

'Don't fret, darling; the Black Prince and Gelert and Lassie and Dick shall all find quarters at the Stone House. Jack will have his own horses; and, dear, your goodness to my brother almost overwhelms me.'

'You approve then?'

'How can I do otherwise? The place will suit Jack down to the ground; it will give him plenty of scope.'

'Oh, I am so glad!' and Bell-Heather looked like her namesake at that moment, with the soft pink flush in her cheeks. 'They will just live here and be happy; and by and by, if they still like it, we might give it them altogether—not for two or three years perhaps, but when they come back from India.'

'Child—child, what am I to say to you?'

'Only one little word, "Yes"; and, Carus, you know you will never need Many Bushes.'

'Never! You are right there.'

'Well, then, why should you not let poor Mr. Hamill and Pen live in it rent free? You know Christian told us that they were thinking of taking a furnished house, because they had no money to buy furniture; you might give them the furniture as a wedding present, and Christian and I could do the rest. Think how convenient for Mr. Hamill to live next to the church and opposite the Vicarage, and Sheila coming to her lessons every day too. Oh,' drawing a long breath, 'I know you mean to do it, for you are just smiling to yourself as though you loved the idea!'

'I think it is the little idealist I love'; but the rest of Carus's speech need not be quoted.

The result of the conversation was that Jack and Christian were summoned to the library that evening, and Heather's generous proposition laid before them.