

out. What had happened to this express train? The unaccustomed sound startled the village also. At many a dinner-table surprised voices said: "Why, what on earth is the down express stopping here for? Something must have broken."

"Some director or other to be put off," said others; "they have it all their own way on the road."

In the mean time Draxy Miller was walking slowly up the first street she saw, wondering what she should do next. The conductor had almost lift her off the train; had said, "God bless you, Miss," and the train was gone, before she could be sure he heard her thank him.

"I hope she'll get her money," thought the conductor. "I'd like to see the man that wouldn't give her what she asked for."

So the benediction and protection of good wishes from strangers as well as from friends, floated on the very air through which Draxy walked, all unconscious of the invisible blessings.

She walked a long way before she met any one of whom she liked to ask direction. At last she saw an elderly man standing under a lamp-post, reading a letter. Draxy studied his face, and then stopped quietly by his side without speaking. He looked up.

"I thought as soon as you had finished reading your letter, sir, I would ask you to tell me where Stephen Potter lives."

It was marvellous what an ineffable charm there was in the subtle mixture of courtesy and simplicity in Draxy's manner.

"I am going directly by his house myself, and will show you," replied the old gentleman. "Pray let me take your bag, Miss."

"Was it for you," he added, suddenly recollecting the strange stopping of the express train, "was it for you the express train stopped just now?"

"Yes, sir," said Draxy. "The conductor very kindly put me off."

The old gentleman's curiosity was strongly roused, but he forbore asking any further questions until he left Draxy on the steps of the house, when he said; "Are they expecting you?"

"Oh no, sir," said Draxy quietly. "I do not know them."

"Most extraordinary thing," muttered the old gentleman, as he walked on. He was a lawyer, and could not escape from the professional habit of looking upon all uncommon incidents as clues.

Draxy Miller's heart beat faster than usual as she was shown into Stephen Potter's library. She had said to the servant simply, "Tell Mr. Potter that Miss Miller would like to see him alone."

The grandeur of the house, the richness of the furniture, would have embarrassed her, except that it made her stern as she thought of her father's poverty. "How little a sum it must be to this man," she thought.