"The girls, I have no doubt, will be glad enough; they have had very little chance as yet. But I don't want Jackson to begin."

"Do you know I rather think I do," said Dexter Freer; "it will be very amusing."

"For us, perhaps, but not for him; he will repent of it, and be wretched. He is too good for that."

"Wretched, never! He has no capacity for wretchedness; and that's why he can afford to risk it."

"He will have to make great concessions," Mrs. Freer remarked.

"He wont make one."

"I should like to see."

"You admit, then, that it will be amusing,

which is all I contend for. But, as you say, we are talking as if it were settled, whereas there is probably nothing in it after all. The best stories always turn out false. I shall be sorry in this case."

They relapsed into silence, while people passed and repassed them—continuous, successive, mechanical, with strange sequences of faces. They looked at the people, but no one looked at them, though every one was there so admittedly to see what was to be seen. It was all striking, all pictorial, and it made a great composition. The wide, long area of the Row, its red-brown surface dotted with bounding figures, stretched away into the distance and became suffused and misty in the bright, thick air. The deep, dark English verdure that bordered and overhung it looked rich and old, revived and refreshed though it was by the breath of June. The mild blue of the sky was spotted with great silvery clouds, and the light drizzled down in heavenly shafts over the quieter spaces of the Park, as one saw them beyond the Row. All this, however, was only a background, for the scene was, before everything, personal—superbly so, and full of the gloss and luster, the contrasted tones, of a thousand polished surfaces. Certain things were salient, pervasive,—the shining flanks of the perfect horses, the twinkle of bits and spurs, the smoothness of fine cloth adjusted to shoulders and limbs, the sheen of hats and boots, the freshness of complexions, the expression of smiling, talking faces, the flash and flutter of rapid gallops. Faces were everywhere, and they were the great effect,—above all, the fair faces of women on tall horses, flushed a little under their stiff black hats, with figures stiffened, in spite of much definition of curve, by their tight-fitting habits. Their hard little helmets, their neat, compact heads, their straight necks, their firm, tailor-made armor, their blooming, competent physique, made them look doubly like Amazons about to ride a charge. The men, with their eyes before them, with hats of undulating brim, good profiles, high collars, white flowers on their chests, long legs and long feet, had an air more elaborately decorative, as they jolted beside the ladies, always out of step. These were youthful types; but it was not all youth, for many a saddle was surmounted by a richer rotundity, and ruddy faces, with short white whiskers or with matronly chins, looked down comfortably from an equilibrium which was moral as well as physical. The walkers differed from the riders only in being on foot, and in looking at the riders more than these looked at them; for they would have done as well in the saddle and ridden as the others ride. The women had tight lit-

tle bonnets and still tighter little knots of hair; their round chins rested on a close swathing of lace, or, in some cases, of silver chains and circlets. They had flat backs and small waists, they walked slowly, with their elbows out, carrying vast parasols, and turning their heads very little to the right or the left. They were amazons unmounted, quite ready to spring into the saddle. There was a great deal of beauty and a suffused look of successful development, which came from clear, quiet eyes and from well-cut lips, on which syllables were liquid and sentences brief. Some of the young men, as well as the women, had the happiest proportions and oval faces, in which line and color were pure and fresh, and the idea of the moment was not very intense.

"They are very good-looking," said Mr. Freer, at the end of ten minutes; "they are the finest whites."

"So long as they remain white they do very well; but when they venture upon color!" his wife replied. She sat with her eyes on a level with the skirts of the ladies who passed her; and she had been following the progress of a green velvet robe, enriched with ornaments of steel and much gathered up in the hands of its wearer, who, herself apparently in her teens, was accompanied by a young lady draped in scanty pink muslin, embroidered, æsthetically, with flowers that simulated the iris.

"All the same, in a crowd, they are wonderfully well turned out," Dexter Freer went on; "take the men, and women, and horses together. Look at that big fellow on the light chestnut: what could be more perfect? By the way, it's Lord Canterville," he added in a moment, as if the fact were of some importance.

Mrs. Freer recognized its importance to the degree of raising her glass to look at Lord Canterville. "How do you know it's he?" she asked, with her glass still up.

"I heard him say something the night I went to the House of Lords. It was very few words, but I remember him. A man who was near me told me who he was."

"He is not so handsome as you," said Mrs. Freer, dropping her glass.

"Ah, you're too difficult!" her husband murmured. "What a pity the girl isn't with him," he went on; "we might see something."

It appeared in a moment that the girl was with him. The nobleman designated had ridden slowly forward from the start, but just opposite our friends he pulled up to look behind him, as if he had been waiting for some one. At the same moment a gentleman in the Walk engaged his attention, so that he advanced to the barrier which protects the pedestrians, and halted there, bending a little

from his saddle and talking with his friend, who leaned against the rail. Lord Canterville was indeed perfect, as his American admirer had said. Upward of sixty, and of great stature and great presence, he was really a splendid apparition. In exquisite preservation, he had the freshness of middle life, and would have been young to the eye if the lapse of years were not needed to account for his considerable girth. He was clad from head to foot in garments of a radiant gray, and his fine florid countenance was surmounted with a white hat, of which the majestic curves were a triumph of good form. Over his mighty chest was spread a beard of the richest growth, and of a color, in spite of a few streaks, vaguely grizzled, to which the coat of his admirable horse appeared to be a perfect match. It left no opportunity, in his uppermost button-hole, for the customary gardenia; but this was of comparatively little consequence, as the vegetation of the beard itself was tropical. Astride his great steed, with his big fist, gloved in pearl-gray, on his swelling thigh, his face lighted up with good-humored indifference, and all his magnificent surface reflecting the mild sunshine, he was a very imposing man indeed, and visibly, uncontestedly, a personage. People almost lingered to look at him as they passed. His halt was brief, however, for he was almost immediately joined by two handsome girls, who were as well turned-out, in Dexter Freer's phrase, as himself. They had been detained a moment at the entrance to the Row, and now advanced side by side, their groom close behind them. One was taller and older than the other, and it was apparent at a glance that they were sisters. Between them, with their charming shoulders, contracted waists, and skirts that hung without a wrinkle, like a plate of zinc, they represented in a singularly complete form the pretty English girl in the position in which she is prettiest.

"Of course they are his daughters," said Dexter Freer, as they rode away with Lord Canterville; "and in that case one of them must be Jackson Lemon's sweetheart. Probably the bigger; they said it was the eldest. She is evidently a fine creature."

"She would hate it over there," Mrs. Freer remarked, for all answer to this cluster of inductions.

"You know I don't admit that. But granting she should, it would do her good to have to accommodate herself."

"She wouldn't accommodate herself."

"She looks so confoundedly fortunate, perched up on that saddle," Dexter Freer pursued, without heeding his wife's rejoinder.

"Aren't they supposed to be very poor?"

"Yes, they look it!" And his eyes followed the distinguished trio, as, with the groom, as distinguished in his way as any of them, they started on a canter.

The air was full of sound, but it was low and diffused; and when, near our friends, it became articulate, the words were simple and few.

"It's as good as the circus, isn't it, Mrs. Freer?" These words correspond to that description, but they pierced the air more effectually than any our friends had lately heard. They were uttered by a young man who had stopped short in the path, absorbed by the sight of his compatriots. He was short and stout, he had a round, kind face, and short, stiff-looking hair, which was reproduced in a small bristling beard. He wore a double-breasted walking-coat, which was not, however, buttoned, and on the summit of his round head was perched a hat of exceeding smallness, and of the so-called "pot" category. It evidently fitted him, but a hatter himself would not have known why. His hands were encased in new gloves, of a dark-brown color, and they hung with an air of unaccustomed inaction at his sides. He sported neither umbrella nor stick. He extended one of his hands, almost with eagerness, to Mrs. Freer, blushing a little as he became aware that he had been eager.

"Oh, Dr. Feeder!" she said, smiling at him. Then she repeated to her husband, "Dr. Feeder, my dear!" and her husband said, "Oh, Doctor, how d'ye do?" I have spoken of the composition of his appearance; but the items were not perceived by these two. They saw only one thing, his delightful face, which was both simple and clever, and unreservedly good. They had lately made the voyage from New York in his company, and it was plain that he would be very genial at sea. After he had stood in front of them a moment, a chair beside Mrs. Freer became vacant, on which he took possession of it, and sat there telling her what he thought of the Park, and how he liked London. As she knew every one, she had known many of his people at home; and while she listened to him she remembered how large their contribution had been to the virtue and culture of Cincinnati. Mrs. Freer's social horizon included even that city; she had been on terms almost familiar with several families from Ohio, and was acquainted with the position of the Feeders there. This family, very numerous, was interwoven into an enormous cousinship. She herself was quite out of such a system, but she could have told you whom Dr. Feeder's great-grandfather had married. Every one, indeed, had heard of the good deeds of the descendants of this worthy, who

were generally physicians, excellent ones, and whose name expressed not inaptly their numerous acts of charity. Sidney Feeder, who had several cousins of this name established in the same line at Cincinnati, had transferred himself and his ambition to New York, where his practice, at the end of three years, had begun to grow. He had studied his profession at Vienna, and was impregnated with German science; indeed, if he had only worn spectacles, he might perfectly, as he sat there watching the riders in Rotten Row as if their proceedings were a successful demonstration, have passed for a young German of distinction. He had come over to London to attend a medical congress which met this year in the British capital; for his interest in the healing art was by no means limited to the cure of his patients, it embraced every form of experiment; and the expression of his honest eyes would almost have reconciled you to vivisection. It was the first time he had come to the Park; for social experiments he had little leisure. Being aware, however, that it was a very typical, and as it were symptomatic, sight, he had conscientiously reserved an afternoon, and had dressed himself carefully for the occasion. "It's quite a brilliant show," he said to Mrs. Freer; "it makes me wish I had a mount." Little as he resembled Lord Canterville, he rode very well.

"Wait till Jackson Lemon passes again, and you can stop him and make him let you take a turn." This was the jocular suggestion of Dexter Freer.

"Why, is he here? I have been looking out for him; I should like to see him."

"Doesn't he go to your medical congress?" asked Mrs. Freer.

"Well, yes, he attends; but he isn't very regular. I guess he goes out a good deal."

"I guess he does," said Mr. Freer; "and if he isn't very regular, I guess he has a good reason. A beautiful reason, a charming reason," he went on, bending forward to look down toward the beginning of the Row. "Dear me, what a lovely reason!"

Dr. Feeder followed the direction of his eyes, and after a moment understood his allusion. Little Jackson Lemon, on his big horse, passed along the avenue again, riding beside one of the young girls who had come that way shortly before in the company of Lord Canterville. His lordship followed, in conversation with the other, his younger daughter. As they advanced, Jackson Lemon turned his eyes toward the multitude under the trees, and it so happened that they rested upon the Dexter Freers. He smiled and raised his hat with all possible friendliness; and his three companions turned to see to

whom he was bowing with so much cordiality. As he settled his hat on his head, he espied the young man from Cincinnati, whom he had at first overlooked; whereupon he smiled still more brightly, and waved Sidney Feeder an airy salutation with his hand, reining in a little at the same time just for an instant, as if he half expected the doctor to come and speak to him. Seeing him with strangers, however, Sidney Feeder hung back, staring a little as he rode away.

It is open to us to know that at this moment the young lady by whose side he was riding said to him familiarly enough:

"Who are those people you bowed to?"

"Some old friends of mine,—Americans," Jackson Lemon answered.

"Of course they are Americans; there is nothing but Americans nowadays."

"Oh, yes, our turn's coming round!" laughed the young man.

"But that doesn't say who they are," his companion continued. "It's so difficult to say who Americans are," she added, before he had time to answer her.

"Dexter Freer and his wife,—there is nothing difficult about that; every one knows them."

"I never heard of them," said the English girl.

"Ah, that's your fault. I assure you everybody knows them."

"And does everybody know the little man with the fat face whom you kissed your hand to?"

"I didn't kiss my hand; but I would if I had thought of it. He is a great chum of mine,—a fellow student at Vienna?"

"And what's his name?"

"Dr. Feeder."

Jackson Lemon's companion was silent a moment.

"Are *all* your friends doctors?" she presently inquired.

"No; some of them are in other businesses."

"Are they all in some business?"

"Most of them; save two or three, like Dexter Freer."

"Dexter Freer? I thought you said Dr. Freer."

The young man gave a laugh. "You heard me wrong. You have got doctors on the brain, Lady Barb."

"I am rather glad," said Lady Barb, giving the rein to her horse, who bounded away.

"Well, yes, she's very handsome, the reason," Dr. Feeder remarked, as he sat under the trees.

"Is he going to marry her?" Mrs. Freer inquired.

"Marry her? I hope not."

"Why do you hope not?"

"Because I know nothing about her. I want to know something about the woman that man marries."

"I suppose you would like him to marry in Cincinnati," Mrs. Freer rejoined, lightly.

"Well, I am not particular where it is; but I want to know her first." Dr. Feeder was very sturdy.

"We were in hopes you would know all about it," said Mr. Freer.

"No; I haven't kept up with him there."

"We have heard from a dozen people that he has been always with her for the last month; and that kind of thing, in England, is supposed to mean something. Hasn't he spoken of her when you have seen him?"

"No; he has only talked about the new treatment of spinal meningitis. He is very much interested in spinal meningitis."

"I wonder if he talks about it to Lady Barb," said Mrs. Freer.

"Who is she, anyway?" the young man inquired.

"Lady Barberina Clement."

"And who is Lady Barberina Clement?"

"The daughter of Lord Canterville."

"And who is Lord Canterville?"

"Dexter must tell you that," said Mrs. Freer.

And Dexter accordingly told him that the Marquis of Canterville had been in his day a great sporting nobleman and an ornament to English society, and had held more than once a high post in her Majesty's household. Dexter Freer knew all these things,—how his lordship had married a daughter of Lord Treherne, a very serious, intelligent, and beautiful woman, who had redeemed him from the extravagance of his youth, and presented him in rapid succession with a dozen little tenants for the nurseries at Pasterns,—this being, as Mr. Freer also knew, the name of the principal seat of the Cantervilles. The Marquis was a Tory, but very liberal for a Tory, and very popular in society at large; good-natured, good-looking, knowing how to be genial, and yet to remain a *grand seigneur*, clever enough to make an occasional speech, and much associated with the fine old English pursuits, as well as with many of the new improvements,—the purification of the Turf, the opening of the museums on Sunday, the propagation of coffee-taverns, the latest ideas on sanitary reform. He disapproved of the extension of the suffrage, but he positively had drainage on the brain. It had been said of him at least once (and I think in print) that he was just the man to convey to the popular mind the impression that the British aristocracy is still a living force. He was not

very rich, unfortunately (for a man who had to exemplify such truths), and of his twelve children, no less than seven were daughters. Lady Barberina, Jackson Lemon's friend, was the second; the eldest had married Lord Beauchemin. Mr. Freer had caught quite the right pronunciation of this name; he called it Bitumen. Lady Lucretia had done very well, for her husband was rich, and she had brought him nothing to speak of; but it was hardly to be expected that the others would do as well. Happily the younger girls were still in the school-room; and before they had come up, Lady Canterville, who was a woman of resources, would have worked off the two that were out. It was Lady Agatha's first season; she was not so pretty as her sister, but she was thought to be cleverer. Half a dozen people had spoken to him of Jackson Lemon's being a great deal at the Cantervilles. He was supposed to be enormously rich.

"Well, so he is," said Sidney Feeder, who had listened to Mr. Freer's little recital with attention, with eagerness even, but with an air of imperfect apprehension.

"Yes, but not so rich as they probably think."

"Do they want his money? Is that what they're after?"

"You go straight to the point," Mrs. Freer murmured.

"I haven't the least idea," said her husband. "He is a very nice fellow in himself."

"Yes, but he's a doctor," Mrs. Freer remarked.

"What have they got against that?" asked Sidney Feeder.

"Why, over here, you know, they only call them in to prescribe," said Dexter Freer; "the profession isn't—a—what you'd call aristocratic."

"Well, I don't know it, and I don't know that I want to know it. How do you mean, aristocratic? What profession is? It would be rather a curious one. Many of the gentlemen at the congress there are quite charming."

"I like doctors very much," said Mrs. Freer; "my father was a doctor. But they don't marry the daughters of marquises."

"I don't believe Jackson wants to marry that one."

"Very possibly not—people are such asses," said Dexter Freer. "But he will have to decide. I wish you would find out, by the way; you can if you will."

"I will ask him—up at the congress; I can do that. I suppose he has got to marry some one," Sidney Feeder added, in a moment, "and she may be a nice girl."

"She is said to be charming."

"Very well, then; it wont hurt him. I

must say, however, I am not sure I like all that about her family."

"What I told you? It's all to their honor and glory."

"Are they quite on the square? It's like those people in Thackeray."

"Oh, if Thackeray could have done this!"

Mrs. Freer exclaimed, with a good deal of expression.

"You mean all this scene?" asked the young man.

"No; the marriage of a British noblewoman and an American doctor. It would have been a subject for Thackeray."

"You see you do want it, my dear," said Dexter Freer, quietly.

"I want it as a story, but I don't want it for Dr. Lemon."

"Does he call himself 'Doctor' still?" Mr. Freer asked of young Feeder.

"I suppose he does; I call him so. Of course he doesn't practice. But once a doctor, always a doctor."

"That's doctrine for Lady Barb!"

"Sidney Feeder stared. "Hasn't she got a title too? What would she expect him to be? President of the United States? He's a man of real ability; he might have stood at the head of his profession. When I think of that, I want to swear. What did his father want to go and make all that money for!"

"It must certainly be odd to them to see a 'medical man' with six or eight millions," Mr. Freer observed.

"They use the same term as the Choc-taws," said his wife.

"Why, some of their own physicians made immense fortunes," Sidney Feeder declared.

"Couldn't he be made a baronet by the Queen?" This suggestion came from Mrs. Freer.

"Yes, then he would be aristocratic," said the young man. "But I don't see why he should want to marry over here; it seems to me to be going out of his way. However, if he is happy, I don't care. I like him very much; he has got lots of ability. If it hadn't been for his father he would have made a splendid doctor. But, as I say, he takes a great interest in medical science, and I guess he means to promote it all he can — with his fortune. He will always be doing something in the way of research. He thinks we *do* know something, and he is bound we shall know more. I hope she won't prevent him, the young marchioness — is that her rank? And I hope they are really good people. He ought to be very useful. I should want to know a good deal about the family I was going to marry into."

"He looked to me, as he rode there, as if

he knew a good deal about the Clements," Dexter Freer said, rising, as his wife suggested that they ought to be going; "and he looked to me pleased with the knowledge. There they come, down on the other side. Will you walk away with us, or will you stay?"

"Stop him and ask him, and then come and tell us — in Jermyn street." This was Mrs. Freer's parting injunction to Sidney Feeder.

"He ought to come himself — tell him that," her husband added.

"Well, I guess I'll stay," said the young man, as his companions merged themselves in the crowd that now was tending toward the gates. He went and stood by the barrier, and saw Dr. Lemon and his friends pull up at the entrance to the Row, where they apparently prepared to separate. The separation took some time, and Sidney Feeder became interested. Lord Canterville and his younger daughter lingered to talk with two gentlemen, also mounted, who looked a good deal at the legs of Lady Agatha's horse. Jackson Lemon and Lady Barberina were face to face, very near each other; and she, leaning forward a little, stroked the overlapping neck of his glossy bay. At a distance he appeared to be talking, and she to be listening and saying nothing. "Oh, yes, he's making love to her," thought Sidney Feeder. Suddenly her father turned away to leave the Park, and she joined him and disappeared, while Dr. Lemon came up on the left again, as if for a final gallop. He had not gone far before he perceived his *confrère*, who awaited him at the rail; and he repeated the gesture which Lady Barberina had spoken of as a kissing of his hand, though it must be added that, to his friend's eyes, it had not quite that significance. When he reached the point where Feeder stood, he pulled up.

