

space was filled with packages and goodly-sized bundles suggestive of Christmas cheer.

There was a subdued titter, as the new-comer, with tears in her eyes, was set on her feet again. Then a girl opposite, hastily gathering her own parcels, pointed to the vacant seat beside her.

The old woman sank into it with an audible sigh of relief; and then, looking round, included all the passengers in a friendly smile.

"Oh! I do be glad to get settled!" she remarked—"I did think as how I'd never get off safely. Why I'm all of a tremble still!"

The girl smiled sympathetically. "You are not accustomed to travelling alone?"

"Accustomed?" echoed the other, "why, my dear, I've not been in a train for well-nigh twenty years; and," she added, "they were different then, I can tell you."

For the time being there was silence throughout the car; conversation was at a standstill, the new-comer being the centre of interest.

All eyes were fixed on her now, as lifting a corner of the white cloth from the basket, she peeped down at the contents, and then turned to the girl with a delighted little nod.