

settlers. Dapple was old, but willing and safe, and May urged her on ; but not too fast, for it is poor economy to overtax an old steed. A dry sob escaped from time to time from May's overcharged heart, but she forced back the tears. It was now time to act, not to fret. She was accustomed to see her mother tired, pale, forced to rest, but not in pain or unconscious, and this sudden mysterious illness seemed to her the beginning of something terrible and unknown. What would home be without the dear kind mother ?

She was approaching the ford. Already the land dipped a little towards the river, and the tree-tops began to show in the cleft. She urged Dapple on, she was anxious about the ford ; some one had said the river was high. At last she was on the steep path which led down to the brink. She confusedly saw before her a cart, some figures, and heard voices, when, with a sudden shock, poor Dapple stumbled, tried to recover herself, in vain ; down she went, and May, with a sharp cry, was thrown some paces away. For a few moments she was stunned ; then she felt some one raise her head, and a voice say—

“Good Heavens, it is May Dent ! Get some water in your hat, Phil.”