

CHAPTER XII.-(Continued.) "Nona, my dear child, are you there? The lamp is very dim, is it not? I don't see you," called the sleepy voice of Mrs. Heathcote, waking me from a Rector entered, full of apologies for his long absence.

"I couldn't get away," he explained. | ing." with quite unnecessary elaboration. "These poor things like to talk out all their troubles, and they are very longwinded. You can't cut them shortto do that would be to ruin your reputation for sympathy. Nona, my dear, let us have some tea, if you please. I am afraid it is the Dean's tea-full of pernicious tannin by this time. It is a quarter to ten o'clock"-taking out his watch. "Why"-staring round him in bewilderment-"what has become of sitting there in her black gown when I came in. What queer trick have my eyes played me now?"

"Miss Branscombe has just left the room," I said, coming to the front; "and, Mrs. Heathcote-Mr. Heathcotewill you both give me your good wishes. I-we-I-that is-Miss Branscombe-Nona---'

The Rector was staring at me openmouthed as I floundered awkwardly through my speech. Mrs. Heathcote's womanly instincts were quicker. saw it in her face, and, crossing over to her side, took her hand in mine.

'She has made me the happiest fellow in the world," I said. "Won't you congratulate me?"

"You-you!" exclaimed the Rector, red in the face with astonishment, as the truth flashed upon him. dickens; I thought it was that scamp Charlie!

"So did I," I could not help saying; and then we all laughed heartily together.

Miss Elmslie came in in the midst of our mirth. Mr. Heathcote hastened to

'My dear Miss Elmslie, have you been as blind as the rest of us? Here whilst we have been watching the other horse!"

"What do you mean?" asked she. "That I am going to ask you to receive me into the family, Miss Elms- earth was the man thinking of? lie," I put in. "Nona is willing to be

of-livery hat round and round in his

"I thought it might be of consequence, sir," he commenced respectfully. Then, as I closed the door on fapturous dream of wonderment and the girl, he came close to me and whisjoy. And at the same moment the pered-"It's all right. I've been over to Colonel Egerton's, and shall have the warrant the first thing in the morn-

> "The warrant?" I echoed, aghast. "Yes; prompt action is the only thing," responded the brisk detective. 'The arrest will be made before ten o'clock.'

"Arrest!" Fortunately my back was turned to the light, and Widdrington could not see my scared face. "Surely this is an extreme measure!"

"Extreme!" answered the detective, "It's the only course, if we are to lay hands on the will at all. Afterwards the child? I could declare I saw her it can be hushed up by the familyrefusal to prosecute and so on. But intimidation is the only line at present, and in the circumstances the will we must have. She doesn't know where it is-of that I am sure. It has not been made way with-criminals seldom do that sort of thing; it shuts the door behind them, you see. We'll put on the thumbscrew, and it will come out, never fear"-with an odious chuckle.

CHAPTER XIII.

I sat down, faint and dizzy. There stood the detective, eager, triumphant, and no doubt utterly astonished and disappointed at my want of appreciation of his success.

"The charge is for concealing," he went on. "I thought it better to take

"I suppose so," I assented dully. I was ransacking my brains for a way of escape. My darling in the clutches of this harpy of the law! It was intolerable-impossible! A wild idea of bribing him-of throwing myself upon his mercy, crossed my half-distracted mind. Something must be done.

"I have telegraphed for more men," said Widdrington-"half a dozen of has Fort been making his running them in case of resistance, you know. They can come down by the night mail."

An army of constables against one poor little trembling woman! What on "He'll probably show fight," went on

what we've got to do is to make Mm hand it over. But"-breaking off in his rapid explanation—"I told you all this in the letter I gave you this evening. Didn't you read it? Bless my soul! You haven't dropped it?"-as I rummaged fruitlessly in one pocket after another. "You haven't lost it?"

"It's not here! No, I did not read it. Stay-I may have left it in the drawing-room; wait here whilst I see, I will be back directly."

Mrs. Heathcote and Miss Elmslie had not yet retired. Lights were full on in the drawing-room, contrary to the virtuous early habits of the household, and the two ladies were seated side by side on a couch by the fire, discussing over and over again the wonderful surprise of the evening.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Heathcote, rising to assist my search. "A letter? No, there is no letter here. Eliza must have seen it if it had been left on the tea-table, and she never takes letters or papers away—the Rector has trained her too well for that. No, it is certainly not here. I hope it was not important. But you will be sure to find it upstairs or in the study. Have you looked there?"

