ness, did not suffer by the contrast. Their acquaintance ripened into friendship, and even into something deeper on Twid's part. She liked him better than the other boys of the settlement, and she showed it in her manner toward him. Perhaps there was something of the coquette in her disposition. It was certainly pleasant to know that this fellow, so strong in his quiet manhood, could be held subject to her slightest caprice. She was too much of a woman to be blind to his devotion to her, and there were times when she was disposed to humor him; times when she perhaps unconsciously led him on, only to reject it afterward. Trivial as such things might seem to her, they were full of the deepest meaning to Twid, and his great admiration for her strengthened into a love the depth of which even he did not divine.

But Twid's devotion was of a very quiet sort, and he never was demonstrative. His attitude toward her was always very respectful, and he never ventured to presume on their friendship. But his love for her had of late grown unmistakable, and she had become a little frightened at the result of her experimenting,—for it was experimenting, and nothing more. Almost unconsciously she had tried to see how completely under subjection she could get the big backwoodsman, and not until it was too late did she perceive what it was leading to. She had grown to like Twid very much, and to admire his sterling qualities; and now she suddenly awakened to the fact that she was trifling with a man who had a heart, and that she was doing an injury to one whom she liked. She resolved to show him as gently as possible his mistake, to carry herself with more reserve toward him, not doubting but that in time, his ardor once dampened, he would forget, and in time they might resume their old basis of friendship.

Twid, with all of a lover's quick intuition, perceived her change of manner toward him, and it stung him deeply. At first he could not understand it, and then he resented it. He had done nothing to merit coldness from her, and his pride was touched. His visits to the cottage became less frequent, and he avoided meeting her. Then his father was taken sick, and Twid seldom went far from his bedside.

A week had intervened since his father's death, and Twid had not been near her. With his heart sick and sore under its double load of grief, he had resolved to go away and leave her to herself, as he imagined she wished to be. Now, as he stood by Mrs. Simms' little gate and looked up at the familiar cottage, he fancied he caught a glimpse of a white dress on the little lawn in front. In an instant his good resolution was shaken, and one look at Mrs. Simms' laughing face settled it.

Waving his hand in good-bye to her, he stepped outside the gate, turned to shut it, and then, facing about, he started up the hill, his gun on his shoulder.

May Slatterly was on the little grass-plot in front of the veranda, trimming some rose-bushes that grew between the gravel walk and the porch. She looked very pretty in her simple dress of some filmy white material, with a single red rose at her throat. She kept busily at her task, but her thoughts were not upon it. She was thinking of Twid. Some one had told her that he was going away to-day, and she wondered if he would come and say good-bye to her. He had not been there for weeks, and she had had plenty of time to think over the events of the year since she had known him. How she had grown to almost despise herself, and what would she not have given to undo it all. Twid's long silence hurt her more than his reproaches had. It seemed to her very like contempt, and it had grown to be almost unbearable. If he would only come and say something to her, even if it was only to reprove her, it would be better than this (as it seemed to her) contemptuous silence. But now he was going away,—going without giving her a chance to vindicate herself; going with his heart full of bitterness and contempt for her, and it was unbearable. Slowly the tears came into her eyes, and leaning her head against the lattice-work, she cried as if her heart would break.

There was a slight noise behind her, and