

and then *yours*, so noble, pure and loving! She laughed at you, even accusing you of having had "some such experience yourself;" those were her very words. I——'

'Oh! stop, stop,' cried Alice, in a voice of bitter pain, as if wrung from her, and then she dropped her face down upon her clasped hands. Hugh looked at her in some surprise.

'Forgive me, Alice, I have pained you. Yet how? Surely, you cannot, you so young——'

Still the bowed head, and silence,—he bent lower. 'Oh, Alice, forgive me, how could I guess that *you* had loved.'

Then came the faint, broken voice.

'Leave me now, Hugh Denham, now that you know my secret.'

He took away her hands from her face, whilst the poor roses fell scattered at their feet; then tenderly holding those little hands in his own strong ones, he said:

'Alice Vane! look at me. I am your brother's friend—*your* friend, if you will let me be so. Your secret is safe with me; and now I will tell you mine. Hopeless though I know my deep love to be, I must tell you now what I can conceal no longer. I love you, Alice, with a devotion, a strength, of which you little dream. Mine is no boyish flame, to be fanned by beauty and winning ways—but a man's earnest passion—the love of soul for soul. Oh, Alice! my love—my love!' and he wrung her slight hands in his—to think that such worship as mine is nothing to you!'

Still she spoke not, and Hugh went on more calmly: 'I will not wound you again by speaking of this. Tell me, my child, as—as—your friend, can nothing be done? Surely your young life need not be darkened by a hopeless love?'

Then Alice looked up, and her face seemed glorified with the lovely flush that crimsoned over it.

'Hopeless love! Oh, *Hugh!*' and down dropped her face again. He bent forward eagerly.

'Alice! look up! Quick! Tell me what you mean? I cannot bear suspense!'

Then she raised again her blushing face, Hugh still holding her hands, and said softly:

'Flo. was right—and my "experience" was—*you!*'

'And I—what a blind fool! This treasure in my very path—and I to choose the false tinsel that dazzled my eyes! Can you ever forgive me, my Alice?'

'Hugh! there is no "forgiveness" between you and me. I loved you then. I love you now. I shall love you unto the end—my own! my own!'

And then Hugh took her into his arms and sealed their betrothal with a long passionate kiss of undying love.

'And now, darling, will you give me a rose?'

And I think that Alice did not refuse him *this time*.

"SAY WHEN EVERY ZEPHYR SIPS."

BY R. MARVIN SEATON.

SAY, when every zephyr sips
Nectar from those dewy lips,
Why should I not share the taste
Of their fragrant sweetness, graced
Richly by the witching play
Thought and sentiment convey,