

Diamond Cut Diamond

OR,
THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER IV.

"Fill up your glass, Halliday. You don't get '47 port every day, you know, and there isn't much of it left now in the old bin. Fill up your glass, and then we can talk over this matter comfortably."

A low-swung shaded lamp threw a subdued radiance over a small round table in the dining room of one of the largest houses in Cromwell Road. The wine decanters, of antique cut glass, stood on the table, and some old china dishes, filled with nuts and winter fruits. There was a glitter of silver, and of colored Venetian finger-bowls; whilst a few rare hot-house flowers, orchids and eucharis lilies in a silver bowl, in the centre of the snowy cloth, that was of an exceeding fineness, completed the perfect decorations of the small table. A chair, half pushed away at one side, denoted the recent departure of a lady; the servants, too, had retired, with velvet footsteps, softly closing the double doors behind them, and the two men, friends and partners, were alone.

Matthew Dane, the master of the house, and head of the ancient and prosperous mercantile firm of Dane and Trichet, sat with his back to the fire-place. A strong, vigorous old man, with a hooked nose, and many seams and wrinkles in his well-marked somewhat high-coloured features, but without a white hair in his almost coal-black, straight-falling locks. Matthew Dane was a man born to rule and to command. Ready of wit, clear of brain, untiring in energy, he had, by his sole exertions, for many years piloted the great house safely through all the storms and dangers of bad seasons, depression of trade, and failing commercial impulse.

Where others had sunk, submerged in the remorseless stream, Matthew Dane had kept up his head—preserving, unbroken, the credit and the prestige of the splendid business which, nearly half a century ago, he had inherited from his grandfather. As to "Trichet," he had had no personality since those remote ages when the French branch, at Lyons, had joined hands with the London firm, thereby consolidating and strengthening it to an extraordinary degree. Trichet, save in the person of one clerk, representing an almost unheeded junior branch of the old family, had now no existence. As in London, so in Lyons, Matthew Dane was the head and mainspring of the whole business. He was, in fact, a demi-god, not only to the firm, but, unfortunately, to himself too.

It seemed to him that he had but to speak, and his word became law; only to command, and servile obedience was instantly rendered unto him. He was master of all that came into contact with him, for the heads of other great houses, at home and abroad, with whom he did business, and who, when Matthew Dane recommended such and such a course of action, were at once convinced of its infallibility, simply because he advised it, of Joseph Halliday—for long years his managing clerk—whom by his own good pleasure, and for his own advantage, he had transferred, with one stroke of his pen, into his partner, without in any way altering his position as his inferior officer—master too, of his clerks and his servants, of his dependents, of every kind and degree, and last, but not least, he was master of his wife. And yet, curiously enough, it was in the person of Mrs. Dane that opposition had met that proud and domineering spirit in the most obstinate and aggravated form.

Mr. Dane, had married a wife, not as ordinary men marry, and from ordinary motives. He had not fallen in love with the lady as ordinary mortals are wont to do; neither had he sought her for her fortune, for she was portionless and he was wealthy; nor again had he chosen his bride from any worldly inducement, of high birth, or influential family, for she could not boast of any aristocratic connections, either mushroom or ancient. He had simply selected her out of a large family, because she was young and healthy, with a clear, wholesome skin, and a robust and hearty appetite. "Here," had said Matthew Dane to himself, "is the fitting mother of my children; the person who is most appropriate to give an heir to the house of 'Dane and Trichet.'" So he married her, and Mrs. Dane fell into ill-health shortly after her marriage, and was childless.

For the first two years of their married life he surrounded her with affectionate solicitude; for the third and fourth the solicitude remained, whilst the affection faded; for the fifth and sixth, an angry reproachfulness against duty unfulfilled, and obligations unredemed, had supervened; and then, after that, he let her alone, recognizing that she was a failure, and that she had ruined his ambitions. He almost hated her for her delicacy, and at the very bottom of his heart he wished that she were dead, so that he might try his luck once more.

Such was the man, clean-shaved, strong-featured, hawk-eyed, young yet, in spite of his seventy years, who sat at his table in Cromwell Road, and passed round the tawny-coloured '47 port to his partner. A very different man to himself was Joseph Halliday, his partner. A good ten years younger than his superior, he was, nevertheless, much older in personal appearance—his hair and whiskers were absolutely white, his forehead inclining to baldness, his features sharpened and pinched. An habitual deference of manner characterised his intercourse with Mr. Dane, a meekness of aspect, a ready acquiescence of word, that was yet not wholly free from a certain amount of cunning and a readiness in the expression of pe-

blue eyes shaded by the penthouse of thick grizzling eyebrows.

