THE CIRCLE; A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

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The circle; a comedy in three acts by W. Somerset Maugham

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W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

THE CIRCLE; A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS



BY W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

Plays:

THE EXPLORER

MRS. DOT

A MAN OF HONOUR

PENELOPE:

FICK STRAW

LADY FREDERICK

THE TENTH MAN

LANDED GENTRY

THE UNKNOWN

SMITH

Novels:

OF HUMAN BONDAGE

THE MOON AND SIXPENCE

THE TREMBLING OF A LEAF

LIZA OF LAMBETH

MRS. CRADDOCK

THE EXPLORER

THE MAGICIAN

THE MERRY-GO-ROUND

THE LAND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN (Stetches and Impressions in Andalusia)

THE CIRCLE

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY
W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM



PERSONS OF THE PLAY

CLIVE CHAMPION-CHENEY

ARNOLD CHAMPION-CHENEY, M.P.

LORD PORTEOUS

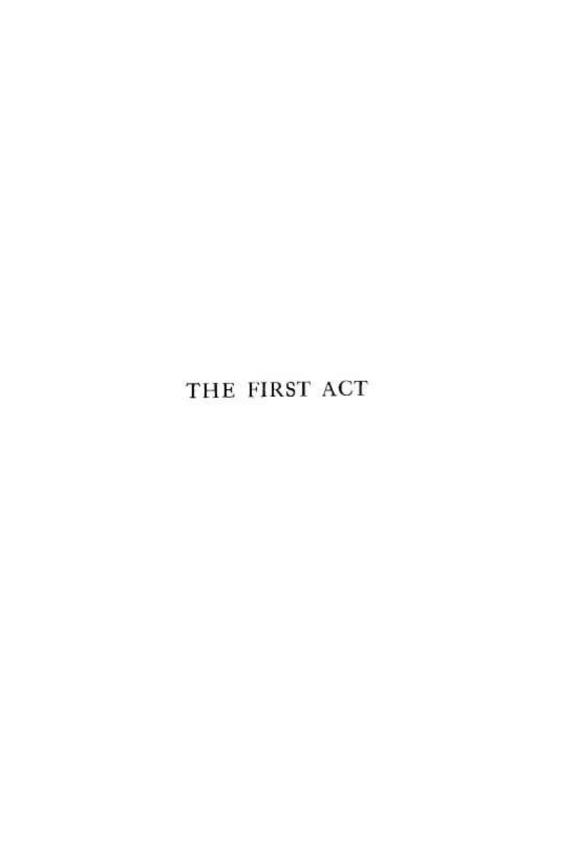
EDWARD LUTON

LADY CATHERINE CHAMPION-CHENEY

ELIZABETH

MRS. SHENSTONE.

The action takes place at Aston-Adey, Arnold Champion-Cheney's house in Dorset.





THE CIRCLE

THE FIRST ACT

The Scene is a stately drawing-room at Aston-Adey, with fine pictures on the walls and Georgian furniture. Aston-Adey has been described, with many illustrations, in Country Life. It is not a house, but a place. Its owner takes a great pride in it, and there is nothing in the room which is not of the period. Through the French windows at the back can be seen the beautiful gardens which are one of the features.

It is a fine summer morning.

Arnold comes in. He is a man of about thirty-five, tall and good-looking, fair, with a clean-cut, sensitive face. He has a look that is intellectual, but somewhat bloodless.

He is very well dressed.

ARNOLD. [Calling.] Elizabeth! [He goes to the window and calls again.] Elizabeth! [He rings the bell. While he is waiting he gives a look round the room. He slightly alters the position of one of the chairs. He takes an ornament from the chimney-piece and blows the dust from it.]

[A FOOTMAN comes in.

Oh, George! see if you can find Mrs. Cheney, and ask

her if she'd be good enough to come here.

FOOTMAN. Very good, sir.

[The FOOTMAN turns to go.

Arnold. Who is supposed to look after this room? FOOTMAN. I don't know, sir.

ARNOLD. I wish when they dust they'd take care to replace the things exactly as they were before.