"If I had known you were coming here, I would have given you a mount," he said. There was not in his person that irradiation of wealth and distinction which made Lord Canterville glow like a picture; but as he sat there with his little legs stuck out, he looked very bright, and sharp, and happy, wearing in his degree the aspect of one of Fortune's favorites. He had a thin, keen, delicate face, a nose very carefully finished, a rapid eye, a trifle hard in expression, and a small mustache, a good deal cultivated. He was not striking, but he was very positive, and it was easy to see that he was full of purpose.

"How many horses have you got — about forty?" his compatriot inquired, in response to his greeting.

"About five hundred," said Jackson Lemon.

"Did you mount your friends — the three you were riding with?"

"Mount them? They have got the best horses in England."

"Did they sell you this one?" Sidney Feeder continued, in the same humorous strain.

"What do you think of him?" said his friend, not deigning to answer this question.

"He's an awful old screw; I wonder he can carry you."

"Where did you get your hat?" asked Dr. Lemon in return.

"I got it in New York. What's the matter with it?"

"It's very beautiful; I wish I had bought one like it."

"The head's the thing — not the hat. I don't mean yours, but mine. There is something very deep in your question; I must think it over."

"Don't — don't," said Jackson Lemon; "you will never get to the bottom of it. Are you having a good time?"

"A glorious time. Have you been up to-day?"

"Up among the doctors? No; I have had a lot of things to do."

"We had a very interesting discussion. I made a few remarks."

"You ought to have told me. What were they about?"

"About the intermarriage of races, from the point of view —" And Sidney Feeder paused a moment, occupied with the attempt to scratch the nose of his friend's horse.

"From the point of view of the progeny, I suppose?"

"Not at all; from the point of view of the old friends."

"Damn the old friends!" Dr. Lemon exclaimed, with jocular crudity.

"Is it true that you are going to marry a young marchioness?"

The face of the young man in the saddle became just a trifle rigid, and his firm eyes fixed themselves on Dr. Feeder.

"Who has told you that?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Freer whom I met just now."

"Mr. and Mrs. Freer be hanged! And who told them?"

"Ever so many people; I don't know who."

"Gad, how things are tattled!" cried Jackson Lemon, with some asperity.

"I can see it's true, by the way you say that."

"Do Freer and his wife believe it?" Jackson Lemon went on, impatiently.

"They want you to go and see them: you can judge for yourself."

"I will go and see them, and tell them to mind their business."

"In Jermyn street; but I forget the number. I am sorry the marchioness isn't American," Sidney Feeder continued.

"If I should marry her, she would be," said his friend. "But I don't see what difference it can make to you."

"Why, she'll look down on the profession; and I don't like that from your wife."

"That will touch me more than you."

"Then it *is* true?" cried Feeder, more seriously, looking up at his friend.

"She wont look down; I will answer for that."

"You wont care; you are out of it all now."

"No, I am not; I mean to do a great deal of work."

"I will believe that when I see it," said Sidney Feeder, who was by no means perfectly incredulous, but who thought it salutary to take that tone. "I am not sure that you have any right to work,—you oughtn't to have everything; you ought to leave the field to us. You must pay the penalty of being so rich. You would have been celebrated if you had continued to practice,—more celebrated than any one. But you wont be now,—you can't be. Some one else will be, in your place."

Jackson Lemon listened to this, but without meeting the eyes of the speaker; not, however, as if he were avoiding them, but as if the long stretch of the ride, now less and less obstructed, invited him, and made his companion's talk a little retarding. Nevertheless, he answered, deliberately and kindly enough:

"I hope it will be you;" and he bowed to a lady who rode past.

"Very likely it will. I hope I make you feel badly,—that's what I'm trying to do."

"Oh, awfully!" cried Jackson Lemon; "all the more that I am not in the least engaged."

"Well, that's good. Wont you come up to-morrow?" Dr. Feeder went on.

"I'll try, my dear fellow; I can't be sure. By by!"

"Oh, you're lost anyway!" cried Sidney Feeder, as the other started away.

## II.

It was Lady Marmaduke, the wife of Sir Henry Marmaduke, who had introduced Jackson Lemon to Lady Beauchemin; after which Lady Beauchemin had made him acquainted with her mother and sisters. Lady Marmaduke was also transatlantic; she had been for her conjugal baronet the most permanent consequence of a tour in the United States.



At present, at the end of ten years, she knew her London as she had never known her New York, so that it had been easy for her to be, as she called herself, Jackson Lemon's social godmother. She had views with regard to his career, and these views fitted into a social scheme which, if our space permitted, I should be glad to lay before the reader in its magnitude. She wished to add an arch or two to the bridge on which she had effected her transit from America; and it was her belief that Jackson Lemon might furnish the materials. This bridge, as yet a somewhat sketchy and rickety structure, she saw (in the future) boldly stretching from one solid pillar to another. It would have to go both ways, for reciprocity was the keynote of Lady Marmaduke's plan. It was her belief that an ultimate fusion was inevitable, and that those who were the first to understand the situation would gain the most. The first time Jackson Lemon had dined with her, he met Lady Beauchemin, who was her intimate friend. Lady Beauchemin was remarkably gracious; she asked him to come and see her as if she really meant it. He presented himself, and in her drawing-room met her mother, who happened to be calling at the same moment. Lady Canterville, not less friendly than her daughter, invited him down to Pasterns for Easter week; and before a month had passed it seemed to him that, though he was not what he would have called intimate at any house in London, the door of the house of Clement opened to him pretty often. This was a considerable good fortune, for it always opened upon a charming picture. The inmates were a blooming and beautiful race, and their interior had an aspect of the ripest comfort. It was not the splendor of New York (as New York had lately begun to appear to the young man), but a splendor in which there was an unpurchasable ingredient of age. He himself had a great deal of money, and money was good, even when it was new, but old money was the best. Even after he learned that Lord Canterville's fortune was more ancient than abundant, it was still the mellowness of the golden element that struck him. It was Lady Beauchemin who had told him that her father was not rich; having told him, besides this, many surprising things,—things that were surprising in themselves, or surprising on her lips. This struck him afresh later that evening—the day he met Sidney Feeder in the Park. He dined out in the company of Lady Beauchemin, and afterward, as she was alone,—her husband had gone down to listen to a debate,—she offered to "take him on." She was going to several places, and he must be going to some of them. They compared notes; and it was settled that they

should proceed together to the Trumpington's, whither, also, it appeared at eleven o'clock that all the world was going, the approach to the house being choked for half a mile with carriages. It was a close, muggy night; Lady Beauchemin's chariot, in its place in the rank, stood still for long periods. In his corner beside her, through the open window, Jackson Lemon, rather hot, rather oppressed, looked out on the moist, greasy pavement, over which was flung, a considerable distance up and down, the flare of a public-house. Lady Beauchemin, however, was not impatient, for she had a purpose in her mind, and now she could say what she wished.

"Do you really love her?" That was the first thing she said.

"Well, I guess so," Jackson Lemon answered, as if he did not recognize the obligation to be serious.

Lady Beauchemin looked at him a moment in silence; he felt her gaze, and turning his eyes, saw her face, partly shadowed, with the aid of a street-lamp. She was not so pretty as Lady Barberina; her countenance had a certain sharpness; her hair, very light in color and wonderfully frizzled, almost covered her eyes, the expression of which, however, together with that of her pointed nose, and the glitter of several diamonds, emerged from the gloom.

"You don't seem to know. I never saw a man in such an odd state," she presently remarked.

"You push me a little too much; I must have time to think of it," the young man went on. "You know in my country they allow us plenty of time."

He had several little oddities of expression, of which he was perfectly conscious, and which he found convenient, for they protected him in a society in which a lonely American was rather exposed; they gave him the advantage which corresponded with certain drawbacks. He had very few natural Americanisms, but the occasional use of one, discreetly chosen, made him appear simpler than he really was, and he had his reasons for wishing this result. He was not simple; he was subtle, circumspect, shrewd, and perfectly aware that he might make mistakes. There was a danger of his making a mistake at present,—a mistake which would be immensely grave. He was determined only to succeed. It is true that for a great success he would take a certain risk; but the risk was to be considered, and he gained time while he multiplied his guesses and talked about his country.

"You may take ten years if you like," said Lady Beauchemin. "I am in no hurry whatever to make you my brother-in-law. Only

you must remember that you spoke to me first."

"What did I say?"

"You told me that Barberina was the finest girl you had seen in England."

"Oh, I am willing to stand by that; I like her type."

"I should think you might!"

"I like her very much—with all her peculiarities."

"What do you mean by her peculiarities?"

"Well, she has some peculiar ideas," said Jackson Lemon, in a tone of the sweetest reasonableness; "and she has a peculiar way of speaking."

"Ah, you can't expect us to speak as well as you!" cried Lady Beauchemin.

"I don't know why not; you do some things much better."

"We have our own ways, at any rate, and we think them the best in the world. One of them is not to let a gentleman devote himself to a girl for three or four months without some sense of responsibility. If you don't wish to marry my sister, you ought to go away."

"I ought never to have come," said Jackson Lemon.

"I can scarcely agree to that; for I should have lost the pleasure of knowing you."

"It would have spared you this duty, which you dislike very much."

"Asking you about your intentions? I don't dislike it at all; it amuses me extremely."

"Should you like your sister to marry me?" asked Jackson Lemon, with great simplicity.

If he expected to take Lady Beauchemin by surprise he was disappointed; for she was perfectly prepared to commit herself.

"I should like it very much. I think English and American society ought to be but one—I mean the best of each—a great whole."

"Will you allow me to ask whether Lady Marmaduke suggested that to you?"

"We have often talked of it."

"Oh, yes, that's her aim."

"Well, it's my aim, too. I think there's a great deal to be done."

"And you would like me to do it?"

"To begin it, precisely. Don't you think we ought to see more of each other—I mean the best in each country?"

Jackson Lemon was silent a moment. "I am afraid I haven't any general ideas. If I should marry an English girl, it wouldn't be for the good of the species."

"Well, we want to be mixed a little; that I am sure of," Lady Beauchemin said.

"You certainly got that from Lady Marmaduke."

"It's too tiresome, your not consenting to be serious! But my father will make you so," Lady Beauchemin went on. "I may as well let you know that he intends in a day or two to ask you your intentions. That's all I wished to say to you. I think you ought to be prepared."

"I am much obliged to you; Lord Canterville will do quite right."

There was, to Lady Beauchemin, something really unfathomable in this little American doctor, whom she had taken up on grounds of large policy, and who, though he was assumed to have sunk the medical character, was neither handsome nor distinguished, but only immensely rich and quite original, for he was not insignificant. It was unfathomable, to begin with, that a medical man should be so rich, or that so rich a man should be a doctor; it was, even to an eye which was always gratified by suitability, rather irritating. Jackson Lemon himself could have explained it better than any one else, but this was an explanation that one could scarcely ask for. There were other things; his cool acceptance of certain situations; his general indisposition to explain; his way of taking refuge in jokes, which at times had not even the merit of being American; his way, too, of appearing to be a suitor without being an aspirant. Lady Beauchemin, however, was, like Jackson Lemon, prepared to run a certain risk. His reserves made him slippery; but that was only when one pressed. She flattered herself that she could handle people lightly. "My father will be sure to act with perfect tact," she said; "of course, if you shouldn't care to be questioned, you can go out of town."

She had the air of really wishing to make everything easy for him.

"I don't want to go out of town; I am enjoying it far too much here," her companion answered. "And wouldn't your father have a right to ask me what I meant by that?"

Lady Beauchemin hesitated; she was slightly perplexed. But in a moment she exclaimed:

"He is incapable of saying anything vulgar!"

She had not really answered his inquiry, and he was conscious of that; but he was quite ready to say to her, a little later, as he guided her steps from the brougham to the strip of carpet which, between a somewhat rickety border of striped cloth and a double row of waiting footmen, policemen, and dingy amateurs of both sexes, stretched from the curbstone to the portal of the Trumpingtons:

"Of course I shall not wait for Lord Canterville to speak to me"

He had been expecting some such announcement as this from Lady Beauchemin, and he judged that her father would do no

more than his duty. He knew that he ought to be prepared with an answer to Lord Canterville, and he wondered at himself for not yet having come to the point. Sidney Feeder's question in the Park had made him feel rather pointless; it was the first allusion that had been made to his possible marriage, except on the part of Lady Beauchemin. None of his own people were in London; he was perfectly independent, and even if his mother had been within reach he could not have consulted her on the subject. He loved her dearly, better than any one; but she was not a woman to consult, for she approved of whatever he did: it was her standard. He was careful not to be too serious when he talked with Lady Beauchemin; but he was very serious indeed as he thought over the matter within himself, which he did even among the diversions of the next half hour, while he squeezed obliquely and slowly through the crush in Mrs. Trumpington's drawing-room. At the end of the half hour he came away, and at the door he found Lady Beauchemin, from whom he had separated on entering the house, and who, this time with a companion of her own sex, was awaiting her carriage and still "going on." He gave her his arm into the street, and as she stepped into the vehicle she repeated that she wished he would go out of town for a few days.

"Who, then, would tell me what to do?" he asked, for answer, looking at her through the window.

She might tell him what to do, but he felt free, all the same; and he was determined this should continue. To prove it to himself he jumped into a hansom and drove back to Brook street to his hotel, instead of proceeding to a bright-windowed house in Portland Place, where he knew that after midnight he should find Lady Canterville and her daughters. There had been a reference to the subject between Lady Barberina and himself during their ride, and she would probably expect him; but it made him taste his liberty not to go, and he liked to taste his liberty. He was aware that to taste it to perfection he ought to go to bed; but he did not go to bed, he did not even take off his hat. He walked up and down his sitting-room, with his head surmounted by this ornament, a good deal tipped back, and his hands in his pockets. There were a good many cards stuck into the frame of the mirror over his chimney-piece, and every time he passed the place he seemed to see what was written on one of them,—the name of the mistress of the house in Portland Place, his own name, and, in the lower left-hand corner, the words: "A small Dance." Of course, now, he must

make up his mind; he would make it up the next day: that was what he said to himself as he walked up and down; and according to his decision he would speak to Lord Canterville, or he would take the night-express to Paris. It was better, meanwhile, that he should not see Lady Barberina. It was vivid to him, as he paused occasionally, looking vaguely at that card in the chimney-glass, that he had come pretty far; and he had come so far because he was under the charm,—yes, he was in love with Lady Barb. There was no doubt, whatever, of that; he had a faculty for diagnosis, and he knew perfectly well what was the matter with him. He wasted no time in musing upon the mystery of this passion, in wondering whether he might not have escaped it by a little vigilance at first, or whether it would die out if he should go away. He accepted it frankly, for the sake of the pleasure it gave him,—the girl was the delight of his eyes,—and confined himself to considering whether such a marriage would square with his general situation. This would not at all necessarily follow from the fact that he was in love; too many other things would come in between. The most important of these was the change, not only of the geographical, but of the social, standpoint for his wife, and a certain re-adjustment that it would involve in his own relation to things. He was not inclined to re-adjustments, and there was no reason why he should be; his own position was in most respects so advantageous. But the girl tempted him almost irresistibly, satisfying his imagination both as a lover and as a student of the human organism; she was so blooming, so complete, of a type so rarely encountered in that degree of perfection. Jackson Lemon was not an Anglo-maniac, but he admired the physical conditions of the English,—their complexion, their temperament, their tissue; and Lady Barberina struck him in flexible, virginal form, as a wonderful compendium of these elements. There was something simple and robust in her beauty; it had the quietness of an old Greek statue, without the vulgarity of the modern simper or of contemporary prettiness. Her head was antique; and though her conversation was quite of the present period, Jackson Lemon had said to himself that there was sure to be in her soul a certain primitive sincerity which would match with the outline of her brow. He saw her as she might be in the future, the beautiful mother of beautiful children, in whom the look of race should be conspicuous. He should like his children to have the look of race, and he was not unaware that he must take his precautions accordingly. A

great many people had it in England; and it was a pleasure to him to see it, especially as no one had it so unmistakably as the second daughter of Lord Canterville. It would be a great luxury to call such a woman one's own; nothing could be more evident than that, because it made no difference that she was not strikingly clever. Striking cleverness was not a part of harmonious form and the English complexion; it was associated with the modern simper, which was a result of modern nerves. If Jackson Lemon had wanted a nervous wife, of course he could have found her at home; but this tall, fair girl, whose character, like her figure, appeared mainly to have been formed by riding across country, was differently put together. All the same, would it suit his book, as they said in London, to marry her and transport her to New York? He came back to this question; came back to it with a persistency which, had she been admitted to a view of it, would have tried the patience of Lady Beauchemin. She had been irritated, more than once, at his appearing to attach himself so exclusively to this horn of the dilemma,—as if it could possibly fail to be a good thing for a little American doctor to marry the daughter of an English peer. It would have been more becoming, in her ladyship's eyes, that he should take that for granted a little more, and the consent of her ladyship's—of their ladyships'—family a little less. They looked at the matter so differently! Jackson Lemon was conscious that if he should marry Lady Barberina Clement, it would be because it suited him, and not because it suited his possible sisters-in-law. He believed that he acted in all things by his own will,—an organ for which he had the highest respect.

It would have seemed, however, that on this occasion it was not working very regularly, for though he had come home to go to bed, the stroke of half-past twelve saw him jump, not into his couch, but into a hansom which the whistle of the porter had summoned to the door of his hotel, and in which he rattled off to Portland Place. Here he found—in a very large house—an assembly of three hundred people, and a band of music concealed in a bower of azaleas. Lady Canterville had not arrived; he wandered through the rooms and assured himself of that. He also discovered a very good conservatory, where there were banks and pyramids of azaleas. He watched the top of the staircase, but it was a long time before he saw what he was looking for, and his impatience at last was extreme. The reward, however, when it came, was all that he could have desired. It was a little smile from Lady Barberina,

who stood behind her mother while the latter extended her finger-tips to the hostess. The entrance of this charming woman, with her beautiful daughters—always a noticeable incident—was effected with a certain brilliancy, and just now it was agreeable to Jackson Lemon to think that it concerned him more than any one else in the house. Tall, dazzling, indifferent, looking about her as if she saw very little, Lady Barberina was certainly a figure round which a young man's fancy might revolve. She was very quiet and simple, had little manner and little movement; but her detachment was not a vulgar art. She appeared to efface herself, to wait till, in the natural course, she should be attended to; and in this there was evidently no exaggeration, for she was too proud not to have perfect confidence. Her sister, smaller, slighter, with a little surprised smile, which seemed to say that, in her extreme innocence, she was yet prepared for anything, having heard, indirectly, such extraordinary things about society, was much more impatient and more expressive, and projected across a threshold the pretty radiance of her eyes and teeth before her mother's name was announced. Lady Canterville was thought by many persons to be very superior to her daughters; she had kept even more beauty than she had given them; and it was a beauty which had been called intellectual. She had extraordinary sweetness, without any definite professions; her manner was mild almost to tenderness; there was even a kind of pity in it. Moreover, her features were perfect, and nothing could be more gently gracious than a way she had of speaking, or rather of listening to people, with her head inclined a little to one side. Jackson Lemon liked her very much, and she had certainly been most kind to him. He approached Lady Barberina as soon as he could do so without an appearance of precipitation, and said to her that he hoped very much she would not dance. He was a master of the art which flourishes in New York above every other, and he had guided her through a dozen waltzes with a skill which, as she felt, left absolutely nothing to be desired. But dancing was not his business to-night. She smiled a little at the expression of his hope.

