

wouldn't lose him for anything. He's my daughter's pet."

"Well, unless horses out here are different from what they are in England, she shall ride him again in less than a week."

He was as good as his word. Five days afterwards he led the horse up to the house for his fair owner to mount.

Jessie McQuoid was at that time the belle of Poverty Bay. Tall, with a complexion like a sun-kissed peach, brilliant dark eyes and blue-black hair, and full of good health and high spirits, she was the pride of her parents, and the admiration and despair of all the young sheep farmers for miles round. But although, like the Widow Malone,

"She melted the hearts
Of the swains in thin parts,"

she was—

"Like the impartial sun,
Which beams on all, and favours none."

Her father's description of the *mauvais sujet* had piqued her curiosity, and as she contrasted his gentlemanly bearing with his shabby dress, her curiosity gave way to pity.

"I think you may safely ride Bruce now, Miss McQuoid," said he, raising his hat. (A groom would have touched the brim). "Only don't ride him too fast or too far."

"I'm so much obliged to you for your care and skill. Have you been out here long?"

"Long enough to get through all my money, but not long enough to get any useful experience."

"Well, let us hope that there's a prosperous career before you in this Colony. Here all who can and will work are sure to get on. Besides, when things are at their worst, they'll mend."

"I'm afraid, Miss McQuoid, that I must answer you in the words of poor Talfourd: 'They say things at the worst will mend, if true My wardrobe's very near as good as new.'"

Then they both laughed, and a sort of freemasonry was established between them.

"That girl would make a sensation in Rotten Row," thought the young man as he watched her cantering off.

"Bruce," said she, patting the horse's glossy neck, "be on your best behaviour, for you've a gentleman to groom you."

And then the same thought shot through both their minds: each had been too familiar with the other.

"What an ass I made of myself to speak to her as if she and I were equals!" said the groom to himself.

"How could I be so familiar with a perfect stranger?" said Jessie, biting her lip with vexation. "But I wanted to cheer him up, poor fellow!"

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Having installed our hero as master of the horse, it is time to hark back to the misdoings which led to his expatriation.

The Honourable Cyril Fortescue was the younger and only brother of Lord Woodleigh, of Woodleigh Towers, and had been a constant thorn in the side of that model landlord and decorous M.P. At eighteen Cyril was expelled from Oxford for letting off fireworks in his College quad. After that he got a cornetcy in the "Death or Glory," where his songs, jests and unflinching good humour made him the idol of his brother Lancers, until one unlucky night he played a practical joke upon his Major, which resulted in a court martial and dismissal from the service. Then, *facilis descensus*, he gravitated to the "rank," and drove a hansom. Be not incredulous, reader. Was there not once upon a time a Viscount who went organ-grinding? Why then blame our hero for trying by any means to get his own living rather than again face an austere elder brother who had thrice paid the young prodigal's debts?

When, however, the aristocratic jehu had lost his licence by furious driving, he was summoned to Woodleigh Towers. His Lordship's summing up will convey the result of the interview.

"Cyril," said the scandalised Peer, "you've brought disgrace upon our family name. I've done what I could to set you right, and I've failed. You'd better go away somewhere and hide yourself. Here's a cheque for two hundred. It'll take you to New Zealand, and keep you till you can find something to suit your peculiar talents. I'd give you more, but I know you'd squander it."

And so Cyril, the spendthrift, came out to