

RODNEY AND FRANCES.*

CHAPTER I.

Rodney's parents discuss his prospects with Frances 2. The latter receives and declines a proposal 3. The parents of Frances express anxiety for the future of their daughter—4. Who, during that evening, confers the promise of her hand to Rodney—5. Relating the incident to her grandmother when she reaches home.

SECTION 1.

During a certain evening in winter, a woman was sitting in the dining room of her home, and was speaking as follows, to a man who lay on a lounge nearer the stove: "You take a peculiar stand in regard to clergymen, Henry, in allowing to them the rite of voting. A measure of such kind could only produce strife in the various circuits."

"I do not originate the plea," replied the man; "I simply approve the agitation it is receiving in other quarters."

"What can you adduce in support?" inquired the woman.

The man replied: "The clergyman falls into that general class to whom is extended the franchise by Laurier's ministry. He is over twenty-one, and a British subject."

"But it would be prejudicial to the harmony of a congregation," rejoined the woman, "if, the flame of partial spirit existing latent there, a minister became prominent on one side to the disparagement of the other."

The man replied again: "The flame of partial spirit should be extinct. Therein lies the force of the argument. It is conceded by many of the present day, that partyism should die, and that the puerile and vituperative editorials propagated by partial organs, should give place to unbiased reports of the doings of government."

"But they say that the governmental members need a check, an opposition," returned the woman.

The man answered by saying: "That, Arletta, is the best argument for partial government; but people are now showing it to be fallacious and untenable. The house of commons should be of one party. Members are sent to parliament to promote the weal of a country, and not of a party. Only when the specious claims of partyism are annulled, will the electors in constituencies begin to vote on the ground of merit. Any body of men can be ruled, can be restrained, by its majority. Why should there be a party in parliament to oppose systematically the ministerial designs, tho these be obviously for the public good?"

*In the relation of this story, it will be observed that *gh* and *ph* are elided from words wherein they are silent; and when having the sound of *f*, are replaced by that letter. Thus, "da^{gh}ter" gives "da^fter"; "gh^t" gives "rit," which is lengthened by a final "e" to "rite"; "tho^{gh}" gives "tho," by throwing away the superfluous "u"; etc.