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By MRS. HUMPHREY WARD. AUTHOR OF "ROBERT ELSNERL"

CHAPTER L

T WAS the day of the private view at the Royal academy. the Royal academy. The great cours yard of Burlington fouse was full of carriages, and a continuous stream of guests was press-ing up the red car-peted stairs over which presided some of the most Tit

betted stain over which presided some of the most imposing in divi-duals known to the second only to her majesty's beef eat-ers in glory of sour-let apparel Inside, however, as it was not yet luncheon time, the rooms were but moderately filled. It was possible to see the pictures, to appreciate the spring freeses, and to single out a friend even across the long gallery. The usual people were there; academicians of the old school and academicians of the new; R. A.'s coming from Kensington and the "regions of cul-ture," and R. A.'s coming from more northerly and provincial neigh-hately aud harely, in want of the graces and adornings with which "culture" professes to provide her. There were politicians still curvide her. There were politicians still curvide her. adornings with which "culture" professes to provide her. There were politicians still capable—as it was only the first week of May —of throwing some sest into their amuso-ments. There were art critics who, accu-tomed as they were by profession to take their art in large and rapid draught, had yet been unable to content themselves with the one meager day allowed by the academy for the examination of some 800 works and for the examination of some 600 works, and were now eking out their notes of the day before by a few supplementary jotting taken in the intervals of conversation with taken in the intervals of conversation with their lady friends. There were the great dealers, betraying in look and gait their pro-found, yet modest, conclousness that upon them rested the foundations of the artistic them rested the foundations of the artistic order, and that if, in a superficial conception of things, the star of an academician differs from that of the man who buys his pictures inglory, the truly philosophical mind assesses matters differently. And, most important of all, there were the women, old and young, some in the full freshness of spring cottons, as if the east wind outside were not mocking the efforts of the Max sum and others still as if the east wind outside were not mocking the efforts of the May sun, and others still wrapped in furs, which showed a juster sense of the caprices of the English climate. Among them one might distinguish the usual shades and species; the familiar country cousin, gathering material for the over-awing of such of her neighbors as were un-shade to in the molecular and the distinguish the usual shades and species; the familiar country cousin, gathering material for the over-awing of such of her neighbors as were unable to dip themselves every year in the stream of Londou; the women folk of the artist world, presenting greater varieties of type than the women of any other class can boast; and lastly, a sprinkling of the women of what calls itself "London society," as well dressed, as well mannered, and as well provided with acquaintance as is the custom

f their kind. In one of the further rooms, more scantily In one of the further rooms, more scattly peopled as yet than the rest, a tall, thin man was strolling listlessly from picture to pic-ture, making every now and then hasty ref-erences to his catalogue, but in general eye-ing all he saw with the look of one in whom familiarity with the sight before him had bred weariness, if not contempt. He was a handsome man, with a broad brow and a handsome man, with a broad brow and a pleasant gentleness of expression. The eyes were fine and thoughtful, and there was a combination of intellectual force with great delicacy of time in the contour of the bead and face which was particularly attractive, especially to women of the more cultivated and impressionable sort. His thin, grayish hair was rather long—not of that pronounced length which inevitably challenges the de-cision of the bystander as to whether the wearer be fool or poet, but still long enough to fall a little carelessly round the head and as take off from the spruce, conventional so take off from the spruce, conventional effect of the owner's irreproachable dress and

general London air. Mr. Eustace Kendal-to give the person

e may as well. These dants are not

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side with Miss Bretherton's erect and grace-ful figure. Kendal betook himself once more to the pictures, and, presently finding some ac-quaintances, made a rapid tour of the rooms with them, parting with them at the en-trance that he might himself go back and look at two or three things in the sculpture room which he had been told were impor-tant and promising. There he came across the American, Edward Wallace, who at once back him by the arm with the manner of an

the American, Edward Wallace, who at once took him by the arm with the manner of an old friend and a little burst of laughter. - "So you saw the introduction! What a man is Forbes! He is as young still as he was at 19. I envy him. He took Miss Breth-erton right round, talked to her of all his favored hobbies, looked at her in a way which would have been awkward if it had been anybody else but such a gentlemanly manise as Forbes, and has almost made her promise to sit to him. Miss Bretherton was a little bewildered, I think. She is so new to London that she doem't know who's who yet in the least. I had to take her aside and ex-plain to her Forbes' humors; then she fired up-there is a naive hero worship about her up-there is a naive hero worship about her just now that she is fresh from a colony-

just now that she is fresh from a colony— and made herself as pleasant to him as a girl could be. I prophesy Forbes will think of nothing elso for the season." "Well, she's a brilliant creature," said Kendal. "It's extraordinary how she shone out beside the pretty English girls about her. It is an intoxicating possession for a woman, such beauty as that; it's like royalty; it places the individual under conditions quite unlike these of common mortals. I suppose it's that rather than any real ability as an it's that rather than any real ability as an actress that has made her a success. I no ticed the papers said as much-some mor politely than others."

