

he wanted the coast clear the stranger, when at last his turn arrived, politely waived his rights, sent the furs and violets in before him, and sat alone with the nurse in the cleared waiting room.

A comparatively short period of time elapsed before the consulting-room door opened once more. But it closed again—almost—and a few words reached the outer room.

"Oh, but you're hard—hard, Doctor Burns! I simply can't do it," said a plaintive voice.

"Then don't expect me to accomplish anything. It's up to you—absolutely," replied a brusque voice, which then softened slightly as it added: "Cheer up. You can, you know. Good-bye."

The patient came out, her lips set, her eyes lowered, and left the office as if she wanted nothing so much as to get away. The nurse rose and began to say that Doctor Burns would now see his one remaining caller, but at that moment Doctor Burns himself appeared in the doorway, glanced at the stranger, who had risen, smiling—and the need for an intermediary between physician and patient vanished before the onslaught of the physician himself.

"My word! Gardner Coolidge! Well, well—if this isn't the greatest thing on earth. My dear fellow!"

The stranger, no longer a stranger, with his hand