

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

no bother you for verra lang. But I'll no gang on the parish," she said in a passionless voice, "I'll no gang on the parish.—I'm Miss Richmond o' Tenshill-land."

She had no interest in her own suggestion. It was an idea that had flitted through her mind before, which came back to her now in feeble recollection. She seemed not to wait for an answer, to have forgotten what she said.

"Oh, mother," cried Janet, "there's a curse on us all! I would work my fingers raw for ye if I could, but I canna," she screamed, "I canna, I canna! My lungs are bye wi't. On Tuesday in Skeighan the doctor telled me I would soon be' deid—he didna say't, but fine I saw what he was hinting. He advised me to gang to Ventnor in the Isle o' Wight," she added wanly, "as if I could gang to the Isle o' Wight. I cam hame trembling and wanted to tell ye, but when I cam in ye were ta'en up wi' John, and, 'Oh, lassie,' said you, 'dinna bother me wi' your complaints enow.' I was hurt at that, and 'Well, well,' I thoct, 'if she doesna want to hear, I'll no tell her!' I was huffed at ye. And then my faither came in, and ye ken what happened. I hadna the heart to speak o't after that; I didna seem to care. I ken what it is to nurse daith in my breist wi' pride, too, mother," she went on. "Ye never cared verra much for me, it was John was your favourite. I used to be angry because you neglected my illness, and I never telled you how heavily I hoasted blood. 'She'll be sorry for this when I'm deid,' I used to think—and I hoped you would be. I had a kind of pride in saying nothing. But, oh, mother, I didna ken *you* were just the same, I