UNCLE MAX.

CHAPTE . AVI .- Continued. "And what did he say ?" she asked, rather

she went on. "He is too kind-hearted to say so; but I know he feels hart at her deon her part to give up all her parish work. I am afraid it was: a little bit of tamper. Gladys has a temper, though you may not think so. She is very firm, and does not brook think so. She is very nrm, and cose not be sufficient so that so the least interference on my part. Poor dear the least interference on my part. Poor dear the last person to think of ailments. When I spoke of the life at Hyda Park you are the last person to think of ailments. When I spoke of the life at Hyda Park you are the last person to think of ailments. "Yes, but one's friends are over-careful; but still you are right; it is not only that how am I to help doing what he asks me, wistfulneds."

I did not gnow-you well enough to be sure you are the last person to think of ailments."

"Yes, but one's friends are over-careful; but still you are right; it is not only that how am I to help doing what he asks me, wistfulneds."

I have good and sufficient reasons for what I have good and sufficient reasons for what I when I owe the very bread I eat to his kind-

ness!" Miss Darrell was poor and dependent then. This piece of news surprised me. I thought of the glittering rings and silver-mounted dressing-case and all the luxurious appliances in her toilet, and wondered if Mr. Hamilton

had paid for them. Miss Darrell seemed to read my thoughts in

a most wonderful way. " Poor mother left very little except personal jewelry. Yes, I owe everything to Giles's generosity. He is good enough to say that I earn my allowance, -and indeed I am not want to talk of myself; I am a very insignificant person, -just Giles's housekeeper; Gludys is mistress of the bouse. I only wanted you to explain to Mr. Cunliffe that I am not to blame for Gladys's strange whim. Let me explain a little. She was looking very ill and overworked, and I begged Giles to lecture her. I told him that there was no need for Gladys to do quite as much; in fact, she was putting herself a little too forward in the parish, considering how young she was, and the vicar an unnarried So Giles and I gave her a word. I am sure he spoke most gently, and I was very cereful indeed in only giving her a hint that people, and even Mr. Cunliffe, might misconstrue such devotion. I never saw Gladys in such a passion; and the next day she had flung everything up. She told the vicar that the school-room made her headache, and that her throat was delicate, and she could not sing. Poor Mr. Cunliffe was in such despair that I was obliged to offer my services. It is far too much for me; but what can I do? the parish must not suffer for Gladys's wilfulness. Now if you could only explain things a little to Mr. Cunliffe; he looked so hurt the other night when Gladys refused to take her old class. No wonder he misses her, for she used to teach the children aplendidly; but if he knew it was only a little temper on Gladys's part he would look over it and be friends with her again. But you must have noticed yourself, Miss Garston,

now little he had to my to her.' I had found it impossible to check Miss Darrell's loquacity or to edge in a single word; but as soon as her breath failed I rose to take my leave, and she did not seek to detain me.

You will explain this to Mr. (unliffe, for Gladys's sake," she said, holding my hand. "I do want him to think well of her, and I can see his good opinion is shaken."
But to this I made no audible reply; but,

as I shook off the dust of Gladwyn, I told myself that Uncle Max should not hear Miss Darrell's version from my lips. She wished to make me a tool in her hands; but her breach of confidence had a very different result from what she expected. Miss Darrell's words had cloured up a perplexity in my you here with Ursula. I mind; I could read between the lines, and I going to the Maberleys'." fully exonerated Miss Hamilton.

met me at the door and told me that Miss Hamilton was in the parior I had thought she meant Lady Betty; but,

to my surprise, I found Miss Hamilton seated by the fire. A pleased smile came to her face as I greeted her most warmly. She must have seen how giad I was; but she shrank back rather nervously when I begged her to take off her furred mantle and stay to tea. She was not sure that she could remain. Lady Betty was alone, as Giles and Etta were

dining at the Macerleys'. She had been asked and had refused; but Etta had taken in her work, as Miss Maberley had wanted them to go early. Perhaps she had better not stay, as it would not be kind to Lady But I soon overruled this objection. Betty. But I soon overruled this objection. I told Miss Hamilton that I saw Lady Betty frequently, but that she herself had never called since her first visit, and that now I

easy to see that. By and by she asked me in a low voice if I were sure to be alone, or if I expected any visitors; and when I had put on your hat.—a run will do you good,—and relieve Miss Hamilton's mind." assured her decidedly that no one but Uncle Max ever came to see me, and that I knew he was engaged this evening, her last scruple seemed to vanish, and she settled herself quite comfortably for a chat. We talked for little while on indifferent subjects. She told me about the neighborhood and the people who lived in the large houses by the church, and about her brother's work in the parish, and how if rich people sent for him he always kept them waiting while he went to the poor ones.

