

CHAPTER XVII

Form, color, drama, and divers other advantages are necessary to the creation of an object of interest. Presenting to the world none of these assets, Miss Alicia had slipped through life a scarcely remarked unit. No little ghost of prettiness had attracted the wandering eye, no suggestion of agreeable or disagreeable power of self-assertion had arrested attention. There had been no hour in her life when she had expected to count as being of the slightest consequence. When she had knocked at the door of the study at Rowcroft Vicarage, and "dear papa" had exclaimed irritably: "Who is that? Who is that?" she had always replied, "It is only Alicia."

This being the case, her gradual awakening to the singularity of her new situation was mentally a process full of doubts and sometimes of alarmed bewilderments. If in her girlhood a curate, even a curate with prominent eyes and a receding chin, had proposed to her that she should face with him a future enriched by the prospect of being called upon to bring up a probable family of twelve on one hundred and fifty pounds a year, with both parish and rectory barking and snapping at her worn-down heels, she would have been sure to assert tenderly that she was afraid she was "not worthy." This was the natural habit of her mind, and in the weeks which followed the foggy afternoon when Tembarom "staked out his claim" she dwelt often upon her unworthiness of the benefits bestowed upon her.

First the world below-stairs, then the village, and then the county itself awoke to the fact that the new Temple Temple Barholm had "taken her up." The first tendency of the world below-stairs was to resent the unwarranted uplifting of a person whom there had been a certain luxury in regarding with disdain and treating with scarcely veiled lack of consideration. To be able to do this with a person who, after all was said and done, was not one of the servant class, but a sort of lady of birth, was not unstimulating. And below-stairs the sense of personal rancor against "a 'anger-on" is strong. The meals served in Miss Alicia's remote sitting-room had been served at leisure, her tea had rarely been hot, and her modestly tinkled bell irregularly answered. Often her far from liberally supplied fire had gone out on chilly days, and she had been afraid to insist on its being relighted. Her sole defense against inattention would have been to complain to Mr. Temple Barholm, and when on one occasion a too obvious neglect had obliged her to gather her quaking being together in mere self-respect and say, "If this continues to occur, William, I shall be obliged to speak to Mr. Temple Barholm," William had so looked at her and so ill hid a secret smile that it had been almost tantamount to his saying, "I'd jolly well like to see you."

And now! Sitting at the end of the table opposite him, if you please! Walking here and walking there with him! Sitting in the library or wherever he was, with him talking and laughing and making as much of her as though she were an aunt with a fortune to leave, and with her

making as free in talk as though at liberty to say anything that came into her head! Well, the beggar that had found himself on horseback was setting another one galloping alongside of him. In the midst of this natural resentment it was "a bit upsetting," as Burrill said, to find it dawning upon one that absolute exactness of ceremony was as much to be required for "her" as for "him." Miss Alicia had long felt secretly sure that she was spoken of as "her" in the servants' hall. That businesslike sharpness which Palford had observed in his client aided Tembarom always to see things without illusions. He knew that there was no particular reason why his army of servants should regard him for the present as much more than an intruder; but he also knew that if men and women had employment which was not made hard for them, and were well paid for doing, they were not anxious to lose it, and the man who paid their wages might give orders with some certainty of finding them obeyed. He was "sharp" in more ways than one. He observed shades he might have been expected to overlook. He observed a certain shade in the demeanor of the domestics when attending Miss Alicia, and it was a shade which marked a difference between service done for her and service done for himself. This was only at the outset, of course, when the secret resentment was felt; but he observed it, mere shade though it was.

He walked out into the hall after Burrill one morning. Not having yet adjusted himself to the rule that when one wished to speak to a man one rang a bell and called him back, fifty times if necessary, he walked after Burrill and stopped him.

"This is a pretty good place for servants, ain't it?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"Good pay, good food, not too much to do?"

"Certainly, sir," Burrill replied, somewhat disturbed by a casualness which yet suggested a method of getting at something or other.

"You and the rest of them don't want to change, do you?"

"No, sir. There is no complaint whatever as far as I have heard."

"That's all right." Mr. Temple Barholm had put his hands into his pockets, and stood looking non-committal in a steady sort of way.

"There's something I want the lot of you to get on to--right away. Miss Temple Barholm is going to stay here. She's got to have everything just as she wants it. She's got to be pleased. She's the lady of the house. See?"

