

Laura Tinley was punished by being requested to lead off with a favourite song in a buzz. She acceded, quite aware of the honour intended, and sat at the piano, taming as much as possible her pantomime of one that would be audible. Lady Gosstre scanned the room, while Adela, following her ladyship's eyeglass, named the guests.

"You get together a quaint set of men," said Lady Gosstre.

"Women!" was on Adela's tongue's tip. She had really thought well of her men. Her heart sank.

"In the country!" she began.

"Yes, yes!" went my lady.

These were the lessons that made the ladies of Brookfield put a check upon youth's tendency to feel delightful satisfaction with its immediate work, and speedily conceive a discontented suspicion of anything whatsoever that served them.

Two other sacrifices were offered at the piano after Laura Tinley. Poor victims of ambition, they arranged their dresses, smiled at the leaves, and deliberately gave utterance to the dreadful nonsense of the laureates of our drawing-rooms. Mr. Pericles and Emilia exchanged scientific glances during the performance. She was merciless to indifferent music. Wilfrid saw the glances pass. So, now, when Emilia was beckoned to the piano, she passed by Wilfrid, and had a cold look in return for beaming eyes.

According to directions, Emilia sang a simple Neapolitan air. The singer was unknown, and was generally taken for another sacrifice.

"Come; that's rather pretty," Lady Gosstre hailed the close.

"It is of ze people — such as zat," assented Mr. Pericles.

Adela heard my lady ask for the singer's name. She made her way to her sisters. Adela was ordinarily the promoter, Cornelia the sifter, and Arabella the director, of schemes in this management. The ladies had a moment for counsel over a music-book, for Arabella was about to do duty at the piano. During a pause, Mr. Pole lifting his white waistcoat with the effort, sent a word abroad, loudly and heartily, regardless of its guardian aspirate, like a bold-faced hoyden flying from her chaperon. They had dreaded it. They loved their father, but declined to think his grammar parental.