

sounds. But he found it dull, very dull. Accustomed to active work, a strict officer, and a man who went into the smallest details about everything, he did not know what to do with his time in this quiet place.

"A confounded gossiping place, too," the Colonel designated Headfort, before he had been there a couple of months. The Forths were indeed naturally much talked of; the girls were handsome, and there were other girls who were ready to fling a stone at their new neighbors and wonder what people saw in them to admire.

"But then the old Colonel is always running after the men, and asking them to the house," they would say; and they thus accounted for the fact that the officers of the garrison were very frequently to be seen in Miss Forth's pretty drawing-room. For it was pretty, though Miss Hilliard, the banker's daughter, wondered how they could contrive to turn round in it. But Miss Hilliard lived in one of the big houses of Headfort, and naturally looked down on the dimensions of Colonel Forth's small one.

But in the meanwhile, Susan, the young housemaid of the establishment, having by the Colonel's command rapped at Miss Ruth's door, now returned to the dining-room, where her master sat fuming.

"Oh, please, sir, Miss Ruth said I was to say she would be down directly; but she has been so put about by the thunder; and, please, sir, she sent the key, and said you were to make tea, and not to wait."

"To wait! No, I should think not. Confound it," roared the Colonel, his red face turning to a vermilion tint as he snatched the key of the tea caddy from Susan's hand; and while he was proceeding to make tea for himself his youngest daughter walked into the room in a white dressing-gown, with her soft, pretty light-brown hair rolled up in a somewhat disorderly knot at the top of her head.

"I am sorry I am late, father," she said, in a sweet low-toned voice; "but the storm last night frightened me so."

"Absurd! Why should the storm frighten you? Ruth, is there no bacon, or eggs, or something fit to eat? Or am I expected to breakfast on dry bread?"

"I will see about it," answered Ruth, and she went into the kitchen to order her father's breakfast, and after a little while the Colonel was able to appease his appetite; paus-