

EPILOGUE

EXACTLY one year later Tessa died at Pontresina, leaving a son five months old. Various causes were given for her death, but she had been listless, feeble, and strange before the boy was born, and she grew worse after his birth. No one ever heard her complain of anything more serious than excessive fatigue; she showed great tenderness for the child, although she was always too tired to hold him for long or to play with him. She seemed to droop and perish as a starved plant. Firmalden alone knew the secret of her invincible melancholy. Her promised letter—"all egoism from beginning to end"—reached him with the news of her last illness.

"I have done everything possible to forget Lessard. Yet our days at Florence were so happy that no effort of the will can tear their memory from my mind. We never said a word that the whole world might not have heard, but the whole world would never have understood us. In paradise

' . . . will I ask of Christ the Lord
This much for him and me—