

gen'lman from Lunnon as does want to see you."

At the words a dead silence fell upon the room, which lasted for several moments, and then the house-keeper, standing at the closed door, could hear low whisperings and rustlings.

"Tell the gentleman," said Lady Trethyn presently, "that I'll be ready to see him in five minutes. I'll ring when I'm ready, and then you can show him in."

In point of fact Lady Trethyn was ready for the detective in two minutes. Scarcely had the house-keeper gone from the door than it was gently opened, and Dr. Shearer's assistant passed out of the room, passed through the back entrance to the manor, and was soon clear away from the house. Then Lady Trethyn rang her bell.

"You're looking much better than you were when I saw you last."

It was Detective Carlyle who spoke, and he was seated at a small table, with Lady Trethyn opposite to him. The door of the room was closed, and the heavy curtains were drawn across the door, to keep out the draughts, Lady Trethyn explained.

"I'm feeling better," Lady Trethyn replied simply.

Detective Carlyle at once felt that there must have been some good cause for her ladyship's marked improvement, but he did not question her about it. The thought ran through his mind, however, that the improvement was due to the same cause which had brought him to the manor. He had come to strengthen his impressions as to Edward Trethyn's being alive, for he was convinced, if his impressions were true, Lady Trethyn could confirm them. Not that he was going to ask her outright. He was too skilful an officer for that, but he counted upon his ability to lead Lady Trethyn to say something in course of conversation which would make his guesses certainties.

"Well, my lady," he said, presently, "I'm sorry to say that I can't report much progress with your case. I have gathered several things, however, which still lead me to think that your son was innocent of the crime charged against him, but nothing as yet which might fix the crime upon the true culprit."

"You remember my suspicions?" asked Lady Trethyn.

"Oh, yes, and they are mine, too, but there's no proof. I have, however, pretty strong proof about another thing."

Lady Trethyn looked up quickly.

"It's my firm belief, Lady Trethyn," went on the detective, "that your son is not dead."

Lady Trethyn's face flushed blood-red, and an apprehensive look betrayed itself in her eyes.

"I can't now give you my reasons for this belief," quietly proceeded the detective, "but I thought the mention of it would cheer you. You see, my lady, if Mr. Edward is not dead, then there is greater hopes of the establishing of his innocence."

Lady Trethyn did not seem particularly affected by the news, which led the detective to think his suspicions confirmed. Was Edward Trethyn indeed alive, and did her ladyship know of it? Mr. Carlyle was almost ready to answer "yes" to both questions. If she were ignorant of his being alive, argued the detective mentally, she would show more eagerness in the announcement he had made to her. She would be more excited, and full of questionings. But she was not so, rather the reverse of these things, and plainly alarmed at the detective's words. Mr. Carlyle thought he could read her heart. She was afraid to confess her knowledge lest he should betray her. Though she had entrusted him with the proving of her son's innocence, not even to him could she trust the secret which might send again her son to prison. And so, after about half an hour's conversation about things wide of the mark, Detective Carlyle left Lady Trethyn's presence, with all his suspicions strengthened, but without proof of them.

But he was determined to obtain proof, and on his way through the hall again made another onslaught on the old housekeeper.

"Has the young doctor gone?" he asked.

"Wasn't he in my lady's room when you were there?"

"Oh, dear no."

"Then I suppose he must have gone. But I never seed him go out. He does come and go, though, mysterious like."

That was sufficient for the detec-