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## XXV.

I WISH that my first impressions of England had been associated with you. But I had two years there while you were away ; and then I went back to America to act, still knowing nothing of you except what I had heard, and the photograph A—— had shown me, in talking of you. Still another year, or nearly a year passed after I came again to live in England, before we met. Yet all the things I have loved best in England since I first saw it, remind me of you, as if we had seen them together.

I hardly know why I did not stay in America, after I went back, because the new point of view I had gained gave me a new interest in everything. And I liked the work, and people were kind.

It is rather wonderful, and very good, how soon evil can be forgotten or ignored. I had been gossiped about, and some worse things than were ever true had been said and printed. Yet no one seemed to remember. Or if a few did remember, they were silent, and none of the old stories were revived. Often, I scarcely knew whether to laugh or cry over the pressing invitations that came to me from prim ladies standing high on "society" pedestals. Just because I was trying to make up for my long, blank years of ignorant blindness, by reading and studying, I got a reputation as a bookworm and a "recluse," such an odd reputation for an actress, that by those who did not look back I