

tracted the attention of a tall elderly gentleman, who with his two daughters, had come to drink the waters. 'Ha,' said the ladies, 'there is a pretty little country maid selling roses, and very choice ones they are. What say you girls to a bouquet, to remind you of home? Pray, child,' asked he, looking at the flowers very sharply, for he was a bit of a florist, 'Where did this Rose Unique grow?'

"In the county jail, please your honor," answered the little girl, all of a tremble, for he was a quick gentleman, and spoke as if he thought she might have stolen them. 'The door keeper gave them me when I went to to see poor grandmother.'

"Prison roses?" cried one of the young ladies, gazing curiously at the pretty unconscious flowers; "who would have thought you could thrive in such a climate?"

"Is your grandmother a prisoner?" asked the old gentleman, quickly but not unkindly. And for what offence?

"For going to see mother die," answered little Jane, innocently. 'Mother went to heaven and took my brother along with her; and poor grandmother is in jail, because wicked men stole her master's things while she was absent.'

"She should have got some one to watch for her," said he; but if what you say be true, the case seems a cruel one too. How came she to be accused of the robbery?"

"Because the things were found in her garden, though she knows not how they came there."

"What shameful villainy!" exclaimed the young ladies, for the little girl's story had interested them deeply.

"Very unlucky," said the gentleman, rubbing his forehead; "is there no one here can vouch for your grandmother's character?"

"Sure, sir, every one can," answered Jane, in her simple way. 'There's no one in—— but knows old Martha Wilkins.'

"Wilkins!" exclaimed the gentleman. 'Wilkins!' screamed out both ladies. 'Can it be our old nurse Martha? Did she ever live in Dorsetshire? Was her husband a game-keeper? What family had she?'

"Little Jane knew nothing about matters which happened before she was born, but she could answer the last question in a

way that settled all. 'One daughter only, if you please, sir,—my poor mother that's gone; and that made her so anxious to see her dear Mary Jane before she died.'

"Mary Jane! No doubt remains," cried these two young ladies, whose joint names had been bestowed on nurse's child.—'O papa, let us go to the prison to see dear Martha; it must be her.'

"Patience, children," answered the old gentleman, who seemed, however, as glad as any of them. There will be a sad bustle to-day at the jail; and besides, to see Martha with any comfort, we must have an order. I'll speak to the high-sheriff by-and-by, when the court breaks up; and in the meantime I see the little girl is anxious to be off.'

"Please your honour," said Jane, 'I'm in no great hurry, only—only—I've four miles to walk, and the children's dinner to get, and grandmother's tea to buy besides.'

"So it was to buy tea for your grandmother, you took to selling roses, good girl! Here's a shilling instead of a sapphire; run to the jail and tell Martha that Mr. Dawes of Ashleigh, is here to befriend her; it will do her more good than all the tea in China.'

"And here's something for yourself," cried Miss Mary, 'for being so dutiful.'

"And something to buy toys for the children," cried Miss Jane to her pretty namesake. And she ran off as gaily to prison as if it had been a palace.

"Martha shed tears of joy when she heard of the unexpected arrival of her old Master, and his meeting with her grandchild. She acknowledged the hand of Providence in it, as she did in everything else; and cried more when she saw the grandest gentleman in Dorsetshire stooping to visit her in her cell, and his nicely dressed daughters to sit on her clean but lowly bed, than she had done when she first heard of her calamity.

"The good old woman was saved the agitation even of an acquittal by Mr. Dawes' exerting himself to have the matter thoroughly investigated. This led to the charge being brought home to some burglars already in the jail for other offences who, after some little delay, admitted the innocence of Martha, and the circumstances under which they hid the linen in her