"That is what mamma has brought us here for," she said; "she doesn't like it if we don't dance."

"How does she know whether she likes it or not? You have always danced."

"Once I didn't," said Lady Barberina.

He told her that, at any rate, he would settle it with her mother, and persuaded her to wander with him into the conservatory, where there were colored lights suspended among

the plants, and a vault of verdure overhead. In comparison with the other rooms, the conservatory was dusky and remote. But they were not alone; half a dozen other couples were in possession. The gloom was rosy with the slopes of azalea, and suffused with mitigated music, which made it possible to talk without consideration of one's neighbors. Nevertheless, though it was only on looking back on the scene later that Lady Barberina perceived this, these dispersed couples were talking very softly. She did not look at them; it seemed to her that, virtually, she was alone with Jackson Lemon. She said something about the flowers, about the fragrance of the air; for all answer to which he asked her, as he stood there before her, a question by which she might have been exceedingly startled.

"How do people who marry in England ever know each other before marriage? They have no chance."

"I'm sure I don't know," said Lady Barberina; "I never was married."

"It's very different in my country. There a man may see much of a girl; he may come and see her, he may be constantly alone with her. I wish you allowed that over here."

Lady Barberina suddenly examined the less ornamental side of her fan, as if it had never occurred to her before to look at it. "It must be so very odd, America," she murmured at last.

"Well, I guess in that matter we are right; over here it's a leap in the dark."

"I'm sure I don't know," said the girl. She had folded her fan; she stretched out her arm mechanically, and plucked a sprig of azalea.

"I guess it doesn't signify, after all," Jackson Lemon remarked. "They say that love is blind at the best." His keen young face was bent upon hers; his thumbs were in the pockets of his trousers; he smiled a little, showing his fine teeth. She said nothing, but only pulled her azalea to pieces. She was usually so quiet that this small movement looked restless.

"This is the first time I have seen you in the least without a lot of people," he went on.

"Yes, it's very tiresome," she said.

"I have been sick of it; I didn't want to come here to-night."

She had not met his eyes, though she knew they were seeking her own. But now she looked at him a moment. She had never objected to his appearance, and in this respect she had no repugnance to overcome. She liked a man to be tall and handsome, and Jackson Lemon was neither; but when she was sixteen, and as tall herself as she was to be at twenty, she had been in love (for three

weeks) with one of her cousins, a little fellow in the Hussars, who was shorter even than the American, shorter, consequently than herself. This proved that distinction might be independent of stature—not that she ever reasoned it out. Jackson Lemon's facial spareness, his bright little eye, which seemed always to be measuring things, struck her as original, and she thought them very cutting, which would do very well for a husband of hers. As she made this reflection, of course it never occurred to her that she herself might be cut; she was not a sacrificial lamb. She perceived that his features expressed a mind—a mind that would be rather superior. She would never have taken him for a doctor; though, indeed, when all was said, that was very negative, and didn't account for the way he imposed himself.

"Why, then, did you come?" she asked, in answer to his last speech.

"Because it seems to me after all better to see you in this way than not to see you at all; I want to know you better."

"I don't think I ought to stay here," said Lady Barberina, looking round her.

"Don't go till I have told you I love you," murmured the young man.

She made no exclamation, indulged in no start; he could not see even that she changed color. She took his request with a noble simplicity, with her head erect and her eyes lowered.

"I don't think you have a right to tell me that."

"Why not?" Jackson Lemon demanded. "I wish to claim the right; I wish you to give it to me."

"I can't—I don't know you. You have said it yourself."

"Can't you have a little faith? That will help us to know each other better. It's disgusting, the want of opportunity; even at Pasterns I could scarcely get a walk with you. But I have the greatest faith in you. I feel that I love you, and I couldn't do more than that at the end of six months. I love your beauty—I love you from head to foot. Don't move, please don't move." He lowered his tone; but it went straight to her ear, and it must be believed that it had a certain eloquence. For himself, after he had heard himself say these words, all his being was in a glow. It was a luxury to speak to her of her beauty; it brought him nearer to her than he had ever been. But the color had come into her face, and it seemed to remind him that her beauty was not all. "Everything about you is sweet and noble," he went on; "everything is dear to me. I am sure you are good. I don't know what you think of me; I

asked Lady Beauchemin to tell me, and she told me to judge for myself. Well, then, I judge you like me. Haven't I a right to assume that till the contrary is proved? May I speak to your father? That's what I want to know, I have been waiting; but now what should I wait for longer? I want to be able to tell him that you have given me some hope. I suppose I ought to speak to him first. I meant to, to-morrow, but meanwhile, to-night, I thought I would just put this in. In my country it wouldn't matter particularly. You must see all that over there for yourself. If you should tell me not to speak to your father, I wouldn't. I would wait. But I like better to ask your leave to speak to him than to ask his to speak to you."

His voice had sunk almost to a whisper; but, though it trembled, his emotion gave it peculiar intensity. He had the same attitude, his thumbs in his trousers, his attentive head, his smile, which was a matter of course; no one would have imagined what he was saying. She had listened without moving and at the end she raised her eyes. They rested on his a moment, and he remembered, a good while later, the look which passed her lids.

"You may say anything that you please to my father, but I don't wish to hear any more. You have said too much, considering how little idea you have given me before."

"I was watching you," said Jackson Lemon.

Lady Barberina held her head higher, looking straight at him. Then, quite seriously, "I don't like to be watched," she remarked.

"You shouldn't be so beautiful, then. Wont you give me a word of hope?" he added.

"I have never supposed I should marry a foreigner," said Lady Barberina.

"Do you call me a foreigner?"

"I think your ideas are very different, and your country is different; you have told me so yourself."

"I should like to show it to you; I would make you like it."

"I am not sure what you would make me do," said Lady Barberina, very honestly.

"Nothing that you don't want."

"I am sure you would try," she declared, with a smile.

"Well," said Jackson Lemon, "after all, I am trying now."

To this she simply replied she must go to her mother, and he was obliged to lead her out of the conservatory. Lady Canterville was not immediately found, so that he had

time to murmur as they went, "Now that I have spoken, I am very happy."

"Perhaps you are happy too soon," said the girl.

"Ah, don't say that, Lady Barb."

"Of course I must think of it."

"Of course you must!" said Jackson Lemon; "I will speak to your father to-morrow."

"I can't fancy what he will say."

"How can he dislike me?" the young man asked, in a tone which Lady Beauchemin, if she had heard him, would have been forced to attribute to his general affectation of the jocose. What Lady Beauchemin's sister thought of it is not recorded; but there is perhaps a clew to her opinion in the answer she made him after a moment's silence:

"Really, you know, you *are* a foreigner!"

With this she turned her back upon him, for she was already in her mother's hands. Jackson Lemon said a few words to Lady Canterville; they were chiefly about its being very hot. She gave him her vague, sweet attention, as if he were saying something ingenious, of which she missed the point. He could see that she was thinking of the doings of her daughter Agatha, whose attitude toward the contemporary young man was wanting in the perception of differences,—a madness without method; she was evidently not occupied with Lady Barberina, who was more to be trusted. This young woman never met her suitor's eyes again; she let her own rest, rather ostentatiously, upon other objects. At last he was going away without a glance from her. Lady Canterville had asked him to come to lunch on the morrow, and he had said he would do so if she would promise him he should see his lordship.

"I can't pay you another visit until I have had some talk with him," he said.

"I don't see why not; but if I speak to him, I dare say he will be at home," she answered.

"It will be worth his while!"

Jackson Lemon left the house reflecting that as he had never proposed to a girl before, he could not be expected to know how women demean themselves in this emergency. He had heard, indeed, that Lady Barb. had had no end of offers; and though he thought it probable that the number was exaggerated, as it always is, it was to be supposed that her way of appearing suddenly to have dropped him was but the usual behavior for the occasion.

## LADY BARBERINA.\*

BY HENRY JAMES,

Author of "Portrait of a Lady," "Daisy Miller," "An International Episode," etc.

### III.

AT her mother's the next day she was absent from luncheon, and Lady Canterville mentioned to him (he didn't ask) that she had gone to see a dear old great-aunt, who was also her godmother, and who lived at Roehampton. Lord Canterville was not present, but our young man was informed by his hostess that he had promised her he would come in exactly at three o'clock. Jackson Lemon lunched with Lady Canterville and the children, who appeared in force at this repast, all the younger girls being present, and two little boys, the juniors of the two sons who were in their teens. Jackson, who was very fond of children, and thought these absolutely the finest in the world,—magnificent specimens of a magnificent brood, such as it would be so satisfactory in future days to see about his own knee,—Jackson felt that he was being treated as one of the family, but was not frightened by what he supposed the privilege to imply. Lady Canterville betrayed no consciousness whatever of his having mooted the question of becoming her son-in-law, and he believed that her eldest daughter had not told her of their talk the night before. This idea gave him pleasure; he liked to think that Lady Barb was judging him for herself. Perhaps, indeed, she was taking counsel of the old lady at Roehampton; he believed that he was the sort of lover of whom a godmother would approve. Godmothers in his mind were mainly associated with fairy tales (he had had no baptismal sponsors of his own); and that point of view would be favorable to a young man with a great deal of gold who had suddenly arrived from a foreign country,—an apparition, surely, sufficiently elfish. He made up his mind that he should like Lady Canterville as a mother-in-law; she would be too well bred to meddle. Her husband came in at three o'clock, just after they had left the table, and said to Jackson Lemon that it was very good in him to have waited.

"I haven't waited," Jackson replied, with his watch in his hand; "you are punctual to the minute."

I know not how Lord Canterville may have

judged his young friend; but Jackson Lemon had been told more than once in his life that he was a very good fellow, but rather too literal. After he had lighted a cigarette in his lordship's "den," a large brown apartment on the ground-floor, which partook at once of the nature of an office and of that of a harness-room (it could not have been called in any degree a library), he went straight to the point in these terms: "Well, now, Lord Canterville, I feel as if I ought to let you know without more delay that I am in love with Lady Barb, and that I should like to marry her." So he spoke, puffing his cigarette, with his conscious but unextenuating eye fixed on his host.

No man, as I have intimated, bore better being looked at than this noble personage; he seemed to bloom in the envious warmth of human contemplation, and never appeared so faultless as when he was most exposed. "My dear fellow, my dear fellow," he murmured, almost in disparagement, stroking his ambrosial beard from before the empty fireplace. He lifted his eyebrows, but he looked perfectly good-natured.

"Are you surprised, sir?" Jackson Lemon asked.

"Why, I suppose any one is surprised at a man wanting one of his children. He sometimes feels the weight of that sort of thing so much, you know. He wonders what the devil another man wants of them." And Lord Canterville laughed pleasantly out of the copious fringe of his lips.

"I only want one of them," said Jackson Lemon, laughing too, but with a lighter organ.

"Polygamy would be rather good for the parents. However, Lucy told me the other night that she thought you were looking the way you speak of."

"Yes, I told Lady Beauchemin that I love Lady Barb, and she seemed to think it was natural."

"Oh, yes; I suppose there's no want of nature in it! But, my dear fellow, I really don't know what to say."

"Of course you'll have to think of it." Jackson Lemon, in saying this, felt that he was making the most liberal concession to the

point of view of his interlocutor, being perfectly aware that in his own country it was not left much to the parents to think of.

"I shall have to talk it over with my wife."

"Lady Canterville has been very kind to me; I hope she will continue."

"My dear fellow, we are excellent friends. No one could appreciate you more than Lady Canterville. Of course, we can only consider such a question on the—a—the highest grounds. You would never want to marry without knowing, as it were, exactly what you are doing. I, on my side, naturally, you know, am bound to do the best I can for my own child. At the same time, of course, we don't want to spend our time in—a—walking around the horse. We want to keep to the main lines."

It was settled between them after a little that the main lines were that Jackson Lemon knew to a certainty the state of his affections, and was in a position to pretend to the hand of a young lady who Lord Canterville might say—of course, you know, without swaggering about it—had a right to expect to do well, as the women call it.

"I should think she had," Jackson Lemon said; "she's a beautiful type."

Lord Canterville stared a moment. "She is a clever, well-grown girl, and she takes her fences like a grasshopper. Does she know all this, by the way?" he added.

"Oh, yes; I told her last night."

Again Lord Canterville had the air, unusual with him, of returning his companion's regard. "I am not sure that you ought to have done that, you know?"

"I couldn't have spoken to you first—I couldn't," said Jackson Lemon. "I meant to, but it stuck in my crop."

"They don't in your country, I guess," his lordship returned, smiling.

"Well, not as a general thing. However, I find it very pleasant to discuss with you now." And in truth it was very pleasant. Nothing could be easier, friendlier, more informal, than Lord Canterville's manner, which implied all sorts of equality, especially that of age and fortune, and made Jackson Lemon feel at the end of three minutes almost as if he, too, were a beautifully preserved and somewhat straitened nobleman of sixty, with the views of a man of the world about his own marriage. The young American perceived that Lord Canterville waived the point of his having spoken first to the girl herself, and saw in this indulgence a just concession to the ardor of young affection. For Lord Canterville seemed perfectly to appreciate the sentimental side—at least so far as it was embodied in his visitor—when he said, without deprecation:

"Did she give you any encouragement?"

"Well, she didn't box my ears. She told me that she would think of it, but that I must speak to you. But naturally I shouldn't have said what I did to her, if I hadn't made up my mind during the last fortnight that I am not disagreeable to her."

"Ah, my dear young man, women are odd cattle!" Lord Canterville exclaimed, rather unexpectedly. "But of course you know all that," he added in an instant; "you take the general risk."

"I am perfectly willing to take the general risk; the particular risk is small."

"Well, upon my honor I don't really know my girls. You see a man's time, in England, is tremendously taken up; but I dare say it's the same in your country. Their mother knows them; I think I had better send for their mother. If you don't mind, I'll just suggest that she join us here."

"I'm rather afraid of you both together, but if it will settle it any quicker—" said Jackson Lemon. Lord Canterville rang the bell, and, when a servant appeared, dispatched him with a message to her ladyship. While they were waiting, the young man remembered that it was in his power to give a more definite account of his pecuniary basis. He had simply said before that he was abundantly able to marry; he shrank from putting himself forward as a millionaire. He had a fine taste, and he wished to appeal to Lord Canterville primarily as a gentleman. But now that he had to make a double impression, he bethought himself of his millions, for millions were always impressive. "I think it only fair to let you know that my fortune is really very considerable," he remarked.

"Yes, I dare say you are beastly rich," said Lord Canterville.

"I have about seven millions."

"Seven millions?"

"I count in dollars; upward of a million and a half sterling."

Lord Canterville looked at him from head to foot, with an air of cheerful resignation to a form of grossness which threatened to become common. Then he said, with a touch of that inconsequence of which he had already given a glimpse: "What the deuce, then, possessed you to turn doctor?"

Jackson Lemon colored a little, hesitated, and then said quickly: "Because I had the talent for it."

"Of course, I don't for a moment doubt of your ability; but don't you find it rather a bore?"

"I don't practice much. I am rather ashamed to say that."

"Ah, well, of course, in your country it's



different. I dare say you've got a door-plate, eh?"

"Oh, yes, and a tin sign tied to the balcony!" said Jackson Lemon, smiling.

"What did your father say to it?"

"To my going into medicine? He said he would be hanged if he'd take any of my doses. He didn't think I should succeed; he wanted me to go into the house."

"Into the House—a—" said Lord Canterville, hesitating a little. "Into your Congress—yes, exactly."

"Ah, no, not so bad as that; into the store," Jackson Lemon replied, in the candid tone in which he expressed himself when, for reasons of his own, he wished to be perfectly national.

Lord Canterville stared, not venturing, even for the moment, to hazard an interpretation; and before a solution had presented itself, Lady Canterville came into the room.

"My dear, I thought we had better see you. Do you know he wants to marry our second girl?"

It was in these simple terms that her husband acquainted her with the question.

Lady Canterville expressed neither surprise nor elation; she simply stood there, smiling, with her head a little inclined to the side, with all her customary graciousness. Her charming eyes rested on those of Jackson Lemon; and though they seemed to show that she had to think a little of so serious a proposition, his own discovered in them none of the coldness of calculation.

"Are you talking about Barberina?" she asked in a moment, as if her thoughts had been far away.

Of course they were talking about Barberina, and Jackson Lemon repeated to her ladyship what he had said to the girl's father. He had thought it all over, and his mind was quite made up. Moreover, he had spoken to Lady Barb.

"Did she tell you that, my dear?" asked Lord Canterville, while he lighted another cigar.

She gave no heed to this inquiry, which had been vague and accidental on his lordship's part, but simply said to Jackson Lemon that the thing was very serious, and that they had better sit down for a moment. In an instant he was near her on the sofa on which she had placed herself, still smiling and looking up at her husband with an air of general meditation, in which a sweet compassion for every one concerned was apparent.

"Barberina has told me nothing," she said, after a little.

"That proves she cares for me!" Jackson Lemon exclaimed eagerly.

Lady Canterville looked as if she thought this almost too ingenious, almost professional; but her husband said cheerfully, jovially:

"Ah, well, if she cares for you, I don't object."

This was a little ambiguous; but before Jackson Lemon had time to look into it, Lady Canterville asked, gently: "Should you expect her to live in America?"

"Oh, yes; that's my home, you know."

"Shouldn't you be living sometimes in England?"

"Oh, yes; we'll come over and see you." The young man was in love, he wanted to marry, he wanted to be genial, and to commend himself to the parents of Lady Barb; at the same time it was in his nature not to accept conditions, save in so far as they exactly suited him,—to tie himself, or, as they said in New York, to give himself away. In any transaction he preferred his own terms to those of any one else. Therefore, the moment Lady Canterville gave signs of wishing to extract a promise, he was on his guard.

"She'll find it very different; perhaps she won't like it," her ladyship suggested.

"If she likes me, she'll like my country," said Jackson Lemon, with decision.

"He tells me he has got a plate on his door," Lord Canterville remarked, humorously.

"We must talk to her, of course; we must understand how she feels," said his wife, looking more serious than she had done as yet.

"Please don't discourage her, Lady Canterville," the young man begged; "and give me a chance to talk to her a little more myself. You haven't given me much chance, you know."

"We don't offer our daughters to people, Mr. Lemon." Lady Canterville was always gentle, but now she was a little majestic.

"She isn't like some women in London, you know," said Jackson Lemon's host, who seemed to remember that to a discussion of such importance he ought from time to time to contribute a word of wisdom. And Jackson Lemon, certainly, if the idea had been presented to him, would have said that No, decidedly; Lady Barberina had not been thrown at him.

"Of course not," he declared, in answer to her mother's remark. "But, you know, you mustn't refuse them too much, either; you mustn't make a poor fellow wait too long. I admire her, I love her, more than I can say; I give you my word of honor for that."

"He seems to think that settles it," said Lord Canterville, smiling down at the young American, very pleasantly, from his place before the cold chimney-piece.

"Of course that's what we desire, Philip," her ladyship returned, very nobly.

"Lady Barb believes it; I am sure she does!" Jackson Lemon exclaimed. "Why should I pretend to be in love with her if I am not?"

