

While this was being said, the woman had arisen, replenished the stove with wood, and removed her chair nearer the lounge. Seating herself in this new situation, and drawing an obstructed breath, she replied: "I confess myself unequal to that problem. Undoubtedly men of principle will deliberate conscientiously on the passing of a public measure, tho no other party should be the. to oppose. But, husband, politics are not for women. Let us talk of domestic, and not of exotic, concerns. Let us speak of our children. They are my parliament. And when we sit alone, during evenings like this, I feel that our parliament is prorogued not to assemble again in full. I think of the time when we were altogether alone, before our children were born."

"And I, sometimes," replied her husband; "Our children are around us for a season and are gone not to return."

"Sydney will depart in the spring," continued the dame; "he is our youngest, the heir of our late maturity. Only Rodney and Horace are left; and Rodney is pursuing that path which will convert the son into the husband."

The man answered: "That is true."

The wife resumed: "He has attended Frances since Dominion Day of last summer, when they went up the river to Brockville. Of such long attendance something should come. We did not go together so long, before we engaged."

"Your memory, Arletta, is singularly retentive," replied the occupant of the lounge. "And was I not venturesome to engage so much, in such little time? But, apropos of Rodney, I shall be glad, wife, when he is settled; for a youth is restless, and impatient of control, when fired by Cupid and by early manhood."

The woman said: "What will you do for him, if he should marry?"

"The wooded lot, on which we are planning to erect a house during the summer, is eligible for a newly married couple," replied her husband. "You remember your saying of the other day, that a young man with a young, healthy wife should be willing to carve for himself a home from primeval nature. Let our son perform the dictum of his mother."

The dame vouchsafed no reply, but sat looking into her lap and futurity, whereupon her husband continued: "But of our children whom relentless Hymen has beguiled from their home, I miss most our daughter, our dark-eyed Susan. During the entire course of her maidenly years, and after she became a woman, she responded with alacrity to the demands of affection and duty. It is sad, Arletta, that our children, in going from us, take with them the life of their parents. But we, my wife, will never separate, never part; and our youth remains still, for love can not grow old."

The woman responded with a tear on either cheek. The husband saw them glistening in the lamplite, assumed a sitting posture, and bending forward kissed the descending drops away. The many which began to follow their benighted predecessors were checked by a handkerchief, and by a sound of steps in another room. Presently a door in that direction opened, a man, a woman and a girl entered the diningroom, and the marital *tete-a-tete* shrank into the silent past.

SECTION 2.

On the following day a woman was sitting in a parlor, on a sofa, while at the organ a man and woman were singing. The words they sang at this point, were as follows: