

A Sealed Paper.

(Continued From Page Two.)

Miss Hubbell was much shocked at hearing the news. Death coming between two betrothed or married persons when young is best described as a shock. It is not the prolonged suffering of later years. I delicately hinted that it would be a comfort to Bernard if he could be united to her before his death, saying nothing about the inheritance. She acquiesced at once, and I had the satisfaction of telling him that she knew nothing of the marriage giving her a fortune.

There was a marriage, and as soon as it was over Bernard signified that he wished to see me alone. His young wife went sorrowfully away, and as soon as the door was closed behind her he asked me to reach under his pillow and take out what I would find there. I found a sealed letter addressed to his wife.

"Keep it," he said, "for six months without mentioning it to her, then give it to her."

I made the promise and at his request left him, since he said that after the excitement he had passed through he must rest.

Bernard died that night. I suggested

to his widow that she remain abroad, where she might the sooner recover from her sad experience, and I took the body of my friend to America. Before leaving I told her that the marriage was partly a plan to insure her inheritance of Bernard's property. She was overwhelmed with the kindly act of the man who had loved her so well.

My trip to join Bernard Carey was my first visit to Europe, and, since it had been very short and circumscribed, after having remained at home a few months I concluded to return there. I had interested myself in the settlement of his estate, and, since it was necessary either that his widow should return to sign certain papers, that she might be put in possession of her inheritance, or that she should sign them abroad, I arranged with the attorneys in the case to take them to her. In deed, if she signed them abroad it was necessary that some one should instruct her in the matter.

My stay at Thun had been during the autumn, and now February had come. Mrs. Carey was at Naples, where Americans gather in great numbers during the early months of the year. So I took a steamer for that port via the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean. On reaching Naples I learned that my quest was at Sorrento, on the southern part of the bay, and in a couple of hours I was at her hotel. It was built on the edge of the cliff overhanging the beautiful waters and in the center of an orange grove.

There are stories the principal part of which is left out. So it is with this one. But it is time for me to admit that my return abroad was rather to see Mrs. Carey than to see Europe. The bay of Naples is beautiful, but my eyes did not view it with the same pleasure as that with which I looked upon the face and figure of Edith Carey. There was so much about us that was beautiful that we enjoyed it, she acting as my pilot, before settling down to dry legal documents. She knew that I had the papers pertaining to her inheritance with me, but she did not speak of them, and when I did she asked if tomorrow would not do as well. I assured her that it would, and she informed me that, not being with a party, she had no one to go about with her and longed to see some of the attractive sights near at hand. So we went to Paestum and Amalfi and Capri—indeed, any place that we could reach and return the same day. We were both young and had largely recovered from our melancholy experience at Thun.

"Why," I remarked to her one day while sitting on the steps of the ruined temple of Jupiter in the forum at Pompeii, "should we be long moved by the death of a single person when the many who were formerly hurrying about in the open space before us all passed away eighteen centuries ago?"

It was nearly seven months from the day of Carey's death that I sat down beside his widow with the inheritance papers I had brought with me. She signed them as I directed without reading them or asking a question. When the work was finished we went out and sat on a marble balcony overhanging the bay. The moon was at the full, and its light in Italy is very bright.

"By the bye," I said, "here is a paper Bernard asked me to give you after six months from the date of his death had expired."

"Please open it," she said, with a shudder.

I did as she asked. I could easily read it by the light of the moon. I started to read it aloud to her, but stopped suddenly.

It expressed a wish that she should marry his friend—myself.

And then and there we agreed to comply.

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