

500 THE CONGRESSWOMAN

"Yes."

"I went with her one day to buy things."

"What sort of things?"

"Dresses and hats, beautiful hats, and slippers and—"

"For whom?"

"For her." Bona Dea poised herself on one foot with a delight, which was tremulous. "It's a secret. She is to be married. I am going to the wedding."

"Married?" asked Cynthia breathlessly. "Not to—Deb."

"No," cried the child scornfully. "I am going to marry Mr. Deb; he told me so. Guess again."

"Is it Father William?" Suddenly the woman's face went as white as the pillow under her cheek.

"No. How funny! Why, Father William is an old, old man."

"Then who?" asked Cynthia impatiently.

"Mr. Blair."

"What?"

The child bent forward to wipe off a tear, which trickled down the woman's cheek.

"I am sorry. Teenie made me promise I wouldn't tell you any news till you were quite strong. Did you wish it was Father William?"

"No."

"Mr. Blair is a stainless gentleman," said Bona Dea.