

"He has gone on a visit to Susan. You know she has remained at her sister's cottage all this time."

"Oh, I know that ! I have written to her often. Dear Susan, I long to see her again !"

So when they pulled up at the gates and Susan and the faithful dog came out to welcome their young mistress, she was so overcome that she could hardly see, and the fresh curtains and blinds at the windows did not attract her attention. She was drawn into the cosy sitting-room by Joyce, and the whole thing, the delightful welcome, which seemed perfected by the sight of the dear, familiar furniture and pictures, quite overpowered her.

Aunt Agnes, too, was happy for Mary's sake. Yet how she yearned for the presence of those dear ones from whom she had once alienated herself ! She put these thoughts resolutely aside, however, and added her thanks to those of Mary.

"And that was why you would not let me go upstairs into the attic, Joyce ?"

"Yes ; I wanted to surprise you, dear. And here comes Mrs. Gray. She helped me right well. To tell the truth, she is longing to know that Mrs. Seymour and you will really make your home here soon."

Mary had longed and yet dreaded to settle with her aunt at Wolfcote. And now that it looked so cosy, so inviting, and especially when Gerald's mother joined her entreaties to those of Joyce, Mary gave way to what had been her aunt's wish from the first, that they should repair the old house and settle down in it together.

"I have never known what it was to have a quiet resting-place, dear, with someone to care for, someone who could love me, too. I could be very happy here."

"What about Parls, Joyce ?" asked Mary, when the two were alone in her own room.

"I mean to go some time. That affair is still on, although a delay has evidently occurred from some cause or other. The person is away from Highborough again for a time. We shall see."

"I might persuade Aunt Agnes to go there and to let me study with you for a few months later in the year. I may wish to be away from Wolfcote for a while."

"That would be delightful ! I must say, dear, your career in art, so far, like that of Gerald's in South Africa, has been cut rather short."

So Mrs. Seymour and her niece settled down in the old home, to the great joy of the scattered small farmers and the cottagers in their vicinity.

Like all those who have lived in the colonies, Aunt Agnes felt that a horse was one of the necessities of life. She bought two, one for herself and one for Mary, and they rode together in every direction. She declared that she felt quite young again, and indeed one would have