what of that, when he gives her a position, and he so charming with women, too."

"And is she young? What is her name, Madame?"

"Oh, she calls herself Adele Metz—quelle horreur de nom!—and she has thirty-one years; not young at all. As though I would pension her for marrying my brother, that vraie perle! Why, a lady asked me yesterday if I had found someone for him, and added, 'If not, I will gladly give you my eldest daughter.' O Madame," I replied at once, "she would not do at all; she is trop evaporation."

"And was your interview with Madame Fontaine agreeable?"

"Oh, sufficiently. In our marriages, mademoiselle, one is not supposed to see the persons to be married; one speaks with the parents, the uncles, the sisters. This is wholly agreeable and proper. I praised my brother, and Madame Fontaine she praised Mademoiselle Metz, and, finally, I found that she was saying quite too much for her parti, and I said, 'Frankly, Madame, this would be a great match for Mademoiselle; my brother has a certain position to offer.' 'And the hard life and the difference in age!' cried Madame Fontaine. 'Your friend should have thought of this,' I answered very stiffly, 'since it is she who has proposed the marriage. My brother, poor man, has never even heard her name.'"

"And is that so, really?" I ask.

"Oh, no, Mademoiselle; he met her once in a shop, but I found it necessary to say that."

"And then, Madame? Pardon my interruption."

"Well, then, we grew quite warm, and finally in burst Mademoiselle Metz herself, who had evidently been listening at the door. My arms dropped stiff. I rose at once, and saying, 'As I see, Madame, that our conversation is quite at an end, I will wish you a very good morning.' And then that creature, who is so determined to get my poor brother, she rushes after me into the street and demands a pension."

"Is she pretty, Madame?"

"Pretty! All of one color; a true Anglaise. I hate those light eyes and white lashes—so false et si villain!" Madame shuddered.

"And so the marriage is broken off?"

"Not at all, chere demoiselle; this is only business, and that is more poetic. She would not be 'trop mal' for a cafe. She is tall and distingué" (meditatively). "O, I presume it will arrange itself. She is going to England for awhile; from there she will probably write me."

After this, long weeks passed with no news from A. Metz. Madame was puzzled. At length came a letter thus conceived: "My dear Madame: Having well reflected upon our conversation, I find myself able to agree with you on all points, and am happy to allow Monsieur, your brother, to address me by letter. In awaiting which I am, with sentiments of the most profound esteem, your obedient servant, A. Metz."

"Not too charming, this letter," cried Madame, with her musical laugh. "However, the affair arranges itself, so now I must see if my brother will answer it."

"But if he will not?"

"Oh, tres bien, then I shall write myself!"

"I know you very capable, Madame; but when it comes to writing a love-letter—"

"Ah, well; perhaps he will do it."

But although willing to be led like an aged lamb to the hymeneal altar, the "true pearl" absolutely refused to lend a helping hand. "Write it yourself, if you wish it written!" he cried, bending with tender pride over a breaded riz de veau. "I married to suit myself once, and now," carefully squeezing a lemon over its brown sides,—"now"—and he flung away the crumpled peel, "it is you who are choosing the woman."

"And so you write the love-letter, poor Madame?" I say, after hearing of the brother's determined attitude.