

"Oh, father, we can almost live off the garden," said she. "I told you we should not starve."

But still new sorrows, and still greater changes were in store for the poor, disheartened family. In June a malignant fever broke out in the village, and in one short month Reuben and Jane had laid their two youngest boys in the grave-yard. There was a dogged look, which was not all sorrow, on Reuben's face as he watched the sexton fill up the last grave. Sam and Jamie, at any rate, would not know any more of the discouragement and hardship of life.

Jane, too, mourned her boys not as mothers mourn whose sons have a birthright of gladness. Jane was very tired of the world.

On the evening after Sam's funeral, as Reuben was sitting on the steps, with his head buried in his hands, a neighbour drove up and threw him a letter.

"It's been lyin' in the office a week or more, Merrill said, and reckoned I'd better bring it up to you," he called out, as he drove on.

"It might lie there forever, for all my goin' after it," thought Reuben to himself, as he picked it up from the dust; "it's no good news, I'll be bound."

But it was good news. The letter was from Jane's oldest sister, who had married only a few years before, and gone to live in a seaport town on the New England coast. Her husband was an old captain, who had retired from his seafaring life with just money enough to live on, in a humble way, in an old house which had belonged to his grandfather.

Emma Melville wrote, offering the Millers a home; their last misfortune had just come to her knowledge, for Jane had been for months too much out of heart to write to her relatives. Emma wrote:—

"We are very poor, too; we haven't anything but the house, and a little money each year to buy what we need to eat and wear, the plainest sort. But the house is large; Captain Melville and me never so much as set foot upstairs. If you can manage to live on the upper floor, you're more than welcome, we both say; and we hope you won't let any pride stand in the way of your coming. It will do us good to have more folks in the house, and it ain't as if it cost us anything, for we shouldn't never be willing, neither me nor Captain Melville, to rent the room to strangers, not while we've got enough to live on without."

There was silence for some minutes between Reuben and Jane and Draxy after this letter had been read. Jane looked steadily away from Reuben. There was deep down in the patient woman's