

you think, my dear young lady, of praying that air might not rush into vacuums? You would no more pray for that to happen than you would think, as a young housekeeper, of keeping down the butcher's bill by praying that every pound of beef might miraculously be turned into two. She admitted all this. She had just admitted it, Mr. Glanville, when you rang; and I was saying to her, when you entered—I was saying this: Then why should you ask God—as you do when you pray for any change in the weather—to do on an enormous scale—to do with the atmosphere of a whole kingdom or hemisphere—what you admit it would be absurd to expect Him to do with regard to that pneumatic toy? It's an argument I frequently employ in my leisure moments. I take my air-pump about with me for the special purpose of enforcing it. There is more in that argument, as you, Mr. Glanville, know, than at first meets the eye of a young woman like Miss Walsh—a great deal more than meets that of a country clergyman. I purpose, if a catarrh, with which I am somewhat afflicted, permits me, to give a lecture on this same subject here."

"Then so far as I gather," said Seaton, with extreme deference, "the great sign and wonder that will signalise the general triumph of science will be the general cessation of prayer."

"Assuredly," said his host; "assuredly. That is almost an identical proposition."

"I wish," said Glanville, "if Miss Walsh's attractions are not too much for you, you'd come over to me for a night or two, and give a lecture on causation to my friends."

"I thank you," said the host gravely. "General society is not much in my line. Fashionable society is not in my line at all. But I have always held that rational conversation is a valuable stimulant to the digestive, as well as to the cerebral functions. You might perhaps assist me in a work on which I am now engaged—a collection of racial traits peculiar to the Irish Celts."