

for of course you can't take her on visits to your friends, and she would be dreadfully dull if you left her at home, alone!

'Quite so, Mrs Jocelyn,' replied an elderly gentleman beside her, to whom her remarks had been addressed, and who might have sat for a type of the old fashioned family lawyer; 'the circumstances are indeed most deplorable. My good friend Mr Howard seemed good for many years. Doubtless he thought so himself, and postponed making any special provision for his niece. And of course the present *denouement* was so unexpected, for, by all the laws of probability, this scapegrace of a nephew should have worn himself out long ago!'

'Yes,' remarked an elderly lady, whose lank grey curls shaded a mildly benevolent face of somewhat sentimental expression; 'It *does* seem sad that good and ill should not be better apportioned in this world. To think of that poor prodigal Jack Howard, living on through all his follies, and turning up, *now*, when no one thought of him, to rob poor Ethel of her natural rights! Pity not that cousin Henry hadn't taken *my* advice, and brought her more out into society. Then her future might have been satisfactorily provided for for she really is unusually attractive. But what about that young Fane who used to be down here so much? Cousin Henry seemed to think there was—or would be—something between him and