

pictures, indifferently packed and tied round with rope-line, were placed against the hat-rack. One, from the corner of the frame which was uncovered, I knew to be the oil-painting of my father and mother; and the other, from the new brilliancy of the gold, I recognised as Désirée's painting of Nith Bridge. Nathan's old hazel walking-stick, which daily he carried to his work, was lying along the top of the carpet-bag, tied securely to the leather handles.

'Désirée, my dear,' I said, with a happy flutter in my heart, 'I do believe Betty's come back.'

She looked at me with a wondering smile on her face, as much as to say, 'Too good to be true;' and, acting on a common impulse, we rushed upstairs like expectant bairns.

There, in the little room facing southward, which we already called Betty's room, on a low chair before an empty fireplace, sat the dear old soul with her chin on her breast and fast asleep. Her bonnet-strings were loosened and lay over her shoulder, and her hands were tucked underneath a Paisley shawl, which was folded across her knees.

We tiptoed in and stood quietly beside her, Désirée on her right and I on her left. Slowly she opened two wondering eyes, and with a