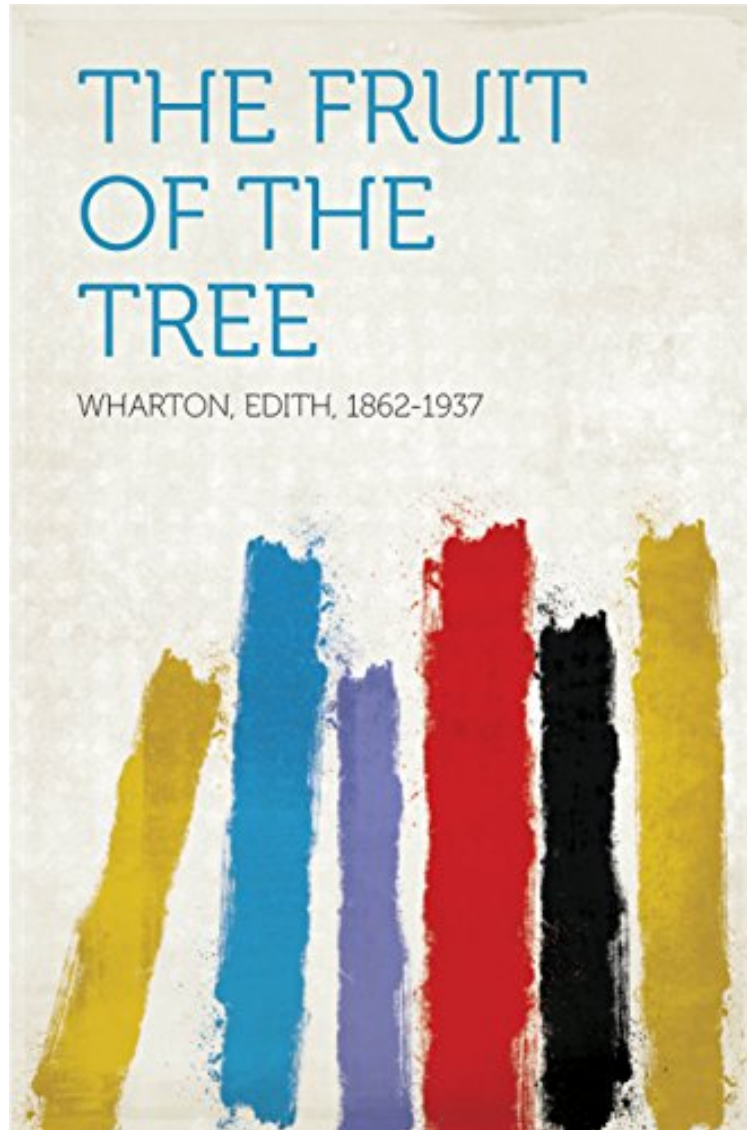


[PDF] The Fruit of the Tree

## The Fruit of the Tree

*Von Edith, 1862-1937 Wharton*  
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**Von Edith, 1862-1937 Wharton : The Fruit of the Tree** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fruit of the Tree:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Laacoon.Von Austin Elliott"The Fruit of The Tree",Edith Wharton's third novel,remains the most misunderstood of all her writings.It has usually been criticized,even by those who admire it,as "brokenbacked" in structure and unsatisfying with its inclusion of the seemingly controversial subjects of labor reform and euthanasia in a work that examines

marriage and satirizes the idle class. This is primarily the reason "The Fruit of The Tree" has not been published in ninety years; hopefully, readers will rediscover a memorable book with its fascinating portrait of turn of the century America with themes which are still timely. It tells the story of a young nurse, whose intelligence and maturity attracts a brilliant young doctor working to reform deplorable labor conditions for the poor. Despite the nurse's admiration for the doctor's progressivism and her growing love for the doctor's person, he becomes infatuated with the gentle elegance of a beautiful and rich society girl—the nurse's best friend. The society girl supports the doctor's work financially to the great animus of her friends and advisers and eventually becomes smitten with him. They marry, only to discover their incompatibility when the doctor's new schemes for reform are baulked by his wife's love of comfort and security. The doctor by this time realizes that the nurse loves him and that he reciprocates. He argues with his wife and they separate; the wife left alone breaks her spine in a riding accident and being attended by her friend, the nurse, begs her to kill her. The nurse seeing that her case is desperate (this is a century ago, remember) and influenced by the doctor's support of euthanasia—does so. The nurse falls under suspicion with the public and even the doctor suspects her of killing his wife because of her love for him. They marry, but she is haunted by the fact that despite her protestations of innocence, her husband tacitly believes her culpable. "The Fruit of The Tree", subtly depicts the price one pays for following conscience and being ahead of one's time. The novel is not "about" labor reform or euthanasia but uses these to show how today's controversial ideas are usually tomorrow's accepted facts; that the progress of our civilization, accepted as a matter of course, is at the cost of the toil and suffering of others. Bitter is the fruit, indeed. I cannot rate, "The Fruit of The Tree" among Edith Wharton's greatest works, however. The style of the book while good, never reaches the sustained brilliance which she achieves in "The House of Mirth", "The Custom of The Country" and "The Age of Innocence", works of which the prose is unrivalled in English fiction. Nevertheless it is a fine novel, and deserves recognition for its well integrated artistry. END

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