

Fred M. White



A Clue In Wax

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THE END

**Author of "The Phantom Car," "The
Grey Woman," "The Riddle of the
Rail," etc.**



CHAPTER I.

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Clifford Cheriton emerged from the bathroom into his modest sitting-room in a blithesome frame of mind. For it was one of those perfect April mornings of which the poet Browning speaks so feelingly, and which seldom comes in what is traditionally a month of tender greenery and sunshine. But here was an afternoon—because it was afternoon—full of flickering lights and shadows and even in the dingy square outside the prim house in Bennett-street the lilacs were in full bloom, and here and there a laburnum about to burgeon into its yellow chains. An afternoon for youth and happiness and everything that goes to make life a joy even in a drab London street.

In the tiny sitting-room Cheriton's landlady had placed his breakfast on a table near the window so that he could command some sort of view of the outside world, and to his bacon and eggs the occupant sat down with the healthy appetite of an athlete and a man who has little or nothing on his conscience. There were sporting prints on the wall, a hanging bookcase containing some five hundred volumes, ranging from Anatole France's 'Revolt of the Angels' to Manning Foster's latest manual on the subject of auction bridge. So that it will be seen what a catholic taste in literature Cheriton possessed. In one corner of the room was a bag of golf clubs, and on the mantelshelf a rather elaborate silver clock bearing an inscription to the effect that the owner had won it in the open mile of the Lanchester school sports 15 years before. Which in itself was a proof

that here was one who had made his mark in one of the finest scholastic institutions in the country. And to complete the whole thing, on a peg behind the door were a policeman's helmet and a blue tunic with three stripes on the arm from which the intelligent observer would have judged that Cheriton was connected with the police force.

The intelligent observer aforesaid would have guessed right, because Clifford was a sergeant in the special reserve and had won that position after three years' service with the Metropolitan Force. Not an unusual thing to happen in these hard times, when a public school career counts for little in the battle of life, and many a youth who had set out a few years before with lofty ambitions had come to regard himself as fortunate to occupy the front seat in a taxi-cab. And this, in a measure, had been Clifford's career up to now. Just a sergeant of police, connected with the Criminal Investigation Department, and the hope that some day he might rise to inspector's rank.

But it had been a hard row to hoe. A whole year in the humblest capacity possible for an officer of the law, then, by fortunate chance, the best part of another year chasing a fugitive from justice across the American continent, followed by an extradition case that lasted for months. Yet, on the whole, his time had not been wasted, because it was all experience, and it was going to help him later on as one of his superiors had told him only a few days before.

Time was when Cheriton had had ambitions towards literature. That, indeed, had been the line he had cut out for himself when he left school and one he had pursued until it had ended in a blind alley and something like starvation.

Criminology was the subject that most fascinated him, and this it was that had impelled him to the writing of a novel, which had for a basis the study of an original criminal and the psychology that goes with the type of lawbreaker who sets out deliberately to prey on society, much in the same spirit as some men regard adventures in unexplored portions of the globe. There had been one or two short stories of Clifford's published in the magazines and a rather longer effort which had won the approval of the literary agent in whose hands he had placed his work. But whilst the grass grows the steed starves, and there had come one bitter moment when the would-be author had to decide between a potential literary career and something in the nature of starvation. By this time he had nearly completed his novel, which was in type so that he had to throw it aside for some months and only work at it at odd times when he was off duty. And in this work he had been encouraged by the girl who had done his typing for him at a price that had barely paid for the paper on which it was written and who now, in some way or another, seemed to have slipped out of his life.

Anyhow, the story was finished, and for the last eight or nine months had been in the hands of Messrs. Amber and Lawrence, the famous literary agents in Whitefriars-street. They had succeeded in finding a publisher for the book, and had also arranged for its simultaneous appearance on the other side of the Atlantic. And there, for the moment, the matter rested.

"Of course, we shall be glad to see anything else you like to send us in the meantime," Lawrence had told Cheriton, "I

don't suppose we shall hear anything about the book for months—perhaps not for a year. You see, the publishers are not under contract to supply an account for nine months after the book appears, and it will be difficult to tell whether it is a success or not until they communicate with us. Let us have what you can, my boy—forget all about your novel. When there is anything to report I will write to you."

