



***F. MARION  
CRAWFORD***

***AN AMERICAN  
POLITICIAN***

**F. Marion Crawford**

# **An American Politician**

**A Novel**

EAN 8596547373223

DigiCat, 2022

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# CHAPTER I.

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Mrs. Sam Wyndham was generally at home after five o'clock. The established custom whereby the ladies who live in Beacon Street all receive their friends on Monday afternoon did not seem to her satisfactory. She was willing to conform to the practice, but she reserved the right of seeing people on other days as well.

Mrs. Sam Wyndham was never very popular. That is to say, she was not one of those women who are seemingly never spoken ill of, and are invited as a matter of course, or rather as an element of success, to every dinner, musical party, and dance in the season.

Women did not all regard her with envy, all young men did not think she was capital fun, nor did all old men come and confide to her the weaknesses of their approaching second childhood. She was not invariably quoted as the standard authority on dress, classical music, and Boston literature, and it was not an unpardonable heresy to say that some other women might be, had been, or could be, more amusing in ordinary conversation. Nevertheless, Mrs. Sam Wyndham held a position in Boston which Boston acknowledged, and which Boston insisted that foreigners such as New Yorkers, Philadelphians and the like, should acknowledge also in that spirit of reverence which is justly due to a descent on both sides from several signers of the Declaration of Independence, and to the wife of one of the

ruling financial spirits of the aristocratic part of Boston business.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Wyndham was about forty years of age, as all her friends of course knew; for it is as easy for a Bostonian to conceal a question of age as for a crowned head. In a place where one half of society calls the other half cousin, and went to school with it, every one knows and accurately remembers just how old everybody else is. But Mrs. Wyndham might have passed for younger than she was among the world at large, for she was fresh to look at, and of good figure and complexion. Her black hair showed no signs of turning gray, and her dark eyes were bright and penetrating still. There were lines in her face, those microscopic lines that come so abundantly to American women in middle age, speaking of a certain restless nervousness that belongs to them especially; but on the whole Mrs. Sam Wyndham was fair to see, having a dignity of carriage and a grace of ease about her that at once gave the impression of a woman thoroughly equal to the part she had to play in the world, and not by any means incapable of enjoying it.

For the rest, Mrs. Sam led a life very much like the lives of many rich Americans. She went abroad frequently, wandered about the continent with her husband, went to Egypt and Algiers, stayed in England, where she had a good many friends, avoided her countrymen and countrywomen when away from home, and did her duty in the social state to which she was called in Boston.

She read the books of the period, and generally pronounced them ridiculous; she believed in her husband's

politics, and aristocratically approved the way in which he abstained from putting theory into practice, from voting, and in a general way from dirtying his fingers with anything so corrupt as government, or so despicable as elections; she understood Boston business to some extent, and called it finance, but she despised the New York Stock Market and denounced its doings as gambling. She made fine distinctions, but she was a woman of sense, and was generally more likely to be right than wrong when she had a definite opinion, or expressed a definite dislike. Her religious views were simple and unobtrusive, and never changed.

Her custom of being at home after five o'clock was perhaps the only deviation she allowed herself from the established manners of her native city, and since two or three other ladies had followed her example, it had come to be regarded as a perfectly harmless idiosyncrasy for which she could not properly be blamed. The people who came to see her were chiefly men, except, of course, on the inevitable Monday.

A day or two before Christmas, then, Mrs. Sam Wyndham was at home in the afternoon. The snow lay thick and hard outside, and the sleigh bells tinkled unceasingly as the sleighs slipped by the window, gleaming and glittering in the deep red glow of the sunset. The track was well beaten for miles away, down Beacon Street and across the Milldam to the country, and the pavements were strewn with ashes to give a foothold for pedestrians.

For the frost was sharp and lasting. But within, Mrs. Wyndham sat by the fire with a small table before her, and one companion by her side, for whom she was pouring tea.

“Tell me all about your summer, Mr. Vancouver,” said she, teasing the flame of the spirit-lamp into better shape with a small silver instrument.

