

The ladies was a-speakin' of yo' this very mornin' at breakfuss. Come in."

He entered, saying: "I am going up to the library. Tell Miss Clementina that I should like to see her in the parlor. I will be down in a minute or two."

He went up-stairs slowly, and passed through the open door of his bed-chamber. His library, a room thirty feet wide, lay across the entire front of the house. To it he had brought most of the books he cared to have about him. He opened the door and went in.

Perched high on the top of a step-ladder sat the woman he had come to see. She was in gray linen, her sleeves rolled up, and she wore a blue-check apron to preserve her from the dust she had been carefully blowing or brushing from a precious shelf of daintily bound volumes of authors' proofs. The long spron gave her slight figure a childlike youthfulness which Grace at any other time would have been quick to observe. Just now she had paused to note the changes which the hand of her best-loved poet had made on a page proof of the "Excursion." She looked up, and, coloring, dropped her skirts over a pair of neat ankles, and came down quickly from her perch. It would be hard to say which of the two was most confused.

"I was dusting your books," she began; "it is quite impossible to keep out the dust. Pray excuse my appearance." It certainly needed no excuse. Without any word of greeting, he said: "I came to get a book, but I also wanted to see you."

"What is it?" she asked, and then, hastily: "Can