

for them was that she should separate herself entirely from her husband. "The condition is hard," she had added, "made harder, too, by the fact that you are his son and my only real claim upon him is through you—yet when you consider the failure of our life together, and that the children's education even is unprovided for, you will, I feel sure, admit that my decision has been a wise one."

The words had dissolved and vanished before his eyes, and turning away he had flung himself on his prison bed, while the hard, dry sobs had quivered like blows in his chest. Yet she was right! His judgment had acquitted her in the first agony of his reproach, and the unerring justice in her decision had convicted him with each smooth, calm sentence in her letter. As he lay there he had lost consciousness of the bare walls and the hot sunshine that fell through the grating, for the ultimate desolation had closed over him like black waters.

A little later he had gone from his cell and taken up his life again; but all that he remembered of it now was a voice that had led to him in the prison yard.

"You look so darn sunk in the mouth I 'll let you have my last smoke—damn you!"

Turning sullenly he had accepted the stranger's tobacco, unaware at the moment that he was partaking of the nature of a sacrament—for while he had smoked there in his dogged misery, he had felt revive in his heart a stir of sympathy for the convict he had seen at the wayside station in Virginia. As if