"Oh, she's not much of an actress; she has no training, no finesse. But you'll see, she'll be the great success of the season. She has wonderful grace on the stage, and a fine voice in spite of tricks. And then her Wesen is so attractive; she is such a frank, un-spolled, good hearted creature. Her sudience falls in love with her, and that goes a long way. But I wish she had a triffe more education and something worth calling a train-ing. Her manager, Robinson, talks of her attempting all the great parts, but it's ab-surd. She talks very naively and prettily about 'her art,' but really she knows no more about it than a baby, and it is perhaps part of her charm that she is so unconscious of her ignorance."

her ignorance." "It is strange how little critical English audiences are," said Kendal. "I believe we are the simplest people in the world. All that we ask is that our feelings should be touched a little, but whether by the art or the artist doesn't matter. She has not been long playing in London, has she?" "Only a few weeks. It's only about two months since she landed from Jamaica. She has a to hear it

has a curious history if you care to hear it I don't think Pyeseen you at all since I made friends with her?" "No," said Kendal; "I was beginning to suspect that something absorbing had got hold of you. I've looked for you two or three times at the club and could not find you." "Oh, it's not Miss Bretherton that has taken up my time. She's so busy that no-body can see much of her. But I have taken her and her people out two or three times sight seeing, since they came-Westminster abbey, the National gallery, and so forth. She is very keen about everything, and the Worralls-her uncle and aunt-stick to her pretty closely." Where does she come from !" "Well, her fathor was the Scotch overseen of a sugar plantation not far from Kingston, and he married an Italian, one of your fair Venetian type--a strange race combination; I suppose it's the secret of the brilliancy and out-of-the-wayness of the girl's beauty. Her mother died when she was small, and the child grow up alone. Her father, however, seems to have been a good sort of man, and to have looked after her. Presently she drew the attention of an uncle, a shopkeeper in Kingston, and a shrewd, hard, money making fellow, who saw there was something to be made out of her. She had already shown a turn for reciting, and had performed at various places - in the schoolroom belonging to the estate, and so on. The father didn't encourage her fancy for it, naturally, being Scotch and Presbyterian. However, he died of fever, and then the child of sixteen fell into her uncle's charge. He seems to have seen at once exactly what line to take. To put it cynically, I imagine he argued som like this: 'Beauty extraordinary-character everything that could be desired-talent not much. So that the things to stake on are the beauty and the character, and let the talent take care of itself.' Anyhow, he got her on to the Kingston theatre-a poor little place enough-and he and the aunt, that sour looking creature you saw with her, looked looking creature you saw with her, looked after her like dragons. Naturally, she was soon the talk of Kingston—what with her looks and her grace, and the difficulty of coming near her, the whole European society, the garrison, government hous Mand all were at her feet. Then the uncle played his cards for an European engagement. You remem-ber that Governor Rutherford they had a little time aged—the writer of that little set little time agoi-the writer of that little set of drawing room plays-'Nineteenth Century Interludes,' I think he called them? It was his last year, and he started for home while Isabel Bretherton was acting at Kingston. Isabel Bretherton was acting at Kingston. He came home full of her, and, knowing all the theatrical people here, he was able to place her at once. Robinson decided to speculate in her, telegraphed out for her, and here she is, uncle, aunt and invalid sister into the barrain." the bargain

of Miss Bretberton at all." of Him Breiberton at all." "Then Fill excitainly come and do my worshiping before the crowd collects," and Kendal, adding, as he half curiously shifted his eye glass so as to take in Wallace's bronned, alert countenance. "How did you happen to know her?" "Rutherford introduced me. He's an old friend on ins."

happen to know her?"
"Rutherford introduced me. He's an old friend of mino."
"Wall," said Eendal, moving off, "Friday, then, I shall be very giad to see Mrs. Stuart; it's ages since I new her last."
The American modded cordially to him, and walked away. He was one of those pleanant ubiquitous foople who know every one and find time for everything—a well known journalist, something of an artist, and still more of a man of the world, who went through his London season with some outward grumbling, but with a real inward asst such as few popular dincers out are blemed with. That he should have attached himself to the latest star was natural enough. He was the most discrete and profitable of cicerones, with a real takent for making him-self useful to nice people. His friendship for Miss Bretherton gave her a certain stamp in Kendal's eyes, for Wallace had a fastidious tasts in personalities and seidom made a mistaka. mistaka. Kendal himself walked home, busy with

Kendal himself walked home, busy with very different thoughts, and was soon estab-lished at his writing table in his high cham-bers overlooking an inner court of the Tem-ple. It was a bright afternoon; the spring sunshine on the red roofs opposite was clear and gay; the old chimney stacks, towering into the pale blue sky threw sharp shadows on the rich red and orange surface of the tiles. Below, the court was half in shadow, and utterly quiet and deserted. To the left there was a gleam of green, atoming for its spring thinness and scantiness by a vivid energy of color, while straight across the court, beyond the rich patchwork of the roofs and the picturesque outline of the chimneys, a delicate piece of white stone work rose into air—the spire of one of Wren's churches, as dainty, as perfect, and as fastidiously balanced as the hand of man could leave it.

could leave it. Could leave it. Inside, the room was such as fitted a studi-ous backelor of means. The bookeases on the walls held old college classics and law books underneath, and above a miscellaneous books underneath, and above a miscellaneous literary library, of which the main bulk was French, while the side wings, so to speak, had that tempting miscellaneous air—here a patch of German, there an island of Italian; patch of German, there an island of Italian; on this side rows of English poets, on the other an abundance of novels of all lan-guages—which delights the foud heart of the book lover. The pictures were mostly auto-types and photographs from subjects of Italian art, except in one corner, where a fine little collection of French historical engrav-ings completely covered the wall and drew a visitor's attention by the brilliancy of their black and white. On the writing table were piles of paper covered French hooks, repreblack and white. On the writing table were piles of paper covered French books, repre-senting for the most part the palmy days of the Romantics, though every here and there were intervening strata of naturalism, bal-anced in their turn by recurrent volumes of Bainte-Beuve. The whole had a studious air. The books were evidently collected with a purpose, and the piles of orderly MSS. lying on the writing table seemed to sum up and explain their surroundings.

