

Stanzas on Reading "I'd be a Butterfly."

I would not be a butterfly—
Nay, Mr. Bayly, nay;
Although you rhyme to ear and eye
In such a dainty way.

The plants that in a garden grow
Are fresh and very sweet;
But more befitting for a show
Than proper things to eat.

'Tis only just a month or so
The things can keep alive;
One year's career they cannot know,
And mine are forty-five.

I tell you frankly, Mr. B.,
I would not if I could;
In fact, as far as I can see,
I could not if I would.

LOVERS YET.

(By the author of "Madoline's Lover.")

Stephen Thorne had gone with his guest
and visitor, Ralph Holt, to fetch the cattle
home. In Ralph's honor, good, motherly
Mrs. Thorne had laid out a bountiful tea—
golden honey that seemed just gathered
from the flowers, ripe fruits, cream fresh
from the dairy—everything was ready; yet
the farmer and his guest seemed long in
coming. She went to the door, and looked
across the meadows. The quiet summer
beauty stole like a spell over her.

Suddenly, down in the meadows, Mrs.
Thorne caught sight of a lady, leading a
little child by the hand. She was followed
by a young maid carrying another. As the
lady drew nearer Mrs. Thorne stood transfixed
and bewildered. Could the summer
sun or the flickering shade be mocking her?
Was she dreaming or awake? Far off still,
through the summer haze, she saw a white,
wan face; dark eyes, shadowed and veiled,
as though by long weeping; lips once rosy
and smiling, rigid and firm. She saw what
seemed to her the sorrowful ghost of the
pretty, blooming child who had left
her long ago. She tried to call out, but her
voice failed her. She tried to run forward
and meet the figure coming so slowly
through the meadows, but she was powerless
to move. She never heard the
footsteps of her husband and his guest.
She only stirred when Stephen Thorne
placed his hand upon her shoulder, and, in
a loud, cheery voice, asked what ailed her.
"Look," she said, hoarsely, "look down the
meadow there, and tell me—if that is
Dora, or Dora's ghost?"

She drew near more swiftly now, for she
had seen the three figures at the door.
The white face and wild eyes seemed aflame
with anxiety.

"Dora, Dora!" cried Mrs. Thorne, "is
it really you?"

"It is," said a faint bitter voice. "I
am come home, mother. My heart is
broken, and I long to die."

They crowded round her, and Ralph
Holt, with his strong arms, carried the
fragile drooping figure into the house. They
laid her upon the little couch, and drew the
curling rings of dark hair back from her
white face. Mrs. Thorne wept aloud,
crying out for her pretty Dora, her poor,
unhappy child. The two men stood
watching her with grave, sad eyes. Ralph
clenched his hand as he gazed upon her,
the wreck of the simple, gentle girl he had
loved so dearly.

"If he has wronged her," he said to
Stephen Thorne, "if he has broken her heart,
and sent her home to die, let him
beware."

"I knew it would never prosper," groaned
her father—"such marriages never do."

When Dora opened her eyes, and saw the
three anxious faces around her, for a
moment she was bewildered. They knew
when the torture of memory returned to
her, for she clasped her hands with a low
moan.

"Dora," said her mother, "what has
happened? Trust us, dear child—we are
your best friends. Where is your husband?
And why have you left him?"

"Because he has grown tired of me," she
cried, with passion and anger flaming again
in her white, worn face. "I did something
he thought wrong, and he prayed heaven
to pardon him for making me his wife."

"What did you do?" asked her father
anxiously.

"Nothing that I thought wrong," she
replied. "Ask me no questions, father. I
would rather die any death than return to
him or see him again. Yet do not think evil of
him. It was all a mistake. I could not think
his thoughts, or live his life—we were quite
different, and very unhappy. He never
wishes to see me again, and I will suffer
anything rather than see him."

The farmer and his wife looked at each
other in silent dismay. This proud, angry
woman, with her passionate words, fright-
ened them. Could it be there Dora who
had ever been sunshine and music to them?

"If you do not like to take me home,
father," she said in a hard voice, "I can
go elsewhere; nothing can surprise or
grieve me now."

But kindly Mrs. Thorne had drawn the
tired head to her.

"Do you not know, child," she said,
gently, "that a mother's love never fails?"

Ralph had raised the little ones in his
arms, and was looking with wondering
admiration at the proud, beautiful face of
the little Beatrice, and the fair loveliness of
Lillian. The children looked with frank,
fearless eyes into his plain, honest face.

