

"Go on, go on!" cried Corentin; "life is full of stranger things than that: you will find the explanation lower: our correspondents—it's one of their defects—are too fond of flooding us with details: they are always over careful in dotting their *i's*."

The man Henri went on:

The Thuilliers, some time ago, left here to return to their Latin quarter. Mademoiselle Brigitte never really liked our sphere; her total lack of education made her uncomfortable. Because I spoke correctly she dubbed me "the orator," and her porter she disliked, because, being sexton at the Madeleine church, he has some manners; she even complained of the market-people in the market at the rear of the church, and said they gave themselves "capable" airs, because they are not so coarse-tongued as those of the Halle, and laughed when she tried to beat down their prices. She has let her house now to an ugly man with only half a nose, one Cérizet, who pays a rent of fifty-five thousand francs. This leaseholder seems to know his road about; he has just married an actress at a minor theatre and was about to occupy this floor, using it also as offices for a company issuing policies for marriage-portions, when Monsieur Picot, arriving from England with his wife, a very wealthy Englishwoman, saw the suite of rooms and offered so large a rental that Monsieur Cérizet felt constrained to accept it. It was then that being introduced by Monsieur Pascal, the janitor, with whom I was in friendly relations, I took service with Monsieur Picot.

"Monsieur Picot, married to a very rich Englishwoman," said la Peyrade, again interrupting himself; "it is inconceivable!"

"Read on," said Corentin; "you will comprehend later."

The fortune of my new master is quite a history, and I speak of it to Monsieur the Chief because of another person in whose marriage Madame de Godollo was mixed up,—a Monsieur Félix Phellion, the inventor of a star,—who in despair at not being able to marry that demoiselle whom they wanted to give to Monsieur la Peyrade, of whom Madame de Godollo made such an ass—