

**The Governor's Lady.**

[Continued from page 6, Col. 3.]

se and by servants with Dan there. Without him she felt like a prisoner of state and looked on the servants as so many jailers.

Leaving her breakfast practically untasted, Mary again ventured to the telephone. With faltering voice she repeated the number. "One-three-nine-four;" with beating heart she inquired for "Mr. Slade;" with sinking courage she received the answer that Mr. Slade had gone out, leaving no message. Again and again during the day she repeated the call, only to receive a similar reply. The possibility of her husband having left such a message to be delivered to her, whether he was there or not never occurred to the truthful, simple-minded little woman. But Slade did not want to be reached by her, and if an untruth, more or less, were necessary, the telephone boy was easily bribed.

Meanwhile Slade was eagerly looking forward to his new life. Never a man to waver, he did not once look back to the wife he had so coolly deserted. He was being dined and banqueted and feted, being everywhere hailed as the candidate for governor. He was sniffing the first breath of future glories with keenest delight. This was the sort of thing that made a man feel big! This was the sort of life to lead—with men bowing and salaaming all around him. He walked with a firmer tread. His shoulders were thrown back a bit more arrogantly. His chest was more noticeable as he walked down the street.

The innate conceit and self-esteem of the man made him overlook the fact that the party needed a rich man. He was quite satisfied that he was being boosted by Strickland and the others because of his brains, his unusual ability, his oratory and his power to lead men. He was happier than he had been for years. Every day the new life looked brighter and the old less desirable.

If he gave a thought to Mary it was a passing one. Mary was "comfortable." She had everything that money could buy. The servants would be taking good care of her, of course. Of the lump in Mary's throat as she sat at the lonely breakfast table and as she went through the still more lonesome ordeal of the formal dinner, he knew nothing. Of the woman's aching heart and her eyes bright with unshed tears as she tried to keep up before the servants and make excuses for his absence, Slade was heartlessly oblivious. Or perhaps it was self-esteem again, that made him unable to feel for her—the self-esteem of the successful man who feels no wounds when fighting for what he wants, and neither knows nor cares that others feel them. He had a heart, but it was unpleasantly like Pharaoh's.

But of Katherine Strickland's statuesque beauty and her cosmopolitan manner he was delightfully aware. During the weeks since he had left home Slade had been calling regularly at the Strickland home, partly to consult with the senator and partly for the purpose of posing for the bust which Katherine was modeling. As they sat hour after hour, he posing comfortably, she working deftly and talking even more cleverly, Slade and Katherine had come to a mutual understanding. The more they saw of each other the more each became convinced that their paths would inevitably converge.

Katherine talked animatedly and entertainingly of social life abroad and of the gay times in Washington, and Slade's heart warmed and his eyes flashed as he pictured himself a part of that charmed circle. With keen penetration he saw the longing of the girl's nature, her iron will, her determination to gain social honors at almost any cost. He flattered himself that when he said the word Katherine Strickland would be ready to cast her lot with his.

From the smoking room of Senator Strickland's big house came the strident sound of men's voices, raised in excitement, and, it would seem, acclaim. Now and again the senator's smooth, oratorical voice would sound and then Slade's slightly deprecatory, yet firm and pleased. Then would follow the patter of applause, laughter and the sudden dropping of voices that signified earnest converse.

To Katherine Strickland, sitting in the softly lighted library adjoining, every sound had its meaning. Her eyes sparkled with keen interest. In her cheeks glowed the deep rose of excitement and exultation. In that other room she knew they were making history. In that other room they were putting up a man for governor, a man she admired and who had aroused her interest as no other man had ever done.

Nothing could stand in that man's way, she thought, with a catch in her breath, nothing could stop him now that he was fairly started. How different this domineering, forceful personality from Bob Hayes, the man who had first won her girl's heart, and yet for whom she had never been willing to renounce her interest in the political and social life which obsessed her with the same compelling force as it did Slade.

With an effort she brought her mind back to the present and to Mrs. Wesley Merritt, who had dropped in on her way from a dance to pick up her husband.

"You simply weren't listening to a word I said," Mrs. Merritt complained in her affectedly affectionate way. "I

was asking if you know Mr. Slade very well."

"Yes," Katherine replied, lightly. "we know him very well."

"And does he ever mention his wife?" in Mrs. Merritt's most perfectly feline manner.

