

cherished memorials of their dead mother were being dispersed and desecrated, and then hide herself in her own room and pray for patience and submission.

From that time forward, as though the mention of the fact to Stella had forcibly impressed it upon her own mind, Mrs. Brookes continually harped upon the approaching payment of the Zarina dividends. Morning, noon, and night she talked of it, always accompanying her anticipations with the inquiry: "And you will see to the business part of it, Mr. Clive?" Over and over again Stella listened to his promise that he would undertake the whole affair.

"You had better give me the scrip, had you not?" he remarked one afternoon, when only very few days remained before the eventful date.

"Yes. Come, and I'll get all you want now," she said.

That same evening Kingston Villa was thrown into sudden confusion and alarm by a telegram summoning both Helen and Caryl to London, to meet a relative, just returned from India. With radiant smiles Helen displayed the missive, and set about her preparations.

"Ah! the joy!" she cried, flinging up her hands. "My uncle! My dear, unforgotten father's brother. You can understand?" bestowing a beaming glance upon Guy, who happened to be paying one of his frequent calls. Much more frequent they were now than had been the case a fortnight earlier, when Thetfield still held Stella.

"Oh, of course," he answered, being unable to conjure up any other reply. Then, as she glided away, leaving him alone with Miss Brookes, "You will have a little peaceful time, at any rate."

She drew in a deep, long breath of relief.

"Indeed, yes. Not that things have been as bad as they were before I went to Mary." And then she blushed, remembering her ideas of a

day or two ago, ideas that Guy's quiet self-possession had, however, nearly lulled to sleep again.

"Clive has not pressed those horrid attentions of his? No. So I have noticed. I suppose," with a smile, "he looked upon your running away as his answer."

"I'm very glad. Why, they are going already!" For a station fly had drawn up at the door.

Amid a flurry of leave-taking, the pair departed within ten minutes, much to Stella's surprise. Mrs. Brookes stood out upon the hall steps to shout after the cab the request she had already made fifty additional times since the arrival of the telegram—"You will be back to do my business on Toosday, Mr. Clive?" And Caryl leaned from the window to nod a final promise. Finally the three who were left turned back to the dining-room, conscious of the strange hush that always succeeds a time of confusion and bustle. It was Stella who first broke the silence.

"What a pile of luggage!" she said. "Surely Helen never found time to pack it in the quarter of an hour she was upstairs!"

"It certainly looked enough to last a year," returned Guy. Adding, in a whisper, "Let us hope it may." But Mrs. Brookes' ears were keen.

"And indeed I call that a most *zunmannerly* and *zunkind* wish, Mr. Ryder; specially when you 'ave 'eard me pressin' 'im to be 'ere o' Toosday. You're jealous of my friends, that's what you are! Jealous!"

It was certainly unfortunate that she had overheard. Happily the previous excitement had somewhat wearied her, however. And shortly afterwards she was to be seen nodding in her chair, with the yellow rose, which had lately displaced its pink predecessor of venerable memory, slowly sliding towards the nape of her neck.

That a letter, announcing the safe arrival of the travellers in London, would reach her in the course of the next day, was a settled article of