"Giles calls himself the poor people's doctor, he attends them for nothing. cannot always refuse rich people if they will have him, but he generally sends them to Dr. Rockbotham. You see, he never takes money for his services, and as people know this, they are ashamed to send for him; and yet they want him because he is so clever. Giles is so fond of his profession; he is always regretting that he had a fortune left him, for he says it would have been far pleasanter to make one. Giles never did care for money; he is ready to fling it away to any one who asks him.

Miss Hamilton kept up this desultory talk all tea-time. She spoke with great animation about her brother, and I could hardly believe it was the same girl who had sat so silently at the head of the table that evening at Glad-wyn. The sad abstracted look had left her face. It seemed as though for a little while

she was determined to forget all her troubles. When Mrs. Barton had taken away the tea-tray, she asked me, with the same wistful look in her eyes, to sing to her if I were

not tired, and I complied at once. I sang for nearly half an hour, and then I returned to the fireside. I saw that Miss stand," she returned, gently. "I should Hamilton put up her hand to shield her face like to speak to him, if I dared, but I think from the light; but I took no notice, and

after a little while she began to talk. "I never heard any singing like yours. Miss Garston; it is a great gift. There is something different in your voice from any one else's ; it seems to touch one's heart.

If my singing always makes you sad, Miss Hamilton, it is a very dublous gift."

"Ab, but it is a pleasant sadness," she replied, quickly. "I feel as though some kind friend were sympathizing with me when you sing; it tells me too that, like myself, you have brown troople."

have always been so corry for you. You must feel so lonely without him:

"No, you are too real, too much in earnest to be satisfied with that sort of life. Mr. one unhappy to be misunderstood by one's Cunlifie used to tell us so. And I seemed to dergyman, and," hesitating a moment, "and understand it all before I saw you. I always one s friends."

felt as though I knew you, even before we "Friends are not left so completely in the felt as though I knew you, even before we met. I hope," hesitating a little, "that we

"You cannot come here too often. Miss Hamilton. It will always be such a pleasure to me to see you."

"Oh, I did not mean that," she returned, nervously. "I may not be able to come here, -that is, not alone; there are never idle; but," interrupting herself, "I do reasons, and you must not expect me; but not want to talk of myself; I am a very in- I hope you will come to Gladwyn whenever you have an hour to spare. Giles said so the other day. I think he meant you to be friends with us. You must not mind. getting still more nervous, "if Etta is a little odd sometimes. Her moods vary, and she does not always make people feel as though they were welcome; but it is only manner, so you must not mind it."

"Oh, no; I shall hope to come and see you and Lady Betty some time."

"And," she went on, hurriedly, "if there is anything that I can do to help you, I hope you will tell me so. Perhaps I cannot visit the people; but there are other things,needle-work, or a little money. Oh, I have so much spare time, and it will be such a pleasure.

"bh, yes; you shall help me, I returned, cheerfully, for she was looking so extremely nervous that I wanted to reassure her; but we were prevented from saying any more on this subject, for just then we heard the click of the little gate, and the next moment Uncle Max walked into the room.

CHAPTER XVII.

" WHY NOT TRUST ME, MAX?" Max looked very discomposed when he saw Miss Hamilton; he shook hands with her gravely, and sat down without saying a word. wondered if it were my fancy, or if Miss Hamilton had really grown perceptibly paler since his entrance.
"What does this mean, Uncle Max?" I

asked, gayly, for this sort of oppressive silence did not suit me at all, "I understood that you and Mr. Tudor were dining at the Glynna' to-night."

"Lawrence has gone without me," he replied. "I had a headache, and so I sent an excuse; but, as it got better, I thought I would come up and see how you were getting

"A headache, Uncle Max!" looking at him rather anxiously, for I had never heard him complain of any ailment before. I had been dissatisfied with his appearance ever since I had come to Heathfield; he had looked worn and thin for some time, but to-

night he looked wretched.
"Oh, it is nothing," he returned, quickly.
"Miss Hamilton, I hardly expected to find you here with Ursula. I thought you were "Etta and Giles have gone," she replied.