Lady Canterville received this inquiry in silence, and her husband, with just the least air in the world of repressed impatience, began to walk up and down the room. He was a man of many engagements, and he had been closeted for more than a quarter of an hour with the young American doctor. "Do you imagine you should come often to England?" Lady Canterville demanded, with a certain abruptness, returning to that important point.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you that; of course we shall do whatever seems best." He was prepared to suppose they should cross the Atlantic every summer: that prospect was by no means displeasing to him; but he was not prepared to give any such pledge to Lady Canterville, especially as he did not believe it would really be necessary. It was in his mind, not as an overt pretension, but as a tacit implication, that he should treat with Barberina's parents on a footing of perfect equality; and there would somehow be nothing equal if he should begin to enter into engagements which didn't belong to the essence of the matter. They were to give their daughter, and he was to take her; in this arrangement there would be as much on one side as on the other. But beyond this he had nothing to ask of them; there was nothing he wished them to promise, and his own pledges, therefore, would have no equivalent. Whenever his wife should wish it, she should come over and see her people. Her home was to be in New York; but he was tacitly conscious that on the question of absences he should be very liberal. Nevertheless, there was something in the very grain of his character which forbade that he should commit himself at present in respect to times and dates.

Lady Canterville looked at her husband, but her husband was not attentive; he was taking a peep at his watch. In a moment, however, he threw out a remark to the effect that he thought it a capital thing that the two countries should become more united, and there was nothing that would bring it about better than a few of the best people on both sides pairing off together. The English, indeed, had begun it; a lot of fellows had brought over a lot of pretty girls, and it was quite fair play that the Americans should take their pick. They were all one race, after all, and why shouldn't they make one society,—the best on both sides, of course? Jackson Lemon smiled as he recognized Lady Mar-

maduke's philosophy, and he was pleased to think that Lady Beauchemin had some influence with her father; for he was sure the old gentleman (as he mentally designated his host) had got all this from her, though he expressed himself less happily than the cleverest of his daughters. Our hero had no objection to make to it, especially if there was anything in it that would really help his case. But it was not in the least on these high grounds that he had sought the hand of Lady Barb. He wanted her not in order that her people and his (the best on both sides!) should make one society; he wanted her simply because he wanted her. Lady Canterville smiled; but she seemed to have another thought.

"I quite appreciate what my husband says; but I don't see why poor Barb should be the one to begin."

"I dare say she'll like it," said Lord Canterville, as if he were attempting a short cut. "They say you spoil your women awfully."

"She's not one of their women yet," her ladyship remarked, in the sweetest tone in the world; and then she added, without Jackson Lemon's knowing exactly what she meant, "It seems so strange."

He was a little irritated; and perhaps these simple words added to the feeling. There had been no positive opposition to his suit, and Lord and Lady Canterville were most kind. But he felt that they held back a little; and though he had not expected them to throw themselves on his neck, he was rather disappointed; his pride was touched. Why should they hesitate? He considered himself such a good *parti*. It was not so much the old gentleman; it was Lady Canterville. As he saw the old gentleman look covertly a second time at his watch, he could have believed he would have been glad to settle the matter on the spot. Lady Canterville seemed to wish her daughter's lover to come forward more, to give certain assurances and guarantees. He felt that he was ready to say or do anything that was a matter of proper form; but he couldn't take the tone of trying to purchase her ladyship's consent, penetrated as he was with the conviction that such a man as he could be trusted to care for his wife rather more than an impecunious British peer and *his* wife could be supposed (with the lights he had acquired in English society) to care even for the handsomest of a dozen children. It was a mistake on Lady Canterville's part not to recognize that. He humored her mistake to the extent of saying, just a little dryly, "My wife shall certainly have everything she wants."

"He tells me he is disgustingly rich," Lord Canterville added, pausing before their companion, with his hands in his pockets.

"I am glad to hear it; but it isn't so much that," she answered, sinking back a little on her sofa. If it was not that, she did not say what it was, though she had looked for a moment as if she were going to. She only raised her eyes to her husband's face, as if to ask for inspiration. I know not whether she found it, but in a moment she said to Jackson Lemon, seeming to imply that it was quite another point: "Do you expect to continue your profession?"

He had no such intention, so far as his profession meant getting up at three o'clock in the morning to assuage the ills of humanity; but here, as before, the touch of such a question instantly stiffened him. "Oh, my profession! I am rather ashamed of that matter. I have neglected my work so much, I don't know what I shall be able to do, once I am really settled at home."

Lady Canterville received these remarks in silence, fixing her eyes again upon her husband's face. But this nobleman was really not helpful; still with his hands in his pockets, save when he needed to remove his cigar from his lips, he went and looked out of the window. "Of course we know you don't practice, and when you're a married man you will have less time even than now. But I should really like to know if they call you Doctor over there."

"Oh, yes, universally. We are nearly as fond of titles as your people."

"I don't call that a title."

"It's not so good as duke or marquis, I admit; but we have to take what we have got."

"Oh, bother, what does it signify?" Lord Canterville demanded, from his place at the window. "I used to have a horse named Doctor, and a devilish good one, too."

"You may call me bishop, if you like," said Jackson Lemon, laughing.

Lady Canterville looked grave, as if she did not enjoy this pleasantry. "I don't care for any titles," she observed; "I don't see why a gentleman shouldn't be called Mister."

It suddenly appeared to Jackson Lemon that there was something helpless, confused, and even slightly comical, in the position of this noble and amiable lady. The impression made him feel kindly; he, too, like Lord Canterville, had begun to long for a short cut. He relaxed a moment, and leaning toward his hostess, with a smile and his hands on his little knees, he said, softly: "It seems to me a question of no importance; all I desire is that you should call me your son-in-law."

Lady Canterville gave him her hand, and he pressed it almost affectionately. Then she got up, remarking that before anything was

decided she must see her daughter; she must learn from her own lips the state of her feelings.

"I don't like at all her not having spoken to me already," she added.

"Where has she gone—to Roehampton? I dare say she has told it all to her god-mother," said Lord Canterville.

"She won't have much to tell, poor girl!" Jackson Lemon exclaimed. "I must really insist upon seeing with more freedom the person I wish to marry."

"You shall have all the freedom you want in two or three days," said Lady Canterville. She smiled with all her sweetness; she appeared to have accepted him, and yet still to be making tacit assumptions. "Are there not certain things to be talked of first?"

"Certain things, dear lady?"

Lady Canterville looked at her husband, and, though he was still at his window, this time he felt it in her silence, and had to come away and speak. "Oh, she means settlements, and that kind of thing." This was an allusion which came with a much better grace from him.

Jackson Lemon looked from one of his companions to the other; he colored a little, and gave a smile that was perhaps a trifle fixed. "Settlements? We don't make them in the United States. You may be sure I shall make a proper provision for my wife."

"My dear fellow, over here—in our class, you know—it's the custom," said Lord Canterville, with a richer brightness in his face at the thought that the discussion was over.

"I have my own ideas," Jackson answered, smiling.

"It seems to me it's a question for the solicitors to discuss," Lady Canterville suggested.

"They may discuss it as much as they please," said Jackson Lemon, with a laugh. He thought he saw his solicitors discussing it! He had, indeed, his own ideas. He opened the door for Lady Canterville, and the three passed out of the room together, walking into the hall in a silence in which there was just a tinge of awkwardness. A note had been struck which grated and scratched a little. A pair of brilliant footmen, at their approach, rose from a bench to a great altitude, and stood there like sentinels presenting arms. Jackson Lemon stopped, looking for a moment into the interior of his hat, which he had in his hand. Then, raising his keen eyes, he fixed them a moment on those of Lady Canterville, addressing her instinctively, rather than her husband. "I guess you and Lord Canterville had better leave it to me!"

"We have our traditions, Mr. Lemon,"

said her ladyship, with nobleness. "I imagine you don't know ——" she murmured.

Lord Canterville laid his hand on the young man's shoulder.

"My dear boy, those fellows will settle it in three minutes."

"Very likely they will!" said Jackson Lemon.

Then he asked of Lady Canterville when he might see Lady Barb.

She hesitated a moment, in her gracious way. "I will write you a note."

One of the tall footmen, at the end of the impressive vista, had opened wide the portals, as if even he were aware of the dignity to which the little visitor had virtually been raised. But Jackson lingered a moment; he was visibly unsatisfied, though apparently so little unconscious that he was unsatisfying.

"I don't think you understand me."

"Your ideas are certainly different," said Lady Canterville.

"If the girl understands you, that's enough!" Lord Canterville exclaimed in a jovial, detached, irrelevant way.

"May not *she* write to me?" Jackson asked of her mother. "I certainly must write to her, you know, if you wont let me see her."

"Oh, yes; you may write to her, Mr. Lemon."

There was a point for a moment in the look that he gave Lady Canterville, while he said to himself that if it were necessary he would transmit his notes through the old lady at Roehampton.

"All right; good-bye. You know what I want, at any rate." Then, as he was going, he turned and added: "You needn't be afraid that I wont bring her over in the hot weather!"

"In the hot weather?" Lady Canterville murmured, with vague visions of the torrid zone, while the young American quitted the house with the sense that he had made great concessions.

His host and hostess passed into a small morning-room, and (Lord Canterville having taken up his hat and stick to go out again) stood there a moment, face to face.

"It's clear enough he wants her," said his lordship, in a summary manner.

"There's something so odd about him," Lady Canterville answered. "Fancy his speaking so about settlements!"

"You had better give him his head; he'll go much quieter."

"He's so obstinate — very obstinate; it's easy to see that. And he seems to think a girl in your daughter's position can be married from one day to the other — with a ring and a new frock — like a housemaid."

"Well, of course, over there, that's the

kind of thing. But he seems really to have a most extraordinary fortune; and every one does say their women have *carte-blanche*."

"*Carte-blanche* is not what Barb wishes; she wishes a settlement. She wants a definite income; she wants to be safe."

Lord Canterville stared a moment. "Has she told you so? I thought you said ——" And then he stopped. "I beg your pardon," he added.

Lady Canterville gave no explanation of her inconsistency. She went on to remark that American fortunes were notoriously insecure; one heard of nothing else; they melted away like smoke. It was their duty to their child to demand that something should be fixed.

"He has a million and a half sterling," said Lord Canterville. "I can't make out what he does with it."

"She ought to have something very handsome," his wife remarked.

"Well, my dear, you must settle it; you must consider it; you must send for Hilary. Only take care you don't put him off; it may be a very good opening, you know. There is a great deal to be done out there; I believe in all that," Lord Canterville went on, in the tone of a conscientious parent.

"There is no doubt that he *is* a doctor — in those places," said Lady Canterville, musingly.

"He may be a peddler for all I care."

"If they should go out, I think Agatha might go with them," her ladyship continued, in the same tone, a little disconnectedly.

"You may send them all out if you like. Good-bye!" And Lord Canterville kissed his wife.

But she detained him a moment, with her hand on his arm. "Don't you think he is very much in love?"

"Oh, yes, he's very bad; but he is a clever little beggar."

"She likes him very much," Lady Canterville announced, rather formally, as they separated.

#### IV.

JACKSON LEMON had said to Sidney Feeder in the Park that he would call on Mr. and Mrs. Freer; but three weeks elapsed before he knocked at their door in Jermyn street. In the mean time he had met them at dinner, and Mrs. Freer had told him that she hoped very much he would find time to come and see her. She had not reproached him, nor shaken her finger at him; and her clemency, which was calculated, and very characteristic of her, touched him so much (for he was in

fault; she was one of his mother's oldest and best friends) that he very soon presented himself. It was on a fine Sunday afternoon, rather late, and the region of Jermyn street looked forsaken and inanimate; the native dullness of the landscape appeared in all its purity. Mrs. Freer, however, was at home, resting on a lodging-house sofa—an angular couch, draped in faded chintz—before she went to dress for dinner. She made the young man very welcome; she told him she had been thinking of him a great deal; she had wished to have a chance to talk with him. He immediately perceived what she had in mind, and then he remembered that Sidney Feeder had told him what it was that Mr. and Mrs. Freer took upon themselves to say. This had provoked him at the time, but he had forgotten it afterward,—partly because he became aware, that same evening, that he did wish to marry the “young marchioness,” and partly because since then he had had much greater annoyances. Yes, the poor young man, so conscious of liberal intentions, of a large way of looking at the future, had had much to irritate and disgust him. He had seen the mistress of his affections but three or four times, and he had received letters from Mr. Hilary, Lord Canterville's solicitor, asking him, in terms the most obsequious, it is true, to designate some gentleman of the law with whom the preliminaries of his marriage to Lady Barberina Clement might be arranged. He had given Mr. Hilary the name of such a functionary, but he had written by the same post to his own solicitor (for whose services in other matters he had had much occasion, Jackson Lemon being distinctly contentious), instructing him that he was at liberty to meet Mr. Hilary, but not at liberty to entertain any proposals as to this odious English idea of a settlement. If marrying Jackson Lemon were not settlement enough, then Lord and Lady Canterville had better alter their point of view. It was quite out of the question that he should alter his. It would perhaps be difficult to explain the strong aversion that he entertained to the introduction into his prospective union of this harsh diplomatic element; it was as if they mistrusted him, suspected him; as if his hands were to be tied, so that he could not handle his own fortune as he thought best. It was not the idea of parting with his money that displeased him, for he flattered himself that he had plans of expenditure for his wife beyond even the imagination of her distinguished parents. It struck him even that they were fools not to have perceived that they should make a much better thing of it by leaving him perfectly free. This intervention of the solicitor was a

nasty little English tradition—totally at variance with the large spirit of American habits—to which he would not submit. It was not his way to submit when he disapproved: why should he change his way on this occasion, when the matter lay so near him? These reflections, and a hundred more, had flowed freely through his mind for several days before he called in Jermyn street, and they had engendered a lively indignation and a really bitter sense of wrong. As may be imagined, they had infused a certain awkwardness into his relations with the house of Canterville, and it may be said of these relations that they were for the moment virtually suspended. His first interview with Lady Barb, after his conference with the old couple, as he called her august elders, had been as tender as he could have desired. Lady Canterville at the end of three days had sent him an invitation—five words on a card—asking him to dine with them to-morrow, quite *en famille*. This had been the only formal intimation that his engagement to Lady Barb was recognized; for even at the family banquet, which included half a dozen outsiders, there had been no allusion on the part either of his host or his hostess to the subject of their conversation in Lord Canterville's den. The only allusion was a wandering ray, once or twice, in Lady Barberina's eyes. When, however, after dinner, she strolled away with him into the music-room, which was lighted and empty, to play for him something out of *Carmen*, of which he had spoken at table, and when the young couple were allowed to enjoy for upward of an hour, unmolested, the comparative privacy of this rich apartment, he felt that Lady Canterville definitely counted upon him. She didn't believe in any serious difficulties. Neither did he, then; and that was why it was a nuisance there should be a vain appearance of them. The arrangements, he supposed Lady Canterville would have said, were pending; and indeed they were, for he had already given orders in Bond street for the setting of an extraordinary number of diamonds. Lady Barb, at any rate, during that hour he spent with her, had had nothing to say about arrangements; and it had been an hour of pure satisfaction. She had seated herself at the piano and had played perpetually, in a soft, incoherent manner, while he leaned over the instrument, very close to her, and said everything that came into his head. She was very bright and serene, and she looked at him as if she liked him very much.

This was all he expected of her, for it did not belong to the cast of her beauty to betray a vulgar infatuation. That beauty was more delightful to him than ever; and there was a

softness about her which seemed to say to him that from this moment she was quite his own. He felt more than ever the value of such a possession; it came over him more than ever that it had taken a great social outlay to produce such a mixture. Simple and girlish as she was, and not particularly quick in the give and take of conversation, she seemed to him to have a part of the history of England in her blood; she was a *résumé* of generations of privileged people, and of centuries of rich country life. Between these two, of course, there was no allusion to the question which had been put into the hands of Mr. Hilary, and the last thing that occurred to Jackson Lemon was that Lady Barb had views as to his settling a fortune upon her before their marriage. It may appear singular, but he had not asked himself whether his money operated upon her in any degree as a bribe; and this was because, instinctively, he felt that such a speculation was idle,—the point was not to be ascertained,—and because he was willing to assume that it was agreeable to her that she should continue to live in luxury. It was eminently agreeable to him that he might enable her to do so. He was acquainted with the mingled character of human motives, and he was glad that he was rich enough to pretend to the hand of a young woman who, for the best of reasons, would be very expensive. After that happy hour in the music-room, he had ridden with her twice; but he had not found her otherwise accessible. She had let him know, the second time they rode, that Lady Canterville had directed her to make, for the moment, no further appointment with him; and on his presenting himself more than once at the house, he had been told that neither the mother nor the daughter was at home; it had been added that Lady Barberina was staying at Roehampton. On giving him that information in the Park, Lady Barb had looked at him with a mute reproach,—there was always a certain superior dumbness in her eyes,—as if he were exposing her to an annoyance that she ought to be spared; as if he were taking an eccentric line on a question that all well-bred people treated in the conventional way. His induction from this was not that she wished to be secure about his money, but that, like a dutiful English daughter, she received her opinions (on points that were indifferent to her) ready-made from a mamma whose fallibility had never been exposed. He knew by this that his solicitor had answered Mr. Hilary's letter, and that Lady Canterville's coolness was the fruit of this correspondence. The effect of it was not in the least to make him come round, as he phrased

it; he had not the smallest intention of doing that. Lady Canterville had spoken of the traditions of her family; but he had no need to go to his family for his own. They resided within himself; anything that he had definitely made up his mind to, acquired in an hour the force of a tradition. Meanwhile, he was in the detestable position of not knowing whether or no he were engaged. He wrote to Lady Barb to inquire,—it being so strange that she should not receive him; and she answered in a very pretty little letter, which had, to his mind, a sort of by-gone quality—an old-fashioned freshness, as if it might have been written in the last century by Clarissa or Amelia. She answered that she did not in the least understand the situation; that, of course, she would never give him up; that her mother had said that there were the best reasons for their not going too fast; that, thank God, she was yet young, and could wait as long as he would; but that she begged he wouldn't write her anything about money-matters, as she could never comprehend them. Jackson felt that he was in no danger whatever of making this last mistake; he only noted how Lady Barb thought it natural that there should be a discussion; and this made it vivid to him afresh that he had got hold of a daughter of the Crusaders. His ingenious mind could appreciate this hereditary assumption perfectly, at the same time that, to light his own footsteps, it remained entirely modern. He believed—or he thought he believed—that in the end he should marry Barberina Clement on his own terms; but in the interval there was a sensible indignity in being challenged and checked. One effect of it, indeed, was to make him desire the girl more keenly. When she was not before his eyes in the flesh, she hovered before him as an image; and this image had reasons of its own for being a radiant picture. There were moments, however, when he wearied of looking at it; it was so impalpable and thankless; and then Jackson Lemon, for the first time in his life, was melancholy. He felt alone in London, and very much out of it, in spite of all the acquaintances he had made, and the bills he had paid; he felt the need of a greater intimacy than any he had formed (save, of course, in the case of Lady Barb). He wanted to vent his disgust, to relieve himself, from the American point of view. He felt that in engaging in a contest with the great house of Canterville, he was, after all, rather single. That singleness was, of course, in a great measure, an inspiration; but it pinched him a little at moments. Then he wished his mother had been in London, for he used to talk of his affairs a great deal with this delightful

parent, who had a soothing way of advising him in the sense he liked best. He had even gone so far as to wish he had never laid eyes on Lady Barb, and had fallen in love with some transatlantic maiden of a similar composition. He presently came back, of course, to the knowledge that in the United States there was—and there could be—nothing similar to Lady Barb; for was it not precisely as a product of the English climate and the British constitution that he valued her? He had relieved himself, from his American point of view, by speaking his mind to Lady Beauchemin, who confessed that she was very much vexed with her parents. She agreed with him that they had made a great mistake; they ought to have left him free; and she expressed her confidence that that freedom would be for her family, as it were, like the silence of the sage,—golden. He must excuse them; he must remember that what was asked of him had been their custom for centuries. She did not mention her authority as to the origin of customs, but she assured him that she would say three words to her father and mother which would make it all right. Jackson answered that customs were all very well, but that intelligent people recognized, when they saw it, the right occasion for departing from them; and with this he awaited the result of Lady Beauchemin's remonstrance. It had not as yet been perceptible, and it must be said that this charming woman was herself much bothered. When, on her venturing to say to her mother that she thought a wrong line had been taken with regard to her sister's *prétendant*, Lady Canterville had replied that Mr. Lemon's unwillingness to settle anything was in itself a proof of what they had feared, the unstable nature of his fortune (for it was useless to talk,—this gracious lady could be very decided,—there could be no serious reason but that one). On meeting this argument, as I say, Jackson's protectress felt considerably baffled. It was perhaps true, as her mother said, that if they didn't insist upon proper guarantees, Barberina might be left in a few years with nothing but the stars and stripes (this odd phrase was a quotation from Mr. Lemon) to cover her. Lady Beauchemin tried to reason it out with Lady Marmaduke; but these were complications unforeseen by Lady Marmaduke in her project of an Anglo-American society. She was obliged to confess that Mr. Lemon's fortune could not have the solidity of long-established things; it was a very new fortune indeed. His father had made the greater part of it all in a lump, a few years before his death, in the extraordinary way in which people made money in America; that,

of course, was why the son had those singular professional attributes. He had begun to study to be a doctor very young, before his expectations were so great. Then he had found he was very clever, and very fond of it. And he had kept on, because, after all, in America, where there were no country gentlemen, a young man had to have something to do, don't you know? And Lady Marmaduke, like an enlightened woman, intimated that in such a case she thought it in much better taste not to try to sink anything. "Because, in America, don't you see," she reasoned, "you can't sink it—nothing *will* sink. Everything is floating about—in the newspapers." And she tried to console her friend by remarking that if Mr. Lemon's fortune was precarious, it was, at all events, so big. That was just the trouble for Lady Beauchemin; it was so big, and yet they were going to lose it. He was as obstinate as a mule; she was sure he would never come round. Lady Marmaduke declared that he would come round; she even offered to bet a dozen pair of *gants de Suède* on it; and she added that this consummation lay quite in the hands of Barberina. Lady Beauchemin promised herself to converse with her sister; for it was not for nothing that she herself had felt the international contagion.

