

seems to want in order to express a very simple thing."

"Yes, but how quickly, how thoroughly I have got over it! She is to me a beautiful woman, that is all."

Ernest turned his chair round to the fire, and flicked his cigarette ash into the grate.

"I don't see what the actual lapse of time has to do with getting over a thing," he said. "If one gets over a thing quickly, one is called either insincere or shallow. That is libellous. The people who continue mourning and regretting a thing are either idle people who are too lazy to control their minds and emotions, or undervitalised people who have no rebound in them. Supposing I lost sixpence, and was shut up in a tower to think over my loss without books to read or people to talk to, I should go on thinking about that sixpence for years."

Percy laughed.

"That is a good explanation," he said. "I, as you know, instantly, or rather after a week of work, plunged into Art. I take off my hat to Art. I am very grateful to her. She consoled me excellently, and kept me from going sour. For weeks I thought of nothing else. Then that incident happened last night, and I find I am alive again."

"And had lunch with Blanche Stoakley to-day," observed Ernest.

"Yes, and am going to see the *Tramp Bicyclist*