And so Cheriton had gone on with his work, trying to convince himself that there was an end of his literary career. Anyway, there was no time now to think even about short stories. But there were optimistic moments when he indulged in day-dreams of future glory, and in these dreams he could see the eager blue eyes and wistful beauty of Evelyn Marchand, the girl who had taken so keen an interest in the book when she was acting in a small capacity as Cheriton's secretary.

What had become of her, he wondered. He had tried to trace her again on his return from America, and get her to go on with the work in which she had proved so fine an inspiration. But she had vanished, leaving no trace behind. She was little more than a girl, working hard to keep herself and a widowed mother by means of a typewriter and making but a poor success of it. A pretty girl, more than a pretty girl, with a delicacy of feature and a natural refinement that told Cheriton plainly enough a story. The story of a girl well-bred and born and fighting bravely against adversity and misfortune. There was something in the perfect spring afternoon that brought that dainty face and charming smile back vividly to Clifford's recollection.

He put this out of his mind for the moment as he ate his breakfast, which was a belated meal seeing that he had come off night duty at 4 o'clock that morning, and was free now, not only for the rest of the day, but for tomorrow as well, it being his monthly day off. Then, when he had despatched his eggs and bacon and lighted a cigarette, he took from the mantelpiece a letter which had arrived by that morning's post. Without any premonition of events he carelessly tore open the envelope and found that it was a short note from his agents, Amber and Lawrence, from whom he had not heard for months. It was a mere request that whenever the recipient had half an hour to spare, the people in Whitefriars-street would be glad to see him on a matter of considerable personal importance.

Forty minutes later, Clifford was seated in the luxurious office of the junior partner and regarding with somewhat envious eyes a series of black deed boxes with white lettering which were ranged all along one wall of the room. And on these white letterings were the names of men who were household words wherever the English language is spoken. Great novelists, most of them, and Cheriton wondered, half whimsically, if ever his own name would appear in that glittering constellation.

"Ah, sit down, Cheriton," Lawrence said. "Help yourself to a cigarette. I dare say you were beginning to wonder if you were ever going to hear from us again."

The speaker was a tall, spare man with a slightly greying moustache and a monocle in his left eye. A keen, shrewd individual whose mouth betrayed a sense of humour.

"Oh, I don't know," Clifford said modestly. "You warned me that it might be months and, besides, I have been pretty busy in other directions. And it doesn't matter much whether the book turns out a success or not. You see, I am a sergeant now, with a promise of promotion, and I have one or two friends at court who will help me as long as I help myself."

"Yes, I quite appreciate that," Lawrence smiled "I must say you don't look much like a policeman."

Clifford smiled in his turn. In his suit of pearl-grey twill, beautifully polished brown shoes and old Lanchester tie, he was about the last individual in the world to be taken by the man in the street for a mere policeman.

"However, let us get to business," Lawrence went on. "I heard from Gardiner and May the day before yesterday with a first account of the sales of your book. And, by a curious coincidence, this morning, we heard also from our New York office with a report of the sales on the other side. My dear young man, do you realise that you are about to become famous?"

"It hadn't struck me," Clifford said dryly.

"Well, you are. I dare say if you had read the papers you would have observed what favourable notices your book received on this side. Don't you ever look at the papers?"

"Very seldom. Just to scan my favourite news sheet and that is about all. I don't agree with Gilbert that a policeman's life is not a happy one, but it's dashed hard work and doesn't leave much leisure for recreation."

"No, I suppose not. Now, see here. Up to the time this account was made up your book had sold five thousand

copies on this side, which means that the publishers have sent us a cheque for just over L250. That you can have, less our commission, and take it away with you if you like."

"You don't mean that?" Clifford gasped.

"Indeed I do. And, what is more, the book is selling rapidly. I shouldn't be at all surprised if you don't made L1000 out of what is called the library edition. And that is only one side of the matter. Now, I read your book before I sent a typed copy to America, and I was sanguine that the American scenes in it which were the result of your experience over there would attract a good deal of attention. As a matter of fact, they have. Up to the present moment over nineteen thousand copies of the book have been sold in the United States, and that means over L1500 for you. At least the cheque speaks for itself."

Cheriton gazed with open-mouthed astonishment at the speaker.

"Oh, I assure you I am not joking," Lawrence laughed. "That story of yours is going to be one of the best sellers in America. When the Americans once take up a thing they don't let it go. Now, what do you say to an offer for three novels on a 16 per cent basis with L100 each for the serial rights, and, in addition, a series of six short stories, annually, at L150 a story."

