

When the child was born, a poor lonely old woman, named Betsey Cole, who lived in the woods between the Rivers plantation and town, sent the colonel word that the little lass would grow up to be both good and beautiful. Nothing would do after that but the colonel must send the fortune-teller a wagon-load of provisions, and he kept it up every Christmas as long as Betsey Cole lived.

The fortune-teller certainly made no mistake in her prediction. The child grew to be the most beautiful young woman in all that region. The colonel named her Mary after his mother, and the name seemed to fit her, for her character was as lovely as her face. Even the women and little children loved her, and when this kind of manifestation is made over a girl, it is needless to inquire about her character or disposition.

It might be supposed that Mary had a lover, but if so, no one knew it but her own sweet self. Her father, the colonel, declared she was as cool as a cucumber when the boys were around, and the young men who raved over her thought she was even cooler than a cucumber. And yet she had her father's ardent temperament and good-nature, and