

asking for quite a while, I reckon, Anne. Well, I'd have no objection to marrying Ludovic. That's frank enough for you, isn't it? But it's not easy to marry a man unless he asks you. And Ludovic has never asked me."

"Is he too shy?" persisted Anne. Since Theodora was in the mood, she meant to sift this puzzling affair to the bottom.

Theodora dropped her work and looked meditatively out over the green slopes of the summer world.

"No, I don't think it is that. Ludovic isn't shy. It's just his way — the Speed way. The Speeds are all dreadfully deliberate. They spend years thinking over a thing before they make up their minds to do it. Sometimes they get so much in the habit of thinking about it that they never get over it — like old Alder Speed, who was always talking of going to England to see his brother, but never went, though there was no earthly reason why he shouldn't. They're not lazy, you know, but they love to take their time."

"And Ludovic is just an aggravated case of Speedism," suggested Anne.

"Exactly. He never hurried in his life. Why, he has been thinking for the last six years of getting his house painted. He talks it over with me every little while, and picks out the colour, and