"Never once," admitted Katherine, without even an attempt at an evasion. "And you have never met her?" Mrs. Merritt was in her glory if she could probe.

"No, I have never met her."

"How extraordinary! My husband—why, Wesley Merritt's name spells hearth and home, domestic purity—while Slade's! They tell me he hasn't seen his wife for weeks, and it's town talk that he's living at his club. And to think he's never mentioned her to you!"

Katherine had quietly rung for a servant, and as Mrs. Merritt finished, remarked casually: "Martin, see that these letters are mailed at once."

Unabashed, Mrs. Merritt was moving eagerly about the artistic room, comfortable in all its appointments, its richness enhanced and mellowed with age, a blend of color that nothing but years can give.

Fannie Merritt was a decided blonde. Her decision had been made more than ten years before. It was a decision that, once made, must be abided by, and the woman had been living up to it ever since. Her gown was the last word of sartorial elegance and style. Daringly décolleté it clung to her long, svelte figure with loving emphasis, and trailed round her exquisitely dressed feet. Her hair did credit to the hairdresser's long and patient efforts, and long, bizarre diamond pendants flashed and sparkled from her ears. If ever a woman had become a slave to her own personal pleasure and dress, that woman was Fannie Merritt. Too self-centered and selfish ever to crave motherhood, she lavished a kind of affection on a watery-eyed little poodle, which repaid her with lap-dog gratitude.

Tonight she was restless and ill at ease. Like Katherine, her mind was full of one thought—Slade, Slade, Slade—but thoughts that took a different direction. She was sick of his name, sick of hearing of his money, sick of the talk of his power and of hearing him named as "the man of the hour." He was winning the very honors she had coveted for her husband, and taking them right out from beneath his very eyes and nose. There didn't seem to be a doubt of Slade becoming governor, the very position for which her husband had been striving for the past six terms. Slade with his millions needed the governorship no more than a pampered child needs a new toy, while to her husband success or failure this time meant either the retrieving of his fortunes or his utter ruin.

The abstraction of the two women was broken by the sudden entrance of Hayes. "Whew!" he whistled. "They're having a time of it in there. Good evening, Mrs. Merritt, your husband is certainly making it warm for Mr. Slade."

"Indeed," laughed Mrs. Merritt, gratified for the moment.

"Dear, dear!" she exclaimed as she watched Hayes gazing wistfully at Katherine and looking very handsome and manly in his well-made evening clothes. "It's quite like old times to see you together." Unhappy herself, it gave her a certain pleasure to make other people unhappy. The jealousy she had long felt for the younger and more beautiful woman found expression now in her purring tones, as, with amiable cruelty, she reminded them of their earlier intimacy. She took delight in making Bob writhe and Katherine whiten as she recalled their passionate young love when only the senator's stern interference had kept them from wedding.

"Let me see," she recollected, "when I was your confidante, you were



"Did You Ask the Senator for the \$10,000 I Want?"

twenty-one, Katherine, and you, Rob, were twenty-four. I can feel Rob's hands gripping mine yet: 'O, Fannie—please see her for me—the senator doesn't approve of it.' And the tears you shed on my shoulder, Katherine—why, it feels wet to think of it."

"O! Fannie!" Katherine's voice was not as firm as usual.

"I always said," the woman persisted, "Rob, she'll come home to you in the end—"

"I think I'll go back and listen to the discussion," and Bob flung disgustedly out of the room. At the door he almost collided with Merritt. Katherine had hurried out to see a reporter who wanted the wherefores and the whys of the dinner party to Slade.

"I can't possibly get away, dear," Merritt explained to his wife. "I've

been buttonholed by some men from up the state. Shall you wait or go home—first?"

Mrs. Merritt refused to be dismissed in that peremptory fashion.

"I'll wait," she returned with acid sweetness. "Then if you are not ready I'll run along."

"Slade's had an ovation tonight," Merritt informed her, nodding toward the smoking-room. "The big out-of-town men are all here. Some of 'em in there yet. He's big, Fannie. He's big. We can't deny that. The brute attacks his point with all the force of a sledge hammer."

"Yes, that's what you lack—punch!" his wife turned on him petulantly.

"You're snowed under," she complained, bitterly. "If you'd taken my advice you wouldn't have come to this Slade feed tonight. What's your paper for," she demanded, "if you can't attack your rival candidate in its columns? Anyone would think you wanted to make him governor—instead of yourself."

