

Whether she was quite able to believe anyone her mental superior may be doubted, but she made believe to herself to believe it, being, like many people of thin intellect, an actress in a small way—and with one's self for sole audience this answers well enough.

"And now, my dear," said Mrs. Hunter, "tell me more of your own life. What can be as interesting as a life? It remains always, to some extent, unknown. Its residue of mystery is its charm. The novelists are the fools of their fancies. Tell me about yourself. Rational talk is quite impossible in these social camps we absurdly call 'watering-places.'"

"Just as if we were horses," said Miss Morrow.

"How witty!" exclaimed Mrs. Hunter. "How delightful! I must remember that. If ever you hear me use it, don't betray me."

"Oh, no!" said Miss Morrow, well pleased and serious.

"But I do want to hear all about you, and of that cousin of whom everyone speaks with admiration. I suspect Mr. Masters is a little afraid of her—and I do want to hear of your uncle, too. Mr. Wentworth describes him as a most interesting talker."

Kitty was too well trained to pour herself out, as yet, with entire frankness, but she soon allowed the shrewd woman at her side to understand that she felt herself the victim of an exacting old man, and that she was scarcely appreciated, as she thought she had a right to be, by this cousin, Miss Fairthorne. Mrs. Hunter's hand sought that of the girl,