

for him. I should make him feel at home, and on equal terms in short, and then I should say something like this : ‘ You are a nice young man, as my daughter thinks, and as I for my part have no reason to doubt. But daughters, my young friend, are rather expensive articles.’ ”

“ Ah, you would go into the question of her settlements at once, would you ? ” inquired the colonel.

“ Not at all, Juxon, not at all,” answered the other with a wave of his huge palm ; “ that would, of course, have to be arranged by the lawyers. What would have to be settled in the first place would be how much the young gentleman was prepared to give *me*.”

“ What, as commission on the transaction ? By gad, that’s a good idea ! ” cried the colonel, slapping his thigh and laughing heartily.

“ Not at all, Juxon, not at all ; you go too fast,” pursued the commissary, gravely. “ I don’t think a father should take anything in that way, and I should only stand out for my rights as a father. ‘ Here is this young lady,’ I should say, ‘ a prize in the matrimonial lottery, indeed, my dear young friend, but who has cost me much in the rearing. You see her in a state of perfection : a state, let me tell you, that is not attained for nothing, and up to this moment she has been entirely unremunerative to me. Before I can enter into any preliminaries, therefore, on her account, my own just expectations must be satisfied. I must have—say a thousand pounds down on the nail, to recoup me for expenses.’ ”

“ You are a devilish sharp fellow, Sandy,” said the colonel, admiringly. “ Your notion is altogether good, though it smacks a little of the savage, don’t it ? You and I have been in places, for instance, where a young woman’s father had to be recompensed with a cow or a pig, or even a string of beads, before she was allowed to change hands, eh ? ” and the colonel dug his companion playfully in the ribs, as though with significant reference to some particular transaction of this nature.

“ Tut, tut ; one may learn of everybody,” said the commissary. “ There’s worse people than savages in this world.”

“ That’s true, Sandy, so long as you and your likes are in it,” responded the other, frankly. “ So, that’s what you would say to this young Landon, is it, if the matter really comes to any head—you would make it a question of compensation ? ”

“ I would make it such a question, undoubtedly,” replied the commissary. “ I should be a fool to do otherwise. But I don’t say that you should make it so. You have not the feelings of a father—how should you have—since you have never had his expenses ? Miss Ella is but your sister’s daughter——”