

pared. She would frown at first, and then throw her arms around Mary, and tell her what a naughty girl she had been.

But all this mental preparation was in vain. Weeks, months, and years passed by, but Mary never came. When the colonel and Cousin Rebecca T. woke up to their new prosperity, they were very busily engaged for some time in fitting themselves to it. It was during this period that Mary and her husband disappeared. The colonel heard in a vague way that Laban Pierson had moved to Atlanta, and that from Atlanta he had gone out West. All the rest was mystery.

But it was no mystery to Laban and Mary. For a little while their affairs went along comfortably. Laban became the conductor of a passenger-train on the main line of the Central of Georgia. Then he moved to Atlanta. Afterward he accepted a position on the Louisville and Nashville Railway, and there had the misfortune to lose a leg in a collision. This was the beginning of troubles that seemed to pursue Laban and Mary. Poverty laid its grim hand upon them at every turn. Mary did the best she could. She was indeed a helpmate and a comforter; she