Jackson Lemon, to dissipate his chagrin, had returned to the sessions of the medical congress, where, inevitably, he had fallen into the hands of Sidney Feeder, who enjoyed in this disinterested assembly a high popularity. It was Dr. Feeder's earnest desire that his old friend should share it, which was all the more easy as the medical congress was really, as the young physician observed, a perpetual symposium. Jackson Lemon entertained the whole body—entertained it profusely, and in a manner befitting one of the patrons of science rather than its humbler votaries; but these dissipations only made him forget for a moment that his relations with the house of Canterville were anomalous. His great difficulty punctually came back to him, and Sidney Feeder saw it stamped upon his brow. Jackson Lemon, with his acute inclination to open himself, was on the point, more than once, of taking the sympathetic Sidney into his confidence. His friend gave him easy opportunity; he asked him what it was he was thinking of all the time, and whether the young marchioness had concluded she couldn't swallow a doctor. These forms of speech were displeasing to Jackson Lemon, whose fastidiousness was nothing new; but it was for even deeper reasons that he said to himself that, for such complicated cases as his, there was no assistance in Sidney Feeder.

To understand his situation, one must know the world; and the child of Cincinnati didn't know the world,—at least the world with which his friend was now concerned.

"Is there a hitch in your marriage? Just tell me that," Sidney Feeder had said, taking everything for granted, in a manner which was in itself a proof of great innocence. It is true he had added that he supposed he had no business to ask; but he had been anxious about it ever since hearing from Mr. and Mrs. Freer that the British aristocracy was down on the medical profession. "Do they want you to give it up? Is that what the hitch is about? Don't desert your colors, Jackson. The repression of pain, the mitigation of misery, constitute surely the noblest profession in the world."

"My dear fellow, you don't know what you are talking about," Jackson observed, for answer to this. "I haven't told any one I was going to be married; still less have I told any one that any one objected to my profession. I should like to see them do it. I have got out of the swim to-day, but I don't regard myself as the sort of person that people object to. And I do expect to do something yet."

"Come home, then, and do it. And excuse me if I say that the facilities for getting married are much greater over there."

"You don't seem to have found them very great."

"I have never had time. Wait till my next vacation, and you will see."

"The facilities over there are too great. Nothing is good but what is difficult," said Jackson Lemon, in a tone of artificial sententiousness that quite tormented his interlocutor.

"Well, they have got their backs up; I can see that. I'm glad you like it. Only, if they despise your profession, what will they say to that of your friends? If they think you are queer, what would they think of me?" asked Sidney Feeder, the turn of whose mind was not, as a general thing, in the least sarcastic, but who was pushed to this sharpness by a conviction that (in spite of declarations which seemed half an admission and half a denial) his friend was suffering himself to be bothered for the sake of a good which might be obtained elsewhere without bother. It had come over him that the bother was of an unworthy kind.

"My dear fellow, all that is idiotic." That had been Jackson Lemon's reply; but it expressed but a portion of his thoughts. The rest was inexpressible, or almost; being connected with a sentiment of rage at its having struck even so genial a mind as Sidney Feeder's, that in proposing to marry a daughter of the highest civilization he was going out of his way—departing from his natural

line. Was he then so ignoble, so pledged to inferior things, that when he saw a girl who (putting aside the fact that she had not genius, which was rare, and which, though he prized rarity, he didn't want) seemed to him the most complete feminine nature he had known, he was to think himself too different, too incongruous, to mate with her? He would mate with whom he chose; that was the upshot of Jackson Lemon's reflections. Several days elapsed, during which everybody—even the pure-minded, like Sidney Feeder—seemed to him very abject.

I relate all this to show why it was that in going to see Mrs. Freer he was prepared much less to be angry with people who, like the Dexter Freers, a month before, had given it out that he was engaged to a peer's daughter, than to resent the insinuation that there were obstacles to such a prospect. He sat with Mrs. Freer alone for half an hour, in the sabbatical stillness of Jermyn street. Her husband had gone for a walk in the Park; he always walked in the Park on Sunday. All the world might have been there, and Jackson and Mrs. Freer in sole possession of the district of St. James's. This perhaps had something to do with making him at last rather confidential; the influences were conciliatory, persuasive. Mrs. Freer was extremely sympathetic; she treated him like a person she had known from the age of ten; asked his leave to continue recumbent; talked a great deal about his mother; and seemed almost, for a while, to perform the kindly functions of that lady. It had been wise of her from the first not to allude, even indirectly, to his having neglected so long to call; her silence on this point was in the best taste. Jackson Lemon had forgotten that it was a habit with her, and indeed a high accomplishment, never to reproach people with these omissions. You might have left her alone for two years, her greeting was always the same; she was never either too delighted to see you, or not delighted enough. After a while, however, he perceived that her silence had been to a certain extent a reference; she appeared to take for granted that he devoted all his hours to a certain young lady. It came over him, for a moment, that his country people took a great deal for granted; but when Mrs. Freer, rather abruptly, sitting up on her sofa, said to him, half simply, half solemnly, "And now, my dear Jackson, I want you to tell me something!" he perceived that, after all, she didn't pretend to know more about the impending matter than he himself did. In the course of a quarter of an hour—so appreciatively she listened—he had told her a good deal about it. It was the first time he



had said so much to any one, and the process relieved him even more than he would have supposed. It made certain things clear to him, by bringing them to a point—above all, the fact that he had been wronged. He made no allusion whatever to its being out of the usual way that, as an American doctor, he should sue for the hand of a marquis's daughter; and this reserve was not voluntary, it was quite unconscious. His mind was too full of the offensive conduct of the Cantervilles, and the sordid side of their want of confidence. He could not imagine that while he talked to Mrs. Freer—and it amazed him afterward that he should have chattered so; he could account for it only by the state of his nerves—she should be thinking only of the strangeness of the situation he sketched for her. She thought Americans as good as other people, but she didn't see where, in American life, the daughter of a marquis would, as she phrased it, work in. To take a simple instance,—they coursed through Mrs. Freer's mind with extraordinary speed,—would she not always expect to go in to dinner first? As a novelty, over there, they might like to see her do it at first; there might be even a pressure for places for the spectacle. But with the increase of every kind of sophistication that was taking place in America, the humorous view to which she would owe her safety might not continue to be taken; and then where would Lady Barberina be? This was but a small instance; but Mrs. Freer's vivid imagination—much as she had lived in Europe, she knew her native land so well—saw a host of others massing themselves behind it. The consequence of all of which was that, after listening to him in the most engaging silence, she raised her clasped hands, pressed them against her breast, lowered her voice to a tone of entreaty, and with her perpetual little smile uttered three words: "My dear Jackson, don't—don't—don't."

"Don't what?" he asked, staring.

"Don't neglect the chance you have of getting out of it; it would never do."

He knew what she meant by his chance of getting out of it; in his many meditations he had, of course, not overlooked that. The ground the old couple had taken about settlements (and the fact that Lady Beauchemin had not come back to him to tell him, as she promised, that she had moved them, proved how firmly they were rooted) would have offered an all-sufficient pretext to a man who should have repented of his advances. Jackson Lemon knew that; but he knew at the same time that he had not repented. The old couple's want of imagination did not in

the least alter the fact that Barberina was, as he had told her father, a beautiful type. Therefore, he simply said to Mrs. Freer that he didn't in the least wish to get out of it; he was as much in it as ever, and he intended to remain there. But what did she mean, he inquired in a moment, by her statement that it would never do? Why wouldn't it do? Mrs. Freer replied by another inquiry: Should he really like her to tell him? It wouldn't do, because Lady Barb would not be satisfied with her place at dinner. She would not be content—in a society of commoners—with any but the best; and the best she could not expect (and it was to be supposed that he did not expect her) always to have.

"What do you mean by commoners?" Jackson Lemon demanded, looking very serious.

"I mean you, and me, and my poor husband, and Dr. Feeder," said Mrs. Freer.

"I don't see how there can be commoners where there are not lords. It is the lord that makes the commoner, and *vice versa*."

"Wont a lady do as well? Lady Barberina—a single English girl—can make a million inferiors."

"She will be, before anything else, my wife; and she will not talk about inferiors any more than I do. I never do; it's very vulgar."

"I don't know what she'll talk about, my dear Jackson, but she will think; and her thoughts wont be pleasant,—I mean for others. Do you expect to sink her to your own rank?"

Jackson Lemon's bright little eyes were fixed more brightly than ever upon his hostess. "I don't understand you; and I don't think you understand yourself." This was not absolutely candid, for he did understand Mrs. Freer to a certain extent; it has been related that before he asked Lady Barb's hand of her parents there had been moments when he himself was not very sure that the flower of the British aristocracy would flourish in American soil. But an intimation from another person that it was beyond his power to pass off his wife—whether she were the daughter of a peer or of a shoe-maker—set all his blood on fire. It quenched on the instant his own perception of difficulties of detail, and made him feel only that he was dishonored—he, the heir of all the ages—by such insinuations. It was his belief—though he had never before had occasion to put it forward—that his position, one of the best in the world, was one of those positions that make everything possible. He had had the best education the age could offer; for, if he had rather wasted his time at Harvard,

where he entered very young, he had, as he believed, been tremendously serious at Heidelberg and at Vienna. He had devoted himself to one of the noblest of professions, a profession recognized as such everywhere but in England; and he had inherited a fortune far beyond the expectation of his earlier years, the years when he cultivated habits of work, which alone—or, rather, in combination with talents that he neither exaggerated nor minimized—would have conducted to distinction. He was one of the most fortunate inhabitants of an immense, fresh, rich country, a country whose future was admitted to be incalculable, and he moved with perfect ease in a society in which he was not overshadowed by others. It seemed to him, therefore, beneath his dignity to wonder whether he could afford, socially speaking, to marry according to his taste. Jackson Lemon pretended to be strong; and what was the use of being strong if you were not prepared to undertake things that timid people might find difficult? It was his plan to marry the woman he liked, and not to be afraid of her afterward. The effect of Mrs. Freer's doubt of his success was to represent to him that his own character would not cover his wife's; she couldn't have made him feel otherwise if she had told him that he was marrying beneath him, and would have to ask for indulgence. "I don't believe you know how much I think that any woman who marries me will be doing very well," he added directly.

"I am very sure of that; but it isn't so simple—one's being an American," Mrs. Freer rejoined, with a little philosophic sigh.

"It's whatever one chooses to make it."

"Well, you'll make it what no one has done yet, if you take that young lady to America and make her happy there."

"Do you think it's such a very dreadful place?"

"No, indeed; but she will."

Jackson Lemon got up from his chair, and took up his hat and stick. He had actually turned a little pale with the force of his emotion; it had made him really quiver that his marriage to Lady Barberina should be looked at as too high a flight. He stood a moment leaning against the mantel-piece, and very much tempted to say to Mrs. Freer that she was a vulgar-minded old woman. But he said something that was really more to the point: "You forget that she will have her consolations."

"Don't go away, or I shall think I have offended you. You can't console a wounded marchioness."

"How will she be wounded? People will be charming to her."

"They will be charming to her—charming

to her!" These words fell from the lips of Dexter Freer, who had opened the door of the room and stood with the knob in his hand, putting himself into relation to his wife's talk with their visitor. This was accomplished in an instant. "Of course I know whom you mean," he said, while he exchanged greetings with Jackson Lemon. "My wife and I—of course you know we are great busybodies—have talked of your affair, and we differ about it completely; she sees only the dangers, and I see the advantages."

"By the advantages he means the fun for us," Mrs. Freer remarked, settling her sofa-cushions.

Jackson looked with a certain sharp blankness from one of these disinterested judges to the other; and even yet they did not perceive how their misdirected familiarities wrought upon him. It was hardly more agreeable to him to know that the husband wished to see Lady Barb in America, than to know that the wife had a dread of such a vision; for there was that in Dexter Freer's face which seemed to say that the thing would take place somehow for the benefit of the spectators. "I think you both see too much,—a great deal too much," he answered, rather coldly.

"My dear young man, at my age I can take certain liberties," said Dexter Freer. "Do it—I beseech you to do it; it has never been done before." And then, as if Jackson's glance had challenged this last assertion, he went on: "Never, I assure you, this particular thing. Young female members of the British aristocracy have married coachmen and fish-mongers, and all that sort of thing; but they have never married you and me."

"They certainly haven't married you," said Mrs. Freer.

"I am much obliged to you for your advice." It may be thought that Jackson Lemon took himself rather seriously; and, indeed, I am afraid that if he had not done so there would have been no occasion for my writing this little history. But it made him almost sick to hear his engagement spoken of as a curious and ambiguous phenomenon. He might have his own ideas about it—one always had about one's engagement; but the ideas that appeared to have peopled the imagination of his friends ended by kindling a little hot spot on each of his cheeks. I would rather not talk any more about my little plans," he added to Dexter Freer. "I have been saying all sorts of absurd things to Mrs. Freer."

"They have been most interesting," that lady declared. "You have been very stupidly treated."

"May she tell me, when you go?" her husband asked of the young man.

"I am going now; she may tell you whatever she likes."

"I am afraid we have displeased you," said Mrs. Freer; "I have said too much what I think. You must excuse me; it's all for your mother."

"It's she that I want Lady Barberina to see!" Jackson Lemon exclaimed, with the inconsequence of filial affection.

"Deary me!" murmured Mrs. Freer.

"We shall go back to America to see how you get on," her husband said; "and if you succeed, it will be a great precedent."

"Oh, I shall succeed!" And with this he took his departure. He walked away with the quick step of a man laboring under a certain excitement; walked up to Piccadilly and down past Hyde Park Corner. It relieved him to traverse these distances, for he was thinking hard under the influence of irritation, and locomotion helped him to think. Certain suggestions that had been made him in the last half-hour rankled in his mind, all

the more that they seemed to have a kind of representative value, to be an echo of the common voice. If his prospects wore that face to Mrs. Freer, they would probably wear it to others; and he felt a sudden need of showing such others that they took a pitiful measure of his position. Jackson Lemon walked and walked till he found himself on the highway of Hammersmith. I have represented him as a young man of much strength of purpose, and I may appear to undermine this plea when I relate that he wrote that evening to his solicitor that Mr. Hilary was to be informed that he would agree to any proposals for settlements that Mr. Hilary should make. Jackson's strength of purpose was shown in his deciding to marry Lady Barberina on any terms. It seemed to him, under the influence of his desire to prove that he was not afraid,—so odious was the imputation,—that terms of any kind were very superficial things. What was fundamental, and of the essence of the matter, would be to marry Lady Barb and carry everything out.

(To be continued.)

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## COMMERCE IN THE COLONIES.\*

BY EDWARD EGGLESTON.

### I. FISHERIES.

IN the first years of the sixteenth century, while yet Englishmen were for the most part home-stayers, and England was an island nation without colonies, and having little foreign trade and no naval force worth considering, a few adventurous seamen from the west country began in a small way the English fisheries at Newfoundland. The development of this enterprise was a turning-point in the history of the English race. By these distant fisheries a great number of seamen were trained, and larger ships than the small craft then in use were gradually produced. This increase of her maritime resources enabled England to hold her own against the ambitious encroachments of Spain, to plant and sustain colonies in America, and at length to become the leading commercial and naval power of the world, with extended possessions in remote quarters of the globe. "For the increase of fishermen and marines," kings and parliaments resorted to the curious expedient of forbidding English subjects to eat

anything but fish on one hundred and fifty-three days in the year.

At the very beginning of New England settlement, Captain John Smith saw that the breath was out of the old motives of gold mines, pearl fisheries, and passages to China. "The main staple from hence to produce the rest is fish," he says bluntly; but lest this motive should prove too prosaic, he adds that "never could Spaniard, with all his mines of gold and silver, pay his debts, his friends, and his army, half so truly as the Hollanders still have done by this contemptible trade of fish." Cod-fishing was, indeed, the means by which the English approached the New England coast. The fishermen on that coast were after a while exempted from paying "Christ's dole," an old duty exacted by the parsons from those who followed the apostles' earlier trade.

The rapid growth of the cod and mackerel fisheries gave New England a staple for foreign trade; and while the young men of the other provinces were engaged in opening new land, large numbers of the New Eng-

## LADY BARBERINA.\*

BY HENRY JAMES,

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v.

"On Sundays, now, you might be at home," Jackson Lemon said to his wife in the following month of March, more than six months after his marriage.

"Are the people any nicer on Sundays than they are on other days?" Lady Barberina replied, from the depths of her chair, without looking up from a stiff little book.

He hesitated a single instant before answering:

"I don't know whether they are, but I think you might be."

"I'm as nice as I know how to be. You must take me as I am. You knew when you married me that I was not an American."

