

they can be drilled into machines, as they are in England."

"Well I shall never be able to treat a servant as if she were my equal," said Louisa, "and I will not."

"You need not do that," said Philip, "there is a medium. Mrs. McFarlane does not think me at all the less a gentleman because I sometimes make my own toast."

"Mrs. McFarlane is a sensible woman," observed Agnes.

"And the same thing holds good," continued Philip, "with the generality of the people here with whom those who live as we do must, to a certain degree, associate. I have heard those of our own standing say that they felt as if they were lowering themselves by the association, and that their pride rebelled against it. I have never felt so. I think there is much to be liked in the people of this country. I have always found them ready to oblige, and am ready to give help in return, on occasion."

"I did not think you had so little pride," said Agnes, smiling.

"Perhaps, instead of less, I have more than you imagine. I have so good an opinion of myself that I believe I could not easily fall to a lower level; and I am sure that there must always be such a difference between me and those round me, and that they will always be so perfectly aware of it, that there is no danger of their presuming on any politeness I may offer them when chance brings me into their company."

"You do not, I presume, *like* the society of common people?" said Louisa.

"It depends upon what you call common people. I assure you, you will get into trouble if you class some of your neighbors under that name."

"I mean all the people round about here," said Mrs. Vining.

"Some of them are rough specimens, I grant, but they would not approve of your classing them all together; there are as distinct *sets* as in any society in a country town. People like the Valleaus place themselves on a much higher level than the Ashtons, who have the store; the Ashtons look down on Mrs. Givins who keeps the tavern, who in her turn considers herself not one but several cuts above Bill White the blacksmith, or old Mrs. Croon."

"How perfectly absurd."

"I do not see why. The best of these people are those who live independent lives on their own property, who drive their carriages, and send their children to boarding-schools for those advantages of education which they never enjoyed themselves. You have been here but a short time, and have not had much opportunity of judging; wait, then, till you know more of them, particularly some of the younger portion, and I think when you hear a young man talk of Homer and pronounce French accurately, and find young ladies who play the piano, and excel in fancy work to an alarming extent, that you will not call them 'common people.'"

"I did not mean to offend you by that expression," said Louisa, laughing. "It's all very strange to me, but I dare say it's all right. Don't talk about them any more now, please, for I want to read."

Agnes rather wondered at the earnestness with which Philip had spoken; however, she agreed with so far as she understood him, and kept the information against the time when she should need it.

(To be continued.)