Silver Bottle; or, The Adventures of Little Marlboro in Search of H

J. H. Ingraham

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The Silver Bottle; or, The Adventures of Little Marlboro in Search of His Father

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PART I

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I AM `Little Marlboro'.' That is my name, I may as well say at once. I dare say there are better names, and I dare say there are much worse names; but good or bad my name is Little Marlboro', and neither more nor less than Little Marlboro'! But let me begin at the beginning! for as I intend to write a true and veracious history of my life, I wish to start fair with my reader, giving and taking no advantage in the outset.

As my memory does not extend farther back than my third year, I must, in common with all my readers, take the tradition of others touching the circumstances of my birth and infancy. But it will be very soon seen, that, in reference to my birth, I am fully as much in the dark as an anxious son would care to be respecting such a personal matter; as I am not able, with any certainty, to fix upon any progenitors until I reach my father Adam and my mother Eve, who are the only parents I can positively lay claim to.

But the reader shall know all that I know touching this interesting matter of my parentage. The knowledge came to me through the good woman, Dame Darwell, who is to be hereafter mentioned, and to whom I owe all the cares and duties, which should have been mine from the hands and heart of a mother. I will begin the narrative of my earlier years after the fashion of story writers; though so far from writing a story I am penning a veritable history, in which there may, nevertheless, be discovered before the end no little romance.

There stands on the road−side not far from the Third Turnpike Gate on the old Providence and Boston stage road a small but neat Inn. It has nothing particular to attract attention but an indefinable air of *snugness* and comfort. The practised traveller as he came near could see from its well swept stone step, the glimpse of its sanded tap−room floor, its dimity curtained windows, with a pot of geranium on the sill, and the shrub rose bush beneath, and the woodbine creeping above the humble portal, that there were to be had within, clean, well−aired beds, abundant and well cooked viands, and home−like welcome; and his expectations were not disappointed. The Inn was situated close by the way side, and few travellers passed it by without giving Dame Darwell a call. Her apple pies, her pumpkin pies, her peach sauce, her golden butter, her rich cream and snow−white cakes long dwelt in the memories of those who had once had the happiness of being her guests. Although she lived but nine miles from Boston, where travellers might be supposed to be best provided for, those who `knew her fame,' in journeying in chaise or on horseback (for rail−roads were not in those days) from Boston, would delay their breakfast till they reached `The Silver Bottle;' or if going into the city, take their supper earlier than usual to get it served up by the tidy and hospitable hostess of this popular Inn. The house was a long, rambling edifice of one story, with every room on one floor; it had a large garden half encircling it, and spacious barns in the rear; two elms of great age and majesty grew before the door completely covering the Inn with shade and green leaves. A red pump of icy cold water stood at one corner, beneath the spout of which was a huge watering rough known to every horse and hoof for half a mile around. The cattle seemed to love the pump at `The Silver Bottle' as much as traveller's loved the entertainment within. Pleasant fields and green meadow with woodlands and sparkling streams were in sight from the ever open door of the Inn, and the birds loved the trees and the shrubbery about Dame Darwell's house better than any other; for there were more robins' nests and grey wrens' nests and yellow birds' nests in her trees than in those of any body else; and from earlier spring till the last leaf of autumn fell, the song of birds was heard around her doors and windows. Dame Darwell had no need to keep birds in cages.

Such was the Silver Bottle Inn at the time of which I write. Dame Darwell, as Hetty Caton, at eighteen had reigned a rustic belle; when bluff George Darwell won her heart and hand from many competitors. George was the only son of a substantial Inn−keeper and heir to all his father's possessions, and after Hetty became his wife he took her home and made her landlady of the Inn. It had, in his father's time, been called the `Quart Mug;' and George retained the old sign and style. But Hetty, his young bride, who had certain refined ideas very execusable in a belle, good natured and sensible too, as she was, did not like the name and did not hesitate to tell George as much. But George could not see the matter with her eyes and very kindly and very firmly refused to change it.

`My father enriched me, dear wife, under this old sign of the `Quart Mug,' and placed me in a situation to wed the best and fairest of all the maidens my eyes ever looked upon! But for that `Quart Mug,' Hetty, I should not have had the happiness of calling you my wife and making you the mistress of this comfortable house!'

Hetty could not utter a word in reply to such arguments as these, and so the old sign board with its picture of a quart mug was suffered to swing as of old beneath the branches of the old elm that overshadowed the pump.

But although these reasons given by George were conclusive, they did not wholly set to rest the matter in the mind of his loving wife. She, however, said no more about it, resolved to yield her own notions to her husband's wishes.

For six years this happy couple lived together in the most perfect harmony, the idea of the vulgarity in the sound of `The Quart Mug,' gradually fading from Mrs. Darwell's mind. With years she had grown less fastidious; yet in heart, if she could have had her way she would have yet taken down the old sign and replaced it by a new one with a more pleasing sound. The sixth anniversary of their marriage had arrived and George rode into Boston to purchase his wife a gift of affection, as had each year been his custom. But when Hetty's eyes beheld him in prideful joy ride gallantly away from the stoop, mounted on a noble, high spirited horse he had just bought, they looked upon him alive for the last time! That evening he was brought back to the Inn, he had left in the morning with such buoyant feelings, a corpse. His horse had been suddenly affrighted by the explosion of rocks near town, and becoming unmanageable had dashed off with him at full speed and turning a corner hurled his rider to the ground and fell upon him. The unfortunate man was taken up insensible, but never breathed again!

I will pass over the grief—the anguish of sorrow—which overwhelmed the bereaved widow. For many days she refused all consolation; for her heart was bound up in her love for her dead husband! But time which heals all wounds of the heart, gradually restored tranquility to her mind; but a shade of tender melancholy, I can remember, was never banished from her fine features. Good, benevolent, and noble woman! how shall I ever recal thee without tender emotions—without tears of gratitude? I now sympathise with thy widowed sorrows, though then God had not given me being. I will do thee justice, thou kind of heart and true; for I am about to speak much of thee and of thy goodness to me! At thy few failings the reader shall smile! for thy virtues he shall praise thee!

For five years the widow of George Darwell remained hostess of the Quart Mug. During this time, more than once had she been tempted to make a change in the name of the Inn: but the memory of George withheld the act; though still the idea grew none the less prominent in her thoughts. At length as years passed by, and she gradually separated her identity with the dead, as the living, and particularly widows, in time naturally do, she thought less of George's wishes and more of her own. Dame Darwell, as she was now generally designated, was in her thirty−fifth year, buxome, handsome, good natured, and the very soul of kindness and benevolence. She had got the reputation of her house spread wide for its neatness, good taste, and comfortable entertainment, and the `best company of the land,' as she often used to say stopped to dine or sleep there. Five Governor's, and a score of Judges at least, and Councellors without number, going to and from the Capital and the Courts, had been entertained by her. For the sake of this respectable order of her guests, the name of the Inn troubled her very much. The idea of changing it was her hobby. We all have a hobby of some kind or other, and this was Dame Darwell's hobby.

One pleasant afternoon in June, the good lady was sitting in the front door of the Inn knitting a very shapely stocking out of blue and white yarn. The air was warm and balmy with the breath of flowers; the windows of the tap and the little parlor were all up; the birds were twittering in the cool shadows of the branches; the water trickled from the end of the spile of the pump into the trough; the fields in front were green and waving; the sky was without a cloud, save a little group in the west sleeping upon the horizon like a pile of pillows. The cook was seated in the kitchen door dressed up and mending her Sunday gown; the cat was crouched on the stone step; the poultry were lazily picking about the door; the cows stood in the coolest shadow of the barn; the hostler and his boy were lying idly and half asleep upon a heap of hay in the sun, by the stable door: the old dog was drowsing on the grass in front; and peace and quiet—the sweet tranquility of a summer afternoon reigned around. Dame Darwell's heart was at peace also; and her soul reflected all the serene beauty of the hour.

She sat so, that, as she occasionally lifted her eyes from her stocking (for she was `closing the heel,' which was an operation that demanded a little more attention than usual) she could not only see some distance from the road, but was also in full view of the old sign of `The Quart Mug.' In every earthly Paradise there is a temptation! The old sign was the apple in this. That very day, Dame Darwell's cousin, Mariah, an old maid, who being homeless

had kindly been given a home by the benevolent hostess, knowing the widow's foible, and having similar tastidious notions of her own about the matter, had been hinting to good Dame Darwell as plainly as she dared, `how much more respectable it would be to have another name for the Inn.' Mariah and her aunt Keezy, another protege of the charitable widow who also made the Inn her home, were out that afternoon to attend a sewing−circle for sending clothes to the naked little heathen, letting the naked little heathen in the streets go naked, in the name of missionary charity! Dame Darwell preferred staying at home and clothing the Christian beggar whom Providence might send by her door!

The sign, as we have said, was in full sight of the good Dame as she sat in her porch, and she could not help looking up to it very often, especially as a robin with a worm dangling from his yellow bill, had perched himself upon it, to rest a moment before he should fly across the `Inn yard' to his nest in the old apple tree by the corner of the kitchen. Every time she looked up she thought the old sign was more and more vulgar; and at length it took such hold of her mind that it appeared to her, as if there could not be found in the whole English language, two words so unsightly and so low in their meaning. The good dame's hobby had at length fairly taken the bit in its teeth.

`Well, I declare it *is* a very vulgar name for a genteel Inn,' said Dame Darwell laying her stocking down upon her knee and looking very positively at the obnoxious words! `It might have done very well in old Captain Darwell's time, and even when George was alive! But things are different now! Inn's are out of fashion even in some places and every thing is called `Hotel!' But whatever change I make, I will always have this an Inn! It means comfort and a home. But there is no need in having such a name for it. `The Quart Mug!' How coarse it sounds! I wonder how I could bear it so long. George wont feel it now, and besides the sign is getting old and will soon fall down, and I *must* have a new one! Yes, I must get a new sign that is a certain. '

Here the good dame's countenance lighted up with pleasure. She had hit upon a new idea! She must have a NEW sign, and that would be an excuse far putting on a new name. Her satisfaction at having hit upon this idea was plaudy visible in her face.

`Yes, it is settled,' she said with emphasis. `I will have a new sign within three days.'

It chanced that at this moment John Blake the carpenter from the next village came by carrying a saw in one hand and a window sash and some pieces of board in the other. She instantly called to him, and in five minutes had bargained for a new sign of precisely the dimensions of the old one, to be completed the next day.

`And shall I give it to Brown when it is done, to paint the old mug on it, ma'm?'

`No: tell Brown to paint it sky−blue, as the old one was before it got so rusty, and then I will call and let him know what I am to have on it.'

The carpenter went his way, and Dame Darwell resumed her knitting with an air of peculiar satisfaction on her features; every little while as she would knit a needle off she would glance up to the old sign with a sort of triumphant air; yet not without feeling a sort of guilty sense of being about to do a very wrong thing in taking down the sign under which she and her husband and her husband's father had so long prospered. But she defended herself against her conscience with the reflection that the sign was ready to fall, and a *new* one *must* take the place of it. While she was thus employed in her thoughts and with her fingers, a four−wheeled chaise with two horses attached appeared on the pike in the direction of Providonce, and as it was advancing at very fast speed, it, the next moment, drove up before the porch of `The Quart Mug.'

CHAPTER II.

How a gentleman and lady alighted at the Inn—Dame Darwell's curiosity defeated— The gentleman orders a strange beverage—The guest and Dame Darwell converse together—The departure of the guests .

