

that he should not come to the point at once. She knew his forceful manner of speech, and determined not to allow her heart to be carried by storm. She answered:

"I am not well—not sick, but worried. Julien was out all night. What will the end be?"

"Oh, he'll get married some time and settle down."

"And who would have him—a drunkard? I should pity her from the bottom of my heart."

"You look at the matter too seriously," said the Count. "Most men are drunkards—some with wine, some with women, but more with love. I was talking to your brother Pascal yesterday about our future."

Vivienne clasped her hands and looked into his face, appealingly.

"We can have no future together, Count Mont d'Oro; I do not love you."

"Well, as to that," cried the Count, jauntily, "neither do I love you, but I respect and admire you."

The appealing look left Vivienne's face; in its place came an expression of determination.

"I wish to be loved—by my husband."

"You must have been reading English novels," said the Count. "In them you will find the word 'home,' but we have nothing like it in French. It may be that the word 'love' has no exact counterpart in our language. You must be content, as most Frenchwomen are, with the love of your children."

"No, no," cried Vivienne. "If they are not the offspring of love, they will have no love. It is too great a risk."

"We must take risks in this life," said the Count. "I will take you to Paris with me. You can enjoy yourself there; it is so different from this dull, sleepy place."

He had tried the old form of temptation. By it Faust had won Marguerite; but Vivienne was made of sterner stuff.