CHAPTER II. IN THE CAMPS OF THE PHILISTINES.

A TOILET in Vagabondia was an event. Not an ordinary toilet, of course, but a toilet extraordinary,--such as is necessarily called forth by some festive gathering or unusual occasion. It was also an excitement after a manner, and not a disagreeable one. It made demands upon the inventive and creative powers of the whole family, and brought to light hidden resources. It also aroused energy, and, being a success, was rejoiced over as a brilliant success. Respectability might complacently retire to its well-furnished chamber, and choose serenely from its unlimited supply of figurative purple and legendary fine linen, without finding a situation either dramatic or amusing; but in Vagabondia this was not the case. Having contrived to conjure up, as it were, from the secret places of the earth an evening dress, are not gloves still necessary? and, being safe as regards gloves, do not the emergencies of the toilet call for minor details seemingly unimportant, but still not to be done without? Finding this to be the case, the household of Crewe rallied all its forces upon such occasions, and set aside all domestic arrangements for the time being. It was not impossible that Dolly should have prepared for a rejoicing without the assistance of Mollie and Aimée, Mrs. Phil and Tod, with occasional artistic suggestions from Phil and any particular friend of the family who chanced to be below-stairs, within hearing distance. It might not have appeared an impossibility, I should say, to ordinary people, but the household of Crewe regarded it as such, and accordingly, on the night of the Bilberry gathering, accompanied Dolly in a body to her tiring-room.

Upon the bed lay the merino dress, white, modest, and untrimmed, save for the swan's-down accompaniments, but fitting to a shade and exhibiting an artistic sweep of train.

"It is a discreet sort of garment," said Dolly, by way of comment; "and it is 'suitable to our social position.' Do you remember when Lady Augusta said that about my black alpaca, girls? Pleasant little observation, was n't it? 'Toinette, I trust hair-pins are not injurious to infantile digestive organs. If they are, perhaps it would be as well to convince Tod that such is the case. What is the matter, Mollie?"

Mollie, leaning upon the dressing-table in her favorite attitude, was looking rather discontented. She was looking very pretty, also, it might be said. Her sleepy, warm brown eyes, being upraised to Dolly, showed larger and warmer and browner than usual; the heavy brown locks, tumbling down over her shoulders, caught a sort of brownish, coppery shade in the flare of gas-light; there was a flush on her soft cheeks, and her ripe lips were curved in a lovely dissatisfaction. Hence Dolly's remark.

"I wish I was going," said the child.

Dolly's eyes flew open wide, in a very sublimity of astonishment.

"Wish you were going?" she echoed. "To the Bilberrys'?"

Mollie nodded.

"Yes, even there. I want to go somewhere. I think I should enjoy myself a little anywhere. I should like to see the people, and hear them talk, and find out what they do, and wear an evening dress."

Dolly gazed at her in mingled pity and bewilderment.

"Mollie," she said, "you are very innocent; and I always knew you were very innocent; but I did not know you were as innocent as this,--so utterly free from human guile that you could imagine pleasure in a Bilberry rejoicing. And I believe," still regarding her with that questioning pity, "--I believe you really could. I must keep an eye on you, Mollie. You are too unsophisticated to be out of danger."

It was characteristic of her good-natured sympathy for the girl that it should occur to her the next minute that perhaps it might please her to see herself donned even in such modest finery as the white merino. She understood her simple longings after unattainable glories so thoroughly, and she was so ready to amuse her to the best of her ability. So she suggested it.

"Put it on, Mollie," she said, "and let us see how you would look in it. I should like to see you in full dress."

The child rose with some faint stir of interest in her manner and went to the bed.

"It wouldn't be long enough for me if it wasn't for the train," she said; "but the train will make it long enough nearly, and I can pull it together at the waist."

She put it on at the bedside, and then came forward to the toilet-table; and Dolly, catching sight of her in the glass as she advanced, turned round with a start.

Standing in the light; the soft heavy white folds draping themselves about her statuesque curves of form as they might have draped themselves about the limbs of some young marble Grace or Goddess, with her white arms and shoulders uncovered, with her unchildish yet youthful face, with her large-irised eyes, her flush of momentary pleasure and half awkwardness, she was just a little dazzling, and Dolly did not hesitate to tell her so.

"You are a beauty, Mollie," she said. "And you are a woman in that dress. If you were only a Bilberry now, what a capital your face would be to you, and what a belle you would be!"