"Good Lord," Clifford gasped. "Do the Americans pay like that? Wonderful!"

With a sweep of his hand, Lawrence indicated the white-lettered boxes on the wall.

"Look at those names," he said. "Known all over the world. Celebrities, every man jack of them. Making incomes

that a Cabinet Minister would envy. But not on this side, my boy, not on this side. The big money comes from the States. And that is where yours is coming from in future. Don't make up your mind in a hurry. You have a career before you, apart from writing, which may easily become a distinguished one. On the other hand, you should be able to make four or five thousand a year for a long time to come by your pen. It doesn't matter if you don't earn a penny in England; you are going to get it in the States. You will leave here presently with the best part of L2000 in your pocket, and if you like to sign the contract, the draft of which our New York agent has sent us, then there is L1500 a year certain for the next three years. But, as I said before, don't decide in a hurry. Come back in a few days and let us know your decision. Personally—but never mind that."

"I have decided now," Clifford said crisply.

"I am quite keen on my present work, but my heart has been with pen and ink ever since I left school. And I am sure, without boasting, that I can do better than I have already done. Of course, I have had no time to write, but on lonely night duty I have had plenty of time to think, and I have dozens of ideas pigeonholed for both long and short stories. If you don't mind, I should be glad if you would put this matter through for me and, when those contracts are ready for signature, I will come along and sign them."

"Ah, that is just what I expected you to say," Lawrence smiled. "And I think you are right. Mind you, I am not saying that I am altogether disinterested, because we are always on the lookout for new clients. Do you know, that book of yours interests me for more reasons than one. The

psychological study of your criminal is most fascinating. It strikes quite a new note. And thereby, in a way, hangs a tale. A lady client of ours sent us a long short story a few weeks ago which, she writes, was written from notes she made a year or two ago. The treatment was so like yours that both my partner and myself were struck at once by the similarity. It was just as if you had been talking over your story with her and inspiring her. Don't misunderstand me, there is no suggestion of plagiarism, but it is just as if you had discussed your story at length with her and she had founded hers on a new angle you had discovered."

Clifford looked up swiftly.

"Is that really so?" he asked. "Of course, I don't want to be personal and I don't want to ask any impertinent questions, but I wonder if you would tell me the name of the lady in question. That is, of course, if you think you can place her story and she is going to publish it under her own name. If she is using a 'nom de plume,' then please forget that I asked the question. I have a good reason for asking it."

"Oh, I think we shall place the story easily enough," Lawrence said. "The lady sent it to us in her own name, and there was no suggestion in her letter that she wanted to hide herself behind a 'nom de plume.' I asked her to come and see us, because I think we can do quite a lot with her."

"And the name?" Clifford asked rather breathlessly.

"The name is Evelyn Marchand."

"Strange, most strange," Clifford murmured. "Before my work was interrupted and I had to go to America, a Miss

Evelyn Marchand did my typing. I dictated most of the story to her, and she came to my lodgings for the purpose. I—"

"Would like to meet her again," Lawrence smiled.

CHAPTER II.

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Before Clifford could reply a clerk came into the room and laid a visiting card on his employer's table. Then he vanished as quietly as he came.

"Now, there is a strange thing," Lawrence said. "This is Miss Marchand's card. She has evidently called to see me on business, and if you like to hang about in the waiting-room for a bit, I will tell her that you are here."

Clifford rose immediately, and for the next quarter of an hour was cooling his heels in the waiting-room. Then the door opened and Evelyn Marchand came in.

The same Evelyn Marchand he had known two years before, and yet not the same. The same almost spiritual beauty, the pleading eyes of clearest blue, the sunny, rather wistful smile, and the crown of auburn hair. But no longer the timid child in a cheap, home-made frock, but one who had suddenly become accustomed to that definite luxury of surrounding which spells prosperity. She was dressed almost as simply as ever, but it was the simplicity of art allied to that Parisian exclusiveness of cut and texture which every daughter of Eve would recognise at a glance, and which merely fascinates man and puzzles him. But directly the girl opened her mouth and held out her hand Clifford knew that there was no change here.

"Oh, Clifford, this is delightful," she said with that dimming naturalness of hers. "I had wondered what on earth had become of you. You disappeared in the most extraordinary way. Just in the middle of a chapter of your

book. And never a word to me except that you were leaving England on business. And I have been wondering ever since if I did anything to offend you."

