AN ENGAGEMENT.

By SIR ROBERT PEEL.

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PART I.

That Arnold Hopetoun was honestly in love admitted of no doubt, and Miss Carstairs was supposed to reciprocate his attachment. His very intimate as-sociates wondered why they did not marry, for Miss Carstairs was not vell off, and Hopetoun's salary from the foreign office, if it would not provide foreign office, if it would not provide her with a house in Green street and a brougham, would at least offer an improvement on the position she was occupying at present. When Hopetoun met her and fell a

prey to her fascinations, she had been staying as was her annual custom, with sowe cousins of her late father's—the Marrables, of Morecombe—and before her visit terminated they were en-

That was twelve months ago, and to-day they were engaged still.

Hopetoun was an ardent lover, and would have committed greater follies than matrimony on 1500 a year for the sake of her beaux years. What then was the explanation of the delay? Had Bella Carstairs mistaken her feelings? Had she given a hasty promise of which Had she given a hasty promise, of which she had subsequently repented? Not at all; she was waiting for his position

to improve.

Five hundred a year seemed to the girl who had started life with the expectation of marrying the son of a duke preposterous and absurd. She was fond of Arnold, even very fond, but she was tired, inexpressibly, deadly tired, of

yet she loved him! Almost she wished she did not. Limited as her oxportunities were, narrow as was her existence, she was only 27, and she might have done better than Arnold Hopetoun after all, she told herself. Had it not been that there was the likelihood of Lord Drillingham "doing something" for his neohew, the engagement would have been broken a week after it was made; she would have recovered her freedom, and awaited for the fairy prince anew. But there was the chance. Why was the wicked uncle so dilatory? Arnold had been importuning him with requests for months! She was thinking these thoughts this

afternoon—secretly hating the un-known peer —when Hopetoun was announced. She welcomed him with a

"You are early," she said.
"I was impatient," he answered.
"How, pretty! Is there any news,

"No." he said. "I don't know that there is any news, but I want to talk to you, Bella. I-I-look here, darling, you, Bella, 1—1—look here, darling, I can't go on waiting for you any longer! Let us marry, and take the goods the gods provide."

"Child!" she murmured. The gentleness of her rebuke was adorable.

"I am not a child." declared Hopetoun; "In Tact, I believe I may lay claim to being tolerably practical, and you

to being tolerably practical, and you may be very certain that I mean to work Drillingham's interest for all it is worth! Trust yourself to me, and I take my oath that you shall never have occasion to regret it."

"Do you imagine," she said, "do you imagine it is only of myself I am think-ing when I say 'wait?" I am thinking "Of me.?"

"Of you! Of myself a little, yes, because I am not a baby; but of you, too; of you chiefly, indeed, for it is on you that the burden of the step would fall."
"I'll change it." said Arnold, stoutly,
"And you would never reproach me—

I know that. But I will not let you 'chance it. 'It would not be a chance, it would be quite a certainty. Certain disaster, of which you would have to bear the burden! It sounds bad, doesn't it? The sound is nothing compared with what the reality would be? Ar-nold, you have never had to bear poverty—I have: I know what you do not —I know the awfulness of striving to keep up appearance; of endeavoring to make a pound do the work of two. I know how terrible you would find the life you are proposing so confidently. I am too fond of you to condemn you to it. I won't!"

It was tenderly put. Even she beleved a great deal of what she said her-telf while she was speaking. He did iot protest any longer; a man has only



many conversations of a similar nature many conversations of a similar nature had exhausted much of Hopetoun's power of remonstrance. She gave him tea, and her mother came in and pres-ently he took his leave. He was not in high spirits. Thor-

oughly as her lover may appreciate common sense in a woman, he is apt to prefer a dash of impudence. She was right, and also she was wrong. He was not a beggar, she was not the daughter of a millionaire. Why was it so dread-ful, the life he contemplated? After he had dined he went back to

his chambers, and wrote a long letter to his uncle, in which he insisted for the seventieth time upon his many claims upon his unappreciative country, and the ridiculous inadequacy of his present

post to his requirements.

A sweet, sunny-tempered individual, Lord Drillingham's protestations of affection were entirely genuine, and his promises, when he made them, were truly meant. Only he forgot—the matter passed through his mind. His son was not ambitious, his daughter had her count to play the part of chargeres. post to his requirements. aunt to play the part of chaperone, and the widower himself was free to



take life as he pleased, unfettered by re-

sponsibilities.