Jackson Lemon stood before the fire, toward which his wife's face was turned and her feet were extended; stood there some time, with his hands behind him, and his eyes dropped a little obliquely upon the bent head and richly draped figure of Lady Barberina. It may be said without delay that he was irritated, and it may be added that he had a double cause. He felt himself to be on the verge of the first crisis that had occurred between himself and his wife,—the reader will perceive that it had occurred rather promptly,—and he was annoyed at his annoyance. A glimpse of his state of mind before his marriage has been given to the reader, who will remember that at that period Jackson Lemon somehow regarded himself as lifted above possibilities of irritation. When one was strong, one was not irritable; and a union with a kind of goddess would, of course, be an element of strength. Lady Barb was a goddess still, and Jackson Lemon admired his wife as much as on the day he led her to the altar; but I am not sure that he felt as strong.

"How do you know what people are?" he said in a moment. "You have seen so few; you are perpetually denying yourself. If you should leave New York to-morrow, you would know wonderfully little about it."

"It's all the same," said Lady Barb; "the people are all exactly alike."

"How can you tell? You never see them."

"Didn't I go out every night for the first two months we were here?"

"It was only to about a dozen houses,—always the same; people, moreover, you had already met in London. You have got no general impressions."

"That's just what I have got; I had them before I came. Every one is just the same; they have just the same names—just the same manners."

Again, for an instant, Jackson Lemon hesitated; then he said, in that apparently artless tone of which mention has already been made, and which he sometimes used in London during his wooing:

"Don't you like it over here?"

Lady Barb raised her eyes from her book.

"Did you expect me to like it?"

"I hoped you would, of course. I think I told you so."

"I don't remember. You said very little about it; you seemed to make a kind of mystery. I knew, of course, you expected me to live here; but I didn't know you expected me to like it."

"You thought I asked of you the sacrifice, as it were."

"I am sure I don't know," said Lady Barb. She got up from her chair and tossed the volume she had been reading into the empty seat. "I recommend you to read that book," she added.

"Is it interesting?"

"It's an American novel."

"I never read novels."

"You had better look at that one; it will show you the kind of people you want me to know."

"I have no doubt it's very vulgar," said Jackson Lemon; "I don't see why you read it."

"What else can I do? I can't always be riding in the Park; I hate the Park," Lady Barb remarked.

"It's quite as good as your own," said her husband.

She glanced at him with a certain quickness, her eyebrows slightly lifted. "Do you mean the park at Pasterns?"

"No; I mean the park in London."

"I don't care about London. One was only in London a few weeks."

"I suppose you miss the country," said Jackson Lemon. It was his idea of life that

he should not be afraid of anything,—not be afraid, in any situation, of knowing the worst that was to be known about it; and the demon of a courage with which discretion was not properly commingled prompted him to take soundings which were perhaps not absolutely necessary for safety, and yet which revealed unmistakable rocks. It was useless to know about rocks if he couldn't avoid them; the only thing was to trust to the wind.

"I don't know what I miss. I think I miss everything!" This was his wife's answer to his too-curious inquiry. It was not peevish, for that is not the tone of a goddess; but it expressed a good deal—a good deal more than Lady Barb, who was rarely eloquent, had expressed before. Nevertheless, though his question had been precipitate, Jackson Lemon said to himself that he might take his time to think over what his wife's little speech contained; he could not help seeing that the future would give him abundant opportunity for that. He was in no hurry to ask himself whether poor Mrs. Freer, in Jermyn street, might not, after all, have been right in saying that, in regard to marrying the product of an English caste, it was not so simple to be an American doctor—might avail little even, in such a case, to be the heir of all the ages. The transition was complicated, but in his bright mind it was rapid, from the brush of a momentary contact with such ideas to certain considerations which led him to say, after an instant, to his wife, "Should you like to go down into Connecticut?"

"Into Connecticut?"

"That's one of our States; it's about as large as Ireland. I'll take you there if you like."

"What does one do there?"

"We can try and get some hunting."

"You and I alone?"

"Perhaps we can get a party to join us."

"The people in the State?"

"Yes; we might propose it to them."

"The tradespeople in the towns?"

"Very true; they will have to mind their shops," said Jackson Lemon. "But we might hunt alone."

"Are there any foxes?"

"No; but there are a few old cows."

Lady Barb had already perceived that her husband took it into his head once in a while to laugh at her, and she was aware that the present occasion was neither worse nor better than some others. She didn't mind it particularly now, though in England it would have disgusted her; she had the consciousness of virtue,—an immense comfort,—and flattered herself that she had learned the lesson of an altered standard of fitness; there were, moreover, so many more disagreeable things in

America than being laughed at by one's husband. But she pretended to mind it, because it made him stop; and above all it stopped discussion, which with Jackson was so often jocular, and none the less tiresome for that. "I only want to be left alone," she said, in answer—though, indeed, it had not the manner of an answer—to his speech about the cows. With this she wandered away to one of the windows which looked out in the Fifth Avenue. She was very fond of these windows, and she had taken a great fancy to the Fifth Avenue, which, in the high-pitched winter weather, when everything sparkled, was a spectacle full of novelty. It will be seen that she was not wholly unjust to her adoptive country: she found it delightful to look out of the window. This was a pleasure she had enjoyed in London only in the most furtive manner; it was not the kind of thing that girls did in England. Besides, in London, in Hill street, there was nothing particular to see; but in the Fifth Avenue everything and every one went by, and observation was made consistent with dignity by the quantities of brocade and lace in which the windows were draped, which, somehow, would not have been tidy in England, and which made an ambush without concealing the brilliant day. Hundreds of women—the curious women of New York, who were unlike any that Lady Barb had hitherto seen—passed the house every hour; and her ladyship was infinitely entertained and mystified by the sight of their clothes. She spent a good deal more time than she was aware of in this amusement; and if she had been addicted to returning upon herself, or asking herself for an account of her conduct,—an inquiry which she did not, indeed, completely neglect, but treated very cursorily,—it would have made her smile sadly to think what she appeared mainly to have come to America for, conscious though she was that her tastes were very simple, and that so long as she didn't hunt it didn't much matter what she did.

Her husband turned about to the fire, giving a push with his foot to a log that had fallen out of its place. Then he said,—and the connection with the words she had just uttered was apparent enough,—“You really must be at home on Sundays, you know. I used to like that so much in London. All the best women here do it. You had better begin to-day. I am going to see my mother; if I meet any one, I will tell them to come.”

“Tell them not to talk so much,” said Lady Barb, among her lace curtains.

“Ah, my dear,” her husband replied, “it isn't every one that has your concision.” And he went and stood behind her in the window,

putting his arm around her waist. It was as much of a satisfaction to him as it had been six months before, at the time the solicitors were settling the matter, that this flower of an ancient stem should be worn upon his own breast; he still thought its fragrance a thing quite apart, and it was as clear as day to him that his wife was the handsomest woman in New York. He had begun, after their arrival, by telling her this very often; but the assurance brought no color to her cheek, no light to her eyes; to be the handsomest woman in New York evidently did not seem to her a position in life. Moreover, the reader may be informed that, oddly enough, Lady Barb did not particularly believe this assertion. There were some very pretty women in New York, and without in the least wishing to be like them—she had seen no woman in America whom she desired to resemble—she envied some of their looks. It is probable that her own finest points were those of which she was most unconscious. But her husband was aware of all of them; nothing could exceed the minuteness of his appreciation of his wife. It was a sign of this that after he had stood behind her a moment he kissed her very tenderly. "Have you any message for my mother?" he asked.

"Please give her my love. And you might take her that book."

"What book?"

"That nasty one I have been reading."

"Oh, bother your books!" said Jackson Lemon, with a certain irritation, as he went out of the room.

There had been a good many things in her life in New York that cost Lady Barb an effort; but sending her love to her mother-in-law was not one of these. She liked Mrs. Lemon better than any one she had seen in America; she was the only person who seemed to Lady Barb really simple, as she understood that quality. Many people had struck her as homely and rustic, and many others as pretentious and vulgar; but in Jackson's mother she had found the golden mean of a simplicity which, as she would have said, was really nice. Her sister, Lady Agatha, was even fonder of Mrs. Lemon; but then Lady Agatha had taken the most extraordinary fancy to every one and everything, and talked as if America were the most delightful country in the world. She was having a lovely time (she already spoke the most beautiful American), and had been, during the winter that was just drawing to a close, the most prominent girl in New York. She had gone out at first with her sister; but for some weeks past Lady Barb had let so many occasions pass that Agatha threw herself into the arms of Mrs.

Lemon, who found her extraordinarily quaint and amusing, and was delighted to take her into society. Mrs. Lemon, as an old woman, had given up such vanities; but she only wanted a motive, and in her good-nature she ordered a dozen new caps, and sat smiling against the wall while her little English maid, on polished floors, to the sound of music, cultivated the American step as well as the American tone. There was no trouble in New York about going out, and the winter was not half over before the little English maid found herself an accomplished diner, rolling about, without any chaperon at all, to banquets where she could count upon a bouquet at her plate. She had had a great deal of correspondence with her mother on this point, and Lady Canterville at last withdrew her protest, which in the meantime had been perfectly useless. It was ultimately Lady Canterville's feeling that if she had married the handsomest of her daughters to an American doctor, she might let another become a professional *raconteuse* (Agatha had written to her that she was expected to talk so much), strange as such a destiny seemed for a girl of nineteen. Mrs. Lemon was even a much simpler woman than Lady Barberina thought her; for she had not noticed that Lady Agatha danced much oftener with Herman Longstraw than with any one else. Jackson Lemon, though he went little to balls, had discovered this truth, and he looked slightly preoccupied when, after he had sat five minutes with his mother on the Sunday afternoon through which I have invited the reader to trace so much more than (I am afraid) is easily apparent of the progress of this simple story, he learned that his sister-in-law was entertaining Mr. Longstraw in the library. He had called half an hour before, and she had taken him into the other room to show him the seal of the Cantervilles, which she had fastened to one of her numerous trinkets (she was adorned with a hundred bangles and chains), and the proper exhibition of which required a taper and a stick of wax. Apparently he was examining it very carefully, for they had been absent a good while. Mrs. Lemon's simplicity was further shown by the fact that she had not measured their absence; it was only when Jackson questioned her that she remembered.

Herman Longstraw was a young Californian who had turned up in New York the winter before, and who traveled on his mustache, as they were understood to say in his native State. This mustache, and some of the accompanying features, were very ornamental; several ladies in New York had been known to declare that they were as beautiful as a dream. Taken in connection with his

tall stature, his familiar good-nature, and his remarkable Western vocabulary, they constituted his only social capital; for of the two great divisions, the rich Californians and the poor Californians, it was well known to which he belonged. Jackson Lemon looked at him as a slightly mitigated cowboy, and was somewhat vexed at his dear mother, though he was aware that she could scarcely figure to herself what an effect such an account as that would produce in the halls of Canterville. He had no desire whatever to play a trick on the house to which he was allied, and knew perfectly that Lady Agatha had not been sent to America to become entangled with a Californian of the wrong denomination. He had been perfectly willing to bring her; he thought, a little vindictively, that this would operate as a hint to her parents as to what he might have been inclined to do if they had not sent Mr. Hilary after him. Herman Longstraw, according to the legend, had been a trapper, a squatter, a miner, a pioneer,—had been everything that one could be in the romantic parts of America, and had accumulated masses of experience before the age of thirty. He had shot bears in the Rockies and buffaloes on the plains; and it was even believed that he had brought down animals of a still more dangerous kind among the haunts of men. There had been a story that he owned a cattle-ranch in Arizona; but a later and apparently more authentic version of it, though it represented him as looking after the cattle, did not depict him as their proprietor. Many of the stories told about him were false; but there is no doubt that his mustache, his good-nature, and his accent were genuine. He danced very badly; but Lady Agatha had frankly told several persons that that was nothing new to her; and she liked (this, however, she did not tell) Mr. Herman Longstraw. What she enjoyed in America was the revelation of freedom; and there was no such proof of freedom as conversation with a gentleman who dressed in skins when he was not in New York, and who, in his usual pursuits, carried his life (as well as that of other people) in his hand. A gentleman whom she had sat next to at dinner in the early part of her stay in New York remarked to her that the United States were the paradise of women and mechanics; and this had seemed to her at the time very abstract, for she was not conscious as yet of belonging to either class. In England she had been only a girl; and the principal idea connected with that was simply that, for one's misfortune, one was not a boy. But presently she perceived that New York was a paradise; and this helped her to know that she must be one of the people men-

tioned in the axiom of her neighbor—people who could do whatever they wanted, had a voice in everything, and made their taste and their ideas felt. She saw that it was great fun to be a woman in America, and that that was the best way to enjoy the New York winter,—the wonderful, brilliant New York winter, the queer, long-shaped, glittering city, the heterogeneous hours, among which you couldn't tell the morning from the afternoon, or the night from either of them, the perpetual liberties and walks, the rushings-out and the droppings-in, the intimacies, the endearments, the conicalities, the sleigh-bells, the cutters, the sunsets on the snow, the ice-parties in the frosty clearness, the bright, hot, velvety houses, the bouquets, the bonbons, the little cakes, the big cakes, the irrepressible inspirations of shopping, the innumerable luncheons and dinners that were offered to youth and innocence, the quantities of chatter of quantities of girls, the perpetual motion of the german, the suppers at restaurants after the play, the way in which life was pervaded by Delmonico, and Delmonico by the sense that though one's hunting was lost, and this so different, it was almost as good—and in all, through all, a kind of suffusion of bright, loud, friendly sound, which was very local, but very human.

Lady Agatha at present was staying, for a little change, with Mrs. Lemon, and such adventures as that were part of the pleasure of her American season. The house was too close; but, physically, the girl could bear anything, and it was all she had to complain of; for Mrs. Lemon, as we know, thought her a quaint little damsel, and had none of those Old World scruples in regard to spoiling young people to which Lady Agatha now perceived that she herself, in the past, had been unduly sacrificed. In her own way—it was not at all her sister's way—she liked to be of importance; and this was assuredly the case when she saw that Mrs. Lemon had apparently nothing in the world to do (after spending a part of the morning with her servants) but invent little distractions (many of them of the edible sort) for her guest. She appeared to have certain friends; but she had no society to speak of, and the people who came into her house came principally to see Lady Agatha. This, as we have seen, was strikingly the case with Herman Longstraw. The whole situation gave Lady Agatha a great feeling of success,—success of a new and unexpected kind. Of course, in England, she had been born successful, in a manner, in coming into the world in one of the most beautiful rooms at Pasterns; but her present triumph was achieved more by her own effort

(not that she had tried very hard) and by her merit. It was not so much what she said (for she never could say half as much as the girls in New York) as the spirit of enjoyment that played in her fresh young face, with its pointless curves, and shone in her gray English eyes. She enjoyed everything, even the street-cars, of which she made liberal use; and, more than everything, she enjoyed Mr. Longstraw and his talk about buffaloes and bears. Mrs. Lemon promised to be very careful, as soon as her son had begun to warn her; and this time she had a certain understanding of what she promised. She thought people ought to make the matches they liked; she had given proof of this in her late behavior to Jackson, whose own union was, in her opinion, marked with all the arbitrariness of true love. Nevertheless, she could see that Herman Longstraw would probably be thought rough in England; and it was not simply that he was so inferior to Jackson, for, after all, certain things were not to be expected. Jackson Lemon was not oppressed with his mother-in-law, having taken his precautions against such a danger; but he was aware that he should give Lady Canterville a permanent advantage over him if, while she was in America, her daughter Agatha should attach herself to a mere mustache.

It was not always, as I have hinted, that Mrs. Lemon entered completely into the views of her son, though in form she never failed to subscribe to them devoutly. She had never yet, for instance, apprehended his reason for marrying Lady Barberina Clement. This was a great secret, and Mrs. Lemon was determined that no one should ever know it. For herself, she was sure that, to the end of time, she should not discover Jackson's reason. She could never ask about it, for that, of course, would betray her. From the first she had told him she was delighted, there being no need of asking for explanations then, as the young lady herself, when she should come to know her, would explain. But the young lady had not yet explained; and after this, evidently, she never would. She was very tall, very handsome, she answered exactly to Mrs. Lemon's prefigurement of the daughter of a lord, and she wore her clothes—which were peculiar, but, to her, remarkably becoming—very well. But she did not elucidate; we know ourselves that there was very little that was explanatory about Lady Barb. So Mrs. Lemon continued to wonder, to ask herself, "Why that one, more than so many others, who would have been more natural?" The choice appeared to her, as I have said, very arbitrary. She found Lady Barb very different from other girls she had

known, and this led her almost immediately to feel sorry for her daughter-in-law. She said to herself that Barb was to be pitied if she found her husband's people as peculiar as his mother found *her*; for the result of that would be to make her very lonesome. Lady Agatha was different, because she seemed to keep nothing back; you saw all there was of her, and she was evidently not homesick. Mrs. Lemon could see that Barberina was ravaged by this last passion, and that she was too proud to show it. She even had a glimpse of the ultimate truth; namely, that Jackson's wife had not the comfort of crying, because that would have amounted to a confession that she had been idiotic enough to believe in advance that, in an American town, in the society of doctors, she should escape such pangs. Mrs. Lemon treated her with the greatest gentleness—all the gentleness that was due to a young woman who was in the unfortunate position of having been married, one couldn't tell why. The world, to Mrs. Lemon's view, contained two great departments,—that of people, and that of things; and she believed that you must take an interest either in one or the other. The incomprehensible thing in Lady Barb was that she cared for neither side of the show. Her house apparently inspired her with no curiosity and no enthusiasm, though it had been thought magnificent enough to be described in successive columns in the American newspapers; and she never spoke of her furniture or her domestics, though she had a prodigious quantity of such possessions. She was the same with regard to her acquaintance, which was immense, inasmuch as every one in the place had called on her. Mrs. Lemon was the least critical woman in the world; but it had sometimes exasperated her just a little that her daughter-in-law should receive every one in New York in exactly the same way. There were differences, Mrs. Lemon knew, and some of them were of the highest importance; but poor Lady Barb appeared never to suspect them. She accepted every one and everything, and asked no questions. She had no curiosity about her fellow-citizens, and as she never assumed it for a moment, she gave Mrs. Lemon no opportunity to enlighten her. Lady Barb was a person with whom you could do nothing unless she gave you an opening; and nothing would have been more difficult than to enlighten her against her will. Of course she picked up a little knowledge; but she confounded and transposed American attributes in the most extraordinary way. She had a way of calling every one Doctor; and Mrs. Lemon could scarcely convince her that this distinction was too precious to be so freely



bestowed. She had once said to her mother-in-law that in New York there was nothing to know people by, their names were so very monotonous; and Mrs. Lemon had entered into this enough to see that there was something that stood out a good deal in Barberina's own prefix. It is probable that during her short stay in New York complete justice was not done Lady Barb; she never got credit, for instance, for repressing her annoyance at the aridity of the social nomenclature, which seemed to her hideous. That little speech to her mother was the most reckless sign she gave of it; and there were few things that contributed more to the good conscience she habitually enjoyed than her self-control on this particular point.

Jackson Lemon was making some researches, just now, which took up a great deal of his time; and, for the rest, he passed his hours abundantly with his wife. For the last three months, therefore, he had seen his mother scarcely more than once a week. In spite of researches, in spite of medical societies, where Jackson, to her knowledge, read papers, Lady Barb had more of her husband's company than she had counted upon at the time she married. She had never known a married pair to be so much together as she and Jackson; he appeared to expect her to sit with him in the library in the morning. He had none of the occupations of gentlemen and noblemen in England, for the element of politics appeared to be as absent as the hunting. There were politics in Washington, she had been told, and even at Albany, and Jackson had proposed to introduce her to these cities; but the proposal, made to her once at dinner before several people, had excited such cries of horror that it fell dead on the spot. "We don't want you to see anything of that kind," one of the ladies had said, and Jackson had appeared to be discouraged,—that is if, in regard to Jackson, she could really tell.

