



CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

"Of course I might have seen the ridiculousness of the whole affair at once. Fancy my being jealous of the Colonel! Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER V.

Mrs. Dene had been very constant in her visits to Jane during her convalescence. Independently of her desire to gratify the Colonel by showing his presence any kindness in her power, she liked the girl for her own sake, and was zealous for her social success.

CHAPTER VI.

When Captain and Mrs. Dene met again at dinner neither made reference to what had passed between them. It was the first time that there had been even an approach to a quarrel, yet it had seemed to draw them nearer to each other and bring some warmth into their relations.

CHAPTER VII.

Unaware of the schemes that had been made for her settlement in life, Jane was charmed when an invitation came for her to go to Cawnpore. Independence of a natural love of change and novelty, she was full of nervous delight at the idea of entering society—the society of which she had so often thought and dreamed.



"Certainly not yet, and it is extremely unlikely that you ever will return. It is that which I want you to keep away and let her get over this infatuation."

"You are not angry with me?" she asked him presently. "Angry with you? No."

"I wish I could dress as well as you," complained Jane, who, like a very woman, was inclined to set a high value upon that branch of feminine industry.

"You are always so thoughtful," murmured Mrs. Dene, with malicious sweetness. "I am quite well now, thank you," answered unsuspecting Jane.

Mrs. Dene, thoughtfully. "Have you forgotten that Major Larzon will be Lord Larzmore someday, while Mr. Graeme's money was gained in trade?"

"Why not? A promise is a promise, and I don't want Jane to be such a fine lady as to forget her first friends," he answered, doggedly.

"Peter Gannett's boy Eben is real smart at his books, I hear," said Grandfather Rollins, as he and his grandson Rob were out at the barn milking the cows one night.

"You'd ask him about anything, an' fust off he'd appear to be speakin' of 'em fair an' square; but before he got through there was allus somethin' to take the jule out of whatever he'd told ye that was pleasant."

Martin Sullivan, a white sailor on the cruiser Minneapolis, now at the Norfolk navy yard, was ironed recently for desertion. He escaped from his cell last night and while handcuffed leaped overboard and swam across the river to Berkeley, half a mile away.



HIS FRIEND'S DECEIT

THERE was a dejected look on Paul Gardner's face as he seated himself at his writing table, and in spite of himself a sigh escaped him. He had come to the parting of the ways in his existence—was now confronting the fact that the career of honor, ease and usefulness which three or four years ago he had mapped out for realization was impossible of attainment.

"Dear Brenda—My heart fails me as I begin this task, but honor compels the conviction that it is a necessary one. By the time this reaches you I shall be many miles upon my journey. It seems but yesterday since I settled here and opened my doors for the reception of patients. I had some £2,000 then, and I believed that, by judicious management, it would suffice until I had made a start. In spite of energy, frugality and, I believe, skill, my practice has yet to be begun. My waiting has been in vain and my brass plate insufficient to attract the practical attention of those requiring medical aid. Now I have come to the end of my resources and I must leave you—your whom I love better than life. I have made up my mind to woo Fortune in a foreign clime. I know you love me and the recollection of the many happy hours we have spent together will in the future, as in the past, be a cheerful incentive to me in my work. But I dare not ask you to wait my return. I hope for success, but I had hoped for it at the outset, and the future may possibly be as unpropitious and the hopes as visionary as those of the past. No; however powerful my inclinations, justice to yourself compels me to relinquish the claim I have hitherto had upon you. Consider yourself, then, dear Brenda, under no obligation to your old love. Pray for me and may God bless you. Ever your friend, PAUL."

It was written at last. He dare not breathe a good-by—dare not utter one of those terms of endearment he had been so accustomed to use. His heart was quickly sinking within him. To pause for a moment would be fatal hesitation. He did not read the letter through, but placed it quickly in an envelope, and, hurriedly directing and sealing it, deposited it on the mantelpiece out of sight, as if he would fain forget its existence. At that moment the door opened, and Paul looked up as his friend, Mark Trevor, entered.

"Well, well," he said, "you know your own affairs best, I suppose, and, after all, you're only doing what an honorable man ought to. But if I can help you in any way, don't be afraid of commanding me. I'm at your service, Gardner, although I don't suppose you have any commissions to give."

"Certainly! I'm glad you mentioned it, my boy. It would never do to cripple yourself at the outset by being short of the ready. I'll lend it you with pleasure. When do you start?" he asked, eagerly.

"In the morning—early." "Fact is, I haven't the money by me, but I can get it in an hour. D'Arcy owes me fifty, and promised to let me have it this morning without fail. I'll just run round and get him to draw the check in your favor instead of mine, and—"

"Thanks, awfully. It's very good of you, Trevor." "Put, but; don't mention it. Get your things put in order, and I'll be back in an hour," and Trevor, snatching up his hat departed.

"True to his word, Mark Trevor returned within an hour. "Just caught him in, my boy," he said. "Here you are—the check's drawn in your favor, to save my indorsement."

"Arrest! Forgery!" he murmured, at length. "There is some mistake. I do not understand. I certainly cashed such a check, but it was not forged; it was drawn by D'Arcy himself—Good heavens! he exclaimed, "can it be true? Can there be truth in those rumors after all? Can he love Brenda, and have concocted this villainous plot to ruin me?" and as a conviction of the truth flashed upon him it required superhuman effort to hold himself in check. On arriving at the station he reiterated his innocence, but, of course, to no purpose.

"When did you receive this?" he inquired. "On the night or rather early morning of his arrest. I know the reason you betrayed him, and evidently Paul did, too. The reason he wired me was to prevent all possibility of your diabolical plot succeeding so far as your intentions with me were concerned. Now go, and never seek my face again. Only remember that those who suffer innocently may make even their suffering a stepping-stone to future success, while those guilty of such offenses as yours must eventually sink deeper in crime."

"You are ill, sir," said Paul, making room and assisting the old man into a comfortable posture. "No—yes—I'm very ill," was the reply.

"What is the name of the doctor attending Mr. Easton?" Paul asked of the attendant as soon as he arrived. "Barrow, sir," replied the man. "And between you and me, sir, I believe there's something wrong between him and Mr. Mark. He's a broken-down, drink-ridden beast, sir, and Mr. Mark won't hear of anyone else being called, and—"

"Quite right. The condition is owing to the cumulative properties of strychnine." "So I conjectured. The patient seems easier now; may I have a word with you in private?"

"I can remember they will do no harm—anyway, they won't," muttered the man. "As soon as it is daylight, depend upon me, sir."