Mr. Pocock Vancouver leaned back in his corner of the sofa and looked at the fire, then at the window, and finally at his hostess, before he answered. He was a pale man and slight of figure, with dark eyes, and his carefully brushed hair, turning gray at the temples and over his forehead, threw his delicate, intelligent face into relief.

“I have not done much,” he answered, rather absently, as though trying to find something interesting in his reminiscences; and he watched Mrs. Wyndham as she filled a cup. He was not the least anxious to talk, it seemed, and he had an air of being thoroughly at home.

“You were in England most of the time, were you not?”

“Yes—I believe I was. Oh, by the bye, I met Harrington in Paris; I thought he meant to stay at home.”

“He often goes abroad,” said Mrs. Wyndham indifferently. “One lump of sugar?”

“Two, if you please—no cream—thanks. Does he go to Paris to convert the French, or to glean materials for converting other people?” inquired Mr. Vancouver languidly.

“I am sure I cannot tell you,” answered the lady, still indifferently. “What do you go to Paris for?”

“Principally to renew my acquaintance with civilized institutions and humanizing influences. What does anybody go abroad for?”

“You always talk like that when you come home, Mr. Vancouver,” said Mrs. Wyndham. “But nevertheless you

come back and seem to find Boston bearable. It is not such a bad place after all, is it?"

"If it were not for half a dozen people here, I would never come back at all," said Mr. Vancouver. "But then, I am not originally one of you, and I suppose that makes a difference."

"And pray, who are the half dozen people who procure us the honor of your presence?"

"You are one of them, Mrs. Wyndham," he answered, looking at her.

"I am much obliged," she replied, demurely. "Any one else?"

"Oh—John Harrington," said Vancouver with a little laugh.

"Really?" said Mrs. Wyndham, innocently; "I did not know you were such good friends."

Mr. Vancouver sipped his tea in silence for a moment and stared at the fire.

"I have a great respect for Harrington," he said at last. "He interests me very much, and I like to meet him." He spoke seriously, as though thoroughly in earnest. The faintest look of amusement came to Mrs. Wyndham's face for a moment.

"I am glad of that," she said; "Mr. Harrington is a very good friend of mine. Do you mind lighting those candles? The days are dreadfully short."

Pocock Vancouver rose with alacrity and performed the service required.

"By the way," said Mrs. Wyndham, watching him, "I have a surprise for you."

"Indeed?"



“Yes, an immense surprise. Do you remember Sybil Brandon?”

“Charlie Brandon’s daughter? Very well-saw her at Newport some time ago. Lily-white style-all eyes and hair.”

“You ought to remember her. You used to rave about her, and you nearly ruined yourself in roses. You will have another chance; she is going to spend the winter with me.”

“Not really?” ejaculated Mr. Vancouver, in some surprise, as he again sat down upon the sofa.

“Yes; you know she is all alone in the world now.”

“What? Is her mother dead too?”

“She died last spring, in Paris. I thought you knew.”

“No,” said Vancouver, thoughtfully. “How awfully sad!”

“Poor girl,” said Mrs. Wyndham; “I thought it would do her good to be among live people, even if she does not go out.”

“When is she coming?” There was a show of interest about the question. “She is here now,” answered Mrs. Sam.

“Dear me!” said Vancouver. “May I have another cup?” His hostess began the usual series of operations necessary to produce a second cup of tea.

“Mrs. Wyndham,” began Vancouver again after a pause, “I have an idea-do not laugh, it is a very good one, I am sure.”

“I am not laughing.”

“Why not marry Sibyl Brandon to John Harrington?”

Mrs. Wyndham stared for a moment.

“How perfectly ridiculous!” she cried at last.

“Why?”

“They would starve, to begin with.”

"I doubt it," said Vancouver.

"Why, I am sure Mr. Harrington never had more than five thousand a year in his life. You could not marry on that, you know—possibly."

"No; but Miss Brandon is very well off—rich, in fact."

"I thought she had nothing."

"She must have thirty or forty thousand a year from her mother, at the least. You know Charlie never did anything in his life; he lived on his wife's money, and Miss Brandon must have it all."

Mrs. Wyndham did not appear surprised at the information; she hardly seemed to think it of any importance.

