

"Because a man with an income of several thousand pounds per annum is not to be despised, especially when you take into consideration that if anything should happen to papa, ours will be a very small jointure. Mamma says that we live beyond our income now; and as I never had any taste for poverty, I tell you frankly, that if nothing more eligible offers, should Doctor Fleming propose, I will not refuse, old and conceited though he be. But, Belinda, you look as serious as though I had been contemplating some crime; what are your ideas on the subject?"

"I should think it a crime, and no very light one, to stand at the altar, and solemnly vow to love and obey, when you have no such intention. Suppose, dear Alice, Doctor Fleming should become a poor man, would you then be willing to take him for better for worse?"

"No, indeed; in that case I should not think of him."

"Well, then, you will marry the riches, not the man. He is only a useless appendage, which you would prefer dispensing with, if you could obtain wealth in any other manner."

"Really, Belinda, you are quite a moralist! How strangely you view the subject. I am sure I never thought of it in that light. Nevertheless, I have quite made up my mind. 'Love in a cottage,' roses, honeysuckles, &c., might do for you, but really never will answer for me. Just imagine me the mistress of a small house, with one servant, — continually looking after her, worrying for fear my parlors should not arrive at the acme of neatness, — ironing my laces, &c., because, forsooth, the servant would spoil them, — making my pastry, — and, more than all, darning my husband's stockings. No, no, I like too well the conveniences of a large mansion; the delectable *ennui*, that attends on having nothing to do; the routine of a well ordered table, without the trouble of looking after it; a carriage at your command, relieving you from the necessity of exposing a delicate upper to the merciless gravel, or scarcely less merciless dust; — these are indispensable to me, they are not luxuries, but necessities, without which I really believe I could not exist. But now that I have informed you of my determination, let me hear an account of your proceedings this evening. Come, be explicit, for I intend to cross-question you. Who among your train of suitors do you intend to honor with