He was now at Deercourt, composing himself after the fatigues of the season by smoking cigars on the lawn, and can-tering about the lanes on his cob. A little later the place would be filled with visitors, but just at present Deercourt was empty, save for its owner, and its hostess, Arnold's consin—a handsome, unaffected girl, who was in his confidence. She knew the motive for his eagerness for advancement, and sympathized with it. which his uncle might not have done. A matrimonial engage-ment is liable to weaken an elderly gentleman's interest; a woman's it intensiies. Yes, Kate Drillingham was a very nice girl indeed, and when the letter came, and her father mentioned it to her, she added her own persuasions to the writer's. "You have been going to do something

for him for ages," she said; "you really might, papa!"
"I must," said the peer, placidly, "Yes, I will bear it in mind."
"What does he say—may I look?"
She read the closely-covered pages

through in silence, and gave them back to Drillingham, thoughtfully. "Poor fellow," she said; "he seems awfully in carnest, doesn't he?"

"Yes, yes; I shall certainly remember the matter. I shall make it my busi-ness to push him forward—er—er—very

"And to begin with—? What shall you try for?" asked the girl.

Drillingham's attention was wandering. He closed his eyes, "Eh?" he said. "Do you mind pulling down that further blind, Kitty? The sun is rather strong, and I think I could manage to

However, he wrote an affable little note in reply to his nephew the following morning, and for awhile Hopetoun felt encouraged by it. Not for very



"Give Me a kiss Before I Begin"

long, because he had had so many simi-lar notes, but just at first—say, for the same length of time as his correspond-ent's fervor of purpose lasted.

When a week had gone by he was every whit as despondent as before, and then an idea occurred to him. It was a strange idea, a novel idea; it was, he told himself, the idea of social genius, but the question was whether he could obtain the collaboration that was necessary. About that he was not sure, in fact he was extremely doubtful, though it was extremely doubten, though it was entirely worth while making the attempt. The first thing to be done, though, was to ascertain whether his fiancee would approve, and when he left the F. O. that afternoon—the inspiration had occurred to him in his official chair—he drove to the little Hampstead

house forthwith. The mother and daughter gether.

"I want to speak to you," he whis-pered, and by and by feminine diplo-macy had effected a disappearance of

iamma. "What is it?" asked Bella. "Import-"Well, yes," said Hopetoun, "I think it may be called 'important.' Give me a kiss before I begin." She lifted her face and smiled.

"Goose!" she said, "You are mys-terious!"

"Because I like to kiss you?" "No, wretch; that is natural."
"Delicious modesty!" laughed Hope-toun. "Bella, I've a scheme!" "I hope you are going to say you had an appointment."

"Tout vient a lui, etc! The scheme first, and the appointment will follow. In fact, the scheme is the appointment, in chrysalis form. Give me another kiss, there's an angel--l'appetit vient

kiss, there's an angel—l'appetit vient en mangeant!"

"You are very prolific of proverbs today," she remarked.

"There! Now impart."

"I am ready—prepare to be startled.
Bella, some three and twenty years

ago—"
"Oh, do be serious!" she said.
"I am, I am!" he cried. "Some three and twenty years ago, the late Lady Drillingham gave birth to a daughter."

"Well, I know all that, Kate."
"Precisely—Kate! You have not met her, but you have heard from me that her, but you have heard from me that the young lady is a trump. You have also heard from me that the one thing in the world harder to move than my respected uncle is a steam-roller. Well, now listen. Lord Drillingham has an immense amount of influence. He couldn't make me prime minister, or chancellor of the exchequer, or arch-bishop of Canterbury, but he could very easily indeed make me the happiest ways in the world." man in the world."

"He?"
"Completed by you! He could, as we both already know, effect that delightful vagueness termed 'putting me into something.' Only his indolence

into something.' Only his indolence prevents him."

"Why." said Miss Carstairs, inter rupting, "waste time by repeating things that 'we both already know?"

"Bella," he returned, "you are as usual right. I won't waste time. In a nutshell, he could, but he's too confoundedly lazy. Well, I've thought of a way of waking him up—but I'm not quite sure whether you'll like it."

"I can answer that in advance: I "I can answer that in advance: I

shall."
"Wait and hear. If—I say "if—my uncle were to understand that Kate's interest in me was something warmer than a cousinly one, he would hustle on my behalf indeed. He may be satisfied to let me stagnate in the F. O. as his nephew, but as his future-son-in-lew—"

"What?" she exclaimed.
"I thought I should startle you. As
his future son-in-law he'd be in a redhot fever to make a coming man of not rever to make a coming man of me—coming somewhere! You follow me? I propose to persuade Kate to join me fir—the plot—to tell him she wants to marry me. In all his life he has never denied her anything, and after his first explosion was over—I suppose he would explode to begin with—he'd display something like commendable industry at last. What do you think of it?"

Miss Carstairs mused "Wall—but

you think of it?"

