Presently he turned, and the two looked into each other's eyes, as men will who understand each other.

"She's got to hear some—news," Hendrie said, in his blunt fashion. "Likely it may knock her—hard."

The surgeon sat up.

"About that boy—Frank? Anything against him?"

Hendrie shook his head.

"No," he said. "It's—about me."

Professor Hinkling sat back in his seat with an assured smile.

"That's all right," he said easily. "It's only that boy matters—just now."

The evening sun was streaming in through the wide bow window of the boudoir, lighting up the delicate shades of color in the costly decorations with a suggestion of spring, rather than the mature days of early autumn which were already upon the world. There was hope in the aspect of the room, hope in the brilliancy of the sunlight, hope, too, engendered of the knowledge that here was no longer a sick room, but a delightful harmonious resting place where convalescence was to be converted into complete restoration to health.

A large lounge filled the space beneath the window where the patient might lie, or sit, drinking in the health-giving fragrance of the pure prairie air; where the sight of the wide blue heavens, with their robes of fleecy white, might well inspire the desire for perfect health; where the golden sun in all its glory might bathe the ailing body in its generous light, and drive back the grim shadows of sickness to the realms of darkness where they rightly belonged.

The room was littered with all those things which told of kindly hearts and loving hands. This temporary imprisonment must be made something more than tolerable. It must be made a memory for after life to look back upon, not with shuddering repulsion, but with delight at the thought of the generous love striving to bring happiness once more into an ailing life.

There were flowers, wonderful and rare; flowers which had traveled leagues and leagues to bring their message of hope of summer days to come, and delight the eye with their