explain their surroundings. The only personal ornament of the room was a group of photographs on the mantel-piece. Two were faded and brown, and reppiece. Two were faded and brown, and rep-resented Kendal's parents, both of whom had been dead some years. The other was a large enbinet photograph of a woman no longer very young—a striking looking woman, with a fine worn face and a general air of distinc-tion and character. There was a strong re-semblance between her features and those of Eustace Kendal, and she was indeed his elder and only sister, the wife of a French senator and her brother's chief friend and counselor and her brothers chief friend and counselor. Mme. de Chateauvieux was a very noticeable person, and her influence over Eustace had been strong over since their childish days. She was a woman who would have justified She was a woman who would have justified a repetition in the present day of Sismondi's enthusiastic estimate of the women of the First Empire. She had that melange du melleur ton, "with the purest elegance of manner, and a store of varied information, with present of the store of varied information. with vivacity of impression and delicacy of feeling, which," as he declared to Mma. d'Albany, "belongs only to your sex, and is found in its perfection only in the best soci-ety of France." In the days when she and Eustace had been

ldren of a distinguished and the only children of a distinguished and wealthy father, a politician of some fame and son-in-law to the Tory premier of his

part of every year in Paris, and the neigh-borhood of his sister was now more delight-

part of every year in Paris, and the neighbor book of his sister was now more delight. It to him than ever. Bo, after a time, he settled down content-shout him, and presently found that glow of about him, and presently found that glow of hoor stealing over him which is at once the shout him, and presently found that glow of hoor stealing over him which is at once the shout him, and presently found that glow of hoor stealing over him which is at once the shout him, and scen he was as often seen in the common haunts of London society as be-fore. He dined out, he went to the theatre, he frequented his club like other men, and every year he spent three of the winter months in Paris, living in the best French, and cultivating, whether in the theatre of the salom of his sister's friends, or in the satisfies of some of the more smissent of French and cultivating, whether in the theatre of the salom of his sister's friends, or in the satisfies of some of the more and more ex-artisfies of some of the source of the sale. More on this May afternoon, as he settled his round of the scalemy fades when how he shock back the tumbling gray how he shock back the tumbling gray he white spire opposite, the contentment of the selening forth to battle, and how a time passed on and the shadows deepened of the slore of an earter of the state, and how a time passed on and the shadows deepened of the slore his round of the partial entry in the white spire opposite, the contentment of the slore how which fell upon the back of the slore how which fell upon the back of the slore how shife fell upon the back of the slore how shife he pare to sloke him on the white he greeted the punctual en-trance of the servant, who at 5 o'clock came on the make up the fire, which erackled him which heery companionable sounds through the lamplit evening and far into the night. with cheery companionable sounds through the lamplit evening and far into the night.

CHAPTER II.

Two or three days afterwards Kendal, in hooking over his engagement book, in which the entries were methodically kept, noticed: "Afternoon tea, Mrs. Stuart's, Friday," and at once sent off a note to Edward Wallace, suggesting that they should go to the theatro together on Thursday evening to see Miss Bretherton, "for, as you will see," he wrote, "it will be impossible for me to meet her with a good conscience unless I have done my duty beforehand by going to see her per-form." To this the American replied by a counter proposal. "Miss Bretherton," he wrote, "offers my sister and myself a box for Friday night; it will hold four or five; you must certainly be of the party, and I shall ask Forbes." Two or three days afterwards Kendal,

would have preferred to see the actress un-der conditions more favorable to an independent judgment, but he was conscious that a refusal would be ungracious, so he accepted and prepared himself to meet the beauty in as sympathetic a frame of mind as pos-

On Friday afternoon, after a long and fruitful day's work, he found himself driving westward towards the old fashioned Ken-sington house of which Mrs. Stuart, with her bright, bird like American ways, had suc-ceeded in making a considerable social cen-ter. His mind was still full of his work,

phrases of Joubert or of Standbal seemed to be still floating about him, and certain sub-tieties of artistic and critical speculation were still vaguely arguing themselves out within him as he sped westward, drawing in the pleasant influences of the spring sunshine, and delighting his eyes in the May green, which was triumphing more and more every day over the grayness of London, and would soon have reached that lovely short lived pause of victory which is all that summer can hope to win amid the dust and crowd of a great city. Kendal was in that condition which is

Kendal was in that condition which is proper to men possessed of the true literary temperament, when the first fervor of youth for mere living is gone, when the first crude difficulties of accumulation are over, and when the mind, admitted to regions of an ampler other and diviner air than any she has inhabited before, feels the full charm any spell of man's vast birthright of knowledge, and is seized with subtler curiosities and and is sensed with subtry curiosities and further reaching desires than anything she has yet been conscious of. The world of fact and of idea is open, and the explorer's instru-ments are as perfect as they can be made. The intoxication of entrance is full upon him, and the lassitude which is the inevita-ble Neuris of an uponding task and the ble Nemesis of an unending task, and the chill which sconer or later descends upon every human hope, are as yet mere na and shadows, counting for nothing in the tranquil vista of his life, which seems to lie spread out before him. It is a rare state, for not many men are capable of the appren-ticeship which leads to it, and a breath of hostile circumstance may put an end to it; but in its own manner and degree, and while it lasts, it is one of the golden states of consciousness, and a man enjoying it feels this mysterious gift of existence to have been a kindly boon from some beneficent power. Arrived at Mrs. Stuart's, Kendal found large gathering already filling the pleasant low rooms, looking out upon trees at either end, upon which Mrs. Stuart had impressed throughout the stamp of her own keen little personality. She was competent in all things --competent in her criticism of a book, and more than competent in all that pertained to the niceties of house management. Her dinner parties, of which each was built up from lation to climax with the most delicate skill and unity of plan; her pretty dresses in which she trailed about her soft colored rooms; her energy, her kindliness and even the evident but quite innocent pursuit of so-cial perfection in which she delighted-all made her popular, and it was not difficult for her to gather together whom she would when she wished to launch a social novelty. On the present occasion she was very much in her element. All around her were people more or less distinguished in the London world; here was an editor, there an artist, a junior member of the government chatted over his toa with a foreign minister, and a flow of the usual London chatter of a su-