"Offend me," Clifford cried. "My dear girl, you couldn't possibly do it. I couldn't tell you where I was going because it was police business and my lips were sealed. When I went away I thought it would be for a month instead of which I was on the other side of the Atlantic for nearly a year. But why this amazing change? You are not going to tell me that you made that powder-blue frock, simple as it looks."

Evelyn laughed joyously.

"You can't deceive a policeman," she said. "But I might ask you the same question. You would hardly call yourself in plain clothes, would you? You are not going to tell me that the suit you are wearing came from anywhere but Bond-street."

"Saville Row as a matter of fact," Clifford smiled. "My one extravagance. I bought myself a spring and autumn suit on the strength of being made a sergeant, and my old tailors let me have it practically at cost price. But what about yourself? You are not-er-well, not exactly—"

"Married," Evelyn said roguishly. "Oh, no."

"Going to be, perhaps," Clifford said greatly daring.

"Not even that, you impertinent person. At least, I—I don't think so. But it is quite a romance. Many months ago I happened to see an advertisement in 'The Times,' asking for information as to any family called Marchand. It was only by a bit of sheer luck that I saw it whilst I was waiting in a house in Grosvenor-square in connection with some of my typing. Now, as you know Marchand spelt with a 'c' is a very

uncommon name, and I am under the impression that my mother and myself are the only two people in the country who can claim that name. I don't think I should have worried about it, only my mother insisted. So I went to the address of a firm of solicitors in Lincoln's Inn Fields with all the evidence I could collect and, after a few days, I heard from those lawyers that their client was the Earl of Seagrane who is absolutely the last of his line. They told me he was a rich old gentleman, living in an ancestral seat called Seagrane Holt, which is on the South Kent coast, and that as he had no heirs and no one to succeed him, he was anxious to trace anyone bearing the family name of Marchand with a view of—well, adopting them. So when all the preliminaries were over, my mother and I went down to Seagrane Holt and—well—there we have been ever since. Isn't it a romantic story?"

"Wonderful," Clifford cried. "I am not going to ask you if you are happy, because you have happiness written all over you."

"Oh, you couldn't help being happy at Seagrane Holt," Evelyn said. "It is such a glorious old place, with old family servants and everything just as you read it in Peacock's stories. And then he is such a dear, kind old man. His life is a romance. He was very wild in his youth, and when really a boy, ran away to sea and was lost sight of for over 50 years. He became a caddie on some American golf links, and when the late Earl died and he was advertised for he was working in the professional's shop making clubs. Of course, he never expected to come into the title, as when he left England there were half a dozen people between him and the

earldom. However, he did come back when he was obliged to, and, because he was so lonely and so out of things in England, he advertised for relatives. And he says mother is a godsend, because she is such a splendid chatelaine. She seemed to take to managing that great household in the most natural way. But the Earl is quite a character in his way, and he hates anything like ceremonial or fuss. So long as the house is run properly and he gets his golf, which he plays regularly at Sandchester—"

"Ah, Sandchester," Cheriton replied—or, rather, interrupted with a half-sigh. "What happy recollections that name conjures up. I used to go down there with my father every summer before the crash came, and those days I shall never forget. Do you know, Eve, I have always promised myself a week-end cottage at Sandchester if ever I was fortunate enough to attain such a luxury. There was a thatched house there, on the high ground beyond the golf links looking out over the sea, with woods behind and—Oh, well, you know the sort of thing I mean."

"Of course I do," Evelyn said. "Why, the park at Seagrane Holt runs right down to it. Isn't the place you mean just behind the seventh hole?"

"That is the spot," Clifford cried almost excitedly. "But perhaps it has been pulled down by now?"

"Indeed it hasn't," Evelyn said. "It is used as a kind of storeroom for odds and ends. It is part of Lord Seagrane's property. I know it very well."

"Now, this is almost like a fairy story," Clifford smiled. "Do you think his lordship would let it to me on lease? I

would put it in repair and see that it was no disgrace to the property. Do you think it could be managed?"

"I am quite sure it could. I have only to ask anything in reason, and Lord Seagrane will be only too delighted to meet my wishes. He really is the dearest old man. Not the popular conception of a great nobleman, because, you see, he had practically no education, and, for the most part, his life in America was a very hard one; but the kindest-hearted man. But what is all this talk about? Are you telling me that you have suddenly come into a fortune or something of that sort?"

