

But it could hardly be said of Ethel that she was lazy, for only an active brain could have found so much for other people to do. She never walked a step beyond the gate of the new fence erected about the captain's house, made by nailing "shakes" to poles fastened to rude posts of unsawn timber. This fence was an eyesore to her when it was first built, but in a day or two its roughness had disappeared under a screen of shrubs brought from the woods and transplanted in the night, which grew and blossomed as if they had never known any other home. Pretty creeping plants were transferred to hanging receptacles in the girl's sitting room, and went on creeping and growing in graceful festoons about the windows, whose ugly smallness was cunningly disguised by dainty draperies of muslin and lace. Odd decorations for the walls were fashioned out of woody curios brought her by the half-clad children whose acquaintance she had made on the beach, and who now, instead of digging their toes idly in the sand hour after hour, busied themselves looking for and bringing to Ethel the hitherto unnoticed plants, shells, and even animals and insects, with which use had made them ignorantly familiar, and to which they had hitherto been indifferent. She told the children the right names of these objects, persuading to the use of them instead of the strange nomenclature current among the untaught, and was delighted with the eagerness exhibited to acquire knowledge of such things, natural history and botany coming before A B C to most of them. She gave them hints about cleanliness and tidiness in dress, seldom directly, but often when soliciting aid in matters which allowed of careful oversight, whereby she was able to teach without seeming to have intended it. No day passed that some of these educating processes were not carried on, though with little apparent effort or design.

When the *Silver Heels* returned from San Francisco in the middle of September she brought in her hold the machinery of a steam sawmill, which was to be erected at Port — by Captain Eliot and his partner, who accompanied him, Howard Summerfield. Summerfield was an athlete, tall, broad-shouldered, straight, with regular features, a clear and fair skin, and blonde wavy hair and beard, the type of a complete physical man, whose conscience and sensibilities were not too refined for his comfort. But when he looked down from his lofty height into the brown, limpid depths of Ethel Eliot's eyes for the first time there was a something telephoned along his nerves which surprised and confused him, being unaccustomed to tremors of any sort. Perhaps the novelty of the sensation pleased him; perhaps he thought by familiarity to overcome it. At all events, he came almost daily to Captain Eliot's house, not infrequently assisting Ethel in imparting instruction to her pupils, suggesting and even providing a blackboard, upon which he gave examples in writing, drawing and arithmetic to the older children, while Ethel rested, and the young ones, like a brood of quail, scattered through the leafy coverts of the forest in search of material for another lesson.

"I never knew," said Summerfield one day, "that I

had a talent for teaching, even to the extent of showing the difference between three jackstones and eight jackstones, or illustrating the principles involved in forming the capital letters in writing. I am indebted to you, Miss Eliot, for the discovery."

"Perhaps ignorance of your talents came only from a lack of opportunity," Ethel suggested.

"I think it was more likely to have been from a lack of incentive," returned he, quickly, in a tone which caused her to glance up at him from her reclining chair interrogatively.

"You see I am capable of self-examination," continued Summerfield, with a nervous laugh, "and that I am in the mood this afternoon. Why do not you question me, Miss Eliot, concerning my motives? Am I not as worthy of dissection as a mollusk?"

"Would it not be better that you should tell me what you choose?" asked Ethel, gently. "My capacity for dissection may not extend higher than a mollusk, and, besides, I should not fancy picking my friends to pieces."

"I am sure you would not; you are too kind and good for that cruel pastime. But I will not tempt you by directing your attention upon my spiritual anatomy. 'Let us close the exercises,' as the preachers say, by reading a poem from Coleridge. May I select?"

Then the tall, graceful, life and health abounding man read with consummate skill and eloquence the exquisite idyl of Genevieve, sitting with his face to the sparkling sea, and, when he had ceased, remaining motionless and silent, with his gaze fixed upon the ripples.

What was it that came to Ethel in those few moments, lying there weak and prostrate? A picture of what her life ought to be—a wild longing to be loved and to love, a passionate protest against helplessness and self-renunciation. The sweet tears that had sprung in sympathy with the poet's picture and the reader's voice suddenly turned bitter with the thought of the future and its losses, and her bosom heaved with convulsive sobs.

"Forgive me, Miss Eliot," Summerfield exclaimed, remorsefully. "I should have remembered your weakness and your tenderness of heart. Would it atone ever so little if I were to confess that I could weep with you for the mischief I have done?"

His voice shook; he knelt and kissed the hands pressed over the tear-stained face. The electric touch restored her composure. A little bird of joy carolled in Ethel's soul, and a new light beamed from the soft eyes when a moment later she ventured to meet the troubled gaze of Summerfield.

What did she see there to check the momentary exultation and repel her, in spite of the sympathizing words and act? Or did the doubt in his mind communicate itself electrically to hers?

"Oh, thank you for your sympathy," she said, quite quietly, "and please do not remember this scene. I sometimes cry for *Kirke's* benefit, but never before displayed my babyishness to any one else."

"You may depend on me not to refer to it, but to forget it—that might not be possible. Shall I send