

again think of Cyril's note. When she returned to her own room, it was nowhere to be found. Again and again she searched the room. It was gone! The only conclusion that she could come to was, that the note had been taken desigedly away. When she went down-stairs to tea, there was an indefinable something about Julia Cadgett's manner which made her involuntarily recall what Edward had said of Mrs. Cadgett's propensity for reading other people's letters, and to wonder if this disagreeable trait could have descended to Julia. What was she to do? To ask Julia Cadgett whether she (Julia) had entered her room and purloined a letter addressed to her? But if Julia had done this, was it likely that she would acknowledge it? On the other hand Edith would, by asking the question, be confiding to one who appeared to be her enemy, many things from which she almost shrank from thinking of herself. Very unhappy, and very uncertain how to act, Edith thought that her best course was to remain silent.

Meanwhile Cyril was walking up and down before the house, which in so short a time he was to leave, very impatient for Edith's, answer to his note. He had told her in that note of prospects newly opened to him in Montreal—he had been offered immediate employment in a large classical school for the sons of the clergy, with the speedy prospect of holy orders—his salary was already enough to justify him in asking her to become a poor gentleman's wife. He also told her that he had acquainted Major Ellis with his wishes, and that his brother had made no actual objection. He did not, it is true, add that the interview had been a very stormy one. Though Major Ellis, when he heard the circumstances of the case, did not blame Edith, nay, praised her for refusing to hear Cyril's offer without his consent, he took Cyril severely to task for endeavouring to win the affections of a girl so situated—he was also very sore about what he called Cyril's Quixotic conduct in refusing a good position at Ottawa; and Cyril had still further angered him by saying that "he saw what influence had been brought to bear on his brother's mind." To this, Major Ellis had retorted by asking him if he referred to Mrs. Ellis's friends, Mrs. Cadgett and her daughter. Whereon Cyril had replied that the Cadgetts were the cause of all the unhappiness in that house, and that he would stay no longer to give his sanction to the persecution which they made a practice of carrying on against a defenceless girl, his brother's near kinswoman. Now it had happened just as he said this, Julia Cadgett entered the room. Both mother and daughter had a knack of coming in at awkward points in conversation; indeed there was more than one myth among the boys of Julia's having been observed in suspicious proximity to Mrs. Ellis's key hole. Julia was looking her very best, and most brilliant; she wore full evening dress, her splendid arms bare almost to the shoulder, and her hair, which streamed loosely down gleaming like gold threads in the lamp light. She was waiting to accompany a gentleman who was to call for her and her mother, to a party, about which, and about his departure to Montreal, she talked to Cyril with that stealthy and cat-like politeness which women show to their enemies. Cyril felt that she knew what he had just