

Sheba Blake Publishing Corp.

A DAUGHTER OF THE SIOUX

Charles King



Sheba Blake Publishing Corp

A DAUGHTER OF THE SIOUX

Charles King



CHARLES KING

A Daughter of the Sioux

First published by Sheba Blake Publishing Corp. 2021

Copyright © 2021 by Charles King

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise without written permission from the publisher. It is illegal to copy this book, post it to a website, or distribute it by any other means without permission.

This novel is entirely a work of fiction. The names, characters and incidents portrayed in it are the work of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events or localities is entirely coincidental.

Charles King asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

Sheba Blake Publishing Corp.

2288 Crossrail Dr

Atlanta, GA 30349

support@shebablake.com

First edition

Cover art by Sheba Blake

Editing by Sheba Blake

This book was professionally typeset on Reedsy

Find out more at reedsy.com



Contents

1. Foreshadowed Events
2. Absent from Duty
3. A Night Encounter
4. The Sign of the Bar Shoe
5. A Grave Discovery
6. First Sight of the Foe
7. Blood Will Tell
8. More Strange Discoveries
9. Bad News from the Front
10. "I'll Never Go Back"
11. A Fight With a Fury
12. The Ordeal By Fire
13. Wounded - Body and Soul
14. A Vanished Heroine
15. A Woman's Plot
16. Night Prowling at Frayne
17. A Rifled Desk
18. Burglary at Blake's
19. A Slap for the Major
20. The Sioux Surrounded

[21. Thanksgiving at Frayne](#)

[22. Behind the Bars](#)

[23. A Soldier Entangled](#)

[24. The Death Song of the Sioux](#)

[*About the Author*](#)

One

Foreshadowed Events



The major commanding looked up from the morning report and surveyed the post adjutant with something of perturbation, if not annoyance, in his grim, gray eyes. For the fourth time that week had Lieutenant Field requested permission to be absent for several hours. The major knew just why the junior wished to go and where. The major knew just why he wished him not to go, but saw fit to name almost any other than the real reason when, with a certain awkward hesitancy he began:

“W—ell, is the post return ready?”

“It *will* be, sir, in abundant time,” was the prompt reply.

“You know they sent it back for correction last month,” hazarded the commander.

“And you know, sir, the error was not mine,” was the instant rejoinder, so quick, sharp and positive as to carry it at a bound to the verge of disrespect, and the keen, blue eyes of the young soldier gazed, frank and fearless, into the heavily ambushed grays of the veteran in the chair. It made the latter wince and stir uneasily.

“If there’s one thing I hate, Field, it is to have my papers sent back by some whipsnapper of a clerk, inviting attention to this or that error, and I expect my adjutant to see to it that they don’t.”

“Your adjutant does see to it, sir. I’m willing to bet a month’s pay fewer errors have been found in the papers of Fort Frayne than any post in the Department of the Platte. General Williams told you as much when you were in Omaha.”

The major fairly wriggled in his cane-bottomed whirligig. What young Field said was true, and the major knew it. He knew, moreover, there wasn’t a more painstaking post adjutant from the Missouri to the mountains. He knew their monthly reports—“returns” as the regulations call them—were referred to by a model adjutant general as model papers. He knew it was due to young Field’s care and attention, and he knew he thought all the world of that young gentleman. It was just because he thought so much of him he was beginning to feel that it was high time to put a stop to something that was going on. But, it was a delicate matter; a woman was the matter; and he hadn’t the moral courage to go at it the straightforward way. He “whip sawed” again. Thrumming on the desk with his lean, bony fingers he began:—

“If I let my adjutant out so much, what’s to prevent other youngsters asking similar indulgence?”

The answer came like the crack of a whip:—

“Nothing, sir; and far better would it be for everybody concerned if they spent more hours in the saddle and fewer at the store.”