The old mahogany clock in the tap struck four precisely as the carriage drew up before the little vine−covered porch of the Inn, in the doorway of which Dame Darwell was seated knitting, and busily engaged in her thoughts in inventing a new and agreeable sounding name for the sign she had ordered John Blake to make for her. The carriage, as she relates the story, and as I have heard her tell it, at least three hundred and one times, was a sort of baroache, painted yellow and lined with drab; a very genteel, convenient traveling chaise for two persons. The horses were well−fed bays, but came up white with foam; and the harness was brass mounted, with a gilt eagle treading upon a serpent on the blinders. Of this Dame Darwell was positive. They were driven by a black man, who had a black cockade in his hat, and was dressed in a blue coat in gilt buttons, with an eagle on them, white waistcoat with flaps and drab breeches, He was a *very* black man, and also very much of a gentleman in his manners, said Dame Darwell. He wore yellow gloves also, and had a white pocket handkerchief, the good Dame noticed. But the horses, the harness, the gilt eagle on the blinders, the yellow barouche, the black driver in his gloves and cockade, were all a secondary matter, and only for a moment diverted the attention of the critical eye of the worthy hostess from the occupants of the chaise.

These were a gentleman and lady. The gentleman were a black cloak, and was dressed in mourning, and the lady wore a deep mourning veil which concealed her face. They both seemed young. Dame Darwell judging that the gentleman, whom she never failed to say was `remarkably handsome and civil−like, and very *acrostick* in his manner,' could not have been above eight and twenty. On the boot was a large round topped trunk of buff leather firmly strapped to the foot board, and in the carriage at their feet, a large traveling basket with a cover.

Dame Darwell, long practised to judge of her guests at a single glance, observed all that I have described, while the black driver was letting down the steps of the barouche. The gentleman sprang out first, and bowing to the good dame as she stood in the door with her knitting, asked,

`Are you the hostess, madam?'

`Yes, sir,' answered Dame Darwell, with a smile of welcome that never failed to detain all comers, if not to a lodging at least to a meal,

`Can I be accommodated here to−night, with my horses?'

`Certainly, sir, with pleasure. I have nice, pleasant rooms, and sweet beds. It is many a gentleman, and lady I have had the happiness of entertaining, and they were sure to come a second time, though I say it, sir, that perhaps shouldn't. And the good hostess smiled so pleasantly, that the gentleman smiled too, and said he would like to be her guest until the next morning.

`It is your lady, I presume air?' said Dame Darwell, who was very particular in some things.

The gentleman colored, glanced at the lady who still sat in the carriage veiled, and then nodded to Dame Darwell very slightly, as much as to say that it was a thing of course. Dame Darwell was satisfied by the nod and invited them in.

`The lady will at once go to a room,' said the gentleman, as he handed her from the carriage, Dame Darwell now saw that she was elegant in person, and her air very lady−like.

`I will show you the room, madam,' said Dame Darwell, preparing to precede the gentleman and lady; but the lady lingered until her traveling basket was taken out by the black man, who now, that Dick had been waked up by the carriage, and had taken the horses' heads, was at liberty to follow them; which he did, with the basket, carrying it very carefully. Dame Darwell observed that the lady kept turning back as they walked through the long passage and watching it with great anxiety, speaking more than once to the man to be careful, until the gentleman spoke sharply in a low tone to her, when she was silent. The room was on the same floor with the tap, but at some distance, quite at the end of the house; one window opening into the garden and two facing the turnpike, but covered with woodbine and honey suckle in full flower. The chamber was spacious and neat in its arrangements,

with white coverlid, white bed hangings, white window curtains, and neat strips of carpet laid upon the snow−white floor before the bed, and the little looking−glass stand. All was neat as wax, and yet comfortable and home−like. Two old fashioned stuffed arm chairs covered with needle−work invited the weary traveler to repose his limbs, and antiquated rocking−chairs, with cushions of rich embroidery, stood on each side of the tiled fire−place, which was now filled with branches of asparagus placed in a china flower−pot.

Dame Darwell having opened the door in this neat apartment, which she used to call the `Court Chamber,' because the Judges always occupied it, she curtesied and asked them when when they would have tea.

`I will let you know in a few minutes, Madam,' said the gentleman: and the hostess taking this for a polite intimation that they desired to be left alone, she curtesied, smiled, and retired to the tap room, followed by the black man who had left the basket.

`You have driven fast, Mr. Coachman,' said Dame Darwell as she reached the porch, turning and addressing the black.

`Yes, marm! Massa al'ays luv drive 'im fas',' answered the negro, touching his hat and passing out of the door to his horses.

`Come from Providence?'

`No marm, New York!' answered the black. `Now, if you please, sar,' he continued addressing the hostler, `lead dese horses to de stable and leave the carriage here; when I on−strap dis trunk and carry im in to massa, I go help you take car' ob im!'

`Your master is going to Boston, I suppose,' said Dame Darwell, after the horses had been taken out and led away.

`I don't kno', marm. Master nebber tell niggar whar he go; only he say, *dar* de road! and niggar drive 'long de road what afore him face, and dat all he kno' 'bout whar massa go to!'

Dame Darwell says she looked very closely into the negro's face on receiving this reply, with the suspicion that the fellow knew more than he would tell. But when he saw she was observing him, he turned his face away and went very busily engaging himself in unlashing the trunk from behind the barouche. At this moment the gentleman made his appearance. Dame Darwell said he was a tall man, with a fine hazel eye, chesnut colored hair, a fine smile and white teeth. `He was as perfect a gentleman to look at as I ever wish to see.' Dame Darwell never failed to add, when she came to this part of the recital. I will now continue it in her own words:

`He comed to me as I was looking at the wooly negro man, and as he had no cloak on now, I saw he wore a black satin vest, and taking out of a little fob in the breast of it the handsomest gold watch I ever see, he said, perlite and civil, as one could wish to have a gentleman,

`Madam, it is now a little past four! We will have tea at five, if you will take the trouble to order it!'

`Certainly, sir: it ie no trouble in the world! You can have it earlier if you choose,' said I.

`That hour will answer, especially as I have concluded that I will ride on instead of stopping for the night as I intended.

I said at onct, not a little alarmed,

`Don't my rooms and the accommodations suit you and your lady, sir!' Perhaps I spoke a little quick, for he looked as if he saw that I did.

`No apartments could be pleasanter; and I assure you we are the losers to leave such pleasant accommdation for others which are uncertain. If any thing could urge us to remain it would be the temptations held out by your agreeable house. The night is cool and I wish to take advantage of it to pursue my journey.'

I was perfectly satisfied at this explanation, though I felt sorry not to keep them till next day; for I had somehow taken up a strange curiosity about 'em, I wanted to gratify; and besides they looked like such nice people I wanted to have them in my house. And what was more I hadn't seen the face of the lady yet; for she kept it closely veiled all the time going through the passage. I only heard her voice speaking to the black coachman about carrying the basket, and it was such a sweet one, I was on a tenter to get a sight of her face. It was pitiful to see her in deep mourning, and doubtless, I thought to myself, she is in great sorrow. Perhaps she has lost her only child; and when I thought of that I felt tears coming into my eyes; for though I hant any little blessings myself, I could sympathise with mother's as had 'em and lost 'em. Well, to the gentleman! When I told him I was sorry he could not stay, he said I could not regret it more than he did; and then after a minute he asked me if I had any

fresh milk. I told him that I had morning's milk, but that if he wished I would have one of the critters milked. He said morning's milk would do if it was sweet; and asked me if I wouldn't boil a little and let him take it to his lady.

`A glass of good fresh milk would do your lady more good, or if you will wait five minutes, I will get her a cup of nice green tea,' says I.

`No, you are very kind. Boiled milk would be preferred! Please have it prepared and I will wait for it and take it in.'

`Oh, sir, I would rather take it to the lady myself. I can't bear you should carry it to her!'

`She prefers I should wait upon her,' he said smiling; I could not help noticing that though he smiled often when he spoke, yet he always smiled sadly; and when he said any thing to me, he seemed to be thinking of something on his mind.

Well, as some ladies love to have their husband's wait on 'em, especially young brides, I wasn't surprised, and went and got the milk boiled, wondering too, why a lady should prefer boiled mornings milk to fresh new milk right from the cow, or a good nice cup of Hyson, with loaf sugar and golden cream. But you'll see the reason by and bye; and then you wont wonder no more than I did afterwards!

I got the milk and brought it to him in the tap where he stood waiting for it with a newspaper in his hand which he had been reading.

`I had better take it, sir,' I said.

`No, I prefer to carry it. Have you some white sugar?' he asked.

I gave it to him, putting the milk on a small waiter in a pitcher, with a tumbler and the sugar bowl and a tea−spoon. Well, he took it and thanked me, and carried it to her, while I went to see about their tea. I had it ready at five o'clock, the table nicely set for two in the little back parlor, and every thing delicious on it. I was then going to the room door to call 'em, when he came in and said,

`You have,' says he `every thing very nice here. Mrs. Hostess, and I regret the lady (`he always said *the* lady, not *my* lady!' added Dame Darwell) cannot come out to the table! I will take in a cup of tea and a little toast on a waiter to her.'

I was sorry she couldn't come out, because when I get a table nicely fixed, I love to have people set down to it and enjoy it. But the poor lady it seemed must be ill, and so I cheerfully put on a waiter a little of every thing nice, and poured out a cup of tea with cream and sugar; and then I said I would take it to her.

`No, you are very kind, madam,' (he always said `madam' so perlite and foreign−like), says he; `I will take it to her myself and urge her to eat something. '

`Is your lady ill, sir?' I asked him.

`Fatigued, and a *little* indisposed,' he said. `As we start again so soon she wishes to take all the rest she can.'

`This was all very reasonable,' continued Dame Darwell; `and so he took the waiter to her, though it did look strange to see such a nice dressed gentleman carrying in a waiter. But then when I thought how it was for his sick wife it didn't appear so strange to me as it did kind in him. In a minute or two he came back and sat down, but first politely asked me to take the head of the table. So I sat down and poured out his tea for him. He ate a little while in silence, and then began asking me a great many questions about myself; how long I had been keeping the Inn; how long I had been a widow; if I had any children? and he asked them so very civil−like that I couldn't help answering them all, 'till he knew as much about me as I did about myself. He then said he thought I must be a very happy woman, `inasmuch as Providence had blessed me with a competence and a kind heart.'

`Perhaps, sir,' said I laughing, `if you should hear me scold in the kitchen and at the stable boys some days when we are pretty busy, you wouldn't think I had a very sweet temper.'

He laughed, but sadly as he always did, and said, `I am quite satisfied that you are kind and good! It is a pity that such excellent qualities as you seem to possess, should not have been bestowed upon one who, as a mother, could exercise them to the happiness of her children!'

When he said this in these very words, I felt as if I could shed tears. He had touched my heart where it was the tenderest. He saw I was affected and said,

`Your regrets are that you are not a mother, I perceive. But Providence may yet realise your wishes, at least in a degree!'

I don't know whether I blushed or not, but I felt my face glow, he was so plain spoken: but I said, trying to laugh,

`I shall never marry again, sir! I love the memory of my poor George too well ever to give the hand that he once loved to another!'

`Perhaps so; I doubt it not madam,' he said, taking a spoonful of my white honey to eat with his fresh bread; `but Providence sometimes affords the good and benevolent objects of affection by means that are unforeseen!'

I looked at him very hard: for I had no idea what he meant, and could not understand him. He saw my looks and then said,

`I mean, madam, in this way. A good wife once who desired offspring in vain, found one morning at her door, a babe in an open box. She could find no parents to claim it and adopted it for her own, and became a mother to it; and doubtless she loved it as if it had been her own!'

`I have not the least doubt she did,' I said warmly. `I am sure, if it had been a pretty baby and a boy too, *I* should have loved the little dear as if it was my own flesh and blood!'

