

house. The expenses will of course be defrayed from the estate. You must not think of infringing on your aunt's small gift. I am sure your brother would not wish it; the more especially since he certainly owes his inheritance indirectly to you, for poor Miss Marney made no secret of the fact that her acquaintance with you inspired her to make this very satisfactory change in the disposition of her property. Now we are agreed that everything should continue here as usual until Captain de Courset's return, or until we receive instructions from him to the contrary? We will ask him to cable his wishes on receipt of our communication."

"I know very well what his wishes will be," said Jeanne.

Happiness dawned once more in her shy brown eyes at the thought of her brother's return; and his return to such amazing and unexpected prosperity.

"I cannot realise what it will be like to see him again, after all these years. First India—then this long, long South African time. And now in a few weeks he will be with me again! I am expecting a telegram directly he knows for certain which ship he will sail by. Oh, I wonder, I wonder—if he will have changed very much."

Mr. Valentine was very kind and sympathetic, and had every desire to please his new client—or his new client's sister; but he was a busy man, and the Christmas holidays were fast approaching; wherefore he did not invite Jeanne to return to the discussion of her brother's personality or his adventures, but after a repetition of the subdued congratulations proper to the occasion, shook hands with her and bowed himself out.

Jeanne, left alone, looked round the warm, luxurious room. At the little table, covered with trifles, become pathetic through the death of their owner; the silver-handled loop that the dead woman had used for reading the newspapers; the gold-topped flask of scent; the cut-glass bottle of salts; the turquoise studded *bonbonnière* and tortoiseshell paper-knife; all of which had been restored to their original places by the careful