

"I want you to engage some young person as Lady Chichester's companion."

"Confound it! How am I to set about the business? I don't know where 'companions' are to be found! There are none round Glebe Royal. There never was a place so destitute of girls."

"Just so! and they wouldn't be the right sort of girls if you found them. Will you let me help you in the matter, Sir Alan? I have a married brother in practice in London, and his wife has often helped me out of a difficulty. If I have your permission to tell her what we require, she will soon send down the right person from town for us."

"If you are *quite* sure it is necessary," replied Sir Alan; "but I must say that I hate the idea of a stranger about the house."

"This young lady, if she knows her duty, will not intrude upon Sir Alan. She will come here to devote her energies exclusively to Lady Chichester! She will read aloud to her, and play and sing if required—arrange her needlework, write her letters, carry her messages, and accompany her out driving or walking—behave herself, in fact, as if she had the good luck to be her ladyship's daughter! And if she doesn't do all this—if she doesn't prove satisfactory, we must send her back, and try another! It is the first prescription I order for Lady Chichester."

"And you think it will cure her?"

"I think it will have a beneficial effect on her health, whatever may succeed it. For I will not conceal from Sir Alan that her ladyship's condition is *not* satisfactory. You must see that for yourself.