

It's plain enough to anyone who isn't a downright fool. A telegraph-girl would be quite another pair of shoes."

"I suppose I don't understand these things."

"Now, my dear Marianne, do you mean to say that if you heard that your Titus had been lunching at Jules's with Lady Thingammy What's-her-name, it wouldn't be quite different from a telegraph-girl and an ABC?" Marianne said she couldn't see any difference. But this was only her obstinacy. Charlotte continued: "Well, I should! And so would the jury. Why, I know by this—that if it was Jules's I shouldn't lose a wink of sleep about it; but if it was a telegraph-girl, I wouldn't go to Clacton-on-Sea in August and leave John alone in London. Not with my ideas, which are rather strict. Of course, one isn't a Frenchwoman or an Italian."

"What are *their* ideas? How should I know anything about them?"

"Do you want me to tell you anything about them, or not? That's the question. . . . Well, of course, one knows what a Frenchwoman's ideas are, and I suppose Italians are exactly the same." Strange to say, this shadowy suggestion in a dropped voice, to fend off the dangers of empty space, seems to convey a distinct impression to its hearer, for she says, "Suppose they are, what then?" and the reply is, "Well—I suppose you wouldn't want us to do as they do! Would you?"

Mrs. John Eldridge possessed in the very highest degree the faculty of making it understood, by slight inflections and modulations of voice, by pauses in the right place, by gestures the shrewdest eyesight could not swear to, though the dullest could never remain in ignorance of them, that a lady and gentleman were engaging her attention. She had manipulated the subject in hand by a dexterous introduction of the Latin races, who are notoriously immoral, until a halo of profligacy had encircled her friend's husband and his aristocratic acquaintance. Marianne kicked in her soul against all suggestions of the kind, but with a misgiving that her friend knew more about "this sort of thing" than she herself did. This, too, she strove to keep under; not to allow Titus, whom she believed incapable of the part Charlotte's management would