

loosely in their sockets, only because no one had ever thought of putting them to the test, and, in the strong hand of Clarence, assisted, perhaps, by the leaning figure of Mrs. Peyton, I grieve to say that the whole *grille* suddenly collapsed, became a frame of tinkling iron, and then clanked, bar by bar, into the road. Mrs. Peyton uttered a little cry and drew back, and Clarence, leaping the ruins, caught her in his arms.

For a moment only, for she quickly withdrew from them, and, although the morning sunlight was quite rosy on her cheeks, she said gravely, pointing to the dismantled opening—

“I suppose you *must* stay now, for you never could leave me here alone and defenceless.”

He stayed. And with this fulfilment of his youthful dreams the romance of his young manhood seemed to be completed, and so closed the second volume of this trilogy. But what effect that fulfilment of youth had upon his maturer years, or the fortunes of those who were dearly concerned in it, may be told in a later and final chronicle.