

The Home Reading Circle

AN INGENUE.

Daphne Rendel, in the Boston Herald.

"Allow me to introduce Mr. Dwyer," said the host, Sir John Beauchamp, as he introduced Lois Campbell, and, looking at Lois, he said, "I have known you for some time, but I do not think I have ever seen you here. He has clear-cut features, and his hair was slightly tinged with gray. She rose, and, taking his arm, they joined the procession winding down stairs to dinner.

Howard Dwyer prided himself on always breaking the ice with a new acquaintance during the passage from the drawing room to the dining room door. Because Lois Campbell looked so obviously "new," he could not resist teasing her, by asking her if she had read Boschoff's "Ladies."

"I have just finished it."

"That is good!" exclaimed Dwyer, surprised. "I suppose you think him a very great dramatist?"

"No, I don't know that I do," replied Lois. "I confess I disliked him."

Dwyer's exclamations of horror were interrupted by the necessity of getting seated at the dinner table. Lois found her old friend Roland Grey on her left. He smiled as he drew in his chair. "I was rather late tonight, and could not make my way to you across the drawing room," he said. "I hope you are staying some time with Lady Beauchamp and that you are enjoying your London gayeties."

"Yes," answered Lois. "I am having a good time, and Mary wants me to stay all the season. I think London delightful."

Dwyer did not appreciate sitting silent between two ladies, both conversing with other men. Accordingly, he claimed his prior right to Lois' attention.

"Miss Campbell, he began, "I am sorry you do not like Boschoff. May I ask why he disgusts you?"

"I shall find it difficult to explain," replied Lois. "For many reasons, he is rather emotional than intelligent. He expects me to delight only in intellectual and moral monstrosities. And then to be assured that these libelous portraits of true women, freed from the trammels of society! I am quite sure that in no circumstances could I act or feel as one of his women; and I do not believe that I am particularly conventional, or in any way exceptional."

Dwyer listened with an air of profound attention, which was somewhat embarrassing.

"Exceptional, at all events, in the consensus with which you express your opinions, Miss Campbell," he replied.

Lois colored slightly.

"You say you are conventional," continued Dwyer. "Perhaps you are not a very good judge. Remember, your character has been largely formed by what one may call hereditary propriety, fostered by education. So-called civilization has not been at work all these centuries without leaving its mark on the human race."

"So much the better, surely."

"Forgive me," replied Dwyer, "it has cramped and crippled us, and now no one can walk alone without crutches supplied by society. I believe, however, it liberates more from timidity than disgust. Clear your mind of all prejudice, and you will, I am certain, immediately appreciate such genius. Women capable of grasping great ideas are not numerous, and we cannot afford to allow one to languish upon the milk and water diet of mere conventionality. Please read the book by Boschoff that I will send you carefully, and then I will discuss it with you. You are staying here some time, I believe?"

"Yes; till the end of July."

"Before then I am sure you will be an ardent admirer of Boschoff."

He had heard enough of this pretty proselyte, and turned to the lady on the other side.

Roland Grey seized the opportunity to converse with Lois about old home acquaintances.

Upstairs Lois found herself sitting next to a certain Miss Cowan, a thorough-going society girl, who knew everything and everybody. She listened with amusement to her cynical comments on things in general, when they were interrupted by an elderly, hard-featured woman, whom Lois had never seen before in her friends' house.

"What have you been telling Miss Campbell of the ball last night, Fanny?" asked Mrs. Lewis, as she seated herself on the lounge, with one hand placed carelessly on Miss Cowan's arm, who, however, took her arm away as soon as was possible, saying, "Are you going to many dances, Miss Campbell?" she continued.

"No. We know very few ball-going people," replied Lois.

"Oh, there are lots of ways of getting invitations to balls," said Miss Cowan. "I assure you it is all right—quite usual now. Won't you come?"

Lois flushed at the thought of being considered prosy. She did not like this man's smile at her timidity.

"I'll be ready in a minute," she said, and left her room hastily.

"Why should she not go?" she argued with herself. There was nothing wrong in it, and it would be delightful.

She felt shy and strange in St. James's hall, seated beside Dwyer, who knew so many people, yet delicately important, too, as she studied with him his large edition of the sonata. She was soon lost in the music, and thought of nothing else. But her sense of exultation forsook her when the concert was over, as they made their way to the door her cavalier exchanged remarks with many acquaintances, and Lois felt they eyed her inquiringly.

"Dwyer has picked up a 'new girl,'" she heard one lady remark, and flushed furiously.

"Oh, please don't trouble. I can quite well go home alone," she implored, as Dwyer hailed a cab.

"That's out of the question," he replied with a lordly air. "I shall certainly see you home."

As they were getting into the hansom, Roland Grey came along the pavement. He stopped for a second in surprise, then took off his hat stiffly and walked on.

Lois was angry with him, angry with herself. Why should he look surprised? She had done nothing. All the same, she devoutly wished that he had not seen her.

