

The Troubling of the Waters

Spirit of the Heather. It seemed to me that the gracious moorland had suddenly transmuted its radiant charm into the form of a girl in a tweed dress and a Tam o' Shanter. I suppose your artistic training is responsible for that touch of vivid color? It reminds me of Turner's basket of oranges on a Thames barge."

"Well, I like that!" cried she, purposely misunderstanding him, though the light which leaped to her eyes when she bent her head showed that her own words were not without a double significance.

"I spoke first of the individual, then of the trick," he said severely. "You are frivolous to-day, my lady."

"I pray your pardon, my lord. But you are to blame. I asked you, in all gravity, who was Fennell, and why did he have a tower?"

"Fennell was a mere accident, a misanthropic bumpkin who lived there for years, and thus achieved the immortality of the Ordnance Map. The tower, more correctly known as a broch, was built by the Romans, or, at any rate, the present structure marks the site of a fortified camp on the old Roman road from Dunsley to York. Its more recent purpose was to house the watchmen who gave warning of a border foray to the dale-dwellers. Its present use will be to serve as a center whence I can lecture you on the antiquities of the Vale of Ure."

Though Marjorie, strange to say, was interested, lectures of that sort are apt to be dull to other people. So more may be learnt of the lives and fortunes of those who were destined to play leading parts in the strange drama which the remote Yorkshire village of Hudston was then preparing for the stage of reality, if heed be paid to another conversation held on that same moor a few days later.