"Pray, what is it you want me to see?" Lady Barb had asked on this occasion.

"Well, New York; and Boston, if you want to very much—but not otherwise; and Niagara; and, more than anything, Newport."

Lady Barb was tired of their eternal Newport; she had heard of it a thousand times, and felt already as if she had lived there half her life; she was sure, moreover, that she should hate it. This is perhaps as near as she came to having a lively conviction on any American subject. She asked herself whether she was then to spend her life in the Fifth Avenue, with alternations of a city of villas (she detested villas), and wondered whether that was all the great American country had to offer her. There were times when she

thought that she should like the backwoods, and that the Far West might be a resource; for she had analyzed her feelings just deeply enough to discover that when she had—hesitating a good deal—turned over the question of marrying Jackson Lemon, it was not in the least of American barbarism that she was afraid; her dread was of American civilization. She believed the little lady I have just quoted was a goose; but that did not make New York any more interesting. It would be reckless to say that she suffered from an overdose of Jackson's company, because she had a view of the fact that he was much her most important social resource. She could talk to him about England,—about her own England,—and he understood more or less what she wished to say, when she wished to say anything, which was not frequent. There were plenty of other people who talked about England; but with them the range of allusion was always the hotels, of which she knew nothing, and the shops, and the opera, and the photographers; they had a mania for photographs. There were other people who were always wanting her to tell them about Pasterns, and the manner of life there, and the parties; but if there was one thing Lady Barb disliked more than another it was describing Pasterns. She had always lived with people who knew of themselves what such a place would be, without demanding these pictorial efforts, proper only, as she vaguely felt, to persons belonging to the classes whose trade was the arts of expression. Lady Barb, of course, had never gone into it; but she knew that in her own class the business was not to express, but to enjoy; not to represent, but to be represented,—though, indeed, this latter liability might convey offense; for it may be noted that even for an aristocrat Jackson Lemon's wife was aristocratic.

Lady Agatha and her visitor came back from the library in course of time, and Jackson Lemon felt it his duty to be rather cold to Herman Longstraw. It was not clear to him what sort of a husband his sister-in-law would do well to look for in America,—if there were to be any question of husbands; but as to this he was not bound to be definite, provided he should rule out Mr. Longstraw. This gentleman, however, was not given to perceive shades of manner; he had little observation, but very great confidence.

"I think you had better come home with me," Jackson said to Lady Agatha; "I guess you have stayed here long enough."

"Don't let him say that, Mrs. Lemon!" the girl cried. "I like being with you so very much."

"I try to make it pleasant," said Mrs.

Lemon. "I should really miss you now; but perhaps it's your mother's wish." If it were a question of defending her guest from ineligible suitors, Mrs. Lemon felt, of course, that her son was more competent than she, though she had a lurking kindness for Herman Longstraw, and a vague idea that he was a gallant, genial specimen of young America.

"Oh, mamma wouldn't see any difference!" Lady Agatha exclaimed, looking at Jackson with pleading blue eyes. "Mamma wants me to see every one; you know she does. That's what she sent me to America for; she knew it was not like England. She wouldn't like it if I didn't sometimes stay with people; she always wanted us to stay at other houses. And she knows all about you, Mrs. Lemon, and she likes you immensely. She sent you a message the other day,—and I am afraid I forgot to give it you,—to thank you for being so kind to me and taking such a lot of trouble. Really she did, but I forgot it. If she wants me to see as much as possible of America, it's much better I should be here than always with Barb,—it's much less like one's own country. I mean it's much nicer—for a girl," said Lady Agatha, affectionately, to Mrs. Lemon, who began also to look at Jackson with a kind of tender argumentativeness.

"If you want the genuine thing, you ought to come out on the plains," Mr. Longstraw interposed, with smiling sincerity. "I guess that was your mother's idea. Why don't you all come out?" He had been looking intently at Lady Agatha while the remarks I have just repeated succeeded each other on her lips,—looking at her with a kind of fascinated approbation, for all the world as if he had been a slightly slow-witted English gentleman and the girl had been a flower of the West—a flower that knew how to talk. He made no secret of the fact that Lady Agatha's voice was music to him, his ear being much more susceptible than his own inflections would have indicated. To Lady Agatha those inflections were not displeasing, partly because, like Mr. Herman himself, in general, she had not a perception of shades, and partly because it never occurred to her to compare them with any other tones. He seemed to her to speak a foreign language altogether,—a romantic dialect, through which the most comical meanings gleamed here and there.

"I should like it above all things," she said, in answer to his last observation.

"The scenery's superior to anything round here," Mr. Longstraw went on.

Mrs. Lemon, as we know, was the softest of women; but, as an old New Yorker, she had no patience with some of the new fash-

ions. Chief among these was the perpetual reference, which had become common only within a few years, to the outlying parts of the country, the States and Territories of which children in her time used to learn the names, in their order, at school, but which no one ever thought of going to or talking about. Such places, in Mrs. Lemon's opinion, belonged to the geography books, or at most to the literature of newspapers, but not to society nor to conversation; and the change—which, so far as it lay in people's talk, she thought at bottom a mere affectation—threatened to make her native land appear vulgar and vague. For this amiable daughter of Manhattan, the normal existence of man, and still more of woman, had been "located," as she would have said, between Trinity Church and the beautiful reservoir at the top of the Fifth Avenue,—monuments of which she was personally proud; and if we could look into the deeper parts of her mind, I am afraid we should discover there an impression that both the countries of Europe and the remainder of her own continent were equally far from the center and the light.

"Well, scenery isn't everything," she remarked, mildly, to Mr. Longstraw; "and if Lady Agatha should wish to see anything of that kind, all she has got to do is to take the boat up the Hudson."

Mrs. Lemon's recognition of this river, I should say, was all that it need have been; she thought that it existed for the purpose of supplying New Yorkers with poetical feelings helping them to face comfortably occasions like the present, and, in general, meet foreigners with confidence,—part of the oddity of foreigners being their conceit about their own places.

"That's a good idea, Lady Agatha; let's take the boat," said Mr. Longstraw. "I've had great times on the boats."

Lady Agatha looked at her cavalier a little with those singular, charming eyes of hers,—eyes of which it was impossible to say, at any moment, whether they were the shyest or the frankest in the world; and she was not aware, while this contemplation lasted, that her brother-in-law was observing her. He was thinking of certain things while he did so, of things he had heard about the English; who still, in spite of his having married into a family of that nation, appeared to him very much through the medium of hearsay. They were more passionate than the Americans, and they did things that would never have been expected; though they seemed steadier and less excitable, there was much social evidence to show that they were more impulsive.

"It's so very kind of you to propose that," Lady Agatha said, in a moment, to Mrs.

Lemon. "I think I have never been in a ship,—except, of course, coming from England. I am sure mamma would wish me to see the Hudson. We used to go in immensely for boating in England."

"Did you boat in a ship?" Herman Longstraw asked, showing his teeth hilariously, and pulling his mustaches.

"Lots of my mother's people have been in the navy." Lady Agatha perceived vaguely and good-naturedly that she had said something which the odd Americans thought odd, and that she must justify herself. Her standard of oddity was getting dreadfully dislocated.

"I really think you had better come back to us," said Jackson. "Your sister is very lonely without you."

"She is much more lonely with me. We are perpetually having differences. Barb is dreadfully vexed because I like America, instead of—instead of——" And Lady Agatha paused a moment; for it just occurred to her that this might be a betrayal.

"Instead of what?" Jackson Lemon inquired.

"Instead of perpetually wanting to go to England, as she does," she went on, only giving her phrase a little softer turn; for she felt the next moment that her sister could have nothing to hide, and must, of course, have the courage of her opinions. "Of course England's best, but I dare say I like to be bad," said Lady Agatha, artlessly.

"Oh, there's no doubt you are awfully bad," Mr. Longstraw exclaimed, with joyous eagerness. Of course he could not know that what she had principally in mind was an exchange of opinions that had taken place between her sister and herself just before she came to stay with Mrs. Lemon. This incident, of which Longstraw was the occasion, might indeed have been called a discussion, for it had carried them quite into the realms of the abstract. Lady Barb had said she didn't see how Agatha could look at such a creature as that,—an odious, familiar, vulgar being, who had not about him the rudiments of a gentleman. Lady Agatha had replied that Mr. Longstraw was familiar and rough, and that he had a twang, and thought it amusing to talk of her as "the Princess"; but that he was a gentleman for all that, and that, at any rate, he was tremendous fun. Her sister to this had rejoined that if he was rough and familiar, he couldn't be a gentleman, inasmuch as that was just what a gentleman meant,—a man who was civil, and well bred, and well born. Lady Agatha had argued that this was just where she differed; that a man might perfectly be a gentleman, and yet be rough, and even ignorant, so long as he was really nice.

The only thing was that he should be really nice, which was the case with Mr. Longstraw, who, moreover, was quite extraordinarily civil—as civil as a man could be. And then Lady Agatha made the strongest point she had ever made in her life—she had never been so inspired—in saying that Mr. Longstraw was rough, perhaps, but not rude,—a distinction altogether wasted on her sister, who declared that she had not come to America, of all places, to learn what a gentleman was. The discussion, in short, had been lively. I know not whether it was the tonic effect on them, too, of the fine winter weather, or, on the other hand, that of Lady Barb's being bored and having nothing else to do; but Lord Canterville's daughters went into the question with the moral earnestness of a pair of Bostonians. It was part of Lady Agatha's view of her admirer that he, after all, much resembled other tall people with smiling eyes and mustaches, who had ridden a good deal in rough countries, and whom she had seen in other places. If he was more familiar, he was also more alert; still, the difference was not in himself, but in the way she saw him,—the way she saw everybody in America. If she should see the others in the same way, no doubt they would be quite the same; and Lady Agatha sighed a little over the possibilities of life; for this peculiar way, especially regarded in connection with gentlemen, had become very pleasant to her.

She had betrayed her sister more than she thought, even though Jackson Lemon did not particularly show it in the tone in which he said: "Of course she knows that she is going to see your mother in the summer." His tone, rather, was that of irritation at the repetition of a familiar idea.

"Oh, it isn't only mamma," replied Lady Agatha.

"I know she likes a cool house," said Mrs. Lemon, suggestively.

"When she goes, you had better bid her good-bye," the girl went on.

"Of course I shall bid her good-bye," said Mrs. Lemon, to whom, apparently, this remark was addressed.

"I shall never bid you good-bye, Princess," Herman Longstraw interposed. "I can tell you that you never will see the last of me."

"Oh, it doesn't matter about me, for I shall come back; but if Barb once gets to England, she will never come back."

"Oh, my dear child," murmured Mrs. Lemon, addressing Lady Agatha, but looking at her son.

Jackson looked at the ceiling, at the floor; above all, he looked very conscious.

"I hope you don't mind my saying that,

Jackson dear," Lady Agatha said to him, for she was very fond of her brother-in-law.

"Ah, well, then, she sha'n't go, then," he remarked, after a moment, with a dry little laugh.

"But you promised mamma, you know," said the girl, with the confidence of her affection.

Jackson looked at her with an eye which expressed none even of his very moderate hilarity. "Your mother, then, must bring her back."

"Get some of your navy people to supply an iron-clad!" cried Mr. Longstraw.

"It would be very pleasant if the Marchioness could come over," said Mrs. Lemon.

"Oh, she would hate it more than poor Barb," Lady Agatha quickly replied. It did not suit her mood at all to see a marchioness inserted into the field of her vision.

"Doesn't she feel interested, from what you have told her?" Herman Longstraw asked of Lady Agatha. But Jackson Lemon did not heed his sister-in-law's answer; he was thinking of something else. He said nothing more, however, about the subject of his thought, and before ten minutes were over he took his departure, having, meanwhile, neglected also to revert to the question of Lady Agatha's bringing her visit to his mother to a close. It was not to speak to him of this (for, as we know, she wished to keep the girl, and somehow could not bring herself to be afraid of Herman Longstraw) that when Jackson took leave she went with him to the door of the house, detaining him a little, while she stood on the steps, as people had always done in New York in her time, though it was another of the new fashions she did not like not to come out of the parlor. She placed her hand on his arm to keep him on the "stoop," and looked up and down into the brilliant afternoon and the beautiful city,—its chocolate-colored houses, so extraordinarily smooth, in which it seemed to her that even the most fastidious people ought to be glad to live. It was useless to conceal it; her son's marriage had made a difference, had put up a kind of barrier. It had brought with it a problem much more difficult than his old problem of how to make his mother feel that she was still, as she had been in his childhood, the dispenser of his rewards. The old problem had been easily solved; the new one was a visible pre-occupation. Mrs. Lemon felt that her daughter-in-law did not take her seriously; and that was a part of the barrier. Even if Barberina liked her better than any one else, this was mostly because she liked every one else so little. Mrs. Lemon had not a grain of resentment in her nature; and it was not to feed a sense of wrong that she permitted herself to criticise her son's wife. She could not help

feeling that his marriage was not altogether fortunate if his wife didn't take his mother seriously. She knew she was not otherwise remarkable than as being his mother; but that position, which was no merit of hers (the merit was all Jackson's in being her son), seemed to her one which, familiar as Lady Barb appeared to have been in England with positions of various kinds, would naturally strike the girl as a very high one, to be accepted as freely as a fine morning. If she didn't think of his mother as an indivisible part of him, perhaps she didn't think of other things either; and Mrs. Lemon vaguely felt that, remarkable as Jackson was, he was made up of parts, and that it would never do that these parts should be rated lower one by one, for there was no knowing what that might end in. She feared that things were rather cold for him at home when he had to explain so much to his wife,—explain to her, for instance, all the sources of happiness that were to be found in New York. This struck her as a new kind of problem altogether for a husband. She had never thought of matrimony without a community of feeling in regard to religion and country; one took those great conditions for granted, just as one assumed that one's food was to be cooked; and if Jackson should have to discuss them with his wife, he might, in spite of his great abilities, be carried into regions where he would get entangled and embroiled,—from which even, possibly, he would not come back at all. Mrs. Lemon had a horror of losing him in some way; and this fear was in her eyes as she stood on the steps of her house, and, after she had glanced up and down the street, looked at him a moment in silence. He simply kissed her again, and said she would take cold.

"I am not afraid of that; I have a shawl." Mrs. Lemon, who was very small and very fair, with pointed features and an elaborate cap, passed her life in a shawl, and owed to this habit her reputation for being an invalid,—an idea which she scorned, naturally enough, inasmuch as it was precisely her shawl that (as she believed) kept her from being one. "Is it true Barberina wont come back?" she asked of her son.

"I don't know that we shall ever find out; I don't know that I shall take her to England."

"Didn't you promise, dear?"

"I don't know that I promised; not absolutely."

"But you wouldn't keep her here against her will?" said Mrs. Lemon, inconsequently.

"I guess she will get used to it," Jackson answered, with a lightness he did not altogether feel."

Mrs. Lemon looked up and down the street again, and gave a little sigh.

"What a pity she isn't American!" She did not mean this as a reproach, a hint of what might have been; it was simply embarrassment resolved into speech.

"She couldn't have been American," said Jackson, with decision.

"Couldn't she, dear?" Mrs. Lemon spoke with a kind of respect; she felt that there were imperceptible reasons in this.

"It was just as she is that I wanted her," Jackson added.

"Even if she wont come back?" his mother asked, with a certain wonder.

"Oh, she has got to come back!" Jackson said, going down the steps.

## VI.

LADY BARB, after this, did not decline to see her New York acquaintances on Sunday afternoons, though she refused for the present to enter into a project of her husband's, who thought it would be a pleasant thing that she should entertain his friends on the evening of that day. Like all good Americans, Jackson Lemon devoted much consideration to the great question how, in his native land, society should be brought into being. It seemed to him that it would help the good cause for which so many Americans are ready to lay down their lives, if his wife should, as he jocularly called it, open a saloon. He believed, or he tried to believe, the *salon* now possible in New York, on condition of its being reserved entirely for adults; and in having taken a wife out of a country in which social traditions were rich and ancient, he had done something toward qualifying his own house—so splendidly qualified in all strictly material respects—to be the scene of such an effort. A charming woman, accustomed only to the best in each country, as Lady Beauchemin said, what might she not achieve by being at home (to the elder generation) in an easy, early, inspiring, comprehensive way, on the evening in the week on which worldly engagements were least numerous? He laid this philosophy before Lady Barb, in pursuance of a theory that if she disliked New York on a short acquaintance, she could not fail to like it on a long one. Jackson Lemon believed in the New York mind,—not so much, indeed, in its literary, artistic, or political achievements as in its general quickness and nascent adaptability. He clung to this belief, for it was a very important piece of material in the structure that he was attempting to rear. The New York mind would throw its glamour over Lady Barb if she would only give it a chance; for it was exceedingly bright, entertaining, and sympathetic. If she would only have a *salon*, where

this charming organ might expand, and where she might inhale its fragrance in the most convenient and luxurious way, without, as it were, getting up from her chair,—if she would only just try this graceful, good-natured experiment (which would make every one like *her* so much, too),—he was sure that all the wrinkles in the gilded scroll of his fate would be smoothed out. But Lady Barb did not rise at all to his conception, and had not the least curiosity about the New York mind. She thought it would be extremely disagreeable to have a lot of people tumbling in on Sunday evening without being invited; and altogether, her husband's sketch of the Anglo-American saloon seemed to her to suggest familiarity, high-pitched talk (she had already made a remark to him about "screeching women"), and exaggerated laughter. She did not tell him—for this, somehow, it was not in her power to express, and, strangely enough, he never completely guessed it—that she was singularly deficient in any natural, or indeed acquired, understanding of what a saloon might be. She had never seen one, and for the most part she never thought of things she had not seen. She had seen great dinners, and balls, and meets, and runs, and races; she had seen garden-parties, and a lot of people, mainly women (who, however, didn't screech), at dull, stuffy teas, and distinguished companies collected in splendid castles; but all this gave her no idea of a tradition of conversation, of a social agreement that its continuity, its accumulations from season to season, should not be lost. Conversation, in Lady Barb's experience, had never been continuous; in such a case it would surely have been a bore. It had been occasional and fragmentary,—a trifle jerky, with allusions that were never explained; it had a dread of detail; it seldom pursued anything very far, or kept hold of it very long.

There was something else that she did not say to her husband in reference to his visions of hospitality, which was, that if she should open a saloon (she had taken up the joke as well, for Lady Barb was eminently good-natured), Mrs. Vanderdecken would straightway open another, and Mrs. Vanderdecken's would be the more successful of the two. This lady, for reasons that Lady Barb had not yet explored, was supposed to be the great personage in New York; there were legends of her husband's family having behind them a fabulous antiquity. When this was alluded to, it was spoken of as something incalculable, and lost in the dimness of time. Mrs. Vanderdecken was young, pretty, clever, incredibly pretentious (Lady Barb thought), and had a wonderfully artistic house. Ambition, also,

was expressed in every rustle of her garments; and if she were the first person in America (this had an immense sound), it was plain that she intended to remain so. It was not till after she had been several months in New York that it came over Lady Barb that this brilliant native had flung down the glove; and when the idea presented itself, lighted up by an incident which I have no space to relate, she simply blushed a little (for Mrs. Vanderdecken) and held her tongue. She had not come to America to bandy words about precedence with such a woman as that. She had ceased to think about it much (of course one thought about it in England); but an instinct of self-preservation led her not to expose herself to occasions on which her claim might be tested. This, at bottom, had much to do with her having, very soon after the first flush of the honors paid her on her arrival, and which seemed to her rather grossly overdone, taken the line of scarcely going out. "They can't keep *that* up!" she had said to herself; and, in short, she would stay at home. She had a feeling that whenever she should go forth she would meet Mrs. Vanderdecken, who would withhold, or deny, or contest something,—poor Lady Barb could never imagine what. She did not try to, and gave little thought to all this; for she was not prone to confess to herself fears, especially fears from which terror was absent. But, as I have said, it abode within her as a presentiment, that if she should set up a drawing-room in the foreign style (it was curious, in New York, how they tried to be foreign) Mrs. Vanderdecken would be beforehand with her. The continuity of conversation—oh! that idea she would certainly have; there was no one so continuous as Mrs. Vanderdecken. Lady Barb, as I have related, did not give her husband the surprise of telling him these thoughts, though she had given him some other surprises. He would have been very much astonished, and perhaps, after a bit, a little encouraged, at finding that she was liable to this particular form of irritation.

