

DISJECTA MEMBRA POETAE

of it some day. You haven't told me what you think of him."

"I don't know what I think—But then, I don't know him."

"No," he said, roused to interest by her hesitation, "you don't know him. That's the beauty of it."

She gave the manuscript back into his hands. "Take him away. He makes me feel uncomfortable."

"To tell the truth, Lucy, he makes me feel uncomfortable, too."

"Why?"

"Well, when you think you've got hold of a genius, and you take him up and stake your reputation on him—and all the time you can't be sure whether it's a spark of the divine fire or a mere flash in the pan. It happens over and over again. The burnt critic dreads the divine fire."

His eyes were fixed on the title page as if fascinated by the words, *Helen in Leuce*.

"But this is not bad—it's *not* bad for two and twenty."

"Only two and twenty?"

"That's all. It looks as if he were made for immortality."

She turned to him that ardent gaze which made the hot day hotter.

"Dear Horace, you're going to do great things for him."

The worst of having a cousin who adores you is that magnificence is expected of you, regularly and as a matter of course. He was not even sure that Lucia did not credit him with power to work miracles. The idea was flattering but also somewhat inconvenient.

"I don't know about great things. I should like to do something. The question is what. He's a little unfortunate in—in his surroundings, and he's been ill, poor fellow. If one could give him a change. If one were only rich and could afford to send him abroad for a year. I *had* thought of asking him down to Oxford."

"And why didn't you?"

"Well, you know, one gets rather crowded up with things in term time."

Lucia looked thoughtfully at the refined, luxurious figure in the hammock. Horace was entitled to the hammock,