

took off the sharp edge of loneliness : it built up a strong and lasting bond of love between them.

In the course of the afternoon Sir Thomas Matheson called again, but when he heard that Mrs. Ambrose was with Mrs. Cheston he did not go up : he only sent a message to say that he left his love and hoped Mrs. Cheston was feeling better.

It was from Payne that Olivia Mary heard much later the news that her son had come back to the house and intended sleeping there. The woman's heart which had been beating in such a dull heavy fashion began to throb unevenly, and she trembled every now and then.

"He said I wasn't to tell you, but he's got an awful headache and he's met with a little accident to-day. His cab ran into another cab. Mr. John's arm and hand are hurt a bit, but he's not badly hurt. I'd tell you if he was," said Payne.

Her mistress said nothing. She let the maid wait upon her, do her hair and generally prepare her for the night, and then she dismissed her ; but after she had gone Payne came back again and she brought with her a little note.

"From Sir Thomas," she said.

Olivia Mary sat a long while with the letter unopened in her hand ; she was frightened to read what her friend had written. When at last she brought herself to do this she found a most matter-of-fact and kindly letter.

"You'll hear, of course, that Jack has had a little accident. It is nothing serious. Don't worry about it. He came on here after he had had the hand dressed and I thought it wiser that he should telegraph to York and say he would not return just for the moment, giving