

must not go to Miss Marney's room unless she was sent for ; and Jeanne, unaccustomed to independent action of any kind (for she had always been subject to authority), had acquiesced as a matter of course.

During the weeks that followed, she had moped unquiet, alone, and disconsolate ; poring over the newspaper for hours, rather in hopes of finding her brother's name in the South African intelligence, than because she was particularly interested in the general news of the day ; afraid of venturing forth alone into the unfamiliar streets ; choked by the fog, depressed by the weather, and hourly expectant of the summons to her aunt's bedside.

The long afternoon wore away, and at half-past four the tea was brought in by Hewitt the butler, and William the Irish footman. William was still a footman, though forty summers had passed lightly over his caroty head and freckled face ; for his twinkling eyes, snub nose, and wide smiling mouth belied all his efforts to emulate the serious dignity of his superior, and debarred him for ever from rising to the first rank in his profession.

A little animation came into the lonely lady's woebegone face when the servants withdrew, leaving her respectfully alone to enjoy her meal.

She enjoyed it less because she was hungry than because eating and drinking gave her something to do.

To farm-bred Jeanne, the tea, however dainty, appeared but the contemptible shadow of her favourite repast ; though, since she had taken next to no exercise for several days, and had lunched but two hours earlier, a less healthy appetite would scarcely have needed it at all.

She handled the heavy Georgian urn nervously, made the tea, and poured it into a shallow cup of egg-shell china. She spurned the London cream, delicately flavoured with boracic acid, and haughtily left one of the four minute wafers which did duty for bread and butter on its snowy folded napkin, lest Hewitt and William should be led to suppose her accustomed to more solid fare.