

feet had certainly been measured for them.

Their eyes met and they smiled. She coloured a little at his detection of her quizzing.

"How many living things the storm has left homeless!" she exclaimed with a gesture towards the open.

"It has cleared the air for us," he answered, in no mind to abuse the cause of her presence there.

"It has broken the heart of a million things! Think of the ejected birds, the industrious insects swept out of house and home, poor little architects and artists, helpless against their fate!"

"To strive—to fail' is always tragedy."

There was an unusual meaning in his tone that attracted her attention. He was not an ordinary man.

"Success is good for the spirit as well as cause for congratulation."

"Oh! I know that feeling so well!" she answered impulsively, with that spontaneous graciousness which charmed him after Caroline's reserve. "And especially it must be so to anyone who *makes*—to have produced something that others accept as good, why, the gratification is but a shadow of that joy of the first Creator, who 'saw that it was good.'"

Howard observed that she said "the gratification *is*," not must be. Was she an artist? She had the spirit. He did not question her. She had sought his protection, not his acquaintance. Just what she revealed of herself he was entitled to know.

"There is nothing new under the sun," he said, presently. "The evening and the morning were the first day, and will be the last."

"There were seven days before the work was complete!"

"I see you hint at evolution?"

She nodded, with the expressive motion of the head which he found himself watching for.

"On the seventh day the greatest Creator got to the end of creating!"

"I understand your meaning. You think that a man's doings have been done, and

that which shall be—was? But there is a great deal in treatment. Every individual is still a new creation, as every day is a new day. We assimilate experience and reproduce it, as Nature makes to-day out of many yesterdays. I hope you are not a pessimist?" She looked at him with critical eyes.

"You will never do anything strong if you lose faith in yourself. Doubt is enervating; it blights force and kills the will. The great rulers of the world give it hope."

She turned her profile to him again, and gazed out abstractedly; but she had forgotten everything but her own thoughts.

With a just audible "Excuse me," which she answered by a preoccupied inclination of the head, Howard went to his sitting-room to see about getting her some tea.

Polly was out with her husband, and had, of course, been detained by the storm. With her usual forethought she had brought in the tray, the spirit kettle was at hand, and lighting it Howard brought another cup and saucer, and made preparations with the neatness of a man accustomed to waiting on himself, then he slipped out under the dripping branches to Polly's duck-pond, and broke from its margin a handful of blue flags. These he thrust into a vase, and went into the rain a second time to gather luscious peaches. Finally he put a match to the fire of pine-wood, set above a heap of pine cones, and put on his coat.

His movements were quick and eager; he had put all other considerations from him, except to give his visitor tea.

She had left the door on his return, and was wandering round the mill. The wind travelling from the snow peaks had chilled the air, and she seemed to shiver a little.

"You must let me give you some tea," said Howard, as she turned and approached him. "The people of the house are out, but if you will permit me to do the honours—?" He broke off with a query in his tone.

"How good of you to know I was longing for some!"