This was too much for the one listener in the room. With something like the sound of a suppressed sneeze, a tall, long-legged captain of cavalry started up from his chair, an outspread newspaper still full-stretched between him and the desk of the commander, and, thus hidden as to his face, sidled sniggering

off to the nearest window. Young Field had fearlessly, if not almost impudently, hit the nail on the head, and metaphorically rapped the thrumming fingers of his superior officer. Some commanders would have raged and sent the daring youngster right about in arrest. Major Webb knew just what Field referred to,—knew that the fascinations of pool, “pitch” and poker held just about half his commissioned force at all “off duty” hours of the day or night hanging about the officers’ club room at the post trader’s; knew, moreover, that while the adjutant never wasted a moment over cards or billiards, he, the post commander, had many a time taken a hand or a cue and wagered his dollars against those of his devoted associates. They all loved him. There wasn’t “a mean streak in his whole system,” said every soldier at Fort Frayne. He had a capital record as a volunteer—a colonel and, later, brigade commander in the great war. He had the brevet of brigadier general of volunteers, but repudiated any title beyond that of his actual rank in the regulars. He was that *rara avis*—a bachelor field officer, and a bird to be brought down if feminine witchery could do it. He was truthful, generous, high-minded, brave—a man who preferred to be of and with his subordinates rather than above them—to rule through affection and regard rather than the stern standard of command. He was gentle and courteous alike to officers and the rank and file, though he feared no man on the face of the globe. He was awkward, bungling and overwhelmingly, lavishly, kind and thoughtful in his dealings with the womenfolk of the garrison, for he stood in awe of the entire sisterhood. He could ride like a centaur; he couldn’t dance worth a cent. He could snuff a candle with his Colt at twenty paces and couldn’t hit a croquet ball to save his soul. His deep-set gray eyes, under their tangled thatch of brown, gazed straight into the face of every man on the Platte, soldier, cowboy, Indian or halfbreed, but fell abashed if a laundress looked at him. Billy Ray,

captain of the sorrel troop and the best light rider in Wyoming, was the only man he ever allowed to straddle a beautiful thoroughbred mare he had bought in Kentucky, but, bad hands or good, there wasn't a riding woman at Frayne who hadn't backed Lorna time and again, because to a woman the major simply couldn't say no.

And though his favorite comrades at the post were captains like Blake and Billy Ray, married men both whose wives he worshipped, the major's rugged heart went out especially to Beverly Field, his boy adjutant, a lad who came to them from West Point only three years before the autumn this story opens, a young fellow full of high health, pluck and principle—a tip top soldier, said everybody from the start, until, as Gregg and other growlers began to declaim, the major completely spoiled him. Here, three years only out of military leadingstrings, he was a young cock of the walk, “too dam' independent for a second lieutenant,” said the officers' club element of the command, men like Gregg, Wilkins, Crane and a few of their following. “The keenest young trooper in the regiment,” said Blake and Ray, who were among its keenest captains, and never a cloud had sailed across the serene sky of their friendship and esteem until this glorious September of 188-, when Nanette Flower, a brilliant, beautiful brunette came a visitor to old Fort Frayne.

And it was on her account the major would, could he have seen the way, said no to the adjutant's request to be absent again. On her account and that of one other, for that request meant another long morning in saddle with Miss Flower, another long morning in which “the sweetest girl in the garrison,” so said they all, would go about her daily duties with an aching heart. There was no woman at Fort Frayne who did not know that Esther Dade thought all the world of Beverly Field. There was only one man who apparently had no inkling of it—Beverly Field himself.

She was the only daughter of a veteran officer, a captain of infantry, who at the age of fifty, after having held a high command in the volunteers during the civil war, was still meekly doing duty as a company officer of regulars nearly two decades after. She had been carefully reared by a most loving and thoughtful mother, even in the crude old days of the army, when its fighting force was scattered in small detachments all over the wide frontier, and men, and women, too, lived on soldier rations, eked out with game, and dwelt in tents or ramshackle, one-storied huts, "built by the labor of troops." At twelve she had been placed at school in the far East, while her father enjoyed a two years' tour on recruiting service, and there, under the care of a noble woman who taught her girls to be women indeed—not vapid votaries of pleasure and fashion, Esther spent five useful years, coming back to her fond father's soldier roof a winsome picture of girlish health and grace and comeliness—a girl who could ride, walk and run if need be, who could bake and cook, mend and sew, cut, fashion and make her own simple wardrobe; who knew algebra, geometry and "trig" quite as well as, and history, geography and grammar far better than, most of the young West Pointers; a girl who spoke her own tongue with accuracy and was not badly versed in French; a girl who performed fairly well on the piano and guitar, but who sang full-throated, rejoicing, exulting like the lark—the soulful music that brought delight to her ageing father, half crippled by the wounds of the war days, and to the mother who so devotedly loved and carefully planned for her. Within a month from her graduation at Madame Piatt's she had become the darling of Fort Frayne, the pet of many a household, the treasure of her own. With other young gallants of the garrison, Beverly Field had been prompt to call, prompt to be her escort when dance or drive, ride or picnic was planned in her honor, especially the ride, for Mr. Adjutant Field loved the saddle, the open prairie or the bold, undulating bluffs. But Field

