

builder, without allowing him time to give further vent to the feelings of gratitude that were agitating his bosom. Scarcely therefore had he passed the threshold of the stately mansion he had lately entered with so much anxiety, ere he began to fill the ears of all his acquaintance whom he chanced to meet, with the most unbounded eulogiums upon the beneficence and liberality of the wealthy banker, whom he represented as a model of generosity, affability and kindness. Nay, even his servant, who waited for him at the door with his cabriolet, was made the recipient of his overcharged feelings, whenever other listeners were wanting. In the meantime, the Marquis de Berizy being introduced into the banker's presence, was received with that studied politeness, mingled with deference, that marks the sense of being in the presence of a superior.— And yet, to judge of them by personal appearance as they stood side by side; the Marquis, a hale and hearty man, about fifty years of age, with hard hands and an attire by no means recherche; and M. Durand so neatly combed, shaved and dressed, with white hands and rose-coloured nails, one would have assuredly mistaken the Marquis for the citizen, and the banker for the noble. The soft and melodious voice too, of the latter, seemed to have more of the aristocratic in its tone, than the strong and somewhat harsh, yet manly voice of the Marquis. A close observer, however, would soon have detected in the one, the careful diction of a person anxious to appear polished and at his ease; and in the other, the freedom of a man habituated to speak and act as a gentleman, and who gives himself no concern about it.

"To what motive," said M. Durand, "am I to attribute the honour of a visit from Monsieur le Marquis de Berizy?"

"I will tell you, sir. You know that by an ordonnance of King Charles X., I have been just named a peer of France."

"That fact is well known, sir, and is looked upon by all as but a proper tribute to the great name you bear."

"You flatter me, Monsieur Durand, but if the truth be known, it is not altogether to the great name I bear that I owe this elevation, but to the fact of my being one of the richest landed proprietors in France. The King thinks that men who possess a great fortune have a more direct interest in maintaining order, than those, who, having nothing to lose, found their hopes of prosperity upon any sudden change or revolution in the state. You see then that I am become a peer of the realm by the same

means that would render you one to-morrow if you chose to make interest for it."

The banker smiling disdainfully at this suggestion, the Marquis resumed.—"But this is not my business at present. When I received the news of my promotion to the peerage, I had been for twenty years a steady and useful resident in the country; and I am now resolved to be equally diligent and useful to the country at large, in my political capacity, as peer of the realm. For this purpose it will now be requisite that I abandon my retired mode of life, and that, taking up my residence during great part of the year in Paris, I then maintain an establishment suitable to the rank and dignity conferred on me by the King. I should never of my own accord have come to this city for purposes of display, for a country life is more congenial to my tastes and habits; but having been called to so exalted a station by the condescension of His Most Gracious Majesty, I feel it a duty I owe to myself, and to the illustrious order to which I now belong, to permit it to suffer no disparagement even in the eyes of the vulgar, by my inattention to outward appearances."

"I conceive your meaning perfectly," replied the banker, with an air of patient resignation that did not escape the notice of the Marquis.

"I beg your pardon for detaining you so long," said the latter, "with details that seem indifferent to you; but this preamble is intended to show the reason of the service I have to request of you; for, in consequence of this resolution to settle myself in Paris, I have just disposed of a large forest, out of the proceeds of which, I intend purchasing for myself a residence in town suited to the station I have filled, and to place the residue of my funds in some banking house, to replace by the interest of my active capital, the dead capital that shall throw into my house."

"And you have chosen my bank for the purpose?" said M. Durand in a grateful tone.

"I have, M. Durand, chosen yours, because you have a reputation for honour and integrity that all France applauds, to which I may add as no mean accessory, a capital of twenty thousand million francs."

"People greatly exaggerate my means," said the banker, in that tone which was evidently meant to confirm the truth of their assertion, even while discovering it, "but whatever my fortune is, it has been honourably acquired. It is the prize of patient industry, which I began with nothing. I am the child of a poor labourer, who left me only an honest