

DISJECTA MEMBRA POETAE

"*In vino veritas*—a true gentleman at heart."

"One of Nature's gentlemen. I know 'em," said Stables.

"One of Art's gentlemen," interposed Jewdwine severely, "and a very fine gentleman too, if you take him that way."

Jewdwine raised his head from his letter and looked round uneasily. Personalities were not altogether to his taste; besides, he was really anxious to finish that letter. He caught sight of a back at the other window.

"I think," said he quietly, "this conversation had better cease.

The owner of the back had moved, a little ostentatiously. He now got up and crossed the room. The back was still towards the group of talkers. Jewdwine followed its passage. He was fascinated. He gasped.

He could have sworn to that back anywhere, with its square but slender shoulders, its defiant swing from the straight hips, the head tossed a little backwards as if to correct the student's tendency to stoop. He looked from the back to Maddox. Maddox could not see what he saw, but his face reflected the horror of Jewdwine's.

Their voices were inaudible enough now.

"Do you know who it is?"

"I should think I did. It's the man himself."

"How truly damnable," said Rankin. After those words there was a silence which Jewdwine, like the wise man he was, utilized for his correspondence.

It was Maddox who recovered first. "Call him what you like," said he, in a wonderful natural voice, between two puffs of a cigarette, "I consider him an uncommonly good sort. A bit of a bounder, but no end of a good sort."

The others were evidently impressed by this bold though desperate policy. Maddox himself was inclined to think that it had saved the situation, but he was anxious to make sure. Edging his chair by slow degrees, he turned discreetly round. With the tail of his eye he could see "the man himself" standing at the far end of the room. He saw too that his own effort, though supreme, had been unavailing. It had deceived no one, least of all S. K. R. "The man himself" stood on the very hearth of the club, with his back to the fireplace. It was the attitude of mastery,