"I knew she had something," she repeated; "but I am glad if you are right. But that does not make it any more feasible to marry her to Mr. Harrington."

"I thought that starvation was your objection," said Vancouver.

"Oh, no; not that only. Besides, he would not marry her."

"He would be very foolish not to, if he had the chance," remarked Vancouver.

"Perhaps he might not even have the chance—perhaps she would not marry him," said Mrs. Wyndham, thoughtfully. "Besides, I do not think John Harrington ought to marry yet; he has other things to do."

Mr. Vancouver seemed about to say something in answer, but he checked himself; possibly he did not speak because he saw some one enter the room at that moment, and was willing to leave the discussion of John Harrington to a future time.

In fact, the person who entered the room should have been the very last to hear the conversation that was taking place, for it was Miss Brandon herself, though Mr. Vancouver had not recognized her at once.

There were greetings and hand-shakings, and then Miss Brandon sat down by the fire and spread out her hands as though to warm them. She looked white and cold.

There are women in the world, both young and old, who seem to move among us like visions from another world, a world that is purer and fairer, and more heavenly than this one in which the rest of us move. It is hard to say what such women have that marks them so distinctly; sometimes it is beauty, sometimes only a manner, often it is both. It is very certain that we know and feel their influence, and that many men fear it as something strange and contrary to the common order of things, a living reproach and protest against all that is base and earthly and badly human.

Most people would have said first of Sybil Brandon that she was cold, and many would have added that she was beautiful. Ill-natured people sometimes said she was deathly. No one ever said she was pretty. Vancouver's description—lily-white, all eyes and hair—certainly struck the principal facts of her appearance, for her skin was whiter than is commonly natural, her eyes were very deep and large and blue, and her soft brown hair seemed to be almost a burden to her from its great quantity. She was dressed entirely in black, and being rather tall and very slight of figure, the dress somewhat exaggerated the ethereal look that was natural to her. She seemed cold, and spread out her delicate hands to the bright flame of the blazing wood-

fire. Mrs. Wyndham and Pocock Vancouver looked at her in silence for a moment. Then Mrs. Wyndham rose with a cup of tea in her hand, and crossed to the other side of the fireplace where Sybil was sitting and offered it to her.

“Poor Sybil, you are so cold. Drink some tea.” The elder woman sat down by the young girl, and lightly kissed her cheek. “You must not be sad, darling,” she whispered sympathetically.

“I am not sad at all, really,” answered Miss Brandon aloud, quite naturally, but pressing Mrs. Wyndham’s hand a little, as though in acknowledgment of her sympathy.

“No one can be sad in Boston,” said Vancouver, putting in a word. “Our city is altogether too wildly gay.” He laughed a little.

“You must not make fun of us to visitors, Mr. Vancouver,” answered Mrs. Wyndham, still holding Sybil’s hand.

“It is Mr. Vancouver’s ruling passion, though he never acknowledges it,” said Miss Brandon, calmly. “I remember it of old.”

“I am flattered at being remembered,” said Mr. Vancouver, whose delicate features betrayed neither pleasure nor interest, however. “But,” he continued, “I am not particularly flattered at being called a scoffer at my own people—”

“I did not say that,” interrupted Miss Brandon.

“Well, you said my ruling passion was making fun of Boston to visitors; at least, you and Mrs. Wyndham said it between you. I really never do that, unless I give the other side of the question as well.”

“What other side?” asked Mrs. Sam, who wanted to make conversation.

“Boston,” said Vancouver with some solemnity. “It is not more often ridiculous than other great institutions.”

“You simply take one’s breath away, Mr. Vancouver,” said Mrs. Wyndham, with a good deal of emphasis. “The idea of calling Boston ‘an institution!’”

“Why, certainly. The United States are only an institution after all. You could not soberly call us a nation. Even you could not reasonably be moved to fine patriotic phrases about your native country, if your ancestors had signed twenty Declarations of Independence. We live in a great institution, and we have every right to flatter ourselves on the success of its management; but in the long run this thing will not do for a nation.”

Miss Brandon looked at Vancouver with a sort of calm incredulity. Mrs. Wyndham always quarreled with him on points like the one now raised, and accordingly took up the cudgels.

