

but sometimes, also, by the grave and dignified Mr. Ruthven, whom, till lately, all but Charlie had come to consider almost a stranger. Still the end of May was come, and nothing was said as to the day when they expected to set sail.

But before that time, great news had come from another quarter. Norman and his family were coming East. A succession of childish illnesses had visited his little ones, and had left both mother and children in need of more bracing air than their home could boast of in the summer time, and they were all coming to take up their abode for a month or two, on the Gulf, up which health-bearing breezes from the ocean never cease to blow. Graeme was to go with them. As many more as could be persuaded were to go, too, but Graeme certainly; and then she was to go home with them, to the West, when their summer holiday should be over.

This was Norman's view of the matter. Graeme's plans were not sufficiently arranged as yet for her to say either yes or no, with regard to it. In the meantime, there were many preparations to be made for their coming, and Graeme wrote to hasten these arrangements, so that they might be in time for the wedding.

"And if only Will comes, we shall all be together again once more," said she, with a long breath.

"To say nothing of Norman's boys, and his wonderful daughter, and Fanny's young gentleman, who will compare with any of them now, I think," said Rose.

"We will have a house full and a merry wedding," said Arthur. "Though it won't be as grand as the other one, Rosie, I'm afraid. If we only could have Mrs. Snow here, Graeme?"

Graeme shook her head.

"I am afraid that can hardly be in the present state of her health. Not that she is ill, but Mr. Snow thinks the journey would be too much for her. I am afraid it is not to be thought of?"

"Never mind—Charlie and Rosie can go round that way and get her blessing. That will be the next best thing to