

DI'SJECTA MEMBRA POETAE

Jewdwine had a weak digestion. When he sat at the high table, peering at his sole and chicken, with critical and pathetic twitchings of his fastidious nose, he shuddered at the vigorous animal appetites of undergraduates in Hall.

Even so he shrank now from the coarse exuberance of Rickman's youth. When it came to women, Rickman *was* impossible.

Now Jewdwine, while pursuing an inner train of thought that had Rickman for its subject, was also keeping his eye on a hansom, and wondering whether he would hail it and so reach Hampstead in time for dinner, or whether he would dine at the Club. Edith would be annoyed if he failed to keep his appointment, and the Club dinners were not good. But none were Edith's; moreover, by dining at the Club for one shilling sixpence, and taking a twopenny tram instead of a three-and-sixpenny cab, he would save one and tenpence.

"And yet," he continued thoughtfully, "the man who wrote *Helen in Leuce* was a poet. Or at least," he added, "one seventh part a poet."

Though Jewdwine's lower nature was preoccupied, the supreme critical faculty performed its functions with precision. The arithmetical method was perhaps suggested by the other calculation. He could not be quite sure, but he believed he had summed up Savage Rickman pretty accurately.

"Thanks," said Rickman, "you've got the fraction all right, anyhow. A poet one day out of seven; the other six days a potman in an infernal, stinking, flaring Gin-Palace-of-Art."

As he looked up at Rickman's, blazing with all its lights, he felt that he had hit on the satisfying, the defining phrase.

His face expressed a wistful desire to confer further with Jewdwine on this matter; but a certain delicacy restrained him.

Something naive in Jewdwine's nature, something half-human, half-tutorial, responded to the mute appeal that said so plainly, "Won't you hear me? I've so much to ask, so much to say. So many ideas, and you're the only man that can understand them." Jewdwine impressed everybody, himself included, as a person of prodigious understanding.