was the busiest man at the post. Other youngsters, troop or company subalterns, had far more time at their disposal, and begged for rides and dances, strolls and sports which the post adjutant was generally far too busy to claim. It was Esther who brought lawn tennis to Frayne and found eager pupils of both sexes, but Field had been the first to meet and welcome her; had been for a brief time at the start her most constant cavalier. Then, as others began to feel the charm of her frank, cordial, joyous manner, and learned to read the beauty that beamed in her clear, truthful eyes and winsome, yet not beautiful face, they became assiduous in turn,—two of them almost distressingly so,—and she could not wound them by refusals. Then came a fortnight in which her father sat as a member of a court-martial down at old Fort Laramie, where were the band, headquarters and four troops of the ——th, and Captain and Mrs. Freeman, who were there stationed, begged that Mrs. Dade and Esther should come and visit them during the session of the court. There would be all manner of army gaieties and a crowd of outside officers, and, as luck would have it, Mr. Field was ordered thither as a witness in two important cases. The captain and his good wife went by stage; Esther and Beverly rode every inch of the way in saddle, camping over night with their joyous little party at La Bontè. Then came a lovely week at Laramie, during which Mr. Field had little to do but devote himself to, and dance with, Esther, and when his final testimony was given and he returned to his station, and not until then, Esther Dade discovered that life had little interest or joy without him; but Field rode back unknowing, and met at Frayne, before Esther Dade's return, a girl who had come almost unheralded, making the journey over the Medicine Bow from Rock Springs on the Union Pacific in the comfortable carriage of old Bill Hay, the post trader, escorted by that redoubtable woman, Mrs. Bill Hay, and

within the week of her arrival Nanette Flower was the toast of the bachelors' mess, the talk of every household at Fort Frayne.

And well she might be. Dark and lustrous were her eyes; black, luxuriant and lustrous was her hair; dark, rich and lustrous her radiant beauty. In contour her face was well nigh faultless. It might have been called beautiful indeed but for the lips, or something about the mouth, that in repose had not a soft or winsome line, but then it was never apparently in repose. Smiles, sunshine, animation, rippling laughter, flashing, even, white teeth—these were what one noted when in talk with Miss Flower. There was something actually radiant, almost dazzling, about her face. Her figure, though *petite*, was exquisite, and women marked with keen appreciation, if not envy, the style and finish of her varied and various gowns. Six trunks, said Bill Hay's boss teamster, had been trundled over the range from Rawlins, not to mention a box containing her little ladyship's beautiful English side-saddle, Melton bridle and other equine impedimenta. Did Miss Flower like to ride? She adored it, and Bill Hay had a bay half thoroughbred that could discount the major's mare 'cross country. All Frayne was out to see her start for her first ride with Beverly Field, and all Frayne reluctantly agreed that sweet Essie Dade could never sit a horse over ditch or hurdle with the superb grace and unconcern displayed by the daring, dashing girl who had so suddenly become the centre of garrison interest. For the first time in her life Mrs. Bill Hay knew what it was to hold the undivided attention of army society, for every woman at Fort Frayne was wild to know all about the beautiful newcomer, and only one could tell.

Hay, the trader, had prospered in his long years on the frontier, first as trader among the Sioux, later as sutler, and finally, when Congress abolished that title, substituting therefore the euphemism, without material clog upon

the perquisites, as post trader at Fort Frayne. No one knew how much he was worth, for while apparently a most open-hearted, whole-souled fellow, Hay was reticence itself when his fortunes or his family were matters of question or comment. He had long been married, and Mrs. Hay, when at the post, was a social sphinx,—kind-hearted, charitable, lavish to the soldiers' wives and children, and devotion itself to the families of the officers when sickness and trouble came, as come in the old days they too often did. It was she who took poor Ned Robinson's young widow and infant all the way to Cheyenne when the Sioux butchered the luckless little hunting party down by Laramie Peak. It was she who nursed Captain Forrest's wife and daughter through ten weeks of typhoid, and, with her own means, sent them to the seashore, while the husband and father was far up on the Yellowstone, cut off from all communication in the big campaign of '76. It was she who built the little chapel and decked and dressed it for Easter and Christmas, despite the fact that she herself had been baptized in the Roman Catholic faith. It was she who went at once to every woman in the garrison whose husband was ordered out on scout or campaign, proffering aid and comfort, despite the fact long whispered in the garrisons of the Platte country, that in the old, old days she had far more friends among the red men than the white. That could well be, because in those days white men were few and far between. Every one had heard the story that it was through her the news of the massacre at Fort Phil Kearny was made known to the post commander, for she could speak the dialects of both the Arapahoe and the Sioux, and had the sign language of the Plains veritably at her fingers' ends. There were not lacking those who declared that Indian blood ran in her veins—that her mother was an Ogalalla squaw and her father a French Canadian fur trapper, a story to which her raven black hair and brows, her deep, dark eyes and somewhat swarthy

