



CHAPTER V.

AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

MEANWHILE, Mona Cameron, who had no such philanthropic schemes to occupy her energies, was no less busy with schemes of an altogether different character. She was thoroughly roused by this time, by Minnie's utter impregnability to all established methods of provocation, so that she found herself obliged to invent new ones, which up to this time had been attended with no better success.

She was not naturally malicious, nor did it afford her any sort of pleasure to rouse and anger Minnie as she so often did, neither did she dislike the girl herself; but circumstances had been too much for her in the beginning, and her nature was such that now it seemed to her almost impossible to change her policy and adopt any other line of conduct. She sometimes rebelled against the rivalry which, she considered, stood between them and any possibility of friendship, but was still firm in her belief, that it was a difficulty which could not be bridged, and the subject had not hitherto been considered by Minnie at all; she simply accepted it, as she