When they reached the house, and Dwyer had rung the bell, she said, putting out her hand:

"Thank you so very much. I can't tell you how immensely I enjoyed the music. It was most good of you to take me."

"Not a bit," he replied. "It is a great delight to have a sympathetic companion." He had taken her hand, but did not mean to be dismissed at once. "Don't you think we had better have a little further practice for tomorrow? We could have it before Lady Beauchamp returns."

The vision of Roland Grey's astonished eyes rose before Lois, and she said, hurriedly:

"I am afraid not now. I am rather tired. But you will come early tomorrow, to see that nothing goes wrong, won't you?"

She quietly withdrew her hand, and he said, "Good-night," and hailed again the hansom, which was driving slowly away.

Roland Grey's evident surprise and displeasure at her proceedings had

stung her, and put Lois on the defensive. She had not known before whether she quite approved of them or not, but now she was quite sure she had done right. She felt she must yet do her duty to the world, and she did not like it when Mary allowed her eyes to widen a little at the news of the afternoon's escapade.

"I don't know whether that was quite wise, Lois, though a good many girls do so. Don't follow their lead too far."

When the day of the concert came Lois sang well, and there was quite a throng of admiring friends round her when she finished, who kept up a little buzz of compliments. Dwyer's quiet "That was good" pleased her most; it sounded sincere.

At the close of the party she was left alone in the back drawing room, while Lady Beauchamp was saying farewell to her guests. She was standing by the piano, tidying her music, when Roland Grey came up to her.

"Thank you so much for your singing. I never enjoyed anything so much," he said earnestly.

Lois smiled. "I am glad you liked it. But are you not rather extravagant in your praise?"

"No," he replied, "it was not a compliment, and he stood fingering the music nervously. At length he continued, "I suppose Dwyer plays very well?"

Lois looked up. "I have never met any one who accompanies so sympathetically. It makes one sing."

Roland dropped a piece of music and stooped to pick it up again. "He went with you to Paderewski's concert yesterday, did he not?"

Lois was determined not to appear ashamed of her conduct, and so replied: "Yes, Mary was unexpectedly called out of town, and Mr. Dwyer, thinking it a pity I should miss the concert, kindly came here and took me. It was very good of him," she added, with a little spurt of defiance.

Grey lost his air of embarrassment and became grave. "Do you like that sort of person?" he asked suddenly.

Lois flushed. "What do you mean?" she demanded.

He looked at her earnestly. "I thought you agreed with me a little time ago that the teaching of that particular set of self-styled 'cultured' people was not very wholesome. Have you changed your mind?"

"I don't know when I said anything of the kind. I certainly think them much more interesting than commonplace people."

"Oh, the poor, maligned commonplace!" exclaimed Grey. "What a fearful crime it nowadays to be dull and respectable!"

"I cannot think that we are quarrelling about, or why you should be displeased that I went to the concert with Mr. Dwyer," said Lois, letting her vexation get the upper hand.

"It was only to misconstruct," he said, drily, and then putting his elbows on the piano, he leaned toward her, "Lois," he said, "for the sake of old times you must forgive what I say, but I wish you would keep clear of that kind of people. They are always so ready to gossip."

The girl threw her head back angrily. "I don't know what you mean, or why you should talk so to me or listen to gossip. Why should a girl not have men as friends without people talking?"

"I hate to have you spoken of as Dwyer's 'new discovery,' and to hear people asking whether you will do. I hate the humbug of this intellectual flirting," he said, with sudden wrath. "I kept silence, and he was conscious that he had lost his self-control.

"I am sorry to have hurt you," he said. "I have said more than I ought; forgive me. Of course, I have no right to speak to you, and, turning quickly, with a bow, he left her.

Howard Dwyer was coming up from the stairs and, as they passed on the stairs he noted with a certain enjoyment Grey's evident discomfort, while Lois, hearing Dwyer's voice, escaped to her own room, and he went on to her bed in a storm of tears. Her pride was bitterly wounded, and she was furious with Roland. Soon, however, with the remembrance of his face at parting he anger melted away. She began to realize her mistake. It had been to appear to her that she had no right to speak to her. But was that true? Had not her silence given him the right that day, last autumn, when, in a sudden rush of feelings he had spoken of his cherished hope of winning her for his wife? True, he had not allowed her to answer, saying that everything was to remain as if he had said nothing till she had seen more of the world and he had made a position. How faithfully he had kept his word, never allowing his own feelings to appear in his conduct toward her. Last autumn Lois had been glad that she was not forced to answer. She had felt that he was a dear friend, to whom it would be painful to say "No." But now she felt she knew not that. Only the thought of saying "No" made her shudder.