"Fill up your glass, man," said old Dane, in his full strong accents, "and let me hear your own views. We are two old men. I am childless, you are sonless. What I ask of you is, what is to become of Dane and Trichet? Are we to allow this splendid inheritance to collapse altogether for want of succession? Or shall we take in Phillibut as a third partner? Phillibut has four sons," added the great man meditatively, with a suddenly falling voice, and then he was very silent, tapping against his finger bowl with his almond-shaped finger-nail.

"It seems to me, Mr. Dane," here said the junior partner, with a covert glance at the fixed and dreamy face, "that there is one element which you have left out of consideration. I may be mistaken, of course—" and here he filled up his wine glass with the '47 port, making a distinct pause as he did so—"and in any case," he continued, with a certain timidity—real or feigned—"I, of course, have not any right to open the subject."

"Speak up, Halliday. Speak up!" "Well, sir—sometimes, from force of long habit, Mr. Halliday called his chief "Sir" still—"if I might remind you—there is Mr. Geoffrey."

"Geoffrey? My nephew, you mean?" "Yes, Mr. Dane."

"Pooh! What do I know about my nephew? He has sat on a stool in my office for two years because my brother, a parson, and an improvident man, as all parsons are, asked me to give him a berth. I gave him a stool and a salary. I know nothing about him—what are his capacities for business? How can I tell what he is made of?" He spoke with a certain angry impatience, as though the subject had been reasoned out in his own mind before.

"If I might make so bold as to say, Mr. Dane, Mr. Geoffrey not only bears your name, but he is a highly promising young man, one that either you or I would be glad, indeed, to own as a son."

Mr. Dane laughed shortly, with a little offence. "You, my good friend! Oh, yes, I daresay! You have daughters, I believe?" "Two daughters, Mr. Dane, lovely girls, well brought up, well-educated, well-mannered young women, with whom no one need be ashamed to be connected." And Mr. Halliday settled his chin into his collar with a little conscious pride.

Matthew Dane gave him a swift and sudden glance, sharp as a needle, out of those keen, hawk-like eyes. Nothing ever escaped him, no shade of significance, however remote, was lost upon his ever-ready comprehension. He was master of the minds of men.

"Oh! So that's your idea, Joe Halliday—that my nephew should marry one of your girls, and that I should take the young couple into partnership?"

"I give you my word, sir—no such thought—nothing so presumptuous—or if, indeed, a transient idea did pass through—the trembling junior partner hastened to cry, with confusion.

Mr. Dane laughed. "My good fellow, don't apologise. It's a very natural idea. Human nature, my dear Halliday, is the same, all the world over. 'Chacun pour soi' as our dear neighbors say. Why should you not have dreamt your little day-dream? After all, it's as good as mine. What's Phillibut to me? Or to you, for the matter of that? Nothing at all, of course. Whereas your daughter—

which is it to be, Halliday?—Well, she is your daughter—and my nephew—well, he is my nephew—and blood is thicker than water—and all the rest of the twaddle, Halliday, my good fellow." And Mr. Dane slapped his hand upon his knee, and laughed heartily—a laugh in which satire and amusement, good nature and devilry, were cunningly intermingled.

Mr. Halliday sipped at his port with a face of resignation, and looked intensely uncomfortable. He never quite knew whether the great man was in jest or in earnest.

"Your nephew, Mr. Dane—" he began, tentatively, after a short silence, during which his superior cracked cobnuts and sipped his port contemplatively.

"Ah! Never mind my nephew, my dear friend, let us leave him alone. I can do as I choose with him, of course. I can make him, or I can break him," he added, with a little chuckle, as though the prospect of thus destroying his brother's son had attractions for him. "C'est bien entendu, n'est-ce pas, as partner Trichet would say—" The mythical "Trichet" often figured as a somewhat familiar jest in Mr. Dane's intimate conversation, and was usually a token that the autocrat was in a good temper.

Mr. Halliday, when he heard it, took heart of grace, and laughed the usual little "Ha, ha!" which he considered due to the time-honored joke.

"What I want to hear about is your daughters, Halliday," continued Mr. Dane. "What sort of girls are they?"

"My dear friend, they are dear, good girls, I assure you," replied his junior, seriously—almost pathetically.

