

she had an intelligent listener, was busy discussing a waltz of hers which was shortly to be published.

"You see, she was remarking, in this composition I was most happy in my inspiration.

"Oh! madam, replied Marmette, it was rather the music was happy, for was it not born of you?" This was a stroke of Trousac, a little malicious, perhaps, but all the same one of Trousac's best hits. It made a very visible impression on Marie. The pause that ensued was awkward, but the arrival of Goudeau put an end to it in a general conversation.

"I am delighted to meet you in Paris, my dear sir. You came from that fine country, Canada, that my friend Puy is so fond of eulogizing. I hope you intend to remain with us for some time!

"Nothing would afford me greater pleasure, answered Marmette.

"Would it be indiscreet to ask if you have come on any particular mission? If I can be of any service to you, I am entirely at your disposal.

"My dear sir, rejoined our author, I am not perfect, and as I came here to attain perfection, I know of no one who could assist me better than yourself."

Goudeau laughed. "My friend, said he, you cannot deny your origin—you are every inch a Frenchman, and if all your countrymen are like you, it is we who should make a pilgrimage to Quebec. But, alas! our imperfections are too many ever to hope for perfection."

I hurried Marmette away; he would have caused me to be forgotten by my other friends; but as there is always something selfish in our natures, I desired to be remembered by them still and had but a short time left to see them.

I glanced at our author on reaching the boulevard and perceived that he had put on his eye-glasses again. I mentioned the matter to him.

"Oh! yes, but they may have another relapse," he answered. And with this rather enigmatical remark, we wended our way to the Café Voltaire for dinner.

"What a jolly place the *Hirsutes*! he said.

"Is it not? I answered.

"Yes, this clubbing together of intellectual men and women is a grand idea.