

*(MARY crosses to HIM. The sight of Mary seems to worry him as if he did not know what to do with her.)*

CRAVEN: *(Cont.)* Are you well?

MARY: Yes.

CRAVEN: Do they take good care of you?

MARY: Yes.

CRAVEN: You are very thin.

MARY: I'm getting fatter.

CRAVEN: *(Rubs his forehead fretfully.)* I forgot you. I intended to send you a governess or a nurse, or something of that sort, but I forgot.

MARY: Please ... *(Lump in throat.)* Please.

CRAVEN: What do you want to say?

MARY: I am -- I am too big for a nurse. And please -- please don't make me have a governess yet!

CRAVEN: *(Absentmindedly.)* That was what the Sowerby woman said.

MARY: *(Stammering.)* Is she -- is she Martha's mother?

CRAVEN: Yes, I think so.

MARY: She knows about children. She has twelve. She knows.

CRAVEN: *(Rousing himself.)* What do you want to do?

MARY: I want to play out of doors. ... I never liked it in India. It was too hot.

CRAVEN: Mrs. Sowerby said it would do you good. Perhaps it will. She thought you had better get stronger before you had a governess. ... Where do you play?

MARY: Everywhere. I skip and run and look about to see if things are beginning to stick up out of the earth. I don't do any harm.

CRAVEN: You could not do any harm, a child like you. You may do what you like.

MARY: *(Tremulously.)* May I?

CRAVEN: Don't look so frightened. Of course you may. I am your guardian, though I am a poor one for any child. I cannot give you time or attention. I am too ill, and wretched, and distracted.