

fore, the day after you receive this. No one, I should think, need, for the present at least, know of any connection whatever between your family affairs and my visit. My errand is to try what can be done for the unhappy prisoner, and, as an old friend, I shall ask your hospitality during my stay. Then I will give you what advice and help I can ; of my truest and warmest sympathy I know I need give you no assurance."

To both mother and daughter this note brought comfort, though Lucia had no knowledge whatever of the many thoughts regarding her father which had begun to occupy her mother's mind. To her, strange and unnatural as it may seem, he was simply an object of fear and abhorrence. She hated him as the cause of her mother's sufferings, of their false and insecure position, and of the self-loathing which possessed her when she thought of their relationship. The idea of any wifely duty owing to him could never have struck her, for what visions of married life she had, belonged to a world totally unlike that of her parents' experience, and she regarded what she knew of that as something beyond all reach of ordinary rules or feelings.

Yet much as she would have wondered had she