"This one with dark hair has the real
Earle face," said Stephen Thorne, proudly;
"that is just my lord's look, proud and
quiet. And little Lillian is something like
Dora when she was quite a child."

"Never say that," cried the young
mother. "Let them grow like anyone else,
but never like me."

They soothed her with gentle loving
words. Her father said she should share
his home with her children, and he would
never give her up again. They bade her
watch the little ones, who had forgotten
there fears, and laughed over the ripe fruit
and golden honey. They also drew aside
the white curtains, and let her tired eyes
fall upon the sweet summer beauty of earth
and sky. Was not everything peaceful?
The sun sinking in the west, the birds
singing their evening song, the flowers

closing their bright eyes, the wind whisper-
ing its "good-night" to the shimmering,
graceful elms—all was peace, and the hot,
angry heart grew calm and still. Bitter
tears rose to the burning eyes—tears that
fell like rain, and seemed to take away the
sharpest sting of her pain.

With wise and tender thought they let
Dora weep undisturbed. The bitter sobbing
ceased at last. Dora had said farewell to
her love. She lay white and exhausted,
but the anger and passion had died away.
"Let me live with you, father," she said,
humbly. "I will serve you, and obey you.
I am content, more than content, with my
own home. But for my little children, let
all be as it was years ago."

When the little ones, like the flowers,
had gone to sleep, and Dora had gone into
the pretty white room prepared for her,
Ralph rose to take his leave.

"Surely," said Stephen Thorne, "you
are not leaving us. You promised to stay
a whole week."

"I know," replied the young farmer;
"but you have many to think for now,
Mr. Thorne. The time will come when the
poor, wearied girl sleeping above us will be
Lady Earle. Her husband knew I loved
her. No shadow even of suspicion must
rest upon her. While your daughter re-
mains under your roof I shall not visit you
again."

Dora's father knew the young man was
right. "Let me see the little ones sometimes,"
continued Ralph; "and if large parcels of
toys and books find their way to the Elms,
you will know who sent them. But I
must not come in Dora's way; she is no
longer Dora Thorne."

As Stephen watched the young man
walking quickly through the long gray
fields, he wished that Dora had never seen
Ronald Earle.

Poor Dora's troubles were not yet ended.
When the warm August sun peeped into
her room on the following morning, she did
not see it shine; when the children crept
to her side, and called for mamma, she was
deaf to their little voices. The tired head
tossed wearily to and fro; the burning eyes
would not close. A raging fever had her in
its fierce clutches. When Mrs. Thorne,
alarmed by the children's cries, came in,
Dora did not know her, but cried out loudly
that she was a false woman, who had lured
her husband from her.

They sent in all haste for aid; but the
battle was long and fierce. During the
hours of delirium Mrs. Thorne gleaned
sorrowfully some portion of her daughter's
story. She cried out incessantly against a
fair woman—one Valentine—who Ronald
loved—cried in scorn and in anger. Fre-
quently she was in a garden, behind some
trees; then confronting some one with
flaming eyes, sobbing that she did not
believe it, then hiding her face, and crying
out, "He has ceased to love me—let me
die!"

But the time came when the fierce fever
burned itself out, and Dora lay weak and
helpless as a little child. She recovered
slowly, but she was never the same again.
Her youth, hope, love, and happiness were
all dead. No smile or dimple, no pretty
blush came to the changed face; the old
coy beauty was all gone.

Calm and quiet, with deep earnest eyes,
and lips that seldom smiled, Dora seemed
to have found another self. Even with her
children the sad restraint never wore off,
nor grew less. If they wanted to play
they sought the farmer in the fields, the
good-natured nurse, or the indulgent
grandmother—never the sad, pale mother.
If they were in trouble then they sought
her.

Dora asked for work. She would have
been dairymaid, housemaid, or anything
else, but her father said "No." A pretty
little room was given to her, with wood-
binches and roses peeping in at the window.
Here for long hours every day, while the
children played in the meadows, she sat
and sewed. There, too, Dora, for the first
time, learned what Ronald, far away in
sunny Italy, had failed to teach her—how
to think and read. Big boxes of books
came from the town of Shorebeach.
Stephen Thorne spared no trouble or
expense in pleasing his daughter. Dora
wondered she had never cared for books,
now that deeper and more solemn thoughts
came to her. The pale face took a new
beauty; no one could have believed that
the thoughtful woman with the sweet
voice and refined accent was the daughter
of the blunt farmer Thorne and his homely
wife.