Mr. Dane waved his hand impatiently. "Pooh! that's not what I mean. As a matter of course, they are good. All young women are good, till they are tried," added the old Cynic, with a sneer. "That is not what I want to know. Are they clever? Are they beautiful? Are they healthy in body, and clear in mind? What are their characters, and what are the distinctions between them?"

"You ask a great many questions, but I will endeavour to satisfy them." And Mr. Halliday crossed one leg over the other, and folded his hands to-

gether upon his knee. Mr. Dane looked at him keenly and sharply.

It was, perhaps, not an easy thing to do—thus to define the physical and mental peculiarities of his children. But Joseph Halliday held in his hand the key to the situation. He was not a great man, like his senior, but he was a very shrewd one—he knew exactly why Mr. Dane wanted to know all about his girls, and their natures, just as plainly as though he had heard him say: "Which of the two is the most suitable for my purpose—which can I easiest mould and govern, so that, in the event of her becoming my nephew's wife, I can still rule both him and her?"

So he set to work to answer him diplomatically and cautiously, for, after all, it was upon Geoffrey, and not upon his uncle, that the decision would finally rest.

"My two daughters, both, I thank God, in very good health, both are tall and comely-looking, they have brown hair, and nice complexions. As to their characters, Angel, the eldest, who is twenty-two, is of a gentle and retiring nature, whilst her sister Dulcie, although equally tractable, is, nevertheless, rather more impetuous in disposition and impulsive in manner."

"Hum—Miss Angel is a fool, I suppose," muttered old Dane.

"Not at all—not at all," replied Mr. Halliday, considerably nettled by the remark. "Angel is by no means deficient in talent and character; all I meant to imply was that she is less easily carried away by her feelings than Dulcie."

"What in the name of fortune, my good fellow," here broke in old Dane, laughing, "induced you to give such sugary names to your girls? 'Angel,' 'Dulcie,' who ever heard of so much seraphic sweetness in one family! If Miss Angel were a little fiend, and Miss Dulcie as hard as a nether millstone, you could scarcely blame Providence, after provoking the notice of the gods in so perverse a fashion."

"A fancy of my poor dear wife's, Mr. Dane, that was all." And Mr. Halliday sighed, as a widower may be supposed to sigh, even after fifty years of liberty.

"Well, my friend, I must see these young ladies myself. Why do you keep them cooped up in the country? Have them up to town, and bring them to see me. What is it, Barnes?" for the soft-footed butler had opened the door.

"It's Mr. Geoffrey, sir, who is upstairs in the drawing-room with Mrs. Dane."

"Ah, we are just coming up. How long has Mr. Geoffrey been here?" "A quarter of an hour, sir. Mrs. Dane wished me to let you know."

"And at the auspicious hour," the auspicious swain arrives,"

quoted the old man gaily, with a sly smile as he rose from the table, but Joseph Halliday knew the man too well to be led away by this apparent geniality. Mr. Dane never committed himself, and he was as uncertain as ever as to the ultimate success of the matrimonial scheme which he had dared to suggest to him, and upon which hung so many ambitious dreams and hopes. The ground had been broken—that was all.

Meanwhile, upstairs, Geoffrey sat by his aunt's sofa, patiently holding a skein of white wool on his outstretched hands, while she slowly unravelled and wound up its many tangles. Long disappointment, and God knows how much of private suffering and humiliation, had broken down this poor lady until she was now but the faint shadow of the radiant girl who had gone forth fifteen years ago from her happy, if somewhat penurious home, to unite her fate with the elderly millionaire who had come a-wooing to the overcrowded house.

Then she had been full of hope and life and energy, determined to make her husband happy, and to be a good wife to him; soon, very soon, she learnt that she had no influence over his life, and no power to please him, save in the only fashion in which she was unable to gratify his ambition and his wishes.

"Any washerwoman can have babies," she would say to herself in the bitterness of her soul. "There is hardly a poor woman in the streets who would not be more precious to him than I am, just for that one thing of which I am incapable, and, for failing in that, I am as nothing to him."

For in her fashion, she had loved him once, meekly and submissively, in accordance with her marriage vows; but now that all delusion was at an end, and that she realized to the full of her own position with him, the love had perished, and only the misery and the disappointment remained to her.

She was frightened of him, too; scenes of violence and angry reproaches had broken her spirit, whilst constant fretting over the unalterable had undermined her health and ruined her nerves. A poor weak creature, feeble in mind, yet clinging with a piteous affection to those who were kind to her, that was what Mrs. Matthew Dane was now, after fifteen years of married life. She was fond of Geoffrey, for he was always gentle and tender to her, yet she had reason to believe that her husband regarded her friendship with him with suspicion and displeasure.