Which remarks, if indiscreet, were affectionate, and made in perfect good faith.

But when, having donned the merino herself, she made her way down the dark staircase to the parlor, there was a vague ghost of uneasiness in her mind, and it was the sight of Mollie in full dress which had aroused it.

"She is so very pretty," she said to herself. "I scarcely knew how very pretty she was until I turned round from the glass to look at her. What a pity it is that we are not rich enough to do her justice, and let her enjoy herself as other girls do. And--and," with a little sigh, "I am afraid we are a dreadfully careless lot. I wonder if Phil ever thinks about it? And she is so innocent and ignorant too. I hope she won't fall in love with anybody disreputable. I wish I knew how to take care of her."

And yet when she went into the parlor to run the gauntlet of family inspection, and walked across the floor to show the sweep of her train, and tried her little opera hood on Tod before putting it on herself, a casual observer would certainly have decided that she had never had a serious thought in her life. Griffith was there, of course. At such times his presence was considered absolutely necessary, and his admiration was always unbounded. His portion it was to tuck her under his arm and lead her out to the cab when the train and wraps were arranged and the hood put on. This evening, when he had made her comfortable and shut the door, she leaned out of the window at the last moment to speak to him.

"I forgot to tell you, Griffith," she said, "Lady Augusta said something about a Mr. Gowan to Mr. Bilberry the other day when she invited me. I wonder if it is the Gowan you were telling me about? He is to be there to-night."

"Of course it is," answered Griffith, with sudden discontent. "He is just the sort of fellow the Bil-berrys would lionize."

It was rather incorrect of Dolly to feel, as she did, a sudden flash of anticipation. She could not help it. This intense appreciation of a novel or dramatic encounter with an eligible Philistine was her great weakness, and she made no secret of it even with her lover, which was unwise if frank.

She gave her fan a wicked flirt, and her eyes flashed as she did it.

"A mine of valuable information lies unexplored before me," she said. "I must make minute inquiries concerning the habits and peculiarities of the people of the East. I shall take the lion in tow, and Lady Augusta's happiness will be complete."

Griffith turned pale--his conquering demon was jealousy.

"Look here, Dolly," he began.

But Dolly settled herself in her seat again, and waved her hand with an

air of extreme satisfaction. She did not mean to make him miserable, and would have been filled with remorse if she had quite understood the extent of the suffering she imposed upon him sometimes merely through her spirit, and the daring onslaughts she made upon people for whom she cared little or nothing. She understood his numerous other peculiarities pretty thoroughly, but she did not understand his jealousy, for the simple reason that she had never been jealous in her life.

"Tell the cabman to drive on," she said, with a flourish. "There is balm to be found even in Bilberry."

And when the man drove on she composed herself comfortably in a corner of the vehicle, in perfect unconsciousness of the fact that she had left a thorn behind, rankling in the bosom of the poor fellow who watched her from the pavement.

She was rather late, she found, on reaching her destination. The parlors were full, and the more enterprising of the guests were beginning to group themselves in twos and threes, and make spasmodic efforts at conversation. But conversation at a Bilberry assemblage was rarely a success,--it was so evident that to converse was a point of etiquette, and it was so patent that conversation was expected from everybody, whether they had anything to say or not.

Inoffensive individuals of retiring temperament, being introduced to each other solemnly and with ceremony, felt that to be silent was to be

guilty of a glaring breach of Bilberry decorum, and, casting about in mental agony for available remarks, found none, and were overwhelmed with amiable confusion. Lady Augusta herself, in copper-colored silk of the most unbending quality and make, was not conducive to cheerfulness. Yet Dolly's first thought on catching sight of her this evening was a cheerful if audacious one.

"She looks as if she was dressed in a boiler," she commented, inwardly. "I wonder if I shall ever live so long--I wonder if I ever could live long enough to submit to a dress like that. And yet she seems to be almost happy in the possession of it. But, I dare say, that is the result of conscious virtue."

It was a very fortunate thing for Dolly that she was not easily discomposed. Most girls entering a room full of people, evidently unemployed, and in consequence naturally prone to not too charitable criticism of new-comers, might have lost self-possession. Not so Dolly Crewe. Being announced, she came in neither with unnecessary hurry nor timidly, and with not the least atom of shrinking from the eyes turned toward her; and, simple and unassuming a young person as she appeared on first sight, more than one pair of eyes in question found themselves attracted by the white merino, the white shoulders, the elaborate tresses, and the serene, innocent-looking orbs.

