

Tales and Sketches.

(From the Christian Union.)

MY WIFE AND I;

OR,

HARRY HENDERSON'S HISTORY.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

WEALTH NOT LOVE.

Eva Van Arsdel was seated in her apartment in all that tremendous flush of happiness and hope, that confusion of feeling, which a young girl experiences when she thinks that the great crisis of her life has been passed, and her destiny happily decided.

"Yes, yes," she said to herself, "I like him, I like him; and I am going to like him, no matter what mamma, or Aunt Maria, or all the world say. I'll stand by him through life and death."

At this moment her mother came into the room.

"Dear me! Eva, child, not gone to bed yet! Why what's the matter? how flushed your cheeks are! Why you look really feverish."

"Do I?" said Eva, hardly knowing what she was saying. "Well, I suppose that is becoming at any rate."

"Aren't you well?" said her mother. "Does your head ache?"

"Well? certainly, nicely; never better, mamma dear," said Eva, caressingly, coming and seating herself on her mother's knee, and putting her arm around her neck—"never better, mother."

"Well, Eva, then I'm glad of it. I have something to tell you,"—and she drew a letter from her pocket. "Here's this letter from Mr. Sydney; I want to read you something from it."

"Oh dear mamma, what's the use? Don't you think it rather stupid, reading those letters?"

"My dear child, Mr. Sydney is such a good man, and so devoted to you."

"I haven't the least objection, mamma, to his being a good man. Long may he be so. But as to his being devoted to me, I am sorry for it."

"At least, Eva, just read this letter—there's a dear; and I am sure you must see how like a gentleman he writes."

Eva took the letter from her mother's hand, and ran it over hurriedly.

"All no use, mamma dear," she said, when she had done. "It won't hurt him. He'll get over this just as people do with the chicken pox. The fact is, mamma, Mr. Sydney is a man that can't bear to be balked in anything that he has once undertaken to do. It is not that he loves me so very dearly, but he has set out to have me. If he could have got me, ten to one, he would have tired of me before now. You know he would have never cared anything about a girl that he knew he could have, it is simply and only because I have kept myself out of his way and been hard to get that he wants me. If he once had me for a wife, I should be all well enough, but I should be glad, and he'd be off after the next thing he could not get. That's just his nature, mamma."

"But, Eva dear, such a fine man as he is."

"I do not see that he is so very fine."

girls marry! Why, there's that young Rivington; he's drunk these nights in the week, so they tell me. And there are worse stories than that about him. He has been bad in every kind of way that a man could be bad. And yet, Polly Elmore is perfectly crazy with delight to have her daughter get him. And here's Wat Sydney, who, everybody says, is always perfectly sober and correct."

"Well, mamma dear, if it is only a sober, correct man that you want me to have, there's that Mr. Henderson, just as sober and correct and a great deal more cultivated and agreeable."

"How absurd of you, my daughter! Mr. Henderson has not anything to support a wife on. He is a good moral young man, I admit, and agreeable, and has talent and all that; but my dear Eva, you are not fitted to contend with poverty. You must marry a man that can support you in the position that you have always been in."

"Whether I love him or not, mamma?"

"My dear Eva, you would of course love your husband. A man that is able to take care of you and get you everything that you want—give you every wish of your heart—you would love of course."

"Well, mamma, I have got a man does exactly that for me, now," said Eva, "and I don't need another. That's just what papa does for me. And now, when I marry, I want a companion that suits me. I have got now all the bracelets, and jewelry, and finger rings that I can think of; and if I wanted forty more I could tease them out of papa any day, or kiss them out of him. Pa always gets me everything I want; so I don't see what I want of Mr. Sydney."

"Well, now, my dear Eva, I must speak to you seriously. You are old enough not to be talked to like a child. The fact is my darling there is nothing so insecure as our life here. Your father, my love is reported to be a great deal richer than he is. Of course we have to keep up the idea, because it helps his business. But the last two or three years he has met with terrible losses, and I have seen him sometimes so nervous about our family expenditures that, really, there was no comfort in life. But, then, we had this match in view. We supposed, of course, that it was coming off. And such a splendid settlement on you would help the family every way. Mr. Sidney is a very generous man; and the use of his capital, the credit that the marriage would give to your father in business circles, would be immense. And then, my child, just think of the establishment you would have! Why, there is not such an establishment in the country as his place on the North River? You saw it yesterday. What could you ask more? And there is that villa at Newport. You might be there in the Summer, and have all your sisters there. And he is a man of the most splendid taste as to equipments and furniture, and everything of that sort. And as I said before, he is a good man."

