

The cardinal was acquitted to-day of all complicity in the affair of the Queen's diamond necklace. How quickly the quicksands of crime got hold of the mind's feet. At that moment it seemed incredible that I had ever been an innocent child, gambolling among the daisies, and thinking, if I thought of it at all, that the grave would be as little as my bed. The door opened and shut. From what I already knew of the man who entered, I should have supposed cleaner limbs and an air more sinister. I explained my object, and told him to sit down and make himself comfortable with the papers. Coffee and sandwiches of Westphalian ham pleased him too obviously. Why cucumber sandwiches? Why such reckless extravagance in one so young? Yes, I felt, at my first sight of him, that the words before my eyes would form some sort of commentary, ironic perhaps, page after page, till the end of my interview, and even after.

---

## NOTES