Lady Augusta advanced slightly to meet her, with a grewsome rustling of copper-colored stiffness. She did not approve of Dolly at any time, but

she specially disapproved of her habit of setting time at defiance and ignoring the consequences.

"I am very glad to see you," she said, with the air of a potentate issuing a proclamation. "I thought"--somewhat severely--"that you were not coming at all."

"Did you?" remarked Dolly, with tranquillity.

"Yes," returned her ladyship. "And I could not understand it. It is nine o'clock now, and I believe I mentioned eight as the hour."

"I dare say you did," said Dolly, unfurling her small downy fan, and using it with much serene grace; "but I wasn't ready at eight. I hope you are very well."

"Thank you," replied her ladyship, icily. "I am very well. Will you go and take a seat by Euphemia? I allowed her to come into the room to-night, and I notice that her manner is not so self-possessed as I should wish."

Dolly gave a little nod of acquiescence, and looked across the room to where the luckless Euphemia sat edged in a corner behind a row of painfully conversational elderly gentlemen, who were struggling with the best intentions to keep up a theological discourse with the Rev. Marmaduke. Euphemia was the eldest Miss Bilberry. She was overgrown

and angular, and suffered from chronic embarrassment, which was not alleviated by the eye of her maternal parent being upon her. She was one of Dolly's pupils, and cherished a secret but enthusiastic admiration for her. And, upon the whole, Dolly was fond of the girl. She was good-natured and unsophisticated, and bore the consciousness of her physical and mental imperfections with a humility which was almost touching to her friend sometimes. Catching Dolly's eye on this occasion, she glanced at her imploringly, and then, catching the eye of her mother, blushed to the tips of her ears, and relapsed into secret anguish of mind.

But Dolly, recognizing her misery, smiled reassuringly, and made her way across the room to her, insinuating herself through the theological phalanx.

"I am so glad you are here at last," said the girl. "I was so afraid you would n't come. And oh, how nice you look, and how beautifully you manage your train! I could never do it in the world. I should be sure to tumble over it. But nothing ever seems to trouble you at all. You haven't any idea how lovely you were when you went across the room to mamma.. Everybody looked at you, and I don't wonder at it."

"They would have looked at anybody," answered Dolly, laughing. "They had nothing else to do."

"That is quite true, poor things," sighed Euphemia, sympathetically.

"You don't know the worst yet, either. You don't know how stupid they are and can be, Dolly. That old gentleman near the screen has not spoken one word yet, and he keeps sighing and wiping the top of his bald head with his pocket-handkerchief until I can't keep my eyes off him, and I am afraid he has noticed me. I don't mean any harm, I'm sure, but I have got nothing to do myself, and I can't help it. But what I was going to say was, that people looked at you as they did not look at others who came in. You seem different some way. And I'm sure that Mr. Gowan of mamma's has been staring at you until it is positively rude of him."

Dolly's slowly moving fan became stationary for a moment.

"Mr. Gowan," she said. "Who is Mr. Gowan?"

"One of mamma's people," answered Euphemia, "though I'm sure I can't quite understand how he can be one of them. He looks so different from the rest. He is very rich, you know, and very aristocratic, and has travelled a great deal He has been all over the world, they say. There he is at that side-table."

Dolly's eyes, travelling round the assemblage with complacent indifference, rested at last on the side-table where the subject of Euphemia's remarks sat.

He really was an eligible Philistine, it seemed, despite Griffith's unflattering description of him.

He was a long-limbed, graceful man, with an aquiline face and superb eyes, which at this moment were resting complacently upon Dolly herself. It was not exactly admiration, either, which they expressed, it was something of a more entertaining nature, at least so Dolly found it,--it was nothing more nor less than a slowly awakening interest in her which paid her the compliment of rising above the surface of evident boredom and overcoming lassitude. It looked as if he was just beginning to study her, and found the game worth the candle. Dolly met his glance with steadiness, and as she met it she measured him. Then she turned to Euphemia again and fluttered the fan slowly and serenely.

"He's nice, is n't he?" commented the guileless Phemie. "If the rest of them were like him, I don't think we should be so stupid, but as it is, you know, he can't talk when there is nobody to talk to."

"No," said Dolly. "One could hardly expect it of him. But I wonder why he does not say something to that thin lady in the dress-cap."

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Phemie, "I don't wonder in the least. That is Miss Berenice MacDowlas, Dolly."