complexion gave no little color. But, long years before, Bill Hay had taken her East, where he had relatives, and where she studied under excellent masters, returning to him summer after summer with more and more of refinement in manner, and so much of style and fashion in dress that her annual advent had come to be looked upon as quite the event of the season, even by women of the social position of Mrs. Ray and Mrs. Blake, the recognized leaders among the young matrons of the ——th Cavalry, and by gentle Mrs. Dade, to whom every one looked up in respect,—almost in reverence. Despite the mystery about her antecedents there was every reason why Mrs. Hay should be held in esteem and affection. Bill Hay himself was a diamond in the rough,—square, sturdy, uncompromising, generous and hospitable; his great pride and glory was his wife; his one great sorrow that their only child had died almost in infancy. His solecisms in syntax and society were many. He was given at times to profanity, and at others, when madame was away, to draw poker; but officers and men alike proclaimed him a man of mettle and never hesitated to go to him when in financial straits, sure of unobtrusive aid. But, even had this not been the case, the popularity of his betterhalf would have carried him through, for there was hardly a woman at Frayne to speak of her except in terms of genuine respect. Mrs. Hay was truth telling, sympathetic, a peacemaker, a resolute opponent of gossip and scandal of every kind, a woman who minded her own business and was only mildly insistent that others should do likewise. She declined all overtures leading to confidences as to her past, and demanded recognition only upon the standard of the present, which was unimpeachable.

All the same it came something like a shock to society at Frayne that, when she appeared at the post this beautiful autumn of 188-, nearly three months later than the usual time, she should be accompanied by this brilliant and

beautiful girl of whom no one of their number had previously heard, and whom she smilingly, confidently presented as, "My niece, Miss Flower."

There was a dance the night the Dades got home from Laramie. Nearly all day long had they driven in the open buckboard over the rough, winding road along the Platte, and Mrs. Dade was far too tired to think of going, but Esther was so eager that her father put aside his precious paper, tucked her under his arm and trudged cheerily away across the parade toward the bright lights of the hop room. They had a fairly good string orchestra at Frayne that year, and one of Strauss's most witching waltzes—"Sounds from the Vienna Woods"—had just been begun as father and daughter entered. A dozen people, men and women both, saw them and noted what followed. With bright, almost dilated, eyes, and a sweet, warm color mantling her smiling face, Esther stood gazing about the room, nodding blithely as she caught the glance of many a friend, yet obviously searching for still another. Then of a sudden they saw the bonny face light up with joy uncontrollable, for Mr. Field came bounding in at the side door, opening from the veranda of the adjutant's office. He saw her; smiled joyous greeting as he came swiftly toward her; then stopped short as a girl in black grenadine dropped the arm of her cavalier, the officer with whom she was promenading, and without a moment's hesitation, placed her left hand, fan-bearing, close to the shoulder knot on his stalwart right arm, her black-gloved right in his white-kidded left, and instantly they went gliding away together, he nodding half in whimsical apology, half in merriment, over the black spangled shoulder, and the roseate light died slowly from the sweet, smiling face—the smile itself seemed slowly freezing—as the still dilated eyes followed the graceful movements of the couple, slowly, harmoniously winding and reversing about the waxen floor. Even at the Point she had never seen more beautiful dancing. Even when her stanchest friend, Mrs. Blake, pounced

upon her with fond, anxious, welcoming words, and Mrs. Ray, seeing it all, broke from her partner's encircling arm, and sped to add her greeting, the child could hardly regain self-control, and one loving-hearted woman cried herself to sleep that night for the woe that had come into the soft and tender eyes which had first beamed with joy at sight of Beverly Field, then filled with sudden dread immeasurable.