What did she care for Dwyer? She asked herself. He was clever and musical, but that was all. He was not a real man, like Roland. And to be spoken of as "Dwyer's discovery!" She pictured to herself Dwyer saying to his friends, "Oh, I've discovered a new girl; not a bad little thing. Fairly amusing, and sings well." Her cheeks tingled, and she buried her face still deeper in the pillow. Suddenly she recollected, with a start, that she was going to the opera, and that she must dress at once. Roland Grey had said he was going to the opera, too. She would try and speak to him and make her peace. It was childish to show temper because he had not been so candid, and it was not his fault that she would not have done so had he not cared.

The opera was excellent, but Lois could not enjoy the music; she was so eager to discover Roland Grey. After some time she perceived him in the box, with a party of people she did not know. She was almost sure he had seen her, but would not look her way. She waited impatiently for the close of the first act, hoping he might come to her box; but though he left his own, he did not come.

The second interval came, but no Roland appeared, nor any else. Lois began to feel ill-used. She wished some acquaintance would come and speak to her; even a word of coming across. She had her way out, but it was Roland on her way out, but it was Howard Dwyer who came up to her.

"Remember, we are to hear all this together again at Bayreuth. Mrs. Berkley will come with us, and I have taken tickets."

"Come, Lois, the carriage is here," cried Lady Beauchamp, taking Dwyer's arm.

Lois, turning her head as she laid her hand on Sir John's arm, saw Roland Grey's back to her. He must have heard everything Dwyer had said. Of course she was not going to Bayreuth, but Roland would think it was all arranged. She must not trust herself to return Dwyer's "good night."

Lois kept her eyes fixed on him till he was one of his party.

A week or two passed. The ladies

next day, as he wished to see her alone. She was very gracious to him.

After a little conversation, Roland asked, nervously, "I had been hoping that might have been Miss Campbell."

"Lois returns to the room showed his eyes gleaming rapturously to the picture, while about his lips the hint of a smile betrayed that his absorbing interest was a pleased one. Since then at intervals his morning picture is changed, not frequently, for a child demands reticence, until the boy has become a small connoisseur in famous paintings, and his occasional short visits to an art gallery are a great delight to him because of his matin studies. The first ten minutes of a child's day are a most valuable receptive period. The young brain is refreshed by sleep, unexcited by any of the day's occupations, eager for impressions and peculiarly responsive to their influence.

A writer on child-study considers that equally important with the first waking hours should be the last of the day. The mother who sits at the first one's bed as the tired, small frame is settling into repose will most invariably find that the mind just before sleep works with unusual, if brief, clearness; she will be wise to let this last, strongly imprinted impression be a soothing one. A gentle voice, a short, easily comprehended tale with no sadness, no tragedy, no sharp vicissitudes of any sort, will send the temporarily keen but fast succumbing faculties off into slumber-land under the best and most healthful auspices. Too many mothers leave to servants these significant moments of their children's lives, lovely to the mothers if they will enjoy them, and precious to the growing character of their respective powers if taken advantage of.

calendar and put in its place a good print of Raphael's "Madonna della Seggiola," this, with no word to him of the change. The next morning the little one's voice was still, but a noiseless peep into the room showed his eyes gleaming rapturously to the picture, while about his lips the hint of a smile betrayed that his absorbing interest was a pleased one. Since then at intervals his morning picture is changed, not frequently, for a child demands reticence, until the boy has become a small connoisseur in famous paintings, and his occasional short visits to an art gallery are a great delight to him because of his matin studies. The first ten minutes of a child's day are a most valuable receptive period. The young brain is refreshed by sleep, unexcited by any of the day's occupations, eager for impressions and peculiarly responsive to their influence.

A writer on child-study considers that equally important with the first waking hours should be the last of the day. The mother who sits at the first one's bed as the tired, small frame is settling into repose will most invariably find that the mind just before sleep works with unusual, if brief, clearness; she will be wise to let this last, strongly imprinted impression be a soothing one. A gentle voice, a short, easily comprehended tale with no sadness, no tragedy, no sharp vicissitudes of any sort, will send the temporarily keen but fast succumbing faculties off into slumber-land under the best and most healthful auspices. Too many mothers leave to servants these significant moments of their children's lives, lovely to the mothers if they will enjoy them, and precious to the growing character of their respective powers if taken advantage of.

gentlemen appeared, and consequently caused a slight movement among the ladies.

"Is Mrs. Lewis?" asked Lois of Miss Cowan. She felt she instinctively disliked the overdressed lady with the overassured manner who had just left them.

"Oh, she is very bad form!" answered Miss Cowan. "I can't understand how people can let her run them. I believe she positively takes money for bringing nice young men like Mr. Grey to balls."

And in fact, Roland Grey was waylaid, on his approaching Lois, by Mrs. Lewis, who seemed determined to see that she presented a favorable view for her many social requirements.

Dwyer came and sat down by Lois. "I have just been hearing how delightfully you sing, Miss Campbell. You are fond of music? Did you hear 'Lohengrin' last night?"

Lois flushed. "Oh, yes," she replied. "I have never been to the opera before."