"Miss Berenice MacDowlas!" echoed Dolly, with a start. "You don't say so?"

"Yes," answered Euphemia. "Do you know her? You spoke as if you did."

"Well--yes--no," answered Dolly, with a half laugh. "I should say I know somebody who does."

And she looked as if she was rather enjoying some small joke of her own. The fact was that Miss MacDowlas was no other than Griffith's amiable aunt. But, of course, it would not have done to tell this to Euphemia Bilberry. Euphemia's ideas on the subject of the tender passion were as yet crude and unformed, and Dolly Crewe was not prone to sentimental confidences, so, as yet, Euphemia and indeed the whole Bilberry family, remained in blissful ignorance of the very existence of such a person as Mr. Griffith Donne.

If personal appearance was to be relied upon, Miss MacDowlas was not a promising subject for diplomatic beguiling.

"We have no need to depend upon her," was Dolly's mental decision. "One glimpse of life in Vagabondia would end poor Griffith's chances with her. I wonder what she would think if she could see Tod in all his glory when 'Toinette and Phil are busy painting."

And her vivid recollection of the personal adornments of Tod at such times brought a smile to her lips.

She made herself very comfortable in her corner, and, exerting herself to her utmost to alleviate Euphemia's sufferings, succeeded so-far

that the girl forgot everything else but her enjoyment of her friend's caustic speeches and satirical little jokes. Dolly was not afraid of results, and, standing in do awe of public opinion, gave herself up to the encouraging of any shadow of amusement quite heartily. She was so entertaining in a small way upon this occasion, that Euphemia's frame of mind became in some degree ecstatic. From her place of state across the room, Lady Augusta regarded them with disapproval. It was so very evident that they were enjoying themselves, and that this shocking Dorothea Crewe was not to be suppressed. (Dorothea, be it known, was Dolly's baptismal name, and Lady Augusta held to its full pronunciation as a matter of duty.) It was useless, however, to disapprove. Behind the theological phalanx Dolly sat enthroned plainly in the best of spirits, and in rather a dangerous mood, to judge from outward appearances. There was nothing of the poor relation about her at least. The little snowy fan was being manipulated gracefully and with occasional artistic nourishes, her enjoyable roulades of laughter tinkled audaciously, her white shoulders were expressive, her gestures charming, and, above all, people were beginning to look at her admiringly, if not with absolute envy. Something must be done.

Lady Augusta moved across the room, piloting her way between people on ottomans and people on chairs, rustling with awe-inspiring majesty; and, reaching the corner at last, she spoke to the daring Dolly over the heads of the phalanx.

"Dorothea," she said, "we should like a little music."

This she had expected would be a move which could not fail to set the young person in her right place. It would show her that her time was not her own, and that she was expected to make herself useful; and it would also set to rights any little mistake lookers-on might have previously labored under as to her position. But even this did not destroy Dolly's equanimity. She finished the small joke she had been making to Phemie, and then turned to her august relative with a sweet but trying smile.

"Music?" she said. "Certainly." And arose at once.

Then Lady Augusta saw her mistake. It was only another chance for Miss Dolly to display herself to advantage, after all. When she arose from her seat in the corner, and gave a glance of inspection to her train over her bare white shoulder, people began to look at her again; and when she crossed the room, she was an actual Sensation,--and to create a sensation in the Bilberry parlors was to attain a triumph. Worse than this, also, as her ladyship passed the bald-headed individual by the screen, that gentleman--who was a lion as regarded worldly possessions--condescended to make his first remark for the evening.

"Pretty girl, that," he said. "Nice girl,--fine figure. Relative?"

"My daughter's governess, sir," replied her ladyship, rigidly.

And in Dolly's passage across the room another incident occurred which

was not lost upon the head of the house of Bilberry. Near the seat of Mr. Ralph Gowan stood a vacated chair, which obstructed the passage to the piano, and, observing it, the gentleman in question rose and removed it, bowing obsequiously in reply to Dolly's slight gesture of thanks, and when she took her place at the instrument he moved to a seat near by, and settled himself to listen with the air of a man who expected to enjoy the performance.

And he evidently did enjoy it, for a very pleasant little performance it was. The songs had a thrill of either pathos or piquancy in every word and note, and the audience found they were listening in spite of themselves.

