

Bellefonte, Pa., Nov. 30, 1900.

A THANKSGIVIN' TURKEY.

'Cindy, reach dah 'hine yo' back 'N' han' me dat ah almanac W'y Laud !-t'morrer's Thanksgivin' ! Got to git out an' make hay-Don' keer whut de preachah say-

We mus' eat Thanksgivin' day, Us sho' uz you's a-libbin You know whah Mahs Hudsor libs?

Dey's a turkey dah dat gibs Me a heap o' trouble. Some day Hudson g'ine to mis' Dat owdashus fowl o' his; I's g'ine ober dah an' twis 'At gobblah's nake plumb double

Goin' pas' dah t' othah day, Turkey strutted up an' say "A'gobble, gobble, gobble!" Much uz ef he mout remahk: "Don' you wish 'at it was dahk? Ain't I temptin' ?" S'I : "You hahk, Er else dey'll be a squabble,

"Take an' wring yo' nake right quick, Light on you lak a thousan' brick, 'N' you won't know what befell you. 'N' I went on. Yit, evah day, When I goes by that-a-way, 'At fowl hab too much to say;

'N' I'm tiadh uv it, I tell you. G'ine to go dis bressed night, An' put out dat turkey's light, 'N' I'll lam 'im lak a cobblah. Take keer, 'Cindy, lemme pass; Got to do ma work up fas' Ain't a-g'ine to take no sass Off o' no man's turkey gobblah

## THE ARTIST ON THE TOP FLOOR

Christine frowned. It was not the moment at which anyone would have wished to meet a young man. A saucepan, under the most favorable circumstances, could scarcely be called a personal adornment; and several saucepans, though held by the daintiest and whitest of feminine hands, were enough to make anyone look ridicu-lous. If she had only left the saucepaus to Hester and carried up soft sofa cushions, or something picturesque and interesting, herself! But—saucepans! It was exasvexation as she stood half-way up the staircase, wondering why the stupid fellow did not pass her and continue his way Then she realized that the narrowness of the staircase and the angle at which she had held the saucepans com-

bined to prevent him.
"I—I beg your pardon! she said has tily, and took a step upward. So did the young man—to save his person from the dangerous proximity of the saucepans;

and they stood precisely as before.

"Won't you let me help you?" he suggested. It was a pardonable offer, considering that there seemed no possibility otherwise of his getting downstairs; but Christine, already ruffled and embarrassed, was pleased to think it officious. His manner, she decided impulsively, was effusive; and she hated effusive men. She was, by way of being a serious young woman herself, serious enough to play at earning her living because she thought it right for a woman to work, and young enough to think that all men should be strong, manly, large-minded, great-souled, andreticent. Effusion, therefore, had no place in her ideal; and as for a fair mustache that hid a perpetual smile—that was accepted the invitation.

'No, thank you! she said, and struggled to dispose of the saucepans more con-

veniently.
"You'd better," advised the young man as the stubborness of the largest and blackest of the three saucepaus again threatened his personal safety. He had no idea that he was expected to be great-souled or any of those things; and it seemed quite reasonable to him that he should want to extricate a very charming girl from a very delightfully unusual predicament. But Christine only saw the smile; and that finally condemned him, from her point of

"No, thank you," she repeated-crossly this time, for the biggest saucepan was torturing her muscles up to the shoulder. She made a desperate effort to swing the thing around and so end the absurd situation; and she succeeded in lengthening it

"Now you must allow me !" cried the young man triumphantly, as the sudden removal of the principal obstacle in his way enabled him at last to pass and spring downstairs, two steps at a time. He was preceded by a clanging, rebounding, blackened object, that rolled and tumbled and jumped and banged its way downward till it was brought up, unintentionally, by the skirts of an elderly lady, who was letting herself into her flat on the floor

'It is your property, Mr. Merrington?' asked the lady with some severity. The immediate appearance of the young man, subsequent to that of the saucepan, led her to this conclusion, and also prevented her from rubbing a smarting ankle with a

Mr. Merrington contrived to remain smiling and unabashed. "I was just endeavoring to make it mine, Miss Lindsey," he answered, picking it up gingerly. "I sincerely hope my carelessness..."

"Not at all !" Miss Lindsay shot at him in much anguish, and she limped inside her flat and shut the door sharply. Maurice Merrington returned upstairs,

swinging the saucepan and whistling gayly. "Don't trouble." said Christine faintly,

as he kept possession of her property and waited for her to lead the way.

