THE PLOT SPOILED.

She was sitting in the corner of the car-riage opposite to me, and we had got into conversation with the ice. I noticed that I pulled down her hat, and straightened what I had not. She agreed with me that it was a hot day, and that the ice was delightful. A tramp tumbler gave a somersault turn to the conversation. I took out my pocketbook to see how much money I had left, and she looked at me over the top of the carriage. The latter was addressed to the heel of the tramp. He was still on it, and she looked at me with a pleased smile.

"Is that you? Are you an actor?" she asked.

"Now I say at once that I am not an actor, and that the latter was not addressed to me, but was somewhat for my subsequent confusion. Yes she was pretty, and I thought she seemed pleased to find Mrs Dan I was an actor. The only other occupants of the carriage were two middle-aged ladies, who were talking in a low whisper, as I decided to be on my guard, and somewhat doubted the fact.

"I'm so glad," she answered. "I did so want to meet a real live actor."

"I am gratified that my presence is any pleasure to you," I said, wondering whether she was an American or merely an ordinary native.

"You see," she replied, "I write a little."

"You're not going to interview me?" I exclaimed in real alarm, for the fact of Dunsmore might be a clientele soon and the consequence unpleasant.

"Oh, no," answered she. "I don't write things like that. I write stories."

A rather form of fiction," I suggested. "Perhaps I've read your stories."

"I've had so many that I don't know them. They only come out in penny editions," she said wistfully. "But I'm writing a serial story for a Sunday paper now. I mostly write serials."

"Much better. You're getting on," I replied, with increased interest in my companion, for I had visions of her name in what kind of person writes penny dreadfuls. "But are you going to put me into the serial story?"

"Would you mind being?" she asked.

"Well, if you don't give me cause," I said.

"It's awfully good of you," she answered gratefully; "and you can tell me a lot of things I want to know. You see, people who buy penny books like them to be about books, and it's so hard to write about books when you've never met one."

"If I can be of any assistance," I said.

"Thank you very much," she said. "Now tell me, are you an actor or a super here? They've always very bad or very good, aren't they?"

"Generally," I said. "I'm afraid I'm one of the bad ones."

"I'm so glad," she answered. "There's a good example in my story. He's the hero, and I can write about him very easily, because he seems to me the humble hero. And there's a bad one. He's the villain, and he lives in his moke, and that's what makes it so hard. How are you to bed?"

"Oh, I'm pretty bad all round," I said. "It's not necessary to be particular to a crime or theft in drawing my character. I'm sorry that I can't tell you much about my crimes. The police, you know. That's the worst of a criminal's career."

"Oh, I like that," she replied. "I'll certainly put that in. But you might tell me about them. I wouldn't let any one know the source."

"I am not alone in those matters," I said mysteriously. "I am sworn to a silence as deep as the grave. I wish I could be more explicit. Our crimes are of motive the petty crimes of the people."

"Are you going to your matinée now?" she asked.

"No," I said, "I'm going to Kitchen to stay with a man there. He's a most unpleasant, but he's got money, and also can be useful, you know."

"You play with sugged dice, do you?" she answered. "How lovely! I'm going to Kitchen, too," she added after a pause.

"Do you live there?" I asked, beginning to feel uneasy.

"No," she said. "I'm going to Mrs Dawson's."

"Mrs. Dawson's?" I inquired faintly. "On a visit?"

"No," she said, "I am going as maid to Mrs. Dawson. I was in a fix, you see, before I took to literature, and I generally take a place for my summer holiday. It will be jolly. I've never been as big a home before."

I was very uncomfortable, for I was going to stay at the house too.

It occurred to me at once that to pretend that I was travelling hosiery, but she would be certain to find me out. In all probability Mrs. Dawson would be in possession of the whole conversation in a day or two, and I should become a laughing stock. I am a shy man and averse to publicity. Besides, for several reasons, I wished to produce a good impression on Mrs. Dawson.

I decided to make a short breast of the whole thing to the young woman. When I had told her, she looked on me with unutterable contempt.

"Then you're not a lord at all," she said. "And was everything else you told me just as untrue?"

"I am afraid so," I answered.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she went on. "I'm not going to speak any more altogether. I shall write to the Argus' society about you."

"I want you," I said, "not to tell any one."

I reasoned with her for some time, and eventually agreed to give her a sovereign down and three more out of the hotel account while I was at Kitchen. We had only just concluded the agreement when we reached our destination. As we stepped, the young woman handed the sovereign back and said, with a smile:

"Mr. Trevor, you shouldn't pretend to be the Earl of Dunmore when your name is on your portmanteau."

"Hello, Lena, how you are," exclaimed Mr. Dawson from the platform. "How do you do, my lord? I didn't know you knew my niece."

"Please don't tell," I whispered.

"Of course not," she answered. "I have the sense of a well bred gentleman." And she did not tell.—Exchange.

FREAK FACTORIES.

Showmen Have No Trouble in Providing New Attractions.

"How do you manage to find new freaks and curiosities?" was the question asked of the manager of a traveling show that had pitched its tent in a London suburb.

"Don't have to find them," was the laconic response. "They find us. The freak business is as regularly established as any other and has its wholesale and retail firms, traveling salesmen, brokers, price lists, factories."

"Factories!" queried the reporter, aghast.

"Why, certainly, factories, of course. The freak business is divided into about three varieties—foreign, domestic and fake.

"In the first class the collectors travel all over the world in search of curios, but the very best freaks come from India and the Malay peninsula. In those countries there are people who breed freaks. They buy young children and animals and deform them while they are young and sell to all manners of showmen. Then they go unmolested on the outlook for genuine natural freaks, and in time learn the knack of a freak comes very frequently. The foreigners of this business is at fourteen.

"There is a very large number of men who devote themselves to the discovering and erection of freaks of all kinds and varieties, and there is scarcely a day goes by that we do not receive packages of photographs and illustrations from some fresh specimen or other.

"Of course there are the faked freak shows to protect both in themselves. If the population of some little show needs an additional attraction and does not have the money to buy something good —fair, the everything else, freaks have their pets—and can get something for little money that will serve the purpose.

"The real genuine freaks always command their prices and travel all over the world in order to exhibit themselves. Most of them have regular routes mapped out by their advance agents, just like theatrical companies, and a complete list of places and dates illustrated circulars