When they were ended, Ralph Gowan sought out Lady Augusta in her stronghold, and placidly proposed being introduced to her young guest; and since it was evident that he intended to leave her no alternative, her ladyship was fain to comply; and so, before half the evening was over, Dolly found herself being entertained as she had never been entertained before in the camps of the Philistines at least. And as to the Eastern explorer, boredom was forgotten for the time, and he gave himself up entirely to the amusing and enjoying of this piquant young person with the white shoulders.

"Crewe," he said to her during the course of their first conversation. "I am sure Lady Augusta said 'Crewe.' Then you are relatives, I suppose?"

"Poor relations," answered Dolly, coolly, and without a shadow of discomfiture. "I am the children's governess. Trying, is n't it?"

Ralph Gowan met the gaze of the bright eyes admiringly. Even at this early period of their acquaintance he was falling into the snare every other man fell into,--the snare of finding that Dolly Crewe was startlingly unlike anybody else.

"Not for the children," he said. "Under such circumstances education must necessarily acquire a new charm."

"Thank you," said Dolly.

When supper was announced, Lady Augusta made another attack and was foiled again. She came to their corner, and, bending over Dolly, spoke to her in stage-whisper.

"I will bring young Mr. Jessup to take you into the supper-room, Dorothea," she said.

But Dolly's plans were already arranged, and even if such had not been the case she would scarcely have rejoiced at the prospect of the escort of young Mr. Jessup, who was a mild young idiot engaged in the study of theology.

"Thank you, Lady Augusta," she said, cheerfully, "but I have promised Mr. Gowan."

And Lady Augusta had the pleasure of seeing her leave the room a minute later, with her small glove slipped through Ralph Gowan's arm, and the plainly delighted face of that gentleman inclined attentively toward the elaborate Frenchy coiffure.

At the supper-table little Miss Crewe was a prominent feature. At her end of the table conversation flourished and cheerfulness reigned. Even Euphemia and young Mr. Jessup, who had come down together in a mutual agony of embarrassment, began to pluck up spirit and hazard occasional remarks, and finally even joined in the laughter at Dolly's witticism.

People lower down the table glanced up across the various dishes, and envied the group who seemed to set the general heaviness and discontent at defiance.

Dolly, accompanied by coffee and cakes, was more at home and more delightful than ever, so delightful, indeed, that Ralph Gowan began to regard even Lady Augusta with gratitude, since it was to her he was, to some extent, indebted for his new acquaintance.

"She is a delightful--yes, a delightful girl!" exclaimed young Mr. Jessup, confidentially addressing-Euphemia, and blushing vividly at his own boldness. "I never heard such a laugh as she has in my life. It

is actually exhilarating. It quite raises one's spirits," with mild naïveté.

Euphemia began to brighten at once. She could talk about Dolly Crewe if she could talk about nothing else.

"Oh, but you have n't seen anything of her yet," she said, in a burst of enthusiasm. "If you could only see her every day, as I do, and hear the witty things she says, and see how self-possessed she is, when other people would be perfectly miserable with confusion, there would be no wonder at your saying you never saw anybody like her. I never did, I am sure. And then, you know, somehow or other, she always looks so well in everything she wears,--even in the shabbiest things, and her things are nearly always shabby enough, for they are dreadfully poor. She is always finding new ways of wearing things or new ways of doing her hair or--or something. It is the way her dresses fit, I think. Oh, dear, how I do wish the dressmaker could make mine fit as hers do! Just look at that white merino, now, for instance. It is the plainest dress in the room, and there is not a bit of fuss or trimming about it, and yet see how soft the folds look and how it hangs,--the train, you know. It reminds me of a picture,--one of those pictures in fashionable monthlies,--illustrations of love stories, you know."

"It is a very pretty dress," said young Mr. Jessup, eying it with great interest. "What did you say the stuff was called?"

"Merino," answered Phemie.

"Merino," repeated Mr. Jessup. "I will try and remember. I should like my sister Lucinda Maria to have a dress like it."

And he regarded it with growing admiration just tempered by the effect of a mental picture of Lucinda Maria, who was bony and of remarkable proportions, attired in its soft and flowing counterpart, with white swan's-down adorning her bare shoulders.

"May I ask," said Miss MacDowlas, at the bottom of the table, to Lady Augusta,--"may I ask who that young lady with the fresh completion is,--the young lady in white at the other end?"

"That is my governess," replied her ladyship, freezingly. "Miss Dorothea Crewe."

And Miss MacDowlas settled her eye-glass and gave Miss Dorothea Crewe the benefit of a prolonged examination.