But the major sought to block that morning ride in vain. The impetuous will of the younger soldier prevailed, as he might have known it would, and from the rear gallery of his quarters, with his strong fieldglass, Major Webb watched the pair fording the Platte far up beyond Pyramid Butte. "Going over to that damned Sioux village again," he swore between his set teeth. "That makes the third time she's headed him there this week," and with strange annoyance at heart he turned away to seek comfort in council with his stanch henchman, Captain Ray, when the orderly came bounding up the steps with a telegraphic despatch which the major opened, read, turned a shade grayer and whistled low.

"My compliments to Captains Blake and Ray," said he, to the silent young soldier, standing attention at the doorstep, "and say I should be glad to see them here at once."

That night the sentries had just called off half past one when there was some commotion at the guard-house. A courier had ridden in post haste from the outlying station of Fort Beecher, far up under the lee of the Big Horn range. The corporal of the guard took charge of his reeking horse, while the sergeant led the messenger to the commander's quarters. The major was already awake and half dressed. "Call the adjutant," was all he said, on reading the despatch, and the sergeant sped away. In less than five minutes he was back.

“I could get no answer to my knock or ring, sir, so I searched the house.
The adjutant isn't there!”

Two

Absent from Duty



For a moment the major stood in silence; then, briefly saying, "Call Captain Ray," turned again to the dimly lighted hallway of his commodious quarters, (the women thought it such a shame there should be no "lady of the house" for the largest and finest of the long line known as "Officers' Row") while the sergeant of the guard scurried away to the soldier home of the senior cavalry captain on duty at the post. When the major again came forth his field glasses were in his hand and he had hurried down the steps and out into the broad sheen of the moonlight when he caught sight of the courier seated on the horseblock at the gate, wearily leaning his head upon his gauntleted hand. Webb stopped short:

"Come right in here, my lad," he cried, "I want to speak with you," and, followed slowly by the soldier, he entered his parlor, and whirled an easy chair in front of the open fireplace. "Sit right down there now, and I'll be with you in a minute," he added; bustled into the rear room and presently reappeared with a decanter and glass; poured out a stiff tot of Monongahela; "A little water?" he asked, as the trooper's eye brightened gratefully. A little water was added and off came the right hand gauntlet. "I drink the major's health and long life to

him,” said the soldier, gulping down the fluid without so much as a wink. Then, true to his training, set down the glass and stood strictly at attention.

“You’ve had nothing to eat since yesterday morning, I’ll be bound,” said Webb. “Now, I’ve got to see some of my officers at once. You make yourself at home here. You’ll find cold beef, bread, cheese, pickles, milk, if you care for it, and pie right there in the pantry. Take the lamp in with you and help yourself. If you want another nip, there’s the decanter. You’ve made splendid time. Did you meet no Indians?”

“Not one, sir, but I saw smokes at sunset out toward Eagle Butte.”

“Your name—I see you belong to Captain Truscott’s troop.”

“Kennedy, sir; and I thank the major.”

“Then I’ll leave you in charge until you’ve had your fill,” said the commander. “Then go over to ‘F’ Troop’s quarters and get a bed. Tell anybody who comes I’ve gone to the flagstaff.” With that the major stalked from the room, followed by the Irishman’s adoring eyes. A moment later he stood by the tall white staff at the edge of the northward bluff, at whose feet the river swept by in musical murmurings. There he quickly focussed his glass, and gazed away westward up the Platte to where but the evening before a score of Indian lodges dotted the other bank, perhaps two miles away. The September moon was at its full and, in that rare, cloudless atmosphere, flooding the valley with its soft, silvery light so that close at hand, within the limits of the garrison, every object could be almost as distinctly seen as in broad day-light, but, farther away, over the lowlands and the river bottom and the rolling prairie stretching to the northern horizon, the cottonwoods along the stream or in the distant swales made only black blotches against the vague, colorless surface, and the bold bluffs beyond the reservation limits south of the flashing waters, the sharp, sawlike edge of the distant mountain range that barred the way to

the west, even the cleancut outlines of Eagle Butte, the landmark of the northward prairie, visible for fifty miles by day, were now all veiled in some intangible filament that screened them from the soldier's searching gaze. Later in the season, on such a night, their crests would gleam with radiance almost intolerable, the glistening sheen of their spotless crown of snow. All over this broad expanse of upland prairie and wooded river bed and boldly undulating bluff line not so much as a spark of fire peeped through the wing of night to tell the presence of human wayfarer, white, halfbreed or Indian, even where the Sioux had swarmed, perhaps two hundred strong, at sunset of the day gone by.

