

352 Daughters of the Dominion

"I—I am not well-educated enough," she faltered, thinking of the vast difference between his easy leisured life and her own hard-working existence and lack of advantages.

He threw up his head and laughed in a happy and triumphant fashion.

"Now, that is false modesty on your part, for did you not tell me at our very first meeting that you had read a whole dictionary through from beginning to end, and that you could spell every word there was in it?"

"It is too bad to laugh at me, really!" she said; but she was laughing herself as she spoke, and her eyes were shining with happiness, for this man had been her ideal of all that was good and noble, and even when from mistake he had been mixed up with that other Dick whose name had been so similar, she had still cared for him in spite of herself.

"I will laugh at you, and with you always if you will let me," he said, only now his voice was grave and subdued. "And when we part to-morrow, Nell, it must be with the understanding that in the spring I shall come to fetch you. Will you be ready for me?"

"Yes, I will be ready," she answered softly.

And so they were betrothed.