

ly up into Gerald's eyes, although she trembled under the gaze which she felt, although she could not meet it.

And so the two friends parted.

If she really cared for me as I do for her," said the inexperienced young man, "she would have given me some little sign."

A week later the war with the Boers broke out, and Mrs. Gray would have given much to get Gerald to change his plans. This, however, he would not hear of. For two years he had been an ardent volunteer, and the spirit of adventure was stirred within him. And he might wait long, as he told his mother, before he had such good chances as seemed his at present.

So all thoughts of making any definite proposal to Mary were effectually driven aside. His mother now wrote to Dr. Middleton that she should go to spend the winter with a sister in the Riviera. She confessed that the idea of her son's having to serve completely unnerved her. Gerald called on the girls before leaving to bid them a final goodbye, but they were out, "gone for the day," said Nurse Anne.

"It's just as well," was his mental comment; but he felt keenly disappointed nevertheless.

"Bully," whispered Mary, into the ear of her faithful friend that same evening, "I am very unhappy, Bully, and very lonely." Next morning, however, she looked up brightly and pleasantly at the doctor as he came in to breakfast, Joyce being not yet down, and she told him that she had quite decided to go to London, and she was only waiting to know whether Miss Curtice, Mrs. Tomlinson's sister, could take her to live in her house.

"Morrison street you say she lives in, Mary? Morrison street, near Oxford street? Quite unsuitable, I should say; close and unhealthy. After our bracing country air, unbearable."

It was, however, decided a week later, that Miss Curtice should give Mary a good bedroom and the use of a tiny sitting room, which she could convert into a little workshop, for twelve shillings a week, and in these she declared she should soon be able to make herself at home.

"You'll not go there till after Christmas, Mary," said the doctor. "I will not allow it. Remember that I am your father's executor and your legal guardian, and it would not become you to act in direct opposition to what I judge best for you."

He said this half playfully, but Joyce and he together over-ruled Mary's objections, and when she had arranged to do this, and had Miss Curtice's promise that the room should be kept for her, she looked forward more cheerfully to the coming year than she had thought possible. Christmas passed over quietly and sadly, this first one without her father.