

Continued from 1st Page. Jones is the second officer; but he has turned in with Mr. Thomas, the first officer, and given up the cabin to you.

"I am sure it is very kind of Mr. Jones," murmured Augusta, not knowing what to make of this turn of fortune. But surprises were not to end there. A few minutes afterward, just as she was leaving the cabin, a gentleman in uniform came up, in whom she recognized the captain. He was accompanied by a pretty, fair-haired woman very becomingly dressed.

"Excuse me, Miss Smithers, I believe," he said, with a bow. "Yes." "I am Captain Alton. I hope you like your new cabin. Let me introduce you to Lady Holmhurst, the wife of Lord Holmhurst, the New Zealand governor, you know. Lady Holmhurst, this is Miss Smithers, whose book you were talking so much about."

"Oh! I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss Smithers," said the great lady in a manner that evidently was not assumed. "Captain Alton had promised that I shall sit next to you at dinner, and then we can have a good talk. I don't know when I have been so much delighted with anything as I was with your book. I have read it three times; what do you think of that for a busy woman?"

"I think there is some mistake," said Augusta hurriedly and with a slight blush. "I am a second-class passenger on board this ship, and therefore can not have the pleasure of sitting next to Lady Holmhurst."

"Oh, that is all right, Miss Smithers," said the captain, with a jolly laugh. "You are my guest, and I shall take no denial." "When we find genius for once in our lives, we are not going to lose the opportunity of sitting at its feet," added Lady Holmhurst, with a little movement toward her which was neither courtesy nor bow, but rather a happy combination of both. The compliment was, Augusta felt, sincere, however much it exaggerated the measure of her poor capacities, and, putting other things aside, was coming as it did from one woman to another, peculiarly graceful and surprising. She blushed and bowed, scarcely knowing what to say, when suddenly Mr. Meeson's harsh tones, pitched just now in a respectful key, broke upon her ear. Mr. Meeson was addressing no less a person than Lord Holmhurst, G. C. M. G. Lord Holmhurst was a stout, short, dark little man, with a somewhat pompous manner and a kindly face. He was a colonial governor of the first water, and was perfectly aware of the fact.

Now, a colonial governor even though he be a G. C. M. G. when he is at home, is not a name, to conjure with, and does not fill an exclusive place in the eye of the English world. There are many colonial governors in the present and past tense to be found in the pursues of South Kensington, where their presence creates no unusual excitement. But when one of this honorable corps sets foot upon the vessel destined to bear him to the shores that he shall rule, and in short, from being nobody out of the common, he becomes, and very properly so, a great man. Nobody knew this better than Lord Holmhurst and to a person fond of observing such things, nothing could have been more curious to notice than the small but gradual increase in the pomposity of his manner, as the great ship day by day steamed further from England and nearer to the country where he was king. It went up, degree by degree, like a thermometer which is taken down into the bowels of the earth, or gradually removed into the sunlight. At present, however, the thermometer was only rising.

"I was repeating, my lord," said the harsh voice of Mr. Meeson, "that the principle of a hereditary peerage in the grandest principle our country has yet developed. It gives us something to look forward to. In one generation we make the money; in the next we take the title which the money buys. Look at your lordship. Your lordship is now in a proud position; but, as I have understood, your lordship's father was a trader like me."

"Hum!—well, not exactly, Mr. Meeson," broke in Lord Holmhurst. "Dear me I wonder who that exceedingly nice-looking girl Lady Holmhurst is talking to can be!" "Now, your lordship, to put a case," went on the remorseless Meeson, who, like most people of his stamp, had an almost superstitious veneration for the aristocracy. "I have made a great deal of money, as I do not mind telling your lordship; what is there to prevent my successor—supposing I have a successor—from taking advantage of that money, and rising on it to a similar position to that so worthily occupied by your lordship?" "Exactly, Mr. Meeson. A most excellent idea for your successor. Excuse me, but I see Lady Holmhurst beckoning to me." And he fled precipitately, still followed by Mr. Meeson.

"John, my dear," said Lady Holmhurst. "I want to introduce you to Miss Smithers—the Miss Smithers whom we have been talking about and whose book you have been reading. Miss Smithers, my husband!" Lord Holmhurst, who when he was not deep in the affairs of state, had a considerable eye for a pretty girl—and what man worthy of the name has not?—bowed most politely, and was proceeding to tell Augusta, in very charming language, how delighted he was to make her acquaintance, when Mr. Meeson arrived on the scene and perceived Augusta for the first time. Quite taken aback at finding her, apparently, upon the best of terms with people of such quality, he hesitated to consider what course to adopt, whereon Lady Holmhurst, in a somewhat formal way, for she was not very fond of Mr. Meeson, mistaking his hesitation went on to introduce him. Thereupon, all in a moment, as we do sometimes take such resolutions, Augusta came to a determination. She would have nothing more to do with Mr. Meeson—she would regulate him then and there, come what would of it.

So, as he advanced upon her with outstretched hand, she drew herself up, and in a cold and determined voice said: "I already know Mr. Meeson, Lady Holmhurst; and I do not wish to have anything more to do with him. Mr. Meeson has not behaved well to me." "Pon my word," murmured Lord Holmhurst to himself, "I don't wonder she has had enough of him. Sensible young woman, that!" Lady Holmhurst looked a little astonished and a little amused. Suddenly,

however, a light broke upon her. "Oh! I see," she said. "I suppose that Mr. Meeson published 'Jemima's Yarn.' Of course that accounts for it. Why, I declare there is the dinner-bell! Come along, Miss Smithers, or we shall lose the place that the captain has promised us." And, accordingly, they went, leaving Mr. Meeson, who had not yet fully realized the unprecedented nature of the position, positively gasping on the deck. And on board the "Kancaroo" there were no clerks and editors on whom he could wreak his wrath!

"And now, my dear Miss Smithers," said Lady Holmhurst when, dinner being over, they were sitting together in the moonlight, near the wheel, "perhaps you will tell me why you don't like Mr. Meeson, whom, by the way, I personally detest. But don't, if you don't wish to, you know."

But Augusta did wish to, and then and there she unfolded her whole sad story into her new-found friend's sympathetic ear; and glad enough the poor girl was to find a confidant to whom she could unbosom her sorrows.

"Well, upon my word," said Lady Holmhurst, when she had listened with tears in her eyes to the history of poor little Jemima's death, "upon my word, of all the brutes I ever heard of, I think that this publisher of yours is the worst! I will cut him, and get my husband to cut him too. But no, I have a better plan than that. He shall tear it by that agreement, so sure as my name is Bessie Holmhurst; he shall tear it up, or—"

and she nodded her little head with an air of infinite wisdom. [To be Continued.]

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