

Shall we call it sin, or shall we call it——”

De Lisle paused; Blanche smiled, and said “Well?”

“Love?” was the answer. “Love has sometimes been accounted a sin, but never a heavy one!”

“And yet,” said Blanche, “it pays many penalties in the world, does it not?”

“Many, I believe; none, that I know of! But you——”

“Know as little as yourself!” said Blanche, rallying, “I merely echo the talk of the world!”

De Lisle made an impatient movement, and pricked his horse so sharply that the poor animal took him out of earshot for confidential conversation. What did the girl mean by her dreams and her half-confidences?—Was she in love, or was she not? How well laid seemed the train of discovery, and yet with a mere breath Blanche blew it all to nothing! The confessor had no patience with her equivocation: he knew