The following afternoon I had a most unequietly. "I ought not to be here, as Lady expected pleasure. When I came back to Betty is alone at Gladwyn; but Miss Garsthe cottage after my day's work Mrs. Barton | ton persuaded me to remain; but it is getting late. I must be going," rising as she "There is not the slightest need for you to

harry," observed Max; "it is not so very late, and I will walk up with you to Gladwyn." "Indeed, I hope you will do nothing of

the kind," she said, hurriedly. "Miss Garston, will you please tell him that there is no need, no need at all? indeed, I would much rather not."

Miss Hamilton had lost all her repose of manner; she looked as nervous and shy as any school-girl when Max announced his intention of escorting her : and vet how could any gentleman have allowed her to go down those dark roads alone?

Perhaps Max thought she was unreasonable, for there was a touch of satire in his voice as he answered her:

"I certainly owe it to my conscience to see I think she wanted me to press her; she was arguing against her own wishes, it was easy to see that. By and by she are the say if I allowed you to go alone? it is a fine starlight night; suppose you

"Yes, do come," observed Miss Hamilton. in a relieved voice; but, as she spoke, her lovely eyes seemed appealing to him, and begging him not to be angry with her; but he frowned slightly, and turned aside, and took up a book. How was it that those two contrived to misunderstand each other so oft n? Max looked even more hurt than he

had done at Gladwyn.

I was not surprised to find that when I left the room Miss Hamilton followed me, but I was hardly prepared to hear her say, in a

troubled voice,—
"Oh! how unfortunate I am! I would not have had this happen for worlds. Etta will—oh, what am I saying?—I am atraid Mr. Cunliffe is offended with me because I did not wish him to go home with me-but,' e little proudly and resentfully, "he is too old a friend so misunderstand me, so he need not have said that."

"I think Uncle Max is not well to- night," I replied, soothingly. "I never heard him speak in that tone before; he is always so careful not to hurt people's feelings."

"Yes, I know," stifling a sigh; "it is more my fault than his; he is looking wretchedly ill; and—and I think he is a little offended with me about other things; it is impossible to explain, and so he misjudges

me."
"Why do you not try to make things a little clearer?" I asked. "Could you not Unclearer." I worked. "These and the country to make things a little clearer?" I worked. say a word to him as we walk home? Uncle
Max is so good that I cannot bear him to be vexed about anything, and I know he is disappointed that you will not work in the

school."
"Yes, I know; but you do not underny courage will fail ; it is not so easy as you "hink." And then se we went down stairs she took my arm, and I could feel that her hand was very cold. "I wish he had not asked you to come; it shows he is hurt with me; but all the same Lahould have asked you

myself." Uncle Max took up his felt hat directly he saw us, and followed us silently into the entry; he did not apeak as we went down the little garden together; and as we turned

about the schools. I am not giving up works prise. I had not expected him to mention selves."

tor my own pleasure; I loved it far too much; Miss Hamilton's name.

"And what did he say " she asked, rather eagerly. "Did he sarese with you?" But I was obliged to confess that I had forgotten his answer. "I know Mr. Canliffe thinks Gladys cold," she went on. "He is too kind-hearted to say so; but I know he feels burt at her. desertion of her post. It was a strange whim on her part to give up all her. parish work. If was a strange wing on her part to give up all her. parish work. If was a strange wing on her part to give up all her. parish work. If was impossible to doub, the interest with genometrate with gen

do, even if I cannot explain them. It makes

met. I hope," hesitating a little, "that we shall see a great deal of you, I know Giles use. Miss Hamilton. I find it impossible to wishes it." No. of course not, no right at all,"-and here Max laughed unsteadily, -" but still, as a clergyman, I thought it could not be wrong to remonstrate when my best worker deserted

her post."
There was no response to this, only Miss Hamilton's hand lay a little heavily on my arm, as though she were tired. I thought it best to be silent. No word of mine was needed. I could tell from Max's voice and

manner how bitterly he was hurt. But when he next spoke it was on a differ-

ent subject. "I must beg your pardon, Miss Hamilton, for having wronged you in my thoughts about something else. I find your brother has forbidden you to attend evening service for the present. And no doubt he is right; but your cousin gave me to understand that you

stayed away for a very different reason.' What did Etta tell you?" she asked, quickly. But before he could answer a dark figure seemed to emerge rather suddenly from the road-side. Miss Hamilton dropped my arm at once. "Is that you, Leah? Have my brother and Miss Darrell returned "Is that you, Leah? from Maplehurst?" And I detected an anxious note in her voice.