"But, mamma, mamma, it will never do. Not if he had the East and West Indies. All that can't buy your little Eva. Tell me, now, mamma dear, was pa a rich man when you married him—I mean when you fell in love with him?"

"Well, no, dear, not very though people always said that he was a man that would rise."

"But you didn't begin in a house like this, mamma. You began at the beginning and helped him up, didn't you?"

"Well, yes, dear, we did begin in a quiet way;

and I had to live pretty carefully the first years of my life; and worked hard, and know all about it; and I want to save you from going through the same as I did?"

May be if you did I should not turn out as you are now. But, really, mother, if pa is embarrassed, why do we live so? Why don't we economize? I am sure I am willing to do it."

"Oh, darling! we mustn't. We mustn't make any change; because, if the idea should once get running that there is any difficulty about money, everybody would be down on your father. We have to keep everything going, and everything up, or else things would go abroad that would injure his credit; and he could not get money for his operations. He is engaged in great operations now that will bring in millions if they succeed."

"And if they don't succeed," said Eva, "then I suppose that we shall lose millions—is that it?"

"Well, dear, it is just as I tell you, we rich people live on a very uncertain eminence, and for that reason I wanted to see my darling daughters settled securely."

"Well, mamma, now I will tell you what I have been thinking of. Since 'riches make to themselves wings and fly away, what is the sense of marrying a man whose main recommendation is, that he is rich? Because that is the thing that makes Mr. Sydney more, for instance, than Mr. Henderson, or any other nice gentlemen we know. Now what if I should marry Mr. Sydney, who, to say the truth, dear mamma, I do not fancy, and who is rather tiresome to me—and then some fine morning his banks should fail, his railroads burst up, and his place on the North River, and his villa at Newport have to be sold, and he and I have to take a little unfashionable house together, and rough it—what then? Why, then, when it comes to that, I should wish that I had chosen a more entertaining companion. For there isn't a thing that I am interested in that I can talk with him about. You see, dear mother, we have to take it 'for better or for worse'; and as there is always danger that the wheel may turn, by and by it may come so that we'll have nothing but the man himself left. It seems to me that we should choose our man with great care. He should be like the pearl of great price, the Bible speaks of, for whom we would be glad to sell everything. It should be somebody we could be happy with if we lost all beside. And when I marry, mother, it will be with a man that I feel is all that to me."

"Well, Eva dear, where'll you find such a man?"

"What if I had found him, mother—or thought I had?"

"What do you mean, child?"

"Mother I have found the man that I love, and he loves me, and we are engaged."

"Eva, child! I would not have thought this of you. Why haven't you told me before?"

"Because, mamma, it was only this afternoon that I found out that he loved me and wanted me to be his wife."

"And may I presume to ask now who it is?" said Mrs. Van Arsdel, in a tone of pique.

"Dear mother, it is Harry Henderson."

"Mr. Henderson! Well, I do think that is too dishonorable; when I told him your relations with Mr. Sydney."

"Mother, you gave him to understand that I was engaged to Mr. Sydney, and I told him, this afternoon, that I was not, and never would be. He was honorable. After you had that conversation with him, he avoided our house."

And avoided me. I was wretched about it, and was wretched; but this afternoon we met accidentally in the Park; and I insisted on knowing from him why he avoided us so. And, at last, I found out all; and he found out all. We understand each other perfectly now, and nothing can ever come between us. Mother, I would go with him to the ends of the earth. There is nothing that I do not feel able to do or suffer for him. And I am glad and proud of myself to know that I can love him as I do."

Oh well, poor child! I do not know what we shall do," said Mrs. Van Arsdel, with profound dejection.

"Dear mother, I will do everything I can to help you, and everything I can to help papa. I do not believe there is one of us children that would not. And I think it is true, what Ida is always telling us, that it would be a great deal better for us if we had less, and had to depend on ourselves and use our own faculties more. There are the boys in college; there is no need of their having spending-money as they do. And I know if papa would tell them of his difficulties it would make men of them, just as it would make a woman of me."

"Well, I do know," said Miss Van Arsdel. "Your father has not told me of any particular embarrassments, only I see he is anxious and nervous, and I know him so well that I always know when his affairs trouble him. And this is a great blow to me, Eva."

