

their previous meeting; but the charm of her manner and movements produced on him a new impression which, though different from that which they dissipated, was in another way equally pleasing. There was nothing in her that suggested any conscious assertion of independence; but, whatever her age might be, she had the indefinable air of a girl or a woman who is mistress of her own experiences; and the thought of a chaperon in connection with her would have somehow seemed an absurdity. Her expression in repose was pensive; but her smile and voice when she spoke had all the light and softness of a ripple on a brook in summer.

What everybody felt about her was that she was a social addition to the company; and after that last serious discussion her presence was a relief and a stimulus, by giving the conversation a totally different turn. She was questioned about her rest-cure, the results of which had been quite satisfactory. She laughingly criticised the novel which Glanville had lent her on her journey. She told Lord Restormel that she had had with her a volume of his early poems, and gave an amusing account of how, yesterday, on the pier at Ballyfergus, she had encountered Sir Roderick Harborough sunning himself with an English bishop. Lady Snowdon looked at her with eyes of marked approbation; and Lord Restormel presently classed her in his own mind as the kind of woman to whom men always attend, though she does not make, nor require to make, any effort to gain their attention. She did not, indeed, move him in a very tempestuous manner; but retaining the relics of certain vice-regal ideas of his right to the first enjoyment of any new feminine sympathies he managed, when tea was over, to secure the young lady to himself, and exhibited to her the riches of his nature in the course of a confidential walk. Just as every Jewish matron hoped to be the mother of the Messiah, so did Lord Restormel hope that every woman he met would prove to be, for himself, the poetic ideal of womanhood; yet of all