"No trouble, I assure you!" cried the young man, following her upstairs.

"Nothing I like better than saucepans, really; and this one is such a particularly

nice and harmless ---- " "It's a horrid saucepan !" interrupted Christine indignantly. She supposed he thought it amusing to ignore the short-comings of this burnt and scarred veteran of her kitchen, and she was determined to

show him that in this as in all things she preferred frankness to flattery. But Mr. errington rattled on uncons errington rattled on unconsciously.
"Ob, don't be hard on it," he said,

swirling it round cautiously as he spoke. "It mayn't be much to look at, perhaps,

"Thank you," said Christine, holding out her hand for it as they reached her own half-open door. "Pray allow me—" began Maurice eagerly, but she still held out her hand, and he yielded with all the grace that

was possible.

"Is there anything else I can do for she knew I you?" he continued, lingering on the engagement threshold. "I suppose you're just moving threshold. "I suppose you're just moving the was she was You surely don't suppose it is my cus-

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you?" cried Christine, begging his first question by answering his second. Then, conscious that there had been a touch of raillery in her tone, and quite convinced that she had no wish to encourage a young man with a smile and no soul, she added more discovered that was so enormously diverting?

Maturally, she had no idea that her innomination; the way of politic explanation: immediately by way of polite explanation 'I have been occupying a spare flat down stairs till my own was ready. That is why I am moving some of my things myself. I am sorry if I have taken up your time." And she shut the door on his protesta-

Her maid, coming in five minutes later with more utensils, found her sitting absently on the edge of a coal scuttle, reading a letter that had come for her two days before. The particular paragraph that re-quired this sudden and inopportune study

ran as follows:
"By the way, Teddy knows an artist on the top floor who might be of use in helping you to place your drawings. I forget his name at the moment, but he does a lot of illustrating and is very nice, my boy says. Would you like Teddy to give him an introduction to you? He is engaged to a sister of Ted's great Oxford chum," etc.,

"Please, Miss," said Hester for the third time, "the men want to know where they are to put the sofa."

Christine listened to her without hearin. "On the top floor!" she answered vaguely, still looking at her letter.

It was pouring with rain, and Christine shivered as she looked out from the front door and scanned the deserted street. Not a cab was in sight, though Hester had gone to search for one more than ten minutes ago. Even the smell of warm, moist greenness, and the reviving life in the trees opposite, which had drooped so mis-erably only yesterday, did not compensate her for being kept waiting on a wet after-noon in this most deserted corner of Chelsea.

"Might I trouble you? Thanks!" said a voice from behind; and Maurice Merrington stepped past her and scanned the empty street in his turn. He raised his hat slightly, which, of course, was demanded by bare politeness. He also glanced at her, though, as if he courted recognition as well; and this, Christine thought, was entirely uncalled for. However, as he did not seem to be going, but pulled a whistle out of his pocket and began blowing it, she seemed as though Fate had destined her to be sandwiched with this tiresome and ir-repressible young man in drafty and cramped corners.

"You won't get a cab" she remarked discouragingly. "Aester has been looking for one ever so long. And it's so wet," she added somewhat fatuously.

"Rain is wet," admitted the young man even more fatuously. Seeing a frown gather behind her veil he hastened to repair his silly jest. "Chelsea is not a good place for cabs," he said with exceeding gravity, and blew a louder blast than be-fore. It was answered this time by a welcome clash of bells in the distance, followed by a jumble of hoofs and a slide, which brought the desired hansom to the end of the street, where it paused doubtfully. Assailed by vigorous signs from the rain-bound couple in the doorway, it gathered up all its resources for another prolonged skid and a slither, scraping the curb with excrutiating sounds all along the street, and ending with a terrific stumble on the spot where it was intended to stop. Having survived these successive perils without disaster, it stood still in a cloud of steam, and opened all over. But nobody

ton, spreading his umberella over Chris tine's new hat "Oh, no !" objected Christine.

distinctly yours, and you are probably in a hurry. "Not in the least," declared Maurice. Only a private view in Broad street; and

views can always wait." Christine opened her mind impulsively to say something—and said something else. "Hester will be back with my cab directly, you see," she pointed outlamely.
"Then I will take yours," said

young man promptly.

