

invited me to tea in her room that same afternoon. You may be sure I never 'begged to be excused'—never 'had much pleasure in regretting that I was unable to accept Miss Mary's polite invitation.' Not I! I jumped and capered round two or three times, and told the housemaid I should be all ready to come; and then, oh! how slowly the hours went until tea-time arrived. As soon as dinner was over, I used to begin to dress myself. Mamma lent me some of her things, or, if she were not at home, papa let me go to her wardrobe and take them,—a long skirt and an apron and a pair of mittens, and a lace cap with a flower in it, for you know a great part of the fun of having tea with aunt Mary was that she behaved to me as if I had been a grown-up lady, and not a little girl at all.

At five o'clock (for an early hour was always mentioned) I tripped away to my engagement, feeling as grand as could be in my long petticoat, and knocked at the door of the little room. When aunt Mary opened it, she used to shake hands with me, just, you know, as if I had come from a long way off, instead of only from the