

"Peace be still"; and the great calm should follow. Already, as he knelt in prayer, and laid bare his soul, with all its burden of anguish, at the Feet of the

Crucified, he could feel the first semblance of that calm in his heart.

But Guy's ground of hope was the more secure.

CHAPTER X.

CHOOSING A HELPMATE.



It was utterly impossible, at that season of the year, when the organisation of the winter's work must be immediately taken in hand, for Walter Jaxon to remain many days at Shingleby. As impossible did it seem to Mary to stay for long away from her babies, to say nothing of her consideration for the needs of the lads whose Baptism had been, at their own earnest request, postponed until she could be present to witness their profession of faith. Yet how to leave Stella alone with the step-mother who, though she had quickly regained her physical strength, was as far as ever from mental recovery, was a difficult matter.

"Of course you must go home," said Wynne, when one day Mary dropped some hint of her perplexities, "and of course Stella can't be deserted. I shall come and take care of her. I'm sure that Mrs. Brookes needs a nurse.

And I shall bargain with Stella to keep three cakes always on the go."

Mrs. Jaxon's troubled face cleared a little, though she looked doubtful.

"But you haven't been your full time at the hospital," she remarked. "Even if we applied for a nurse they would not send you."

"Try it," nodding significantly. "You see," she went on, in her most confidential tone, "I'm a trouble just now. People," her eyes filling, "are not all as kind as they might be, though some are very good. Then, too, it isn't the invariable custom to keep a nurse from outside work until she is fully qualified. Do just as you like, of course, and don't move in the affair so far as I am concerned if you'd rather have some one more aged and experienced. But—"

"I'd prefer you to anybody," declared her friend, with sincerity.

"Then, as I said before, try!"

And having taken the advice, and succeeded in obtaining the services of "Nurse Wynne," Mrs. Jaxon set about the preparations for her return with a relieved heart. How she yearned to kiss and hug those pretty, small morsels of humanity from whom she had never before been parted, and who were themselves longing for "mummy," only her motherly heart could tell.

"Of course Walter and I will come down again at any time, if you need us," said Mary to Stella upon the morning of departure. "And perhaps," pointedly addressing Wynne, "Harry may run over before long. I'm not good at law matters, and don't know whether the people who have offered bail have to turn up occasionally or not."

"Dr. Jaxon said something about being here whenever the trial came on. But, of course, at present nobody can tell when that will be," said Wynne, trying to speak carelessly, and to disregard the burning sensation in her own cheeks. "I'm sure nobody could have been kinder than your husband—and Dr. Jaxon, too, especially as he had never even met Guy before he saw him in the police-court."

But Mrs. Jaxon murmured something about wishing that both she and Walter could have done more, or helped Guy out of any of his tribulations by a longer stay in Shingleby. Then the cab arrived, and there was a loud call for "Mary." She went out into the hall, followed by the girls.

"I must say good-bye to the poor old mother," she exclaimed. "Give me two minutes, Walter."

She ran upstairs to the sitting-room which had, since her seizure, been