

Then a laugh, clear and resonant, like the voice, rang out on the drowsy atmosphere.

"Take care! That is nicely done, only you don't look pleased enough. How do you know I am not the beneficent spirit you were so earnestly invoking a moment ago?"

Stanley was silent for a moment, coolly scanning her from head to feet. Then dropping lazily back upon the grass, he smiled skeptically.

"The spirit of repose does not harrow men's souls by sitting and laughing at them, nor does she make them get up and bow to her."

"Indeed?"

"No; she comes like a breath of summer air, laden with the intoxicating fragrance of flowers, and the drowsy hum of bees. Lightly as a thistle-down, she touches brow, and lips, and hair, and tired humanity sinks into the somnolence, the oblivion, of perfect rest."

The brown eyes contemplated him, for a moment or two, reflectively, and in silence.

"Evidently you are a very tired mortal. I imagine you are overworked, and if I may hazard a guess, I should say that your labor has been mental, rather than physical. Your brain power and nervous force are overdrawn, and almost exhausted. Were I your physician, I should prescribe a week's rest, a fishing excursion, or something of the sort, in order to give impoverished nature a chance to replenish her resources."

"A week's rest!" repeated Stanley, almost contemptuously. "As well offer a bite of pickle to a starving wretch! And a fishing excursion! It is plainly evident that you can not conceive utter weariness of the world and all it contains. Why, if a fish were to come to me and beg, with tears in its eyes, to be impaled upon my hook, I could not sum-

mon up sufficient energy to grant its request. No, no; what rest can there be for the mind, but that born of oblivion?"

"Hush!" said his listener, solemnly. "Oblivion means death. Would you court oblivion, at the cost of existence?"

"I scarcely know," he answered, meditatively. "So much depends upon what death really is. I only know that the supreme wish of my heart is that I might close my eyes, this sunny afternoon, only to open them in some realm where care, anxiety, effort and ambition are unknown; where the sweet spirit of repose holds supreme sway, assisted only by such hand-maidens as touch the sensuous nature into fullest and most voluptuous enjoyment. Imagine the unalloyed bliss of an existence in which you could gaze at the yellow orb of day, without having to remember how many millions of miles lay between it and your planet; without harboring a suspicion of the existence of a solar system. Think of being able to inhale the fragrance of sweetest blossoms, without ever dreaming of trying to name and classify them! Think of a fellow clasping to his breast some fair being of his love, and closing his eyes in blissful unconsciousness of such dark shadows as house rent, grocer's bills, and paragonic bottles. Think of—" He paused suddenly, and listened, as he heard, not far away, the shouting of childish voices, and the scamper of small feet among the bushes.

She arose, smiling, and said: "My children are searching for me, and I must bid you adieu."

"Your children!" he echoed, incredulously.

"Yes, my class; I am a teacher, out botanizing with my pupils."

"A teacher! Then you can not be a stranger to weariness. You must know what it is to be tired."

A softened, saddened light came into the beautiful eyes. "Weariness and I