

what you have done. But I wouldn't stop there. I would not rest until I could snap my fingers at anything the Pension Board could do."

He stopped. Windermere drew a long breath, and seemed lost in reverie. He had often traversed this ground in thought before, but he had seen it with the eyes of a valetudinarian. Now he began to see it with the eyes of one of the most vigorous personalities in the Canadian Corps; he seemed in touch again with the spirit that had animated his old companions in the White Ghurkas.

"You are right," he said. "Never say die. What do you suggest?"

China was on the point of outlining various possibilities which occurred to him on the spur of the moment, when the door opened, and Mrs. Cadwallader came in to announce that the evening meal—"I can hardly call it dinner," she said—was ready, and that they would be glad if Major Macdonald would stay and partake of their humble fare.

China was immediately all apologies for having stayed so late, and was for taking his departure immediately. But Windermere would not hear of his going, professed that he would be deeply aggrieved if he did not stay; and China allowed himself to be persuaded, not without an inward tremor as to what the old rector would have to say when he found that his guest had been breaking bread in the house of sin.

The conversation at dinner flickered about the old days in France and Flanders. China Macdonald, who was always in good form at the dinner-table, recounted with gusto the later history of certain worthies in the White Ghurkas whom Windermere had known, but had lost track of; and Windermere threw light on one or two passages of battalion history with which China was imperfectly familiar. Mrs. Cadwallader listened at first in silence, and China thought that he detected in her a strain of antagonism, unexpressed and unformulated, toward himself;

but as the meal progressed, her manner became less reserved. China would have liked to discover what her attitude would be toward the suggestions he had made to Windermere; but the matter was too delicate for him to broach on his own initiative, and Windermere studiously avoided any reference to it. China, therefore, limited himself to mere table-talk, striving only to convey to Mrs. Cadwallader, in his blunt way, the impression that he was above all her friend and Windermere's.

It was not until he was taking his departure that China found an opportunity to pick up the threads of his conversation with Windermere where they had been dropped. Windermere walked out with him to the garden gate, moving slowly on his crutches; and China immediately plunged into his interrupted argument.

"A number of possible openings occur to me," he said, "none of them perhaps entirely satisfactory. You might be able to take a place as master in a boys' school. The hours there would not be long, and the holidays would be *déjà quelque chose*. Unfortunately, the pay would be poor. We might find something in the civil service that would suit you. Or perhaps you might set up in some sort of business, the oversight of which would not be too great a tax on you. These are just possibilities that occur to me. They'll have to be looked into more closely. But you may depend upon this, if any capital is necessary to start you up, it will be forthcoming, and if there is anything I can do, it will be done. I shall think things over to-night. I'll come around and see you to-morrow, and perhaps then I shall have some new ideas."

The two men gripped hands in the darkness, and parted.

When China returned to the rectory, he found the rector in the library. As he sat down in the leather armchair by the fireplace, where often in the old days before the war he had sat in fear and humility, his