

Do you think there's any hope she may return to us after a bit an' say nothin' about it, an' go on waitin', an' bein' as respectful as before ? "

I said I doubted it.

Sophonisba sighed, " Well there's bound to be somethin' disappointin'—if only it had been Gertrude, we'll have to give her notice anyhow, an' it would have saved that ! Anyway what's the good of worryin', he's gone, an' gone for good ! "

It certainly seemed as if he had. Even Percy Kearness could hardly return to Hill Land after twice leaving it under such conspicuous circumstances, to say nothing of the warrant in my drawer.

Then Sophonisba began to want to know how it had happened, and what was going to happen, and said she simply could not rest till she knew, adding, " An' after all he is my uncle ! "

" But how are we to find out ? " I asked helplessly.

" The telescopin' admiral," she said at once. " Run an' fetch him, Edward ! "

So I ran and fetched him, and he was able to supply some information.

It seemed that late last night a cab had drawn up before our gates, and that a tall elegant woman, and a short fat little man, had made fifteen journeys into it, carrying bags and parcels. Then they had caught the midnight train to London, travelling first class.

The admiral ended by thanking me for the great service I had rendered him in opening his eyes to the obsolete pattern he had endured so long, and said he would always consider himself under a special obligation in consequence.

" I couldn't have seen half at the old range," he added.

He went away to keep our secret, and Sophonisba