

"There has been very little going on. I never knew such a quiet week. I have been out on the bicycle alone every day after bank hours and so many of the fellows are away that I have had double work."

"Bridget told me there was a great deal of sickness in town, and that lots of people were going away. You look very well."

"I never was better in my life! I feel as if a weight had been lifted from my heart."

He spoke impulsively, and said the last words almost against his will.

"Well, there's something strange about you to-day. Were you as peculiar at the 'at home'?"

"Yes, I was a little peculiar," he said sheepishly.

"Poor Mrs. Johnson, after going to so much trouble!"

"I wasn't rude to Mrs. Johnson, I hardly spoke to her—I say, that's a splendid looking horse in that field."

"Whom were you rude to, then?" she inquired laughingly.

"Katie Watkins, since you ask me," and he met her glance a little defiantly.

"I am sorry I asked you rude questions, Charley, and I don't know why I was so inquisitive," answered the girl humbly. Then she continued with an attempt at carelessness, "I dare say it is not so very serious though, for Miss Watkins is sure to forgive and forget, so I don't suppose there's much harm done."

"There is no harm done, Louie; but I don't think Miss Watkins will ever forgive me."

"Why, what ever did you say to her?—but you're losing your afternoon's ride."

"I told her I proposed to her because she had money," answered the young man with a frown upon his face and a heightened colour, while he looked straight before him.

"Oh, Charley! how could you say such a thing? You ought to be ashamed of yourself."