When I said this he looked at me very earnestly, and then seemed gratified. He soon finished his supper, for he talked more than he ate, and didn't seem to have any appetite, though he praised every thing. In a little while he got up and after saying he should like to have his servant provided for, he went to the lady's room. Well, I didn't see either of them again until about dusk when he came into the tap. He was looking very pale and very grave. He called for his bill and settled it, giving me a gold piece, and I gave me the change in silver. I then asked him when he would have his horses; and he said as the moon rose soon after sunset, he would thank me to have them harnessed as soon as it rose. He then spoke to his servant to see that they were at the door at that time, and then went back again to the lady's room. I tried to get something out of the negro about his master and mistress; but he didn't seem to know anything. I don't believe he knew his right hand from his left; yet he was the perlitest nigger I ever saw afore or since. Well, the moon rose, and the horses were put in, the negro went for the travelling basket and placed it in the carriage, and the gentleman and lady, the latter after delaying a good deal and three times going back for something, came out, she leaning heavily on his arm, and weeping: for I distinctly heard her stifled sobs. She still wore her veil, and I tried to see her face, holding a candle in my hand purposely; and as good fortune would favor me, her veil caught the door catch as she was passing out and was drawn aside! It left exposed a sweet, lovely face, pale and tearful, and that of a person not more than two and twenty. The next moment she was seated in the carriage. The gentleman got in by her side the black man shut the door and mounted to his box, and the horses dashed off at full speed along the turnpike in the direction of Boston.

CHAPTER III.

How Dame Darwell and her relations discuss the strangers—Aunt Keezy gives her opinion—Charitable stockings for the Flat Foot Indians—The beggar woman and Dame Darwell's lesson to her Aunt and Couzin—The true charity of Dame Darwell contrasted with the false charity of the others—The alarm.

When good Dame Darwell got to that part of her story with which we have closed the last chapter, she was accustomed to clasp both of her hands together, lift her eyes towards the heavens and shake her head several times very mysteriously; and then say to her auditors,

`What I have told you is nothing, *nothing* to what is now coming. The carriage drove off, as I said, but I could see by the light of the moon that the lady leaned out and looked back towards the Inn till she was out of sight. Poor lady! I did not then know what she was looking back for. Well, I went into the house, and just as I did so couzin Mariah and aunt Keezy got home from the sewing circle, and we all sot down in the porch together because it was a pleasant moonshiny evening, and when they begun to tell me about the sewing circle, I stopped 'em by beginning to talk about the handsome gentleman in black and the beautiful lady in mourning; and how she wept.

`I expect,' says aunt Keezy, `she's just lost her father and goin' home from the funeral.'

`Perhaps her husband treats her bad,' says couzin Mariah; `I shouldn't wonder, 'specially as he wouldn't let no body wait on her but himself.'

`He waited on her coz she preferred it,' said I something quick; for couzin Mariah, because she was an old maid, was always making a slur at husband's, and I always stand up for 'em for dear George's sake.'

`It's very mysterious they should propose to stay all night and then go away at dark,' says aunt Keezy shaking her head. `Did you find out their names?'

`No,' said I, `but I saw on the brass plate on the trunk three letters, F. R. M.'

Aunt Keezy repeated the letters over and over, and so did couzin Mariah, but they nor I could make nothing of them. Well, we than began to talk about the sewing circle. Aunt Keezy said she had in all made two shirts, a gown, and hemmed four cotton pocket handkerchiefs to clothe the nakedness of the little Sandwich Islanders with; while couzin Mariah said she had made three waistcoats, three children's frocks, and knit six pairs of garters since spring for the Flat−Foot Indians. Both then began to talk of the virtue of charity and benevolence, and couzin Mariah particularly said how immodest it was to let the heathen go stark naked, and if she could she'd have 'em all put into trowsers rite off. She had such pity for 'em. While we were setting talking in this manner and they were unrolling and displaying what they had made, a poor woman and three children came along the pike and stopped at the door. The woman, it could be seen by the moonlight, was in rags, and her old gown was slit so that the bare knee was visible; while the two little girls and boy were half naked, one of them only able to keep her tatters upon her by holding them up with her hands. The poor woman, who was Irish, said that she was from New York where her husband had died, and was going to Boston where she had a brother; and that she begged her way, for she hadn't seen the color of a penny since many a weary week. I al'ays suspected aunt Keezy's and couzin Mariah's charities were like the Pharisee's prayers, to be seen of men, so I didn't say any thing but waited to see what would come to pass.

`Its a plizzint evenin' ye are enjoyin' in the door leddies, and God bliss ye and long kape the roof o'er yer heds,' sez she; `for its long since the roof has been over me and mine! I bliss God ye have the home and the nice cloathin', and no doubt plenty food to yer hunger. It's me and mine is starvin' and is naked! God gives the sparrows feathers, but to clothe his childer he puts sweet charity into the hearts of the rich. Is it a shelter and a bit of bread ye'll give me for my babes, good leddies?'

The words and appeal were so pathetic I could not help the tears coming into my eyes; but I hardened my heart a little minute or two till I should see what my couzin and aunt Keezy would do; for I knew what I would do! So I got up and went into the tap as if for something.

`This is a tavern,' said aunt Keezy sharply; `and no one need expect to be entertained here without pay.'

`Yes; go to some of the farmer's houses, if you want help,' said couzin Mariah. `I am really shocked to see you

go about so, woman, with your bare knee sticking out so! How immodest! Why do you not sew it up?'

`Its niver a stitch 'll stay, but the first step I take tares it out, the cloth is so rotten. I am modest, leddies, if I am poor! If you could give me an old bit dress, or—'

`We have nothing here for you, so tramp with your brats,' said aunt Keezy sharply.

`You'll find lodging among your own class somewhere up the pike.'

I now came out. `Poor woman,' says I, `you seem very destitute. Have vou no other garments than those rags for yourself and your children?'

`None, marm, so help me the swate virgin.'

`They are not sufficient for decency.'

`That is what I have been telling her,' said couzin Mariah with warmth. `Indeed, woman, I am shocked you should be seen so. You can't be a fit object of charity to have so little modesty. That little boy too! Fie! You ought certainly to be ashamed to bring such objects before decent people.' And couzin Mariah covered her eyes to keep from seeing such shocking depravity.

I was now roused. I am never angry except at such things as this. So I said, but very quietly so that she need not suspect,

`How many gowns did you make at the sewing circle for the Sandwich Islander's, couzin?'

`I made three child's frocks, three waistcoats and knit six pair of garters, they are all to be sent out in the first ship.'

`And how many things did you make, aunt?' sez I.

`Two shirts, a gown, and hemmed four pocket handkerchiefs.'

`Let me see them,' said I in the same quiet way, as if I wasn't thinking at all about the poor woman and her children who stood so pitifully outside the door. So they handed them to me without any suspicion, thinking I was going to admire their work and praise their industry; for the idea of any *really* charitable destination of their articles never once entered their narrow and selfish minds. I unrolled the gown and the three frocks, and to my delight I saw that the frocks were just the children's sizes and that the dress would be just the thing for the mother.

`They are very nice garments,' said I. `These are to be your free gifts for the Sandwich Islanders and the Flat−Foot Indians, are they not?' said I.

`Yes, we give them in charity,' both answered with a sort of Pharisaic exultation, wishing to give me a high notion of their charity. But I knew them both quite as well as they knew themselves, and I always hated all hypocrisy. So I said,

`Then Heaven has rewarded your charity by bringing the Sandwich Islanders to your door instead of waiting to have the clothes take a long voyage to hunt them up. I will be the dispenser of your charity, good aunt. Here, poor Sandwich Islander,' said I, turning to the woman and handing her the gown, `here is a gown this good lady in spectacles has just finished for you. Take it and give her many thanks for it.'

The poor woman took it, and knelt right down before aunt Keezy and poured out a volume of the most grateful benedictions upon her and her children and her children's children. In the meanwhile I had unrolled the three frocks, and given one to each of the children, saying to them,

`My poor little Flat−Foot Indians whom Providence has sent to my door, here is a frock for each of you this good lady (pointing to couzin Mariah) has made for you. Take them and thank her for thinking of you in your destitution. '

The children took the frocks, (they were ten, eight, and six years old, the boy being the least) and all three imitating their mother dropped on their naked knees down before couzin Mariah. There is no describing the consternation and utter astonishment of both aunt Keezy and couzin Mariah. They first looked at me and then at the poor woman, then at the gown, which the next moment she took forcible possession of, abusing the innocent women as a thief and an imposter; while the latter looked as angry as she dared to be; for she caught my eye and saw that I was not only in earnest but very indignant. But for that she would have rescued her frocks also.

`Give back the gown, aunt,' I said firmly. `It is the woman's. You made it, or profess to have made it for charity. Charity has sent hither her hand−maid to receive it. Restore it to her.

Aunt Keezy sulkily obeyed, and both looked angry and mortified. I continued,

`This is your charity! This is your pious benevolence! Spend your time making up clothing for heathens on the

other side of the world who may never be benefitted by them, and letting the naked heathens that God sends to your very feet perish! This kind of charity is not of Heaven! It is not angel's charity! A truly benevolent woman's heart will bleed for the naked Irish woman as freely as for the Sandwich Island woman. `Give while thou hast the poor with thee,' is the language of the Holy Scriptures. Deliver me from that morbid charity which sheds tears because savages go bare−foot, and turns a deaf ear to the prayers of the poor in a Christian land! Tell your sewing−circle they will find Sandwich Island savages and Flat Foot Indians around their own doors. If you had given to this woman but a pocket handkerchief, or offered her food, I would have believed in your Sandwich Island charity! But now I would not give a fig for it. I could put all the true charity you both possess in the eye of a cambric needle and then you couldn't find it with double patent spectacles.'

`You will see I was up,' said good Dame Darwell in recounting this affair, `but if any thing moves me it is meanness and low views in people who pretend to be saints. Aunt Keezy and couzin Mariah wanted the minister (who was a bachelor) to think they were so very charitable; and also to have the merit of it in the world: for every body knew who gave to the Sandwich Islanders and knit stockings for the Flat−Food Indians; but nobody knew who gave to the poor in secret! Well, they looked at me and at one another; and then couzin Mariah burst out a sobbing and aunt Keezy looked as angry as a thunder clould.

`I declare, couzin Hetty,' cried Mariah, `this is cruel and shameful.'

`It is outrageous,' thundered aunt Keezy.

`Very well,' said I very quietly; for I was calm again now I had my say; `who gave you the calico for the dresses, aunt Keezy?'

She didn't answer and I replied, `Wasn't it I? Didn't I give you both material for all—the cotton, yarn, thread, and even the needles? In a word, is there any thing either of you have on your backs that I did not give you. Have you not been fed, lodged and clothed by me, one of you for five years, and your aunt Keezy for seven? What I have given these poor people is my own.'

`You ought to be ashamed to throw up our dependence on you to us,' cried aunt Keezy, now fairly mad.

`It is ungenerous to boast of your charities in this manner,' cried couzin Mariah.

`I did not boast. I spoke of them to humble you, and to show you that you are just as dependent upon me as that poor woman, for lodging, food and clothing to night. What you have on is mine; and it would be just to make you both take it off and clothe this poor woman with it!'

Here both burst out a crying and took on so that I told them they should both go at once if they did not stop, when they made shift to be quiet. I had given them a good lesson and a good lecture, and that was all I wanted; for I would sooner have gone out of my own house than turned out poor aunt Keezy, who though a close, narrow minded woman was too simple to take any care of herself; and couzin Mariah I liked all but for her being over religious. But the lesson I gave them did them both good. It made them more humble, and gave them a better notion of what was true charity.

`Now,' says I, `that you needn't call me unjust and accuse me of being like an Indian in taking back what I have once bestowed, if to−morrow you will price these articles according as the society values them, I will pay you the money for them. Now, good woman,' said I, `come in with your children, and let us try on the dresses, but first they must be well scrubbed.'

