

RUNNING WATER

"It 's not only that you are born with qualities, definite characteristics, definite cravings, for which you are no more responsible than the man in the moon, and which are part of you. But there 's something else. How much of your character, how much of all your life to come is decided for you during the first ten or fifteen years of your life—decided for you, mind, not by you? Upon my soul, I think the whole of it. You don't agree? Well, it 's an open question. I believe that at the age of fifteen the lines along which you will move are already drawn, your character formed, your conduct for the future a settled thing."

To that Sylvia gave no assent. But she did not disagree. She only looked at her father with a questioning and a troubled face. If it were so, she asked, why had she hated from the first the circle in which her mother and herself had moved. And the answer—or at all events *an* answer—came as she put the question to herself. She had lived amongst her dreams. She was in doubt.

"Well, hear something of my boyhood, Sylvia!" cried her father, and for the first time his voice became embittered. "I was brought up by a respectable father. Yes, respectable," he said, with a sneer. "Everything about us was respectable. We lived in a respectable house in a respectable neighborhood, and twice every Sunday we went to church and listened to a respectable clergyman. But!— Well, here 's a chapter out of the inside. I would go to bed and read in bed by a candle. Not a very heinous offence, but contrary