

that had been accumulating in the family for generations had seemingly permeated the mother's heart, for the expression of her son's face softened neither her tone nor manner. And yet not for a moment could she be made to think of herself as cruel, or even stern. She was simply firm and sensible in the performance of her duty. She was but maintaining the traditional policy of the family, and was conscious that society would thoroughly approve of her course. Chief of all, she sincerely believed that she was promoting her son's welfare, but she had not Mrs. Jocelyn's gentle ways of manifesting solicitude.

After a moment of oppressive silence, she began,

'Perhaps I can best present this issue in its true light by again asking, Are you a man of honour?'

'Is it dishonourable,' answered her son irritably, 'to love a pure, good girl?'

'No,' said his mother, in the same quiet, measured voice; 'but it may be very great folly and a useless waste. It is dishonourable, however, to inspire false hopes in a girl's heart, no matter who she is. It is weak and dishonourable to hover around a pretty face like a poor moth that singes its wings.'

In sudden, passionate appeal, he exclaimed, 'If I can win Miss Jocelyn, why cannot I marry her? She is as good as she is beautiful. If you knew her as I do you would be proud to call her your daughter. They live very prettily, even elegantly—'

By a simple, deprecatory gesture, Mrs. Arnold made her son feel that it was useless to add another word.

'Vinton,' she said, 'a little reason in these matters is better than an indefinite amount of sentimental nonsense. You are old enough to be swayed by reason, and not to fume and fret after the impossible like a child. Neither your father nor I have acted hastily in this matter. It was a great trial to discover that you had allowed your fancy to become entangled below the circle in which it is your privilege to move, and I am thankful that my other children have been more considerate. In a quiet, unobtrusive way we have taken pains to learn all about the Jocelyns. They are comparative strangers in the city. Mr. Jocelyn is merely a junior partner in a large iron firm, and from all your father says I fear he has lived too ele-