`So I took 'em through to the kitchen and first gave them a hearty meal, and it did me good, and the poor mother too, to see the little brats devour the bread and butter. After they had got through I had them all put into a tub and the cook and her girl washed them from head to heel. I then put them all in one bed next the kitchen, meaning to get something ready that night to complete their wardrobe when they got up in the morning; for not a rag they had worn was fit to put on again, and I made Dick burn them in the stable yard. The poor woman I let sleep in the same room with her children, meaning to help out her wardrobe in the morning from mine. The grateful creature! I could hardly get her off to bed for her blessings and prayers. Well, Aunt Keezy and couzin Mariah set to work altering and making up little articles for the children to put on, glad of an opportunity to redeem their credit with me. We sat up till it was quite late, cutting out and sewing together; and the clock had just struck ten, when couzin Mariah, who had uncommonly sharp ears, stopped and listened and said she thought she heard a child crying.

`It is one of the poor woman's,' I said; `I will go and see if the little one has'nt fallen out of the bed.' So I took a light and went out of the little parlor across the kitchen and opened the door of the room. They were all asleep, the

poor woman having her little boy fast asleep by her side, no doubt having got up to get him to lay by her. All was still. I went back to the room and had hardly taken up my work, when we all thought we heard the cry of a child. We paused and listened. It was not repeated, and aunt Keezy set down the the sound to the cat.

`It was like a cat,' said I, `but there is the cat on the chair under the window. '

`Then what could it have been?' cried couzin Mariah, looking pale.

`Perhaps some strange cat,' said I.

I had hardly spoken when I heard it again louder than before. It was a sharp, loud cry, but seemed a good way off. We all started and looked in the direction of the sound and listened attentively and with beating hearts.

`It must be the boy,' I said, after waiting a little while. `He has probably cried out in his sleep.'

`It did not sound like a boy's cry,' said aunt Keezy. `It was a baby's, if ever a baby cried in the world.'

`No neighbor has a baby within half a mile of here. It can't be,' I said positively.

`There it is again,' exclaimed Mariah, running to me and catching firm hold of my shoulder.

Sure enough we heard it now loud and distinct. It was plainly the cry of a good lusty baby. It did not now go like the wail of a cat, but emitted full and clear notes that were not to be mistaken.

`It comes from the further end of the house,' said aunt Keezy, who had now caught hold of couzin Mariah as fast as she had hold upon me.

`From the Court Chamber,' gasped the latter.

I was perplexed and contounded. The child continued to cry, and wholly at a loss to explain it, I took up the light and determined to proceed at once in the direction of the sounds. Aunt Keezy would have dissuaded me, asseverating that it might be a ghost, especially as my husband George had died in that distant room. But I knew George hadn't a cry like a six month's baby and I resolutely resolved to see the matter to the bottom. Afraid to be left alone and yet equally afraid to accompany me, they followed me with trembling steps along the passage from which the cries still came louder and louder.

CHAPTER IV.

How Dame Darwell led the way to the Court Chamber—How all but the good hostess were frightened—What was discooered in the Court Chamber—The Silver Bottle—Dame Darwell's sympathy—The note and package—The ill−will of aunt Keezy and cousin Mariah—The Quart Mug succumbs to `The Silver Bottle.'

`The passage you know,' said Dame Darwell, continuing her narration, from my little sitting room to the Court Chamber is very long; so it took me some time to get to the door of the room, especially as aunt Keesy was holding on by one arm and cousin Mariah by the other. I hadn't been in the room since the strange gentlemen and lady had left it, intendin' to leave it till morning to be cleaned up. Well, the cries as I got to the door were right lusty and strong, and there was now no mistaking it for any thing else *but* a baby.'

`Don't open the door for the world!' cried aunt Keesy trembling behind me in every limb.

`It may be an evil spirit in the shape of a baby,' said cousin Mariah pulling me back.

`I do not fear it if it is,' I said boldly. `I have a clear conscience. It is a baby and a real one, of that I am positive; but how it ever got into the Court Chamber is a mystery!'

I then tried to open the door and it was locked! This startled me, I confess. The key wasn't in the door, but I saw it lying on the floor at my feet. I picked it up and put it into the lock, resolved at once to see the end of all this.— The child, hearing perhaps the noise of the key, stopped crying.

`It's gone,' said aunt Keezy.

`It's frightened away whatever it was,' echoed cousin Mariah; but neither of them seemed to have gained any more courage with this idea.

`It has only stopped crying to listen,' I said; and then unlocked the door and threw it wide open. I must say I was a little trepidous in my nerves,' continued Dame Darwell, at this crisis of her story, `on opening the door, because it *was* so odd a baby should be heard crying there at that time of night and no mother in the room that I knew of. So I stood in the door way a minute and looked in before I entered. I held the candle above my head to take a view of the room. All seemed just as it should be. The easy chair stood in its corner; the stuffed rocking chairs sat up one each side of the mantle; the things in the chamber were just as neat as if the gentleman and lady had not been in it. But I could see no baby. The white dimity curtains of the bed were down and drawn close as usual. I could'nt therefore see into it, and so I kept my eyes fixed and listened. I could hear nothing and began really to feel queer about the cry we'd heard coming from the chamber, when all at once we heard it from behind the curtain's of the bed so sudden and so loud and clear that aunt Keezy yelled out louder still with mortal fear, and cousin Mariah screamed `murder' at the top of her lungs and sunk right down on the floor in the door way. I must confess the cry was so sudden and sharp in the silence that was a moment before it, that my heart leaped into my throat. But I was not frightened, only startled. The cry was not only loud but right down angry, as if the baby after stopping and listening a little while and then hearing nothing more had set up afresh. I walked straight to the bed and lifted the curtains with one hand and put the light in with the other, and there sure enough lay a handsome little fat baby about seven months old, right in the middle of the bed with a pillow each side of him to keep him from rolling out. He had kicked the coverlid down and lay there with a silver nursing bottle held tight in one of his dimpled hands. As soon as he saw the light he stopped half way in a vigorous screech and looked right up into my face, the tears glistening like little diamonds of dew on his cheeks.'

`If ever I was surprised at any thing,' said Dame Darwell, `it was when I saw this little fellow lying in the middle of my best bed without my knowing no more how he ever came there than the man in the moon! I didn't scream nor faint, but stood a full minute kind o' petrified, looking down at the dear little innocent. There he lay looking at me a minute and then smiled, and then thrust the tube of the silver bottle into his mouth and began to suck away vigorously for a little, when being reminded that it was empty he set up a pitiful cry and looked at me so imploringly! I couldn't resist stooping right down and kissing the little dear, and I believe I dropped a tear on its little cheek, it looked so innocent and helpless. I then told aunt Keesy, who was looking at the baby with wonder and fear, to hold the light; and took up the little fellow in my arms and held him off to take a good look at

him to see it I had ever seen it before. But I had never seen any baby like it, and my curiosity was roused to know how it came there. The little stranger, however was resolved to give me no time for the indulgence of curiosity; for he put up his pretty lip and began to show cry, and then thrust his little silver bottle into its mouth and began to draw at it. I saw at once what the little fellow wanted and sent cousin Mariah, who had got over her fright and was trying to guess who the baby belonged to, to make up a fire in the kitchen and boil it some milk.

I hadn't more than got the words `boiled milk' out of my mouth when the boiled milk the gentleman had ordered flashed on my mind! I then thought how I had found the child in the room they had left, and that the mystery was solved! The boiled milk must have been ordered for this very baby! and they had gone away and forgotten it!

It was queer enough! I couldn't think a mother and father could forget their child and leave it behind at an Inn; but then there was the child in their bed and they had departed. I mentioned my surprise to aunt Keezy.

`It may be their's if they had brought a baby with 'em and went off without taking it again,' said aunt Keezy. `Did they have a baby?'

`Not that I saw or heard,' said I, quite struck aback with this doubt; for sure enough they had not brought any baby with them. This I confessed to aunt Keezy, who said very sensibly,

`Well, if they didn't bring no baby with 'em I don't see how they could have left one.'

`It might have been born here,' called out Cousin Mariah from the passage, she having overheard aunt Keezy's remark. I've read of such things in novels.'

`It couldn't have been born six months old,' said I laughing; `for the child is full that if not more.'

`How can you tell its age, cousin Hetty?' said Mariah, vexed at my laughing. `I am sure all babies looked the same age and have the same looks to me.

I didn't care to argue the matter with cousin Mariah, who would probably never be any wiser about babies than she was then, being such a confirmed old maid as she was: and as the little fellow began to grow very impatient for his bottle to be filled I told her to hurry with the milk, while I sat down in a rocking chair and began to sooth the little fellow, wondering all the while where it had come from, for I had gave up the notion they had left it. While I was thinking and admiring it, for it was so fat and chubby with black eyes and a good deal of silky brown hair, what the gentleman had said to me at supper about Providence sometimes ratifying our wishes in more ways than one, flashed upon my mind; and for a minute or two I began to feel very superstitious, and began to think that the child had come to my roof in a supernatural way. The more I thought upon it, the less superstitious I felt, but the more the idea began to take hold of my mind that the babe was his and that he had sounded me with the intention to leave it with me. I mentioned my belief to aunt Keezy, who said, in her way—

`It is all very probable *if* the gentleman and lady had only brought the child with them.'

Here I was all afloat again. That they brought no child with them I was very well assured. Yet here was a child left in their rooms—here was a sucking bottle in his hand, and boiled milk had been ordered! It all looked very like being their's, but then, as aunt Keezy said, `if they didn't bring a child how should they have left one, at least one six months old? If it had been a new born baby then it would all have been easily accounted for.

By this time couzin Mariah had heated the milk, sweetened it, and brought it in and I filled the silver bottle, and put it to the impatient little rogue's mouth, who could hardly be kept quiet till it came. As soon as he found he could draw something from the tube besides air, he began to pull away with a vigor and zeal that made us all laugh. Now, he was quiet, I had time to talk over the whole matter about him. Aunt Keezy first proposed carefully to examine his blanket and robes, for he was wrapped in a fine merino blanket bound with blue silk ribbon and his dress was very elegantly worked. We made a thorough search but there was no name or initials upon them.

`I will look about the bed and see if those who placed him here havn't left some articles,' said couzin Mariah, beginning the search with commendable curiosity.

`And I will look round the room and see if any thing is to be found in it,' said aunt Keezy. In a minute afterward couzin Mariah drew out from beneath the counterpane a large and neat package tied with scarlet tape, and at the same instant aunt Keezy discovered lying on the pincushion under the glass a billet addressed to

"Mistress Darwell, *Hostess*."

Both uttered exclamations and run to me with their prizes.

`Now we shall see?' cried couzin Mariah beginning to untie the parcel. But I took it from her.

`The mystery will be cleared up,' exclaimed aunt Keezy, who had a perfect horror of every thing at all mysterious.

The note was unsealed, and written with pencil. The direction was written in a delicate hand, perfectly lady−like. I could not help thinking of the pale, sweet face in mourning as I looked at it. I opened it and read, first to myself, for I did not like always to make aunt Keezy and my cousin my confidants, and then read aloud:

Dear Madam:

I am stranger to you! You may never behold me again, yet I am about to cast myself upon your heart! I am about to entrust to you what is dearer to me than life—my infant child! Circumstances of the most painful character, which I cannot at present control and which may bind me till death releases me from this sad world, compel me to deny myself longer the blessed privilege of a mother. I must separate from my child, perhaps never more to clasp it to my bleeding bosom. I have been three days seeking somewhere to leave it,—alas, to leave it among strangers—unknowing and unknown. But no where could I desert it hitherto. The hour of delay cannot be extended. Providence I feel has brought me to your roof. Your heart is kind—for your voice and face are kindly and benevolent. I have had repeated to me your language at the table, and my heart has confidence in you. To you, then, dear madam, I entrust my little boy—my babe! my heart's idol. God forgive me, if I am committing a crime. But it is not mine to choose. I *must* part with my babe. I shall leave it in the bed. With it you will also find a package of its clothing. Take my child, cherish it tenderly for the poor mother's sake who is denied the trust, she now makes over to you with a broken heart.'

