

school teacher and made him the instrument to prepare the first and crude ritual of the now well-known Order of Knights of Pythias. The place being unfavorable to the introduction, he was led to the seat of Government, which had just commenced one of the greatest movements in the betterment of humanity, by liberating from bondage over four millions of human beings that had been held as slaves by the peculiar laws of this country. Those laws are now obsolete and abolished. Just at such a period, this Order was launched at the capital and became the cogent educator of the official family of this government to greater monuments in the betterment and elevation of the human family. That it was organised by the directing hand that controls all for good, there can be no doubt. That it has grown and improved as years and experience have passed, since the organisation, is an established fact. If it had failed to keep abreast of the times, its mission would have been a failure.

None of the fraternities or other organisations whose mission is the helping of the unfortunate and down-trodden, with the index finger of the nobler, better thoughts and actions, have shown greater progress or better results than the Order assembled here this day for the specific purpose of exchanging ideas, and stimulating and advocating renewed efforts in eradicating selfishness from the human family.

#### HER COUNTRY COUSIN.

"I am not blaming you, dear, but I wish it had not been necessary to ask Marion here this winter. A few weeks would have been a long enough visit, it seems to me. I am sure I don't know how we shall manage to entertain her for the whole winter."

Mr. Carmen stirred his coffee and looked across the breakfast table at his wife.

"Margaret," he said, "it isn't often that I ask you and Isabel to put yourselves out to please me. I do ask it now, if receiving into our house the daughter of my only brother is putting you out so much. Suppose that Isabel were left without us, and John had a home of his own, what would we think of him if he begrudged his hospitality to our girl?"

"Indeed, dear, I do not begrudge it. I am just afraid we shall not be able to make Marion happy. You know it is Isabel's first winter at home since she left school, and she will naturally go out a great deal. Marion, I gather from her letters, will not feel like taking part in the social life here, and I am afraid she will be less contented with us than with her friends in Iowa."

Mrs. Carmen's voice was soft and sweet, almost pleading in tone, and her husband, after twenty-five years of familiarity with its sound, never failed to feel its influence.

"She can't help being happy if you and Isabel are kind to her," he answered, his momentary resentment quite gone. "Where is Isabel this morning?"

"I hear her coming now."

There was a sound of a light step and the swish of a skirt.

"Good morning," said Isabel Carmen, entering

the room and seating herself at the vacant place at the table. "How are you this morning, mother dear?"

"Quite cured of my headache. And did you sleep well?"

"Oh, yes, I always do," replied Isabel.

As she sat there full in the light from the big window across from her, she looked the very personification of health and youth. She was extremely pretty in her white flannel shirt waist, her blonde hair waving back from her face, and her cheeks touched with the rosy glow of a child's on awakening. There was about her whole personality something fresh, natural and honest, which made her attractive wherever she went. "Perfectly unaffected" she had been pronounced by the older girls when they had discussed the qualities displayed by the seasonal debutantes, of whom Isabel was one; and "awfully pretty" they had also conceded.

When Mr. Carmen had left the house after breakfast, Isabel and her mother sat for a long time in the library discussing the arrival of Marion Carmen, who was expected that day.

"I do hope she will be nice," said Isabel. "If she is, it will be delightful having her here. But do you know, mother, I rather dread her coming."

"So do I," sighed Mrs. Carmen. "Of course, we have to ask her sometime, but the whole winter—well, we must make the best of it, for your father's sake. You must not expect her to be like the other girls you know, Isabel. Her

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