

Many influences were at work in Blantyre. He often thought himself a theatre for conflicting emotions. The blood of old Celtic kings stirred him to revolt. Their pride had fallen on him. Later came a stern and uncompromising ancestry, rigid and unjoyous. The mothers of his race bore children to send them abroad and serve their country. It almost appeared that life at home was modulated lest youth love it too much to leave it. That vision remained unsoftened by years. There were no tendrils to hold him with memorial affection.

He did not know when or why Stella Blake had refused to merge herself into the rest of the procession. Nor could he imagine what hitherto unused faculty of his own had blossomed into unaccustomed action. He had stopped astonished at those first advances. Now, working slowly back, he fastened on one night when the *Harmonic* lay off the Azores, and he had joined Stella to watch the twinkling shore lights. He had been talking, diffident and impersonal as ever, when suddenly the suggestion came at him. A week before he would have scouted it, but now, for the first time in all his detached existence, he deliberately gave himself up to the thought of self-interest.

To Blantyre the sea was a wind-blown wilderness across which he was thrown shuttle-like between New York and old world ports. Such humanity as he encountered seemed as elusive as the sea itself. He sensed its colour, life and motion—all its kaleidoscopic unrest. It used him reluctantly when it had to, with inward questionings as to whether he