

"Most women can—admirably. They buy at eighty as much white hair, the coiffeurs tell me, as they buy blonde or black at twenty."

"Ah, but they can't, if they have a bit of heart or mind in them. Hilda has both."

"The case is so rare I could not prescribe for it—let us hope Miladi's own prescription will suit her," said the Duc, whose serene good-humour was still slightly ruffled.

"Well, she always was all extremes and contraries," said Lord Clairvaux. "You never could say one minute what she wouldn't do the next. By George! you know there is nothing too odd for her to go in for; I should not wonder an atom if when we come here two or three years hence, we find her worshipping a curly Paolino, seeing to the silkworms, and studying wine-making: she's really tried everything else, you know."

"Everything except happiness? Well, very few of us get any chance of trying that, or would appreciate it if we did get it. Happiness," pursued the Duc pensively, "must, after