Widdrington was awaiting me impatiently when I returned.

"It is gone," I admitted ruefully. "I came straight from the garden to the drawing-room, and from there here. I must have dropped it."

"Then the whole thing's blownruined," cried the man, clapping on his hat, and making for the door. "There's not a minute to be lost.'

My letter was gone-there was no doubt about it. A second and calmer search through my pockets confirmed the fact. I had entirely forgotten the paper, attaching no importance to it at the moment, regarding it as simply a ruse on the detective's part to attract my attention; and subsequent events had entirely driven the whole circumstance out of my mind. I had doubtless dropped the missive-with all its important revelation—in the garden or

I opened the window of my bedroom, which looked over the lawn and garden path by which I had returned to the house. A man's figure-Widdrington's-was just vanishing through the gate. He had evidently been searching over the ground, so that no efforts of mine were needed. I wondered what success he had had. Probably he found the missing letter, and all fear of miscarriage to his plans was

I sat up late into the night, writing and reading. Sleep, in the tumult of my mind, was out of the question. had to think over and realize the wonderful and blissful change which had come into my life. Nona, my peerless treasure, was mine-my own. And the cloud which had overshadowed hereven in my most loyal thought-had dimmed the rapturous joy of my betrothal.

I had almost forgotten Widdrington in the floodtide of my happiness, but, when I descended to the breakfastroom the next morning, I was abruptly recalled to the subject of last night's interview. On my plate lay a note marked-"Delivered by hand." contained only these words-

"Gone. Disappeared last night. Letter not found."

Later in the day the detective's intelligence was confirmed by the Rector. Mr. Charles Branscombe had gone from Forest Lea, leaving no address behind him. The two or three female servants remaining in charge either knew or would tell nothing. Charlie had always a fascinating influence on their class and set; as Widdrington had said, there was something of a feudal devotion in their loyalty to him. They no doubt thought his case a hard one, and they would not betray him.

Mr. Heathcote's new groom had also disappeared—summoned to London by the dangerous illness of his father, the household believed.

To be continued.

with the clatter of spoons and tempo-

rarily hushed by the mouthfuls of ice

cream, that the following conversation

took place between two women, one of

whom was an ardent club woman, as

could easily be seen by the string of

medals and insignia which ornament-

ed the front of her bodice, while the

other was just the ordinary everyday

woman. "My dear," said the club

woman, grabbing her companion's

hand, I must be going. I am due at

a meeting of the daughters of Lafay-

ette Post, and then I must drop in for

a moment and see Mrs. Blank about

our next meeting and the topic for

cussion." "How do you find time for

all these clubs and what does your hus-

band say to all this running about?"

"Ten years ago it was I who sat at

home and waited till between 5 and 6

for him to come home. 'Mais nous

avons change tout sela,' he sits home

and waits for me now. I have been out

since 9 this morning and I am just

looking lige a tramp now. Well, he

does not seem to mind it; he is just as

good and dear as he can be. We board

you know, and I never had any chil-

dren. But good bye; I shall see you

again at the 'Justicia,' shall I not?" Is

this the solution of the abnormal

growth of woman's clubs, "We board,

you know, and I never had any chil-

which has driven her into the clubs?

Twenty-five years ago the United

States supplied 15 per cent of the

world's coal consumption; now it sup-

WOMEN'S CLUB

And the Reason for Their Rapid Growth of Late Years.

It was at a woman's club, after the meeting, and when the hum and buzz of feminine voices were intermingled

"The-the criminal!" I repeated after him blankly. The man give me a quick critical

tense stupidity.

combe," he emphasized. "It's a clear case, and an uncommon clever game, too. Personation of his cousin, Miss Branscombe-wonderful likeness at all times-fair hair, slight figure-like a girl's-no hair on face-no wonder you were taken in"—meaningly. "Lady's maid in the plot, supplied all the rigout, etc., and gave the tip into the bargain. Uncommonly well managed. Astonishing how the young fellow gets over the women-they're all ready to go down on their knees and to sell their souls for him-every one of them. As

"Woodward?" I ejaculated, beginning to recover from my stupefaction, and to see daylight through the whole

"Yes," returned the ex-groom, with a wink. "Young woman soft on the sex generally, you see-didn't want much courting to let the whole cat out of the bag-as much as she knew. Knows nothing about the will; she believed Mr. Branscombe only wanted to dren." Is it the lack of motherhood look at it, she says. He told her so, and she thought it hard lines that he was not allowed to go to the house The girl conducted me to the door. or to be at his uncle's funeral. She It was open, and "Mr. Tillott" was never supposed that he wanted to get standing just withir, turning his out- hold of the will altogether. And now plies 30 per cent.