"Well, dear mother, I am very sorry it is so; but I cannot help it. It would be wicked for me, mother, to marry any other man when I love Harry as I do. Love is not a glove that you can take off as you please; it is something very different. Now, with him, I never felt tired. I always like to be with him; I always like to talk with him; he never makes me nervous; I never wish he was gone; he can always understand me, and I can understand him. We can almost tell what the other is thinking of without speaking. And I will risk our not being happy together. So please do, dear mother, look a little cheerful about it. Let me be happy in my own way."

"Well, I suppose I must," said Mrs. Van Arsdel, with a deep sigh, taking up the lamp. "You always did have your own way, Eva."

"Oh, well, mother dear; some day you'll be glad of it. Good night."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

FURTHER CONSULTATIONS.

After the departure of her mother, Eva in vain tried to compose herself to sleep. Her cheeks were flushed, and her brain was in a complete whirl. Her mother had said and hinted just enough about the financial condition of the family to fill her with vague alarms. She walked uneasily up and down her luxurious chamber, all whose appointments spoke of wealth and taste; and it was with an unpleasant feeling of insecurity that she regarded the pictures and statues and sofas and all the charming arrangements, in perfecting which her father had always allowed her carte blanche as to money. She reflected uneasily, that in making all these expensive arrangements, she had ordered simply what pleased her fancy, without inquiry as to price, and without ever glancing

over a bill to know the result; and now, she found herself affianced to a young man without any other resources than those which must come from the exertion of his talents, seconded by prudence and economy. And here, again, offered to her acceptance, was another marriage, which would afford her the means of gratifying every taste, and of continuing to live in all those habits of costly luxury and careless expenses that she could not but feel were very agreeable to her. Not for one moment did she feel an inclination or a temptation, to purchase that luxury, and that ease, by the sale of herself; but still, when she thought of her lover—the difficulties that he must necessarily meet, of the cares she must bring upon him—she asked herself, "Was it not an act of injustice to him to burden him with so incapable and helpless a wife, as she feared she should prove?"

"But I am not incapable," she said to herself, "and I will use it; I will show that I am good for something. I wonder if it is true that papa is embarrassed. If he is, I wish he would tell us; I wish he would tell us at once, and let us help him economize. I would do it; I am sure we all would do it."

It was in vain, under the pressure of these thoughts, to try to compose herself to sleep; and, at last, she passed into her sister Ida's room, with her usual systematic regularity as to hours, had for a long time been in the enjoyment of quiet slumber.

Ida, dear! she said stooping over and speaking to her sister, "Ida, look here!"

Ida opened her eyes, and sat up in bed. "Why, child, not gone to bed yet? What is the matter with you? You will certainly ruin your health with these irregular hours."

"Oh, Ida, I am so nervous I can't sleep! I am sorry to disturb you, but, indeed, I want to talk to you about something that worries me; and you know you are always gone before I am up in the morning."

"Well, dear, what is it?" said Ida, stroking her head.

"Do you know mamma has just been into my room with a letter from Mr. Sydney. He is coming into the field again, and has written to mamma, and mamma has been in talking to me till I am just ready to cry. Now, Ida, you know all that took place between Mr. Henderson and me yesterday in the Park; we are engaged, are we not, as much as two people can be?"

"Certainly you are," said Ida, decisively.

"Well, now, mamma is so distressed and disappointed."

"You told her about it, then?" said Ida.

"Certainly; yes, I told her all about it; and oh, Ida! what do you think? mamma really made me feel as if something dreadful was going to happen in the family, that papa was getting embarrassed in his business, and perhaps we might all fail and come to ruin if I did not help him by marrying Mr. Sydney. Now, do you think it would be right for me? It certainly cannot be my duty!"

"Ask yourself that question," said Ida; "think what you must promise and vow in marriage."

"To be sure! and how wicked it would be to promise and vow all to one man when I know that I love another one better!"

"Then," said Ida, "asking a woman to take false marriage vows to save her family, or her parents from trouble, is just like asking her to steal money, or forge a false note to save them. Eva, you cannot do it."

But, Ida dear, is it really true, do you think, that papa is troubled in his business?"

