

him. She had come like a mountain spring to a thirsty man. He had been groping for inspiration and for help: now he seemed to find them all in her. She was so much more than charming, though it was her charm that first impressed him; so much more than pretty, though her face attracted him at first; so much more than magnetic, though she drew him to her at their first meeting with bonds as delicate as they were strong. These were tangible, vital, legitimate qualities — but were they all? Could lips part so, could eyes shine so, could voice tremble so, if there were not something underneath; a good heart, fidelity, warmth of nature?

“For the first time,” he thought, “I long to be worthy of a woman. But I would not tell her how I love her at this moment, unless I felt I need not be wholly unequal to her demands. I have never desired anything strongly enough to struggle for it, up to now; but she has set my springs in motion, and I can work for her until I die!”