This was unanswerable; yet it seemed a hame to leave him to the doubtful issue of Hester's search. She glanced at him sidewise. He looked very well, in an or-dinary smart London manner, and for the moment his appearance pleased her. She forgot he was effusive instead of reticent, and that he lacked soul—and she burned

"I am going to a private view in Broad street, too," she confessed. "It seems a pity, considering the scarcity of cabs—and rain—and everything—that shouldn't both-

And when Hester did return with her cab she was just in time to see her mistress drive off in another cab with a strange young man; and for the next few seconds Hester endured language.
In the retreating hansom Christine was

listing impatiently while her companion made commonplace and wholly unnecessary remarks about the position of Chelsea. It was so stupid of him, she reflected crossly, not to see that she wanted to explain her reasons for acting in such an unconven-tional manner. Maurice, of course, had no idea that there was anything to explain; but his was not a reflective nature. The remarks came to an end in time, and

Christine seized her opportunity.
"Mrs. Howard wrote me that her son Teddy was going to give you an introduc-tion to me," she began; "so I was expect-ing that you would call on one of my

Thursdays. They knew that your flat was over mine, and —"

A certain blankness that came into his face as she said this made her stop and hesitate. Decidedly, he was the most tactless of young men! Even if the intro-

duction had not reached him, he need not have looked as if he had never heard of his best friend.

"Well, you do live on the top floor, don't you?" she demanded a little crossly. "Certainly, yes—to be sure!" answered Maurice readily. He wished he could have acquiesced as easily in what she said about the introduction; but the name of Teddy Howard was quite unknown to him. Before he had time to say so, however, she had jumped to the illogical conclusion that he did not wish to continue an acquaintance for which, so far, he was distinctly responsible; and she became furiously anxious at once to explain to him that she was equally indifferent, and would not have mentioned the subject if Mrs. Howard had not placed her in such an awkward

"To be quite frank," she resumed hurriedly, "Mrs. Howard thought you might be good enough to give me some advice about placing my drawings. I was at school with the Hazlewood girls, too, and she knew I would be interested in your engagement. Which one is it? The little

She was quite pleased with herself for

tom to walk about carrying saucepans, do fore disconcerted her greatly to find that

cent observations had explained the whole mystery to Maurice. He realized now that she mistook him for Tom Ingleburg, whose flat he had merely taken for the summer and for the moment the humor of the situation overcame him. But when he turned to explain things to her he found her staring at him with such a hurt look on her face that he immediately forgot everything else in a desire to humble himself and bring back her smile again.

"Please forgive me! It wasn't you; ought to be ashamed of myself—something I saw in the street we just passed! Awful-ly funny place, Chelsea, don't you know,'' he stammered, lying feebly in his confu-

"Oh !" said Christine indifferently. looking straight in front of her. He was a good-natured fellow, and he could not bear to think that he had wounded her by his idiotic laughter. She was so young and so pretty, too, that her little dered. spasmodic attempts at dignity only in-oreased his interest in her. He certainly did not wish to disconcert her further by explaining the mistake she had made. I ever met."

Perhaps, too, he was not unwilling for his own sake to keep up the deception a little longer. Afterward, he could not imagine what had possessed him to think that it would be amusing to play her such a schoolboy's silly trick, or that it would be Christine, and she swept her hand compression. possible for any length of time to keep her from finding it out.

"It's odd, now that you should know the Howards, the Hazlewoods, and all those, isn't it?" he pursued recklessly. Young Howard has never sent me that

introduction, by the way. But it doesn't matter, does it?"

If he had not been such a boy at heart, in spite of his twenty-eight years, he could never have done it. Anyhow, he was in for it now, and it was something to see that her face was already softening. "Isn't it the little dark one?" she asked

Maurice refrained rigidly from smiling. out of his pocket and began blowing it, she accepted the inevitable and bowed. It also letting himself in for an engagement

to some one he had never seen. "Yes," he said boldly; "the little dark one." He glanced at her as he spoke. Christine was dark, too. "At least," he continued, gazing at the poise of the dainty little head she kept so resolutely turned away from him, 'she's got that sort of dark hair that's black in the shadows, and just glistens with brown shades where it catches the light. And she's a winsome little creature!" he wound up enthusias-

tically. She turned and smiled at him then. "Tell me about her," she said in a friend-

ly tone.
This, however, Maurice seemed in no hurry to do. It had just occurred to him that if he had to play another man's part, it would be well to find out first how much she knew about the other man. "Oh, that can wait," he said, as he had

said of the private view. "What else did Mrs. Howard tell you about me, I won-"She didn't tell me your name," observed Christine. "Did she tell you

'Rather !" answered Maurice shamelessly. Fortune was certainly playing into lis hands more kindly than he deserved. It was something to know that his name Christine kept her countenance—and her while he had an advantage over her in the possession of hers, which he had gleaned from the porter. "Miss Christine Berwick, illustrator in black and white! Isn't that

He went on to tell her his own name and then, wondering what his chances of detection were, he asked if she knew any one else who lived in the flats. He muttered something to the cab horse when he heard that Miss Lindsay had called on her the day before.

