# 'LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP.' A NOVEL. IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. II

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'Look Before You Leap.' a Novel. In Two Volumes. Vol. II by Annie French Hector

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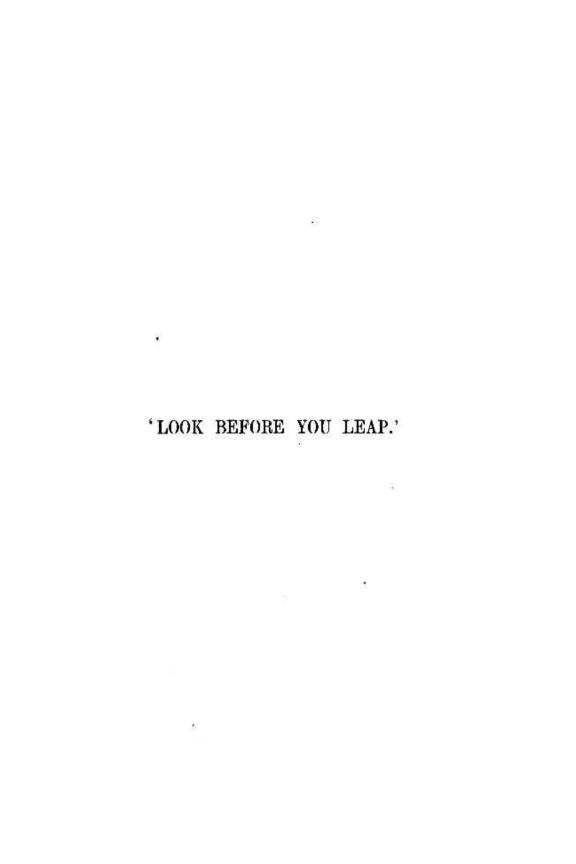
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### **ANNIE FRENCH HECTOR**

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#### 'LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP.'

#### CHAPTER I.

NEVILLE and his faithful guide reached the Waterloo Station during an opportune lull, when a Southampton train was expected, and the cabs had gathered thick at the arrival-platform; but after a careful examination of the various physiognomies of their drivers, Dennis shook his head despondingly.

'There's none on 'em him,' he said;
'I couldn't just describe him, 'cos I seen
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him only a minit-but I'd know him-I'm sure I'd know him-and it's a S. W. cab. I seen the letters on the back on it jist as it was a-drivin' off-and so we'll find him here some hour in the day-'cos this is his rightful stan'-sure now I understan' yes, if ye have it to me, I'm always about the Station, and if I can't catch him, may I never sell a "Tiligraph."'

'If you had only trusted us and understood us before,' said Neville, sternly, 'what valuable time might have been saved. Your obstinacy may be the cause of our total failure, boy.'

'Faith! I'll make up for it, sir,' returned the unabashed Bedouin-'An' as to thrustin', who'd thrust the police, 'cept a born-natural. Sure I thought I was doing the lady a good turn, but never mind, I'll get the cabby for yes.'

With this very indefinite assurance, Neville was fain to be content, and returned to his gloomy solitude, to pore over disheartening papers, and weary his brain with unaccustomed calculations; striving to have some plan of future exertion and livelihood fixed before his cherished hope—the recovery of his wife —was fulfilled.

In truth it was a perplexing problem—
a couple of thousands for a capital—and
the world before him, with no businesstraining or habits, to what could he turn
himself? Yet he knew that he possessed
a certain amount of method and capability for organization, with a conscious-

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ness that although neither of a quick or brilliant class of intelligence, he had the power of steady and prolonged application.

Some military appointment he knew would be the best solution of his enigma, but he shrunk from the publicity of application; his story was already widely circulated in all military circles, and he quivered at the idea of the pale witticisms, the contemptuous pity, the mocking laughter it must have drawn forth. He felt inclined to rush forth, armed with a horsewhip, for the general flagellation of his acquaintance; could he discover Marie, and show her as his own, his valued, cherished wife, then people might see that the disappointment which furnished