"Papa is not a man that would speak freely to any woman on business matters," said Ida, "not even to me; but I know that his liabilities and ventures are terrific; and nothing would surprise me less than to have this air castle that we have been living in dissolve like a morning mist, and let us down on the pavement. All I have to say is, that if it comes it is just what I have been preparing for all my life. I have absolutely refused to be made such a helpless doll as young girls in our position commonly are. I have determined that I would keep my faculties bright, and my bodily health firm and strong; and that all these luxuries should not become a necessity to me, so but what I could take care of myself, and take care of others, without them. And all I have to say is, if a crash comes it will find me ready, and it won't crush me."

"But, Ida, don't you think it would be a great deal better if we would all begin now to economize, and live very differently? Why, I am sure I would be willing to move out of this, and rent it, or sell it, and live in a smaller one, and give up the carriages and horses. We could live a great deal cheaper and more quietly than we do, and yet have everything that I care about. Yes, I'd even rather sell the pictures—all except a few—and feel safe and independent, than to live in this sort of glittering, uncertain way, and be pressed to marry a man that I do not love, for the sake of getting out of it."

"Well, dear," said Ida, "you never will get Aunt Maria to let me stop running this race with the Elmore's till the last gun fires, and the ship is ready to sink; that's the whole of it. It is what people will say, and the thought of being pitted by their set, and being beaten in the race, that will go further than anything else. If you talk about any drawing in of expenses, they say that we must not do anything of the sort—that it will injure papa's credit. Now I know enough of what things cost, and what business estimates are, to know that they are spending at a tremendous rate. If we had an entailed estate settled upon us with an annual income of two or three hundred thousand dollars, there might be some sense in living as we do; but when all depends on the value of stocks that are going up to-day and down to-morrow, there is never any knowing what may happen; and that is what I have always felt. Father made a lucky hit by investing in stocks that doubled, and trebled, and quadrupled in value; but now, there is a combination against them, and they are falling. I know it gives father great anxiety; and, as I said before, I should not wonder in the least—nothing would surprise me less, than that we should have a great crisis one of these times."

"Poor Harry!" said Eva, "it was the thought of my being an heiress that made him hesitate so long; perhaps he'll have a chance to take me without that obstacle. Ida, do you think it would be right and just in me to let him take such an inefficient body as I am? Am I quite spoiled, do you think—past all redemption?"

"Oh, no, darling," said Ida; "I have good hopes of you. In the first place, a woman that has strength of mind enough to be true to her love against all the pressure that has been brought to bear on you, has strength of mind to do anything that may be required of her. Of course, dear, it will come to the practical point of living in an

entirely different style from what we now live in; and you must count the cost. In the first place, you must give up fashionable society altogether. You must consent to be pitted and wondered at as one that has fallen out of her sphere, and gone down in the world. All the Mrs. Grundys will stop calling on you; and you won't have any turn-out in the Park; and you may have to take a small house on an unfashionable street, and give your mind to the business of calculating expenses, and watching outgoes and incomes."

"Well, now, seriously, Ida, shouldn't mind these things a bit. I don't care a penny for Mrs. Grundy, nor her works and ways. As to the little house, there'll be the less care to keep it; and as to its being on an unfashionable street, what do I care for that? Nobody that I really care for would fail to come and see me, let me live where I would. And Harry and I just agree in our views of life. We are not going to live for the world, but for ourselves and our friends. We'll have the nicest little home, where every true friend of ours shall feel as much at home as we do. And don't you think, Ida, that I should make a good manager? Oh! I know that I could make a house pretty—charming—on ever so little money, just as I get up a spring hat, sometimes, out of odds and ends; and I quite like the idea of having it to do. Of course, poor papa, I don't want him to fail; and I hope he won't; but I'm sometimes like you, Ida, if all should go to ruin, I feel as if I could stand up, now, that I have got Harry to stand up with me. We can begin quietly at first, and make our fortune together. I have thought of ever so many things that I could do for him to help him. Do you know, Ida,—(I rather guess you'll laugh)—that I brought home his gloves and mended them this very evening? I told him I was doing to begin to take care of him. You see I'll make it cheaper for him in a thousand ways—I know I can. He never shall find me a burden. I am quite impatient to be able to show what I can do."

"To begin, darling," said Ida, "one thing you must do is, to take care of your body; no late hours to waste your little brain. And so don't you think you had better go to your room and go quietly to sleep?"