"She pokes her finger into everybody's

pie," he told her. Thinks she can call on every newcomer because she's the oldest tenant in the block. Awful old gossip! Don't tell her too much-"

Christie chuckled to herself in a rather demure, amused sort of way that was interesting to hear. "She won't come again, I fancy," she said, and laughed out "Why not?" asked Maurice, feeling re-

lieved notwithstanding.
Christine's characteristic frown rested on her face an instant. "She began by asking me what rent I paid," she answered,

Well?" preed Maurice, becoming cur-"I-I don't think I can tell you," sa

Christine, her demure look returning.
"Can't you?" said Maurice in an interested tone. He glanced out of the window they were horribly near Broad street. Perhaps, if you shut your eyes and try "But, you see-you see, it's about you

explained Christine. She, too, glanced out of the window. In another moment they would reach Broad street, and the opportunity for telling him would have gor

by. "That's an additional reason for letting me hear," declared the tempter, rejoicing as a block held them for a moment at Alas a block held them for a moment at Al-bemarl street. He never sat in a hansom again on a wet day, blocked by the traffic, without hearing that low, nervous little voice in his ear, through the drip of the rain and the drone of wheels and the clat-

"I-I'm afraid it wouldn't be she protested feebly.

Maurice played his last card cunningly as the traffic melted away in front of them.

"Of course I shouldn't wish to make you

tell me anything that you would so keep to yourself," he said gravely. "Oh, it isn't anything like that !" ex voice. "She only said—well she didn't say anything, only she began gossiping about all the people in the house, and when she came to you—"?

"Yes? When she came to me peated Maurice encouragingly, as the blush spread over her cheeks again.

Christine gave herself a shake and ended her confidence breathlessly. "Well, then I told her I never allowed anybody to say horrid things about the people I—about my friends, you know; and it seemed to upset her rather. That was why I didn't even hear your name, because she got up and went away. I opened all the windows when she'd gone!" added Christine with another chuckle.

She was staring straight up Broad street, but she knew he was looking at her, and her blushes were beyond her control. "That was very nice of you," said Maurice, and for once his manner was not

"Oh !" cried Christine, making a frantic attempt to justify herself. "You see, I didn't know how to stop her otherwise; and-aud-there was Mis. Howard-and the saucepans-

"Just so," laughed Maurice as he flung back the doors of the hansom. "By all means let us put it down to the sauce-That evening a forlorn little figure of

girl stood by the window of her flat in the

faint light that came from a departed sun face that he immediately forgot everything else in a desire to humble himself and bring back her smile again.

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> The letter floated out of her hand and lay neglected at her feet. "I knew he wasn't a nice man!" she murmured with a catch in her voice.
>
> She stood by the window, pondering till foie gras.

t grew quite dark. Then she switched on the light suddenly and smiled in a mysterious manner. "I'll pay him out by keeping up the and!" she said aloud; and Hester, who

inadvertently caught the remark "For an artist," said Christine impres sively, "you are the least energetic person

"Why have I got to be energetic?" grumbled the artist in question, who lay stretched on the turf a few yards away

hensively around the Sorrey Valley that lay below them. "Only look at it!" "I am looking at it," he said; which was not strictly true, for the range of vis-

ion bounded by the brim of his straw hat was blocked at that instant by an erect little person in a bicycle suit, sitting up against the blue sky, with two small and very white hands clasped over her knees. "Then why don't you get up and make a ing." sketch of it?" demanded Christine.

