

nal ambition and the desire to escape from the difficulties that pressed upon herself, her husband and her family, at any and whatever cost, on the other.

It was the old story, recurring even yet now and then in our midst; though with our practical notions and our busy working lives we are skeptical about it here in Canada.

Mr. Amhurst was poor, and hopelessly in debt, and Juliet was young, and redundant with the graces of youth. There had come a rich suitor for the girl's hand; a man rich enough, and withal generous enough, to do wonders for the family of the woman whom he should make his wife. At first none of the family suspected Mr. Thurston's preference for Juliet. He noticed her very little to all appearance when they met in society, or at Mr. Amhurst's house, and was, as a rule, far more attentive to Hester and Penelope and Lucy, her elder sisters, than to her. He was grave and sensible too, and Juliet was, if not a mad-cap, when the mood was on her, but one degree removed from that supposititious horror of grave and sensible men. And the mood was oftenest on her, it seemed, when Mr. Thurston was present. Its indulgence drew upon her many a reprimand from her mother and elder sisters, and many a mild remonstrance from her father; which, however, failed to produce the desired reformation. Then, too, Mr. Thurston was conservative in politics, and held a seat in the Commons, and Juliet, although she was notoriously ignorant of even the simplest questions of political economy, not infrequently startled and horrified her father and his friend by interrupting them in the midst of some profound discussion of ministerial measures by comments of her own, tinged with the reddest and most rampant radicalism. But in spite of all this, and to the astonishment of the whole family, it at last became apparent that Juliet, and Juliet alone, was the attraction for Mr. Thurston in Mr. Amhurst's house, or wherever he was likely to meet her. Not that even there he obtruded his attentions upon her, or singled her out from all the rest when he came amongst the family; but little by little the truth transpired. Little

by little he contrived to have it known that she was the object of his regard, her love the object of his suit. The knowledge of the fact was intensely gratifying to Mr. Amhurst and his wife, and the whole family, with but one exception. They caught at it eagerly. It seemed to them as the rope flung out to the drowning man. But there was an obstacle in the way. Juliet could not and would not accept the man for her lover. She flung the suggestion from her at first with careless incredulity as too ridiculous to be believed; and then, when time compelled her to admit that it was serious, with a blind passionate scorn that left her no room for justice or generosity. She hated Mr. Thurston. She would sooner die than be his wife. She despised him for his meanness. It was like him to force obligations upon her father, and then, when he thought he had him in his power, to propose for her. He had done wisely for himself doubtless in thus insuring the family's sympathy and co-operation; but the ruse would not succeed with her. She told her father this, openly, defiantly, with passionate tears and sobs; and then, for Juliet's was an undisciplined nature, unrestrained by filial reverence, and smarting just then under a bitter sense of injustice, that he and her mother and all of them had combined to bring upon her this disgrace, this bitter shame. There were angry words on both sides, and reproaches; and Juliet left her father's presence with a feeling that life had suddenly become too hard to be endured, and that death, if it would only come, would be a blessed deliverance.

"But I will never consent; never, if they kill me for it," she said, defiantly; and then she bathed her hot eyes in the little hand-basin, brushed out her long hair before the cracked looking-glass, and tying on her hat slipped softly down stairs and out of doors, unseen by anyone in the house. She had only one friend in the world, she felt, to whom she could confide her troubles, and what wonder was it that she longed with an eager longing to meet that friend. Her conscience told her that it was a dangerous course she was pursuing, but she was too miserable just then to listen to the warning