

it seemed to her, cogitated over the subject for some time, "Mrs. Brereton, do you know I think there's something wrong with Mr. Graham?" The governess felt the blood rise to her cheek, but she replied quietly, "Yes? What makes you think so, my dear?"

"Sometimes he looks so wild. And, do you know," with a mysterious and somewhat alarmed air, "he walks about the garden at night when we're all in bed."

"How do you know, my child? That must be a fancy."

"No. I've fancied I've heard footsteps more than once under my window, and last night I was so sure of it, that I got up and peeped from behind the curtain, and I saw him! Poor man, I hope he's not going mad; I should be very sorry, though he is ugly, and queer, and wears such absurd shirt-collars." Mrs. Brereton involuntarily thought of Olivia's pitying anxiety for Malvolio, under a similar fear.

"He is ill, perhaps, or has some family trouble," she said. And then she resolved that, ere the day should be over, some step must be decided on to avert the danger.

Should she, without appearing to suspect the truth, gently question him, as though she believed what she had said to Lady Agnes, mentioning the latter's discovery of his nocturnal wanderings? This might, at least, put him on his guard for the present, till she should decide on what it might further be necessary to do? Yes, that would be the best plan. So she watched till an opportunity occurred of finding him alone in the library, a room which, in the absence of Lord Leytonstone, Andrew and herself only frequented.

Entering, she found him seated by a table at the end of the room. Books were spread before him, and he read none of them; on an open folio his arms were laid, and his head rested on them. At the sound of her step he raised it, not starting from his position, but lifting up his face slowly, and one too stupefied and weary with grief to heed interruption. He said no word, and his face was so wan and haggard that Lady Agnes wrote—"I hope he is not going mad, poor man"—rushed across her recollection. She approached him steadily, though the heart beat, and commanding her voice, she began:

"Mr. Graham, you must pardon me, but I fear—I think that I ought to speak to you as an old woman to a young man whom she cannot but believe is in some suffering, physical or mental, that requires sympathy, and it may be advice."

Then she went on by degrees to speak of what her pupil told her. He sat still, his elbows resting on his book, his head in his hands, his fingers through his dishevelled hair, till she came to this point; then he looked up.

"She saw me? I did not mean that. But the truth—and you know it—is, that I am going mad for the love of her."

Then his face went down upon his hands again, and he groaned aloud.

Mrs. Brereton—good, sensible, proper Mrs. Brereton—stood aghast. For this she certainly was not prepared, and it took her so aback that she paused, not knowing how to proceed further. But she had time to recover, for Andrew seemed to have forgotten her presence in the depths of his agony.

"But then," she began, timidly, "what do you propose to do? Things cannot go on so."

"They cannot! God knows they cannot! I suppose," looking up with a ghastly smile, "you think the maddest part of it was my falling in love with her at all! If you knew what my youth has been—starved of all youth's brightness! I know it sounds like a hero of melodrama to talk of suicide, but on my soul, I do not see how I can face life, while death seems so easy! What can I do? What can any one do for me?"

"Time—absence," faltered Mrs. Brereton.

"Time—aye, but in the *meanwhile*. Absence—but *during* the absence. *Now*, is the question. When a man is writhing frantic with a present agony, will it relieve him to suggest that years hence he may have recovered from the wound? But at least, if I die in the effort, I must leave this. Nothing must happen to me *here* to shock, or startle, or offend her. You will make my

excuses to Lord Leytonstone. You may tell him the truth or not, just as you think fit. I shall probably never see him again; and he is a good man—he will feel that I have endeavoured to do my duty."

Five years passed away, and Lady Agnes was married in her own degree, and Andrew Graham was quietly settled down again at Leytonstone Hall as librarian, his somewhat pupil, Lord Leithbridge, having gone to Oxford. Mrs. Brereton had told Lord Leytonstone the truth, and he understood it all, and when he could find Andrew out, at the end of four years' wild wanderings up and down the earth, he had begged him, Lady Agnes being lately married, to return to his old duties in his old retreat. And weary and hopeless of flying from himself, and feeling some of the old love of his neglected studies return upon him, and touched by Lord Leytonstone's kindness and fidelity, he had consented.

Time had wrought no great change in him; it seldom does in men of his aspect and manner; it had rather intensified than altered his peculiarities.

His cheeks were more hollow, and his hair thinner, and his shirt collars perhaps higher, and his manner, if possible, more nervously awkward and absent than of old. But he had by degrees fallen back into his old habit of taking Dr. Britton's house in the course of his solitary rambles, and, by degrees also, his terror of Nelly had worn away.

Somehow or other she had got an inkling of the cause of his abrupt departure, and wild as had seemed to her his folly in allowing even his thoughts to rise to Lady Agnes, it was nevertheless undoubtedly true that his involuntary presumption had risen him considerably in her estimation. Besides, was there ever a true woman who did not view with interest a man who had not loved wisely but too well? who did not entertain a "desire to be good to him" apart from all interested motive in the matter?

So Nelly treated him gently, and he ceased to be afraid of her, and came by slow gradations to feel comforted by her presence, and learned to talk to her shyly.