THE PRESIDENT'S CIVIL SERVICE

IS NO BACKWARD STEP

ORDER APPROVED.

Federal Commissioner Harlow Declares It to Be in Accord with the Spirit of the Law and Calculated to Improve the Public Service.

In his recent letter to the president of the Civil Service Reform association of St. Louis, Mr. John B. Harlow, a member of the federal civil-service commission, upholds the action of President McKinley in removing from the classified list the positions embraced in the order of exemption which was issued by the president several weeks ago. So far from disapproving of these exemptions Commissioner Harlow presents reasons which amply support his view that the modifications put in force by the president's order are for the benefit of the public service and will result in securing a higher degree of efficiency than has heretofore been possible. It clearly appears from Commis-

sioner Harlow's presentment of the case that much of the criticism passed upon the exemption order of May 29 has been based upon lack of correct information or upon an erroneous conception of the facts on the part of the critics, and that in issuing his now famous order, after full and careful consideration of the subject, and after a thorough discussion of the matter with his cabinet officers, President Mc-Kinley has not only not violated the civil-service law either in letter or in spirit, but has construed that law wisely, intelligently and with regard solely for the best interests of the public sarvice.

On this point the closing paragraph of Commissioner Harlow's letter is clear and emphatic. The commissioner brings prominently into view the fact that, as amended by the order of May 29, the rules are for the first time the result of the united discussion of the president and his entire cabinet, and are an innovation to that extent, as all members of the cabinet are thoroughly conversant with the rules, while in the past members of the cabinet have stated that they have never read the rules and were much surprised to learn of some of the provisions in them. "The present rules are now fully understood by the heads of departments, and I am confident," says Commissioner Harlow, "that they will be better obeyed in the future, not only in the letter but in the spirit, than any civil-service rules have been in the

This view of a member of the civilservice commission may well be accepted as against the unfair and malicious criticisms of mugwump sticklers for the most radical forms of interpretation and application in connection with the civil service-interpretations and applications of the law which the fair test of practical operation has shown to be impracticable, nonsensical and of actual detriment to the public service. Commissioner Harlow is much the better authority on this subject, for he speaks with knowledge and experience. So is Secretary Gage, whose recent statement in the Washington Star was so convincing as to bring about an entire change of attitude on the part of so rigid a champion of strict construction as the Pioneer Press of St. Paul. That paper, after an exhaustive review of the case as presented by Secretary Gage, is constrained to say:

"The Pioneer Press accepts with entire satisfaction and full confidence in the honesty and good faith of President McKinley and Secretary Gage their assurance that in this order there has been no letting down of the bars for political appointments—that they are in the interest of an honest and efficient administration of the public business, and will prove a substantial benefit to the merit system. That assurance is equivalent to a guaranty. The public will have a full opportunity to see in the actual working of these new rules whether this declaration is true, or whether the doors have been opened wide for the inroads of the

spoilsmen, as has been charged." Exactly in line with this sensible conclusion all unprejudiced persons will stand. It was the conclusion inevitably formed after reading the very clear statement of facts contained in the interview of ex-Secretary Cornelius N. Bliss in the New York Mail and Express. The conclusion that in President McKinley's order of civil-service exemptions there has been no backward step, no letting down of the bars for the easier entrance of the spoilsmen, is one that the level-headed and fair-minded people of the United States will promptly accept after a full knowledge of the facts.

Trusts and Soup Houses. The reason trusts were not so numerous under Cleveland as under Mc-Kinley is because democratic rule and principles make times so hard that capital can find nothing profitable out of which to make a trust. Under Cleveland's democratic rule capital remained idle on account of lack of confidence in the democracy. But no sooner was republican rule restored than capital at once entered the business arena with full confidence.

Democratic hard times is death to trusts and every other business.

Republican prosperity is profitable to trusts and all branches of business. Which is best, hard times and no business, or prosperity and revival of business everywhere?

Yes, we admit that republican good times create enough profitable business will attempt to combine for the pur- Journal.

pose of controlling all the business in sight, but democratic hard times and free trade invite no such feelings for the owners of surplus money.