“I do not see how you can congratulate yourself on the management of your institution, as you call it, when you know very well you would rather die than have anything to do with it.”

“Very true. But then, you always say that gentlemen should not touch anything so dirty as politics, Mrs. Wyndham,” retorted Vancouver.

“Well, that just shows that it is not an institution at all, and that you are quite wrong, and that we are a great nation supported and carried on by real patriotism.”

“And the Irish and German votes,” added Vancouver, with that scorn which only the true son of freedom can exhibit in speaking of his fellow-citizens.

“Oh, the Irish vote! That is always the last word in the argument,” answered Mrs. Sam.

“I do not see exactly what the Irish have to do with it,” remarked Miss Brandon, innocently. She did not understand politics.

Vancouver glanced at the clock and took his hat.

“It is very simple,” he said, rising to go. “It is the bull in the china shop—the Irish bull amongst the American china—dangerous, you know. Good evening, Mrs. Wyndham; good evening, Miss Brandon.” And he took his leave. Miss Brandon watched his slim figure disappear through the heavy curtains of the door.

“He has not changed much since I knew him,” she said, turning again to the fire. “I used to think he was clever.”

“And have you changed your mind?” asked Mrs. Wyndham, laughing.

“Not quite, but I begin to doubt. He has very good manners, and looks altogether like a gentleman.”

“Of course,” said Mrs. “Wyndham.” His mother was a Shaw, although his father came from South Carolina. But he is really very bright; Sam always says he is one of the ablest men in Boston.”

“In what way?” inquired Sybil.

“Oh, he is a lawyer, don’t you know?—great railroad man.”

“Oh,” ejaculated Miss Brandon, and relapsed into silence.

Mrs. Wyndham rose and stood before the fire, and pushed a log back with her small foot. Miss Brandon

watched her, half wondering whether the flames would not catch her dress.

"I have been to see that Miss Thorn," said Sybil presently.

"Oh," exclaimed Mrs. Sam, with sudden interest, "tell me all about her this minute, dear. Is not she the most extraordinary creature?"

"I rather like her," answered Miss Brandon. "She is very pretty."

"What style? Dark?"

"No; not exactly. Brown hair, and lots of eyebrows. She is a little thing, but very much alive, you know."

"Awfully English, of course," suggested Mrs. Sam.

"Well-yes, I suppose so. She is wild about horses, and says she shoots. But I like her-I am sure I shall like her very much. She does not seem very pleased with her aunt."

"I do not wonder," said Mrs. Sam. "Poor little thing-she has nobody else belonging to her, has she?"

"Oh, yes," answered Sybil, with a little tremor in her voice; "she has a mother in England."

"I want to see her ever so much," said Mrs. Sam. "Bring her to luncheon."

"You will see her to-night, I think; she said she was going to that party."

"I hate to leave you alone," said Mrs. Wyndham. "I really think I had better not go."

"Dear Mrs. Wyndham," said Sybil, rising, and laying her hands on her hostess's shoulders, half affectionately, half in protest, "this idea must be stopped from the first, and I mean to stop it. You are not to give up any party, or any

society, or anything at all for me. If you do I will go away again. Promise me, will you not?"

"Very well, dear. But you know you are the dearest girl in the world." And so they kissed, and agreed that Mrs. Wyndham should go out, and that Sybil should stay at home.

Mrs. Wyndham was really a very kind-hearted woman and a loving friend. That might be the reason why she was never popular. Popularity is a curious combination of friendliness and indifference, but very popular people rarely have devoted friends, and still more rarely suffer great passions. Everybody's friend is far too apt to be nobody's, for it is impossible to rely on the support of a person whose devotion is liable to be called upon a hundred times a day, from a hundred different quarters. The friendships that mean anything mean sacrifice for friendship's sake; and a man or a woman really ready to make sacrifices for a considerable number of people is likely to be asked to do it very often, and to be soon spent in the effort to be true to every one.

