

PREFACE.

vation. On the contrary, it was not the author's intention to draw an individual, but simply to show the type of a class. Facts as to conduct and behaviour similar to those she has described are unhappily too familiar to residents of New York. But in this as in other cases the author has simply used isolated facts in the construction of a dramatic character suited to the design of the story. If the readers of to-day will turn back to Miss Edgeworth's *Belinda*, they will find that this style of manners, these assumptions and mode of asserting them, are no new things. In the character of Harriet Freke, Miss Edgeworth vividly portrays the manners and sentiments of the modern emancipated women of our times, who think themselves

" Ne'er so sure our passion to create,
As when they touch the brink of all we hate."

Certainly the author knows no original fully answering to the character of Mrs. Cerulian, though she has heard such an one described; and, doubtless, there are traits in her equally attributable to all fair enthusiasts who mistake the influence of their own personal charms and fascinations over the other sex, for real superiority of intellect.

There are happily several young women whose vigorous self-sustaining career, in open paths of usefulness alike for themselves and others, are like that of Ida Van Arsdell; and the true experience of a lovely New York girl first suggested the character of Eva; yet both of them are, in execution, strictly imaginary paintings, adapted to the story. In short, some real character, or, in many cases, some two or three, furnish the germs, but the germs only, out of which new characters are developed.

In close: The author wishes to dedicate this Story to the many dear, bright young girls whom she is so happy as to number among her choicest friends. No matter what the critics say of it, if *they* like it; and she hopes from them at least a favorable judgment.

H. B. S.

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