Close at hand, northernmost of the brown line, was the double set of quarters occupied by Captains Blake and Ray, the latter, as senior, having chosen the half nearest the bluff because of the encircling veranda and the fine, far-extending view. A bright light gleamed now behind the blinds of the corner room of the second floor, telling that the captain was up and dressing in answer to the commander's summons, but all the rest of the dozen houses were black, save where at the middle of the row a faint glow came from the open doorway at the commanding officer's. Across the broad level of the parade were the long, low barracks of the troops, six in number, gable-ending east and west. Closing the quadrangle on the south were the headquarters buildings and the assembly room, the offices of the adjutant and quartermaster, the commissary and quartermaster's storehouses, etc. At the southwest angle stood the guard-house, where oil lamps, backed by their reflectors of polished tin, sent brilliant beams of light athwart the roadway. Beyond these low buildings the black bulk of the Medicine Bow Mountains, only a dozen miles away, tumbled confusedly against the sparkling sky. All spoke of peace, security, repose, for even in the flats under the westward bluff,

where lay the wide extended corrals, hay and wood yards and the stables, not one of the myriad dogs that hung about the post was lifting up his voice to bay the autumn moon. Even those easily-started night trumpeters, the big Missouri mules, sprawled about their roomy, sand-floored stables and drowsed in placid comfort, wearied with their musical efforts of the earlier hours of the night and gathering impetus for the sonorous braying with which they should presently salute the dawn.

Beyond the guard-house, at the edge of the plateau overlooking the westward flats, but invisible from the flagstaff bluff, stood the big wooden edifice known as the store, with its card and billiard room for the officers on the southern side, another for the enlisted men upon the northern, the bar and general merchandise establishment compressed between them. Southward, farther still, surrounded by crude greenhouses abounding in potted plants and beds of vine and vegetables, was the big and somewhat pretentious house of the post trader himself, his own stables and corral being half way down the slope and well away from those of the garrison. "Out of sight," muttered Webb, "but by no means out of mind," for it was safe to say the thoughts of more than half the men and women making up the social element of Fort Frayne had been centering within the last few days beneath the roof that gave shelter to that brilliant, fascinating beauty Nanette Flower.

Ten days a denizen of the fort, it seemed as though she had been there as many weeks, so completely had she accepted the situation and possessed herself of the ins and outs of garrison life. The women had called, of course, and gone away filled with unwilling admiration, for the girl's gowns and graces were undeniable. The married men, as was the army way, had called with their wives on the occasion of the first visit. The bachelors, from Webb down to the junior subaltern, had called in little squads at first; afterwards,

except the major, they sought to see Miss Flower when other fellows were not present. Even Hartley and Donovan, the two whose devotions to Esther Dade had been carried to the verge of oppression, and who were on terms of distant civility only when compelled to appear together in the presence of women or their other superiors, had been moved to more than one visit at the Hays', but Hartley speedily returned to his undesired siege at the quarters of Captain Dade, while Donovan joined forces with two other youngsters, Bruce and Putney, because it gave them comfort to bother Field; who, being the adjutant, and a very busy man, could visit only at certain hours of the day or evening. Now, it had become apparent to the boys that despite her general attitude of cordiality their attentions were not what Mrs. Hay so much desired as those of the major commanding. Twice had he been invited to dine within the week of Nanette's coming. Once he accepted. The second time he begged off on plea of a previous engagement, subsequently made, to go shooting with Blake. It was the bachelor heart and home of Major Webb to which Mrs. Hay would have laid vicarious siege, small blame to her, for that indomitable cross-examiner, Mrs. Wilkins, wife and manager of the veteran ranker now serving as post quartermaster, had wormed out of Mrs. Hay the admission that Nanette had no fortune. She was the only daughter of a half brother, very dear to Mrs. Hay, whom she had lost, she said, long years before. To do her justice, it was quite apparent that Miss Flower was no party to the plan, for, though she beamed on Webb as she did on all, she frankly showed her preference for the younger officers who could dance as well as ride, and either dancing or riding was her glory. She danced like a sylph; she seemed to float about the room as though on air; she rode superbly, and shirked no leap that even Ray and Field took with lowered hands and close gripping knees. She was joyous, laughing, radiant with all the officers, and fairly glowed with cordiality for all the