We believe it is the greatest blessing that could happen to the country for the money men of the nation to buy up the struggling enterprises, for the blight of Clevelandism and democracy had so crippled business enterprises force, but the additional workingmen that new blood (money) alone can save are not to be had for any considera-

We believe the republican party can be trusted to fully protect the people from injurious trusts; in fact the American people themselves will see to it that republican prosperity remains and that a trust that injures the public shall not exist.

It is much better to have a full stomach and fight trusts than to be starving and have not even a trust to fight. We prefer prosperity and trusts to famine and starvation. Trusts and soup houses do not go together .- Ogden (Utah) Standard.

Tariff as an Issue in 1900.

Leading democratic newspapers here and there are in favor of making "tariff reform" the chief issue in next year's campaign, and the recent tirade of Trust King Havemeyer against protection is bearing fruit.

The Philadelphia Record is one of the newspapers which believes the tariff issue would be a winner for the democrats. "With tariff reform as the issue," it says, "the democratic party would not only be united, but to its ysis is sufficient to indicate which polbanner would be attracted tens of thousands of voters who can no longer be duped with the false pretense that protective duties, while enhancing the cost of the necessaries of living, give labor and high wages to workingmen."

Of course the Record, in common with other eastern democratic newspapers, hopes that the revival of the tariff issue will dispose of sixteen to one, and it may be sincere in the belief that the democrats would be strengthened by having such an issue. Nevertheless, we are inclined to believe it would find itself mistaken. The benefits of protection are not a delusion. Th people of the United States have had one dose of tariff reform, and they do not want another. The disastrous panic following the election of a freetrade congress and president caused an industrial paralysis which threw hundreds of thousands of workingmen out of employment and caused a loss to them in wages amounting to many millions of dollars. The return of prosperity following the re-enactment of the republican protective tariff law furnished an object lesson which nobody can disregard, and the voters will not

The republicans would be gratified to without being able to find any, while in see the democrats adopt tariff reform prosperous days the work hunts the as the paramount issue next year .-



Our "Heavy Burdens." Dun's Trade Review is authority for the statement that business failures in this country during the second quarter of 1899, just closed, were the smallest reported in that quarter for twentyfive years. It was also stated that the average per failure, \$7,165, was the smallest ever known in any quarter; that the average per firm in business and the ratio of defaulted liabilities to solvent exchanges were both the smallest ever known in any quarter. We recommend the examination of this report and the careful study of it to Mr. Bryan and Mr. O. H. P. Belmont and to all of their free-trade followers who pretend to think the country is laboring under heavy burdens. Such study would probably not have much enlightening effect on any of these gentlemen. They are not men who are to be disturbed by such things as facts; but it may perhaps give the country a rest for a brief period from their vaporings and give the people an opportunity to reflect upon the present marvelous prosperity of the country and the swiftness with which that prosperity has followed upon the heels of the protective tariff.

The free-traders who, under the leadership of Bryan and Belmont, are ranting about the country's present heavy burdens, are not showing the usual cleverness of their kind in seizing upon a campaign cry which will appeal to the passions of the thoughtless and the ignorant. Our present era of prosperity is too aggressive and insistent not to make itself felt above all empty denials of its existence.

No Adequate Reward Offered.

Generally the opposition, while setting forth the dangers and evils which combinations called trusts present, and making the present tariff responsible for them, offers no remedies. It is like physicians who would attempt to cure disease by shouting about its fatality that "trusts have come to stay" are and declaring that unless something shall be done at once the loss of life

An Infallible Test.

A recent dispatch from Louisville. Ky., after referring to the great activity found among the manufacturers and jobbers of plumbers' supplies in that vicinity, concluded as follows:

"One firm here has been vainly trying to hire a hundred more workmen, and had already largely increased its tion."

There is not a single American, protectionist or free-trader, who, if he had been cast away on a desert island for a time and had not known what had occurred in his absence, had not known what changes of national policy had been made, would not know, if shown, as his first bit of information about his native land, the above dispatch, telling of a vain search, not for work but for workmen, that the country was under a protective tariff law. Not the president of the New England Free Trade league himself, nor even Mr. Cleveland, the high priest of free trade, would have any doubts as to that fact.

Such a thing has never been known under free trade; similar instances have been numerous under protection. This fact of itself ought to be sufficient to cope successfully with the fallacies of the free-trade theorists. When one policy is so invariably productive of prosperity and the opposite policy is so invariably productive of industrial ruin and disaster that the mere existence of prosperity or of business paralicy is in force, there ought to be no difficulty in choosing between the two policies. In justice to the American voters it must be recognized that they never have had any hesitation about choosing protection whenever the issue between the two policies has been fairly and squarely put.

