

utterly impossible to dance on them," chimes in Letty, our beauty, "and anyway, we never could have anything like a party in these little rooms; the drawing-rooms in the new house are something sensible."

Tom gives a contemptuous sniff, and observes that Letty's chief aim and end in life is to swell it round at parties. Letty's remarks jar upon Tom, for he is sorry to leave the old house. This big brother of ours is just at that age when any little sentiment a boy may happen to have begins to develop itself. The old house has been a sort of little terrestrial paradise to him ever since Cousin Hetty glorified it with her presence in the early summer. He likes to loiter round the verandah in the evenings, calling back the tender little scenes that have been enacted there, and fancying that the ivy leaves and honeysuckles whisper the very same things to each other they did on those happy June nights, and now he is going to leave everything that speaks to him of Hetty, and go off to that stuck-up big house on the hill. But as Tom wanders disconsolately through the dear old rooms, he resolves that he will spend a good many of his evenings under the honeysuckle and ivy on the old verandah.

"Where is Meta?" asks mamma.

"Up-stairs, I think," says Sara, "but I must take a long, last look at these musty old rooms, and run-up to the new house to see about tea." So she trips off briskly, and Letty follows, for she doesn't see the use of "mooning" around here any longer. Tom takes a stroll into the kitchen, where he and Hetty used to tease busy little Sara when she was deep in the mysteries of delicious pies and cakes. Mamma and papa go up the crooked little stairs, for they have a foolish notion that the old rooms up there will feel neglected if they leave them

without saying "good-bye." They pause at the head of the stair and look wonderingly at one another, for they hear low sobs coming from one of the rooms. On going softly to the door they find Meta sitting on an old box, crying bitterly. Poor little Meta! There she has been sitting for nearly half-an-hour, trying hard to reconcile herself to leaving her old home. She has been so fond of it, and it has been so mixed up with all her joys and sorrows, that she feels as if she were parting with some dear old friend. Meta doesn't make many friends; she is such an odd little thing,—full of queer dreams and fancies,—perhaps that is why she becomes so fond of the lifeless things about her. This room, above all, is sacred to her, for it was here that dear brother Charlie died,—the brother we all loved so dearly, and that Meta worshipped with the whole strength of her tender little heart. He was her hero, her ideal of all that was manly and good, and since he died we have never heard her speak his name; but often, often we have heard her steal from her room when she thought we were all asleep, and, throwing herself down by his bed, she would sob as if she had lost all that made life precious to her. Now everything is gone that was once Charlie's, but still Meta clings to the old room where she last saw him. Papa's spectacles grow dim, and tears come to mamma's gentle eyes. They move quietly away to wait in another room till they hear Meta go swiftly down the stair, and, from the window, see her fly across the lawn.

After standing a moment at Charlie's door, they pass silently down stairs, and, shutting the front door softly behind them, they leave the dear old house all alone with the sad twilight falling around it, and hiding it from their tear-dimmed eyes.