

"I brought nothing but absolute necessities. I did not know how long I was to stay. Uncle Roberts said I was to go at once when your telegram came ; so I started as soon as the cart could be got ready, and brought as few things as possible. Just a small box ; and my desk in my hand."

"You must be sadly uncomfortable, my love," said Miss Caroline, sympathetically. "Still it will give you some shopping to do. Pray hand me the bag on my quilt."

Jeanne attempted to do so, but the little terrier growled ominously.

"Sensible dog!" said Miss Marney, in approving tones ; "you see how he guards my property."

But she quieted her pet, and the bag was extricated. Miss Caroline opened it without removing the white kid glove, and took out a bundle of crackling bank-notes.

Selecting a couple she handed them to Jeanne.

"You must get yourself any trifle you require, my dear Jane. No thanks, I beg. Put them in the pocket of your gown. And pray write and desire that your wardrobe may be sent. I am in hopes to persuade you to stay on."

Jeanne's heart sank, but she tried to conceal her dismay as well as she could ; and faltered forth her thanks for her relative's proposed hospitality.

"I am desirous to know," said Miss Marney, settling herself among her pillows, and half closing her eyes, "how far you are aware of your near connection with our family. I am too weak to be able to talk much myself, but I can give you my attention very well," her accents were regretful, and Jeanne divined that Miss Caroline was more accustomed to hold forth herself than to listen to others. "Speak clearly, my love. People nowadays mumble so dreadfully."

Without suspecting her aunt of deafness, Jeanne obediently raised her voice.

"I know more about our own family than about yours ; but uncle Roberts has told us what he had heard of both. Then there are the labels on the miniatures, and an odd