"Yes, ma'am," returned Leah, civilly;

" and Miss Darrell seemed anxious at your being out so late, because you would take cold, and Master begged you would wrap up and walk very fast."
"Oh, I shall take no harm," returned Miss

Hamilton, impatiently. "Good-night, Miss Garaton, and thank you for a very happy evening. Good-night, Mr. Cunliffe, and thank you, too. There is no need to come any further; Leah will take care of me." And she waved her hand and moved away

in the darkness. "What a bugbear that woman is !" I observed, rather irritably, as we retraced our steps in the direction of the Man and Plough, the little inn that stood at the junction of the four roads. Everything looked dark and eerie in the faint starlight. Our footsteps seemed to strike sharply against the hard, white road; there was a sus-picion of frost in the air. When Max spoke, which was not for some minutes, he he was unhappy, but he had refused to con-marely remarked that we should have a cold fide in me. Was his unhappiness connected in Christmas, and then he asked me if I would dine with him at the vicarage on Christman baffled me; it was impossible for me to day. He and Mr. Tudor would be alone.

"Christmas will be here in less than a fort-night, Ursula," he went on, rather absently, but I knew he was not thinking of what he was saying. And when we reached the White Cottage he followed me into the parlor, sat down before the fire, and stretched out his hands to the blaze, as though he were very cold. I stood and watched him for a moment,

and then 1 could bear it no longer.

"Oh, Max!" I exclaimed, "I wish you would tell me what makes you look so all free communication. Max was certainly wretchedly ill to-night. Even Miss Hamilton not like himself when Miss Hamilton was noticed it. I am sure there is something the matter." "Nonsense, child! What should be the

matter?" But Max turned his face away as he spoke, "I told you that I had a headache; but that is nothing to make a fuss about. Mrs. Drabble shall make me a good strong cup of tea when I get home." Max's manner was just a trifle testy, but I

was not going to be repelled after this fashion. On the contrary, I put my hand on his shoulder and obliged him to look at me. "It is not only a headache. You are unhappy about something; as though I do not see that. Max, you know we have always been like brother and sister, and I want you

to tell me what has grieved you." I'nat touched him, as I knew it would, for he had dearly loved his sister.

"I wish your mother were here now," he returned, in a moved voice. "I wish poor Emmie were here; there were not many women like her. One could have trusted her with anything."
"I think I am to be trusted too, Max."

"Yes, yes, you are like her, Ursula, You have got just the same quiet way. Your voice always reminds me of hers. She was a dear, good sister to me, more like a mother than a sister. I think if she had lived she would have been a great comfort to me now. Ursula.

"I know I am not so good as my mother, but I should like to be a comfort to you in

her place." Lauppose Max's ear detected the suppresse pain in my voice, for as he looked at me his manner changed; the old affectionate amile came to his lips, and he put his hands lightly on me, as though to keep me near him. You have been a comfort to me, my dear. You and I have always understood each other. I think you are as good as gold, Uraula.

Then why not trust me, Max? Why not tell me what makes you so unhappy? "Little she bear," he said, still smiling, you must not begin to growl at me after this fashion, because I am somewhat hipped and want a change. There is no need to be anxious about me. A man in my position must have his own and other people's difficulties to bear. No, no, my dear, you have a wise head, but you are too young to take my burdens on your shoulders. What should you know about an old bachelor's worries? "An old bachelor," I returned, indignantly. "when you know you are young and

handsome, Max! How can you talk such nonsense?" I could see he was amused at this. "You must not expect me to believe that man is no judge of his own looks; but I

never thought much about such things my-self. T detest the notion of a handsome parson. There, we will dismiss the subject of your humble servant. I want to sek you a favor, Uraula." And then I knew that all my coaxing had been in vain, and that he did not mean to tell me what troubled him and made him look so pinched and worn.

But, in spite of this pressee, he kept me waiting for a long time, while he sat silently looking into the fire and stroking his brown beard. "Ursuls," he began at last, still gazing

riend were sympathizing with me when you the little garden together; and as we turned ling; it tells me too that, like myself, you into the road leading to the violarage it was last night, to be aure, when what you really said."

