

room. "Why, May, crying? What is it, dear?"

The little chest was heaving, and great tears were dropping down upon the white muslin pinafore, as May, between her sobs, brought out her complaint, "May's c'ying 'cos of what Sarah said!"

"Poor pet. Had May been naughty then? Ah, here's Granny to hear too. What did Sarah say, dearie?"

"I don't know," gasped out the small sufferer, between her sobs. "But it was somefin drefful!"

Mary mopped up the tokens of woe, with a smile. They were such sweet silly little things, these bairns of hers, and with all her heart she loved them for their silliness. It was so charming to be able to soothe their fancied griefs, and to see the doleful faces brighten into good humour and happiness again, just as May's did now upon the recommendation that she should help Ivy to open the piano.

"And how have you got on to-day, my dearest?" Walter asked as the children obeyed.

"Oh, I had a good number! The lads seemed so impressed with the idea of the Confirmation, Walter. I am very happy about them. Your classes have done them an immense lot of good, much more than I could have accomplished in a year."

"Who sent them to the classes?" he smiled. "And didn't I see you afterwards coming from O'Hara's cottage?"

"Why, where were you?" in surprise. "There's such a change there. But—oh yes, Ivy, I'll come. Walter, you shall hear the story by-and-by."

She seated herself on the stool and began to run her fingers over the keys. May, listening, with her blonde head on one side, nodded. Her ideas of tune were at present vague.

"That's 'Mary had a little lamb,' movvy," she said at last. "I singed that in church to-day!"

For both the tinies were most regular church-goers, and would on no account have missed the weekly treat. Whether it did them at their age much good, might, however, be open to question, especially after May's information — May, whose baby voice was apt to make itself heard in a sort of droning murmur during psalms and canticles. Until this instant her mother had not suspected that she uttered any words at all.

"But you don't generally sing that?" she said.

"No," from Ivy now. "May gen'ly

sings 'I think when I read' and 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star,' 'cause she told me so. But she thought she'd like a change to-day."

After which, what more was there to say? "With one glance at her husband Mary immediately began to play "There is a green hill far away," and in another second the children's voices were mingling with her own in the sweet strains.

The Confirmation took place next day. It was, for Mr. and Mrs. Jaxon, a happy arrangement, as upon the Tuesday they had promised to journey once more to Shingleby, where Guy was enduring, as best he might, the expectation that any day his trial might take place.

At Kingston Villa matters were not of the brightest. Stella looked weary and anxious; Guy, whenever he appeared, gave an impression of languor and weakness that almost alarmed his friends; whilst Wynne's suspense was obvious, in spite of the fact that her cheerfulness was the one sunny thing about the house. At the source of neither suspense nor cheerfulness, however, did any of the other inmates of the dwelling guess.

"I am thankful you would not let me tell Guy about Mrs. Brookes," the girl remarked one day to Harry. "If the uncertainty as to whether or not she will be able to give evidence is trying to me, it would have been torture to him."

"Exactly my idea," said the doctor. "Glad you agree at last, my dear!" For they had not always been entirely at one upon the matter. Wynne's reply was a laugh and a blush.

It had been one of the earliest pieces of evidence adduced against the so-called Countess Helen Vasco and Caryl Clive, that under these high-sounding titles was disguised the plain name of Smith. As Mr. and Mrs. Smith the police recognised them, husband and wife instead of brother and sister, a couple altogether worthy of each other, and who, for years, had been known at Scotland Yard as a pair of undoubted swindlers, whose cleverness had enabled them to evade the clutches of justice.

The shock to "good society" at Shingleby was indeed severe when the details of those two lives were made public. That they, people who had prided themselves upon their exclusiveness and power of discrimination, should have received and flattered and even run after a sometime tailor, accustomed to pursue his respectable, though not aristocratic, call-