

tion. Firkins of butter, stores of cheese would accumulate in his cellars; home-made cloth and linen in his cupboards, and when he would return from his farm labors, hungry and tired, tempting, well prepared meals would await him. Yes, it would be very pleasant for him, but would it be so for his wife, who would pass the hours of his absence in shrinking from the constant supervision his sister would exercise over every thing and every person around her? How miserable, how mortified would she feel, brought perpetually into such vivid contrast with the skilful, energetic Madame Chartrand; made to feel so keenly her inferiority on all the points in which the other excelled.

No, he had no right to risk his wife's happiness by bringing a third party to dwell beneath his roof, and in a kind, though firm tone, he rejoined:

"Thank you, Francoise, for your kind offer, the prompting I know of a good heart, but I think it better that I and my little Genevieve should rough it alone. Troubles we will have, I suppose, like most married people, but we must try to bear them patiently; and if Genevieve is wanting in some things, she possesses, at least, a gentle, affectionate nature, and a loving heart."

"'Tis finally settled then, Paul?"

"Yes; you are not angry?"

"No. Do you not think I have better sense than that? But I must leave to-morrow. I could not endure, any longer, the trials to which both my temper and my patience are continually exposed in this house. Between Genevieve's indifference, and the shameless negligence of her two lazy girls, I would be worried to death before a fortnight, debarred as I would be from trying to set things right. Why, they have almost made me lose sight of my poor dead husband, and of that decent grief, which, as a respectable widow, I am bound to feel. I will go to my room now, and read some prayers, for I missed vespers this holy Sunday to have a talk with you."

She left the room, and Paul lapsed into a brown study, from which he was at length roused by the entrance of his wife.

"Come here, Genevieve."

She obeyed, and passing his arm around her, he said, looking earnestly into her face: My sister wishes to come to live with us; she will take all the charge of the house-keeping into her hands."

The bride's pale cheek slightly reddened, her lip quivered, but with an effort of self-control she quietly answered: "Of course, Paul, if you wish it."

"No, my little wife. It shall not be. No one shall come between you and I; and we'll struggle through our troubles unhelped. I have already told sister Fran-

coise so, and the blame of refusal will rest entirely with myself."

How eloquently the lustrous brown eyes thanked him, how tenderly the small fingers closed on his own, reconciling him in their mute expression of affection to the many shortcomings that Mrs. Chartrand had so pitilessly laid before him. The latter kept her resolution of taking an early leave, and the following morning, whilst sunrise was still flushing the east, mounted into the comfortable little spring cart in which her brother was to drive her back to her own abode. If Paul had felt any qualms of conscience for his refusal of her kindly intended offer, the sight of her plump, portly figure, and full, ruddy cheeks, which he inwardly contrasted with his wife's frail little frame and delicate face, fully reconciled him to the past.

After Mrs. Chartrand's visit, one of the incapables was dismissed, and a substitute procured in the shape of a rare housekeeper, who could do everything almost as well as Mrs. Chartrand herself. But, alas! she had a terrible temper, and would pounce like a tigress on that innocent lamb, her mistress, without the slightest provocation. Knowing her value, Genevieve bore everything patiently; but one afternoon that Marie was venting her constitutional ill-temper in sundry insolent remarks as to what some people were sent into the world for, when they were not able to even help a poor, over-worked servant with a churning, or a baking, her master, whom she supposed busy in the farm-yard, entered unperceived, and after listening a moment to her angry diatribes, laid his hand on her shoulder, and ordered her at once to pack up and "go."

Of course there was a storm afterwards, and Genevieve, securely shut up in her room, listened in nervous alarm to the uproar going on outside, the rattling of crockery, the warlike clashing of knives, and the spasmodic movements of chairs, benches, pails, kicked over in turn. It subsided, however, in time, and husband and wife felt equally relieved when the door closed upon their skilful but redoubtable "help;" Paul devoutly, though somewhat obscurely, thanking Providence "that they would have peace now, even though they should soon be again in the midst of chaos," referring probably to the general irregularity and confusion from which Marie's activity had dragged the household.

CHAPTER III.

Company still continued to come and go at Mr. de Courval's; for the month of October, with its brightly tinted woods and hazy amber sky, without speaking of the excel-