Dwyer was pleased with her enthusiasm. "You should go to Bayreuth."

"How should I go there? But I fear there is no chance of my doing so; at all events, this year."

"I am taking a party there in August. You must come with us, Miss Campbell."

Lois, in the excitement that the sound or mention of Wagner aroused in her, at once began to ply Dwyer with questions about it, so that Lady Beauchamp's remark when the party had broken up was natural enough.

"You seemed to get on with Mr. Dwyer, Lois. He is amusing, is he not?"

"Yes. We quarreled at dinner over Boschoff, and made it up afterward over music."

"He knows a good deal about music," said Mrs. Beauchamp. "He is really cleverer than most of his set. It is their creed of mutual admiration which annoys me, though I can't help liking them individually. It will be very interesting if you become one of their shining lights. It might very well come about through your singing and Mr. Dwyer's good word. But be a common mortal as long as you can."

She added: "I like your friend, Mr. Grey, very much. He seems so straightforward and sincere."

The musical sympathy between Lois and Mr. Dwyer having been fully established, Mr. Dwyer volunteered his services for accompanying her in the songs she had arranged to sing at a concert in the drawing room. They practiced brought him often to the house, more often than was necessary, but then he wished to improve his acquaintance with this "new little girl," as he called her to his friends.

It was in the way of escorting Lois and her chaperon to concerts. Lady Beauchamp, who did not care for music, performed her duties faithfully.

Once, and once only, did she fall here—a sudden summons to the country! Lois was wild with disappointment; she was to have heard Paderewski. She roamed about the drawing room disconsolately after Mary had gone. She could not settle to any occupation, but stood drumming with her fingers against the window pane, and staring absent into the air.

Suddenly a hansom drove up to the door, the bell rang and the butler announced "Mr. Dwyer."

I saw Lady Beauchamp driving into Victoria station this morning," he said, and I feared she looked as if you were not going to St. James's hall this afternoon."

"Yes," replied Lois. "She was patting suddenly into the country, so I cannot go."

"You must not miss this concert," he exclaimed. "I have a hansom waiting. Come with me."

The girl hesitated.

Dwyer interrupted her with a slightly pitying smile. "You don't mean to say you're afraid of the proprieties, Miss Campbell? I assure you it is all right—quite usual now. Won't you come?"

Lois flushed at the thought of being considered prosy. She did not like this man's smile at her timidity.

"I'll be ready in a minute," she said, and left her room hastily.

"Why should she not go?" she argued with herself. There was nothing wrong in it, and it would be delightful.

She felt shy and strange in St. James's hall, seated beside Dwyer, who knew so many people, yet delicately important, too, as she studied with him his large edition of the sonata. She was soon lost in the music, and thought of nothing else. But her sense of exultation forsook her when the concert was over, as they made their way to the door her cavalier exchanged remarks with many acquaintances, and Lois felt they eyed her inquiringly.

"Dwyer has picked up a 'new girl,'" she heard one lady remark, and flushed furiously.

"Oh, please don't trouble. I can quite well go home alone," she implored, as Dwyer hailed a cab.

"That's out of the question," he replied with a lordly air. "I shall certainly see you home."

As they were getting into the hansom, Roland Grey came along the pavement. He stopped for a second in surprise, then took off his hat stiffly and walked on.

Lois was angry with him, angry with herself. Why should he look surprised? She had done nothing. All the same, she devoutly wished that he had not seen her.

When they reached the house, and Dwyer had rung the bell, she said, putting out her hand:

"Thank you so very much. I can't tell you how immensely I enjoyed the music. It was most good of you to take me."

"Not a bit," he replied. "It is a great delight to have a sympathetic companion." He had taken her hand, but did not mean to be dismissed at once. "Don't you think we had better have a little further practice for tomorrow? We could have it before Lady Beauchamp returns."

The vision of Roland Grey's astonished eyes rose before Lois, and she said, hurriedly:

"I am afraid not now. I am rather tired. But you will come early tomorrow, to see that nothing goes wrong, won't you?"

She quietly withdrew her hand, and he said, "Good-night," and hailed again the hansom, which was driving slowly away.

Roland Grey's evident surprise and displeasure at her proceedings had

stung her, and put Lois on the defensive. She had not known before whether she quite approved of them or not, but now she was quite sure she had done right. She felt she must yet do her duty to the world, and she did not like it when Mary allowed her eyes to widen a little at the news of the afternoon's escapade.

"I don't know whether that was quite wise, Lois, though a good many girls do so. Don't follow their lead too far."

When the day of the concert came Lois sang well, and there was quite a throng of admiring friends round her when she finished, who kept up a little buzz of compliments. Dwyer's quiet "That was good" pleased her most; it sounded sincere.

At the close of the party she was left alone in the back drawing room, while Lady Beauchamp was saying farewell to her guests. She was standing by the piano, tidying her music, when Roland Grey came up to her.

"Thank you so much for your singing. I never enjoyed anything so much," he said earnestly.