When she heard the sound of the gentlemen's voices on the staircase, she pushed her armchair further away from him.

"Don't be talking to me, Geoff," she said nervously; "he will think we have been plotting something."

"My dear aunt, surely that must be fancy."

"Oh, you don't know him as I do. He must be master everywhere, even over people's thoughts."

The drawing-room door opened. Geoffrey was sitting close to it on a low chair behind a tall Japanese screen that sheltered the entrance to the room. As the door opened he heard Mr. Halliday say—"We might send Faulkner, perhaps, to France," Faulkner being the name of one of the head clerks.

Then Mr. Dane answered quickly: "No, no, I don't know enough about him, we don't want a repetition of the De Brefour scandal-tragedy business;

no more untried clerks where money is concerned for me, Halliday. Ah! Geoffrey, how d'ye do? Helping your aunt with her wool work, eh?"

But for once Geoffrey had no repartee ready. The name of De Brefour had struck upon his ears with a strange intensity. Swiftly there flashed before his mental vision, the long, low room, warm-curtained and book-lined, the shaded lamp, the flickering firelight, and the "Lady Hamilton" of his dreams, who had granted him that one interview, now more than six weeks ago—beautiful Rose De Brefour!

By what strange chance had her name, held sacred within the innermost recesses of his soul, come to be mentioned again to him, and upon the lips of his uncle? and why were words of such dire import and scandal and tragedy named with it in the same breath?

The next moment he was smiling at himself for his folly. It was, of course, but a mere coincidence of similarity of name—it could be nothing more. And yet the coincidence was a singular one.

To Be Continued.

WINTER HEALTH HINTS.

How to Keep Well During the Indoor Season.

Open Fires.—Before houses were kept so warm people were much healthier. We are great sinners in this respect. If you must have a raging fire as soon as the temperature falls a trifle, have it in an open grate. The constant current up the chimney carries off impure air, which is replaced by air from without.

Diphtheria.—There is no reason why diphtheria should be worse in cold weather than in warm. Good ventilation will usually keep it away. Tonsillitis and sore throat, should be carefully looked after, as either may develop into diphtheria. When a child has sore throat, it should be examined frequently. If there is a yellow substance on the lining close to the tonsils a doctor should be called at once, as this is a diphtheritic symptom.

Malaria.—Malaria may become common in any region where there is much tearing up of the streets. Plenty of sunlight and perfect drainage are the best specifics in city or country. Malaria and yellow fever are pretty nearly akin, the former being, of course, a much milder type.

Deadly Dust.—Street dust contains not only ordinary filth of animal litter, but the specific germs of many diseases, like consumption, diphtheria and pneumonia.

Drawn Fowls.—Fowls should always be "drawn" before they are exposed for sale. The common practice of leaving the intestines in chickens and turkeys, sometimes for days, for no reason but to make them weigh more, poisons the meat.

The Teeth.—A noted physician suggests that there should be free dental institutes for the poor where teeth can be filled as well as merely drawn when far decayed as at present. Decaying teeth are bad for the general health. In the German Army there are staff dentists as well as surgeons, and all soldiers' teeth are treated free of charge.

NAMED AFTER A MOUNTAIN.

The New Fuji, of the Japanese Navy, is a Vessel to be Proud of.

In two years at the outside, the strength of the Japanese navy will be represented by about 250,000 tons of displacement.

Japan's largest and most formidable man-of-war is the Fuji, named after the highest mountain in Japan, having a tonnage of 12,649, which figures represent the exact height of the mountain in feet.

The Fuji was ordered from the Armstrong-Whitworth Company, England, with her sister ship Yoshima, in June, 1894, two months before the outbreak of the China-Japanese war, and arrived at Yokohama, the central naval station of Japan, on October, 31, 1897.

The Fuji is a first class battle ship with a displacement of 12,649 tons, and 13,687 horse power, with a speed of eighteen and a quarter knots an hour. The dimensions are:—Length, 406 feet 6 inches; breadth, at the broadest part, 73 feet; main draught, 26.3 feet. Her armament consists of four 1-inch Armstrong guns, ten 6-inch Armstrong quick firing guns, twenty 3-pound quick fires, four 21-2 pound quick fires and five torpedo tubes.

The Fuji is painted a white gray, the color of all Japanese war ships. Her funnels are placed fore and aft, instead of abreast, and there is only one top for guns to each of the masts. These masts are fitted with an ammunition hoist, which runs inside. She has on board Captain Minra, Commander Saito, and a crew of about three hundred and fifty officers and blue-jackets.

