

should like it very much. I have often wished I had had a little sister, and she can go out walks with me, you know; it would be like having a big dog with one, only much jollier."

"Yes," his mother said smiling; "and I shouldn't be surprised if you wanted to throw sticks into the water for her to fetch them out, and to be taking her out for a night's fishing, and be constantly bringing her home splashed with that nasty red mud from head to foot. You would be a nice playmate for a little girl, Jim. Perhaps it is that special advantage that the sergeant had in his mind's eye when he was so anxious to put her with me."

James laughed.

"I would see that she didn't come to any harm anyhow, you know; and, after all, I suppose it was my picking her out of the sea that had something to do with his first thinking of putting her with you."

"I suppose it had, Jim," she said more seriously. "But what do you think, my boy? You know there are disadvantages in it. There will be a good deal of talk about my taking this showman's grandchild, and some of the farmers' wives won't like it."

"Then let them dislike it," James said indignantly. "The child is as good as their daughters any day. Why, I noticed her in church looking like a little lady. There was not a child there to compare to her."

"Yes, I have noticed her myself," Mrs. Walsham said. "She is a singularly pretty and graceful child; but it will certainly cause remark."

"Well, mother, you can easily say, what is really the fact, that you naturally felt an interest in her because I picked her out of the water. Besides, if people make remarks they will soon be tired of that; and if not, I can get into some scrape or other and give them something else to talk about."