

CHAPTER IV.

IN MORRISON STREET.

The first night in Morrison street was a very sleepless one. Mary had begun to unpack after her meal the evening before; but she soon gave up that work in despair. Accustomed as she had been to a large, old-fashioned bedroom, well furnished, with a roomy wardrobe, a well-made old chest of drawers, a big old dower-chest, in which clothes not immediately in use could be folded away, and a cupboard in the wall, the accommodation in Miss Curtice's best bedroom, good though it was, and suited to the size of the chamber, seemed meagre indeed. So Mary had decided to try and sleep with her possessions around her, and just to repack some of them for Miss Curtice to stow away as she suggested.

"I must have some familiar objects for my eyes to rest on to-morrow when I awake," she said to herself, "else I shall feel like the little old woman in the nursery rhyme who fell asleep by the roadside, and on waking to find her petticoats 'all cut round about,' doubts if it be really herself, until her little dog recognizes her. Ah, my poor dear Bully, if you were only here I would not feel so lonely!"

And then poor Mary fell to weeping. Brave though she was, it was all terribly lonely and strange to her. Soon she roused herself; the outburst had relieved her burdened heart, and she opened a box which held the portraits of her father and her mother. These she hung up over the mantel. On another wall a sketch of Bully, drawn by Joyce's clever pencil, was placed, and a photograph of the dear old Moss. A pair of small Dresden china vases, a grotesque old china bird and two figures—old Flaxman's design, made by Wedgwood—replaced the stiff ornaments of the mantel, and Mary felt more cheerful as she surveyed them. On her moorlands she had had so few companions that the characters in her favorite novels had been more real to her than they are to many town girls, and her mind reverted often to this heroine or that whose personality had impressed itself on her.

"There," she thought, as she gave some finishing touches to the arrangement of her little treasures, "I am like that woman in . . . of whom the author said she was a true dweller in tents, a wanderer without a permanent home, yet loving the beautiful. She carried always with her a few properties with which she sought to give to each place in which she sojourned an impress of her own individuality—familiar and suggestive touches which took away the strangeness of new surroundings."