

never regretted that I made her a Countess. I hope you will not."

Jack's mother led Bertha away. "You must not mind his last words," she said. "We knew that John had gone in search of you and we imagined what the end would be. The Earl's father was opposed to our marriage, but Carolus was determined that I should be his wife, and I knew that John was like his father. My only wish is that the Earl could have lived to have seen you both happy."

Jack stood by the bedside and took his father's wasted hand in his. "Have I your forgiveness, father?"

The thin fingers closed upon his own; then he heard the words: "It runs in the blood; like father, like son."

Both Vandemar and Clarence were soon in receipt of letters informing them of the death and burial of the Earl of Noxton. They read, too, in the papers, of the demise of Lord Carolus De Vinne, Earl of Noxton, and the announcement of the accession of his son John De Vinne to the title. The item contained the information that the young Earl had been married while in Paris to Miss Bertha Renville, daughter of the late Oscar Renville, who had left her a large fortune which would go to swell the revenues of the young Earl. The item further stated that the young Countess of Noxton was a beautiful English girl, and when the period of retirement was over she would, no doubt, prove a great acquisition to London society.

As Countess Mont d'Oro foretold, the war cloud grew black, and England, France, and Sardinia made a triple alliance against the aggressions of Russia in the Crimea.

"Admiral," said Vandemar, "I am going to London to ask the Admiralty for active service."

"Nonsense," cried the Admiral. "You stay at home and look after your wife. This is not to be a naval war; this affair is to be fought out on land, and a sailor on land is of no more use than a turtle on its back. Be-