

A SKETCH OF A TEMPERAMENT

Freyjas, the Nymphs and Fauns, Eves, Avices, and other innumerable Well-Beloveds—I want to see them never any more! . . . “Instead of sweet smell there shall be stink, and there shall be burning instead of beauty,” said the prophet.’

And they came away. On another afternoon they went to the National Gallery, to test his taste in paintings, which had formerly been good. As she had expected, it was just the same with him there. He saw no more to move him, he declared, in the time-defying presentations of Perugino, Titian, Sebastiano, and other statuesque creators than in the work of the pavement artist they had passed on their way.

‘It is strange!’ said she.

‘I don’t regret it. I have lost a faculty which has, after all, brought me my greatest sorrows, if a few little pleasures. Let us be gone.’

He was now so well advanced in convalescence that it was deemed a most desirable thing to take him down into his native air. Marcia agreed to accompany him. ‘I don’t see why I shouldn’t,’ said she. ‘An old friendless woman like me, and you an old friendless man.’

‘Yes. Thank Heaven I am old at last. The curse is removed.’

It may be shortly stated here that after his