

"Yes—and—er—extreme. She likes him. There is every reason to hope that her liking will develop into a sufficiently deep and stable affection. She will get rid of her folly about B, and make A a good wife. Yes, Miss May, if I were the author of your novel I should make her marry A, and I should call that a happy ending."

A silence followed. It was broken by the philosopher.

"Is that all you wanted my opinion about, Miss May?" he asked, with his finger between the leaves of the treatise on ontology.

"Yes, I think so. I hope I have n't bored you?"

"I've enjoyed the discussion extremely. I had no idea that novels raised points of such psychological interest. I must find time to read one."

The girl had shifted her position till, instead of her full face, her profile was turned toward him. Looking away toward the paddock that lay brilliant in sunshine on the skirts of the apple orchard, she asked in low slow tones, twisting her hands in her lap:

"Don't you think that perhaps if B found out afterward—when she had married A, you know—that she had cared for him so very, very much, he might be a little sorry?"

"If he were a gentleman he would regret it deeply."

"I mean—sorry on his own account; that—that he had thrown away all that, you know?"