"My dear friend," he remonstrated, "I

time, and-"Are you never serious?" sighed Chris-

tine. "I trust not," said he. "And you wouldn't like it, if I were." She glanced at him critically, and wondered. It was quite a long time since she last told herself that he was the exact opposite of everything she thought a ma should be. She glanced slowly away again and her eyes fell on the spot where his bicycle lay prone on the ground. "If you didn't mean to work," she cried, pointing to it. "why did you bring

your sketching materials with you?" "That isn't materials," answered the voice under the straw hat. "That's lunch-

Christine fairly gasped. "And all this while you've been pretending it was—"
she began, and then stopped to shake her
head disapprovingly at him. "And you call yourself an artist!" she concluded with a shrug of her shoulders.
"Excuse me, I never did! It was you," said Maurice; and having made this ex-

ed solemnly. "I was also told that you were tremendously successful, and that one word of recommendation from you would get me as much work as I could wish. And I find that you never do any work at all, that nobody has ever heard of you, and that I may whistle for your recommendation! It's a little hard on me, I must sav !'

"Very hard," admitted Maurice, smiling in a provoking manner. "But then, you shouldn't believe old ladies in the country; they never have any sense

proportion."
"Now I come to think of it," continued Christine thoughtfully, "she even mentioned the paper you were on—the Pastel. Now, I never see anybody's name in the Pastel except—except—what does he call himself?—isn't it Tom Something?"

"Oh, I dare say," said Maurice. "man with a name like that is sure to l uccessful." "Now, don't be jealous because I hap pen to mention the name of a man who has fought his way in the world, and toiled and slaved and slaved for an ideal !' she

cried "It's time for luncheon" remarked Maurice, rising to his feet. "When you

begin to get strenuous it always means that it's time for luncheon." Christine tossed her head disdainfully. "I am sorry for the girl you're going to marry!" she remarked.

"Are you?" said Maurice, looking at ner a little queerly before he stooped over

his machine. "So am I."
"Why?" asked Christine, making little holes in the turf with her finger. "Because I'm afraid she thinks I'm

good-for-nothing."
"What a shame!" said Christine involuntarily. Then she stopped short and laughed a little unmeaningly.

"Why is it a shame?" inquired Maurice tossing sundry paper parcels toward her. "You've known me just as long as she had when I proposed to her. And you think I'm a lazy brute; so why shouldn't she?" "Foie gras—hurrah!" answered Christine peering into one of the packages. Then, as she was opening the next. "But it's dif-ferent for her," she resumed casually, "be-

"Do you think that makes a differen Look out—this is claret!"
"Any seltzer? Good! It makes every

Maurice unstrapped the last package and weighed it in his hand meditatively, standing straight up and looking down at her as she knelt in the heather and deftly untied his clumsy knots with her white little fingers. Her hair was all light brown shades today, for the sunlight was upon it. He thought he had never seen such bewitching hands or such charming hair; and he dropped the last package suddenly at his feet, and took two quick steps across the space of tinted turf that divided them.

She felt him coming and looked up surprised. Something in his face told her that the game they had been playing together for three months was coming to an

'there's something I ought to tell you 've been rotting all the time, and — " "Of course you have! So have I," she answered lightly. "But do, do sit down now, and have luncheon! I'm simply starving; and what do you mean by leav-

a hit effusive. "Your friendship is worth | ing that parcel behind? I'm sure there's take to him. having, if you stick up for your friends cake in it, and cake is more important to me than all the rest, put together! If we me than all the rest put together! If we

don't make haste, too, we shall never get to Guildford by tea time."

She said this very rapidly, without knowing exactly what she was saying.

She only knew that she wanted to stop his explanation, for some reason that she could not quite make clear to herself. Her manner broke the spell, and the young man turned on his heel and picked up the discarded parcel.

"Wrong again!" he retorted, keeping his back turned to her. "It's jam puffs, the three cornered things you said you liked so much the other day. I say, why

"Why do you always complain of my being strenuous, when you won't let me be frivolous for a moment?" Christine laughed back; and they left the further discussion of the subject and turned to the

Somehow, that bicycle ride was the jolliest of all the expeditions they had planned together during the last three months The other expeditions had always ended at tea time; but today they dawdled so long over Inncheon that they missed their train at Guildford, and were obliged to dine to-gether and catch a later one back to town.

Who would say that you were the successful illustrator, the great man I was so terrified of meeting three months ago?' laughed Christine as they skimmed home from Victoria along the wood paved

"Or that you were the demure and conventional young lady whom I did meet on the staircase three months ago?" jeered

Maurice in reply.

'Conventional?' cried his companion indignantly; 'I'm sure I wasn't!'

'Never mind,' said Maurice soothingly "nobody can call you conventional now."
"What do you mean?" demanded Christine just as indignantly. "I'm sure I couldn't be more conventional than I am. I think you're perfectly borrid this even

Who's going to please a woman? "My dear friend," ne remonder am not a cinematograph.

