

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

Spare me yet a little space ;
And life's wine upon the lees
Shall not be outpoured to please
Children in the market-place.

—*Verses Wise or Otherwise.*

"I WANT to see you, Sir Conrad," said Mark, as he entered the room, and found to his surprise Lady Clayton there as well as her husband.

Sir Conrad's heart swelled as he looked at the man before him. Here was the foremost statesman of the day ; a man who had climbed to the top of the political tree before he was forty : and this man was his own son. Was the Ex-Minister to blame if he felt proud as he realized that it was his intellect, reproduced in a younger generation, that was now governing the British Empire—that the only man in England greater than himself was his firstborn son?

Conrad Clayton was a man in whom the instinct of fatherhood had always been strong ; but never had it stirred in him so strongly as to-day, when he recognized his intellectual superior in his own child.

"I also want to see you," he replied, "to tell you two things. The first is that, contrary to the expectations of the country and the press, I am ready to support you in the