

were others who averred that it was more hard to bear than any passion into which she could have flown. "It is not my command. It is simply the necessity of the case."

"It is simply an impossibility, then; for I have promised to marry Alice Ford, and I am a Challoner, and keep my word."

"I expected nothing less. I believe there is no act of folly you would not commit; but this, at any rate, you shall not do."

"How will you prevent it?"

"How long do you suppose you will be the heir of Donningdean when my father discovers the disgrace you intend bringing on our name?"

"He won't thwart me. I am his only son, and Alice is worthy of any lot. I have intended to tell him for some time; and if, as I suppose you mean, you tell him now, you will only hasten the end a little."

Allan spoke bravely, but at heart he felt a cold fear. His sister, in spite of her assured words, was by no means certain that the old man would discard his son for his marriage, however low. Allan's candor made a change of plan needful.

"I suppose you think," she said in a softer tone, "that because our father permitted Anne's marriage he will also allow yours. But do you not see the difference? You, the representative of the family, the only one who can transmit the name. Does not the very fact that one of us has already made a misalliance render it the more needful that the rest should act otherwise? Oh! Allan, have you no regard for what we have been, and should still be?"

"Yes; but I have a greater regard for Alice and my own word."

"Allan, four years ago I gave up my own love. I refused one to whom I had given all my heart, because I thought it a marriage unworthy of a Challoner. Can you give me no credit for the sacrifice? Will you not do the same?"

"I don't see that you deserve much credit. You broke the heart of a man who loved you far better than you deserved. If you could so treat him—and you only gave up one thing you liked for another you liked better—if you thought it right, well and good, only don't expect me to follow

your example in conduct which I entirely disapprove."

"Our father will never forgive you, Allan."

"Yes, he will; perhaps not at first, but I can wait. Don't think me harsh, Charlotte. I would please you if I could; but you see we are so different. You put pride before everything else, and I put happiness a long way before pride."

"You are determined, then?" in a low, strange tone.

"Quite determined. I love Alice. I have promised to marry her, and my father will forgive me in the end, if not now."

Charlotte thought so, too, and saw that she must play her last card. There are moments in our lives when every other feeling gives way to one master passion—when to gain our end we are willing to risk or sacrifice all, and are willing to take the consequences. So it was now with Charlotte Challoner. It may seem to some an insufficient cause; but with her the pride of family and the love of wealth and distinction was the absorbing idea of her soul. To it she had sacrificed her happiness, and with it every soft and womanly feeling, and she resolved that another should not defeat the purpose for which she had given up so much, and yet enjoy what she must never hope for now. Like most proud natures, she could feel bitter resentment, and many of her brother's words had roused that feeling at present; but she kept it down, and though her eyes gleamed fiercely, and her lip trembled, she still spoke calmly enough.

"As you will, Allan; I have but one more argument to use, and if you resist that you must take your own course. Come with me for a moment to the library."

Wondering, he followed her; and she took from a locked desk a small folded paper, which she held carefully with both her hands.

"I would have spared you this, Allan, if I could. Had I any hope that you would listen to reason, I should not do this. As it is, I have no choice. You say that our father would forgive your marriage with a factory girl; I do not know; it seems to me there is no regard left for our old dignity but in me, and he might be as weak as he