"I hope, sir," Burrill said with professional dignity, "that Miss Temple Barholm has not had reason to express any dissatisfaction."

"I'm the one that would express it--quick," said Tembarom. "She wouldn't have time to get in first. I just wanted to make sure I

shouldn't have to do it. The other fellows are under you. You've got a head on your shoulders, I guess. It's up to you to put 'em on to it. That's all."

"Thank you, sir," said Burrill.

His master went back into the library smiling genially, and Burrill stood still a moment or so gazing at the door he closed behind him.

Be sure the village, and finally circles not made up of cottagers, heard of this, howsoever mysteriously. Miss Alicia was not aware that the incident had occurred. She could not help observing, however, that the manners of the servants of the household curiously improved; also, when she passed through the village, that foreheads were touched without omission and the curtseys of playing children were prompt. When she dropped into a cottage, housewives polished off the seats of chairs vigorously before offering them, and symptoms and needs were explained with a respectful fluency which at times almost suggested that she might be relied on to use influence.

"I'm afraid I have done the village people injustice," she said leniently to Tembarom. "I used to think them so disrespectful and unappreciative. I dare say it was because I was so troubled myself. I'm afraid one's own troubles do sometimes make one unfair."

"Well, yours are over," said Tembarom. "And so are mine as long as you

stay by me."

Never had Miss Alicia been to London. She had remained, as was demanded of her by her duty to dear papa, at Rowcroft, which was in Somersetshire. She had only dreamed of London, and had had fifty-five years of dreaming. She had read of great functions, and seen pictures of some of them in the illustrated papers. She had loyally endeavored to follow at a distance the doings of her Majesty,-- she always spoke of Queen Victoria reverentially as "her Majesty,"--she rejoiced when a prince or a princess was born or christened or married, and believed that a "drawing-room" was the most awe-inspiring, brilliant, and important function in the civilized world, scarcely second to Parliament. London--no one but herself or an elderly gentlewoman of her type could have told any one the nature of her thoughts of London.

Let, therefore, those of vivid imagination make an effort to depict to themselves the effect produced upon her mind by Tembarom's casually suggesting at breakfast one morning that he thought it might be rather a good "stunt" for them to run up to London. By mere good fortune she escaped dropping the egg she had just taken from the egg-stand.

"London!" she said. "Oh!"

"Pearson thinks it would be a first-rate idea," he explained. "I guess he thinks that if he can get me into the swell clothing stores he can fix me up as I ought to be fixed, if I'm not going to disgrace him. I

should hate to disgrace Pearson. Then he can see his girl, too, and I want him to see his girl."

"Is--Pearson--engaged?" she asked; but the thought which was repeating itself aloud to her was "London! London!"

"He calls it 'keeping company,' or 'walking out,'" Tembarom answered.

"She's a nice girl, and he's dead stuck on her. Will you go with me, Miss Alicia?"

"Dear Mr. Temple Barholm," she fluttered, "to visit London would be a privilege I never dreamed it would be my great fortune to enjoy--never."

"Good business!" he ejaculated delightedly. "That's luck for me. It gave me the blues--what I saw of it. But if you are with me, I'll bet it'll be as different as afternoon tea was after I got hold of you. When shall we start? To-morrow?"

Her sixteen-year-old blush repeated itself.

"I feel so sorry. It seems almost undignified to mention it, but--I fear I should not look smart enough for London. My wardrobe is so very limited. I mustn't," she added with a sweet effort at humor, "do the new Mr. Temple Barholm discredit by looking unfashionable."

He was more delighted than before.

"Say," he broke out, "I'll tell you what we'll do: we'll go together and buy everything 'suitable' in sight. The pair of us'll come back here as suitable as Burrill and Pearson. We'll paint the town red."

He actually meant it. He was like a boy with a new game. His sense of the dreariness of London had disappeared. He knew what it would be like with Miss Alicia as a companion. He had really seen nothing of the place himself, and he would find out every darned thing worth looking at, and take her to see it-- theaters, shops, every show in town. When they left the breakfast-table it was agreed upon that they would make the journey the following day.