ey muo cao or or mancy by the mrg eyes and the vivid whiteness of th Kendal watched her from his corner skin.

skin. Kendal watched her from his corner, where his conversation with two mulical young ladies had been suddenly suspended by the arrival of the actress, and thought that his impression of the week before had been, if anything, below the truth. "She comes into the room well, too," he said to himself critically; "she is not a mere mikmaid; she has some manner, some indi-viduality. Ah, now Fornandez"-maming the minister—"has got hold of her. Then, I suppose, Rushbrook (the member of the gov-ernment) will come next and we commoner mortals in our turn. What absurdities these things are!" things are!"

mortals in our turn. What absurdities these things are!" His reflections, however, were stopped by the exclamations of the girls beside him, who were already warm admirers of Miss Brether-ton, and wild with enthusiasm at finding themselves in the same room with her. They discovered that he was going to see her in the evening; they envied him, they described the heavy to him, they dwels in superlatives on the crowded state of the theatre and on the play to him, they dwels in superlatives on the crowded state of the theatre and on the play to him, they allowed themselves— being asthetic damsels robed in sober green-ish grays—a gentle lament over the some-what violent coloring of one of the actress' costumes, while all the time keeping their eyes furtively fixed on the gleaming ani-mated profile and graceful shoulders, over which, in the entrance of the second drawing room, the minister's gray head was bending. Mrs. Stuart did her duty bravely. Miss Bretherton had announced to her, with a hour to give. "We poor professionals, you know, must dine at 4 That made me lato, and now 1 find 1 am such a long way from homs that 6 is the latest moment 1 can stay."

So that Mrs. Stuart was put to it to get to that airs, Stuart was put to it to get through all the introductions she had prom-ised. But she performed her task without flinching, killing remorselessly each nascent conversation in the bud, giving artist, author or member of parliament his proper little sentence of introduction, and at last beckon-ing to Eustace Kendal, who left his corner feeling society to be a foolish business and withdue the parliament her proper little feeling society to be a foolish business and wishing the ordeal were over. Miss Bretherton smiled at him as she had

Miss Bretherton smiled at him as she had smiled at all the others, and he sat down for his three minutes on the chair beside her. "I hear you are satisfied with your English audiences, Miss Bretherton," he began at once, having prepared himself so far. "To-night IJam to have the pleasure for the first time of making one of your admirers." "I hope it will please you," she said, with a shyness that was still bright and friendly. "You will be sure to come and see me after-wards! L have been arranging it with Mrs.

"You will be sure to come and see me arter-wards! I have been arranging it with Mrs. Stuart. I am nover fit to talk to afterwards, I get so tired. But it does one good to see one's friends; it makes one forget the theatro a little before going home." "Do you find London very exciting?" "You ware Device home here a set

"Do you find London very exciting?" "Yes, very. People have been so extra-ordinarily kind to me, and it is all such a new experience after that little place King-ston. I should have had my bead turned, I think," she added, with a happy little laugh, "but that when one cares about one's art one is not likely to think too much of one's self. I am always despairing over what there is still to do, and what one may have done seems to make no matter."

She spoke with a pretty humility, evidently meaning what she said, and yet there was such a delightful young triumph in her man-ner, such an invulnerable consciousness of artistic success, that Kendal felt a secret stir of amusement as he recalled the criticisms which among his own set he had most com monly heard applied to her. "Yes, indeed," he answered, pleasantly

"Yes, indeed," he answered, pleasantly. "I suppose overy artist feels the same. We all do if we are good for anything—we who scribble as well as you who act." "Oh, yes," she said; with kindly, question-ing eyes, "you write a great deal? I know; Mr. Wallace told me. He says you are so learned, and that your book will be splendid. It must be grand to write books. I should like it, I think, better than acting. You need only depend on yourself; but in acting you're always depending on some one else, and you get in such a rage when all your own grant ideas are spelled because the leading gentleman won't do anything different from what he has been used to, or the next lady wants to show off, or the stage manager has a grudge against you! Bomething always happens." "Apparently the only thing that always

the task and gone arr. Forces was announced. He came in in a bad temper, having been de-layed by business, and presently sat down to dinner with Mrs. Staart and Wallace and Kendal in a very grumbling frame of mind. Mr. Stuart, a young and able lawyer, in the first agonies of real success at the bar, had sent word that he could not reach home till late.

