

"I shan't give you the chance, Aggie, you can rely upon that."

The squire was fully prepared for the communication which James had to make to him, and, as there were no reasons for waiting, the ceremony took place very shortly afterward. The squire never asked any questions about his nephew. The official report had come home that Lieutenant Horton had died of drowning while under arrest, but the squire forbore all inquiry, and to the end of his life remained in ignorance of the disgraceful circumstances. Perhaps in his heart the news was a relief to him. He had never been fond of Richard as a lad, and his confidence once shaken had never been restored. He had intended to carry out his promise to leave him twenty thousand pounds; but he was well pleased that all that belonged to him should descend to his granddaughter. Mr. Wilks was the only resident at the Hall who ever learned from James the facts of Richard Horton's disgrace. Years afterward a few lines without signature or address came to James from America. The writer said that he was sure that he would be glad to hear that, under a changed name, he was doing very well. "I shall never return to England," he ended, "nor ever forget your kindness and generosity."

The marriage of the young people made but few changes at the Hall. The squire proposed to give Aggie at once a sum which would have purchased an estate in the neighborhood; but he was delighted to find that she and James had made up their minds that the party at the Hall should not be broken up.

"What do you want to send us away for, grandpapa?" she asked. "You three will be happier for having us with you, and James and I will be happier for having you with us. What nonsense to talk about buying another estate! We might get a little house up in London. It would make a change for James and me to spend two or three months every year there, but of course this will be our home."