I sighed as I looked at Charlie's picture. still holding my arm, perhaps that gave her

I sighed as I looked at Charlie's picture. still holding my arm, perhaps that gave her

I sighed as I looked at Charlie's picture. still holding my arm, perhaps that gave her

I sighed as I looked at Charlie's picture. still holding my arm, perhaps that gave her

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'She is not happy," he went on, "and she is more lonely than other girls of her age, Miss Elizabeth is a nice bright little thing,

Miss Elizabeth is a nice bright little thing, but, as Lawrence rays, she wants ballast; she is a child compared to Gladys. Miss Hamilation, I mean." And here Max stammereds little nervously.

"No, you are right, she is not happy," I returned, quietly; "she gives mell the impression that she has known some great trouble."

"Every one has his troubles," he replied evasively. "Most people indules in the character of hares, of ten thought that Miss. Hamilton and here sister would have been in happier without Miss Darrell; and I often fancied that she has misrogreeseited things. It is always difficult to under the contents of the conte a smothered sigh, "but I confess Miss Darrell is rather a problem to me."

signing person. I am less charitable than thought you would have been far too senyou, and women are sharper in these matters. have already found out that Miss Darrell makes Miss Hamilton wiserable."

"Gently, gently, Ursula," in quite a shock-d voice; "there is no need to put things ed voice; quite so strongly ; you are too hasty, my dear. Miss Darrell may be a little too managing, and perhaps jealous and exacting; but I think she is very fond of her cousins.

"Indeed !" rather dryly, for I did not agree with Max in the least; he was always ready to believe the best of every one.

"Hamilton, too, is really devoted to his sisters, but they do not understand him. I believe Miss Hamilton is very proud of her brother, but she does not confide in him. He has often told me, in quite a pained way, how reserved they are with him. I believe Miss Darrell is far more his confidente than his sisters."

* No doubt," I returned, quite convinced in my own mind that this was the case. "So you must see yourself how much Miss Hamilton needs a friend," he went on, hurriedly. "I want you to be very good to her Uroula; perhaps you may think it a little strange it I say that I think it will be as much your duty to befriend Miss Hamilton

as to minister to Pheebe Locke.' "I wonder who is speaking strongly now

Maz. "But if it be the truth," he pleaded little anxiously.

"You need not fear," was my answer if Miss Hamilton requires my friendship, I am very willing to beatow it. I will be as good to her as I know we to be, Max. Is it likely I should refuse the first favor you have ever asked me?" And, as he thanked me rather gravely, I felt that he was very much in earnest about this. He went away after this, but I think I had succeeded in cheering him, for he looked more like himself as h bade me good-night; but after he had gone I sat for a long time, reflecting over our talk.

I feit perplexed and a little saddened by what had passed. Max had not denied that any way with Miss Hamilton? This question answer it.

I could not understand his manner to her. He was perfectly kind and gentle to her, as he was to all women, but he was also reserved and distant; in spite of their long acquaintance, for he had visited at Gladwyn for years, there was no familiarity them. Miss Hamilton, on her part, seemed to avoid him, yet I was sure she both respected and liked him. There was some strange barrier between them that bindered present : and on her side she seemed to freeze and become unapproachable the moment he appeared. But this was not the only thing that perplexed me. The whole atmosphere of Gladwyn was oppressive. I had a subtile feeling of discomfort whenever Miss Darrell was in the room; her voice seemed to have a curious magnetic effect on one; its tuneless vibrations seemed to irritate me; if she spoke loudly, her voice was rather shrill and unpleasant. She knew this, and carefully modulated it. I used to wonder over its smooth-

ness and fluency. And there was another thing that struck me. Mr. Hamilton seemed fond of his stepslaters, but he treated them with reserve; the frank jokes that pass between brothers and sisters, the pleasant raillery, the blunt speeches, the interchange of confidential looks were missing in the family circle at Gladwyn. Mr. Hamilton behaved with oldfashioned courtesy to his sisters; he was watchful over their comfort, but he was certainly a little stiff and constrained in his manner to them; he seemed to unbend more freely to his cousin than to them : he had scolded her, good-humoredly, once or twice, after quite a brotherly fashion, and she had taken his rebukes in a way that showed they understood each other. I grew tired at last of trying to adjust my ideas on the subject of the Hamilton family. I was rather provoked to see how they had begun to absorb my interest. "Never mind, I have promised Uncle Max to be good to her," was my last waking thought that night, "and I am determined to keep my word." And I fell asleep, and dreamt that I was trying to save Miss Hamilton from drowning, and that all the time Miss Darrell was standing on the shore, laughing and pelting us with stones, and when a larger one than usual struck me, I