Lois smiled. "I am glad you liked it. But are you not rather extravagant in your praise?"

"No," he replied, "it was not a compliment, and he stood fingering the music nervously. At length he continued, "I suppose Dwyer plays very well?"

Lois looked up. "I have never met any one who accompanies so sympathetically. It makes one sing."

Roland dropped a piece of music and stooped to pick it up again. "He went with you to Paderewski's concert yesterday, did he not?"

Lois was determined not to appear ashamed of her conduct, and so replied: "Yes, Mary was unexpectedly called out of town, and Mr. Dwyer, thinking it a pity I should miss the concert, kindly came here and took me. It was very good of him," she added, with a little spurt of defiance.

Grey lost his air of embarrassment and became grave. "Do you like that sort of person?" he asked suddenly.

Lois flushed. "What do you mean?" she demanded.

He looked at her earnestly. "I thought you agreed with me a little time ago that the teaching of that particular set of self-styled 'cultured' people was not very wholesome. Have you changed your mind?"

"I don't know when I said anything of the kind. I certainly think them much more interesting than commonplace people."

"Oh, the poor, maligned commonplace!" exclaimed Grey. "What a fearful crime it nowadays to be dull and respectable!"

"I cannot think that we are quarrelling about, or why you should be displeased that I went to the concert with Mr. Dwyer," said Lois, letting her vexation get the upper hand.

"It was only to misconstruct," he said, drily, and then putting his elbows on the piano, he leaned toward her, "Lois," he said, "for the sake of old times you must forgive what I say, but I wish you would keep clear of that kind of people. They are always so ready to gossip."

The girl threw her head back angrily. "I don't know what you mean, or why you should talk so to me or listen to gossip. Why should a girl not have men as friends without people talking?"

"I hate to have you spoken of as Dwyer's 'new discovery,' and to hear people asking whether you will do. I hate the humbug of this intellectual flirting," he said, with sudden wrath. "I kept silence, and he was conscious that he had lost his self-control.

"I am sorry to have hurt you," he said. "I have said more than I ought; forgive me. Of course, I have no right to speak to you, and, turning quickly, with a bow, he left her.

Howard Dwyer was coming up from the stairs and, as they passed on the stairs he noted with a certain enjoyment Grey's evident discomfort, while Lois, hearing Dwyer's voice, escaped to her own room, and he went on to her bed in a storm of tears. Her pride was bitterly wounded, and she was furious with Roland. Soon, however, with the remembrance of his face at parting he anger melted away. She began to realize her mistake. It had been to appear to her that she had no right to speak to her. But was that true? Had not her silence given him the right that day, last autumn, when, in a sudden rush of feelings he had spoken of his cherished hope of winning her for his wife? True, he had not allowed her to answer, saying that everything was to remain as if he had said nothing till she had seen more of the world and he had made a position. How faithfully he had kept his word, never allowing his own feelings to appear in his conduct toward her. Last autumn Lois had been glad that she was not forced to answer. She had felt that he was a dear friend, to whom it would be painful to say "No." But now she felt she knew not that. Only the thought of saying "No" made her shudder.

What did she care for Dwyer? She asked herself. He was clever and musical, but that was all. He was not a real man, like Roland. And to be spoken of as "Dwyer's discovery!" She pictured to herself Dwyer saying to his friends, "Oh, I've discovered a new girl; not a bad little thing. Fairly amusing, and sings well." Her cheeks tingled, and she buried her face still deeper in the pillow. Suddenly she recollected, with a start, that she was going to the opera, and that she must dress at once. Roland Grey had said he was going to the opera, too. She would try and speak to him and make her peace. It was childish to show temper because he had not been so candid, and it was not his fault that she would not have done so had he not cared.

The opera was excellent, but Lois could not enjoy the music; she was so eager to discover Roland Grey. After some time she perceived him in the box, with a party of people she did not know. She was almost sure he had seen her, but would not look her way. She waited impatiently for the close of the first act, hoping he might come to her box; but though he left his own, he did not come.

The second interval came, but no Roland appeared, nor any else. Lois began to feel ill-used. She wished some acquaintance would come and speak to her; even a word of coming across. She had her way out, but it was Roland on her way out, but it was Howard Dwyer who came up to her.

"Remember, we are to hear all this together again at Bayreuth. Mrs. Berkley will come with us, and I have taken tickets."

"Come, Lois, the carriage is here," cried Lady Beauchamp, taking Dwyer's arm.

Lois, turning her head as she laid her hand on Sir John's arm, saw Roland Grey's back to her. He must have heard everything Dwyer had said. Of course she was not going to Bayreuth, but Roland would think it was all arranged. She must not trust herself to return Dwyer's "good night."

Lois kept her eyes fixed on him till he was one of his party.

A week or two passed. The ladies

next day, as he wished to see her alone. She was very gracious to him.

After a little conversation, Roland asked, nervously, "I had been hoping that might have been Miss Campbell."

