FIVE O'CLOCK TEA

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Five o'clock tea by W. D. Howells

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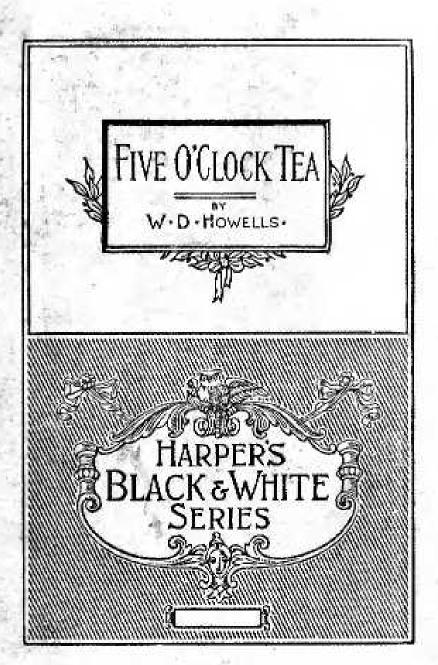
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W. D. HOWELLS

FIVE O'CLOCK TEA







"TWILL YOU ANSWER MY QUESTION, AMY?"

FIVE O'CLOCK TEA

Farce

W. D. HOWELLS

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK
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ILLUSTRATIONS

" WILL YOU ANSWER MY QUESTION, AMY " Frontispiece

"MRS. SOMERS, POURING & CUP OF TEA: "THAT MAKES IT A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT" Focing page 33

FIVE O'CLOCK TEA

Ι

MRS. SOMERS: MR. WILLIS CAMPBELL

 $m M^{RS.\,AMY\,SOMERS}$, in a lightly floating tea-gown of singularly becoming texture and color, employs the last moments of expectance before the arrival of her guests in marching up and down in front of the mirror which fills the space between the long windows of her drawingroom, looking over either shoulder for different effects of the drifting and eddying train, and advancing upon her image with certain little bobs and bows, and retreating from it with a variety of fan practice and elaborated courtesies, finally degenerating into burlesque, and a series of grimaces and "mouths" made at the responsive reflex. In the fascination of this amusement she is first ignorant, and then aware, of the presence of Mr. Willis Campbell, who on the landing space between the drawing-room and the library stands, hat in hand, in the pleased contemplation of Mrs. Somers's manœuvres and contortions as the mirror reports them to him. Mrs. Somers does not permit herself the slightest start on seeing him in the glass, but turns deliberately away, having taken time to prepare the air of gratification and surprise with which she greets him at half the length of the drawing-room.

Mrs. Somers, giving her hand: "Why, Mr. Campbell! How very nice of you! How long have you been prowling about there on the landing? So stupid of them not to have turned up the

gas!"

Campbell: "I wasn't much incommoded. That sort of pitch-darkness is rather becoming to my style of beauty, I find. The only objection was that I couldn't see you."

Mrs. Somers: "Do you often make

those pretty speeches?"