The Demand for Labor. A dispatch from Pittsburg to a trade

paper reads: "The summer lull which usually starts in with warm weather will not be a factor in Western Pennsylvania this year. Almost every firm is looking for men in various parts of the country, as none can be had here. In the meanwhile steel mills and furnaces are starting up that have been idle in many sections, and the former operatives having moved away, search is being made among the workmen here for skilled mechanics who can take charge of such plants. This is causing all sorts of offers for labor and fixed salaries are being done away with to hold men."

The difference between hard times and prosperity is that when times are hard the workingman hunts for work man, and, as the above dispatch shows, not without some difficulty in finding him. This is just the difference also between the results of free trade and those of a protective tariff. In the years from 1893 to 1896 under the free-trade administration of Mr. Cleveland and the blasting effects of the Wilson law American workingmen hunted for work in vain. Today as a result of the Dingley law, the manufacturers are hunting for workmen, and, as the dispatch says, are making "all sorts of offers for labor." There should not be any doubt as to which way the American workingmen will vote in 1900. They will naturaly prefer to have work hunt them rather than for them to have to hunt for work.

Euromaniacal.

Strange as it may seem, we generally eat, drink or smoke by the brand or label, and this is particularly true of wines. It is sometimes said that the American wines are not equal to the foreign. It is a well-known fact that the foreign champagnes are not bottled in this country, and yet labels and caps for the popular foreign brands are largely made in the United States. A short time since sample caps of popular French champagnes were shown to us, and orders for two of these caps to the number of 50,000 each had just been placed in this country. The purpose of that, of course, was to bottle American wines and label them with the most popular French brands.

It is well known that the natural American champagne is the purest in the world, and it is a pity that deception should be used in bottling these fine American wines and branding them as French wines. The only safe way to secure pure wines, if one has to drink, is to secure well-known American brands. But there are Euromaniacs who must have a foreign cap and label, and if they are willing to pay twice as much for the American under the foreign brand and cap there is probably no way to prevent them from so doing.

As a result of the final conference at Detroit between the representatives of iron and steel manufacturers and the iron and steel wage committee of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin workers, the wage scales for iron and steel workers, as fixed by the recent convention of the Amalgamated association, were practically all accepted by the manufacturers. This means that there will be a general ad-

Higher Wages for 45,000.

vance of 25 per cent in the wages of about 45,000 men employed in the iror and steel manufacturing industries .-Albany (N. Y.) Journal, Should Be Instructed. From the Covington (Ky.) Commonwealth: Those Democrats who say

not representing a Democratic principle. Democracy, first of all, is for enterprise so that a number of men must be very great.-Indianapolis the people and not the individual. The pgreatest good to the greatest number.

"SHE HAS MADE ME THE HAPPIEST FELLOW IN THE WORLD," I SAID.

cousin?" "Is this true?" she exclaimed in breathless wonder. "Oh, I was never so glad of anything in my life"-clasp-

ing her hands. "Receive you? Of course I will. I must go to the dear child at once." "It's the most satisfactory way out of all our difficulties," Mr. Heathcote declared, when I had laid my position fully before him. 'It has relieved my

mind of a great load of anxiety. could not have borne to see the dear girl married to that other fellow. And now I suppose we must give up Forest Lea. I am sorry about the old place, too. If the will-"Let it go," I said, hastily, recalled

to the remembrance of all the trouble involved in that unhappy subject.

"Mr. Tillott would like to speak to you, sir," announced a maid, as I crossed the hall, bed-room candlestick in hand.

"Who on earth is Mr. Tillott?" I inquired. "It's the groom, sir. He wants to see you about a letter he found in the

dog-cart, he says." "Oh, yes-all right! Where is he?" I remembered then that I had never read the letter; it had passed completely out of my mind since thrusting it into my pocket before my explanation with Nona.

"He is waiting in the study, sir. He said he was sorry to disturb you so late."

"Just so-which is the study?"

my wife-will you let me be your | the detective.

"He? Who?" I stammered. "Why, the criminal!" answered Widdrington.

look. That I had been dining, and dining not wisely, but too well, was evidently the conclusion he arrived at. Nothing else could account for my in-

"The criminal-Mr. Charles Brans-

for this onething.