

CHAPTER III

1620 BROOK STREET

MR. THOMAS ALEXANDER BURNS had already walked up and down Brook Street thrice, and was walking down for the fourth time, when, about the middle of a block, he almost ran over Miss Eden, walking up.

"Well, I declare, it's Mr. Burns," said Miss Eden, using the pleasant formula which always implies that one might possibly be someone else.

Mr. Burns, thus convinced of his own identity, lifted his hat, and, for no apparent reason, blushed.

"I am trying to find a number," went on Miss Eden, drawing a slip of paper from her purse. "It is number 1620 Brook Street; Miss Brown's lodgings, you know. This is Brook Street, isn't it? I don't suppose you can tell me where she lives?"

"Oh, it ought to be quite easy to find the number," evaded the astute Mr. Burns. "It is not quite dark yet. Wonderful how these autumn evenings linger." He cleared his throat. "Number 1620, you say? It ought to be somewhere hereabouts, a few doors farther east, I fancy." All this with such a fine air of detachment that one must have been sharp indeed to have guessed that he had already passed number 1620 six times (three times up and three times down), and knew to a yard exactly how far they were from it at that present moment.