A few weeks passed, and but for the little
ones Dora would have believed the whole
to have been but a long, dark dream. She
would not think of Ronald; she would not
remember his love, his sacrifices for her;
she thought only of her wrongs and his
cruel words.

The children grew and thrived. Dora
had no care at present as to their education.
From her they learned good English, and
between herself and the faithful young
nurse they could learn, she thought,
tolerable Italian. She would not think of
a future that might take those beloved chil-
dren from her. She ignored Ronald's claim to
them—they were hers. He had tired of
them when he tired of her. She never felt
the days monotonous in that quiet farm-
house, as others might have done. A dead
calm seemed to surround her, but it was
destined soon to be broken.

CHAPTER XV.

Ronald did not return in the evening to
the pretty villa where he had once been so
happy. In the warmth of his anger, he felt
that he never could look again upon his
wife. To his sensitive, refined nature
there was something more repulsive in the
dishonorable act she had committed than
there would have been in a crime of
deeper dye. He was shocked and startled—
more so than if he had awoke some fair
summer morning to find Dora dead by his
side. She was indeed dead to him in one
sense. The ideal girl, all purity, gentleness,
and truth, whom he had loved and married,
had, it appeared, never really existed after
all. He shrank from the idea of the angry,
vehement woman who had assailed him
with vehement words and foul calumnies.
He shrank from the woman who had for-
gotten every rule of good breeding—
every trace of good manners, in angry,
fierce passion.

How was he ever to face Miss Charteris
again? She would never mention one
word of what had happened, but he could
ill brook the shame Dora had brought
upon him. He remembered the summer
morning in the woods when he had told
Valentine the story of his love, and had

pictured his pretty, artless Dora to her.
Could the angry woman who had dared to
insult him, and to calumniate the fairest
and truest lady in all England, possibly be
the same?

Ronald had never before been brought into
close contact with dishonor. He had some
faint recollection at college of having seen
and known a young man, the son of a
wealthy nobleman, scorned and despised,
driven from all society, and he was told
that it was because he had been detected
in the act of listening at the principal's
door. He remembered how old and young
had shunned this young man as though he
were plague-stricken; and now his own wife,
Dora, had done the very same thing under
circumstances that rendered the dishonor
greater. He asked himself, with a cynical
smile, what he could expect. He had
married for love of a pretty, child-like face,
never giving any thought to principle, mind,
or intellect. The only wonder was that so
wretched and unequal a match had not
turned out ten times worse. His father's
warning rang in his ears. How blind,
how foolish he had been! Every hope of
his own life was wrecked, every hope and
plan of his father's disappointed and dead.
There seemed to him nothing left to care
for. His wife—oh, he would not think of
her! The name vexed him. He could
not stand in Valentine's presence again,
and for the first time he realized what she
had been to him. Home, and consequently
England, was closed to him; the grand
mission he had once believed his had faded
from his mind.

Thinking of all these things, Ronald's
love for his young wife seemed changed to
dislike. Three days passed before he
returned home; then he was somewhat
startled to find her really gone. He had
anticipated sullen temper, renewed quarrels,
and then a separation, but he was startled
to find her actually gone. The servant
gave him the cold, farewell letter, written
without tears, without sorrow. He tore it
into shreds, and flung it from him.

"The last act in the farce," he said,
bitterly. "If I had not been mad I should
have foreseen this."
The silent deserted rooms did not
remind him of the loving young wife parted
from him forever. He was too angry, too
annoyed, for any gentle thoughts to influ-
ence him. She had left him—so much the
better; there could never again be
peace between them. He thought with
regret of the little ones—they were too
young for him to undertake charge of them,
so that they were best left with their mother
for a time. He said to himself that he
must make the best use he could of his
life; everything seemed at an end. He
felt very lonely and unhappy as he sat in
his solitary home; and, the more sorrow
pressed upon him, the more bitter his
thoughts grew, the deeper became his dislike
to his unhappy young wife.

Ronald wrote to his mother, but he said
no word to her of the cause of their
quarrel.

"Dora and I," he said, "will never live
together again—perhaps never meet. She
has gone home to her father; I am going
to wander over the wide earth. Will you
induce my father to receive my children at
Earlescourt? And will you see Mr. Burt,
and arrange that half my small income is
settled upon Dora?"

But to all his wife's entreaties Lord
Earle turned a deaf ear. He declared that
never during his life-time should the
children of Dora Thorne enter Earlescourt.
His resolution was fixed and unalterable.
How, he asked, was he to trust the man
who had once deceived him? For aught
he knew, the separation between Ronald
and his wife might be a deeply laid scheme,
and the children once with him, there
would be a grand reconciliation between
the parents.