But popularity makes no great demands. The popular man is known to be so busy in being popular that his offenses of omission are readily pardoned. His engagements are legion, his obligations are innumerable, and far more than he can fulfill. But, meet him when you will, his smile is as bright, his greeting as cordial, and his sayings as universally good-natured and satisfactory as ever. He has acquired the habit of pleasing, and it is almost impossible for him to displease. He enjoys it all, is agreeable to every one, and is never expected to catch cold in attending a



friend's funeral, or otherwise to sacrifice his comfort, because he is quite certain to have important engagements elsewhere, in which the world always believes. There is probably no individual more absolutely free and untrammelled than the thoroughly popular man.

# CHAPTER II.

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Fate, the artist, mixes her own colors. She grinds them with a pestle in the fashion of the old masters, and out of the most strange pigments she produces often only soft neutral tints for background and shadow, kneading a vast deal of bright colors away among the grays and browns; but now and then she takes a palette loaded with strong paint, and a great brush, and splashes a startling full length portrait upon the canvas, without much regard for drawing or general composition, but with very startling effect. To paint well needs life-long study; to paint so as merely to attract attention needs courage and a heart hardened against artistic sensitiveness.

John Harrington was a high light against the mezzotint of his surroundings. He was a constant source of interest, and not infrequently of terror, to the good town of Boston. True, he was a Bostonian himself, a chip of the old block, whose progenitors had lived in Salem, and whose very name breathed Pilgrim memories. He even had a teapot that had come over in the Mayflower. This was greatly venerated, and whenever John Harrington said anything more than usually modern, his friends brandished the teapot, morally speaking, in his defense, and put it in the clouds as a kind of rainbow—a promise that Puritan blood could not go wrong. Nevertheless, John Harrington continued to startle his fellow-townsmen by his writings and sayings, so that many

of the grave sort shook their heads and swore that he sympathized with the Irish and believed in Chinese labor.

As a matter-of-fact, he did not mince matters. Endowed with unbounded courage and an extraordinary command of language, when he got upon his feet he spoke his mind in a way that was good to hear. Moreover, he had the strong oratorical temperament that forces attention and commands men in a body. He said that things were wrong and should be put right; and when he had said so for half an hour to a couple of thousand people, most of them were ready to follow him out of the hall and go and put things right on the spot, with their own hands. As yet the opportunity had not offered for proceeding in so simple a manner, but the aforesaid Bostonians of the graver sort said that John Harrington would some day be seen heading a desperate mob of socialists in an assault upon the State House. What he had to do with socialism, or to what end he should thus fiercely invade the headquarters of all earthly respectability, was not exactly apparent, but the picture thus evoked in the minds of the solemn burghers satisfactorily defined for them the personality of the man, and they said it and said it again.

It was somewhat remarkable that he had never been called clever. At first he was regarded as a fool by most of his own class, though he always had friends who believed in him. By and by, as it came to be seen that he had a purpose and would be listened to while he stated it, Boston said there was something in him; but he was never said to be clever or "bright"-he was John Harrington, neither more nor less. He was never even called "Jack."

He was a friend of Mrs. Wyndham's; her keen instincts had long ago recognized the true metal in the man, and of all who came and went in her house there was none more welcome than he. Sam Wyndham utterly disagreed with him in politics, but always defended him in private, saying that he would "calm down a lot when he got older," and that meanwhile he was "a very good fellow if you did not stir him up."

He was therefore very intimate at the Sam Wyndham establishment; in fact, at the very hour when Pocock Vancouver was drinking Mrs. Sam's tea, John had intended to be enjoying the same privilege. Unfortunately for his intention he was caught elsewhere and could not get away. He was drinking tea, it is true, but the position in which he found himself was not entirely to his taste.

Old Miss Schenectady, whose niece, Miss Josephine Thorn, had lately come over from England to pass the winter, had asked John Harrington to call that afternoon. The old lady believed in John on account of the Mayflower teapot, and consequently thought him a desirable acquaintance for her niece. Accordingly, John went to the house, and met Miss Sybil Brandon just as she was leaving it; which he regretted, suspecting that her society would have been more interesting than that of Miss Thorn. As it turned out, he was right, for his first impression of the young English girl was not altogether agreeable; and he found himself obliged to stay and talk to her until an ancient lady, who had come to gossip with Miss Schenectady, and was fully carrying out her intentions, should go away and make it possible for him to take his leave without absolutely

abandoning Miss Thorn in the corner of the room she had selected for the *tête-à-tête*.

