

ponies were given an extra handful of oats, the bridles polished.

Richard Ashley had been at Eton for four years. He was a tall, good-looking boy of eighteen and resembled his father in many ways. Helen was a slip of a girl of sixteen, with fair curly hair. She had been sent away to a convent in France "to learn to be a lady," as her mother said. Helen only laughed and declared she was not meant to be a lady. In spite of her mischievous ways she was well liked, both at the village in which she lived and also at the convent.

At the French convent Helen had met another English girl called Rae Peterson—the only two English girls in the large convent. Helen had at once been attracted by Rae and the two had become firm friends.

Just before the holidays Helen walked up to Rae and said, "Are you going anywhere for the holidays, Rae?"

"No," said Rae, "my mother and father have gone to America and I have to stay here."

"No you won't, if I can help it," said Helen, "would you like to come to my home?"

"I should love it," said Rae fervently.

After this conversation Helen had written to Lady Ashley:

"Dear Mum,—Please could I bring a friend home? Her mother and father have gone to America."

A few weeks later the letter had been answered by this:

"Dear Helen,—Yes, bring your friend home, I should like to have her. Write again and tell Dad where to meet you."

The scene now changes to the busy port of Calais in France. Two smartly dressed girls stood beside a pile of luggage on the wharf. Soon they were on the boat and after a few hours arrived in Southampton. Here Sir Richard Ashley met them and drove them to the house. Lady Ashley was waiting at the door to welcome them. As they got out of the car she said, "Welcome to Chiltern Manor, Rae. I hope you will have happy holidays here."

As Rae lay in bed that night she thought over the events of the day, what a welcome she had had, how kind they all were! With these pleasant thoughts in her mind she fell asleep.

She was wakened by a bright light shining through her window. She quickly pulled on her slippers and dressing gown and tip-toed along the corridor towards the light. She