

silence, and then burying her face in her husband's bosom, wept bitterly.

After a little she raised her head, and said, sadly—

"Forgive me, Gordon, but it was so unlooked for, so unexpected; and papa was so very dear to me."

"I understand all about it, my darling," said Gordon, wiping away her tears; "there is no need of apology for such tears as these. But come away, now, and we will think and talk of other things."

Their tea-table was charmingly laid out by Mrs. Ellisson's own hands, and bright with floral offerings—gifts from many who had thus soon learned to love "the young doctor," as he was called.

Over the mantel-piece little Nettie's pretty "WELCOME" peeped out from its wreath of roses and lilies, and every object in the room seemed to repeat the word to the gentle bride, as she sat down for the first time at the head of her own table.

By the time tea and worship were over, the sun had set; and as Hope did not care to ride, she and Gordon set out on foot to visit Mrs. Ellisson.

She was not expecting them that night, and as Hope stole unannounced into the room where she was sitting alone in the twilight, she caught her in her arms with a cry of unutterable love and grief, and leaning her head on Hope's shoulder, wept long and bitterly.

An hour later Gordon and Hope left her with her spirit calmed, and her heart soothed and comforted by their kindness and affection.

"I shall send for you in the morning," Gordon said, as he bade her good night, "and you must expect us to claim you at least one day out of every week, and as many more, of course, as you can afford to give us."

"We shall never consent for Jack to have you altogether," said Hope, glancing fondly at her brother, who had just returned from his evening lesson, as she kissed Mrs. Ellisson good night; "for my claim, mamma, is older than his by several years, you know."