

"Oh! never you mind that," replied her husband, "I feel as much at home here as though I had been in it for years. And, besides, I'm going to take Dick to see an old friend of mine, Jack Lucas, you remember, who lives about two miles from here, as Ransom tells me. So don't mind us—we're all right."

"God bless you, Jasper," cried the so long brow-beaten wife in a burst of joy and gratitude. "If you only knew how it lightens my heart to hear you talk like that! It almost makes me feel young again."

"Well! well! say no more about it, Lennie! It's a long lane has no turn. You've been travelling a pretty hard road, little woman; but maybe the worst is past. Who knows?"

Mrs. Williams could hardly believe her ears, but she made no further remark, well content with the point she had gained.

#### IV.

The days passed rapidly at Elm Grove, for, as Moore once sang--

"—Never does Time travel faster  
That when his way lies among flowers."

All too soon the visit of the Williams family came to a close. They set out on a bright sunny morning for their distant home, cheered by a promise from the Ransoms to return the visit in the early autumn. Some whispered words were exchanged between the two matrons while the men were occupied about the preparations for departure.

"Thank God and you, my dear Elizabeth," said Mrs. Williams, "a blessed change has already come for me and the girls. Jasper seems a different man of late, and my boy is more gentle and submissive. What a relief it is to me!"