"I wish you were!" said Christine fervently. "Just wouldn't I turn the handle and the gas on the stairs extinguished. They had a good deal of fun over carrying the good deal of fun over carrying they had a good deal of fun over groaned Maurice. "Who? Oh, who?"
Ride as they might, they could not reach picture like that, all around you, without putting it straight on to a canvas?"

"If it's a panorama that you want," he observed, we'll go to Earl's Court next cle lamp, a feat that excited Christine to them. fresh merriment, because either he or she managed to get in the way of the smouldering flicker and so made it of less use than

"Good night !" he said, holding out his hand when she had unlocked her door. 'It's been all right, hasn't it?"

'Splendid !" she responded warmly; and she went in and he went up.

No one could have said that their fare well was incriminating: but Miss Lindsey, who had softly opened her door below to see what the laughter was about, heard every word and condemned them both.

"My dear," said Miss Lindsey, nodding two black feathers and a velvet nasturtium with vigor, "I am older than you are, and I know! On occasions like the present, when any

advantage was to be gained from it, Miss Lindsey never minded owning to her age. Christine did not contradict her, and she went on. 'That young man is not to be trusted,

was her next shaft. "No," said Christine calmly: "so I have discovered."

stand you aright?" she said stiffly.
"Probably not," answered Christine,
smiling a little. "I said Mr. Merrington was not to be trusted. I think you said so too, did you not?"
"But—but in that case," said the amaz-

ed lady, "how is one to interpret-"Is anybody to be trusted?" continued Christine as if she did not notice the stammering comments of her visitor. "I sincerely hope so, Miss Berwick," re-plied Miss Lindsey drawing herself up. "Well, I don't know," observed Chris-tine rather more briskly. "I fancy there

are a good many people going about who gleam all the information they can from every one, so that they can turn it into scandal and make mischief between good friends. Those are the people who are not to be trusted, I think."

Miss Lindsey moved a little nervously in her chair. There was something in the way this Miss Berwick fixed her with those cold dark eyes of hers that was extremely uucomfortable. "It behooves us all to b circumspect," she remarked, trying to lead back the conversation to its original chan-nel. But Christine had had as much of it

as she meant to endure.
"I don't think so," she said bluntly "If we've got to be circumspect, it generally means that there is something that we are obliged to conceal. I hate hiding things, and I never mean to be circumspect as long

as I live! Miss Lindsey's little green eyes gleamed This was just the opening she wanted. "My dear young lady," she said solemnly, "don't you think it is wise, when one is alone in the world, like you and me, to be little-circumspect? Of course I am the last person to suspect evil; but people will talk you know, and one or two of the tenants have already remarked on the unusual, the—the very unusual intimacy that exists between Mr. Merrington and yourself. As I said before—''

"Then-then don't say it again, please !" interrupted Christine imploringly. "If

he gossip of the other wear.

"My dear," said Miss Lindsey with a patient smile, "don't be offended with an old woman. I came to see you today as a friend. There is a little mistake I feel it my duty to correct in your mind. You "Oh, do stop!" said Christine impatiently, and she turned around to hide her blushes and study the design on the crimson curtain.

hind her hand. She was thinking how delicious it would be to pull the two feathers and the nasturtium out of their black velvet setting and crush them all together

till they were indistinguishable.

"Then let me tell you—he isn't!" cried
Miss Lindsey, and she shook all over with
suppressed triumph. "You have mistaken
him for Mr. Ingleberry."

"Is that all?" smiled Christine. "Why I found that out the day after you last call

ed, three months ago!"
Miss Lindsey's countenance fell. hnew—that?" she said slowly.

Christine nodded wearily. She wondered how long it would be before she began to be rude to the intolerable old mischief-

"Of course you know your own affairs best, dear Miss Berwick," resumed her visitor, recovering herself again, "but I must say it surprises me to hear that your ac-quaintance with Mr. Merrington did not cease when you had explained your mis-

A sudden desire to be reckless and to

shock Miss Lindsey at any cost possess "As to that," she said airily. "I never

did explain my mistake to Mr. Merring-ton. I found his friendship so entertainton. I found his friendship so entertaining that I went on pretending I believed him to be somebody else, so that we could still be friends. Probably it is for the same reason that Mr. Merrington still poses to me as Mr. Inglebury. But it doesn't interest me to find out. Yes, the time has flown, hasn't it? So kind of you to look in ?

