

in at his wife and Charlotte. From over his shoulder Leaver looked in also, smiling. "He's arranged for me to operate on one of his most critical cases to-morrow morning at his clinic. The country surgeon! Did you ever hear of such effrontery? I may be ridden out of town on a rail by to-morrow noon!"

"Hear the man! He looks like a country surgeon, doesn't he?" challenged Leaver, advancing. "London-made clothes, Bond-street neckwear, scarfpin from Rome, general air of confidence and calm. I assure you I was nowhere, when the family of my patient saw the lately arrived specialist from Berlin."

"It's not on that patient I'm to do violence," Burns explained, at Ellen's look of astonishment. "He's just mixing things up on purpose. It's a charity case for mine — but none the less honour, on that account. I have a chance to try out a certain new method, adapted from one I saw used for the first time abroad. If it doesn't work I'll — drop several pegs in my own estimation, and in self-confidence."

"It will work," said Leaver, "in your hands. The country surgeon is going to surprise one or two of my colleagues to-morrow."

The morrow came. Charlotte and Ellen drove with the two men to the hospital, and watched them disappear within its bare but kindly walls.