

Sir Christopher

manage till Cecil is old enough to take control. Another six months we shall rest under your roof, — then, dear cousin, we must be gone to our own."

Mary Brent laid her hand upon the younger woman's arm.

"Vex me not, Elinor," she said, "by speaking so. Let it be settled that this is your home. 'Tis not kind to talk of leaving me. Besides, you could not live upon your lands without an arm to protect you, stout enough for defence and for toil."

"We will hire laborers."

"Common laborers are not enough. There must be a man with head to direct as well as hands to work."

Cecil, who had stood by an eager listener, suddenly stripped up the sleeve of his jerkin and bared his arm.

"Feel that!" he cried, doubling his elbow till the muscle stood out. Mary Brent laughed as she laid her hand upon it.

"Truly, 'tis a pretty muscle. Yet will it be better for a few more years of growth. Say, Elinor, wilt thou take this man for thy tenant? Giles has left the lease already drawn for thee, as Cecil's guardian, to sign when thou hast settled terms with the man. Giles says he is as fine a fellow as hath yet set foot in Maryland. He is