"Oh, Ida! I am going to be so good and so regular after to-night; but to-night, you know, is a kind of exception. Girls don't get engaged every day of their lives, and so you must forgive me if I do make a run on you to-night. The fact is, with my talk with Harry this afternoon, and with mamma to-night, and all the fuss that I see impending, my eyes are just as wide open as they can be; and I don't believe I could go to sleep if I were to try. Oh, Ida! Harry told me all about his mother, and all about that handsome cousin of his, that he has spoken of so many times. Do you know I used to have such worries of mind about that cousin? I was perfectly sure that she stood in my way. And now, Ida, I have a most capital idea about her! She wants to go to France to study, just as you do; and how nice it would be if you could join company and go together."

"It would be pleasant," said Ida. "I must confess I don't like the idea of being 'damsel errant,' wandering off entirely alone in the world; and if I leave you, darling, I shall want somebody to speak to. But come my dear little pussy, you must lie down and shut your eyes, and say your prayers, and do try to go to sleep."

"You darling good little doctor, you," said Eva, "it is too bad of me to keep you up! There I will be good—see how good I am! Good night!"

And kissing her sister, she sought her own room.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MAKING LOVE TO ONE'S FATHER-IN-LAW.

Life has many descents from romance to reality that are far from agreeable. But every exalted hour, and every charming passage in our mortal pilgrimage, is a luxury that has to be paid for with something disagreeable. The German story-teller, Tieck, has a pretty legend of a magical region where were marvelous golden castles, and fountains, and flowers, and bright winged elves, living a life of ceaseless pleasure; but all this was visible only to the anointed eyes of some favored mortal to whom was granted the vision. To all others this elfin country was a desolate wilderness. I had given me within a day or two that vision of Wonderland, and wandered—scarcely knowing whether in the body or out—in its enchanted bowers. The first exhilarating joy of the moment when every mist rose up from the landscape of love; when there was perfect understanding, perfect union, perfect rest; was something that transmuted life. But having wandered in this blessed country and spoken the tongue of angels, I was now to return to every-day regions and try to translate its marvels and mysteries into the vernacular of mortals. In short, I was to wait upon Mr. Van Arsdel and ask of him the hand of his daughter.

Now however charming, with suitable encouragement, to make love to a beautiful lady, making love to a prospective father-in-law is quite another matter.

Men are not as a general thing inclined to look sympathetically on other men in love with any fine woman of their acquaintance, and are rather provoked than otherwise to have them accepted.

"What any women can see in that fellow?" is a sort of standing phrase. But possessors of daughters, are, a fortiori, enemies ready made to every pretender to their hands. My own instincts made me aware of this, and I could easily fancy that had I a daughter like Eva, I should be ready to shoot the fellow who came to take her from me.

Mr. Van Arsdel, it is true, had showed me, hitherto, in his quiet way, marked favor. He was seldom much of a talker, though a shrewd observer of all that was said by others. He had listened silently to all our discussions and conversations in Ida's library, and oftentimes to the reading of the articles I had subjected to the judgment of the ladies; sometimes, though very rarely, interposing little bits of common sense criticism which showed keen good sense, and knowledge of the world.

Mr. Van Arsdel, like many of our merchant princes, had come from a rural district, and an early experience of the hard and frugal life of a farm. Good sense, acute observation, an ability to take wide and clear views of men and things, and an incurable integrity, had been the means of his rise to his present elevation. He was a true American man in another respect, and that was his devotion to women. In America, where we have a clear democracy, women hold that influence over men that is exerted by the aristocracy in other countries. They are something to be looked up to, petted and courted. The human mind seems to require something of this kind. The faith and fealty that the middle-class Englishman has toward his nobility is not all snobbery. It has something

of poetry in it—it is his romance of life. Up in those airy regions where walk the nobility, he is at liberty to fancy some higher, finer types of manhood and womanhood than he sees in the ordinary ways of life, and he adores the unseen and unknown. The American life would become vulgar and common-place did not a chivalrous devotion to women come in to supply the place of recognized orders of nobility. The true democrat sees no superior in rank among men, but all women are by courtesy his superiors.

Mr. Van Arsdel had married a beauty and a belle. When she chose him from among a crowd of suitors he could scarcely believe his own eyes or ears, or help marvelling at the wondrous grace of the choice; and as he told her so, Mrs. Van Arsdel believed him, and their subsequent life was arranged on that understanding. The Van Arsdel house was an empire where women ruled, though as the queen was a pretty, motherly woman, her reign was easy and flowery.

