

## XXVI

### BELLOVED

NEWS travels by odd channels — Things “get round,” as we say. And by one channel or another came to Henry the news of Daphne’s marriage to Stephen St. Hilary. It must have come from some acquaintance, if one comes to think of it, because it came to him in the street. He was on his way to a picture gallery, where there was a show by a new man, a genius. The tidings did not turn him aside from his purpose. He heard it, dropped a few banal flowers of speech on the bride’s path, and went on to his picture gallery. It was in Paris, somewhere on the Quays.

“She was bound to marry someone, of course,” he seems to have told himself, adding a rider about her having been certain to be miserable with *him*.

Then he looked at the new man’s pictures, and saw that they were very good.

“They’re better than mine, confound him,” he appears to have admitted, and then fell deep in thought. I cannot transcribe for you the thought of Henry. His thought has always been a sealed book to me. All I know is that it caught, grasped, held him, that he sat on a narrow bench which he did not feel, opposite a picture which he did not see — and that quite abruptly something happened to him.

Things do happen to people. That is what makes life so interesting. Things do so definitely and