

venture on an interruption; though *we* do seem to have had more sense at your age. There! don't look annoyed. I dare say we were quite as foolish in our own way. Why here is Grace—the fair girl philosopher, I call her. Isn't her costume effective?"

MISS E.—“Just too sweet for anything! Positively it is *simplex*—”

MISS B. (*with some asperity*)—“Please don't, Maggie; we all know you've been at College.”

Miss Archer approaches with a light step and is hailed rapturously by the younger ladies and with a cordial smile by the elder. After the customary greetings, Mrs. Eggleston starts an important topic—the latest arrival. A gentleman has taken the “Seagull” cottage.

MISS B.—“I do hope he is intellectual.”

MISS E. (*with an air of summing up the question at issue*)—“He may prove quite an acquisition. Does he play tennis?”

It is discovered that Miss Archer is acquainted with him. On being appealed to she proceeds to demonstrate Mr. Wentworth. At last—

MISS E. (*breaking in*)—“Do be serious, Grace. We never know when you really mean what you say. Positively, I shall be afraid to meet Mr. Wentworth.”

MISS B. (*after reflection*)—“At any rate he will do very nicely for Hamlet in our theatricals. I declare his coming is quite providential. There is such a dearth of eligible males here this season, I am sure we are often much perplexed to know what to do.”

MISS A.—“If I might make a suggestion, adopt some of the ineligible.”

MISS B.—“Of course we did think of that. But these promiscuous acquaintanceships are so dreadfully embarrassing. You cannot always terminate them when you would like.”

MISS E.—“Yes, if they would only consent to be adopted for the season.”

MISS A.—“What provoking men! not to be content with one glimpse of our social paradise, which, to be sure, is a trifle dull at present.”

MISS B.—“Grace Archer! I quite despair of you! and you used to be so sensible on this point.”

MRS. E.—“Girls, don't quarrel! Mr. Jopling is walking this way,”—and she turns to Miss Beaumont and asks a little mischievously—“Shall I tell him what I have heard this afternoon? He will be greatly flattered by the interest he has excited.”

MISS B. (*with entreaty*)—“If you do, Mrs. Eggleston, I shall die.”

The party turn their heads and see a rather youngish man in tennis suit, with racquet under his arm. As soon as he is noticed he raises his hat politely and shows a faded, ascetic face, finished off with large eyes and lustreless black hair, which has thinned a little on his forehead, but has left him a noble brow. The Rev. Mr. Jopling is in the heyday of clerical comfort. He is a novelty and a bachelor. Moreover, his paleness makes him interesting.

REV. MR. J.—“Good-afternoon, ladies! Shall we have the pleasure of your company on the lawn, Mrs. Eggleston?”

MRS. E.—“As a spectator, yes.”

REV. MR. J.—“We shall persuade you to play.”

Miss Beaumont handles her book a little ostentatiously, that Mr. Jopling might observe the title. But he contents

himself with—“The afternoon is too lovely, Miss Beaumont not to allow yourself to be enticed from your studies.”

MISS B.—“I so feel the need of talking over what I read with a mature mind that I willingly give over now in hope that you may another time assist me.”

REV. MR. J.—“I shall be delighted to give you all my poor assistance.”

MISS E. (*who is afraid the conversation may take a wrong turn*)—“Don't you think that I am improving in my service? I have been practising awfully hard.”

REV. MR. J.—“I hope not, Miss Ellice; I am over-matched as it is.”

MISS B.—“Oh! Mr. Jopling, we have thought of giving dramatic scenes some evening on the terrace, in the open air, you know. I do hope you approve. It will be delightful, and such a help to a thorough understanding of the plays. Won't you take part?”

Miss Archer, who has been talking with Mrs. Eggleston in this interval, now says good-bye.

REV. MR. J.—“Certainly . . . that is . . . You are going, Miss Archer? Permit me to be your escort.”

MISS A.—“I have an engagement, but I mustn't take you from your game.”—She is moving off—“Really, I do wish you to stay.”

REV. MR. J. (*still keeping up with Miss Archer as she walks away*)—“The sun is yet too high for active exertion. *Au revoir, ladies!*”

Miss Beaumont and Miss Ellice look so put out that Mrs. Eggleston rallies them. They reply vaguely, and each seems to be turning over in her mind something of importance. Finally—

MISS B. (*as if completing aloud the mental train*)—“And the name is so singular, you know.”—To which Miss Ellice curiously enough assents.

MRS. E.—“What is it, girls?”

MISS B.—“Oh! I was just trying to imagine who Mr. Jopling could be. The name is so awfully common, you know.”

W. H. HUNTER.

MY STREAMLET.

Winding through the woodlands
Sparkling down the meads;
Gliding 'neath the willows,
Resting 'mong the reeds
Laughing in the sunshine,
Dancing over stones,
Murmurs on my streamlet
In soft, glad undertones.

Where my streamlet floweth,
Banks with flowers are set,
Marsh-marigold and crowfoot,
And purple violet;
From green slopes and hill-sides
Comes the low of herds,
Blending with the murmur
Of brooklet, bees and birds.

Gently-flowing streamlet,
Thy word to me,
As thou flowest onward,
Downward to the sea:
“Let thy life be gentle,
Joyous, pure and bright;
Thou, too, then shalt scatter
Blessing and delight.”

T. W. S.