

drinkers, some of whom, at peace with all mankind under its influence, were scattering abroad through the neighbouring woods and dingles, discussing religious education and the fighting power of nations, pigeon-shooting, and Psychical Research.

"We came away from the tree too soon," Challis said.

"Can't we turn? . . ."

"Suppose we do. We can go round the coppice. . . . What was I saying? Oh—about Society! Don't you think it is so? One has to reckon with one's Social Duties. So I'm told."

"We could have thought of Society before," Challis said, rather sullenly. And then he felt brutal. "No, Judith Arkroyd, I won't say that. Forgive me! All I mean is—it was all just as true—what you say about Society—six months ago as it is now. The mistake was then."

A small thing in his speech unnerved Judith—the way he used her full name. This was the second time he had done so. It seemed to imply some new aspect of their relation—the throwing aside of some veil—the recognition of some discarded formality. She was no longer "Miss Arkroyd"; and "Judith" would have been either patronage or impertinence. In her case there was no professional name to build a half-way house to familiarity on.

She dropped her worldly tone as misplaced or useless, as she said: "I had at one time half thought I would leave you to finish the play before I cried off. But should I have done you any service? I thought not, in the end, and I wished to get it over."

He said: "It is over now. No harm is done. I would not have had it otherwise."

She replied: "Your work will not be lost. You will think better of it—better about destroying it, I mean. You will finish it, I hope."

"No—I think I shall probably destroy it. I hate having incomplete manuscripts hanging about. They keep me always in doubt whether to go on with them or not."

"Then give this one the benefit of the doubt, and finish it. Come!" She tried to *leggierire* the tone of the conversation, but it was a failure—worse than a failure, by the speech that followed on its provocation.