This was all. The paper was blistered as if with tears fallen upon it, and the handwriting though delicate was tremulous, and toward the last, hurried. When I had done reading it we all looked in silence at each other and then opened the package. It contained a dozen beautiful infant robes and slips, caps, and under robes, and all was rich and beautifully made up.

`Now, only think!' ejaculated aunt Keezy, lifting both her hands and lost in amazement.

`Was ever the like!' repeated couzin Mariah in a tone of unlimited wonder, when I had laid open the contents of the bundle.

I sat silent and thinking with the note in my hand. I was wondering how that baby had got into the house and I not know it. I made known my perplexity to aunt Keezy, who said—

`Did they not bring it it in under a cloak?'

`No. The lady wore a close habit; and the gentleman threw off his cloak as soon as he got out of the carriage.'

`Perhaps the child was brought in in a trunk!' ventured cousin Mariah.

`The trunk was not brought in,' I said. `But I do recollect now *what* was brought in, and that was the very thing! It was a large travelling basket, like a champaign basket. The negro man carried it and I noticed that the lady was very anxious and careful about it and spoke to him three or four times to be careful how he bore it! That was it! The little dear was in that basket!' I exclaimed with satisfaction.

`There is no doubt,' said aunt Keezy, shaking her head.

`How very extraordinary'! exclaimed couzin Mariah, looking at the same time very grave.

`That is the way it was,' I said. `The basket was carried back to the carriage just as it was brought in. Now I can see why the poor mother came back three times to the room before she could finally tear herself away. I shouldn't wonder if they had been trying to leave it at some place all along the road, but her heart couldn't trust any body with it.'

`It's a pity she hadn't left it somewhere else than here,' exclaimed couzin Mariah looking coldly upon the little fellow as he lay upon my lap happily sucking away at his silver bottle and looking round at times with his handsome black eyes on each of them and then smiling up into my face as if he thought I was his mother. I shed tears for the poor mother when I read the note over again and saw him smiling up into my face, and kissing him I said—

`You shall be mine now my babe. I will be a mother to you from this time,' said I. [And nobly did you keep your promise, good, kind Dame Darwell, for— but I am going in advance of the story.]

`Why do you wish he had been left somewhere else?' I asked cousin Mariah, continued the good dame, when I

heard her say that.

`Because it is likely to be a scandal in the neighborhood to have it here.'

`A scandal?' I repeated.

`They will not believe the story, and people may say it's—it's—' here couzin Mariah hesitated.

`Whose?'

`Mine—or aunt Keezy's.'

I didn't laugh, for I was too sorrowful on the poor mother's account; but I said—

`People will be no more likely to believe the one story than the other!'

I don't know whether they took this reply of mine as a compliment or not. I did not mean it for one, for I was vexed at their suspicions. `The child shall be mine and be *called* mine if people like,' said I.

`Perhaps it was not born in due wedlock,' said aunt Keezy. `In that case it is a disgrace to keep it. I speak for your good, niece.'

`The child is entrusted to my protection. Whether its mother is married or not is nothing to the purpose. The child is just the same child—and has the same eyes, lips and smile as if it had been born in wedlock. When you can show me that it is not a helpless baby and does not need my protection, I will then talk with you aunt Keezy. Providence has sent it to me instead of giving me one of my own, and from this day I am its mother.

They both wanted to say something more; but I wouldn't suffer them to speak; for I well knew that the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the child didn't trouble their consciences. They were only thinking how that the child might possibly be a rival in the possession of my property, which on my death they had expectations of inheriting between them. So I took the baby to my own bed room and from that night I never knew any difference between it and one that was my own. I forgot to say that on the silver bottle of the dear boy was the same engraving of an eagle treading on a serpent's head, I saw on the harness and door of the carriage, and that the letter W was underneath. The next day when the painter came to me and asked me what name he should paint on the sign board, I told him to paint a `silver bottle,' and put the words `The Silver Bottle' under it; and ever since then the Inn has been called `The Silver Bottle.'

At this point good Dame Darwell used to end her story of my `discovery lying between two pillows in the middle of the best bed in the Court Chamber.'

CHAPTER V.

How certain evil persons would slander Dame Darwell touching my birth—How couzin Mariah and aunt Keezy were vexed that people wonldn't slander them— Dame Darwell receives a call from the minister—A question arises touching my having been christened—I am at length christened.

The foregoing narrative of my `discovery,' not birth, I have given in the words of the excellent Dame Darwell, as I have a hundred times heard her relate it not only to me in person, when I was old enough to understand, but also to all her neighbors and most of her old guests when they came again: for not one of them ever failed to ask her why she had changed the name of the Inn, to `The Silver Bottle,' which inquiry always gave her a fine oppportunity for relating my story.

There were some envious, ill−willed people who said that Dame Darwell knew more about that baby than she pretended to. But their slanderous whisperings had no effect upon the respectable and discreet portion of the community, who rejected the suspicion at once; for no character stood fairer than that of the hostess of the Silver Bottle Inn. These suspicions and whisperings of slanderous tongues did not even happen to fix upon `aunt Keezy' or `couzin Mariah,' whereat, if I may credit the good Dame, they were not a little vexed: for, although, they would have indignantly denounced any one who would insinuate that they, either of them, knew more about that baby than they would like other people should know; yet when they found no body even thought or hinted about the child's mysterious appearance in reference to themselves, they were not a little chagrined.

By the third day after my *discovery*, not a soul that knew Dame Darwell but had heard of the baby left at her Inn by a gentleman and lady in black who came in a double barouche with bay horses, and went away after dark: and every body paid a special visit to Dame Darwell to see the baby and hear her account of the strange affair. She took every body into the Court Chamber and showed them the bed and just how the child was lying in it, and then showed them the silver bottle and the clothing and read the note to them Among these visiters was the minister, who coming home from a journey on the afternoon of the third day and hearing of the matter, put on his hat, took his cane and walked across the meadows to the Inn.

Dame Darwell who was sitting at her window with the baby (that is *myself*) in her arms feeding it with pap, while couzin Mariah was making a night gown for it, and aunt Keezy cutting out a night cap—both being perfectly broken in by Dame Darwell to submission outwardly, but inwardly hating the little stranger with all their hearts.

`I declare if there isn't the minister crossing the style,' said the good Dame. `How glad I am to see him.'

The minister who was a mild looking, plainly dressed man of five and forty, with a large nose and spectacles, entered and saluted the hostess.

`Good evening, mistress Darwell! So I hear you have had an addition to your family.'

This was spoken in such a sly way that Dame Darwell blushed, looked down and laughed, and then answered,

`Yes, Doctor! Here he is a fine seven−months boy−baby as ever was seen!' And she held up the little fellow, (that is *myself*,) to the view of the minister. He looked at me steadily through his spectacles, says Dame Darwell, full a minute without a word; now peering at me this way and now that; now examining my eyes, then my nose, and then my mouth; then taking a general view, as if he was trying to find out a resemblance between me and some of his parishioners. But he was foiled, for he slowly and negatively shook his head.

`A fine boy, mistress Darwell.'

`He is indeed, sir, and good as he is good looking. He sleeps all night without waking and takes a two hour's nap before dinner. He has hardly cried once since I have had him.'

`That speaks well for your care of the little stranger,' said the minister. `But you seem to have come by him in a very singular fashion, Mrs. Darwell.'

`Yes, indeed, Doctor, you may well say that, the little dear. See how he rolls his black eyes round as if he knew we were talking of it.'

Dame Darwell then began to relate the whole story as the reader has it, from the first appearance of the carriage on the pike driving up to the door, to my discovery in the `best bed' lying between two pillows grasping a

silver sucking bottle and tears glistening on my cheeks. After she had got through, the Rev. Doctor placed his hands across the top of his stick, rested his chin upon his hands and began to look very thoughtful. After a little time, he raised his head, looked Dame Darwell full in the face and then gazing upon me, said,

`This is very, *very* extraordinary.'

`Unheard of,' echoed `aunt Keezy.'

`Strange enough,' said cousin Mariah.

`It's a blessed Providence,' added good Dame Darwell benevolently.

`Let me look at the note, worthy mistress Darwell?' asked his reverence.

He took it and read it over twice. He examined the texture of the paper and the handwriting with great particularity and then returned it to her, saying—

`It is lady like and scholarly in its style and appearance. The child's mother was an educated woman. She was also a feeling woman. Some circumstances which none but Providence can fathom, have led her to this seeming act of cruelty. There have been circumstances in families which render the concealment of the birth of children expedient. It would seem they were man and wife, or why travel together and leave it together with such unity. If the child had been illegitimate there seems no necessity why the father should be a party to its desertion, or why the mother should feel herself compelled to act as she has done, and evidently against her heart. If she had not been married to him she would not have deserted her child to have followed him. It is all very inexplicable,' he said, after a moments' silence; `and the more I examine into the motives that led to this act, the more difficult I find it to reconcile it with any plausible cause. We must leave the event to Providence who will watch over it with the same care as if its parents had not deserted it; for whatever relation the parents may stand in with reference to each other, the infant is one of God's creatures, and of those of whom Christ said `suffer them to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.' Think how you have there entrusted to you, Mistress Darwell, an heir of Christ's Kingdom, and you will not need any other motive for the exercise of your well−known benevolence.'

This view of the matter taken by the minister was deeply gratifying to Dame Darwell and not a little humbling to the two spinsters, who had taken a very different and less charitable view of the affair.

`I knew you would say I did right in keeping the dear child, Doctor,' said Dame Darwell with tender emotion; `some of my friends advised me to send it to the Overseer. But I could not listen to such a proposition. While I have a house over my head and a bed and food to eat, this little fellow shall share them with me!'

`Your feelings do you honor, Mistress Darwell,' said the minister! I should have looked for no other course of conduct in you, knowing you as well as I do. The little stranger is truly fortunate in finding so excellent a protector. I doubt not that parents had previous knowledge of you, good Dame Darwell,' added the minister with a benevolent smile.

The worthy hostess colored and looked down; for it always embarrassed Dame Darwell to be complimented upon her qualities of the heart. If she was complimented for her good looks she would laugh and say something pleasant back again; but when she was praised for her charities she looked down in modest silence.

`Is there no mark on the dresses left with it, nor any clue to the child's name?' asked the minister in an earnest tone.

`Nothing except the eagle and the letter on the silver bottle,' said Dame Darwell.

`Let me see the bottle.'

`Cousin Mariah, bring the Doctor the bottle out of thecupb oard I am trying to wean it by giving it pap, Doctor, for I think now its got no mother, the best thing will be to wean it; for I think it is full seven, if not eight months old. Here is the bottle, sir They filled it and left the child sucking it and he went to sleep I suppose; and it was when he awoke and found it empty that he set up the cry that we first heard.'

The minister took the silver bottle and closely examined the cypher, which was an eagle with one foot upon the head of a serpent and the other talon grasping the writhing folds. Beneath was the letter M, beautifully eugraved. (I have it before me while I write.)

`This would seem to be a means, though a very uncertain one,' said the minister, `of ascertaining the parentage of the child. By an advertisement in the papers accurately describing this cypher and the initial letter, perhaps the family name might be discovered. I would advise this course to be at once taken.'

But to this step Dame Darwell was decidedly opposed. She said she already loved me too much to think of

giving me up, and that if any body came for the child it certainly would not be the parents who had left it; and as for resigning it to any relations she positively would not. `If it wasn't necessary their child should have been left here, they would not have left it,' was her argument, `If they want it again, they know where to come for it. Who is an advertisement to benefit, but, perhaps some wicked relation, the poor mother has broken her heart to hide her child from! No, Doctor. Let me keep the child as Providence and its parents have entrusted it to me. I am able to support it, and to do by it handsomely when I die!'

Here Dame Darwell saw aunt Keezy and cousin Mariah exchanging secret glances and then look very black at me, though they did not dare to betray openly their feelings. Dame Darwell only smiled, for she loved to punish their selfishness, which would have barred and cast a cloud over her charities.

