

**STEPHEN REMARX:
THE STORY OF A
VENTURE IN ETHICS**

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Stephen Remark: The Story of a Venture in Ethics by James Adderley

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JAMES ADDERLEY

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*THE STORY OF A VENTURE
IN ETHICS*

BY

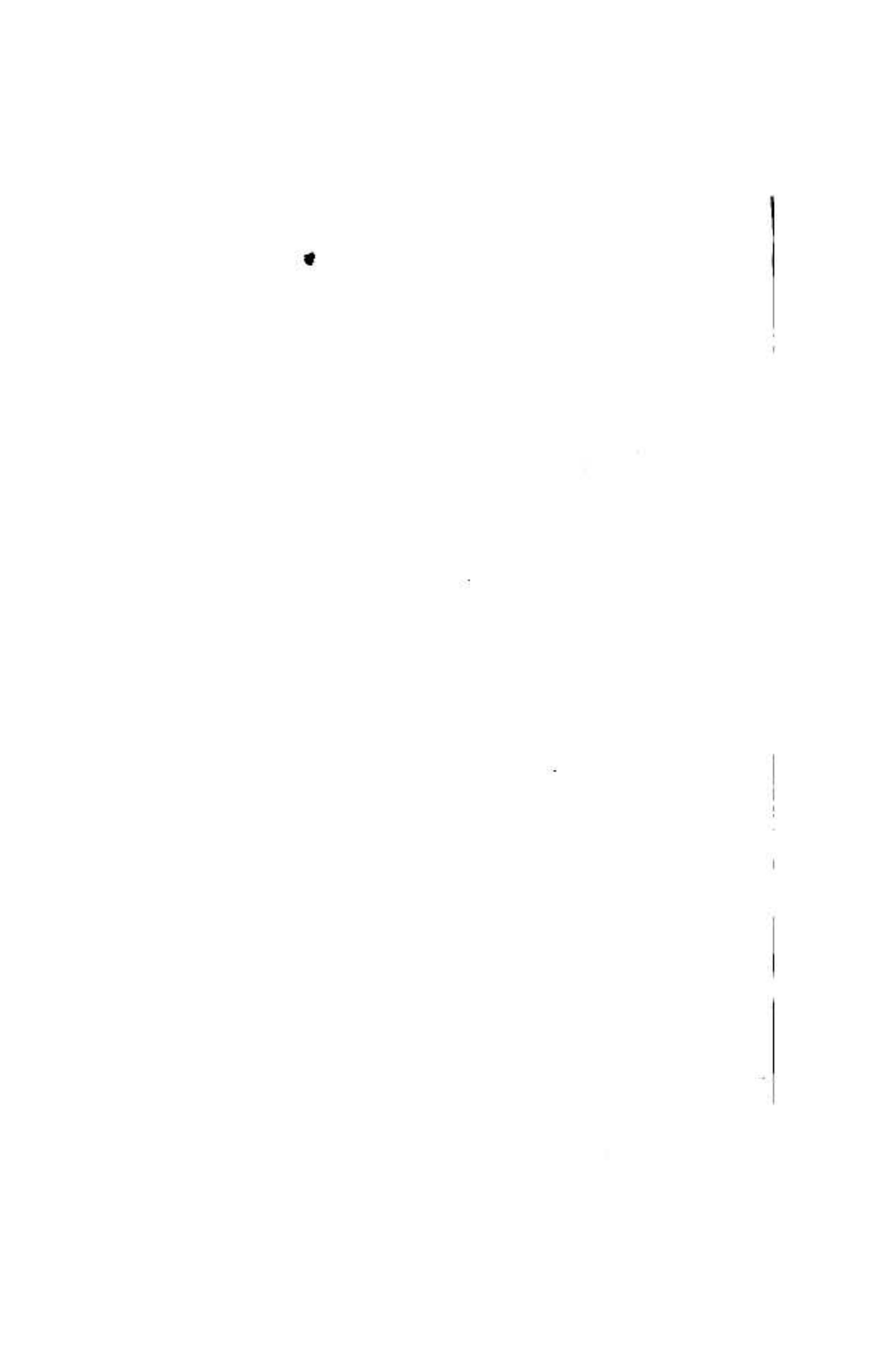
JAMES ADDERLEY

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STEPHEN REMARX

I

STEPHEN

STEPHEN REMARX was an orphan, the son of the late Lord Remark of Balustrade Abbey in Surrey. His brother, Lord Remark, had passed into another sphere, where the wicked do not cease from troubling and the weary are not at rest; he had, in fact, "gone to the bad." Gambling had done it. The estate was ruined, his wife had left him, his three boys had gone away from home, the eldest to Manitoba, the second to Madras and the youngest—well, nobody knew of his whereabouts. He was last seen, when he was "sacked" from Eton for catapulting a master's wife on her way to chapel. Lord Remark spent a good deal of his

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STEPHEN REMARK

time at Monte Carlo, but occasionally came to London to vote for the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill or to have a tooth out. But he never came to his brother's church, the fashionable Church of St. Mark and the Angels, Chelsea. This was not surprising, for the two brothers were quite different from one another.

In the old days at Balustrade when boys they had never agreed. Stephen was for ever reading books, while his brother was bird's-nesting. On a Sunday afternoon, while the elder son was smoking in the hayloft, Stephen would love to sit in the garden with his mother, and listen to her while she taught him the Catechism in her old-fashioned way. "Who are my betters?" the boy would ask. "Well, my dear," the Countess would reply, "you have not many of them, that part of the Catechism is written for the lower orders: in fact, you are yourself a 'better' and they must order themselves lowly and reverently to you." "I see," said Stephen, though he felt somehow that his mother was wrong.

STEPHEN

Not long after this his parents died, and he was left very much to himself, his old guardian and uncle, the Marquis of St. Alphege, having a theory that the more you interfered with a boy the worse he became. If this theory were correct, the young Earl Remax would have been a terrible villain, if the Marquis had paid any attention to his education. As it was he went quite fast enough on the downward path. At twenty-one he married an actress from the Jollity Theatre, whose chief accomplishment was a peculiar twist of her ankles in the dance between the verses of a comic song; at twenty-four he had nearly been put into prison at Bordeaux for stealing somebody's pearl studs; and at twenty-six he had run through so much money, that her ladyship thought he was not worth hanging on to, and so went back to the Jollity, where she is still performing nightly. Stephen on the other hand went on quietly. At Eton he was chiefly known as a "beastly sap," which translated into more elegant and Christian language means that he tried to construe