

suited you. But what have you to say against Edward Oliver? He is generous in the extreme, and certainly cannot merit the title of egotist."

"No, indeed. He is the very reverse, and that is one of the things I lay to his charge. A man should respect himself too much to commit dishonorable actions. He has not the very nicest sense of honor, I fancy, and is, besides, exceedingly dissipated. The happiness of my life would indeed be risked, were I united to such a man."

"Well, now for the last, Henry Palmer. What objection can you possibly have to him? Young, handsome, generous, yet prudent, exceedingly fascinating in manners, unexceptionable in morals, what more would you expect? I do not believe there was one disengaged young lady in the party this evening, that would refuse him but yourself."

"That may be, and yet he would not be my choice. I acknowledge he possesses all the qualities you have enumerated; his conversation is exceedingly brilliant; his wit inexhaustible; and judging from his continual smiles, I should say he is very good-humored; and yet it is this that disappoints me. Strange as it may appear, I should like him better were he sometimes otherwise. I do not mean cynical or morose, but occasionally grave. He is superficial, his learning, his accomplishments, all seem to float on the surface; his affections are evanescent; like the butterfly, he is continually roving from flower to flower; there is no wellspring of generous feeling, that gush irresistibly forth, keeping the heart pure from the defiling touch of fashionable life. He is a complete 'man of the world;' sentiment is on his tongue, but it never awakes noble and lofty impulses in his heart. No, no, though I like him much, very much, as an acquaintance, he could never be a near friend. There is no sympathy, no congeniality between us."

"How foolish you are, Belinda; when you are as old as I am you will have become less fastidious, or you surely will be an old maid."

"That is very possible; indeed I have almost made up my mind to it, for I see nothing dreadful in that appellation."

"I have just thought," said Lavinia, who had been silent during the foregoing conversation, "of the person who would suit you exactly, and that is Captain Elton. He has