Miss Carstairs mused. "Well—but how would it end?" she asked.

"The deception would have to be sustained for two or three months. When I was really in a substantial appointment, we could tell the old gentleman that he had been fooled. He would not be outrageously angry, I daresay—I should not be the most desirable of partis at the best. We should explain the motive; Kate would be bridesmaid at our wedding, and you and I would live happily ever after. Again, what do you think of it?"

"I don't know," sald his fiancee.

"I don't know," sald his fiancee.

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'Anyhow, I don't think your cousin

would agree."
"I'm doubtful of that part of it my self. But she is a pal, Kate—I'm not sure. If she does agree, what then?" "If she would agree, I don't know that it is a bad plan. It sounds rather silly, but silly things sometimes come off. It would certainly stimulate that

lethargic peer to action."

"Rather! He'll positively perspire in his hurry to assist me. 'My talented nephew, young Hopetoun!' 'A really brilliant young fellow, Arnold Hopetoun! 'You will be serving me, me personally!' I can hear him. A thousand a year? In no time at all I shall be drawing two, three thousand a year! We'll have bays in the carriage, Bella, and a brougham for night work!"

They both laughed.

They both laughed.
"Go and see what Miss Drillingham says," advised Beila. "Go and put it to her: and if, like Barkis, she is willing, we'll play the farce out. When shall I see you again?"
"I'll ask leave tomorrow. If she con-

sents. I'll write you at once; if she re-fuses, I'll come and tell you so. I wish she knew you, Bella; it would make her the more anxious to help us. Your likenesses don't do you anything like

justice, darling, upon my word!" He applied for leave, and got it, and two mornings later he was steaming two mornings later he was steaming out of Euston prepared to put his idea into execution. He had announced his impending arrival by telegram, and when he reached the Deercourt plat-form, he saw the dog-cart was waiting in the lane behind the gate to meet him. Ten minutes drive brought him to the house. Drillingham and his cousin were in the morning-room. "Glad to see you. Arnold," said his uncle. "I have been thinking of you a good deal of late."

"How are you, Arnold?" said Kate 'We were very glad to get your wire,' Then they had lunch, and afterwards Drillingham, who was nervous of being brought to bay in a tete-a-tete, pleaded letters to write, and retired to have a nap in the library, and Arnold and the girl were alone

They went out into the grounds. "What's the news?" said Kitty, "How

"She is very well, thank you, but I am a wreck. Kate, this state of things "I saw your letter to papa," she said,

"and I spoke to him about it."
"And he said—""
"He said he would certainly bear you in mind. I am awfully sorry for you, Arnold, I remind him as often as I can. but—well, you know papa! I can't say I've done any good, though I've done my best."

"You could do much more," said Ar-nold, nervously, "if you would." "I?" she stared at him in surprise, "You are not blaming me, too?"
"Oh, no, no! I mean you can do much more in too." I mean you can do much more always good friends. Kate, weren't we? If I asked a big thing of you—if if you agreed with me that it would have the desired effect, you wouldn't

refuse, I'm sure." "What are you talking about?" she said rather coldly. "Yes, we are quite good friends—we always shall be, I hope. What does the preamble lead

"What I mean is," he stammered that you have always been very sym-

tism was Chroniele,

It Had Converted Him.

There was a well-known clergyman who had such a complete abhorrence for profanity in any form that in his family he would not even tolerate polite slang. At one time a well-known parishioner and intimate friend of this minister delivered, at timate friend of this minister delivered, at a semi-religious meeting, a vigorous talk on the évils of profanity. Next morning the layman, thinking his reverend friend would surely be interested in a lecture so well in sympathy with his own principles, sent him a newspaper report of the speech. In a few days came the reply. It was on a postal card and read as follows: "My dear X—: I have read most carefully your talk upon the violation of the third commandment, and you will be glad to learn that I have completely abandoned the habit,"—Boston Budget.

He Had Grown. Very Fat Man (to friend)-Won't you remember me? I used to be a page at the

Hon, Snobson's.
"Well, it appears to me you have grown into a volume,"—London Chips.



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matism, Neuralgia, Headache,

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"What I mean is," he stammered, "that you have always been very symnathetic, and all that. In plain English, you alone can help me to win Bella. I've come today to find out whether you'll do it."

Under a cedar close by there were two garden chairs. Miss Drillingham sat down, her white hands folded in her lap, a little pucker of wonderment gathering on her brow. Yes, it was infinitely more awkward than he pictured it.

However, he had gone too far to retreat. His cousin was waiting patiently for him to proceed, and his silence after so elaborate a prelude was becoming absurd.

"Will you belease tell me what you have to say?" she said, quietly.
"Yes," he declared, "it is neck or nothing—I will!"