"I am not surprised," he said, "that the
unhappy boy is weary of his pretty toy. It
could not be otherwise; he must bear the
consequences of his own folly. He had
time for thought, he made his own choice—
now let him abide by it. You have dis-
regarded my wish, Lady Helena, in even-
naming the matter to me. Let all mention
of it cease. I have no son. One thing
remember—I am not hard upon you—you
can go where you like, see whom you like,
and spend what money you will, and as
you will."

Lady Earle was not long in availing
herself of the permission. There was
great excitement at the Elms one morning,
caused by the receipt of a letter from Lady
Earle, saying that she would be there on
the same day, to visit her son's wife and
children.

The little ones looked up to her with
wondering eyes. To them she was like a
vision, with her noble face and distinguished
air.

Stephen Thorne and his wife received
the great lady not without some trepidation;
yet they were in no way to blame. The fatal
marriage had been as great a blow to them
as to Lord and Lady Earle. With the
quiet dignity and graceful ease that never
deserted her, Lady Earle soon made them
feel at home. She started in utter sur-
prise when a quiet, grave woman, on whose
face sweetness and sullen humor were
strangely mingled, entered the room. This
could not be pretty, coy, blushing Dora!
Where were the dimples and smiles? The
large dark eyes raised so sadly to her were
full of strange, pathetic beauty. With
sharp pain the thought struck Lady Earle,
"WHAT MUST NOT DORA HAVE SUFFERED
TO HAVE CHANGED HER SO GREATLY?" The sad
eyes and worn face touched her as no
beauty could have done. She clasped Dora
in her arms and kissed her.

"You are my daughter now," she said,
in that rich, musical voice which Dora
remembered so well. "We will not mention
the past; it is irrevocable. If you sinned
against duty and obedience, your face tells
me you have suffered. What has come
between you and my son I do not seek to
know. The shock must have been a great
one which parted you, for he gave up all
the world for you, Dora, years ago. We
will not speak of Ronald. Our care must
be with the children. Of course you wish
them to remain with you?"

"While it is possible," said Dora,
wearily. "I shall never leave home again;
but I cannot hope to keep them here
always."

"I should have liked to adopt them,"
said Lady Earle; "to take them home and
educate them, but—"

"Lord Earle will not permit it," inter-
rupted Dora, calmly. "I know—I do not
wonder."

"You must let me do all I can for them
here," continued Lady Earle; "I have

made all plans and arrangements. We
will give the children an education befitting
their position, without removing them
from you. Then we shall see what time
will do. Let me see the little ones. I wish
you had called one Helena, after me."

Dora remembered why she had not done
so, and a flush of shame rose to her face.

They were beautiful children, and Dora
brought them proudly to the stately lady
waiting for them. Lady Earle took Bea-
trice in her arms.

"Why, Dora," she said, admiringly,
"she has the Earle face, with a novel
charm all its own. This child will grow
up into a magnificent woman."

"She has the Earle spirit and pride,"
said the young mother; "I find it hard to
manage her even now."

Then Lady Earle looked at the fair spiri-
tual face and golden hair of little Lillian.
The shy dove like eyes and sweet lips
charmed her.

"There is a great contrast between
them," she said thoughtfully. "They will
require careful training, Dora; and now
we will speak of the matter which has
brought me here."

Dora noticed that, long as she remained,
Lady Earle never let Beatrice leave her
arms; occasionally she bent over Lillian
and touched her soft golden curls, but the
child with the "Earle face" was the one
she loved best.

Together with Stephen Thorne and his
wife Lady Earle went over the Elms. The
situation delighted her; nothing could be
better or more healthy for the children,
but the interior of the house must be
altered. Then with delicate grace that
could only charm, never wound, Lady
Earle unfolded her plans. She wished a
new suite of rooms to be built for Dora and
the children, to be nicely furnished with
everything that could be required. She
would bear the expense. Immediately on
her return she would send an efficient
French maid for the little ones, and in the
course of a year or two she would engage
the services of an accomplished governess,
who would undertake the education of
Beatrice and Lillian without removing
them from their mother's care.

"I shall send a good piano and a harp,"
said Lady Earle; "it will be my pride and
pleasure to select books, music, drawings,
and everything else my grandchildren
require. I should wish them always to be
nicely dressed and carefully trained. To you,
Dora, I must leave the highest and best
training of all. Teach them to be good,
and to do their duty. They have learned
all when they have learned that."