"Upon my word, Eve, you are not far wrong," Clifford laughed excitedly. "Let me tell you all about it."

In a few words he outlined the extraordinary events of the last hour. How something like fame had come to him out of the blue, and how, all at once, he had blossomed from a mere policeman into something very like a celebrity.

"Wonderful, isn't it?" he concluded. "This morning I hadn't a five-pound note to bless myself with, and now I am in possession of nearly £2000 and the promise of a good deal more than that, annually. So I am going to give up being a detective and devote myself to literature in future. But what a remarkable thing it is that I should find you here just when Lawrence was telling me of my amazing luck. By the way, he told me something more than that. He was saying just now that you had also written a promising story something on the same lines of my type of work. And then I informed him that you used to act as a sort of secretary to me. And almost before I had finished telling him a clerk brought in your card. There is a fate in this. But then I always knew

that we should meet again some day. But, tell me, how was it you happened to be up in town?"

"Well, I came up to do some shopping, and also to see to a commission that Lord Seagrane gave me. So I thought that I would call on Mr. Lawrence to see what he thought of my story."

"You are going back this afternoon?"

"Oh, no," Evelyn said. "Not till to-morrow, anyway. I am on my own after 6 o'clock and I am staying the night at a private hotel in Mount-street."

"Splendid!" Clifford cried. "In that case, you are going to dine with me and perhaps we can do a show afterwards. Something wildly extravagant in the way of a dinner to celebrate the occasion. I believe that I have a respectable dress suit somewhere or another, and if I can't find it, then I will hire one. But perhaps you have some other engagement."

Evelyn responded to the effect that the evening was entirely at her disposal and that she had not been looking forward to it with any great amount of pleasure.

"I was thinking of looking up an old friend of mine who is secretary to a city merchant," she said. "But we need not worry any more about that."

"We won't," Clifford said promptly. "Now, look here, you have some work to do and so have I. If you give me your address I will call for you at 7 o'clock and, meanwhile, I will engage a table at the Clarendon. I have not been inside that place for five years, though I believe the old head waiter is still there and will be glad to see me for my father's sake."

On this understanding they parted and, shortly afterwards, Clifford returned to his lodgings with Lawrence's cheque in his pocket. That he would pay into the bank the following morning and, meanwhile, he had in ready money the necessary funds for the evening's entertainment. His first business was to look up the dress suit he had not worn time out of mind, to discover that it had not suffered, though perhaps not quite so up-to-date as he would have liked. A hurried visit to a neighbouring tailor and the application of a skilfully used hot iron worked wonders, so that, later on, it was quite an immaculate young man who set out on foot to pick up his companion in Mount-street.

He had a good deal to think about as he walked along. His own future for one thing—a future so bright and glowing that he almost trembled when he thought of it. As if by the lifting of a fairy's wand, he had been raised almost miraculously from a lowly position in the police force to something that was very nearly akin to fame. At any rate, he could see before him now the prospect of a splendid income for many years to come, and the knowledge that he was his own master, to work when he liked, and turn his intelligence to that class of literature to which he felt himself to be best fitted.

And Evelyn. What a beautiful girl she had grown into! She had always been pretty and attractive with a certain appeal of her own which had stirred Clifford profoundly. He was beginning to realise now, with something almost like a shock, that he had always cared for Evelyn Marchand, though he had never, by word or sign, shown her in what direction his feelings lay. It would have been selfishness

personified to have done so. As a mere humble member of the police with no prospect before him, it would have been almost cruel on his part to have made any attempt to engage the affections of a girl who had come to him in the first instance as a mere matter of business.

But now everything was changed. For Evelyn was no longer a child struggling to make money enough to keep herself and her mother from starvation, but a lovely girl on whom prosperity and happiness had acted entirely for the best.

So Cheriton walked along the West End streets with his head high in the air and a feeling in his heart that he had the whole world at his feet. He did not even care to consider the possibility that the Earl of Seagrane might have had other views for his attractive young relative. It was pleasant to know that the present head of the Seagrane family was no haughty aristocrat, but a man who had had to struggle hard in a harder world and was, therefore, devoid of the shibboleths of the class to which he had been born. Sooner or later, he would have to meet this old man and—oh, well, the future could take care of itself.