“All that, of course, you know,” said Miss Thorn, in answer to some remark of John’s, “but what sort of things do you really care for?”

“People,” answered John without hesitation.

“Of course,” returned his companion, “everybody likes people. It is not very original. One could not live without lots of society, could one?”

“That depends on the meaning of society.”

“Oh, I am not in the least learned about meanings,” answered Miss Thorn. “I mean what one means by society, you know. Heaps of men and women, and tea-parties, and staying in the country, and that.”

“That is a sketch indeed,” said John, laughing. “But then it is rather different here. We do not relapse into the country as you do in England, and then come back to town like lions refreshed with sleep.”

“Why not?”

“Because once in society here one is always in it. At least, most people are. As soon as heat begins Boston goes to New York; and by-and-by New York goes to Saratoga, and takes Boston with it; and then all three go to Newport, and the thing begins again, until there is a general rush to Lenox, to see the glories of the autumn; and by the time the glories are getting a little thin it is time to be in Beacon Street again.”

“But when do people shoot and ride?—do they ever hunt?” asked Miss Thorn, opening her wide brown eyes in

some astonishment at John Harrington's description of society life in America.

"Oh yes, they hunt at Newport with a drag and a bagged fox. They do it in July and August, when it is as hot as it can be, and the farmers turn out with pitchforks and stones to warn them off the growing crops."

"How ridiculous!" exclaimed Miss Josephine.

"It is absurd, of course," said Harrington, "and cruel. But I must say they ride as though there were no hereafter, and it is a stiff country."

"They must, I should think; no one who believed in a hereafter would hunt in summer."

"I will wager that if you go to Newport this summer you will hunt, just like everybody else," said John boldly.

Josephine Thorn knew in her heart that it was true, but she did not like the tone in which John said it. There was an air of certainty about his way of talking that roused her opposition.

"I would do nothing so foolish," said she. "You do not know me. And do you mean to tell me that you like these people who rush madly about the country and hunt in summer, and those sort of things?"

"No," said John, "not always."

"But you said you liked people. How awfully inconsistent you are!"

"Excuse me, I think not. I meant that I liked people and having to do with them—with men and women—better than I like things."

"What are 'things'?" inquired Josephine, sarcastically. "You are not very clear in your way of expressing yourself."

“I will be as clear as you please,” answered John, looking across the room at Miss Schenectady and her ancient friend, and devoutly wishing he could get away. “I mean by ‘things’ the study of the inanimate part of creation, of such sciences as are not directly connected with man’s thoughts and actions, and such pursuits as hunting, shooting, and sporting of all kinds, which lead only to the amusement of the individual. I mean also the production of literature for literature’s sake, and of works of art for the mere sake of themselves. When I say I like ‘people,’ I mean men and women, their opinions and their relations to each other.”

“I should think you would get very tired of them,” said Miss Thorn scornfully. “They are all dreadfully alike.”

She never forgot the look Harrington turned upon her as he answered. His calm, deep-set gray eyes gazed steadily at her, and his square features assumed an air of gravity that almost startled her.

“I am never tired of men and women,” he said. “Has it ever struck you, Miss Thorn, that the study of men and women means the study of government, and that a knowledge of men and women may give the power to influence the destiny of mankind?”

“I never thought of it like that,” said Josephine, very quietly. She was surprised at his manner, and she suddenly felt that he was no ordinary man.

To tell the truth, her aunt had informed her that John Harrington was coming that afternoon, and had told her he was an exceedingly able man, a statement which at once roused Josephine’s opposition to its fiercest pitch. She thoroughly hated to be warned about people, to be primed

as it were with a dose of their superiority beforehand. It always prepared her to dislike the admirable individual when he appeared. It seemed as though it were taken for granted that she herself had not enough intelligence to discover wit in others, and needed to be told of it with great circumstance in order to be upon her good behavior. Consequently Josephine began by disliking John. She thought he was a Philistine; his hair was too straight, and besides, it was red; he shaved all his face, whereas the men she liked always had beards; she liked men with black eyes, or blue— John's were gray and hard; he spoke quietly, without expression, and she liked men who were enthusiastic. After all, too, the things he said were not very clever; anybody could have said them.