For the first time in her life the
thought came home to Dora. How was
she to teach what she had never learned
and had failed to practice? That night,
long after Lady Earle had gone away and
the children had fallen asleep, Dora knelt
in the moonlight and prayed that she might
learn to teach her children to do their duty.

As Lady Earle wished the old farm-house
was left intact, and a new group of build-
ings added to it. There was a pretty
sitting-room for Dora, and a larger one to
serve as a study for the children, large
sleeping-rooms, and a bath-room, all replete
with comfort. Two years passed before
all was completed, and Lady Earle thought
it time to send a governess to the Elms.

During those years little or nothing was
heard of Ronald. After reading the cold
letter Dora left for him, it seemed as
though all love, all care, all interest, died
out in his heart. He sat for many long
hours, thinking of the blighted life "he
could not lay down, yet cared little to hold."
He was only 23—the age at which life
opens to most men; yet he was worn,
tired, wearied of everything—the energies
that once seemed boundless, the ambition
once so fierce and proud, all gone. His
whole nature recoiled from the shock. Had
Dora, in the fury of her jealousy and rage,
tried to kill him, he would have thought
that but a small offence compared with
the breach of honor in crouching behind the
trees to listen. He thought of the quiet,
grand beauty of Valentine's face while
Dora's was convulsed with passion. He
remembered the utter wonder in Valen-
tine's eyes when Dora's flamed upon them.
He remembered the sickening sense of
shame that had cowed him as he listened
to her angry, abusive words. And this
untrained, ignorant, ill-bred woman was
his wife! For her he had given up home,
parents, position, wealth—all he held in
life worth caring for. For her, and through
her, he stood there alone in the world.

These thoughts first maddened him, then
drove him to despair. What had life left
for him? He could not return to England;
his father's doors were closed against him.
There was no path open to him; without
his father's help he could not get into
Parliament. He could not work as an
artist at home. He would not remain in
Florence; never again, he said to himself,
would he see Valentine Charteris—Valen-
tine, who had been the witness of his
humiliation and disgrace. Sooner anything
than that. He would leave the villa and
go somewhere—he cared little where. No
quiet, no rest came to him. Had his mis-
fortunes been accidental—had they been
any other than what they were, the result
of his boyish folly and disobedience, he
would have found them easier to bear; as
it was, the recollection that it was all his
own fault drove him half mad.

Before morning he had written a fare-
well note to Lady Charteris, saying that
he was leaving Florence at once, and would
not be able to see her again. He wrote to
Valentine, but the few stiff words expressed
little of what he felt. He prayed her to
forget the miserable scene that would
haunt him to his dying day; to pardon the
insults that had driven him nearly mad;
to pardon the mad jealousy, the dishonor of
Dora; to forget him and all belonging to
him. When Miss Charteris read that
letter she knew that all efforts to restore
peace would for a time be in vain. She
heard the day following that the clever
young artist, Mr. Thorne, had left.

Countess Rosali loudly lamented Ron-
ald's departure. It was so strange, she
said; the dark-eyed little wife and her
children had gone home to England, and
the husband, after selling off his home,
had gone with Mr. Charles Standon into
the interior of Africa. What was he going
to do there?

She lamented him for two days without
ceasing, until Valentine was tired of her
many conjectures. He was missed in the
brilliant salons of Florence, but by none
so much as by Valentine Charteris.

What the pretty coquette Countess had
said was true. After making many plans

and forming many resolutions, Ronald met
Mr. Standon, who was on the point of
joining an exploring expedition in South
Africa. He gladly consented to accom-
pany him. There was but little prepara-
tion needed. Four days after the never-to-
be-forgotten garden scene, Ronald Earle
had left Italy, and became a wanderer
upon the face of the earth.

CHAPTER XVI.

Valentine Charteris never told the
secret. She listened to the wonder and
conjectures of all around her, but not even
to her mother did she hint what had passed.
She pitied Ronald profoundly. She knew
the shock Dora had inflicted on his sensi-
tive honorable disposition. For Dora
herself she felt nothing but compassion.
Her calm, serene nature was incapable of
such jealousies. Valentine could never be
jealous or mean, but she could understand
the torture which had made shy, gentle
Dora both.

"Jealous of me, poor child!" said Valen-
tine to herself. "Nothing but ignorance
can excuse her. As though I, with half
Florence at my feet, cared for her husband,
except as a dear and true friend."

