

the cushioned corner and to poetry-laden sentences. She wished, more than she had ever before wished anything, to walk with Cousin Dick in the freshness of the morning—not to rhapsodize with Israfael in the dimness of the twilight.

With the change of interests came also the change of ideals. Surely, it was better to feel the blood pulsing through one's veins, to find joy in being alive, to run like a Diana through the woods, than to be a willowy maiden, and hold a sunflower.

So, it came about that a little note brought back Cousin Dick, and, later, another one went to Israfael, which started that young man home from Paris, without delay.

Two weeks later, there waited on the pier, in the mists of the early Winter morning, a man and a maid. The strong wind that ruffled the water blew tendrils of gold across the gray coat of the man, as the girl stood half-sheltered by his broad shoulders.

Over the rail of the incoming boat leaned another man, who gazed eagerly

at the mass of color that told of people waiting.

At first, he could not distinguish a single person; but, as the vessel covered the intervening water, he picked out, at last, a tall figure in gray—the figure of a man, broad-shouldered, muscular; a little nearer, and he saw the strong, quiet face.

The man on the boat looked at the man on the pier, steadily; and, presently, the man on the pier leaned down, and a speck of red which had stood out against his gray coat, detached itself, and proved to be the hat of the girl, who waved a welcome.

Then, a strange thing happened. The man on the boat, looking with disappointed eyes, beheld a young woman of heavy proportions, red-cheeked, double-chinned, dimpling with a smile of supreme content, the smile, as he mused bitterly, of the mediocre.

But the man on the pier, gazing with eyes of love, saw a being radiant—a girl all color and glow, a girl strong and alive and sweet-tempered; and he thanked God because the girl was his.



## WHAT OF THE VICTORY?

PALE roses and pale leaves and little wings,  
And all the silver flow of early light,  
And all the lute-like notes the morning sings  
Over the bier of night.

For night is past. Have I not fought my way  
Out of the dark? Yet, here within the bright,  
Imperious presence of celestial day,  
I mourn—O God!—the night.

ZONA GALE.



HE—It makes me a better man to kiss you.  
SHE—I want to help you all I can.



SOME self-made men have relieved the Lord of a great responsibility.

## THREE YEARS AFTER

By Owen Oliver

WE were strolling toward the Sandsea jetty when I saw Nellie Redwood again, after three years. She was looking straight at us with her big, daring eyes, and I knew that she meant mischief. My wife saw nothing. She is blind.

"What is the matter, dear?" my wife asked. "You shivered as if you had met a ghost."

"Perhaps, I did!" It was useless to say that I was merely cold. She can read half of my thoughts with her finger-tips upon my arm.

"Is it anything you can tell me?"

"Something reminded me of a friend I have lost." Nellie was more than a friend.

"Ah, I know!" She pressed my arm in sympathy.

"Yes, dear," I said, "you know."

"You would not forget your friend, would you, Fred—even though it hurts you to remember?"

"No, dear," I said; "oh, no!" Sometimes, I think I would.

"Once, I had sad memories of friends; memories that *hurt*. But now—I have *you*!"

"Only me!"

"It is enough." She smiled up at me with her sightless eyes.

"I have you, and so many things. It should be easy to forget, or even to remember; but—" I paused.

"You do not wish to talk about it now?"

"No, not now." My eyes met Nellie's again as they followed us down toward the sea.

"You will tell me, some day?"

"Yes, dear, some day." Some day, I shall tell her—something else!

I lost sight of Nellie, and we walked along in silence. For two years, I had told myself that I had forgotten. It was a lie.

"I am tired, dear," said Agnes, when we turned back. "You want to be a little while alone. Take me in."

So, I took her in. Then, I came out again and walked down to the grove, at the end of the esplanade; and, there, I met Nellie.

"Well?" I asked. We did not trouble to shake hands. There was never any half-way with us.

"I thought you would come," she said, with a slight sneer. "You were always quick to understand. You remember!"

"Yes," I said, coldly, "I remember. What do you wish?" We walked along under the trees, in the dusk.

"That, I suppose, was your wife?"

"Yes. I should prefer that you confined yourself to me."

"Unfortunately, your wife is a factor in the matter."

"Then, I decline to discuss it."

"Would that be wise?"

"You are a she-devil," I said, passionately.

"Yes, I am. Whose fault is it?" Her eyes blazed at me, and a streak of moonlight danced in them, through the trees.

"Mainly," I answered, sullenly, "your own. But for your ungovernable temper——"

"Had my temper nothing to try it?" she demanded. "Was there nothing to wear the brightness out of me? Nothing to kill the goodness in me? Oh, yes! say there was none to kill. Say it was only *you*, instead of some one