

westers. It is all done with and dead—Dear ; did you know—did you know ? No more yellow tussock for me ; no more of the nights that we love—Dear ; did you know—did you know ? Oh ! why did you teach me to love you ? Good-bye ! Good-bye ! Good-bye !

“ She’s mad. I’m going to put a stopper on this,” stammered Harton, preparing to descend.

“ No, I’m dashed if you do ;” Tony wheeled and led the horses away with a strong hand. “ Let her alone. She’ll belong to Crandeck to-morrow, and—and—and a jolly good thing, too ! Did you see her face ? She never looked like that for Crandeck. Tony—what is it ? What does it mean ?”

“ It means,” said Tony, huskily, “ that we are fools, and don’t understand. And we can’t understand. She’s just learnt what the love of a man for a woman is, and it can’t touch her, because—because she learnt something bigger first.”

“ Something—bigger ? You don’t know ?”

“ No,” he said, unsteadily, “ I don’t know. But it is. How much do we know about anything, after all ? She knows more—and this d—d plain knows more. Look at it, Harton.”

Harton looked where the mighty bulk of it lay spread to the moon, with the great, regular movement of wind-stirred, whitened tussock, like breath that quickened the chest of a giant, and the stillness that is not placid, but tingling with curbed waiting about him.

And, for the first time, the threatening, unexplainable strength of the land that was old and wise beyond the knowledge of men, came down on him, and startled him.

“ It’s—it is the very devil,” he said. “ Thank the Lord she’s going away to-morrow. Come on, Tony.”

He shook out the reins and went home at the gallop. But every sod that the hoofs cut from the

turf seemed to sob at him in dumb live pain, until he loathed Tony for his words, and went to pace his room the night through ; threshing out the limitations beyond which no human thought may stray with certainty, and finding no comfort therein.

Tony brought Our Lady a crown of white manuka-flowers for her marriage-day ; and the sun was blazing and jubilant over a golden earth, and a blue sky, and a little group of men on the wide verandah surrounding a white frock that was Our Lady being married to Crandeck.

But when the Presbyterian parson, from forty miles away, had said all the “ Amens,” and Crandeck stooped to kiss his wife before all her “ boys,” the strong, assertive scent of the manuka irritated him to inexplicable jealousy.

“ Take it off, sweetheart. You’ve nothing more to do with the plain and its belongings. You’re mine now—mine, and nobody else’s. Do you hear ?”

“ Confound you,” said Verenin ; “ you needn’t rub it in like that ! He’s so cocky, you fellows—”

“ An’ you’ll write to us sometimes, My Lady ? And I’ll let you know how that turnip crop on the swamp turns out.”

“ You’ve got my folks’ address all right ? Nottingham—shut up, Tony ! Do you want to do all the gassing yourself ?”

Payne brought up his four-in-hand with a whirl and a scatter of shingle and turf beyond the verandah, and Tony held Our Lady’s hands very tight after he had helped her in.

“ I’ll look after the light. Be a brave girl, dear, and Crandeck will bring you back some day.”

“ Yes,” she answered. But Tony turned away from her eyes, and choked over the shout that went with a burst shoe of Mrs Rooney’s after the four-in-hand as Payne let out the whip.

By reason of a long day’s work