

the former, that he had asked her advice at all, and then gained nothing by it, and still more so with the latter, that she should be working so against her but the end of it the clever lady did not foresee.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Two weeks had passed after Mrs. Staunton's ball, and the Doranes, excepting Mr. Cyrus, and Colonel Compeigne and his daughters had taken their departure to Italy, when Bruce Everett returned from the South. But his mission had been unsuccessful, save the clue he had found in the cemetery, and of which he had written to the Judge. Judge Staunton was disappointed, but he yet had hopes, because he knew Everett would still, when his time permitted carry on the search, and must in the end succeed, as he always did, once his brilliant mind and energy were given to a project. His Millicent would be restored to him, and her lost inheritance.

Beatrice was rejoiced to have her lover back, and as she walked with him now in amongst the flowers of the conservatory, she said —

"Bruce, time dragged miserably for me while you were away, and if I had not been receiving your letters I do not know what I should have done."

"And I might say the same," he replied, stooping and touching her hands lightly with his lips, but she fancied his action was forced. "It was joy to me when the train steamed into our own home station last night," and —

He stopped, because a slender dark robed figure, just then crept noiselessly apast the open door, but not until Beatrice Staunton had seen her lover's eyes follow it and rest on the golden head of her mother's companion with a strange light in them, that made the heiress sick at heart. But she said nothing, neither did he, but continued the sentence he had broken off on.

Rosamond was hastening to obey a sudden summons she had gotten in the library, where she had been reading, to go to her mistress' boudoir, and when she entered the apartment, the lady bade her close the door tightly.

"I am going to speak plainly to you, Miss Raymond," she said, when the

young girl was seated, "and you must not be offended, but I think you have done a most foolish thing in refusing to be Cyrus Dorane's wife. I see by your face that you are surprised that I know he has asked you, but a little bird has whispered it all to me, and I regret your want of wisdom in refusing such an offer, that many young ladies, I know, would jump at."

The fair face flushed, and the small mouth grew hard.

"Mr. Dorane will never be but a stranger to me, Mrs. Staunton, and I have been advised how to act with him."

"By Mr. Madden, the priest, I suppose," and there was a slight sneer in her musical voice.

"Father Madden knows nothing about it, Mrs. Staunton. It is mother, in whom I confide everything, and she has told me what to do."

"Why do you object to Mr. Dorane? Have you ever heard aught against his character?"

"No, but I do not like him, and besides his life and mine are run on two opposite plans. He should win his wife from the ranks equal to his own."

"You speak very sensibly and gravely for a girl your age, but that is nonsense. You have beauty and accomplishments, and that is all a man wants in a wife nowadays."

But Rosamond shook her head. She could not be influenced, and her mistress was angry, though she feigned not to be and bade the young girl bring a book, and read to her. So Rosamond lost more favor with her mistress.

Cyrus Dorane was playing a great role by plunging into all manner of wild excesses since his family's leaving the city, and his intimates began to wonder where it was to end. His had never been a worthily spent life, but since the finale with Rosamond Raymond, it was doubly worse, and he was as surely going to destruction, as Bruce Everett had long ago predicted he would.

"Miss Raymond must have settled Dorane finely," the lawyer's young partner remarked to him one day, some few weeks after Everett's arrival home from Virginia, "or, is it the old folks going away that has upset him and is causing him to make such a fool of himself?"