

"No fear of that, Marion dear. In the first place, no one would ever think of asking me; I am not good enough for such exalted duties; and in the second place, I wouldn't go if I were asked. I know too much, from what I have seen and heard, of the trials and privations of ministers' wives, and of ministers too. I honour them for their courage, but, I confess, I could not muster enthusiasm enough to share their lot."

"Well, I am sure *I* shouldn't, at all events. It never would suit my fashionable tastes and expensive habits. I mean to marry a fortune some of these days, even if I have to take its owner thrown in."

"Why, Marion, how mercenary you are. I declare, if I didn't know that you are only joking, I would be ashamed of you."

Thus chatted two young lady friends as they sat in a cosy parlour in one of our Canadian cities, discussing the approaching Methodist Conference. The advent of several hundred Methodist ministers is always an event of considerable social importance. Many are the deep counsellings of anxious matrons "on hospitable thoughts intent," in providing for the physical comforts of their guests. And in the ranks of young ladydom scarce less solicitude is manifested in garnishing parlours and chambers with those last touches of female taste which impart such an air of poetic refinement to our homes; and, perhaps it must be added, in the preparation of neat and elegant toilets for the reception of their visitors, who are often quite unconscious of the amount of thought and labour expended for their gratification.

II.

The next interview of our young friends was some weeks after the Conference, with its numerous business sessions, its interesting religious services, and its pleasant interchange of social amenities, had passed away.

"Well, you have survived the Conference, I see," remarked the vivacious Marion.

"Yes," replied the quieter Ethel, "and an exceedingly enjoyable time we all found it."

"I should have thought it must have been dreadfully dull with