

Every kind of love, however ethereal it may seem to be, springs entirely from the instinct of sex; indeed, it is absolutely this instinct, only in a more definite, specialised, and perhaps, strictly speaking, more individualised form. If, bearing this in mind, one considers the important _rôle_ which love plays in all its phases and degrees, not only in dramas and novels, but also in the real world, where next to one's love of life it shows itself as the strongest and most active of all motives; if one considers that it constantly occupies half the capacities and thoughts of the younger part of humanity, and is the final goal of almost every human effort; that it influences adversely the most important affairs; that it hourly disturbs the most earnest occupations; that it sometimes deranges even the greatest intellects for a time; that it is not afraid of interrupting the transactions of statesmen or the investigations of men of learning; that it knows how to leave its love-letters and locks of hair in ministerial portfolios and philosophical manuscripts; that it knows equally well how to plan the most complicated and wicked affairs, to dissolve the most important relations, to break the strongest ties; that life, health, riches, rank, and happiness are sometimes sacrificed for its sake; that it makes the otherwise honest, perfidious, and a man who has been hitherto faithful a betrayer, and, altogether, appears as a hostile demon whose object is to overthrow, confuse, and upset everything it comes across: if all this is taken into consideration one will have reason to ask--"Why is there all this noise? Why all this crowding, blustering, anguish, and want? Why should such a trifle play so important a part and create disturbance and confusion in the well-regulated life of mankind?" But to the earnest

investigator the spirit of truth gradually unfolds the answer: it is not a trifle one is dealing with; the importance of love is absolutely in keeping with the seriousness and zeal with which it is prosecuted. The ultimate aim of all love-affairs, whether they be of a tragic or comic nature, is really more important than all other aims in human life, and therefore is perfectly deserving of that profound seriousness with which it is pursued.