"I don't know, I'm sure, what's the good of

"I don't know, I'm sure, what's the good of coing to see that girl with you two carping fellows," he began combatively, over his soup. "She won't suit you, and you'll only spoit Mrs. Stuart's pleasure and mine." "My dear Forbes," said Wallace in his placid, undisturbed way, "you will see I shall behave like an angel. I shall allow my-self no unpleasant remarks, and I shall make as much noise as any body in the theatre." "That's all very well, but if you don't say it, Kendal will look it, and I don't know which is the most damping." "Mrs. Stuart, you shall be the judge of our behavior," said Kendal-be and Forbes were excellent friends. "Forbes is not in a judicial frame of mind, but we will trust you-to be fair. I suppose, Forbes, we may be al-lowed a grumble or two at Hawes if you shut our mouths on the subject of Miss Bretherton.".

shut our mouths on the subject of Miss Brotherton.", "Hawes does his best," said Forbes, with a touch of obstinacy. "He looks well, he strides well, he is a fine figure of a man with a big bullying volce. I don't know what more you want in a German prince. It is this everiasting hypercriticism which spoils all one's pleasure and frightens all the char-acter out of the artists?" At which ! Mrs. Stuart laughed, and, womanlike, observed that she supposed it was only people who, like Forbes, had suc-ceeded in disarming the critics who could afford to scoff at them-a remark, which drew a funny little now, half petulant, half pleased, out of the artists, in whom one of the strongest notes of character was his sus-ceptibility to the attentions of women. "You've seen her already, I believe," said Wallace to Forbes. "I think Miss Brether-ton told me you were at the Calliope on Mon-day."

day." "Yes, I was. Well, as I tell you, I don't eare to be critical. I don't want to whittle away the few pleasures that this dull life can provide me with by this perpetual discontent with what's set before me. Why can't you eat and be thankfull To look at that girl is eat and be thankfull. To look at that girl is a liberal education; she has a fine voice, too, and her beauty, her freshness, the energy of life in her, give me every sort of artistic pleasure. What a curmudgeon I should be— what a grudging, ungrateful fellow if, after all she has done to delight me, I should abuse her because she can't speak out her thresome speeches—which are of no account and don't matter, to my function at all-as well as speeches—which are of no account and don't matter, to my impression, at all—as well as one of your thin, French, snake like creatures who have nothing but their art, as you call it; nothing but what they have been care-fully taught; nothing but what they have laboriously learned with time and trouble, to depend upon?" * Having delivered himself of this tirade, the artist threw himself back in his chair, tossed back his gray hair from his glowing black eyes, and looked defiance at Kendal, who was altting output

who was sitting opposite. "But, after all," said Ke-

"But, after all," said Ker -, roused, "these tiresome speeches are her metier; it's her business to speak them, and to speak them well. You are praising her for quali-ties which are not properly dramatic at all. In your studio they would be the only thing that a man need consider; on the stage they naturally come second." "Ah, well," shid Forbes, falling to upon his dimen again at a continue isonal from May

"Ah, well," shid Forbes, falling to upon his dinner again at a gentle signal from Mrs. Stuart that the carriage would soon be round. "I knew very well how you and Wallace would take her. You and I will have to defend each other, Mrs. Stuart, against those two shower baths, and when we go to see her afterwards I shall be invalu-able, for I shall be able to save Kondal and Wallace the humbug of compliments." Whereupon the others protested that they would on no account be deprived of their share of the compliments, and Wallace es-pecially laid it down that's man would be a poor creature who could not find smooth things to say upon any conceivable occasion to laabel Bretherton. Besides, he saw her every day and was in excellent practice, Forbes looked a little scornful, but at this point Mrs. Stuart succeeded in diverting his attention to the latest picture, and the dinner flowed on pleasantly till the coffee was flowed on pleasantly till the coffee was handed and the carriage appounced.

and of her faithing lover, was throughout with sufficient dramati

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At this Forbes balf turned round, and then turbed." At this Forbes balf turned round, and then his great mane, under which gleamed a com-tenance of comedy meanses, at the two may behind him. But in another instant the tones of Isabel Bretherton's voice riveled in attention, and the eyes of all those in the ba-pre once more turned towards the stand. The scene which followed was one of the most meritorious passages in the reflec-heavy German play from which the "Was Lady" had been adapted. It was intended to show the romantic and passionate character of the countes, and to suggest that was to extravagance and daring in her which we the explanation of the subsequent action of its occasional heavines in the most of man force and intensity, which has nothing of its occasional heavines in the most of sufficient force of feeling, and an artist sums subtle enough to suggest to her the most sufficient force of feeling, and an artist sum subtle enough to suggest to her the most sufficient force of feeling and an artist sum of a complete collapse of a most sufficient force of the subsequent action of a constitue, could have made a green mark in it. But the first works among a way before two minutes were or two Exceeds in the order is a complete collapse of the sufficient force or two the spell had has not reas which the first scenes had predeted in another scenes or two the spell had has need to a state of mere irritable commons of the scenes of great capabilities and predeted in scenes of great capabilities and predeted in scenes of great capabilities and predeted in and that even her attitudes had less that the deforts. It was eviden to him that has not have passed from a state of mere irritable contents in it which was almost a state of monnes in it which was almost and the scenes of great capabilities and particle in a borde effort of a complete had be the first which had exercised was an another the which had exercised was an another the which had exercised met an another the scenaris in it which was almost in the At this Forbes balf turned round, and the

we have been describing his name-was not apparently in a good temper with his sur-roundings. He was standing with a dissat-iafled expression before a Venetian scene drawn by a brilliant member of a group of English artists settled on foreign soil and trained in foreign methods.

