

six, so we'll catch Falconer as he comes in. They're all busy on the land just now, planting potatoes."

The Mains, a snug, blue-slatted farmhouse on the roadside, with its outbuildings clustered about it, looked a very tidy, well-managed place. A good garden, with a grassy lawn in front, separated it from the road, and was entered by a green wicket gate.

"You can come in if you like, dear. They won't mind," said Elizabeth, as she sprang to the ground.

I hesitated a moment, and then followed her. A little maidservant, evidently much flustered, showed us in, and we were left quite a long time in the old-fashioned sitting-room, which was so exquisitely clean, and smelt so sweetly of lavender and thyme and all the old-fashioned herbs beloved of country housekeepers.

"Now, I wonder why Mrs. Falconer doesn't come," said Elizabeth, rather impatiently. "Well, here's the old man himself."

He opened the door, and gave us good evening, with the rugged courtesy of these well-mannered people; and Elizabeth introduced me briefly. The difficulty was that he had not the remotest idea why we had come; and though it was by no means unusual for Mrs. Hamilton to drop in upon the