He did not openly refer to the fact that among the plans for their round of festivities he had laid out for himself the attending to one or two practical points. He was going to see Palford, and he had made an appointment with a celebrated nerve specialist. He did not discuss this for several reasons. One of them was that his summing up of Miss Alicia was that she had had trouble enough to think over all her little life, and the thing for a fellow to do for her, if he liked her, was to give her a good time and make her feel as if she was at a picnic right straight along--not let her even hear of a darned thing that might worry her. He had said comparatively little to her about Strangeways. His first mention of his condition had obviously made her somewhat nervous, though she had been full of kindly interest. She was

in private not sorry that it was felt better that she should not disturb the patient by a visit to his room. The abnormality of his condition seemed just slightly alarming to her.

"But, oh, how good, how charitable, you are!" she had murmured.

"Good," he answered, the devout admiration of her tone rather puzzling him. "It ain't that. I just want to see the thing through. I dropped into it by accident, and then I dropped into this by accident, and that made it as easy as falling off a log. I believe he's going to get well sometime. I guess I kind of like him because he holds on to me so and believes I'm just It. Maybe it's because I'm stuck on myself."

His visit to Strangeways was longer than usual that afternoon. He explained the situation to him so that he understood it sufficiently not to seem alarmed by it. This was one of the advances Tembarom had noticed recently, that he was less easily terrified, and seemed occasionally to see facts in their proper relation to one another. Sometimes the experiments tried on him were successful, sometimes they were not, but he never resented them.

"You are trying to help me to remember," he said once. "I think you will sometime."

"Sure I will," said Tembarom. "You're better every day."

Pearson was to remain in charge of him until toward the end of the London visit. Then he was to run up for a couple of days, leaving in his place a young footman to whom the invalid had become accustomed.

The visit to London was to Miss Alicia a period of enraptured delirium. The beautiful hotel in which she was established, the afternoons at the Tower, the National Gallery, the British Museum, the evenings at the play, during which one saw the most brilliant and distinguished actors, the mornings in the shops, attended as though one were a person of fortune, what could be said of them? And the sacred day on which she saw her Majesty drive slowly by, glittering helmets, splendid uniforms, waving plumes, and clanking swords accompanying and guarding her, and gentlemen standing still with their hats off, and everybody looking after her with that natural touch of awe which royalty properly inspires! Miss Alicia's heart beat rapidly in her breast, and she involuntarily made a curtsy as the great lady in mourning drove by. She lost no shade of any flavor of ecstatic pleasure in anything, and was to Tembarom, who knew nothing about shades and flavors, indeed a touching and endearing thing.

He had never got so much out of anything. If Ann had just been there, well, that would have been the limit. Ann was on her way to America now, and she wouldn't write to him or let him write to her. He had to make a fair trial of it. He could find out only in that way, she said.

It was not to be denied that the youth and longing in him gave him some half-hours to face which made him shut himself up in his room and

stare hard at the wall, folding his arms tightly as he tilted his chair.

There arrived a day when one of the most exalted shops in Bond Street was invaded by an American young man of a bearing the peculiarities of which were subtly combined with a remotely suggested air of knowing that if he could find what he wanted, there was no doubt as to his power to get it. What he wanted was not usual, and was explained with a frankness which might have seemed unsophisticated, but, singularly, did not. He wanted to have a private talk with some feminine power in charge, and she must be some one who knew exactly what ladies ought to have.

Being shown into a room, such a feminine power was brought to him and placed at his service. She was a middle-aged person, wearing beautifully fitted garments and having an observant eye and a dignified suavity of manner. She looked the young American over with a swift inclusion of all possibilities. He was by this time wearing extremely well-fitting garments himself, but she was at once aware that his tailored perfection was a new thing to him.

He went to his point without apologetic explanation.

"You know all the things any kind of a lady ought to have," he said--
"all the things that would make any one feel comfortable and as if they'd got plenty? Useful things as well as ornamental ones?"

"Yes, sir," she replied, with rising interest. "I have been in the establishment thirty years."

"Good business," Tembarom replied. Already he felt relieved. "I've got a relation, a little old lady, and I want her to fix herself out just as she ought to be fixed. Now, what I'm afraid of is that she won't get everything she ought to unless I manage it for her somehow beforehand. She's got into a habit of-- well, economizing. Now the time's past for that, and I want her to get everything a woman like you would know she really wants, so that she could look her best, living in a big country house, with a relation that thinks a lot of her."

He paused a second or so, and then went further, fixing a clear and astonishingly shrewd eye upon the head of the department listening to him.

