

was disturbed by having anyone to direct or issue orders to. Thus it was that when Minnie appeared, directly after breakfast, Mabel was at liberty to devote herself entirely to her. They chatted on various topics of general interest until Miss Chartres disappeared into the "lower regions" (as Minnie was wont to designate the kitchen floor) on housekeeping duties intent, and then they were free to bring forth the matter which was uppermost in each of their thoughts.

"Well?" Interrogated Minnie, after a short silence.

"Well?" Repeated Mabel in the same tone.

Minnie laughed.

"Now, don't tease, Mabel!" she exclaimed, "you know I am in earnest, so I won't have teasing—and please *don't* be so awfully cautious: one would think you delighted to make a wet blanket of yourself for my especial discomfort and confusion."

"Not this 'one,' though," asserted Mabel, slipping her arm round Minnie, who tried to get up a terrible frown but failed ignominiously.

"Well, then, tell me the result of your cogitations—you are to be Prime Minister, you know."

"Then you must be Queen!" laughed Mabel.

"O, no, I am going to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, thank you, quite a high enough post for me."

"My Right Honourable Friend is easily satisfied, truly, but I don't think if I had the power of appointment I should entrust such an office to you," Mabel remarked.

"You are pleased to be complimentary," returned Minnie,