The minister after a little reflection approved of her course, saying that the only way was to leave the clearing up of the mystery to that Providence which governs and unfolds all events. Suddenly an idea seemed to flash upon the good man's mind. He looked very seriously a moment at the child, and then said,

`Is it possible this child has not been baptized, Mrs. Darwell. What name do you call it.

`There was no name given to it in the note, and I thought of calling it Georgy after my dear husband; for I resolved if I ever had a boy he should be called George. But I have another name for it;' and the widow smiled.

`George is doubtless a good name; but it is a pity if the child has ever been christened its name should not be known to you. You are quite sure there was nothing in the package of clothing to give any clue to his name? Not an article marked?'

`This was the wrapper the clothes came in. You see it is a piece of buff paper without the scratch of a pen on it. This bit of printed music paper, the caps were wrapped up in! You see the tune on it is `Little Marlboro',' a favorite of George's and mine!'

And as the hostess spoke she handed the minister a leaf of a singing book, on which was the tune of `Little Marlboro',' the name of the tune being on the page in large letters. The minister looked at it a moment, and then in the face of Dame Darwell, and said,

`They evidently were christian people and orthodox, to have this music book by them. They doubtless christened their child.'

`I have thought of giving him that name,' said Dame Darwell, slightly hesitating.

`What name?' asked the minister.

`That on the paper. It was what first struck my eye when I unrolled the caps, and it seemed to me that that was the name Providence sent for it.'

`It is a very odd name for a child,' said his reverences miling.

`I confess it is odd; but there it is on the paper, and it seems as plain to me that it ought to be the child's name, as if his mother had writ it there.'

`So you mean to call him `Little Marlboro',' and nothing more?' asked the minister.

`Yes if there is no objection to it in the christening,' answered Dame Darwell; `for I want him christened and properly named; for no one knows whether he has been christened, and I should be uneasy if I thought it was a little heathen!'

`Little Marlboro' is a very good name, and is the title of a tune which I am partial to. A very good name for a tune, Mistress Darwell, but not so appropriate for a child,' he said with a quiet smile.

`Now I think it is very pretty,' said Dame Darwell, looking affectionately down upon me as I was laying in her lap perfectly comfortable. `*Itty Marly dear* itty Marly! See him smile! The dear little fellow knows his name already! '

`Well Mrs. Darwell, you are at liberty to do as you choose, and if you will prefix George to the Marlboro' I have no objections to baptizing him; for he will need the George when he is too much grown to make the `Little' appropriate. '

`Little Marlboro' is my fancy, Doctor,' said the good hostess smiling. `There it is on the paper and it seems somehow to belong to him.'

`Well then I will humor you, Mrs. Darwell. Bring the babe to church next Sunday and I will christen him `Little Marlboro'.'

The next Sunday `Little Marlboro' I was christened, not a little to the amusement and surprise of the congregation, who thought doubtless that name was quite as much out of the common way as way my mysterious

appearance in the `best bed' of the Inn kept by the worthy Dame.'

CHAPTER VI.

My name causes remark, but Dame Darwell explains and satisfies curiosity— Aunt Keezy and cousin Mariah conspire against me, and open war is declared between us—My victory and Emma Field—A battle—A new and painful view of my position.

The oddity of the name by which good Dame Darwell had had me christened, created not a little curiosity and amazement; but when the worthy hostess explained to inquirers how the caps had come wrapped up in the piece of music called `Little Marlboro', they one and all agreed with her in the propriety of bestowing upon me a name, which Providence seemed in a particular manner to have designated as that which should belong to me.

Such, then, as I have narrated in the foregoing chapter, was the manner, not of my birth exactly, for that remains still an impenetrable mystery, but of my *appearance!* From that time Dame Darwell became a mother to me. She never failed to have me dressed in my best `bib and tucker' when any of the more respectable order of her guests arrived, and brought into the room; when she began to relate my history, a thing she was very fond of doing. In this manner I soon got to be quite a hero before I was one year old; and Dame Darwell always ended her narrative with the assertion of her firm belief that I should yet turn out to be some great personage, and she hoped to live to see the day when I should ride in my state carriage. She never failed to declare her intention of making me her heir, which assurances did not tend to elevate me very greatly in the affections of `aunt Keezy' and cousin Mariah.' These two personages soon began to regard me with the most decided demonstrations of hostility, and to look upon me as a little heathen that had surreptitiously crept in between them and the twelve thousand dollars at which Dame Darwell's fortune was estimated. But their fears of the good dame prevented them from openly exhibiting their malevolence; though they did not fail to put their heads together against me when alone, and plot how they should get me out of the way without absolutely putting arsenic into my milk. But their conspiracies did not, it would seem, arrive at any positive head inasmuch as I reached my seventh year alive, hale and thriving as any urchin in all those parts. I can, however, distinctly recollect sundry privately administered pinches and ear pullings from these two good ladies whenever they would meet me in the passage, or be alone with me; which led me to take a very decided dislike to their society, a disposition I was by no means backward in manifesting. I was too spirited even at seven years to complain to Dame Darwell of their persecutions, but used to retaliate in my own way. I took pitch and with it fastened nut shells on aunt Keesy's cat, and turned her into their bed room at night, where her clattering footsteps up and down the floor terrified them out of their wits; and Dame Darwell used to laugh while they cried, for the good dame, in the first place, never thought any thing I did was wrong; and in the second place she well knew their dislike of me, and connived at any tricks I saw fit to play upon them. I would resent `cousin Mariah's' treatment by putting honey on a stick and bringing into the house a cloud of bees and wasps of which she stood in the greatest terror, and at the sight of which she would drop everything and run screaming to shut herself up. I put bees under her dinner plate and hornets in the lining of her bonnet. One Sunday she heard a well known buzzing and angry humming in the crown of her bonnet. In such cases cousin Mariah lost all presence of mind. She did so now! She jumped up in her pew, tore off her bonnet, snapping the strings and flinging it into the aisle, and then uttered a shrick that paralyzed every body in the meeting house.

I may be censured as cruel and unfeeling. But that very morning she had pinched my ear till the blood came, without any provocation, and daily the two were exercising their wits to annoy me and give me pain, well knowing I would not complain to Dame Darwell; who, had she known what I endured from their malace, would have sent them both away from beneath her roof.— Thus under the necessity of defending myself, I early learned to regard them as my natural enemies; but I will say that in all my resentment, my revenge was without malace and often playful though severe. In my seventh year, I was sent to the village school, having already been previously taught to read fluently by my more than mother. From this time up to my twelfth year nothing of importance occurred to vary the monotony of a school boy's life. I had studied hard and improved all the privileges good Dame Darwell conferred upon me. Perhaps, however, it will be more modest to speak in the third person of my accomplishments at this period, and use Dame Darwell's words, as she spoke of me to the chief

Justice who stopped one day at the Inn.

`He is now twelve or thereabouts, your worship, but as you know he came to me so singularly I don't know when his birth day is, and so I always keeps that I discovered him on. He is the most affectionate and generous boy you ever saw. He loves me with all his heart and returns my affection with as much fondness as if I were his own mother. He has grown so tall and handsome with large, sparkling hazel eyes, brown curly hair, and such a pleasant voice and smile. I never hear him speak but I don't think of his mother's; for it sounds just like it. He has his father's forehead and eye, and I think will be tall like him, but he'll make a handsomer man, I think. He studies so hard too! He is at the head of all his classes in Latin and Greek, (for you know I send him to the Academy now) and has got through Ceesy's Commandment's and Vigil's Enidy.'

`Cesar's Commentaries and Virgil's æneiad, you probably mean, madam, politely observed the chief Justice.

Up to this time the course of my life had been smooth and happy. My little warfare, with couzin Mariah and aunt Keezy had given zest to my existence without in any degree affecting my tranquility. Dame Darwell did me justice in saying that I fondly returned her affection. I well knew the history of my life from her lips; and many is the hour I have sat at her knee, and heard her tell about my father and mother—mysterious persons to my youthful imagination. I felt all my obligations to her, and loved her not only from gratitude, but for herself. I tried hard by close application to my books to make her some return for her kindness: for I knew that every medal, every honor I obtained would gladden her heart.

But there was now a change to pass over the hitherto unruffled surface of my existence. I had at school become the rival both in Latin and love of the only son of a physician of the town; a lad who prided himself on his father's wealth and respectability, and who, thereupon, assumed a superiority over those boys whose parents did not move in the same exclusive set with his. He was a good scholar, and a youth of good deal of cleverness; and no doubt would have been a favorite, but for his insufferable arrogancy. This feeling he did not hestitate to show at any time, and on every occasion. If he was talking with one whom he considered his equal, and I or any lad whom he did not regard as such should approach, he would immediately turn his back and walk away. This conduct amused me and excited only pity. I did not seek his acquaintance, however, and we seldom spoke. There chanced, at length, to be an exhibition and a competition for Latin prizes. I feared only him and he feared only me. We both struggled hard! I did my best, resolved to punish him by getting the victory! I succeeded.

As I left the Academy a lovely little girl of eleven years came up to me with a bright smile, and holding out a boquet. I knew her name to be Emma Field, for I had often seen her pass on her way to a boarding school near, though I had never spoken with her. Yet her sweet image had made a deep impression upon me, and I never passed her without coloring deeper (young as we both were) and without seeing her beautiful face all that day mingling like sunshine with my Latin verbs. I had several times seen Russel Carryl join her and walk with her, and felt a rising emotion of cordial antipathy to him for that very circumstance. Emma Field came from Boston, and belonged, I was told to one of the most wealthy and aristocratic families in that city, of wealth and olden lineages.

As she approached me, I felt my face glow and expressed a mixed sensation of timidity and delight; for her eye was upon, and her smile was directed towards me.

`Here, master Marlboro',' she said in a voice as musical as a robin red−breast's, at the same time presenting me with the bunch of flowers; `here is a boquet I gathered expressly for Russel Carryl, because I expected he would gain the medal; and as I gathered it and brought it on purpose to present to the victor, you and not he are the one entitled to it. Will you please accept it!'

This was spoken with such grace, such sweet propriety of manner, and the flowers were proffered with so frank and gracious a mien that I was both charmed and bewildered. I hardly knew where I was, and stuttering out some clumsy reply and blushing up to the eyes, I received from her the boquet and placed it in my vest.

`There, sir Russel Carryl,' she cried, laughing and turning towards this personage whom she had passed by to reach me, and who saw the act: `I gathered that beautiful bunch of flowers to bring to the exibition to give to you, because you told me you were to be the victor; and only because I expected you to win the prize did I promise it to you. But as you have lost I have bestowed it upon the winner.'

Thus speaking she bowed and laughed, nodded to me and bounded away to join a group of her school−mates who with their governess had walked from the Boarding school a mile distant to witness ize did hibition. As soon

as she had turned away leaving my heart bounding wildly and full of sweet joy (for I then, with school boys of the same age, felt the first delightful emotions of that sensation which a few years later I knew to be love) I could not help glancing with a triumph in my looks I did not wish to conceal towards Russel Carryl. He was glaring on me with a scowl of hatred and defiance. No sooner did he catch the exulting expression of my eye, than he came up to me, and said in an imperious tone,

`Give me that boquet, sirrah?'

`It is mine,' I answered with a smile. `If you wish it you will have to take it from me, for I shall not resign it.'

He clenched his fist and cried,

`Give it to me or I will knock you down.'

I knew him to be as courageous as he was proud and vain, and that he would not hesitate to make the effort to do what he threatened. He was a year older but no taller than I. I had never tried my strength or skill with him, but I felt all at once a disposition to do so.

`I shall not take a blow from you,' I answered very positively.