It was a lovely day in the declining summer, and the late afternoon sun was lying on the doctor's house and garden. Nelly had finished mixing the salad, and had strolled out bareheaded into what was called the orchard, a bit of ground at the end of the garden, clothed with thick grass, daisies, buttercups, and bull's eyes, and shaded with grey old filbert, and a scattering of no less ancient apple and pear trees. The sun was getting down so that his rays struck slantingly through the mossy trunks, and a soft "even blowing wind" made the leaves dance and rustle, and throw flickers of light and shadow on the grass, all bending before the breeze, and now and then a rosy apple or a bunch of nuts would come down with a thud on the ground.

Nelly, awaiting her father's return, roved up and down, now swallowed up in shade, now shone upon by the slanting rays, which gilded her russet hair, and lovingly touched into transparency her ruddy cheek and clear brown neck. Presently, while picking a nut from its husks, she was aware of footsteps behind her, and looking around, she saw Andrew Graham. Taking off his hat, he addressed her:

"I—I beg your pardon—but—a—I wished to speak to your father, and I was told he was expected every moment, and—a—I took the liberty—"

"You are quite welcome," Nelly said, with a smile; "will you come into the house or do you prefer remaining here?"

"Oh, just as you like—it is such a lovely day—" and without finishing his speech, he fell into her step, and they sauntered on, side by side.

It was the first time Nelly had ever been alone with him, and though she was neither praiseworthy nor shy, she felt puzzled how to commence the conversation.

"You have been for one of your long walks?"

"Yes—at least, not very long." A pause.

"Won't you put on your hat?" seeing that he carried it in his hand.

"Oh no, I prefer going without my hat."

Another pause. Just then a bunch of nuts fell plump on the librarian's head, and made him exclaim, putting up his hand, "Bless me, what can that be?" then it dropped on the grass at his feet, and they both laughed, and he picked it up, and presented it to Nelly, who quickly divested the filberts of their sheath, and cracking one like a squirrel, with her head on one side, nibbled it with her white teeth.

This had broken the stiffness, and they began to talk, till the librarian suddenly, to his own amazement, found himself describing to his companion some of the flowers he had seen in South America, and giving her a practical lesson in botany on a large white-rayed bull's eye. And then the doctor came home, and insisted on his staying to dinner; and, after dinner, the good man, as was his wont, fell asleep in his easy-chair; and the twilight came on gradually, and the yellow harvest moon arose from behind the elms, and Nelly and the librarian sat by the window to look at it; and he described to her—speaking softly, so as not to disturb the doctor—how he had lain on his back on the prairie and watched it rise and set many a night some years ago. Nelly wondered she had never noticed before what a pleasant tone of voice he had, and when he became earnest and eloquent, she thought that, hearing him talk thus, one could quite forget his hollow cheeks, and his thin hair, and his shirt-collars. Can you not see reader, how it all came about! Need I tell how in the spring there was a wedding at Summerfield, and that Nelly Britton was the bride, and Andrew Graham—with a face a little fuller, hair brushed to the best advantage, and modified shirt-collars—the bridegroom?

BATHING.

THERE was a fashionable physician of Queen Anne's days who recommended to his aristocratic patients what Lord Malmesbury, at the end of the century, recommended to Caroline of Brunswick, whom he was escorting on her bridal way, to England—namely, to wash "all over" daily. The doctor took pains to assure his wealthy patients that they would not find complete ablation a very disagreeable process. It might disgust and irritate them at first; but he enjoined them to have patience, courage, and perseverance. By degrees they would come to think of the wash "all over" as a positive luxury. They might disbelieve him on this point, but he reiterated the assurance; and he added that the daily morning bath would sustain and increase health, and not only make life tolerable, or even pleasant, but would prolong it also. Nothing could be more encouraging to a generation to whom life was dear, but there was a dread of water in those days; even the young and beautiful Cynthias of the minute were not altogether so clean as they might have been, and the bath was avoided by general fashionable consent. People, however, at the close of the last century, instead of resorting to mineral springs, had begun to perform that annual solemnity of "going to the sea-side." Then "all the world," as the phrase goes, gave themselves up to bathing. Some went in for health, some for pleasure; then paused the timid, and plunged in the brave. It was as much the custom for men to have "guides" as for the ladies; and it was necessary for the former, when "nervous," to be explicit in their directions. Remember the case of Charles Lamb, frightened and stammering, who, with difficulty exclaiming "I'm to be dipped—," was three times plunged to the lowermost depths as he repeated the words, before he had breath enough to add, "*only once!*" But though "all the world" goes to, or into, the sea at every recurring autumn, the entire subject of bathing is one about which European nations have little, or no knowledge. All English bathers still wait (if heated) to cool themselves before they plunge in, and thereby gain any one of a list of diseases too long to be enumerated. To take the plunge "hissing hot" is your only true method if you would have healthy reaction. The truth, we take it, lies in the just medium; and then it should never be forgotten that all the benefit to be derived from the water ceases with the first plunge.