

nice-looking girls they were, too. I thought if they were my sisters I'd soon put a stop to all that nonsense."

"What would you do?" asked Mildred, incredulously.

"I would try my powers of persuasion first; and if that plan did not succeed, I'd shut them up in a Protestant nunnery."

"I am glad I'm not your sister."

"So am I," said Errol. "Will you come for a walk, Miss Daryll? Do, if only on the abstract principle of philanthropy. Here am I thoroughly done up, minus brains, plus a wretched headache. Nothing will do me so much good as a stroll in the park; but I will not go alone. Now the question is, ought you to neglect such an unmistakable opportunity of conferring a lasting benefit upon a fellow creature, putting my individuality out of the question altogether?"

It was sheer nonsense, of course, and Mildred knew it; yet she put away her brushes, and went out into the lovely summer evening. Errol had not studied Mildred's character all those months in vain. From the very first he had liked to watch her face during his conversation with Ericson and James; looking for the quick, glad blush which lighted it up when, by some happy argument, he drove them into a corner. Mere friendly interest had soon deepened into something more, and one day he awoke to the fact that she was dearer to him than all the world beside.

What he did on receiving this revelation has been already shown. He did what most men would have done—resolve to try to win her. Mildred stood to him the impersonation of all that was lovely and lovable in girlhood, and his was not the nature to lightly lay down a love that had become part of his religion. The very thought of her raised him out of the ofttimes lowering atmosphere of daily association, and exercised a refining influence upon his life. Since he had known her, religion and love combined had given all his aims and aspirations a purer, nobler cast. A woman's most powerful influence is generally that of which she is perfectly unconscious; a man's, that which he wills shall be so.

He led the way to his favourite seat, and threw himself on the greensward at her feet, clasping his hands underneath his head. "This is Elysium!" he said. "Nothing to do but lie still. No books! No intricate problems to solve! No ceiling