

you had anythin' to do with her goin' away, though I never saw any person show such a dislike to another as she did to you. You plagued her, and I warned you not to, but I don't think you drove her away."

Hawkes was blowing huge clouds of smoke toward the ceiling.

"Do you know much about Alice Goldthurst?" he asked.

"No," in mild surprise.

"I'd rather see a sister of mine dead, if I had a sister, than an intimate friend of hers," said Hawkes, speaking sharply and rising so suddenly as to make Mr. Grillis start. For the first time he noticed the pallor on the young man's face.

"Look here! I'll pay the next Goldthurst note if you'll tell me where Marie is in a week's time."

"I tell?" with a puzzled look. "How can I tell?"

"If you will find her! If you will help me find her!" hurriedly. "Nothing will ever convince me that she followed that Goldthurst girl, willingly and knowingly."

He was so unlike Hawkes in his excitement that Mr. Grillis stared, amazed.

"I'll never believe it till I see it. Come, will you help me?"

"You know I will, Hawkes. I don't want any price for it, either, and you ought to know it. We've been together too long to talk of payin' for friendship."

"I'll put my hand down into my pocket and pay that five thousand gladly, if you will show her to me in a week. No matter where she is. If she has had freedom in her actions, I know where I will not find her. You ask me if I remember her. I remember her so well, and she came to me so often, although there were three thousand miles between us, that I have come home to marry her."

Those were long, weary days for Little John Pattern after Marie's departure. Disconsolately he wandered over his great estate. The summer house, where he had so often listened to the low voice which had the power to dissipate his petty vexations, had come to be distasteful to him. He passed very little time in his home. When away from the dingy office on Water street, however, his favorite haunt was the foot path on the cliff, where he paced back and forth, leaning heavily on his staff, his face more pinched and the blue suit hanging loosely on his shrinking frame. He was obstinate and quarrelsome, and a source of no little trouble to his better and larger half. Mrs. Pattern was likewise undergoing a change. Not that she was less bustling, or a more careless manager than in the past, but she accompanied her duties with unintelligible mumblings and shaking of her head. The secret of her unsettled state lay in the fact that Charles, though a barrister, had received so little encouragement from the law requiring public that he had grown rusty. In other words, he was far from thorough in his work, and for want of his father's signature in certain places on a certain legal document, it was a question that would require a judge and jury to decide just who would be the owner or owners of the Pattern estate on Summit avenue, St. Timothy's Hill, in the case of Little John's decease.

Every other plan being frustrated, it had come to be the absorbing desire of the mother to own the prop-

erty jointly with her son during her life. A will to that effect (secured during an illness of the old man) had lately been discovered to be defective, and the ambitious lady realized the fact that unless another will was made in her favor,—and she had little hope of it,—the law would allow her but a third interest in the estate.

A conversation which occurred between herself and son about this time increased her anxiety and her mumbling. Little John had for two consecutive evenings delayed tea for an hour. When he did return, he was morose and refused to explain his tardiness. On the third evening Mrs. Pattern, waiting in the drawing room, lost every particle of patience.

"I suppose we've got to git that Maria back," she said, crossly. "There's no puttin' up with his freaks. If she was here he'd be round to his meals. I guess we'd better advertise for her; 'twon't cost much."

"If she returns," said Charles, "I shall ask her to marry me."

"Well, I vum, Charl' Pattern!" with startling distinctness. "Hev you lost what little sense you hed? Marry her? Marry yer mother's maid?"

"There is better blood in her than in us," Charles replied, and left the room.

"Well, I vum!" the woman declared. "We're a goin' to the dogs, the whole on us. So Maria'll boss it over me in this house, will she?" angrily. "I'll make thet drivin' idjit sign thet will out to-night!"

The "drivin' idjit" was at that minute stumping into the side door. The minute was marked for the tiny French clock in the drawing room struck nine. Mrs. Pattern stood in the side hall, her hands on her hips, a serious impediment to her husband's progress.

"Well, how long are you a goin' to keep this up?" she asked, looking very ugly. She would doubtless have followed the question with comments on his conduct, had not a wonderful thing occurred. Little John had stopped at the first word, waited till she had had her say, then, without warning, raised his stick and dealt her a sounding whack on the fat head. Mrs. Pattern uttered an astonished yell and fled, but Little John seemed hardly satisfied. He brought his stick crashing through the hall chandelier and perforated the pictures with cane holes, all the time keeping up a labored hopping, laughing and crying. When he was disarmed by Charles it was discovered that the head of the house was in an advanced state of intoxication.

With the social downfall of the house staring her in the face, Mrs. Pattern pooled private issues. A council was held by the sober members of the family, which lasted till late into the night. As a result of this meeting, Charles left for the city in advance of his usual time on the following day, and repaired to the office on Water street. Coming into the dingy room unannounced, he found an uncouth individual working at the bench, who treated Little John with such familiarity that the son was forced into the astonished expression, "Well!"

Little John absolutely refused to go home, and Charles retired. When the husband and father did get to the St. Timothy hill mansion, he was in a condition bordering on insanity, and so it continued day after day. The affairs of the house of Pattern were growing into a very bad state, indeed.