She meant to show her Boston aunt that she had no intention of accepting Boston genius on faith. It was not her way; she liked to find out for herself whether people were able or not, without being told, and if she ascertained that John Harrington enjoyed a fictitious reputation for genius it would amuse her to destroy it—or at all events to write a long letter home to a friend, expressing her supreme opinion on that and other matters.

John, on his part, did not very much care what impression he produced. He never did on such occasions, and just now he was rendered doubly indifferent by the fact that he was wishing himself somewhere else. True, there was a certain novelty in being asked point-blank questions about his tastes. Boston people knew what he liked, and generally only asked him about what he did. Perhaps, if he had met Josephine by daylight, instead of in the dim shadows of Miss



Schenectady's front drawing-room, he might have been struck by her appearance and interested by her manner. As it was, he was merely endeavoring to get through his visit with a proper amount of civility, in the hope that he might get away in time to see Mrs. Sam Wyndham before dinner.

Josephine thought John dull, probably well informed, and utterly without interest in anything. She felt inclined to do something desperate—to throw the cushions at him, to do anything, in short, to rouse him from his calmness. Then he made that remark about government, and his voice deepened, and his gray eyes shone, and she was aware that he had a great and absorbing interest in life, and that he could be roused in one direction at least. To do her justice, she had quick perceptions, and the impression on her mind was instantaneous.

"I never thought of it like that," she said. "Do you know?" she added in a moment, "I should not have thought you took much interest in anything at all."

John laughed. He was amused at the idea that he, who knew himself to be one of the most enthusiastic of mortals, should be thought indifferent; and he was amused at the outspoken frankness of the girl's remark.

"You know that is just like me," continued Miss Thorn quickly. "I always say what I think, you know. I cannot help it a bit."

"What a pity all the world is not like you!" said John. "It would save a great deal of trouble, I am sure."

"The frump is going at last," said Josephine, in an undertone, as the ancient friend rose and showed signs of taking leave of Miss Schenectady.

“There is certainly no mistake about the frankness of that speech,” said John, rising to his feet and laughing again.

“There is no mistaking its truth,” answered Josephine. “She is the real thing—the real old-fashioned frump—we have lots of them at home.”

“You remind me of Heine,” said John. “He said he called a spade a spade, and Herr Schmidt an ass.”

Miss Thorn laughed. “Exactly,” she answered, “that is the knowledge of men which you say leads to power.”

She rose also, and there was a little stir as the old lady departed. Josephine watched John as he bowed and opened the door of the room to let the visitor out. She wondered vaguely whether she would like him, whether he might not really be a remarkable man—a fact she doubted in proportion as her aunt assured her of its truth; she liked his looks and tried to determine whether he was handsome or not, and she watched closely for any awkwardness or shyness of manner, that being the fault in a man which she never pardoned.

He was very different from the men she had generally known, and most completely different from those she had known as her admirers. In fact she had never admired her admirers at all,—except dear Ronald, of course. They competed with her on her own ground, and she knew well enough she was more than a match for any of them. Ronald was different; she had known him all her life. But all those other men! They could ride—but she rode as well, or better. They could shoot, but so could she, and allowing for the disadvantages of a woman in field sports, she was as good a shot as they. She knew she could do anything they could do,

and understood most things they understood. All in all, she did not care for the average young Englishman. He was great fun in his own way, but there were probably more interesting things in the world than pheasants and fences. Politics would be interesting, she thought; she had known three or four men who were young and already prominent in Parliament, and they were undeniably interesting; but they were generally either ugly or clumsy,—the unpardonable sin,—or perhaps they were vain. Josephine could not bear vain men. John Harrington probably had some one or more of these defects. He was certainly no “beauty man,” to begin with, nevertheless, she wondered whether he might not be called handsome by stretching a point. She rather hoped, inwardly and unconsciously, that her ultimate judgment would decide in favor of his good looks. She always judged; it was the first thing she did, and she was surprised, on the present occasion, to find her judgment so slow. People who pride themselves on being critical are often annoyed when they find themselves uncertain of their own opinion. As for his accomplishments, they were doubtful, to say the least. Miss Thorn was not used to considering American men as manly. She had read a great many books which made game of them, and showed how unused they were to all those good things which make up the life of an English country gentleman; she had met one or two Americans who turned up their noses in impotent scorn of all field sports except horse-racing, which they regarded from a financial point of view. Probably John Harrington had never killed a pheasant in his life. Lastly, he

might be vain. A man with such a reputation for ability would most likely be conceited.