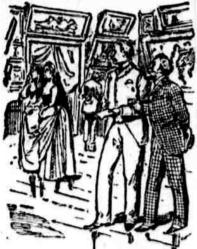
"Not so good as last year," ho was remark-ing to himself. "Vulgar drawing, vulgar composition, hasty work everywhere. It is success spoils all these men-success and the amount of money there is going. The man who painted this didn't get any pleasure out of it. But it's the same all round. It is money and luxury and the struggle to live which are driving us all on and killing the artist's natural joy in his work. And pres-ently, as that odd little Frenchman said to me last year, we shall have dropped irretriev ably into the 'lowest depth of mediocrity.''

"Kendal!" said an eager voice close to his ear, while a hand was laid on his arm, "do you know that girl?

Kendal turned in astonishment and saw short oldish man, in whom he recognized a famous artist, standing by, his keen, mobile face wearing an expression of strong interest and inquiry.

"What girlf" he asked, with a smile, shak-

ing his questioner by the hand. "That girl in black, standing by Orchard-son's picture. Why, you must know her by sight! It's Miss Bretherton, the actress. Did



"It's Miss Eretherton, the actress."

ou ever see such beauty? I must get som body to introduce me to her. There's nothing worth looking at since she came in. But, by ill luck, nobody here seems to know her," Eustace Kendal, to whom the warm artist emperament of his friend was well known. turned with some amusement towards the picture named, and noticed that flutter in the room which shows that something or some one of interest is present. People try to look

unconcerned, and, catalogue in hand, were edging towards the spot where the lady in black stood, glancing alternately at her and at the pictures, in the manner of those equally determined to satisfy their curiosity and their sense of politeness. The lady in question, meanwhile, conscious that she was eing looked at, but not apparently disturbed by it, was talking to another lady, the only person with her, a tall, gaunt woman, also dressed in black and gifted abundantly with person the forbidding aspect which beauty requires in its duenna.

Kendal could see nothing more at first than a tall, slender figure, a beautiful head, with a delicate white profile, in flashing contrast with its black surroundings, and with lines of golden brown hair. But in profile and figure there was an extraordinary distinction and grace which reconciled him to his friend's eagerness and made him wish for the eauty's next movement. Presently sho turned and caught the gaze of the two men full upon her. Her eyes dropped a little, but there was nothing ill bred or excessive in her self consciousness. She took her companion's arm with a quiet movement and drew her towards one of the striking pictures of the year, some little way off. The two men also turned and walked away.

"I never saw such beauty as that before," said the artist, with emphasis. "I must find some one who knows her, and get the chance of seeing that face light un, else I shall go

"Oh, she has a sister?"

"Yes; a little, white, crippled thing, peovish-cripples generally are-but full of a curious force of some hidden kind. Isabel is very good to her, and rather afraid of her. It seems to me that she is afraid of all her belongings. I believe they put upon her, and she has as much capacity as anybody I ever knew for letting herself be trampled upon." "What, that splendid, vivacious creature?" said Kendal incredulously. "I think I'd back her for holding her own."

"Ah, well, you see," said the American, with the quiet superiority of a three weeks acquaintance, "I know something of her by now, and sho's not quite what you might think her at first sight. However, whether she is afraid of them or not, it's to be hoped they will take care of her. Naturally has a splendid physique, but it seems to me ondon tries her. The piece they have chosen for her is a heavy one, and then of course society is down upon her, and in a fow weeks she'll be the rage."

"I haven't seen her at all," said Kendal, beginning, perhaps, to be a little bored with the subject of Miss Bretherton, and turning, eye glass in hand, toward the sculpture "Come and take me some evening."

"By all means. But you must come and meet the girl herself at my sister's next Fri day. She will be there at afternoon tea. I told Agnes I should ok anybody I liked. warned her-you know her little weaknesses! --that she had better be first in the field; a month hence it will be impose

young days, she had always led and influ d her brother. He followed her admiringly through her London seasons, watching the impression she made, triumphing in her the impression she made, triumpling in her triumphs, and at home discussing every new book with her and sharing, at least in his college vacations, the secretary's work for their father, which she did excellently, and with a quick, keen, political sense which Eustace had never seen h any other woman. She was handsome in her own refined and delicato way, especially at night, when the sparkle of her white neck and arms and the added brightness of her dress gave her the accent and color she was somewhat lacking in at other times. Naturally, she was in no want of suitors, for she was rich and her want of suitors, for she was rich and her father was influential, but she said "No" many times and was nearly 30 before M. de Chateauvieux, the first secretary of the French embassy, persuaded ther to marry him. Since then she had filled an effective place in Parisian society. Her husband had abandoned diplomacy for politics, in which his general tendencies were Orleanist, while in literature he was well known as a con-siant contributor to The Revue des Deux Mondes. He and his wife maintain ned an in teresting, and in its way influential salon, which provided a meeting ground for th best English and French society, and showed off at once the delicate quality of Mme. de Chateauvieux's intelligence and the force and kindliness of her womanly tact.