Then he sat down on the other chair and told her.

(To be continued.)

An Absent-Minded Domisie.

I have heard some good tetree on the ministent some good tetree on the him sheen minded in the temporary absence of his wife. It have heard some good tetree on the him passing and the body is such and the desired and told her.

An Absent-Minded Domisie.

I have heard some good tetree on the ministent man told her.

An Absent-Minded Domisie.

I have heard some good tetree on the ministent man told her.

"The wife: A multiplicity of cares has made him absent-minded I heard to day of an occasion when the doctor was studenly called from home during the temporary absence of his wife. He temporary absence of bis wife. He temporary absence of his wife. He temporar

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	Chic., R. I. & Pac 661		6512	
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31	Mo. Pac 2514	2514	244	2414
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New York Produce Market. New York, Jan. 4.—Flour—Dull, stead; unchanged. Wheat—Spot market fair; active; firmer No. 2 red store and elevaungraded red, \$5a73c.; No. 1 Northern, \$63c.; options wer fairly active, firm, at \$5c. advance; No. 2 red, \$71sc.; March, \$63c.; March, \$63c.;

Buffalo Live Stock. \$3.55a4; mixed packers, \$3.95a4; roughs, \$3.20a3, 40; stags, \$2.75a3,15. Sheep and lambs—Receipts, 880 head; on sale, 12,00 head; one load Canada lambs brough \$5.20; market steady for sheep, easy for lambs; choice to prime lambs, \$3a5,15; good, \$4.75a4,90; fight to fair, \$4.40a4,55; mixed sheep, good to choice, \$2.85a2,55; light to fair, \$2.25a2,50; culls, \$1.75a2,15.

Philadelphia Tallow Market .

Oil Market.

A Clean Sweep. The colonel took down from the shelf his the colone took down from the shelf his time-honored companion, the comforter of his declining years, uncorked it and turned it up slowly and dignifiedly, as a gentleman should. Not a drop came out, It was empty. He set it down with a sigh, "By Gad!" he exclaimed, "even the jug has gone Republican!"—Cincinnati Enquirer.

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Buffalo Live Stock.

Buffalo N. Y., Jan. 4.—Cattle—Receipts, 1.562 head; on sale, 42 head; market, firm; light heifers, \$3a5,10; fat cows, \$2.50a2.25; no very good cattle on sale; veals, good to extra, \$7.50a8.50. Hogs—Receipts, 10.880 head; on sale, 5.00 head; market steady; Yorkers, good to choice, \$1a4.05; light do, \$4a4.05; pigs, \$4a4.05; mediums and heavy, \$3.55a4; mixed packers, \$3.96a4; roughs.

Chicago Live Stock. Chicago Live Stock.

Union Stock Yards, Ill., Jan. 4.—Cattle—
Receipts, 500 head; market strong; extra
steers, \$2.25a4.25; stockers and feeders,
\$2.75a3.75; cows and bulls, \$1.50a3.50; calves,
\$3a6.75; Texans, \$3a4.10. Hogs—Receipts,
\$17.000 head; market firm and 5 cents higher;
heavy packing and shipping lots, \$3.65a
\$.\$23\cdots; common to choice mixed, \$1.55a3.82\cdots;
choice assorted, \$3.75a3.85; 'light, \$3.69a
\$.377\cdots; pigs, \$2.75a3.75. Sheep—Receipts,
\$3.000; market strong; inferior to choice,
\$2a3.60; lambs, \$3.25a4.70.

Toledo Grain Market.

Toledo, O., Jan. 4.—Close, Wheat—Receipts, 11,011 bushels; shipments, 14,500 bushels; firm; No. 2 red cash, 67½c.; May, 68½c.; July, 66c.; No. 3 red cash, 65½c. Corn—Receipts, 53,100 bushels; shipments, 45,300 bushels; No. 2 mixed cash, 26½c.; No. 3 do., 25½c.; No. 3 yellow, 27c. Oats—Receipts, 1,374 bushels; shipments, 2,000 bushels; dull; No. 3 mixed cash, 17c. Cloverseed—Receipts do bags; shipments 739 bags; firmer; prime cash and January, 34.49; March, \$4.45; prime alske cash, \$1,75. Toledo Grain Market.

Philadelphia, Jan. 4.—Tallow is weak and dull. We quote: City, prime, in hogsheads, 37gc.; country, prime. In barrels, 37gc.; country, dark, in barrels, 31ga33gc.; cakes, 41gc.; grease, 31gc.

Oil City, Pa., Jan. 4.—Oil opened, \$1.48½; highest, \$1.48; lowest, \$1.48½; closed, \$1.49 bid. Standard's price, \$1.50.

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