

"Upon my word," said Mr. Hancock, when the ladies had left the dining-room, "Miss Stephanie Leighton is a remarkably clever young lady."

"Yes," replied Glanville, "I'm delighted to find that she is. I was rather afraid at first that we might find her out of place in our conferences. But before we embark on conference number two, I want to explain to her privately what it is we are doing, and make myself quite sure of how far she is fit for our company. I may as well do this now. I see her out there on the terrace. Restormel, will you look after the wine, and by the time you have all finished I shall have discovered what I want to know."

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THE task of discovery he found had been considerably simplified by a little conversation with regard to the point at issue which Mrs. Vernon had already had with her niece. Mrs. Vernon, it seemed, had described to her in general terms the nature of the discussions on which the party had entered; but she was not sorry when she saw Glanville approaching, to devolve on him the duty of making the explanation complete.

Miss Leighton, with the greatest composure, at once detached herself from her aunt, as if moonlight and male companionship were a combination with which she was quite familiar, and she and Glanville were presently leaning on the balustrade alone together.

"I want," he said, "to tell you how you've fallen into strange company. I only hope that you won't be bored or shocked."

"My aunt," said Miss Leighton, "told me that you'd taken to discussing religion, and new ideas, and so on; but she wasn't very explicit. She referred to religion as if it were an improper story, which it mightn't be good for me to hear. What does she think I'm made of? If new ideas are to shock one, one ought to go and live in China. New ideas