

'Oh,' said she, hastily—and the beautiful pale face flushed somewhat—'I was not thinking of that. It was a mere fancy. It seems so long since we left England, and we have come so great a way, that it is strange to think one could be back in Surrey in a fortnight.'

'We can not allow you to play truant, you know,' said Queen T—, in her gentle way. 'What would every one say if we allowed you to go back without seeing Niagara?'

'I assure you I was not thinking of such a thing,' said Lady Sylvia, seriously, as if she were afraid of grievously offending Niagara. 'Would not every one laugh if I were to show homesickness so soon?'

But, all the same, we could see that she never looked at these blue waters of the Atlantic without a certain wistfulness: and, as it happened, we were pretty much by the sea-side at this time. For first of all we went down to Manchester—a small, scattered, picturesque watering-place overlooking Massachusetts Bay, the Swiss-looking cottages of wood dotted down anywhere on the high rocks above the strand. And when the wild sunset had died out of the western skies—the splendid colors had been blinding our sight until we turned for refuge to the dark, intense greens of the trees in shadow—we had our chairs out on the veranda, up here on the rocks, over the sea. We heard the splashing of the waves below. We could vaguely make out the line of the land running away out to Cape Cod; and now the twin lights of the Sisters began to shoot their orange rays into the purple dusk. Then the moon rose; and the Atlantic grew grey; and there was a pale radiance on the rocks around us. Our good friends talked much of England that long, still, beautiful night; and now it seemed a place very far apart from us, that we should scarcely be able to recognize when we saw it again.

Then we went to see some other friends as Newport, arriving just in time to get a glimpse of the afternoon drive before the people and their smart little vehicles disappeared into those spacious gardens in which the villas were partly hidden. The next morning we drove round by the sea; and now the sun was burning on the almost smooth water, and there was a fresh smell of sea-weed, and the tiny ripples curled

crisp and white along the pebbly bays. Our Bell began to praise the sea. Here was no churned chalk; but the crystal seawater of the northern shores that she loved. And when she turned her eyes inland, and found occasional glimpses of moorland and rock, she appealed to Lady Sylvia to say if she did not think it was like some part of Scotland, although, to be sure, there was no heath here.

'I have never been in Scotland,' said Lady Sylvia, gently, and looking down. 'I—I almost thought we should have gone this year.'

There was no tremor at all in her voice; she had bravely nerved herself on the spur of the moment.

'You must go next year; Mr. Balfour will be so proud to show his native country to you,' said Queen T—, very demurely; but we others could see some strange meaning in her eyes—some quick, full expression of confident triumph and joy.

And how is it possible to avoid some brief but grateful mention of the one beautiful day we spent at Cambridge—or, rather, outside Cambridge—in a certain garden there? It was a Sunday, fair and calm and sweet-scented, for there were cool winds blowing through the trees, and bringing the odors of flowers into the shadowed veranda. Was not that bit of landscape over there, too—the soft green hill with its patches of tree, the hedges and fields, the breezy blue sky with its floating clouds of white—a pleasant suggestion of Surrey? There was one sitting with us there who is known and well beloved wherever, all over the wide world, the English tongue is spoken; and if that gracious kindness which seemed to be extended to all things, animate and inanimate, was more particularly shown to our poor stricken patient, who could wonder who had ever seen her sensitive mouth and pathetic eyes? Of whom was it written—

'Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour  
on her spirit:  
Something within her said, "at length thy trials are  
ended?"'

If she could not quite say that as yet, her sorrows were for the moment at least forgotten, and she sat content and pleased and grateful. And then we had dinner in an old-fashioned room of the old-fashioned house, and much discourse of books; the