

was not to call you, ma'am, but that when you came down I was to ask you to be so good and recollect that letter which he wished you to write."

"Very well," said Maud, in a tone of disgust; and the servant withdrew, confiding to Sophy, whom he met just afterwards, that he thought "it was no wonder that Miss Brereton took on so, for Missis was a wonderful, kind lady." And Sophy agreed with him.

Maud had scarcely drunk a cup of coffee, when her father entered the room, hardly able to repress the satisfaction which would beam out on his face. "Well, Maud," he said, "you see I'm beforehand with you this morning. I've got through all my business, for Wellby is a man who understands his trade thoroughly. No expense is to be spared." Then, seeing the look of pain on his daughter's face, he kissed her forehead, and said, "I shall be forced to leave you alone, I am sorry to say, as I am obliged to drive to Windmouth on business this afternoon. I shall hardly get back before seven o'clock, I am afraid, so you must take care of yourself." And with a touch of tenderness in his voice, "You know you are my only home treasure." He was leaving the room, but turned back to say "Be sure you get that note done this morning, for I wish to see it before it goes. Bring it to me at luncheon."

"Yes, papa," replied Maud, thankful to be dismissed, and glad to have some definite occupation. So she sat down at her desk with a sheet of paper before her. It was very hard to write such tidings to one who, she knew, was a valued friend of her mother's. She wondered why her father was thus anxious that the news should be conveyed to him at once, and in an irregular manner: She resolved to enter into no details; she would simply state the fact of her mother's decease, and ask him to be present at the funeral. So she began:

"DEAR LORD ASHBURTOWN,—

"I hardly know how to tell you what happened yesterday, for I can scarcely bear to think about it yet, and I cannot realize it at all. Perhaps you have already guessed what has occurred; perhaps you saw more nearly than I did how near her end dear Mamma was—and yet I thought I knew how ill she was. She died yesterday afternoon—suddenly at last—and papa desired me to write and tell you. He also wishes me to say that the funeral will take place at Brereton Church, at two o'clock on Tuesday, and he hopes you will be present.

"Yours sincerely,

"MAUD BRERETON.

"Brereton House, Sept. 17th, 186—."