

# Henry Northcote (IA henrynorthcote00snairich).pdf/53



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"A beginner one might say, yet an ambitious one."

"Where do you get the ambition from?"

"It is in the color of your eyes. Besides, have you not a habit of turning your phrases?"

"If I did not know you to be a connoisseur in men of promise I should not be convinced."

"That's my foible, right enough," said the solicitor, with a laugh. "A connoisseur in men of promise. Samuel Whitcomb owes his own reputation to that, and he is proud to believe that the reputations of half a score of those who are in every way his superiors are to be traced to that source."

"Laying aside the question of superiority, all the world knows it."

"I gave Finnemore Jones his first brief," said the solicitor, immodestly. "I provided Cooper, Howard, and Harrington with the opportunities that made them famous."

"And above all," said the young advocate, measuring with a stealthy eye the man before him, "are you not the discoverer of Michael Tobin?"

"Ha!" cried the solicitor, as he brought his fist upon the table with an air of unmistakable triumph, "I was holding that back."

"As the crown of your achievement?"

"Yes; Michael Tobin is almost here. But how do you come to suspect it, when at present his quality is only known to the few?"

"I am one of them," said Northcote, looking his companion imperturbably in the eyes.

Such a cool affirmation seemed to delight the solicitor.

"Well, I should not be surprised if you were,"



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