He looked steadily in my face a moment, and then with a sudden movement of his hand snatched the boquet from my vest. I instantly struck him a blow in the left temple and he reeled. But he recovered himself enough to dash the bunch of flowers to the earth and grind them into the ground with his heel. This act called forth all my indignation. I attacked him with well directed blows, which he met with courage and returned with no little skill. For at least ten minutes we fought there on the green surrounded by a ring of boys. and both excited by as determined a spirit of rivalry in love as ever inspired the breasts of two rival knights' errant. It was a drawn battle, for seeing the Preceptor and one of the tutors coming we ceased. Seeing that the battle had torminated the teachers passed on their way without approaching nearer. Russel Carryl picked up his hat and was instantly surrounded by a party of his fellow `aristocrats' who were loud in their expressions of resentment against me: for he had a black eye and was bleeding freely at the nose, while I had not received a single mark.

I was also surrounded by a party of my friends who were rejoicing in my success.

`I wouldn't have fought with such a low fellow,' said one of the aristocratic consolers to my wounded antagonist.

`He is only a tavern keeper's boy,' said another.

`I wouldn't have fought with the bastard,' said Russel Carryl! `But the fellow dared to carry in his bosom the flowers she had given him.'

Had I heard aright? All the blood in my heart rushed to my brain! I walked firmly up to him and fixing my eyes upon his, I said—

`What term was that you applied to me, Russel Carryl?'

He hesitated a moment and then answered boldly—

`I said that you were a bastard!'

My hand was clenched to strike him to the ground. But suddenly the mystery hanging around my birth rushed full upon my mind! My fears seemed painfully to whisper that he might have spoken the truth. My clenched hand relaxed. I felt my bosom bursting with my feelings. I made no answer. I opened not my pale and trembling lips; but turning away I walked homeward at a rapid step, which under the increasing excitement of my wounded and insulted feelings, soon increased into a run. I had gone but a few steps before they began shouting after me and calling me boldly by that epithet of infamy, and even some of the boys of my own party I heard taking up the cry. Such is human nature whether manifesting itself in the boy of twelve or the man of mature years. On reaching the Inn which had been the only home I had ever known, I threw myself into the arms of Dame Darwell weeping as if my heart would burst and poured into her maternal ears the bitterness of my young soul. She was indignant, and vented her anger in no measured words; and did all she could to soothe me, by assuring me that she was as certain that my father and mother, whoever they were, were as much husband and wife, as she and George Darwell had been! I listened to her reasons for believing this and became calmer. But I firmly refused to go back to that school again. This weakness ize kind woman indulged me in, and in a few days afterwards sent me into Boston to the Latin School in School street, with the arrangement that I should come out every Saturday and return every Monday.

CHAPTER VII.

The green silk purse—I enter at Harvard—My meeting with Russel Carryl— The effect of my menace—A sudden change in the bearing of my classmates— Henry Seaford calls on me—My determination—The midshipman's warrant arrives.

I remained at the Latin School two years, during which time I was fitted for the Sophomore class at Cambridge. I had left behind me in the village the mystery touching my birth, and the name of `Little Marlboro';' passing for the son of Dame Darwell, under the name of Marlboro' Darwell. By this name I was now known. Yet not a day passed while I was at the Latin School that I did not labor under a nervous apprehension that the skcret should be discovered, and that the epithet I had heard applied to me by Russel Carryl would be repeated. But during the two years I was known only as Marlboro' Darwell, and not even suspected of being other than the son of Mrs. Darwell. At length, as I have said, I was fitted for the university and returned to the Inn and to my more than mother. Noble woman! how my heart fills while I speak of thee and recall thy goodness io me! During the two years I was at the Latin School she liberally supplied me with money, a liberality I never abused; and clothed me very handsomely. Twice during those two years I had met Emma Field. The first time was in Washington street, directly opposite the Old South. I was going to school with my green sachel over my sboulders, as she was tripping along with a little green silk purse in her hand. She knew me as quickly as I recognized her and smiled, and stopped. I myself was passing by, blushing, for I would not have been so bold as to have spoken to her *first* for the world.

`So you've come to Boston to school, Master Marlboro'?' she said in a voice whoes sweet tones I have never forgotten.

`Yes,' I stammered out confusedly.

`I am sorry my little bunch of roses should have caused such a battle between that quick Russel Carryl and you. I heard of it; he told me all about it, and how he tore the bouqet from you and trampled on it. I was very angry with him, and told him I was; and said it was a very ungentlemanly act. We are not friends now on account of it! Will you take this little green purse instead of the bouquet. I netted it myself. There is no money in it, for I have just spent my last penny, but I know you will value it, you fought so bravely for the bouquet!'

This was spoken with a *naivette* I am unable to describe. Her manner was frank, friendly, and more like that of a sister or a cousin than a stranger whom I had never spoken to but once before. I took the purse and thanked her with a flow of glowing words, not one of which can I now remember. Indeed I could not have told five minutes afterwards what I said. I only recollect that she smiled, bowed, and the next moment was tripping away. I was only recalled to consciousness by one of my classmates asking me `if I had found a purse?' I hastily thrust it into my pocket and making some embarrassed answer, joined him and went toward the school.

The second time I met her was full a year afterwards and only a few days before I was to return home. I was passing down Beacon street and saw her at a window. She recognized me, waved her hand, bowed, smiled, and then disappeared. My heart fluttered for twenty four hours afterwards, and her image was constantly present to my mind. I saw that she had grown taller and more lovely, if possible, for she was now full fourteen. I being now in my fifteenth year. The evening before I was to quit Boston I walked down and up Beacon street several times, in the hope of once more seeing her at the window; but in vain. I was forced to leave town without obtaining sight of her.

On reaching the Inn, and there talking over with the good Dame Darwell my future plans, she told me it was her wish that I should enter at Harvard and after that become a lawyer; for the worthy hostess had a great reverence for legal gentlemen, and considered a Judge the greatest personage on earth next to a King. I had, however, no fancy for the law; though I had no objection to the collegiate course, for I had a passion for study. My prepossessions were exclusively for the sea, and to enter the navy was my ambition. This, I knew Dame Darwell was not ignorant of; and I, therefore, did not hesitate to mention it now. She answered by speaking of the honors and emoluments that the bar would give me, and by commenting upon the perils of the sea.

`I want you, my son,' as she always called me, `I want you to be a respectable and an honored man. I have money enough to pay your way handsomely to the law, and it will give me a pleasure to spend the last cent I have for your benefit. But, I also want to have you happy. Now if you prefer the sea why I won't oppose it, especially if your heart is set on it. I would rather have you here, where I can see you every week, for you know you are the same to me as my son, and are all my dependence. But then, dear boy, I don't want to have you do what you have no liking for. I would rather make a sacrifice myself than you should be disappointed when you've set your heart.'

Thus did the good lady discourse with me upon the subject; and as I had certainly a dislike to the law, and a decided partiality for the sea, we compromised matters, by my promising that I would pass through college, and then, if I could overcome my prejudice against the law, I would study it; if not, I would go into the navy if I could get a midshipman's warrant. This, she said, she knew could be easily obtained by her influence with Judge —, the Senator, who had for twenty years in traveling, put up at her house. On leaving College I should be but eighteen, full young enough for a middy, and with the advantage of a superior education. Secretly I resolved I would enter the navy when I graduated, for I felt I could never overcome my repugnance to the bar.

This matter being amicably adjusted I was in due time admitted to the Sophomore class at Cambridge. I passed my examination with honor, and saw, with gratification, that I had made a favorable impression upon the examining professors. Dame Darwell had my chambers furnished in a very handsome manner, and in point of dress and personal comfort, I was not inferior to the wealthiest in College. I had returned home after my examination, to pass the time before the term commenced, when I punctually made my appearance at Harvard and reported myself. As I was descending the stairs of my tutor's room, I encountered a fashionably dressed youth ascending. Our eyes met, and there was an instantaneous recognition. It was Russel Carryl! We had not crossed each other's paths since the affair of the boquet, nearly three years before. I met his glance tranquilly but firmly. His eyes flashed hatred and defiance. He was passing me with a haughty air, when I impulsively caught his arm and held him. The sight if him there filled me with an instant consciousness that he would endeavor to cast a cloud of infamy, if in his power, around my way through College. I shrunk at the idea. I was sensitive on the point of my mysterious infancy: and recoiled at the thought of being branded with the epithet he had once before used in connection with my name.

`Russel Carryl, I have a word to say to you,' I said in a deep tone.

The halls were deserted as were all of the rooms on that floor, none of the occupants having yet returned from their vacation. I did not fear interruption or of being overheard.

`What do you mean?' he asked, turning pale.

`I mean this, sir,' I replied resolutely. `You once applied an epithet to me, which I did not resent. I have not forgotten it. Dare, while in the university to breathe it to a human ear, or hint it and I swear that I will take your cowardly life. I will seek you out till I avenge myself. I am here a student and mean to remain here. If you whisper aught that shall bring infamy upon my name that hour you have to die. My character is as dear to me as life can be to you. I balance one against the other! Now remember, sir, if the story get abroad, I shall hold you accountable—for it will assuredly come from you.'

Thus speaking I released him and descended the stairs and sought my chamber, which I paced to and fro for many hours, trembling lest the disgraceful term I had once had applied to me should follow me to the walls of the University. I hoped, however, much from the bold and determined position I had in the outset assumed with reference to the only enemy I had, who had the will and the power to injure me. I knew that Carryl would have got a story circulating at once if I had not threatened him, and that he could now do no more; and I had a pretty strong confidence in having intimidated him. The result showed that I was not in error. He remained in College two years, during which time, though we daily met, we never spoke; and during this period I had no reason, from the manner of the students towards me, to suspect they had ever heard the disgraceful term I so dreaded coupled with my name. But after two year's residence in College, Russel Carryl was expelled for a gross misdemeanor, and soon after went to New Orleans. He had not been absent but a few weeks before I discovered a marked change in the conduct and bearing of many of the students with whom I had been on terms of intimacy. Some of them openly avoided me, and others coldly acknowledged my salute. Sensitive and alive to suspicions touching the point nearest my feelings, I began to suspect that my name at last had got to be coupled with an infamous epithet! My suspicions were at length confirmed (for I was getting feverish and in constant mental agony under the insulting bearing of my class mates, who did not hesitate openly to shun me) by seeing after coming from

recitation, the word `Bastard, ' written in chalk, upon my door.

It would be impossible for me to express my feelings on seeing this fearful word! It at once explained all the cold looks, and open insults, the scornful laughs and jeering gestures I had been for some days the subject of! I entered my room and locked the door. I threw myself into a chair but instantly rose, for my brain was on fire and I could not be tranquil! For a little while I was perfectly insane under the rush of emotions that overwhelmed me! All that I had feared had at last come upon me! and at a time too when I was winning golden honors in the very front of my class. In a few months longer I was to graduate, and common fame had already awarded to me the highest honor. All these high hopes were at once crushed.

I at length became calmer and was able to reason and reflect upon what had happened. I felt that the degrading light in which I was now regarded was owing to no act of mine! I felt the proud consciousness of innocence. But this was not enough to sustain me against the prejudices and malice of those with whom I was daily thrown into contact. I knew that I was looked upon as a degraded thing; and that from that day, if I remained in college, my path would be a solitary one! I should be the mark for the finger of scorn and buffoonery, and shunned and despised. The thought was madness. I could not endure it for an instant. My proud spirit rebelled and my wounded heart shrunk at this contemplation.

`No,' said I, `my course is decided. I leave College this very hour never more to return. I will fly from the ignominy that surrounds my name.'

I had one friend in College whom I greatly esteemed for the purity of his heart and the strong wisdom of his cultivated mind. He was the son of a country clergyman, and a beneficiary. We were intimate, and he was the only person I had ever made the confidant of the mystery which surrounded my infancy. This knowledge endeared me to him still more; and he truly loved me. He had few associates, for he was poor and a charity student. This led me first to notice him, and to seek his acquaintance. His name was Henry Seaford. While I was uttering my determination he knocked at the door. I knew his knock and opened it to him. He entered and sat down. I saw he was deeply moved.

