

"We will try to arrive in season," said Mrs. Cozmel.

Rodney observed in reply: "You and Amy should lay aside your labors entirely, to-day; and, you with father, and Amy with Horace, arrive in time to visit, and enjoy the conversation of old acquaintances."

"Only the most congenial temperaments should venture to visit together," replied his mother, having resumed her ironing; "for, believe me, the boredom and the rudeness of social intercourse arise largely from the non-observance of this rule."

Rodney replied: "I trust that you will find them congenial who have discovered a congeniality in me."

At this point his father said: "Concerning your settlement, I have not hitherto spoken with much explicitness; and you have shown a commendable restraint in waiting acquiescent till I mite choose to divulge our intentions. But now it is proper to inform you that the wooded lot and the house erected thereon will be transferred to you by deed. The said document will await your return from the honeymoonic journey; and you will find the house prepared for your reception in that simple style of upholstery to which your twenty-four years of life have accustomed you. The land is as Nature left it; but your industry will transform its appearance and improve its value."

To this Rodney answered: "You surprise and delite me, sir, with the liberality of your settlement. I am not averse to earning my living in the manner recommended to our progenitor, Adam, and practised by my father. My fiancée is a woman taut in the culinary art, and endowed by her parents with frugal and industrious notions of life."

"The alliance in one woman," said Mrs. Cozmel, "of refinement and humility, of elevation of character and love for mild physical labor, is a rare preparation for the wife of a bourgeois. If her parents add nothing to this, her dot is already munificent. But Horace has your horse ready at the door, so I resign you to another, and aggrandize both."

Mrs. Cozmel kissed her son, and her husband said: "Being masculine, I am not permitted to indulge in feminine tokens of regard; but believe that I wish you well."

He took his son's hand in his and shook it warmly. Rodney returned the caress of his mother, and now assuming his hat and rite glove, left the room; his parents followed.

SECTION 3.

During the forenoon Frances and her friend Phoebe entered the parlor of the former's home, and sitting together on the sofa, Phoebe inquired: "How long before we dress?"

"As soon as mother comes," replied Frances; "she is superintending the cuisine till the arrival of your mother."

Phoebe replied by saying: "Your life abundantly proves, Frances, that if one seeks first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, the rest will follow."

"I endeavor to be duly thankful for divine favors," replied Frances. "Yet the natural heart goes from longing to longing. To-day we concentrate our desires upon a husband; to-morrow we shall repine for lack of children. If they are given, anxieties for their welfare ensue; and only the grave encloses our discontent."

"Phoebe replied again: "One like you, Frances, beginning life auspiciously, with youth, with health, with a husband, should not mourn the possibility of being childless."