I wonder if it were accident or design that brought Miss Darrell across my path the next day. I had just left the Locke's cottage, feeling somewhat tired and depressed : Pr cebe had been in one of her contrary moods, and had given me a good deal of trouble, but the evil spirit had been quieted at last, and I had taken my leave after reprimanding her severely for her rudeness. I was just closing the garden gate, when Miss Darrell came up to me in the dusk, holding out her hand with her tingling little laugh.

"How odd that we should have met just here! I hardly knew you, Miss Garston, in that long cloak, you looked so like a Sister of Charity. I think you are very wise to adopt a uniform.

"Thank you, but I have hardly adopted one," I returned, folding the fur edges of my cloak closer to me, for it was a bitter cold evening. "Are you going home, Miss Darrell? because you have passed the turning that leads to Gladwyn."

"Oh, I do not mind a longer round;" was the careless answer, ... I am very hardy, and a walk never hurts me: If it were Gladys.

now by the bye, have you seen my cousin Giles to day?"
"No!" I returned, wondering a little at

her question.
You are lucky to have escaped him,

Her eyes followed my glance, and I saw as walking on my other side. That she has taken to you, and she likes few far too angry to say much to her; he only bad opinion mattered to Miss Garston; you again that translules motion of her hands.

"Yes Transw" she said, hurriedly; but "Mr. Cunliffe, I am so sorry you were hurt be with you."

"Yes Transw" she said, hurriedly; but with me the other night, when Etta spoke have seried of them she other night, when Etta spoke have seried of them she other night, when Etta spoke or seried for you. Yan about the schools. I am not giving up work or see I had not expected him to mention salves."

solves."

"Indeed!" somewhat sarchatteally, for?

confess this speech made me feel rather cross.

I wondered if Mr. Hamilton could really
have said it. I determined that I would at

"Don't be too sure of that," returned Miss "I am not surprised to hear you say that," Darrell, in a voice that somehow recalled my I returned, quickly; "you are just the sort dream. "I am afraid it would not please of a man, Max, to be hoodwinked by any delyou. Giles is no flatterer. He said he sible for that sort of nonsense, but that one never knew, and that it was not only young and pretty girle like Gladys who could be romantic, and for all your staid looks you were not Methuselah; rather a dubious speech

Miss Garston."
"True!" far too dubious to be entirely palatable to my feminine pride; but I was careful not to hint this to Miss Darrell, and

she went on in the same light jesting way. "It is terribly hard to satisfy (Files, he is so critical; he sets impossible standards for people, and then sneers if they do not reach them. He had conceived rather a high opinion of you, Miss Garaton. He told me one day that he would be glad for you to be intimate with his sisters, as they would only learn good from you, and that he hoped that disconcerted at my coldness. I would encourage your visits. I trust that he has not changed his opinion since then; but Giles is so odd when people disappoint him. I said last night that we would invite you for to-morrow, and then you and Gladys could finish your talk; but he was as cross as possible, and begged that I would invite no one for Thursday, as he was very busy, and Gladys must find another opportunity for her talk. There how I am chattering on !—and perhaps I ought not to have said all that; but I thought you would wonder at our want of neighborliness, and of course we cannot expect you to understand Gilles's odd temper : it is a great

pity he has got this idea in his head."
"What idea, Miss Darrell?" "Dear, dear, how sharp you are ! how you take me up! Of course it is only Gites's ill temper: he cannot really think you wanting

in ballast."