"I found out this was a high-class place," he explained. "I made sure of that before I came in. In a place that was second or third class there might be people who'd think they'd caught a 'sucker' that would take anything that was unloaded on to him, because he didn't know. The things are for Miss Temple Barholm, and she DOES know. I shall ask her to come here herself to-morrow morning, and I want you to take care of her, and show her the best you've got that's suitable." He seemed to like the word; he repeated it--"Suitable," and quickly restrained a

sudden, unexplainable, wide smile.

The attending lady's name was Mrs. Mellish. Thirty years' experience had taught her many lessons. She was a hard woman and a sharp one, but beneath her sharp hardness lay a suppressed sense of the perfect in taste. To have a customer with unchecked resources put into her hands to do her best by was an inspiring incident. A quiver of enlightenment had crossed her countenance when she had heard the name of Temple Barholm. She had a newspaper knowledge of the odd Temple Barholm story. This was the next of kin who had blacked boots in New York, and the obvious probability that he was a fool, if it had taken the form of a hope, had been promptly nipped in the bud. The type from which he was furthest removed was that of the fortune-intoxicated young man who could be obsequiously flattered into buying anything which cost money enough.

"Not a thing's to be unloaded on her that she doesn't like," he added, "and she's not a girl that goes to pink teas. She's a--a--lady --and not young--and used to quiet ways."

The evidently New York word "unload" revealed him to his hearer as by a flash, though she had never heard it before.

"We have exactly the things which will be suitable, sir," she said. "I think I quite understand." Tembarom smiled again, and, thanking her, went away still smiling, because he knew Miss Alicia was safe.

There were of course difficulties in the way of persuading Miss Alicia that her duty lay in the direction of spending mornings in the most sumptuous of Bond Street shops, ordering for herself an entire wardrobe on a basis of unlimited resources. Tembarom was called upon to employ the most adroitly subtle reasoning, entirely founded on his "claim" and her affectionate willingness to give him pleasure.

He really made love to her in the way a joyful young fellow can make love to his mother or his nicest aunt. He made her feel that she counted for so much in his scheme of enjoyment that to do as he asked would be to add a glow to it.

"And they won't spoil you," he said. "The Mellish woman that's the boss has promised that. I wouldn't have you spoiled for a farm," he added heartily.

And he spoke the truth. If he had been told that he was cherishing her type as though it were a priceless bit of old Saxe, he would have stared blankly and made a jocular remark. But it was exactly this which he actually clung to and adored. He even had a second private interview with Mrs. Mellish, and asked her to "keep her as much like she was" as was possible.

Stimulated by the suppressed touch of artistic fervor, Mrs. Mellish guessed at something even before her client arrived; but the moment

she entered the showroom all was revealed to her at once. The very hint of flush and tremor in Miss Alicia's manner was an assistance. Surrounded by a small and extremely select court composed of Mrs. Mellish and two low-voiced, deft-handed assistants, it was with a fine little effort that Miss Alicia restrained herself from exterior suggestion of her feeling that there was something almost impious in thinking of possessing the exquisite stuffs and shades displayed to her in flowing beauty on every side. Such linens and batistes and laces, such delicate, faint grays and lavenders and soft-falling blacks! If she had been capable of approaching the thought, such luxury might even have hinted at guilty splendor.

Mrs. Mellish became possessed of an "idea" To create the costume of an exquisite, early-Victorian old lady in a play done for the most fashionable and popular actor manager of the most "drawing-room" of West End theaters, where one saw royalty in the royal box, with bouquets on every side, the orchestra breaking off in the middle of a strain to play "God Save the Queen," and the audience standing up as the royal party came in -- that was her idea. She carried it out, steering Miss Alicia with finished tact through the shoals and rapids of her timidities. And the result was wonderful; color,--or, rather, shades, -- textures, and forms were made subservient by real genius. Miss Alicia -- as she was turned out when the wardrobe was complete -- might have been an elderly little duchess of sweet and modest good taste in the dress of forty years earlier. It took time, but some of the things were prepared as though by magic, and the night the first

boxes were delivered at the hotel Miss Alicia, on going to bed, in kneeling down to her devotions prayed fervently that she might not be "led astray by fleshly desires," and that her gratitude might be acceptable, and not stained by a too great joy "in the things which corrupt."

