

"Yes, indeed, so good and pathetic, poor little dears," said Lady Argent tenderly; "and both so pretty, weren't they?"

"Rosamund has rather lost her looks, I'm sorry to say."

Bertha was looking keenly at her friend, who remained serenely unconscious of her scrutiny.

"Don't you think so, Sybil?"

"She's rather too thin, and I don't like those great shadows under her eyes, but I'm sure she'll always be a very pretty creature. So like her mother, you know, though I always thought that Mrs. Grantham spoilt herself with those enormous earrings, especially in the country, somehow. I don't quite know," Lady Argent thoughtfully pursued, with an air of far greater interest than any she had bestowed on the subject of Rosamund's looks, "why it is that I have always disliked earrings. I do so hope it isn't prejudice, which I always think so very narrow-minded and shocking. But I never could bear the picture of St. Cecilia that everyone likes so much because of those great things hanging from her ears. Sitting at the organ, dear, you know. Though I've no doubt it was the fashion, and quite proper and everything in those days, and in that country."

"My dear Sybil! Surely Cecilia was a Roman virgin? You talk as though she'd lived in some unheard of region."

"Well, I never can remember quite where Tyre and Sidon and Syracuse and all those places are," was Lady Argent's rather surprising reply. "I know St. Paul was always going there, but then he really did travel a great deal, Bertie, even for nowadays. I never can bear to think how dreadfully inconvenient their travelling arrangements must have been then—though, of course, it made it all the more meritorious."

Bertha made a decided effort to turn the conversation from channels which appeared to her unnecessarily Scriptural.

"It's such a comfort to see Rosamund looking better every day. There's nothing like youth, my dear, when all's said and done. After all, in spite of the grief and

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