

diced against him for the general hauteur of his bearing, and especially for his slighting remarks with regard to herself. Darcy is gradually attracted toward her by her brightness, her wit and independence, but his pride—for she has undesirable connections—will not permit him to show his feelings. He finally proposes to her, but with such insolent references to her family that he only incenses her the more. Through the help he is later able to give her family her prejudice is overcome, and she begins to “comprehend that he was exactly the man who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her,” and the story ends with their marriage. Only a thorough reading of the whole book could give any adequate idea of the charm of Elizabeth, her quaint good sense and lively mind. A random quotation may show the extremely quiet and natural way in which she is presented. She has been surprised into accepting Mr. Darcy as a partner for the dance. “They stood for some time without speaking a word; and she began to imagine that their silence would last through the two dances, and at first was resolved not to break it; till suddenly fancying that it would be the greater punishment to her partner to oblige him to talk, she made some slight observation on the dance. He replied, and was again silent. After a pause of some minutes she addressed him a second time with—“It is your turn to say something now, Mr. Darcy. *I* talked about the dance, and *you* ought to make some kind of remark on the size of the room or the number of couples.” He smiled, and assured her that whatever she wished him to say should be said. “Very well, that reply will do for the present. Perhaps by and by I may observe that private balls are much pleasanter than public ones. But *now* we may be silent.”

“Do you talk by rule, then, while you are dancing?”

“Sometimes. One must speak a little, you know. It would look odd to be entirely silent for half an hour together; yet for the advantage of *some*, conversation ought to be so arranged as that they may have the trouble of saying as little as possible.”

“Are you consulting your own feelings in the present case, or do you imagine that you are gratifying mine?”

“Both,” replied Elizabeth, archly; “for I have always seen a great similarity in the turn of our minds. We are each of an unsocial, taciturn disposition, unwilling to speak unless we expect to say something that will amaze the whole room and be handed down to posterity with all the *éclat* of a proverb.”