The very next day occurred Rose. She was the young person to whom Pearson was engaged, and it appeared that if Miss Alicia would make up her mind to oblige Mr. Temple Barholm by allowing the girl to come to her as lady's-maid, even if only temporarily, she would be doing a most kind and charitable thing. She was a very nice, well-behaved girl, and unfortunately she had felt herself forced to leave her place because her mistress's husband was not at all a nice man. He had shown himself so far from nice that Pearson had been most unhappy, and Rose had been compelled to give notice, though she had no other situation in prospect and her mother was dependent on her. This was without doubt not Mr. Temple Barholm's exact phrasing of the story, but it was what Miss Alicia gathered, and what moved her deeply. It was so cruel and so sad! That wicked man! That poor girl! She had never had a lady's-maid, and might be rather at a loss at first, but it was only like Mr. Temple Barholm's kind heart to suggest such a way of helping the girl and poor Pearson.

So occurred Rose, a pretty creature whose blue eyes suppressed grateful tears as she took Miss Alicia's instructions during their first interview. And Pearson arrived the same night, and, waiting upon

Tembarom, stood before him, and with perfect respect, choked.

"Might I thank you, if you please, sir," he began, recovering himself--
-"might I thank you and say how grateful--Rose and me, sir--" and
choked again.

"I told you it would be all right," answered Tembarom. "It is all
right. I wish I was fixed like you are, Pearson."

When the Countess of Mallowe called, Rose had just dressed Miss Alicia
for the afternoon in one of the most perfect of the evolutions of Mrs.
Mellish's idea. It was a definite creation, as even Lady Mallowe
detected the moment her eyes fell upon it. Its hue was dull, soft
gray, and how it managed to concede points and elude suggestions of
modes interred, and yet remain what it did remain, and accord
perfectly with the side ringlets and the lace cap of Mechlin, only
dressmaking genius could have explained. The mere wearing of it gave
Miss Alicia a support and courage which she could scarcely believe to
be her own. When the cards of Lady Mallowe and Lady Joan Fayre were
brought up to her, she was absolutely not really frightened; a little
nervous for a moment, perhaps, but frightened, no. A few weeks of
relief and ease, of cheery consideration, of perfectly good treatment
and good food and good clothes, had begun a rebuilding of the actual
cells of her.

Lady Mallowe entered alone. She was a handsome person, and

astonishingly young when considered as the mother of a daughter of twenty-seven. She wore a white veil, and looked pink through it. She swept into the room, and shook hands with Miss Alicia with delicate warmth.

"We do not really know each other at all," she said. "It is disgraceful how little relatives see of one another."

The disgrace, if measured by the extent of the relationship, was not immense. Perhaps this thought flickered across Miss Alicia's mind among a number of other things. She had heard "dear papa" on Lady Mallowe, and, howsoever lacking in graces, the vicar of Rowcroft had not lacked an acrid shrewdness. Miss Alicia's sensitively self-accusing soul shrank before a hasty realization of the fact that if he had been present when the cards were brought up, he would, on glancing over them through his spectacles, have jerked out immediately: "What does the woman want? She's come to get something." Miss Alicia wished she had not been so immediately beset by this mental vision.

Lady Mallowe had come for something. She had come to be amiable to Miss Temple Barholm and to establish relations with her.

"Joan should have been here to meet me," she explained. "Her dressmaker is keeping her, of course. She will be so annoyed. She wanted very much to come with me."

It was further revealed that she might arrive at any moment, which gave Miss Alicia an opportunity to express, with pretty grace, the hope that she would, and her trust that she was quite well.

"She is always well," Lady Mallowe returned. "And she is of course as interested as we all are in this romantic thing. It is perfectly delicious, like a three- volumed novel."

"It is romantic," said Miss Alicia, wondering how much her visitor knew or thought she knew, and what circumstances would present themselves to her as delicious.

"Of course one has heard only the usual talk one always hears when everybody is chattering about a thing," Lady Mallowe replied, with a propitiating smile. "No one really knows what is true and what isn't. But it is nice to notice that all the gossip speaks so well of him. No one seems to pretend that he is anything but extremely nice himself, notwithstanding his disadvantages."

She kept a fine hazel eye, surrounded by a line which artistically represented itself as black lashes, steadily resting on Miss Alicia as she said the last words.

"He is," said Miss Alicia, with gentle firmness, "nicer than I had ever imagined any young man could be--far nicer."

Lady Mallowe's glance round the luxurious private sitting-room and over the perfect "idea" of Mrs. Mellish was so swift as to be almost imperceptible.

