

find out how she was? He spoke into a tin tube and coming back opened a big book. 'She died yesterday,' he said quite unconcerned. I could not help it, I gave a cry and fainted. As we trudged home in the rain, the woman told me they had buried her.

I had now no home. The landlord fumigated our room with sulphur, took the little furniture for the rent, and got another tenant. Everybody was kind but I knew they had not enough for themselves, and the resolve took shape, that I would go to the parish where my mother was born. Often, when we took a walk on the Green, Sunday evenings, she would point to the hills beyond which her father's home once was, and I came to think of that country-place as one where there was plenty to eat and coals to keep warm. How to get there I tried to plan. I must walk, of course, but how was I to live on the road? I was running messages for the grocer with whom mother had dealt, and he gave me a halfpenny when he had an errand. These I gave to the woman where I slept and who was so kind to me despite her poverty. I was on London street after dark when a gentleman came along. He was half-tipsy. Catching hold of my collar he said if I would lead him to his house he would give me sixpence. He gave me a number in Montieth row. I took his hand, which steadied him a little, and we got along slowly, and were lucky in not meeting a policeman. When we got to the number he gave me, I rang the bell. A man came to the door, who exclaimed, At it again. The gentleman stumbled in and I was going away