

their own feeling of superiority, as most of them did, to a squaw man.

She heard that term from the Major, a moment after he had shaken hands with her. He had asked what were the other suspicions mentioned against Genesee; she could not hear the answer—they had moved a little apart from her—but she could hear the impatience with which he broke in on their speech.

"A squaw man!—well, what if he is?" he asked, with a serene indifference to the social side of the question. "What difference does it make whether the man's wife has been red, or white, or black, so long as she suited him? There are two classes of squaw men, as there are of other men on the frontier—the renegades and the usual percentage of honest and dishonest citizens. You've all apparently been willing to understand only the renegades. I've been along the border for thirty years, and some of the bravest white men I've ever seen had Indian wives. Some of the men whose assistance in Indian wars has been invaluable to us are ranchmen whose children are half-breeds, and who have taught their squaws housework and English at the same time, and made them a credit to any nation. There's a heap of uncalled-for prejudice against a certain class of those men; and, so far as I've noticed, the sneak who abandons his wife and children back in the States, or borrows the wife of someone else to make the trip out here with, is the specimen that is first to curl his lip at the squaw man. That girl over there strikes me as showing more common sense than the whole community; she gave him the valuation of a man."

The Major's blood was up. It was seldom that he made so long a speech; but the question was one