

268 The Shadow of a Great Rock

Love; wife; home:—the simple words became for him the whole gamut of harmony, the sweet, inviolate harmony of the creation. He laughed, with a sort of shame, at the memory of what had been his faith so short a time ago—that conquest of this wide, new land was to be made by the sheer, gross strength of will and body, through the lust of the fighter. Such a poor, blind faith! He knew better now. Blood must be shed, no doubt, to appease the savage gods of the wilderness; but the supreme and ultimate victory would descend, not upon the ghastly battlefield, but upon the dooryard of the home; its most precious trophy would fall, not to the messenger of death and destruction, but to him who would bring into life being out of the virgin soil and about the hearthstone. Life, not death, must be the magic master-word of the victor; fruitfulness, not devastation; the world-old patience of the husbandman, not the mad fury of him whose hand bore fire and sword. So much was made