" Oh, I understand now. Please go on." "But I have no more to say," rather be-wildered by my abruptness. "Of course we shall see you soon, when all this has blown over. If you like, I will tell Giles's I have

"Please tell Mr. Hamilton nothing. I will speak to him myself. Good night, Miss Darrell: I am rather cold and tired after my day's work. I do not in the least expect that Miss Hamilton has taken any harm.,' And I made my escape. I do not know what Miss Darrell thought of me, but she walked on rather thoughtfully; as for me, I felt tingling all over with irritation. If Mr. Hamilton had dered to imply these things of me, I should hardly be able to keep my promise to Uncle Max, for I would certainly decline to visit at Gladwyn.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MISS HAMILTON'S LITTLE SCHOLAR. Miss Darrell's innuendoes were not to be borne with any degree of patience. Mr. Hamilton's opinion might be nething to me, -how often I repeated that !- but all the sake of his wife and the children, and I cansame I owed it to my dignity to seek an ex-

planation with him. The opportunity came the very next day. He called to speak to me about a new patient, a little cripple boy who had broken his arm; the father was a laborer, and there were ten children, and the mother took in washing. "Poor Robin has not much chance of good nursing," he went on ; "Mrs. Bell is not a bad mother, as mothers go, but she is overworked and overburdened; she has a good bit of difficulty in keeping her husband out of the alchouse. Good heavens! what lives these women lead! it is to be hoped that it will be made up to them in another world; no washing tubs and alchouses there, no bruised bodies and souls, ch, Miss

Farston ?" Mr. Hamilton was talking in his usual ishion: he had taken the arm-chair I had offered him, and seemed in no hurry to leave t, although his dinner-hour was approaching. When he had given me full directions about Robin, and I had promised to go te him directly after my breakfast the next morning, said to him in quite a caveless manner that hoped Miss Hamilton was well and had sustained no ill effects from her visit to me. 46 Oh, no: she is better than usual. I think you roused her and did her good. Gladys

mopes too much at home. All the same," in a tolerant tone, "you ought not to have kept her so late; as Etta very wisely remarked, it was to good for her to stav in on Sundays and remain out a couple of hours later another night; you see, Gladys takes cold so easily."
"I hear you were very much inclined to

blame the village nurse, Mr. Hamilton."
"Who:—I?" looking at me in a little sur-

prise, " I do not remember that I said anything very dreadful. Etta was in a fuss, as usual; you managing women like to make a can't take; whooping-cangh,—why, he near-fuss sometimes; she sent off Leah, and wanted me to lecture Gladys for her imprudence ; scanlet fever,—why, he was as nearly gone as but I was not inclined to be bothered, and possible, the doctor said. He has saways said it was Gladys's affair if she chose to been puny and weakly from a baby. But said it was Gladys's affair if she chose to. make herself ill, but all the same she ought to be ashamed of such skittishness at her age. I don't believe Gladys knew I was joking; that is the worst of her, she never sees a joke ; Etta does, though, for she barst out where." laughing when my lady walked off to bed in rather a dignified manner. I hope you are not easily offended too, Miss Garston ?

"Oh, dear, no," I returned, coolly, "only I should be sorry if you had in any way changed your opinion of my steadiness. Miss Darrell hinted that you were vexed with me for keeping your sister, and thought that I was to blame."

Mr., Hamilton looked so bewildered at this

that I exonerated him from that moment. "What nonsense has that girl been talking?" he said, rather irritated. "I always! ing?" he said, rather irritated. I always tell her that tongue of hera will lead her into trouble. I know she talked plenty of rub. Afghanistan and to belone mistress of the blent that night. When she raid it was a pity that you and Gladys were always that tong guarantees that England's proximity tering georats, I told her, that though you were not a Methuselan, you were hardly the sortof person to indulge in that sort of gentlinen, tallty, that I could answer for your good sans. tality, that I could answer for your good sense in that, and that Litts need not be so hard

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on a pretty young girl like Gladyers That:

was not accuraing you of want of wateadi-

think."

Was Mr. Hamilton cross? He looked quite moddy all at once; his face wore that hard disagrees ble look that I so disliked. He had been so pleasant in his mainers ever since that evening at Gladwyn that I was rather sorry that this agrees ble state of things should be disturbed. He was evidently not to blame for Miss Darrell's misrepresentations, so I hastened with unch polloy to throw oil on the troubled water?

"Vollot know my you sould say that. It ought not in be dismatter of indifference what people thank of its."

"Out it that? Would you like to know my opinion of you after nearly a month of acquaintance? Let me warn you, I have entirely eliminated my consideration."

you do not misconstrue my motives now." "You may be quite sure of that," rather grimly, as though my last speech dipleased him. "It is difficult not to think you older than you are, you are so terribly sensible and matter-of-fact. How can ladys get on with you, I wonder? Do you put a moral extin-

guisher on all her romance? "I am not quite so matter-of-fact as you make out, Mr. Hamilton."