"Lois returns to the room showed his eyes gleaming rapturously to the picture, while about his lips the hint of a smile betrayed that his absorbing interest was a pleased one. Since then at intervals his morning picture is changed, not frequently, for a child demands reticence, until the boy has become a small connoisseur in famous paintings, and his occasional short visits to an art gallery are a great delight to him because of his matin studies. The first ten minutes of a child's day are a most valuable receptive period. The young brain is refreshed by sleep, unexcited by any of the day's occupations, eager for impressions and peculiarly responsive to their influence.

A writer on child-study considers that equally important with the first waking hours should be the last of the day. The mother who sits at the first one's bed as the tired, small frame is settling into repose will most invariably find that the mind just before sleep works with unusual, if brief, clearness; she will be wise to let this last, strongly imprinted impression be a soothing one. A gentle voice, a short, easily comprehended tale with no sadness, no tragedy, no sharp vicissitudes of any sort, will send the temporarily keen but fast succumbing faculties off into slumber-land under the best and most healthful auspices. Too many mothers leave to servants these significant moments of their children's lives, lovely to the mothers if they will enjoy them, and precious to the growing character of their respective powers if taken advantage of.

stung her, and put Lois on the defensive. She had not known before whether she quite approved of them or not, but now she was quite sure she had done right. She felt she must yet do her duty to the world, and she did not like it when Mary allowed her eyes to widen a little at the news of the afternoon's escapade.

"I don't know whether that was quite wise, Lois, though a good many girls do so. Don't follow their lead too far."

When the day of the concert came Lois sang well, and there was quite a throng of admiring friends round her when she finished, who kept up a little buzz of compliments. Dwyer's quiet "That was good" pleased her most; it sounded sincere.

At the close of the party she was left alone in the back drawing room, while Lady Beauchamp was saying farewell to her guests. She was standing by the piano, tidying her music, when Roland Grey came up to her.

"Thank you so much for your singing. I never enjoyed anything so much," he said earnestly.

Lois smiled. "I am glad you liked it. But are you not rather extravagant in your praise?"

"No," he replied, "it was not a compliment, and he stood fingering the music nervously. At length he continued, "I suppose Dwyer plays very well?"

Lois looked up. "I have never met any one who accompanies so sympathetically. It makes one sing."

Roland dropped a piece of music and stooped to pick it up again. "He went with you to Paderewski's concert yesterday, did he not?"

Lois was determined not to appear ashamed of her conduct, and so replied: "Yes, Mary was unexpectedly called out of town, and Mr. Dwyer, thinking it a pity I should miss the concert, kindly came here and took me. It was very good of him," she added, with a little spurt of defiance.

Grey lost his air of embarrassment and became grave. "Do you like that sort of person?" he asked suddenly.

Lois flushed. "What do you mean?" she demanded.

He looked at her earnestly. "I thought you agreed with me a little time ago that the teaching of that particular set of self-styled 'cultured' people was not very wholesome. Have you changed your mind?"

"I don't know when I said anything of the kind. I certainly think them much more interesting than commonplace people."

"Oh, the poor, maligned commonplace!" exclaimed Grey. "What a fearful crime it nowadays to be dull and respectable!"

"I cannot think that we are quarrelling about, or why you should be displeased that I went to the concert with Mr. Dwyer," said Lois, letting her vexation get the upper hand.

"It was only to misconstruct," he said, drily, and then putting his elbows on the piano, he leaned toward her, "Lois," he said, "for the sake of old times you must forgive what I say, but I wish you would keep clear of that kind of people. They are always so ready to gossip."

The girl threw her head back angrily. "I don't know what you mean, or why you should talk so to me or listen to gossip. Why should a girl not have men as friends without people talking?"

"I hate to have you spoken of as Dwyer's 'new discovery,' and to hear people asking whether you will do. I hate the humbug of this intellectual flirting," he said, with sudden wrath. "I kept silence, and he was conscious that he had lost his self-control.

"I am sorry to have hurt you," he said. "I have said more than I ought; forgive me. Of course, I have no right to speak to you, and, turning quickly, with a bow, he left her.

Howard Dwyer was coming up from the stairs and, as they passed on the stairs he noted with a certain enjoyment Grey's evident discomfort, while Lois, hearing Dwyer's voice, escaped to her own room, and he went on to her bed in a storm of tears. Her pride was bitterly wounded, and she was furious with Roland. Soon, however, with the remembrance of his face at parting he anger melted away. She began to realize her mistake. It had been to appear to her that she had no right to speak to her. But was that true? Had not her silence given him the right that day, last autumn, when, in a sudden rush of feelings he had spoken of his cherished hope of winning her for his wife? True, he had not allowed her to answer, saying that everything was to remain as if he had said nothing till she had seen more of the world and he had made a position. How faithfully he had kept his word, never allowing his own feelings to appear in his conduct toward her. Last autumn Lois had been glad that she was not forced to answer. She had felt that he was a dear friend, to whom it would be painful to say "No." But now she felt she knew not that. Only the thought of saying "No" made her shudder.

