

"Died on the table," said Burns, with entire coolness. His face had sobered at the question, but his expression was by no means crestfallen.

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" Charlotte began, earnestly.

But her husband interrupted her. "No condolences are due, dear. He gave a dying man the most merciful sort of euthanasia, and at the same time demonstrated a new method as daring as it was triumphant. With a case taken a month earlier it would have saved a life. The demonstration is a contribution to science. If he received no applause it was because we don't applaud in the presence of death, but there was not a man there who didn't realize that in certain lines the country surgeon could give them a long handicap and still win."

Burns looked out of the window without speaking. His sea-tanned face showed a deeper shade under Leaver's praise. Leaver himself smiled at the averted profile of his friend, and went on, while Ellen looked at him as if he had given her something which money could not buy.

"I wish," said John Leaver, laying a firm-knit hand on Burns's knee, "you'd come to Baltimore, Red. Between us we'd do some things pretty well worth doing. Without undue conceit I think I can promise you a backing to start on that would give you a place in a twelvemonth that couldn't be