"I can't attack him publicly," Merritt retorted. "He'd put up glue factories facing our property and with a lake breeze blowing our way—phew! My position is very difficult. Of course, election's a long way ahead, but I'm the only stick in his puddle."

"Yes, you're a big stick!" she taunted. "Why don't you do something?"

"What can I do?" he groaned. "I've been told tonight by no less than four men that they won't support me again. And Strickland's speech introducing Slade was a masterpiece!"

"Yes—Strickland's masterpieces are concocted by his daughter, we all know that. Just as I write your stuff," she finished with hateful emphasis on the possessive.

"My dear, I wish you'd be more careful!" warned Merritt, making sure that the door leading into the smoking-room was closed.

"Your 'Message to the Farmer'—that made you famous! What did I ever get for writing it?" and with self-satisfied deliberateness she arranged herself carefully in a low-seated chair near the fireplace.

"I never denied that you had a man's brain," placatingly, drawingly, mockingly, "darling."

"Yes—I'm the family mosquito that buzzes behind your ears. God help us if it wasn't for me. Did you ask the senator for the \$10,000 I want?" she demanded.

"He can't," Merritt was huddled in the nearest chair. The subject had been causing him appetiteless days and sleepless nights. When a woman

and tenacity wants something a man can't get then that man is very likely to be nagged into desperation.

"You look out, Wesley," she answered, alarm breaking the careful modulation of her voice. "That's the first time he ever refused us."

"He's broke—dead broke. I don't know how he can keep this up. The senator's nearly out. That's why he's sticking to Slade."

"Well, I don't care how you get it—I want it. It's vital. I've got to have ten thousand to go to Europe. Everybody's going—Mrs. Webb, Mrs. O'Donnell—" and her voice trailed off into a pettish whine.

"Yes, I know all about that crowd," Merritt snarled. "Sunny places for shady people."

"Wesley! I need clothes. I've told everybody I'm going," and the peevish woman glared at her husband. Then she added suddenly: "Can't the senator ask Slade?"

"Oh, my God, Fannie!" the hectoring man groaned. "Can I suggest that? A rival candidate! I've mortgaged my property up to the hilt now for clothes—but sooner than—"

"I don't care—I need clothes," his wife interrupted, rising and walking restlessly about the room. "I've got to go to Europe. The devil take your excuses."

Then, with a sudden change of thought, she cooed. "Wesley!"

[Continued next week.]

**MEXICAN WOMEN WANT VOTE**

Republic's First Woman's Congress Petitions Carranza.

Mexican women are demanding the right of suffrage.

In the first woman's congress held in the republic women of Yucatan have declared Mexican women the equal of men in intelligence and entitled to hold office and to share in all political activities. The Mexican suffragists call on women throughout their land to join in the demand.

The demand of the women was received at El Paso, by Andrea Garcia, Mexican Consul, for transmission to General Carranza.

**Women As Street-Cleaning Inspectors.**

"Because women are the only persons who know how to clean house," Street Commissioner Fetherston of New York City, is going to permit five of them to get on his street cleaning force and see what they can do at cleaning up the large dirty-faced city of Greater New York. "New York is nothing more than a large private house," remarked the commissioner, and as women are natural housekeepers and also trained house cleaners, he expects better results from them than from an entire board of men.

Women have been saying for a long time now that municipalities are only extensions of homes and private houses. Their contention for positions in the great modern civic movements is based upon the fact that here women are only fulfilling the same duties on a large scale which for generations they have been fulfilling on a small scale. Women believe that they can make good in such positions. These five inspectors from New York City will be watched with considerable interest by all those who have faith that this is a most natural and wise step for Commissioner Fetherston to take.

**Proximity Did It.**

The prairie districts of Canada, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan are presenting bills for woman suffrage. "It may be," says an English paper, "because the intercourse of Manitoba and Alberta with the enfranchised states of the Union is so close that they have been won over to suffrage by seeing it in practice." In Manitoba a government woman suffrage bill has been drafted, while a similar bill is being drawn up in Alberta. Suffragists confidently believe that women will win equal suffrage rights in those two provinces within a few months. There are also good hopes for suffrage in Saskatchewan. It is expected that Dominion Franchise will automatically follow the Provincial vote for the women of Manitoba and Alberta, as in any Province all those people vote for the Dominion Parliament who are qualified to vote for their own Provincial Parliament.

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