

But putting aside all idea of affection, the temptation which led you to commit this outrage against every better feeling of your nature exists no longer. Mr. Crane is a ruined man; if, therefore, you adhere to the conventional prejudice which you vainly endeavour to dignify by the name of duty, you have nothing to hope but to sacrifice to it the best years of your life, years in which you will still be young, when your queenly beauty and bright clear intellect will fit you to shine in and lead society of a class in which your elegant tastes and refined sympathies would meet with a gratification sufficient in itself to render life one scene of pleasurable excitement. But, more than this, you are ambitious; I can read it in your flashing eye, in the curl of your haughty lip. I would open to you such a field for that ambition as in your wildest moments you have never dreamed of. You do not believe me! you consider me a base, unscrupulous adventurer. If it were so, what have I ever had to call out the higher, nobler qualities of my nature? Nothing! But with such a soul as yours to urge and inspire me, and with your love as my reward, to what height might not my genius soar! What was the great Napoleon but a Corsican adventurer? and yet his was a career an Emperor's daughter was proud to share. You think I am romancing—talking bombastic nonsense; but it is not so. In America, at the present time, there is an immense field for talent. I know the character of the nation well, know how both its strong and weak points could be turned to account, and form the ladder by which I might climb even to the President's seat, and once there!—Presidents have ere now become Emperors—from democracy to despotism is the natural transition—history proves it. Since I have known you, a change has come over my every thought and feeling; hitherto I have exerted my talents merely to supply my own fastidious requirements, but now my ideas are enlarged, my aspirations heightened. Brought up from my earliest childhood among men, clever indeed, but without one pure thought, one disinterested feeling, I became—what I am. You have excited in me higher, nobler feelings. I will not deny that your beauty first attracted me; but since I have known you, and each day discovered new qualities with which I could sympathize, I have learned to love you with the only deep, real sentiment I have ever yet felt for one of your sex. Hitherto I have looked on women as mere toys wherewith to solace one's leisure hours; but in you I recognize a loftier nature; I feel not only in the presence of an intelligence equal to my own, but I have an instinctive perception that you might become my leading star, my tutelary deity! Kate, hear me! my destiny is in your hands. Fly with me to America—everything is prepared; and when we arrive on the soil of a new world, you shall become the bride of a man already possessed of riches sufficient to obtain for you luxuries greater than you have yet enjoyed, and with a gift riches are powerless to procure—talent which has never yet failed me, however critical the position—talent which, henceforward, you shall direct