She is the biggest war vessel ever possessed by Japan—indeed, the largest which ever passed through the Suez Canal. This monster represented the Japanese navy at the naval review at Spithead during the Queen's jubilee.

AN EMPEROR'S BREAKFAST.

The German Emperor takes for his breakfast, a small white loaf, the top of which is covered over with salt, and which accordingly goes by the name of salt bun. After this he consumes a small special kind of bun, known as a "lucca eye," then some sandwiches, for which another kind of bread is required, baked until the outside is quite black.

IMPOVERISHED BLOOD.

A CONDITION THAT FREQUENTLY CAUSES MUCH SUFFERING.

Mrs. Henry Gifford, of Kentville, Proves the Value of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in this Condition.

From the Acadien, Wolfville, N.S.

The case of Mrs. Henry Gifford, of Kentville, who some time ago was cured of a distressing malady through the medium of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, is of peculiar value as illustrating the rapidity with which this remarkable medicine operates. A representative of the Acadien who called upon Mrs. Gifford the other day to elicit information, concerning her cure, found her to be a very intelligent lady, and a hearty advocate of the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Upon learning the object of his call Mrs. Gifford expressed herself as pleased at the prospect of having an opportunity to give publicity to her remarkable cure. "I have told all my friends about it," she said, "but have often felt that it was my duty to have a statement of my case published in the papers." Three years ago this spring my system was in a badly run down state. In this condition I was attacked by a heavy cold, and an enlarged tonsil of great size and extreme painfulness was the result. For 9 weary months I was unable to turn my head and my health became such that I could not exert myself in the least. Several physicians were consulted, but without the slightest benefit. The swelling was finally lanced but the operation only aggravated the matter as my blood was so impoverished that the incision did not heal but developed into a running sore. Despondency seized me and at times I almost wished that I was dead. At last by a happy chance I was advised to use Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. After using a few boxes the swelling disappeared and perfect health and buoyancy of spirits returned. Since that time Mrs. Gifford has had implicit confidence in Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and has used them for any physical disorder of herself or children with the same happy results.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills create new blood, build up the nerves, and thus drive disease from the system. In hundreds of cases they have cured after all other medicines had failed, thus establishing the claim that they are a marvel among the triumphs of modern medical science. The genuine Pink Pills are sold only in boxes, bearing the full trade mark, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People." Protect yourself from imposition by refusing any pill that does not bear the registered trade mark around the box. If in doubt send direct to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., and they will be mailed to you post paid at 50c. a box, or six boxes for \$2.50.

ONLY AN OFFICER.

Mr. Arnold Foster tells, in an article in the English National Review on military red tape, a good story of the Admiralty:

"At one time the Admiralty was afflicted in the same way as the War Office, and there is a story of a post captain whose claim for a cab fare from the dockyard gates to Portsmouth Railway Station was refused on the ground that there was no evidence of his having made the journey. The officer is reputed to have replied that, in the first place, he was a post captain in Her Majesty's navy, and had, in fact, taken the cab, but if evidence were required, he could produce the testimony of a beggar and a street walker, who were on the spot at the time, and who could doubtless satisfy their lordships."

WORK OF RATS.

Rats are playing havoc with the underground telephone and telegraph cables in St. Louis. They have discovered that the wires are covered with paraffined paper, and they like the taste. To satisfy their appetites they must gnaw through the lead casting around the wires. It has happened in a number of cases that the rats in gnawing through the lead cables to get at the greased paper have bared the copper wires so that they touch each other and cross in such a manner as to make it impossible to establish communication over them.

AN EDITOR'S TRIAL.

Maximilian Harden, editor of Die Zukunft in Berlin, is to be tried on five charges of lese majeste for the publication of articles casting ridicule on the Emperor. He is almost sure to be convicted, and may be punished by imprisonment, ranging from six months to five years, but the circulation of his paper has increased threefold since the prosecutions, and now reaches a quarter of a million.

A LONDON EEL MARKET.

Few Londoners know that an eel market of a quaint and interesting kind is held every Sunday morning near the south side of Blackfriars Bridge, barring, of course the times when the slippery fishes are not obtainable. It is said to be nearly three hundred years old. The peculiarity of the gathering is that here only you buy eels by the handful instead of by weight. Sixpence a fistful is the price, and although the fishes are generally small it is much cheaper than purchasing by weight.

Woman's success as an engineer is phenomenal. Although she frequently has a wash-out on the line, but few disasters are recorded.