What did she care for Dwyer? She asked herself. He was clever and musical, but that was all. He was not a real man, like Roland. And to be spoken of as "Dwyer's discovery!" She pictured to herself Dwyer saying to his friends, "Oh, I've discovered a new girl; not a bad little thing. Fairly amusing, and sings well." Her cheeks tingled, and she buried her face still deeper in the pillow. Suddenly she recollected, with a start, that she was going to the opera, and that she must dress at once. Roland Grey had said he was going to the opera, too. She would try and speak to him and make her peace. It was childish to show temper because he had not been so candid, and it was not his fault that she would not have done so had he not cared.

The opera was excellent, but Lois could not enjoy the music; she was so eager to discover Roland Grey. After some time she perceived him in the box, with a party of people she did not know. She was almost sure he had seen her, but would not look her way. She waited impatiently for the close of the first act, hoping he might come to her box; but though he left his own, he did not come.

The second interval came, but no Roland appeared, nor any else. Lois began to feel ill-used. She wished some acquaintance would come and speak to her; even a word of coming across. She had her way out, but it was Roland on her way out, but it was Howard Dwyer who came up to her.

"Remember, we are to hear all this together again at Bayreuth. Mrs. Berkley will come with us, and I have taken tickets."

"Come, Lois, the carriage is here," cried Lady Beauchamp, taking Dwyer's arm.

Lois, turning her head as she laid her hand on Sir John's arm, saw Roland Grey's back to her. He must have heard everything Dwyer had said. Of course she was not going to Bayreuth, but Roland would think it was all arranged. She must not trust herself to return Dwyer's "good night."

Lois kept her eyes fixed on him till he was one of his party.

A week or two passed. The ladies

next day, as he wished to see her alone. She was very gracious to him.

After a little conversation, Roland asked, nervously, "I had been hoping that might have been Miss Campbell."

"Lois returns to the room showed his eyes gleaming rapturously to the picture, while about his lips the hint of a smile betrayed that his absorbing interest was a pleased one. Since then at intervals his morning picture is changed, not frequently, for a child demands reticence, until the boy has become a small connoisseur in famous paintings, and his occasional short visits to an art gallery are a great delight to him because of his matin studies. The first ten minutes of a child's day are a most valuable receptive period. The young brain is refreshed by sleep, unexcited by any of the day's occupations, eager for impressions and peculiarly responsive to their influence.

A writer on child-study considers that equally important with the first waking hours should be the last of the day. The mother who sits at the first one's bed as the tired, small frame is settling into repose will most invariably find that the mind just before sleep works with unusual, if brief, clearness; she will be wise to let this last, strongly imprinted impression be a soothing one. A gentle voice, a short, easily comprehended tale with no sadness, no tragedy, no sharp vicissitudes of any sort, will send the temporarily keen but fast succumbing faculties off into slumber-land under the best and most healthful auspices. Too many mothers leave to servants these significant moments of their children's lives, lovely to the mothers if they will enjoy them, and precious to the growing character of their respective powers if taken advantage of.

gentlemen appeared, and consequently caused a slight movement among the ladies.

"Is Mrs. Lewis?" asked Lois of Miss Cowan. She felt she instinctively disliked the overdressed lady with the overassured manner who had just left them.

"Oh, she is very bad form!" answered Miss Cowan. "I can't understand how people can let her run them. I believe she positively takes money for bringing nice young men like Mr. Grey to balls."

And in fact, Roland Grey was waylaid, on his approaching Lois, by Mrs. Lewis, who seemed determined to see that she presented a favorable view for her many social requirements.

Dwyer came and sat down by Lois. "I have just been hearing how delightfully you sing, Miss Campbell. You are fond of music? Did you hear 'Lohengrin' last night?"

Lois flushed. "Oh, yes," she replied. "I have never been to the opera before."

Dwyer was pleased with her enthusiasm. "You should go to Bayreuth."

"How should I go there? But I fear there is no chance of my doing so; at all events, this year."

"I am taking a party there in August. You must come with us, Miss Campbell."

Lois, in the excitement that the sound or mention of Wagner aroused in her, at once began to ply Dwyer with questions about it, so that Lady Beauchamp's remark when the party had broken up was natural enough.

"You seemed to get on with Mr. Dwyer, Lois. He is amusing, is he not?"

"Yes. We quarreled at dinner over Boschoff, and made it up afterward over music."

"He knows a good deal about music," said Mrs. Beauchamp. "He is really cleverer than most of his set. It is their creed of mutual admiration which annoys me, though I can't help liking them individually. It will be very interesting if you become one of their shining lights. It might very well come about through your singing and Mr. Dwyer's good word. But be a common mortal as long as you can."

She added: "I like your friend, Mr. Grey, very much. He seems so straightforward and sincere."