"Crewe," she said, at length. "Poor relation, I suppose?" with some sharpness of manner. Dignity was lost upon Miss MacDowlas.

"A branch of my family who are no great credit to it," was the majestic rejoinder.

"Oh, indeed," was the lady's sole remark, and then Miss MacDowlas returned to her coffee, still, however, keeping her double eye-glass across her nose and casting an occasional glance at Dolly.

And just at this particular moment Dolly was unconsciously sealing Ralph Gowan's fate for him. Quite unconsciously, I repeat, for the most serious of Dolly's iniquities were generally unconscious. When she flirted, her flirtations were of so frank and open a nature, that, bewildered and fascinated though her victims might be, they must have been blind indeed to have been deceived, and so there were those who survived them and left the field safe, though somewhat sore at heart. But when she was in her honest, earnest, life-enjoying moods, and meant no harm,--when she was simply enjoying herself and trying to amuse her masculine companion, when her gestures were unconscious and her speeches
unstudied, when she laughed through sheer merriment and was charmingly theatrical because she could not help it and because little bits of pathos and comedy were natural to her at times, then it was that the danger became deadly; then it was that her admirers were regardless of consequences, and defied results. And she was in just such a mood to-night.

"Come and see us?" she was saying. "Of course you may; and if you come, you shall have an insight into the domestic workings of modern Vagabondia. You shall be introduced to half a dozen people who toil not, neither do they spin successfully, for their toiling and spinning seems

to have little result, after all. You shall see shabbiness and the spice of life hand-in-hand; and, I dare say, you will find that the figurative dinner of herbs is not utterly destitute of a flavor of piquancy. You shall see people who enjoy themselves in sheer defiance of circumstances, and who find a pathos in every-day events, which, in the camps of the Philistines, mean nothing. Yes, you may come if you care to." And Ralph Gowan, looking down at the changeful eyes, saw an almost tender light shining in their depths,--summoned up all at once perhaps by one of those inexplicable touches of pathos of which she had spoken.

But even coffee and conversation must come to an end at last, and so the end of this evening came. People began to drop away one by one, bidding their hostess good-night with the air of individuals who had performed a duty, and were relieved to find it performed and disposed of for the time being. So Dolly, leaving her companion with a bright farewell, and amiably disposing of Lady Augusta, slipped up-stairs to the retiring-room for her wraps. In the course of three minutes she came down again, the scarlet shawl draped around her, and the highly ornamental hood donned. She was of so little consequence in the Bilberry household that no one met her when she reappeared. Even the servants knew that her convenience or inconvenience was of small moment, so the task of summoning her cab would have devolved upon herself, had it not been for a little incident, which might have been either an accident or otherwise. As she came down the staircase a gentleman crossed the threshold of the parlor and came to meet her,--and this gentleman was no other than Ralph Gowan.

"Let me have the pleasure of putting you into your--"

"Cab," ended Dolly, with a trill of a laugh,--it was so evident that he had been going to say "carriage." "Thank you, with the greatest of pleasure. Indeed, it is rather a relief to me, for they generally keep me waiting. And I detest waiting."

He handed her into her seat, and lingered to see that she was comfortable, perhaps with unnecessary caution; and then, when she gave him her hand through the window, he held it for a moment longer than was exactly called for by the exigencies of the occasion.

"You will not forget that you have given me permission to call," he said, hesitating slightly.

"Oh, dear no!" she answered. "I shall not forget. We are always glad to see people--in Vagabondia."

And as the cab drove off, she waved the hand he had held in an airy gesture of adieu, gave him a bewildering farewell nod, and, withdrawing her face from the window, disappeared in the shadow within.

"Great Jove!" meditated Ralph Gowan, when he had seen the last of her. "And this is a nursery governess,--a sort of escape-valve for the spleen and ill moods of that woman in copper-color. She teaches them French and

music, I dare say, and makes those spicy little jokes of hers over the dog-eared arithmetic. Ah, well! such is impartial Fortune," And he strolled back into the house again, to make his adieus to Lady Augusta, with the bewitching Greuze face fresh in his memory.

But, for her part, Dolly, having left him behind in the Philistine camp, was nestling comfortably in the dark corner of her cab, thinking of Griffith, as she always did think of him when she found herself alone for a moment.

"I wonder if he will be at home when I get there," she said. "Poor fellow! he would find it dull enough without me, unless they were all in unusually good spirits. I wonder if the time ever will come when we shall have a little house of our own, and can go out together or stay at home, just as we like."