The whole had a studious air. Shortly after her marriage the father and

mother died within eighteen months of each other, and Eustace found his lot in life radi cally changed. He had been his father's secretary after leaving college, which pre-vented his making any serious efforts to succeed at the bar, and in consequence his in-terests, both of head and heart, had been more concentrated than is often the case with a young man within the walls of his He had admired his father sincerely and the worth of his mother's loquacious and sometimes modulesome tenderness he never realized fully till he had lost it. When he was finally alone it became necessary for him to choose a line in life. His sister and be divided his father's money between them, and Eustace found himself with a fortune such as in the eyes of most of his friends constituted a leading of Providence towards two things --marriage and a seat in parliament. How-ever, fortunately, his sister, the only person to whom he applied for advice, was in no hurry to press a docision in either case upon him. She saw that, without the stimulus of the father's presence, Eustace's interest in politics was less real than his interest in let ters nor did the times seem to her propitious to that philosophi : conservatism which might be said to represent the family type of mind. So she stirred him up to return to some of the projects of his Cambridge days, when he and she were first bitten with a passion for that great, that fascinating French litera-ture which absorbs, generation after generation, the interests of two-thirds of three who are sensitive to the things of letters. She suggested a book to him which took his fancy, and in planning it something of the old zest of life returned to him. Moreover, it was a book which required him to spand a

when Kendal entered. Mrs. Stuart put him in the way of a chair and of abundant chances of conversation, and then left him with a shrug of her shoul-ders and a whisper. "The beauty is shockingly late! Tell me what I shall do if all these people are disappointed." In reality Mrs. Stuart was beginning to be restless. Kendal had himself arrived very late, and, as the talk flowed faster and the room filled fuller of guests eager for the new sensation which had been promised them, the spirits of the little bostess began to sink. The minister had surreptitiously looked at his watch, and a tiresome lady friend had said good-by in a voice which might have been lower, and with a lament which might have been spared. Mrs. Stuart set great store upon the success of her social undertakings, and to gather a crowd of people to meet the rising star of the season, and then to have to send them home with only tes and talk to remember, was one of those failures which no one with any self respect should allow themselves to

perior kind was rippling through the room

However, fortune was once more kind to one of her chief favorites. Mrs. Stuart was just listening with a tired face to the well meant, but depressing condolences of the har-rister standing by her, who was describing to her the "absurd failure" of a party to meet the leading actress of the Comedie Francaise, to which he had been invited in the previous season, when the sound of wheels was heard outside. Mrs. Stuart made a quick step for-ward, leaving her Job's comforter planted in the middle of his story, the hum of talk dropped in an instant and the crowd about the door fell hastily back as it was thrown open and Miss Bretherton entered.

What a glow of radiance and beauty en-tered the room with her! She came in rapidly, her graceful head thrown engerly back, her face kindling and her hands outstretched as she caught sight of Mrs. Stuart, There was a vigor and splendor of life about her that made all her movements large and emphatic, and yet, at the same time, nothing could exceed the delicate finish of the phy-sical structure itself. What was indeed characteristic in her was this combination of extraordinary perfectness of detail, with a flash, a warmth, a force of impression, such as often raises the lower kinds of beauty into excellence and picturesqueness, but is seldom found in connection with those types where the beauty is, as it were, sufficient in and by itself, and does not need anything but its own inherent harmonies of line and hue to impress itself on the beholders.

There were some, indeed, who maintained that the smallness and delicacy of her feat ures was out of keeping with her stature and her ample gliding motions. But here, again, the impression of delicacy was transformed

rather hating himself for the cheapness of the compliment. "I hear wonderful reports of the difficulty of getting a seat at the Cal-liope; and his friends tell me that Mr. Robinson looks ten years younger. Poor mani it is time that fortune smiled on him." "Yes, indeed; he had a bad time last year.

That Miss Harwood, the American actress, that they thought would be such a success, didn't come off at all. She didn't hit the public. It doesn't seem to me that the English public is hard to please. At that wretched little theatre in Kingston I wasn't nearly so much at my case as I am here. Hero one can always do one's best and be sure that the audience will appreciate it. I have all sorts of projects in my head. Next year shall have a theatre of my own, I think, and then"-

"And then we shall see you in all the great parts

The beauty had just begun her answer when Kendal became conscious of Mrs. Stuart standing beside him, with another

for him but to retire with a basty smile and hand shake, Miss Bretherton brightly re-

more a general flutter in the room. Miss Bretherton was going. She came forward in her long, flowing black garments, holding Mrs. Stuart by the band, the crowd dividing as she passed. On her way to the door stood a child, Mrs. Stuart's youngest, looking at her with large, wondering brown eyes and finger on lip. The actress sublealy stooped to her, lifted her up with the case of physical strength into the midst of her soft furs and velvets, and kissed her with a gracious queenliness. The child threw its little white arins around her, smiled upon her and smoothed her hair as though to assure itself that the fairy princess was real. Then it struggled down, and in another minute the bright vision was gone, and the crowded room seemed to have grown suddenly dull and empty.

"That was prettily done," said Edward Wallace to Kendal as they stood together looking on. "In another woman those things would be done for effect, but I don't think she does thom for effect. It is as though she felt herself in such a warm and congenial atmosphere, she is so sure of herself and her surroundings, that she is able to give herself full play, to follow every impulse as it rises. There is a wonderful absence of mauvaise honte about her, and yet I believe that, little as she knows of her own deficiencies, she is "Very possibly," said Kendal; "it is a cu-

rious study, a character taken so much au naturel, and suddenly transported into the midst of such a London triumph as this, 1 have certainly been very much attracted and feel inclined to quarrel with you for having run her down. I believe I shall admire her

more than you to to-night." "I only hope you may," said the Ameri-can, cordially; I am afraid, however, that from any standard that is worth using there is not much to be said for her as an actress. As a human being she is nearly perfection." The afternoon guests departed, and just as

CHAPTER III.