Here was Evelyn awaiting him, a dainty vision in sea-green with shoes and stockings to match. A perfect figure of budding English womanhood with a smile on her lips and a look in those glorious blue eyes of hers that set Clifford tingling from head to foot. It was as if fortune was showering all her gifts upon him at once and the knowledge had gone to his head.

"Splendid," he said. "I suppose the right thing to do is to compliment you on your frock, isn't it? I have been so long a

lonely policeman that I have forgotten all the little amenities. But you look stunning."

"That is very nice of you," Evelyn smiled. "All the more so because I believe you mean every word you say."

"And a good deal more than that," Clifford said emphatically. "Now, let me call a taxi."

"The extravagance of it!" Evelyn mocked. "On a lovely night like this I should much prefer to walk. Wait a minute till I get a wrap."

She vanished, to reappear again almost immediately, and together they walked down the street, with Evelyn happy and gay and not realising exactly what a proud and happy man it was who strode along by her side. Nor did she seem to be in the least conscious of the attention she was attracting as she walked across the floor of the Clarendon grill-room to the table at the far end, which Clifford had engaged an hour before. It was that beautiful unconsciousness of hers and the sweet serenity with which she surveyed the room which was not the least of her charms.

It was the head waiter himself who piloted them to their table laid out for two and saw that they had every attention.

"Capital chap, that," Clifford said when the coffee and liqueur stage was reached. "It is extraordinary what memories these head waiters have. That man recognised me directly I came in, though I have not been inside these walls for five years. He remembered my father and told me how honoured he was to have the opportunity of waiting on a Cheriton once more. He seemed to be under the impression I had been abroad all this time. But I don't doubt

for a moment that he knows all about the family misfortunes, to say nothing of the fact that I am a mere policeman. All very soothing to my vanity."

"All very pleasant, I am sure," Evelyn said. "Do you know, I have never dined in a place like this before. I felt horribly frightened when I came in and wondered if I should do anything that was not quite right and proper. You see, this is practically my first visit to London since we went down to Seagrane Holt. It is all very wonderful and fascinating and some of those women's dresses are marvellous. Gives me a sort of Arabian Nights feeling. I could sit here watching for hours."

"Well, let's," Clifford suggested. "Unless you would like to go on to a music hall or something of that sort."

"Oh no, Clifford, I am quite satisfied as I am, to sit here and watch these people coming and going. It gives me the feeling that I am in the great world at last. Mind you, I wouldn't change Seagrane Holt for anything that London had to offer me."

"As ideal as all that," Clifford smiled. "Then you don't find it dull down there occasionally?"

"Dull, my dear boy, how ridiculous. That lovely old house, filled with all sorts of wonderful treasures. Pictures and tapestries and furniture almost priceless. Then the gardens and the lawns and the wonderful trees! The late Lord Seagrane would have had to sell it if he had lived much longer. It was quite a mercy in its way that my dear old benefactor happens to be an exceedingly rich man."

"Oh, is he? How does that come about? I understood you to say that he worked on some American golf links."

"Yes, that is true enough," Evelyn explained. "But every now and then, he got the wanderers' fever and went off exploring. Alaska and the Yukon, and all that kind of thing. Then he would come back again, sure of his old job because he was a fine workman, to settle down for a year or two, and then off again. And, eventually, he became really rich. As far as I can gather, there was a trip he took with an Englishman named Canton, and they found a copper mine. Canton hadn't any money, but plenty of friends in the city, and they financed the scheme. Just before the late earl died, his successor realised all he had made out of that last desperate adventure, and was prepared to spend the rest of his days in America, when he came into the title and estates, and came home, very much against the grain. His partner died in the meantime, and, by some means or another that I have never had properly explained, contrived to lose all his money. He had a son called Andrew Canton, who had not long come down from Oxford, and had nearly qualified for the Bar, and it was characteristic of the dear old man that he should seek out Andrew Canton and induce the latter to come and live at Seagrane Holt."

Clifford was conscious of a certain uneasiness which he would have found it hard to account for.

"And what is the young man like?" he asked.

"Oh, presentable enough—quite the finished product of Oxford. A good sportsman, but a little rash and impetuous, and, I fancy, a born gambler. Not that it matters much, because, some day or another, he will be master of Seagrane Holt and a huge fortune, which will necessarily be attached to it."