

"I am older now, I have thought more. I have reflected on what you said," murmured Margaret.

"You have done my poor words much honor," said he, with a slight cold smile. "And I am glad to think that the breach in your friendship is healed. Miss Colwyn is a true and loyal friend—I could not wish you a better. I shall feel some pleasure in the thought, when I am far from England, that you have her for your friend once more."

"Far from England"—Margaret repeated the words with paling lips.

"Did you not know? I have accepted a post in Victoria. I shall be out for five years at least. So great a field of usefulness seems open to me there that I did not know how to refuse it."

Margaret was mute for a time. Then, with a tremendous effort, she put another question. "You go—alone?" she said.

Sir Philip did not look at her.

"No," he said, kicking a small pebble off the tessellated pavement with the toe of his boot, and apparently taking the greatest interest in its ultimate fate, "no, I don't go quite alone. I am taking with me my secretary—and—my wife. I suppose you know that next week I am going to marry Miss Adela Smithies, daughter of Smithies the great brewer? We sail ten days later."

---

## CHAPTER XL.

### MY FAITHFUL JANET.

"Good blood," they say, "does not lie." Margaret was true to her traditions. She did not faint, she did not weep, over what was complete ruin to her expectations, if not of her hopes. She held her head a little more erect than usual, and looked Sir Philip quietly in the face.

"I am very glad to hear it," she said—it was a very excusable lie, perhaps. "I hope you will be happy."

Strange to say, her calmness robbed Sir Philip of his self-possession. He flushed hotly and looked away, thinking of some words that he had spoken many months ago to