On their arrival at the theatre, armed with Miss Bretherton's order, Mrs. Stuart's party found themselves shown into a large roomy found themselves shown into a large roomy box close to the stage-too, close, indeed, for purposes of seeing well. The house was al-ready crowded, and Kendal noticed, as he scanned the stalls and boxes through his opera glass, that it contained a considerable sprinkling of notabilities of various kinds. It was a large new theatre, which hitherto-had enjoyed but a very moderate share of popular favor, so that the brilliant and eager crowd with which it was now filled was in itself a sufficient testimony to the success of itself a sufficient testimony to the success of the actress who had wrought so great a

transformation. "What an experience is this for a girl of 21," whispered Kendal to Mrs. Stuart, who was comfortably settled in the further cor-ner of the box, her small dainty figure set off by the crimson curtains behind it. "One would think that an actor's life must stir the very depths of a man or woman's individual-ity, that it must call every power into action and strike sparks out of the dullest." "Yes; but how seldom it is so!" "Well, in England, at any rate, the fact is, their training is so imperfect they daren't

is, their training is so imperfect they daren't let themselves go. It's only when a man possesses the lower secrets of his art per-fectly that he can aim at the higher. But the band is nearly through the overture. Just tell me before the curtain goes up some-thing about the play. I have only very vague ideas about it. The scene is laid in Bartin." Berlin."

"Yes; in the Altes Schloss at Berlin. The story is based upon the legend of the 'White

Lady.'" "What, the warning phantom of the Hohenzollerns Mrs. Stuart nodded. "A crown prince of Frussia is in love with the beautiful Countess Hilda von Weissenstein. Reasons of state, however, oblige him to throw her over and

however, obligs him to throw her over and to take steps towards marriage with a prin-cess of Wurtemberg. They have just been betrothed when the countess, mail with jealousy, plays the part of the White Lady and appears to the princess to try and terrify her out of the proposed marriage." "And the countess is Miss Bretherton?" "Yes. Of course, the malicious people say that her getting up as the White Lady is really the raison d'etre of the piece. But, hushi there is the signal. Make up your mind to be bored by the princess; she is one mind to be bored by the princess; she is one

of the worst sticks I ever saw !" The first scene represented the Laliroom at the Schloss, or rather the royal antercom, beyond which the vista of the ballroom opened. The Prussian and Wurtemberg opened. The Prussian and Wurtemberg royalties had not yet arrived, with the ex-ception of the Prince Wilhelm, on whose matrimonial prospects the play was to turn. He was engaged in explaining the situation to his friend, Waldemar von Rothenfels, the difficulties in which he was placed, his pas-sion for the Countess Hilda, the political necessities which forced him to marry a daughter of the house of Wurtemberg, the pressure brought to bear upon him by his parents, and his own despair at having to break the news to the counters.

The story is proken off by the arrival of the royalties, including the pink and white maiden who is to be Prince Wilhelm's fate, and the royal quadrille begins. The prince

leads his princess to her place, when it 'f discovered that another lady is required to complete the figure, and an aide-de-camp is dispatched into the ballroom to fetch one He returns, ushering in the beautiful Hilda yon Weissenstein. From this moment the audience had been

Impatiently waiting, and when the dazding figure, in its trailing, pearl embroidered robes, appeared in the doorway of the ball-room, a storm of applause broke forth again and again, and for some minutes delayed the

nor again, and for scene. Nothing, indeed, could have been better calculated than this opening to display the poculiar gifts of the actress. The quadrille was a stately spectacular display, in which splendid dress and stirring music and the effects of rhythmic motion had been brought freely into play for the delight of the behold-interval. ers. Between the figures illere was a little skillfully managed action, mostly is dumb show. The movements of the lealous beauty

Inbored effort of acting—her movements which had exercised such an activity of the service states, had here with out grace, but often without dignity, and at all times lacking in that consistency, the unity of plan which is the soul of art. The sense of chill and disillusion was arrowed disaction of art. The sense of chill and disillusion was arrowed disaction of art. The sense of chill and disillusion was arrowed to be sould at the bod at the sense of the sense of

"There!" said Wallace, with a sigh of re-lief as the curtain fell on the first act, "there done with. There are two or three things in the second act that are beautiful. In her first appearance as the White Lady she is an wonderful as ever, but the third act is a wonde

"No whispering there," said Forbas look-ing round upon them. "Oh, I know what you're after, Edward, perfectly. I have is all with one ear." "That," said Wallace, moving up to him, "is physically impossible. Don't be so pay-macious. We leave you the front of the box, and when we appear in your territory our mouths are closed. But in our own domains we claim the right of free men." "Poor girl!" said Forbes, with a sigh "How abe manages to tame London as the dow is a marvel to me. If she was a state to a marvel to me. If she was a state ong ago. You have done your best as it is, only the public won't listen to you. Oh, don't suppose I don't see all that you are the critical poison's in my value just as it is in yours, but I hold it in check-it shart' master me. I will proteet my first that makes me feel I will proteet my for it, and "when I come across anything in life that makes me feel I will proteet my feelings from it with all my might." "We are dumb," asid Kondal, with a smile; "otherwise I would pedantically any you to consider what are the feelings" to which the dramatic art properly and legiti-mately appeak." "Oh, hang your dramatic art!" mid

which the dramatic art property and appears "Oh, hang your dramatic art!" said Forbes, firing up; "can't you take things simply and straightforwardly! She is there -she is doing her best for you-there iss's a movement or a look which isn't as glorious

The second se

Mrs. Stuart standing beside him. spirant at her elbow, and nothing remain minding him that they should meet again. A few minutes afterwards there was once