

NEW CHRONICLES OF REBECCA

bed ; her aunt and her mother were stemming cur-
rants on the side porch.

A blue spot at one of the Perkins window
showed that in one vestal bosom hope was not dead
yet, although it was seven o'clock.

Suddenly there was the sound of a horse's feet
coming up the quiet road ; plainly a steed hired
from some metropolis like Milltown or Wareham
as Riverboro horses when through with their day's
work never disported themselves so gayly.

A little open vehicle came in sight, and in it sat
Abijah Flagg. The wagon was so freshly painted
and so shiny that Rebecca thought that he must
have alighted at the bridge and given it a
polish. The creases in his trousers, too, had an
of having been pressed in only a few minutes be-
fore. The whip was new and had a yellow ribbon
on it ; the gray suit of clothes was new, and the
coat flourished a flower in its button-hole. The
hat was the latest thing in hats, and the intrepid
swain wore a seal-ring on the little finger of his
right hand. As Rebecca remembered that she had
guided it in making capital G's in his copy-book,
she felt positively maternal, although she was two
years younger than Abijah the Brave.

He drove up to the Perkins gate and was so long
about hitching the horse that Rebecca's heart beat
tumultuously at the thought of Emma Jane's heart