Mr. Van Arsdel delighted in the combinations of business for his own sake. It was his form of mental activity. He liked the effort, the strife, the care, the labor, the success of winning; but when money was once won he cared not a copper for all those forms of luxury and show, for the pride, pomp, and circumstance of fashion, which were all in all to his wife.

In his secret heart he considered the greater part of the proceedings in and about his splendid establishment as a rather expensive species of humbug; but then it was what the women wanted and desired, and he took it all quietly and without comment. I felt somewhat nervous when I asked a private interview with him in Ida's library.

"I have told mamma, Harry," whispered Eva, "and she is beginning to get over it."

Mrs. Van Arsdel received me with an air of patient endurance, as if I had been the toothache or any of the other inevitable inflictions of life, Miss Alice was distant and reserved, and only Ida was cordial.

I found Mr. Van Arsdel dry, cold, and wary, not in the least encouraging any sentimental effusion, and therefore I proceeded to speak to him with as matter-of-fact directness as if the treaty related to a bag of wool.

"Mr. Van Arsdel, I love your daughter. She has honored me so far as to accept of my love, and I have her permission to ask your consent to our marriage."

He took off his spectacles, wiped them deliberately while I was speaking, and coughed drily.

"Mr. Henderson," he said, "I have always had a great respect for you so far as I knew you, but I must confess I don't know why I should want to give you my daughter."

"Simply, sir, because in the order of nature you must give her to somebody, and I have the honor to be chosen by her."

"Eva could do better, her mother thinks."

"I am aware Miss Van Arsdel could marry a man with more money than I have, but none who would love her more or be more devoted to her happiness. Besides I have the honor to be the man of her choice, and perhaps you may be aware that Miss Eva is a young lady of very decided preferences."

He smiled drily, and looked at me with a funny twinkle in his eye.

"Eva has always been used to having her own way," he remarked.

"Then, my dear sir, I must beg leave to say that the choice of a companion for life is a place where a lady has a good right to insist on her own way."

"Well, Mr. Henderson, you may be right. But perhaps her parents ought to insist that she shall not make an imprudent marriage."

"Mr. Van Arsdel, I do not conceive that I am proposing an imprudent marriage. I have no wealth to offer, it is true, but I have a reasonable prospect of being able to support a wife and family. I have good firm health, I have good business habits, I have a profession which already assures me a certain income, and an influential position in society."

"What do you call your profession?"

"Literature," I replied.

He looked skeptical, and I added,—"Yes, Mr. Van Arsdel, in our day literature is a profession in which one may hope for both fame and money."

"It is rather an uncertain one, isn't it?" said he.

"I think not. A business which proposes to supply a great permanent, constantly increasing demand, you must admit to be a good one. The demand for current reading is just as wide and steady as any demand of our life, and the men who undertake to supply it have as certain a business as those that undertake to supply cotton or cloth, or railroad iron. At this day fortunes are being made in and by literature."

Mr. Van Arsdel drummed on the table abstractedly.

"Now," said I, determined to speak in the language of men and things, "the case is just this: if a young man of good, reliable habits, good health and good principles, has a capital of seventy thousand dollars invested in a fair paying business, has he not a prospect of supporting a family in comfort?"

"Yes," said Mr. Van Arsdel, regarding me curiously. "I should call that a good beginning."

"Well," rejoined I, "my health, my education, my power of doing literary work, are the capital. They secure to me for the next year an income equal to that of seventy thousand dollars at ten per cent. Now, I think a capital of that amount invested in a man is quite as safe as the same sum invested in any stocks whatever. It seems to me that in our country a man who knows how to take care of his health is less likely to become unproductive in income than in any stock you can name."

"There's something in that, I admit," said Mr. Van Arsdel.

"And there's something in this, too, papa," said Eva, who entered at this moment, and could not resist her desire to dip her oar in the current of conversation, "and that is, that an investment that you have got to take for better or worse, and can't sell or get rid of all your life, had better be made in something that you are sure you will like."

"And are you sure of that in this case, Pussy?" said her father, pinching her cheek.

"Tolerably, as men go. Mr. Henderson is the least tiresome man of my acquaintance, and you know, papa, it's time I took somebody; you don't want me to go into a convent, do you?"

"How about poor Mr. Sydney?"

"Poor Mr. Sydney has just called, and I have invited him to a private audience, and have convinced him that I am not in the least, the person to make him happy—and he is one of the sort that feel that it is of the last importance that he should be made happy."