For with agitation written all over her Miss Lindsey had hurriedly risen to her feet and extended a thin, black gloved hand to her hostess; and was gone before Christine had time to guess the reason for her anxiety to be off.

Upstairs, a few minutes later, Maurice Merrington was wondering where some women bought their bonnets. But he had very little leisure in which to study the vagaries of the nasturtium and the two black feathers. For his visitor gave him no peace until she was quite sure that he had learned everything she came to tell him. She might have felt less satisfaction over what she had accomplished had she seen his face when he at last found himself "Little wretch!" he laughed softly to

imself. "I've got her at last !" 'Then you've never heard of the Howards, or the Hazlewoods either?" said a very dignified little person, standing up to her full height in the recess of the bay window, and looking the wronged and injured woman to perfection.

"Pardon me, I never heard of any one

else, in the early days of our acquaintance," the man on the sofa ventured in a weak voice to remark. Christine made an expressive gesture

with her hand, to indicate that this was no laughing matter.

"And you don't really live on the top floor at all?" she said in a tone of deep resentment.

"If you put it in that way-no," admitted the offender.

The injured woman made another effort and increased her height by nearly half an inch. She fully realized, as she did so, that the crimson curtain made the most ef-fective background possible for black hair

and a rose-colored gown. "You are not even an artist," she said," turning her great dark eyes upon him with a wealth of pathetic reproach in

"No," said Maurice Merrington, looking at his boots. "And-and-I don't believe you're engaged to anybody!" cried the woman he had deceived, her wrath kindling afresh at

each proof of his duplicity.

The culprit looked up. His expression was still contrite, but the extremities of the fair mustache were twitching.
"That," he observed deliberately, "is a defect that with your permission I propose immediately to remedy."

Christine fairly gasped at his presumption. "After everything you have just told me!" was all she was able to articu-"Have I your permission?" asked the man on the sofa. "I should think not, indeed !" cried the

injured woman, after seeking wildly for a better retort and finding none. "Why ever not?" he asked, appearing surpised. "I'm not bad-looking, am I?" Words failed her completely, and he

"I don't drink or anything, and after

a close study of your charming moods for more than three months I find I can treat be an ideal match, I assure you! What is your objection to it?" Again it was difficult to find a retort

that was not ridiculously feminine and in-"You have deceived me abominably," she cried, tapping her tiny foot impatiently on the polished floor.

"I have," said Maurice. "Here I have been treating you all this time with the greatest freedom and frank-"You have," interrupted Maurice

"-thinking you were engaged to my old school friend," concluded Christine "No doubt that was the reason," said Manrice. "And yet you venture to suggest that I

should—that we should—that—that—''
"Quite so," said Maurice mildly. "I
do venture." "But you-you've deceived me shamefully !" she repeated with much

"You said that before," observed Maurice. "And if it comes to that, how about "What do you mean?" she asked with sudden apprehension in her tone. Maurice arose dramatically to his feet and

looked down at her sternly. His moment had come at last.
"Haven't you known all this while that I was the wrong man, that I was only pretending to be somebody else to shield you from the consequences of your own original mistake, and that I never painted a stroke in my life?" he demanded with tragic emphasis. "Haven't you been leading me on, and encouraging me, knowing perfectly well that I was not engaged to anybody?

Haven't you—?"
"Stop!" implored Christine, frantic with
the desire to explain everything and prove
to him that she was not the dreadful, designing person he was describing. But Maurice was enjoying the situation im-mensely and meant to keep it up a little

"It's no good trying to slide out of it like this," resumed Maurice, struggling to keep his voice steady. "You simply must marry me now; there's no other way of

saving your reputation."

I do hate bullies," said Christine to the crimson curtain. "You prefer artists, don't you?" inquired Maurice blandly.
"I prefer mean who do something with their lives," cried she, remembering her

lost ideals sadly.

"I've done plenty with mine in the last three months," observed Maurice. 'One private view, one ride in a hansom, four walks in the park, two matinees, seven walks in the park, two matinees, seven the park of the p bicycle rides, seventeen quarrels—''
All at once she turned around and faced

him. "I—Iwish you wouldn't," she said in a different tone. The smile was gone at last from under the fair mustache.

"I won't—if you will," he said gently.

And she did.—Evelyn Sharp in the Saturday Evening Post.