

CHAPTER III

ENTER A PRINCESS

THE sun was shining fair, the bright spring day was young, with considerable promise of being too hot. Brand had an envelope in his hand, containing a letter of introduction, and directed to Messrs. Vanslyperken & Schneidam, Attorneys, at number thirty-four. Here was number thirty-four. Brand glanced at his envelope, then at the big shining brass plate of Messrs. Vanslyperken & Schneidam; but he waited before climbing the steps, because the inner doors swung open, and a lady client came out, who turned with a gracious good-day to the clerk, while she gathered up her skirts before descending into the dust of the streets.

The lady was young and fair, of a commanding presence, her face radiant with health, her small red lips pursed up, as though the lawyers had given her something very serious to think about. She was dressed as a professional nurse, in silvery grey, her bonnet sitting light as a feather amid the lustrous golden-brown hair. As she came down the steps Brand stood aside by the railings, staring so hard that she looked up to see what was the matter. He felt her glance at the gaping seams of his boots, his ragged overalls, his old pilot jacket, his flannel shirt that was ripped at the breast, showing the white skin, at the soft felt hat that sagged down over his eyes. He turned his face away, shifting uneasily, as