

of the freshest, and the fried plaice could not have been better.

"We get the fried fish from over the way," said Annie, when she came in to clear the table. "It's the best fish in the neighborhood. They get it fresh from Grimsby every morning, and the fat all comes from Brand's meat factory."

"The fat?" asked Mary wonderingly.

"What they fry it in, miss."

"Do you not fry it at home?" A fried fish shop was unknown in Highborough.

"Oh, no! They sell it opposite. There are penny and twopenny and threepenny bits. The plaice is best."

Noticing a little look of distrust in Mary's face, Annie begged her to go into another room, from which a good view of the "Fish Dinner and Supper Bar," as a big board over the window stated, could be obtained. At little tables a few respectable workmen were evidently enjoying a meal. A nice-looking woman in white apron, bib and oversleeves, was frying busily at the side, and all looked clean and tidy.

"They don't put pieces in the window," said Annie.

"They do it fresh for each customer. And they fry for lots of the real gentry around. Auntie wouldn't have it if she didn't know all about it."

Annie had not been long in London. She was an orphan niece, whom Miss Curtice had adopted, a simple country girl, who, being much alone in the house over the shop, was glad to have the chance of a little talk with someone.

"And that's a hairdresser next door, miss; quite a genteel shop it is. There's everything anybody could want in our street, and a draper just round the corner."

Mary was amused in spite of herself. It was all very strange and funny. She wondered what Joyce Middleton would say when she came to London to visit some relations who lived in a big square not far from Morrison street. The rooms themselves were spotlessly clean and very pleasant-looking. Miss Curtice kept to all her home-like country traditions respecting white counterpanes and window curtains, and the furniture was new and in good taste.

"Auntie never puts a card up in the window," said Annie; "she never takes people she does not know about. We get mostly country friends who come up to see the sights and do a lot of shopping."

They had gone back to the little sitting-room. "Those do not look like country girls," remarked Mary, pointing to some photographs in a long frame on the wall.

Two of these represented a young, pretty woman in theatrical costume, another a girl in the attitude of dancing. The faces of both were refined, and underneath the