So the little villa was deserted; the
gaunt, silent servant found a fresh place.
Ronald's pictures were eagerly bought up;
the pretty countess, after looking very
sentimental and sad for some days, forgot
her sorrow and its cause in the novelty of
making the acquaintance of an impassive,
unimpressible American. Florence
soon forgot one whom she had been proud
to know and honor.

Two months afterwards, as Miss Char-
teris sat alone in her favorite nook—the
bower of trees where poor Dora's tragedy
had been enacted—she was found by the
Prince Borzezi. Every one said that
sooner or later it would come to this.
Prince Borzezi, most fastidious of men,
who had admired many women but loved
none, whose verdict was the rule of fashion,
loved Valentine Charteris. Her fair Eng-
lish face, with its calm grand beauty, her
graceful dignity, her noble mind and pure
soul, had captivated him. For many long
weeks he hovered around Valentine, long-
ing, yet dreading, to speak the words which
would unite or part them for life.

Lately there had been rumors that Lady
Charteris and her daughter intended to
leave Florence; then Prince Borzezi
decided upon knowing his fate. He sought
Valentine, and found her seated under the
shade of her favorite trees.

"Miss Charteris," he said, after a few
words of greeting, "I am come to ask from
you the greatest favor, the sweetest boon,
you can confer on any man."

"What is it?" asked Valentine, calmly,
anticipating some trifling request.

"Your permission to keep for my own
the original 'Queen Guinevere,'" he
replied; "that picture is more to me than all
I possess. Only one thing is dearer, the
original. May I ever hope to make that
mine also?"

Valentine raised her magnificent eyes in
wonder. It was an offer of marriage then
that he was making.

"Have you no word for me, Miss Char-
teris?" he said. "I lay my life and my
love at your feet. Have you no word for
me?"

"I really do not know what to say,"
replied Valentine.

"You do not refuse me?" said her lover.

"Well, no," replied Valentine.

"And you do not accept me?" he con-
tinued.

"Decidedly not," she replied, more
firmly.

"Then, I shall consider there is some
ground for hope," he said.

Valentine had recovered her self-posses-
sion. Her lover gazed anxiously at her
beautiful face; its proud calm was unbro-
ken.

"I will tell you how it is," resumed
Valentine, after a short pause. "I like
you better perhaps than any man I know,
but I do not love you."

"You do not forbid me to try all I can to
win your love?" asked the Prince.

"No," was the calm reply. "I esteem
you very highly, Prince. I cannot say
more."

"But you will in time," he replied. "I
would not change your quiet, friendly
liking, Miss Charteris, for the love of any
other woman."

Under the bright sky the handsome
Italian told the story of his love, in words
that were poetry itself—how he worshipped
the fair, calm girl, so unlike the women of
his own clime. As she listened, Valentine
thought of that summer morning years ago
when Ronald had told the story of his love;
and then Valentine owned to her own
heart that, if Ronald were in Prince Borze-
zi's place, she would not listen so calmly,
nor reply so coolly.

"How cold and stately these English
girls are!" thought the lover. "They are
more like goddesses than women. Would
any word of mine ever disturb the proud
coldness of that perfect face?"

It did not then but before the morning
ended Prince Borzezi had obtained per-
mission to visit England in the spring, and
ask again the same question. Valentine
liked him. She admired his noble and
generous character, his artistic tastes; his
fastidious exclusiveness had a charm for
her: she did not love him, but it seemed to
her more than probable that the day
would come when she would do so.

Lady Charteris and her daughter left
Florence and returned to Greenock. Lady
Earle paid them a long visit, and heard all
they had to tell of her idolized son. Lady
Charteris spoke kindly of Dora; and Valen-
tine, believing she could do something to
restore peace, sent an affectionate greeting,
and asked permission to visit the Elms.

Lady Earle saw she had made a mis-
take when she repeated Valentine's words
to Dora. The young wife's face flushed
burning red, and then grew white as death.

"Pray bring me no more messages from
Miss Charteris," she replied. "I do not
like her—she would only come to triumph
over me. I decline to see her. I have no
message to send her."

Then for the first time an inkling of the
truth came to Lady Earle. Evidently
Dora was bitterly jealous of Valentine. Had
she any cause for it? Could it be that her
unhappy son had learned to love Miss
Charteris when it was all too late? From
that day Lady Earle pitied her son with a
deeper and more tender compassion; she
translated Dora's curt words in civil Eng-
lish, and then wrote to Miss Charteris.
Valentine quite understood upon reading