The musical sympathy between Lois and Mr. Dwyer having been fully established, Mr. Dwyer volunteered his services for accompanying her in the songs she had arranged to sing at a concert in the drawing room. They practiced brought him often to the house, more often than was necessary, but then he wished to improve his acquaintance with this "new little girl," as he called her to his friends.

It was in the way of escorting Lois and her chaperon to concerts. Lady Beauchamp, who did not care for music, performed her duties faithfully.

Once, and once only, did she fall here—a sudden summons to the country! Lois was wild with disappointment; she was to have heard Paderewski. She roamed about the drawing room disconsolately after Mary had gone. She could not settle to any occupation, but stood drumming with her fingers against the window pane, and staring absent into the air.

Suddenly a hansom drove up to the door, the bell rang and the butler announced "Mr. Dwyer."

I saw Lady Beauchamp driving into Victoria station this morning," he said, and I feared she looked as if you were not going to St. James's hall this afternoon."

"Yes," replied Lois. "She was patting suddenly into the country, so I cannot go."

"You must not miss this concert," he exclaimed. "I have a hansom waiting. Come with me."

The girl hesitated.

Dwyer interrupted her with a slightly pitying smile. "You don't mean to say you're afraid of the proprieties, Miss Campbell? I assure you it is all right—quite usual now. Won't you come?"

Lois flushed at the thought of being considered prosy. She did not like this man's smile at her timidity.

"I'll be ready in a minute," she said, and left her room hastily.

"Why should she not go?" she argued with herself. There was nothing wrong in it, and it would be delightful.

She felt shy and strange in St. James's hall, seated beside Dwyer, who knew so many people, yet delicately important, too, as she studied with him his large edition of the sonata. She was soon lost in the music, and thought of nothing else. But her sense of exultation forsook her when the concert was over, as they made their way to the door her cavalier exchanged remarks with many acquaintances, and Lois felt they eyed her inquiringly.

"Dwyer has picked up a 'new girl,'" she heard one lady remark, and flushed furiously.

"Oh, please don't trouble. I can quite well go home alone," she implored, as Dwyer hailed a cab.

"That's out of the question," he replied with a lordly air. "I shall certainly see you home."

As they were getting into the hansom, Roland Grey came along the pavement. He stopped for a second in surprise, then took off his hat stiffly and walked on.

Lois was angry with him, angry with herself. Why should he look surprised? She had done nothing. All the same, she devoutly wished that he had not seen her.

When they reached the house, and Dwyer had rung the bell, she said, putting out her hand:

"Thank you so very much. I can't tell you how immensely I enjoyed the music. It was most good of you to take me."

"Not a bit," he replied. "It is a great delight to have a sympathetic companion." He had taken her hand, but did not mean to be dismissed at once. "Don't you think we had better have a little further practice for tomorrow? We could have it before Lady Beauchamp returns."

The vision of Roland Grey's astonished eyes rose before Lois, and she said, hurriedly:

"I am afraid not now. I am rather tired. But you will come early tomorrow, to see that nothing goes wrong, won't you?"

She quietly withdrew her hand, and he said, "Good-night," and hailed again the hansom, which was driving slowly away.

Roland Grey's evident surprise and displeasure at her proceedings had

stung her, and put Lois on the defensive. She had not known before whether she quite approved of them or not, but now she was quite sure she had done right. She felt she must yet do her duty to the world, and she did not like it when Mary allowed her eyes to widen a little at the news of the afternoon's escapade.

"I don't know whether that was quite wise, Lois, though a good many girls do so. Don't follow their lead too far."

When the day of the concert came Lois sang well, and there was quite a throng of admiring friends round her when she finished, who kept up a little buzz of compliments. Dwyer's quiet "That was good" pleased her most; it sounded sincere.

At the close of the party she was left alone in the back drawing room, while Lady Beauchamp was saying farewell to her guests. She was standing by the piano, tidying her music, when Roland Grey came up to her.

"Thank you so much for your singing. I never enjoyed anything so much," he said earnestly.

Lois smiled. "I am glad you liked it. But are you not rather extravagant in your praise?"

"No," he replied, "it was not a compliment, and he stood fingering the music nervously. At length he continued, "I suppose Dwyer plays very well?"

Lois looked up. "I have never met any one who accompanies so sympathetically. It makes one sing."

Roland dropped a piece of music and stooped to pick it up again. "He went with you to Paderewski's concert yesterday, did he not?"

Lois was determined not to appear ashamed of her conduct, and so replied: "Yes, Mary was unexpectedly called out of town, and Mr. Dwyer, thinking it a pity I should miss the concert, kindly came here and took me. It was very good of him," she added, with a little spurt of defiance.

Grey lost his air of embarrassment and became grave. "Do you like that sort of person?" he asked suddenly.

Lois flushed. "What do you mean?" she demanded.

He looked at her earnestly. "I thought you agreed with