

"Laura commencing: — 'We *must* have her over to us.' — 'I fear we have pre-engaged her.' — 'Oh, but you, dear, will do us the favour to come, too?' — 'I fear, dear, our immediate engagements will preclude the possibility.' — 'Surely, dear Miss Pole, we may hope that you have not abandoned us?' — 'That, my dear Miss Tinley, is out of the question.' — 'May we not name a day?' — 'If it depends upon us, frankly, we cannot bid you do so.'"

The other joined him in laughter, adding: "'Frankly' 's capital! What absurd creatures women are! How the deuce did you manage to remember it all?"

"My sister was at my elbow. She repeated it, word for word."

"'Pon my honour, women are wonderful creatures!'"

The two young men continued their remarks, with a sense of perfect consistency.

Lady Gosstre, as she was being conducted to her carriage, had pronounced aloud that Emilia was decidedly worth hearing.

"She's better worth knowing," said Tracy Runningbrook. "I see you are all bent on spoiling her. If you were to sit and talk with her, you would perceive that she's meant for more than to make a machine of her throat. What a throat it is! She has the most comical notion of things. I fancy I'm looking at the budding of my own brain. She's a born artist, but I'm afraid everybody's conspiring to ruin her."

"Surely," said Adela, "we shall not do that, if we encourage her in her Art."

"He means another kind of art," said Lady Gosstre. "The term 'artist,' applied to our sex, signifies 'Frenchwoman' with him. He does not allow us to be anything but women. As artists then we are largely privileged, I assure you."

"Are we placed under a professor to learn the art?" Adela inquired, pleased with the subject under such high patronage.

"Each new experience is your accomplished professor," said Tracy. "One can't call Cleopatra a professor: she's but an illustrious example."

"Imp! you are corrupt." With which my lady tapped farewell on his shoulder. Leaning from the carriage-window, she said: "I suppose I shall see you at Richford?"