

could ever force the Count's consent to his son's union, with the daughter of an upstart peasant like Mathieu Durand.

Arthur had good reason to consider this decision as irrevocable, for on the morrow he received an order from his father to set out for London; and he left Paris under the full impression, that this removal was intended to separate him from Delphine, without reflecting that it might be still more to prevent his meeting again with M. Felix.

CHAPTER V.

It is not to be supposed that this repugnance of the Count de Lozeraie was the only obstacle, that opposed itself to the union of Arthur de Lozeraie with the fair, but self-willed Delphine Durand; and indeed it is to be doubted whether one so mild and unromantic as Arthur, would have long retained his hold upon the affections of so volatile and capricious a young lady, had not a piquancy been given to the affair, by the unusually firm and decided refusal of her father to sanction it. In fact, weak and yielding as Mathieu Durand generally was to his daughter's wishes, he, in this instance, shewed himself inflexible. In vain did she assure him that she would die of despair, if she did not become the wife of Arthur; in vain was she seized with repeated and violent hysterics; nothing touched the banker. And yet Delphine had played her part pretty well. She had driven her two waiting women from the room,—turned her drawing master out of doors—thrown the music in the face of her music master—returned three hats to Mademoiselle Alexandrine, the most skilful milliner in Paris;—torn a dozen dresses, and broken a number of pretty little nic-nacs; but still these interesting demonstrations of her profound grief had found M. Durand inexorable, with regard to M. de Lozeraie.

"Is it his title that attracts you?" said he to his daughter. "If you wish it, I will marry you to a marquis or a duke."

"I wish to be Arthur's wife and nothing else," replied she.

"But," resumed M. Durand, "this M. de Lozeraie is a mushroom Count, doubtless the intriguing son of some bailiff, who has stolen the titles which he wears."

"But are you not the son of a peasant, yourself, papa?" cried Delphine; "you say so to every body."

"Oh! that is quite a different thing, Delphine," said the banker, with ill concealed

rage. "As for me, I boast of it—I glory in it—I am proud of it."

Delphine could not understand the species of pride that urged M. Durand continually to say that he was a man of the people, and yet to feel hurt whenever any one else attributed that station to him; so she did not dispute the propriety of the distinction established by her father, but returned to her original assertion, that she would die if she did not become Arthur's wife.

This humour lasted eight days, at the end of which time she learnt that Arthur had set out for London. From what has been already seen of Delphine's character, it will be easily imagined that her vanity was greatly humbled by this discovery. To say the truth, she had felt astonished and disappointed during the eight days that she had not met Arthur scaling the walls of the park, seducing one of the gardeners, or at least, bribing a chambermaid to gain access to her; proposing to carry her off in a postchaise, and threatening to kill himself at her feet if she did not comply with his wishes. As the blindness of self-love attributed to affection all the silly demonstrations she had made in favour of Arthur, she had not the least doubt but that the passion of a man, especially one inspired by her, would go much farther.—Cruel then was the disenchantment occasioned to her by Arthur's departure.

The rage and indignation felt by Delphine on this occasion would, one would suppose, have brought her demonstrations of a fictitious, or at least an exaggerated grief, to a sudden termination; but to confess to her father that she cared no more for Arthur de Lozeraie, would have been to confess that she was in the wrong; she therefore persisted in repeating as before, "I will have Arthur or death."

She had for some time given up the idea of succeeding in obtaining her father's consent, yet she obtained one kind of success which pleased her, and induced her to protract the game; for she chagrined her father, and alarmed the whole house. They watched all her actions—followed her in her walks—trembled if they saw her examine a knife or look out of a window high from the ground, all which pleased Mademoiselle Durand's vanity, and so worried her father, who became seriously alarmed at his daughter's pertinacity, that, after three months, he began to find his antipathy for M. de Lozeraie yielding before his anxiety for his daughter. An interview, however, which took place at this juncture, between him and the Count, under the following