He shot an odd sort of glance at me. When you sing, one can believe that there is nothing prosaic in a nest-full of larks. Poor Pheebe, I do believe you are doing her good; she looks far more human already. By the bye, when are you coming to sing to us again? I told Etta that I was engaged on Thursday, and she declared it

was our only free day until Christmas."
"I shall be too busy to come till after then," I replied, quietly, for I did not wish him to think that I was ready to jump at any invitation to Gladwyn. He seemed rather

"Why, it is more than ten days to Christmas ! Thope you do not mean to be stiff and unneighborly, Miss Garston. I am afraid," with a decidedly quizzical look, "that pride is

a serious defect of yours." "Perhaps so; but, you see, I do not wish to be different from my neighbors," I replied, quietly; but my speech was received by Mr. Hamilton with a hearty laugh.

"Oh, yes, you are right: we are a proud lot," he observed, as he rose to take leave. "Well, Miss Garston, after Christmas is over, we shall hope to see you for an evening; but any afternoon you are free they will be glad to see you. Etta makes excellent tea. What a craze five o'clock tea is with you women! I have protested against it in vain :: the girls are in majority against me." With this speech he took himself off. I was much relieved at this peaceable ending to our interview. Now he was gone I could scarcely believe that I had ventured on a joke with the formidable Mr. Hamilton, a joke which he had taken in excellent part. I began to feel less in awe of him: he certainly knew how to shake hands beartily, and I could recapitulate Lady Betty's criticism on myself and apply it to him, for when Mr. Hamilton smiled he looked quite a different man,years younger and much better looking. Well, I was glad that he had such a good

opinion of my common sense.

My hands were likely to be full of business until after Christmas. Mrs. Marshall was growing gradually weaker, and Mr. Hamilton Was doubtful whether she would last to see the New Year in. Her husband would be home on Christmas Eve; his work at Lewes would be finished by then, and he hoped to find work nearer home. Poor Many told me this with tears in her eyes; her one prayer was that she might be spared to see Andrew again. "He has been a good husband to me, and has kept out of the public house for the him," finished the poor woman; but when I repeated this to Mr. Hamilton he shock his head. "A few hours may take her off any day," he said ; "it is only a wonder that she has lasted so long. I believe she is keeping hevself alive by the sacer force of her longing to see her husband. Women are strange creatures, Miss Garston."

My new patient was likely to give me plenty of occupation, I found the poor little fellow, looking very forlorn and dull, lying in a dark corner of a large shilly garret, which was evidently shared by two or three brothers.

Mrs. Bell. who had left her washing-tub to accompany me up-stairs, stood drying her arms on her apron, and talking in a highpitched querulous voice. " No one can say I have not been unfortunate this year," she grumbled. "There's Bell, he gets worse and worse and worse. I fetched him myself out of the Man and plough last Saturday night, where he was drinking the money that was to buy the children bread. 'Do you call yourself a man or a brute ?" I says, but in my opinion it's wronging the poor brutes to compare them with such as him, 'Work!' says he; 'why don't you work yourself!' when I am at that wash-too from morning ill night." "And now poor Robin is adding to your

trouble, Mrs. Bell," I observed, with a pity-ing look at the child's white face and large wistful eyes.

"Ay, he has gone and done it now," she returned, with a touch of motherly feeling; if it was a slide those bad boys had made, and Robbie came down on it with his crutch under him. He is always in trouble, is Robbie, has had more illnesses than all the children put together; there is nothing Robin there's Bell, now, makes more of a fuss over Rob than over the others; if there is anything that will keep him away from the Man and Plough, it is Rob taking him out some-

66 Ay, father's promised to pit with me this evening," observed Robin, in a faint little treble.

(To be continued.)

RUSSIA MEANS BUSINESS. ST. PETERBRURG, June 3.—The Novo Vremya says Russia never agreed to regard Afghanistan as outside of her influence. There was only a conversational change of views during Russia K bive campaign. "Since that time a great change has takin place, and Russia has become a neighbor of Afghanistan." (We can only supthe Aghan frontier provinces which she deemed expedient, and would not be conferred whether they were agreeable to England or not. The Novost says England is mistaken in neplecting to condiliate Russia. If the Ameer is over-

A coquette is like a war veteran -the goes through many engagements, the waste waste the sufficient with both the seast him the force