

look for worldly advantages with his wife. I shall be glad if you will give me a promise that you will in future discountenance his attentions in every possible way ; as, I am sure you must feel, is best for all parties."

"You have spoken frankly, Madam, and as far as you could, in speaking on such a subject at all, kindly ; and I thank you. May I claim the right to address you with equal candour ?"

She nodded her consent, and I continued.

"I will not deny that from the time I became an inmate of your house, Mr. Knollys has honoured me with especial attention ; and on one occasion addressed me in language which it was not consistent with my duty, either to you or to myself, to permit him to use, and which I therefore begged him to cease. So far from his preference having been any gratification to me, it has been a source of sincere annoyance. I have represented to Mr. Knollys that it could not fail to be displeasing to the General and to you, and that it could never be reciprocated by me. One word more, Madam. In my estimation there are other considerations in marriage than those of wealth and station, and were there no other objection, Mr. Knollys would never be my choice ; which was made long since, though, like many of the projects of this life, made in vain."

I expected that Mrs. Knollys might have been offended at words more haughty than her own ; but such did not seem to be the case. On the contrary she took my hand, complimented me on my good sense and right feeling, and dismissed the subject, with the assurance that her mind was now quite at ease ; and the drive came to an end in perfect harmony. But I congratulated myself that I was in no danger of loving Robert Knollys, and murmured to myself, as I left his cautious and cunningly-candid mother, "What if I had ? How would she have spoken then ? I do not—never shall ; but what if I had ?"

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