

"Let me carry it down for you," he said cheerily. I still think you have no cause for anxiety ; the company was too large not to be able to be heard from in some way before this time, in case of accident. Still, I really *can* understand something of a mother's feelings. I have a dear mother of my own. I'll tell you what we will do, Mrs. Edmonds. If you will lie down and rest, I'll mount my horse and take a trip toward the Schuyler farm and learn the facts. I was making ready for a very early start in another direction, and Selim will be saddled and bridled waiting for me ; but I can easily make the trip later, or wait until another day for that matter."

Up to that moment Mrs. Edmonds had not shed a tear, but at the sound of the sympathetic voice, planning a scheme that would at least relieve her of this terrible suspense, she lost for the moment her carefully trained self-control and broke into a fit of weeping. Mr. Maxwell made no attempt to restrain the tears ; he gently seated the trembling lady in the chair from which she had risen, then went briskly about his room, making final preparations for departure, talking cheerily the while.

"It will be a very short ride out to the farm, Mrs. Edmonds, for Selim and me ; and by the time you have had one nap we shall be back here with good news from the truants. Young people cannot always be depended upon for excellent judgment ; and your daughter, remember, may