On the Sunday afternoon she was visible; and on one of these occasions, going into her drawing-room late, he found her entertaining two ladies and a gentleman. The gentleman was Sidney Feeder, and one of the ladies was Mrs. Vanderdecken, whose ostensible relations with Lady Barb were of the most cordial nature. If she intended to crush her (as two or three persons, not conspicuous for a narrow accuracy, gave out that she privately declared), Mrs. Vanderdecken wished at least to study the weak points of the invader, to penetrate herself with the character of the

English girl. Lady Barb, indeed, appeared to have a mysterious fascination for the representative of the American patriciate. Mrs. Vanderdecken could not take her eyes off her victim; and whatever might be her estimate of her importance, she at least could not let her alone. "Why does she come to see me?" poor Lady Barb asked herself. "I am sure I don't want to see her; she has done enough for civility long ago." Mrs. Vanderdecken had her own reasons; and one of them was simply the pleasure of looking at the Doctor's wife, as she habitually called the daughter of the Cantervilles. She was not guilty of the folly of depreciating this lady's appearance, and professed an unbounded admiration for it, defending it on many occasions against superficial people, who said there were fifty women in New York who were handsomer. Whatever might have been Lady Barb's weak points, they were not the curve of her cheek and chin, the setting of her head on her throat, or the quietness of her deep eyes, which were as beautiful as if they had been blank, like those of antique busts. "The head is enchanting—perfectly enchanting," Mrs. Vanderdecken used to say irrelevantly, as if there were only one head in the place. She always used to ask about the Doctor; and that was another reason why she came. She brought up the Doctor at every turn; asked if he were often called up at night; found it the greatest of luxuries, in a word, to address Lady Barb as the wife of a medical man, more or less *au courant* of her husband's patients. The other lady, on this Sunday afternoon, was a certain little Mrs. Chew, who had the appearance of a small but very expensive doll, and was always asking Lady Barb about England, which Mrs. Vanderdecken never did. The latter visitor conversed with Lady Barb on a purely American basis, with that continuity (on her own side) of which mention has already been made, while Mrs. Chew engaged Sidney Feeder on topics equally local. Lady Barb liked Sidney Feeder; she only hated his name, which was constantly in her ears during the half-hour the ladies sat with her, Mrs. Chew having the habit, which annoyed Lady Barb, of repeating perpetually the appellation of her interlocutor.

Lady Barb's relations with Mrs. Vanderdecken consisted mainly in wondering, while she talked, what she wanted of her, and in looking with her sculptured eyes at her visitor's clothes, in which there was always much to examine. "Oh, Dr. Feeder!" "Now, Dr. Feeder!" "Well, Dr. Feeder!"—these exclamations, on the lips of Mrs. Chew, were an undertone in Lady Barb's consciousness.

When I say that she liked her husband's *confrère*, as he used to call himself, I mean that she smiled at him when he came, and gave him her hand, and asked him if he would have some tea. There was nothing nasty (as they said in London) in Lady Barb, and she would have been incapable of inflicting a deliberate snub upon a man who had the air of standing up so squarely to any work that he might have in hand. But she had nothing to say to Sidney Feeder. He apparently had the art of making her shy, more shy than usual, for she was always a little so; she discouraged him, discouraged him completely. He was not a man who wanted drawing out, there was nothing of that in him, he was remarkably copious; but Lady Barb appeared unable to follow him, and half the time, evidently, did not know what he was saying. He tried to adapt his conversation to her needs; but when he spoke of the world, of what was going on in society, she was more at sea even than when he spoke of hospitals and laboratories, and the health of the city, and the progress of science. She appeared, indeed, after her first smile when he came in, which was always charming, scarcely to see him, looking past him, and above him, and below him, and everywhere but at him, until he got up to go again, when she gave him another smile, as expressive of pleasure and of casual acquaintance as that with which she had greeted his entry; it seemed to imply that they had been having delightful talk for an hour. He wondered what the deuce Jackson Lemon could find interesting in such a woman, and he believed that his perverse though gifted colleague was not destined to feel that she illuminated his life. He pitied Jackson; he saw that Lady Barb, in New York, would neither assimilate nor be assimilated; and yet he was afraid to betray his incredulity, thinking it might be depressing to poor Lemon to show him how his marriage—now so dreadfully irrevocable—struck others. Sidney Feeder was a man of a strenuous conscience, and he did his duty overmuch by his old friend and his wife, from the simple fear that he should not do it enough. In order not to appear to neglect them, he called upon Lady Barb heroically, in spite of pressing engagements, week after week, enjoying his virtue himself as little as he made it fruitful for his hostess, who wondered at last what she had done to deserve these visitations. She spoke of them to her husband, who wondered also what poor Sidney had in his head, and yet was unable, of course, to hint to him that he need not think it necessary to come so often. Between Dr. Feeder's wish not to let Jackson see that his

marriage had made a difference, and Jackson's hesitation to reveal to Sidney that his standard of friendship was too high, Lady Barb passed a good many of those numerous hours during which she asked herself if she had come to America for that. Very little had ever passed between her and her husband on the subject of Sidney Feeder; for an instinct told her that if they were ever to have scenes, she must choose the occasion well, and this odd person was not an occasion. Jackson had tacitly admitted that his friend Feeder was anything he chose to think him; he was not a man to be guilty, in a discussion, of the disloyalty of damning him with praise that was faint. If Lady Agatha had usually been with her sister, Dr. Feeder would have been better entertained; for the younger of the English visitors prided herself, after several months of New York, on understanding everything that was said, and catching every allusion, it mattered not from whose lips it fell. But Lady Agatha was never at home; she had learned how to describe herself perfectly by the time she wrote to her mother that she was always "on the go." None of the innumerable victims of Old World tyranny who have fled to the United States as to a land of freedom, have ever offered more lavish incense to that goddess than this emancipated London *débutante*. She had enrolled herself in an amiable band which was known by the humorous name of "the Tearers,"—a dozen young ladies of agreeable appearance, high spirits, and good wind, whose most general characteristic was that, when wanted, they were to be sought anywhere in the world but under the roof that was supposed to shelter them. They were never at home; and when Sidney Feeder, as sometimes happened, met Lady Agatha at other houses, she was in the hands of the irrepressible Longstraw. She had come back to her sister, but Mr. Longstraw had followed her to the door. As to passing it, he had received direct discouragement from her brother-in-law; but he could at least hang about and wait for her. It may be confided to the reader, at the risk of diminishing the effect of the only incident which in the course of this very level narrative may startle him, that he never had to wait very long.

When Jackson Lemon came in, his wife's visitors were on the point of leaving her; and he did not ask even Sidney Feeder to remain, for he had something particular to say to Lady Barb.

"I haven't asked you half what I wanted—I have been talking so much to Dr. Feeder," the dressy Mrs. Chew said, holding the hand of her hostess in one of her own,

and toying with one of Lady Barb's ribbons with the other.

"I don't think I have anything to tell you; I think I have told people everything," Lady Barb answered, rather wearily.

"You haven't told *me* much!" Mrs. Vanderdecken said, smiling brightly.

"What could one tell you?—you know everything," Jackson Lemon interposed.

"Ah, no; there are some things that are great mysteries for me," the lady returned. "I hope you are coming to me on the 17th," she added, to Lady Barb.

"On the 17th? I think we are going somewhere."

"Do go to Mrs. Vanderdecken's," said Mrs. Chew; "you'll see the cream of the cream."

"Oh, gracious!" Mrs. Vanderdecken exclaimed.

"Well, I don't care; she will, wont she, Dr. Feeder?—the very pick of American society." Mrs. Chew stuck to her point.

"Well, I have no doubt Lady Barb will have a good time," said Sidney Feeder. "I'm afraid you miss the bran," he went on, with irrelevant jocosity, to Lady Barb. He always tried the jocose when other elements had failed.

"The bran?" asked Lady Barb, staring.

"Where you used to ride in the Park."

"My dear fellow, you speak as if it were the circus," Jackson Lemon said, smiling; "I haven't married a mountebank!"

"Well, they put some stuff on the road," Sidney Feeder explained, not holding much to his joke.

"You must miss a great many things," said Mrs. Chew, tenderly.

"I don't see what," Mrs. Vanderdecken remarked, "except the fogs and the Queen. New York is getting more and more like London. It's a pity; you ought to have known us thirty years ago."

"You are the queen here," said Jackson Lemon; "but I don't know what you know about thirty years ago."

"Do you think she doesn't go back?—she goes back to the last century!" cried Mrs. Chew.

"I dare say I should have liked that," said Lady Barb; "but I can't imagine." And she looked at her husband—a look she often had—as if she vaguely wished him to do something.

He was not called upon, however, to take any violent steps, for Mrs. Chew presently said, "Well, Lady Barberina, good-bye;" and Mrs. Vanderdecken smiled in silence at her hostess, and addressed a farewell, accompanied very audibly with his title, to her

host; and Sidney Feeder made a joke about stepping on the trains of the ladies' dresses as he accompanied them to the door. Mrs. Chew had always a great deal to say at the last; she talked till she was in the street, and then she did not cease. But at the end of five minutes Jackson Lemon was alone with his wife; and then he told her a piece of news. He prefaced it, however, by an inquiry as he came back from the hall.

"Where is Agatha, my dear?"

"I haven't the least idea. In the streets somewhere, I suppose."

"I think you ought to know a little more."

"How can I know about things here? I have given her up; I can do nothing with her. I don't care what she does."

"She ought to go back to England," Jackson Lemon said, after a pause.

"She ought never to have come."

"It was not my proposal, God knows!" Jackson answered, rather sharply.

"Mamma could never know what it really is," said his wife.

"No; it has not been as yet what your mother supposed! Herman Longstraw wants to marry her. He has made me a formal proposal. I met him half an hour ago in Madison Avenue, and he asked me to come with him into the Columbia Club. There, in the billiard-room, which to-day is empty, he opened himself—thinking evidently that in laying the matter before me he was behaving with extraordinary propriety. He tells me he is dying of love, and that she is perfectly willing to go and live in Arizona."

"So she is," said Lady Barb. "And what did you tell him?"

"I told him that I was sure it would never do, and that at any rate I could have nothing to say to it. I told him explicitly, in short, what I had told him virtually before. I said that we should send Agatha straight back to England, and that if they had the courage they must themselves broach the question over there."

"When shall you send her back?" asked Lady Barb.

"Immediately; by the very first steamer."

"Alone, like an American girl?"

"Don't be rough, Barb," said Jackson Lemon. "I shall easily find some people; lots of people are sailing now."

"I must take her myself," Lady Barb declared in a moment. "I brought her out, and I must restore her to my mother's hands."

Jackson Lemon had expected this, and he believed he was prepared for it. But when it came he found his preparation was not complete; for he had no answer to make—none, at least, that seemed to him to go to the point. During these last weeks it had come over him,



with a quiet, irresistible, unmerciful force, that Mrs. Dexter Freer had been right when she said to him, that Sunday afternoon in Jermyn street, the summer before, that he would find it was not so simple to be an American. Such an identity was complicated, in just the measure that she had foretold, by the difficulty of domesticating one's wife. The difficulty was not dissipated by his having taken a high tone about it; it pinched him from morning till night, like a misfitting shoe. His high tone had given him courage when he took the great step; but he began to perceive that the highest tone in the world cannot change the nature of things. His ears tingled when he reflected that if the Dexter Freers, whom he had thought alike abject in their hopes and their fears, had been by ill-luck spending the winter in New York, they would have found his predicament as entertaining as they could desire. Drop by drop the conviction had entered his mind — the first drop had come in the form of a word from Lady Agatha — that if his wife should return to England, she would never again cross the Atlantic to the west. That word from Lady Agatha had been the touch from the outside, at which often one's fears crystallize. What she would do, how she would resist, — this he was not yet prepared to tell himself; but he felt, every time he looked at her, that this beautiful woman, whom he had adored, was filled with a dumb, insuperable, ineradicable purpose. He knew that if she should plant herself, no power on earth would move her; and her blooming, antique beauty, and the general loftiness of her breeding, came to seem to him — rapidly — but the magnificent expression of a dense, patient, imperturbable obstinacy. She was not light, she was not supple, and after six months of marriage he had made up his mind that she was not clever; but, nevertheless, she would elude him. She had married him, she had come into his fortune and his consideration, — for who was she, after all? Jackson Lemon was once so angry as to ask himself, reminding himself that in England Lady Claras and Lady Florences were as thick as blackberries, — but she would have nothing to do, if she could help it, with his country. She had gone in to dinner first in every house in the place, but this had not satisfied her. It *had* been simple to be an American, in this sense, that no one else in New York had made any difficulties; the difficulties had sprung from her peculiar feelings, which were, after all, what he had married her for, thinking they would be a fine temperamental heritage for his brood. So they would, doubtless, in the coming years, after the brood should have appeared; but meanwhile they interfered with the best heritage

of all — the nationality of his possible children. Lady Barb would do nothing violent; he was tolerably certain of that. She would not return to England without his consent; only when she should return, it would be once for all. His only possible line, then, was not to take her back, — a position replete with difficulties, because, of course, he had in a manner given his word, while she had given no word at all, beyond the general promise she murmured at the altar. She had been general, but he had been specific; the settlements he had made were a part of that. His difficulties were such as he could not directly face. He must tack in approaching so uncertain a coast. He said to Lady Barb presently that it would be very inconvenient for him to leave New York at that moment: she must remember that their plans had been laid for a later departure. He could not think of letting her make the voyage without him, and, on the other hand, they must pack her sister off without delay. He would, therefore, make instant inquiry for a chaperon; and he relieved his irritation by expressing considerable disgust at Herman Longstraw.

Lady Barb did not trouble herself to denounce this gentleman; her manner was that of having for a long time expected the worst. She simply remarked dryly, after having listened to her husband for some minutes in silence: "I would as lief she should marry Dr. Feeder!"

The day after this, Jackson Lemon closeted himself for an hour with Lady Agatha, taking great pains to set forth to her the reasons why she should not marry her Californian. Jackson was kind, he was affectionate; he kissed her, and put his arm around her waist; he reminded her that he and she were the best of friends, and that she had always been awfully nice to him; therefore he counted upon her. She would break her mother's heart, she would deserve her father's curse, and she would get him, Jackson, into a pickle from which no human power could ever disembroil him. Lady Agatha listened and cried, and returned his kiss very affectionately, and admitted that her father and mother would never consent to such a marriage; and when he told her that he had made arrangements for her to sail for Liverpool (with some charming people) the next day but one, she embraced him again, and assured him that she could never thank him enough for all the trouble he had taken about her. He flattered himself that he had convinced, and in some degree comforted her, and reflected with complacency that even should his wife take it into her head, Barberina would never get ready to embark for her native land between a Monday and a Wednesday. The next morning

Lady Agatha did not appear at breakfast; but as she usually rose very late, her absence excited no alarm. She had not rung her bell, and she was supposed still to be sleeping. But she had never yet slept later than mid-day; and as this hour approached, her sister went to her room. Lady Barb then discovered that she had left the house at seven o'clock in the morning, and had gone to meet Herman Longstraw at a neighboring corner. A little note on the table explained it very succinctly, and put beyond the power of Jackson Lemon and his wife to doubt that by the time this news reached them their wayward sister had been united to the man of her preference as closely as the laws of the State of New York could bind her. Her little note set forth that as she knew she should never be permitted to marry him, she had determined to marry him without permission, and that directly after the ceremony, which would be of the simplest kind, they were to take a train for the Far West. Our history is concerned only with the remote consequences of this incident, which made, of course, a great deal of trouble for Jackson Lemon. He went to the Far West in pursuit of the fugitives, and overtook them in California; but he had not the audacity to propose to them to separate, as it was easy for him to see that Herman Longstraw was at least as well married as himself. Lady Agatha was already popular in the new States, where the history of her elopement, emblazoned in enormous capitals, was circulated in a thousand newspapers. This question of the newspapers had been for Jackson Lemon one of the most definite results of his sister-in-law's *coup de tête*. His first thought had been of the public prints, and his first exclamation a prayer that they should not get hold of the story. But they did get hold of it, and they treated the affair with their customary energy and eloquence. Lady Barb never saw them; but an affectionate friend of the family, traveling at that time in the United States, made a parcel of some of the leading journals, and sent them to Lord Canterville. This missive elicited from her ladyship a letter addressed to Jackson Lemon which shook the young man's position to the base. The phials of an unnamable vulgarity had been opened upon the house of Canterville, and his mother-in-law demanded that in compensation for the affronts and injuries that were being heaped upon her family, and bereaved and dishonored as she was, she should at least be allowed to look on the face of her other daughter. "I suppose you will not, for

very pity, be deaf to such a prayer as that," said Lady Barb; and though shrinking from recording a second act of weakness on the part of a man who had such pretensions to be strong, I must relate that poor Jackson, who blushed dreadfully over the newspapers, and felt afresh as he read them the force of Mrs. Freer's terrible axiom,—poor Jackson paid a visit to the office of the Cunarders. He said to himself afterward that it was the newspapers that had done it; he could not bear to appear to be on their side; they made it so hard to deny that the country was vulgar, at a time when one was in such need of all one's arguments. Lady Barb, before sailing, definitely refused to mention any week or month as the date of their prearranged return to New York. Very many weeks and months have elapsed since then, and she gives no sign of coming back. She will never fix a date. She is much missed by Mrs. Vanderdecken, who still alludes to her—still says the line of the shoulders was superb; putting the statement, pensively, in the past tense. Lady Beauchemin and Lady Marmaduke are much disconcerted; the international project has not, in their view, received an impetus.

Jackson Lemon has a house in London, and he rides in the Park with his wife, who is as beautiful as the day, and a year ago presented him with a little girl, with features that Jackson already scans for the look of race,—whether in hope or fear, to-day, is more than my muse has revealed. He has occasional scenes with Lady Barb, during which the look of race is very visible in her own countenance; but they never terminate in a visit to the Cunarders. He is exceedingly restless, and is constantly crossing to the continent; but he returns with a certain abruptness, for he cannot bear to meet the Dexter Freers, and they seem to pervade the more comfortable parts of Europe. He dodges them in every town. Sidney Feeder feels very badly about him; it is months since Jackson has sent him any "results." The excellent fellow goes very often, in a consolatory spirit, to see Mrs. Lemon; but he has not yet been able to answer her standing question: "Why that girl more than another?" Lady Agatha Longstraw and her husband arrived a year ago in England, and Mr. Longstraw's personality had immense success during the last London season. It is not exactly known what they live on, though it is perfectly known that he is looking for something to do. Meanwhile, it is as good as known that Jackson Lemon supports them.