"How delightful!" she said. "He must be unusually agreeable, or you would not have consented to stay and take care of him."

"I cannot tell you how HAPPY I am to have been asked to stay with him, Lady Mallowe," Miss Alicia replied, the gentle firmness becoming a soft dignity.

"Which of course shows all the more how attractive he must be. And in view of the past lack of advantages, what a help you can be to him! It is quite wonderful for him to have a relative at hand who is an Englishwoman and familiar with things he will feel he must learn."

A perhaps singular truth is that but for the unmistakable nature of the surroundings she quickly took in the significance of, and but for the perfection of the carrying out of Mrs. Mellish's delightful idea, it is more than probable that her lady-ship's manner of approaching Miss Alicia and certain subjects on which she desired enlightenment would have been much more direct and much less propitiatory.

Extraordinary as it was, "the creature"--she thought of Tembarom as "the creature"-- had plainly been so pleased with the chance of being properly coached that he had put everything, so to speak, in the little old woman's hands. She had got a hold upon him. It was quite

likely that to regard her as a definite factor would only be the part of the merest discretion. She was evidently quite in love with him in her early-Victorian, spinster way. One had to be prudent with women like that who had got hold of a male creature for the first time in their lives, and were almost unaware of their own power. Their very unconsciousness made them a dangerous influence.

With a masterly review of these facts in her mind Lady Mallowe went on with a fluent and pleasant talk, through the medium of which she managed to convey a large number of things Miss Alicia was far from being clever enough to realize she was talking about. She lightly waved wings of suggestion across the scene, she dropped infinitesimal seeds in passing, she left faint echoes behind her-- the kind of echoes one would find oneself listening to and trying to hear as definitely formed sounds. She had been balancing herself on a precarious platform of rank and title, unsupported by any sordid foundation of a solid nature, through a lifetime spent in London. She had learned to catch fiercely at straws of chance, and bitterly to regret the floating past of the slightest, which had made of her a finished product of her kind. She talked lightly, and was sometimes almost witty. To her hearer she seemed to know every brilliant personage and to be familiar with every dazzling thing. She knew well what social habits and customs meant, what their value, or lack of value, was. There were customs, she implied skilfully, so established by time that it was impossible to ignore them. Relationships, for instance, stood for so much that was fine in England that one was

sometimes quite touched by the far-reachingness of family loyalty. The head of the house of a great estate represented a certain power in the matter of upholding the dignity of his possessions, of caring for his tenantry, of standing for proper hospitality and friendly family feeling. It was quite beautiful as one often saw it. Throughout the talk there were several references to Joan, who really must come in shortly, which were very interesting to Miss Alicia. Lady Joan, Miss Alicia heard casually, was a great beauty. Her perfection and her extreme cleverness had made her perhaps a trifle difficile. She had not done--Lady Mallowe put it with a lightness of phrasing which was delicacy itself-- what she might have done, with every exalted advantage, so many times. She had a profound nature. Here Lady Mallowe waved away, as it were, a ghost of a sigh. Since Miss Temple Barholm was a relative, she had no doubt heard of the unfortunate, the very sad incident which her mother sometimes feared prejudiced the girl even yet.

"You mean--poor Jem!" broke forth involuntarily from Miss Alicia's lips. Lady Mallowe stared a little.

"Do you call him that?" she asked. "Did you know him, then?"

"I loved him," answered Miss Alicia, winking her eyes to keep back the moisture in them, "though it was only when he was a little boy."

"Oh," said Lady Mallowe, with a sudden, singular softness, "I must

tell Joan that."

Lady Joan had not appeared even after they had had tea and her mother went away, but somehow Miss Alicia had reached a vaguely yearning feeling for her and wished very much the dressmaker had released her. She was quite stirred when it revealed itself almost at the last moment that in a few weeks both she and Lady Mallowe were to pay a visit at no great distance from Temple Barholm itself, and that her ladyship would certainly arrange to drive over to continue her delightful acquaintance and to see the beautiful old place again.

"In any case one must, even if he lived in lonely state, pay one's respects to the head of the house. The truth is, of course, one is extremely anxious to meet him, and it is charming to know that one is not merely invading the privacy of a bachelor," Lady Mallowe put it.

"She'll come for YOU," Little Ann had soberly remarked.

Tembarom remembered the look in her quiet, unresentful blue eyes when he came in to dinner and Miss Alicia related to him the events of the afternoon.