And yet, despite probability, she could not help thinking John interesting. That one speech of his about government had meant something. He was a man with a strong personality, with a great interest in the world led by a dominant aspiration of some sort; and Josephine, in her heart, loved power and admired those who possessed it. Political power especially had that charm for her which it has for most English people of the upper class. There is some quality in the English race which breeds an inordinate admiration for all kinds of superiority: it is certain that if one class of English society can be justly accused of an over-great veneration for rank, the class which is rank itself is not behindhand in doing homage to the political stars of the day. In favor of this peculiarity of English people it may fairly be said that they love to associate with persons of rank and power from a disinterested love of those things themselves, whereas in most other countries the society of noble and influential persons is chiefly sought from the most cynical motives of personal advantage.

Politics—that is, the outward and appreciable manifestations of political life—must always furnish abundant food for the curiosity of the many and the intelligent criticism of the few. There is no exception to that rule, be the state great or small. But politics in England and politics in America, so far as the main points are concerned, are as different as it is possible for any two social functions to be. Roughly, Government and the doings of Government are centripetal in England, and centrifugal in America. In

England the will of the people assists the workings of Providence, whereas in America devout persons pray that Providence may on occasion modify the will of the people. In England men believe in the Queen, the Royal Family, the Established Church, and Belgravia first, and in themselves afterwards. Americans believe in themselves devoutly, and a man who could "establish" upon them a church, a royalty, or a peerage, would be a very clever fellow.

Josephine Thorn and John Harrington were fair examples of their nationalities. Josephine believed in England and the English; John Harrington believed in America and the Americans. How far England and America are ever likely to believe in each other, however, is a question of future history and not of past experience, and any reasonable amount of doubt may be cast upon the possibility of such mutual confidence.

But as Josephine stood watching John Harrington while he opened the drawing-room door for the visitor to go out, she thought of none of these things. She certainly did not consider herself a type of her nation—a distinction to which few English people aspire—and she as certainly would have denied that the man before her was a type of the modern American.

John remained standing when the lady was gone.

"Do sit down," said Miss Schenectady, settling herself once more in her corner.

"Thank you, I think I must be going now," answered John. "It is late." As he spoke he turned toward Miss Thorn, and for the first time saw her under the bright light of the old-fashioned gas chandelier.

The young girl was perhaps not what is called a great beauty, but she was undeniably handsome, and she possessed that quality which often goes with quick perceptions and great activity, and which is commonly defined by the expression "striking." Short, rather than tall, she was yet so proportioned between strength and fineness as to be very graceful, and her head sat proudly on her shoulders-too proudly sometimes, for she could command and she could be angry. Her wide brown eyes were bright and fearless and honest. The faint color came and went under the clear skin as freely as the heart could send it, and though her hair was brown and soft, there were ruddy tints among the coils, that flashed out unexpectedly here and there like threads of red gold twined in a mass of fine silk.

John looked at her in some astonishment, for in his anxiety to be gone and in the dimness of the corner where they had sat, he had not realized that Josephine was any more remarkable in her appearance than most of the extremely young women who annually make their entrance into society, with the average stock of pink and white prettiness. They call them "buds" in Boston-an abbreviation for rosebuds.

Fresh young roses of each opening year, fresh with the dew of heaven and the blush of innocence, coming up in this wild garden of a world, what would the gardener do without you? Where would all beauty and sweetness be found among the thorny bushes and the withering old shrubs and the rotting weeds, were it not for you? Maidens with clean hands and pure hearts, in whose touch there is something that heals the ills and soothes the pains of