

had lately settled on an estate in the neighborhood, and had shown a great inclination for Cynthia's society. Westwood was never tired of praising his good looks, his manly ways, his abilities, and his intelligence, and of calculating openly, in his daughter's hearing, the amount of wealth of which he was sure MacPhail was possessed. Cynthia grew impatient of these praises before long.

"Dear father," she said, taking his grizzled head between her hands one day and kissing it, "I like your Mr. MacPhail very well; but I shall get tired of him very soon if you are always praising him so much."

"But you do like him, Cynthia?" said her father, turning round hastily.

"Oh, yes—I think that he is a very estimable young man! I know all his good points by heart; but I can't say that I find him interesting."

"Interesting?" echoed Westwood. "What do you mean, Cynthia? Isn't he clever enough for you?"

"He is clever enough for anybody, no doubt," said Cynthia, with a little laugh. "But he never reads, he never thinks—except about his stock—and he isn't even a gentleman."

"Neither am I, Cynthia, my dear," said her father sorrowfully.

"You, you darling old man," said the girl lightly—"as if you were not one of Nature's gentlemen, and the dearest and noblest of men to boot! If he were like you, father, I should think twice as much of him;" and she put her arm round his neck and kissed him.

Westwood's face beamed.

"You're not ashamed of your old father?" he said delightedly. "Bless you, my girl! What I shall do when the time comes for me to lose you, I'm sure I don't know!"

"You are not likely to lose me father. I shall probably stay with you always," said Cynthia rather sadly. But she brightened up when she saw his questioning face. "You and I shall always keep house together, shall we not?"

"Don't you think, Cynthia," said he, detaining her as she was about to move away, "that we might take MacPhail into partnership some of these days?"

"Partnership?" she repeated, not seeing his drift at