

great clearness and precision. In the very middle of a bar, however, the little girl stopped, and darted half-way up the steep bank beside which they were going.

"What in the world is the matter?"

"Primroses—just look!"

Two roots, side by side, nestling in a sort of cleft, as primroses best love to grow, with brave green leaves sheltering several timid little buds, that yet contrived to have a peep at the strange world they had crept into.

"Well, are you going to pick them? Can't you reach? Come down, and I'll get them for you."

"No; I don't want to gather them—only to look. Aren't they pretty, Vaughan?"

"O! all very well—yes, pretty, if you like."

"Don't you like them yourself?"

"Yes, of course—not as you do, though. Flowers are girls' things; I'm not a girl."

"Well, but——" began Caroline, meditatively. However, her objection remained unuttered.

Vaughan commenced whistling shrilly, and walked on at an increased pace. Presently Caroline resumed her song. Her careless trill sounded pleasantly and joyously on the quiet.

"'Miron-ton, miron-ton, miron-taine,'"

sang she, while Vaughan tried under his breath to imitate the pretty French accents which flowed so easily over her red lips.

"Caroline," he interrupted at length, "how is it you never talk French now? I suppose you can speak it just as well as English, can't you? When you first came to Redwood, you talked English with an accent, like a French child——"

"Did I?" said she, with a sudden sadness. The sunshine went out of her face; the ready tears gathered in the large, steady eyes. "I don't like," she faltered; "it hurts me—a little—talking French—because—mamma—before mamma died——"

And there her voice fell, and a very courageous effort was made to keep back more tears.

"O," Vaughan replied, with a clumsy endeavour at a consoling tone, "that's more than a year ago. Now, you know——" He stopped, feeling boyishly awkward, probably, for sympathy is very nearly the rarest of masculine characteristics, and even in the kindest soils seldom reaches the