

even white teeth, and made deep lines, which suggested various things, according to the nature of the smile, on either side of her face. As a rule one might take them to mean a rather deprecating acceptance of life as it stands—they seemed intended for that; and then Mrs. Bell would express an enthusiasm and contradict them. As she came through the door under the "Entry into Jerusalem," saying that she really must apologize, she was sure it was unpardonable keeping Miss Kimpsey waiting like this, the lines expressed an intention of being as agreeable as possible without committing herself to return Miss Kimpsey's visit.

"Why no, Mrs. Bell," Miss Kimpsey said earnestly, with a protesting buff and grey smile, "I didn't mind waiting a particle, honestly I didn't. Besides, I presume it's early for a call, but I thought I'd drop in on my way from school." Miss Kimpsey was determined that Mrs. Bell should have every excuse that charity could invent for her. She sat down again, and agreed with Mrs. Bell that they were having lovely weather, especially when they remembered what a disagreeable fall it had been last year; certainly this October had been just about perfect. The ladies used these superlatives in the tone of mild defiance that almost any statement of fact has upon feminine lips in America. It did not seem to matter that their observations were entirely in union.

"I thought I'd run in," said Miss Kimpsey, screwing herself up by the arm of her chair.

"Yes?"

"And speak to you about a thing I've been thinking a good deal of, Mrs. Bell, this last day or two. It's about Elfrida."

Mrs. Bell's expression became judicial. If this was a complaint—and she was not accustomed to