

their embarrassed unease. With cultured dignity enhancing native grace, the lady courteously bowed, and turned inquiringly to her husband.

"These—commercial gentlemen, my dear, have made me certain proposals—"

"Spare thyself, my love, I have heard—"

"And thou—!"

"Approve all I know my husband will say."

"Ah! My angel! And 'twas for thee I feared and hesitated! Then, my dear, before we invite these—*gentlemen* to withdraw from beneath our humble roof, let me tell them—nay, let *us* say, what is our thought respecting the nefarious proposition they have so mistakenly advanced. We may forgive them, too, for they do not know, and perhaps cannot understand, the feeling with which we regard the honorable tradition of our houses. I think I speak for thee when I say that we cherish our honor as a religion; that it has come down to us with our blood, pure and unsullied; and in our poverty it is the one thing we have not parted with, and will keep to the end. These ephemeral muck-gatherers of the market have no understanding of the sentiments attaching to a profession dating back for centuries, when our scriveners were the trusted servants alike of Church and State, and the recorders of their most carefully guarded secrets. They do not know how inextricably our calling is bound up with the Constitution re-established on the basis of ancient law and custom. In impeaching the immutable inviolability of a Deed, they attack the foundations of society, and impinge on the sacred rights of property which it is the sworn duty of the members of our ancient Guild to safeguard between man and man. They may engage our services for a trifling fee, but they cannot suborn our signature, nor bribe us to do an illegal, unprofessional, or dishonorable