

not a jot for should show such independence, rather nettled and annoyed her for a moment. But she paid no more heed to him than to the other clerks.

But what was the merest jar to Christine's vanity, cost Dennis a desperate struggle. It required no effort on her part to pass him by without a glance. To him it was torture. In a few days she ceased to think about him at all, and only remembered him in connection with her disappointment. But she was restless, could settle down to no work, and had lost her zest in her old pleasures. She tried to act as usual, for she saw her father's eye was on her. He had not much indulgence for any one's weaknesses save his own, and often by a little cold satire would sting her to the very quick. On the other hand, his admiration, openly expressed in a certain courtly gallantry, nourished her pride but not her heart. Though she tried to keep up her usual routine, her manner was forced before him, and languid when alone. But he said :

"All this will pass away like a cold snap in Spring, and the old zest will come again in a few days."

It did, but from a cause he could not understand, and which his daughter with consummate skill and care concealed. He thought it was only the old zest rallying after a sharp frost of disappointment.

Dennis' pride gave way before her cool and unstudied indifference. It was clearly evident to him that he had no hold upon her life whatever, and how ever to gain any he did not see. He became more and more dejected.

"She must have a heart, or I could not love her so, but it is so encased in ice I fear I can never reach it."

That something was wrong with Dennis, any friend who cared for him at all might see. The Bruders did, and with the quick intuitions of woman, Mrs. Bruder half guessed the cause. Mr. Bruder seeing preoccupation and sometimes weary apathy in Dennis' face, would say, "Mr. Fleet is not well."

Then, as even this slight notice of his different appearance, seemed to give pain, Mr. Bruder was patiently and kindly blind to his pupil's inattention.

He faithfully kept up all his duties on Sunday as during the week ; but all was now hard work.

Some little time after the unlucky morning which he could never think of without an expression of pain, he went to his mission class as usual. He heard his boys

recite their lessons, said a few poor lame words in explanation, and then he leaned his head listlessly and wearily on his hand. He was startled to hear a sweet voice say :

"Well, Mr. Fleet, are you not going to welcome a new laborer into your corner of the vineyard?"

With a deep flush he saw that Miss Winthrop was in charge of the class next to him, and that he had been oblivious to her presence nearly an hour. He tried to apologize. But she interrupted him saying :

"Mr. Fleet, you are not well. Any one can see that."

Then Dennis blushed as if he had a raging fever, and she was perplexed.

The closing exercises of the school now occupied them, and then they walked out together.

"Mr. Fleet," she said, "you never accepted my invitation. We have not seen you at our house. But perhaps your circle of friends is so large that you do not wish to add to it."

Dennis could not forbear a smile at the suggestion, but he said in apology :

"I do not visit any one, save a gentleman from whom I am taking lessons."

"Do you mean to say that you have no friends at all in this great city?"

"Well, I suppose that is nearly the truth, that is, in the sense you use the term. My teacher and his wife—"

"Nonsense! I mean friends of one's own age, people of the same culture and status as yourself. I think we need such society as truly as food and air. I did not mean those whom business or duty brought you in contact with, or who are friendly or grateful as a matter of course."

"I have made no progress since my introduction to society at Miss Brown's," said Dennis.

"But you had the sincere and cordial offer of introduction," said Miss Winthrop, looking a little hurt.

"I feel hardly fit for society," said Dennis, all out of sort with himself. "It seems that I can only blunder and give pain. But I am indeed grateful for your kindness."

Miss Winthrop looked into his worn, pale face, and instinctively felt that something was wrong, and she felt real sympathy for the lonely young man, isolated among thousands. She said gently but decidedly :

"I did mean my invitation kindly, and I truly wished you to come. The only proof you can give that you appreciate my courtesy,