



CHAPTER XVI.

As Stephen has not put in an appearance at the Court now for fully two days, speculation is rife as to what has become of him. "He was at the lake yesterday," says Portia. "He came up to us from the southern end of it." At this both Dulce and Roger start, and the former changes color visibly. "I really wonder where he can be," says Julia. "So do I," murmurs Dulce, faintly, but distinctly, feeling she is in duty bound to say something. "Stephen never used to miss a day."

select amount of vituperation from both sides, an openly avowed declaration on Mr. Gower's part that he had not requested the pleasure of his society on this or any other occasion, he hoped it would be the last time he would present himself at the Plaza. Equally honest avowal on the part of Dulce to the effect that the discomfort he felt in coming was almost if never could be quite balanced by the joy he experienced as departing, and a few more hot words that very nearly led to bloodshed.



CHAPTER XVII.

"No, I was not," he says, calmly. He takes great comfort in his soul in the remembrance that he might have heard much more that was not intended for his ears had he stayed in his place of confinement yesterday, which he had not. "Accident brought me to that part of the lake, and brought me, your words to my ears. When I heard them I remembered how many trivial things that at the moment of their occurrence had seemed as naught. But now my eyes are opened. I am no longer blind. I have brought you here to tell you I will give you back your promise to marry me, your freedom," with a sudden bitterness, as suddenly suppressed—"on one condition."

speech must read well for the sake of the party, and so the reporter or the editor has to make it read well, although every sentence were a catastrophe to the English language. The reporter must hear all that an able speaker, who thinks it is vulgar to speak out, says, and it must be right the next morning or the next night in the papers, though the night before the whole audience sat with its hand behind its ear in vain trying to catch it. This man must go through killing night work. He must go into heated rooms, blazes and into unventilated audience-rooms that are enough to take the life out of him. He must visit court rooms, which are almost always disgusting with rum and tobacco. He must expose himself at the fire. He must visit in fetid alleyways. Added to all that, he must have hasty mastication and irregular habits. To bear up under this tremendous nervous strain they are tempted to artificial stimulants, and how many thousands have gone down under their pressure God only knows. They must have something to counteract the wet, they must have something to keep out the chill, and after a scant night's sleep they must say something to revive them for the morning's work. This is what made Horace Greeley such a stout temperance man. I said to him, "Mr. Greeley, why are you more eloquent on the subject of temperance than any other subject?" He replied, "I have seen so many of my best friends in Journalism go down under intemperance." Oh, my dear brother of the newspaper profession, what you cannot do without artificial stimulants God does not want you to do. There is no half way ground for our literary people between totalitism and dissipation. Your professional success, your domestic peace, your eternal salvation, will depend upon your theories regarding artificial stimulants. I have had so many friends go down under the temptation, their brilliancy quenched, their names blasted, that I cry out this morning in the words of another, "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright, for at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."