

minute and away, as a gleam of scarlet and white through a break in the woodland told them that they had again fallen in with the lost hunt.

Such a run they had in the afternoon ! thirty-five minutes without a check ; it quite eclipsed the little sport of the morning.

It was very late that afternoon when Georgie and her father, stiff, tired, and muddy, dismounted at their own hall door, and limped into the house, whilst their steeds, looking tucked up and draggled, were led away to their well-earned gruel.

Little Flora came flying down stairs three steps at a time to meet them.

"Have you killed a fox, papa ? where is his head ?" she cried, clinging to her father's muddy coat tails.

Mrs. Travers, following slowly, lugubriously said it was a mercy they hadn't broken their necks this time, as if they were in the habit of doing so.

"Oh papa !" cried little Flora, "do let me ride with you some day on Snowflake ; I know I could go quite well without a leading rein."

"So you shall, my little girl," said the Squire, lifting her up and kissing her, "I'll make another Georgie of you some day, when she goes and marries, and leaves her old daddy !" and the old man winked and nodded at his eldest daughter in a manner that made her quite hopeful about the confession that was hanging over her.

"Please go and take off your dirty things, Georgie, and make haste," said her mother. "Flora, you naughty child, you have covered your nice clean frock with mud ; and I wish, Mr. Travers, you wouldn't put such ideas in the child's head ; I am sure one daughter rushing about all day, with a pack of men, and unsexing herself among stable boys is enough in a family. I hope to see Flora grow up a lady like her sister Mary."

"Stuff and nonsense !" growled the Squire, fiercely ; "there isn't one of 'em can hold a candle to Georgie ; I won't hear her abused, ma'am. Unsexed, indeed ! did ye ever hear such a word ! d'ye want her to ride in a flannel petticoat ? is it her wearing breeches that you mind ?"

"Don't be so coarse, Squire," said his wife, looking deeply offended, whilst her spouse retired into his dressing-room with a loud guffaw of certainly rather unrefined laughter.

It was in the evening, after dinner, when the Squire had retired to his study to smoke his nocturnal pipe that Georgie came and stood at the back of her father's chair.

"Papa, I have something to say to you," she began, softly stroking the top of his bald head.

"What is it, my girl ? I suppose you want another hunter this winter : well, I have been thinking myself the chestnut is looking a little bit shaky on his fore-legs, though there's no doubt he carried you well to-day, very well—couldn't have gone better ; but still I know he won't last for ever. There's that brown mare, I meant her for you, and—there, I'll give her to you outright for your own ; but I suppose you'll be wanting another. Well, if you're a good girl I'll see what I can do for you."

"But, papa, it isn't about horses at all," said Georgie, timidly.

"Not about horses !" he exclaimed, looking up at her. "Well, what is it, eh ?"

"You—you said to-day, papa—perhaps some day I might—I might think about marriage."

"Eh ? what, what ! marriage, is it ? Ah, my girl, I shan't know how to part with you, but I won't be selfish ; never fear, my dear, the old man won't be selfish. I won't say nay to any good man who will make my little girl happy and keep her as well mounted as she deserves to be. Who is the man ? out with it, Georgie ; who is the happy man ?"

"Oh, papa, I am afraid it isn't at all a good match for me, not so good as you would like, but he is such a dear fellow, and I am so very fond of him."

"Well—out with it ; who is he ?" said her father impatiently.

"Wattie Ellison !" faltered the girl, hanging down her head.

"*What !*" thundered the Squire, jumping up from his chair and turning round on her—whilst his best meerschaum pipe fell shattered at his feet. "*What ?* how dare you mention that good-for-nothing young scoundrel to me ? how dare you think of such a thing ? confound his impudence ! so that's what all your riding about together has come to, is it ! I wouldn't have believed it of you, Georgie, I wouldn't have believed it !"

"Oh, papa, don't be so angry," cried Georgie, tearfully clasping her hands toge-