"Oh, my dear! So you think! But one never can tell with one's brothers. Look at Tom. What a creature he has married! I never see him now."

"Louis is very unlike Tom."

"Men are all alike in some ways, my dear," said Cecilia, with the pitying superiority of the married woman talking to the spinster. "Of course Louis will marry now that he is rich. Surely you couldn't be so selfish as to wish him not to?"

"Some day, of course," said Jeanne. "I want him to marry. But he promised me faithfully long ago, that he would never marry any one I didn't like—so it will be all right, and I shan't mind—when the time comes. Still I may hope, without being selfish, that it won't come just yet. He has his career to think about first."

"I don't see how one can expect to like one's brothers' wives," said Cecilia. "They always marry some horrid woman or other. Men are so easily taken in. Joseph's sisters can't bear me, and I never even trouble to be civil to them, knowing very well that it would be no use. He goes to see his people by himself, and as they are all scientific together, I'm sure it's no loss."

"But you'll come and see *me*," entreated Jeanne.

"Certainly I will," said Cecilia. "I can assure you I know very well what it is to be alone. Joseph goes to the most outlandish places, and if he can slip off without me he will. Imagine at his age, going out to South Africa!"

"To fight!"

"No—no, not to fight—he was a surgeon in his youth and thought he could be of use. Of course nobody wanted him. I felt sure of that. He was much too old. But that is Joseph all over. If he has made up his mind to do a thing, he does it. So off he went in spite of all I could say; though he was quite violent when I suggested I might go with him and nurse some of the officers. My heart goes out to wounded men. But you will be wanting to go shopping, Jeanne, and I really might help you over that——" she cast an expressive glance at