`You have seen what is written on my door?' I almost sternly demanded.

`Yes, Marlboro'. It was a cruel and unfeeling act. I heard you walking over−head (his room was under mine) and knew something had greatly agitated yon. I came up to see, half suspecting the cause, when I saw the writing on your door. The infamous thing has been whispered about some days, but I only learned it this morning!'

`I have felt a change in the manner of many towards me for the week past and suspected the cause,' I said bitterly. `I thank the hand that wrote that on the door, it has relieved my mind and led me to adopt a course of action. I leave Cambridge this evening.'

My friend would have dissuaded me from this step, but finally yielded to my mode of reasoning and acknowledged I could not remain and be happy. He then told me that the report had been started by means of Russel Carryl who, before sailing from Boston, had written a note to one of the class, stating that he well knew me a boy at school and that I was there well known as the illegitimate son of Mrs. Darwell who kept the Silver Bottle Inn. On hearing this I could hardly restrain indignant tears. I forgot myself in the injury thus done that noble hearted woman! Seaford sympathised with me fully, but could afford me no consolation. I could neither prove my birth nor disprove the charge, and I resolved at once to leava. I presented Seaford with all my books, furniture and bedding, embraced him warmly and took the stage that very evening for home, leaving a note with Seaford to give to the President, in which I briefly stated that circumstances had rendered it necessary for me to take up my connections with the College.

That night I mingled my griefs and angry feelings with the gentle words of comfort and hope with which the good Dame Darwell strove to heal my wounded spirit.

The next day application was made by the benevolent woman to Judge —, in my behalf. He at once wrote on to Washington; and after waiting but three months I was so fortunate as to receive an appointment accompanied with an order to join the sloop of war Lexington at Norfolk.

CHAPTER VIII.

Prepare to join my ship—The conspiracy of Cousin Mariah against the Parson— Its success—My departure—A cruise—I pass my examination as Passed Midshipman—The supper—The insult and my resentment.

When the hour came for my departure to join my ship, my heart was oppressed with sadness and regret at the idea of parting with that noble hearted woman, who had been to me more than a mother. To her the prospect of parting with me for a period, perhaps, of three years, was an event of the deepest sorrow. Yet she felt that it was best for me to depart; that it was necessary I should go forth into the world; and that on board ship I should be secure from the fears which had harrassed me touching the ignominy which had been charged upon my birth. For my sake she tried to suppress her overwhelming emotion, and to assume a degree of cheerfulness she was far from feeling.

Dame Darwell at this time was just past her forty−seventh year, and still retained traces of that rustic beauty which had captivated the heart of George Darwell. Her eye was still dark and lively, her smile full of sweetness and her step light and bouyant, though she had got to be something fleshy. Her attachment and devotion to me seemed to increase with her years and my difficulties, and in parting with her I felt I was about to rend myself.

Aunt Keezy, who was now a thin, prim, spectacled old lady of sixty−one, having thus far in vain tried to outlive the good dame, professed a great deal of hypocritical sorrow for my departure: though I well knew in her withered old heart she was praying I might never return to rob her of Dame Darwell's loaves and fishes which she was clinging to life with the hope yet to enjoy. Cousin Mariah was not at home now. This discreet maiden seeing that Dame Darwell grew each year more hale and hearty and that I had escaped the croup, scarlet fever, rash, meazles and mumps, and promised to live out my full years, resolved to commit matrimony. For this purpose she set her cap for the minister, a slovenly bachelor who had succeeded the Rev. Dr. who had officiated at my baptism. The minister came to the Silver Bottle to board, and this circumstance inspired cousin Mariah with the idea of laying seige to his heart. The lady in question was about nine and thirty, tall and slender, straight and thin, innocent of bust and bustle. She had sandy brown hair, which she always wore in two bunches of frizzled curls on each temple. Her ears were very large and cartiliginous; her eyes pale blue; her nose inclined to turn up, and the corners of her mouth down. She was remarkably plain altogether, with a visage that seldom relaxed with a smile, but on the contrary expressed habitual discontent. Such were the beseiging forces that were contemplating an assault upon the solitary stronghold of celibacy within which Parson Buckhorn had entrenched himself. The parson was about forty−four, six feet one inch high, loosely jointed and hugely ungainly. He wore sheep skin slippers and a tattered morning gown, spectacles, and a short pipe; for the latter was so constanly in his mouth it may be reckoned among his attire.

Cousin Mariah began by a series of little attentions. She darned his hose she starched his cravats; she burnt out his pipe; she patched his gown, she kneed his pantaloons and elbowed his coat; she brought him hot water to shave and brushed his hat and surtout. In a word the designing maiden managed to make herself so useful to him that he was dependent on her for every thing.— Dame Darwell saw the game and winked at it; for she was nothing loth that the minister should take her off her hands; for couzin Maria was not the pleasantest tempered person to live with in the world. After she had got the good man as dependent upon her as a child, she suddenly took it into her head to make a visit of a few days to a distant relation. This was her *coup de main* The poor minister was utterly lost. He had no one to darn his hose, to starch his cravat, to fill his pipe, to knee his trousers and elbow his coat, to get hot water for him to shave with, and brush his hat! He was completely lost. She had well played her part.

`Good Mistress Darwell, when is your couzin to return?' said the poor ensnared Minister the second morning after her departure.

`She may be gone three or four weeks, perhaps longer. I should'nt wonder if she should get a husband there and stay away altogether!' said Dame Darwell mischievously.

`Impossible! It can't he!' said the good man; and then he filled his pipe and tried to console himself smoking.

But it would not do. He became restless and impatient; lost his appetite; forgot his sermons, and altogether showed the symptoms of a bachelor bewitched. Seeing affairs in this condition the good Dame thought it best to send for cousin Mariah, whom, as I have said, she was secretly favoring and encouraging in her hymenial conspiracy. On the fifth day cousin Mariah returned, and, to make an end of my story, in ten days afterwards they were published, and in due time married, greatly to the joy of the good dame. It was not a part of my foster mother to let cousin Mariah live with her now she was married; and so giving her a handsome wedding present of fifteen hundred dollars, she assisted them in going to housekeeping; and at the time of my departure they were living in a comfortable dwelling at the other end of the town. Cousin Mariah had now been six years a wife but not a mother.

As the stage came up to the door to take me from the roof which had been all my life my maternal home, the minister and cousin Mariah appeared to bid me farewell. The good man gave me good council and his blessing, and cousin Mariah said she hoped I would do credit to her and her cousin and all the relations, considering `as I had no relation to do credit to!' I was in no mood at such a moment to resent her malicious reflections upon my unfortunate infancy, being too much oppressed by the open grief and fast flowing tears of my beloved foster mother Closely she pressed me to her benevolent heart, prayed Heaven to protect me and in safety return me to her arms.

The coachman had secured my baggage and got upon his box. I embraced her tenderly and sprung into the coach. The next moment I was borne rapidly away from the home of my childhood, from the only true friend I could trust on earth, and fairly launched on the wide world of action, trials and struggles.

I was now eighteen, tall and well formed, and as dear Dame Darwell used to say, `with fine hazel eyes and rich brown hair; a handsome nose and mouth with a complexion inclined to brunette.' The change of scenery soon divested my mind in a measure from the burden of parting sorrow, and I became more tranquil and capable of reflection.

I felt I was now truly alone in the world! I did not know that a kindred drop of blood flowed in the veins of any human being. I could call no one father, mother, sister, brother, or cousin or kindred. I knew not even my name. These reflections came full upon my mind and I gave the rein to the ideas and emotions they suggested. From my boyhood, from the time that I had first heard from the lips of Russel Carryl the approprious epithet of `Bastard' applied to me, I had felt a feverish, restless, growing desire to learn who my parents were! I panted to unfold the mystery—to learn the *truth!* This ever living desire mingled even in my dreams; and many and many a nigh*t* have I dreamed I saw my mother and father!—she pale and beautiful, weeping and clad in deep mourning; he tall, noble in person and with a countenance bold yet pleasing. But I knew these were only the vision of memory recalling in sleep the descriptions of good Dame Darwell. But once, and the very night I left Cambridge, I had a dream that made a deep impression upon my mind, and which yet gives a complexion to the future whenever I look forward to it. I fell asleep dwelling painfully upon my disgrace, and the curse of man that seemed destined to follow me, and cast a cloud over all the brightest prospects of my life. I dreamed that I was standing in front of a stately gateway over which was an escutchcon on which was an eagle trampling upon a serpent. I stood gazing upon it, I remember, trying to recall where I had seen it before. While doing so a man dressed in black came to the gate and invited me with great respect and reverence in his manner to enter, at the same time holding open the gate with one hand. I passed in and found myself in an avenue lined with noble trees of great antiquity. It led to a beautiful edifice that seemed to me to be a palace. This man preceded me and ushered me up the steps of the magnificent portico into a hall of great size and beauty.

On the wall at the extremity I saw a bas relief in green marble of an eagle with his claw upon the head of a serpent. While I was looking at it and wondering, and trying to recall what connection that eagle and serpent had with something which seemed to weigh upon my memory, but which I could not recall, a double door was thrown open beneath the marble escutcheon, and two ushers coming forth, bowed to me, and then pointed forward through the door. I advanced and entered a circular apartment of great splendor. It was hung with tapestry worked in gold thread. At its extremity on a sumptuous couch reclined a female form. By her side kneeled a tall man. I approached them. The female was dead. He was gazing with tears upon her cold features. She was about forty with a profile of exquisite beauty and heavenly expression still resting upon her mouth. I involuntarily knelt on the opposite side of the couch. The gentleman, who was a noble looking man of about fifty, looked up and gazing on me tenderly, and without any surprise said,

`You have come too late, my son! The spirit has just flown!'

`I gazed upon her! I knew that it was my mother, and casting myself upon the body I wept.

I awoke! My cheeks were bathed in tears; and a sadness lay heavily at my heart. The dream made a deep and singular impression upon me! It has given a tinge of melancholy to all my thoughts of my parents, while it has led me to believe that I shall never again behold them living; that I shall go down to the grave without ever knowing to whom I owe my being.

I reached Norfolk in time to join my ship. In a few days we put to sea, and I entered with zeal and alacrity upon my duties. Our destination was the Mediterranean. After cruising in those agreeable latitudes for a few months, I joined the North Carolina, 74, and after a cruise of three years, returned to the United States. I did not delay an hour in New York, but at once hastened to my foster−mother, who had regularly written to me, and whom I now found perfectly well, and now that I had returned, perfectly happy. Aunt Keezy met me with a warm welcome, but couzin Mariah looked as if she were sorry I was not safe in the bottom of the sea. This feeling doubtless had its origin in the fact of her having presented the good parson a little pug−nosed baby boy, whom she had christened George Darwell and in whose way she felt I stood.

I had now acquired a good knowledge of seamanship and was so fortunate as to be ordered to Philadelphia to prepare for examination. While there I devoted myself wholly to study and passed the ordeal midshipmen so much dread not only without difficulty but with flattering commendations from the Board of Examiners. Up to this time from the hour of my entering the navy nothing had transpired that could lead me to believe that the mystery of my birth was know to my fellow officers. But the evening of the day on which I passed my examination showed me that I had not been forgotten by my implacable enemy Russel Carryl. The `Passed' Midshipmen partook of a supper. I was of the party. There was also present a midshipman who for some reason or other had taken a dislike to me. He had *passed* with difficulty and I had answered invariably every question to which he had failed. This irritated him, I saw at the time. At the supper, observing he looked at me from time to time with a clouded brow, I felt a disposition to conciliate him, and said pleasantly,

`Frank, I will take wine with you!'

`I drink wine only with gentlemen,' he answered in a haughty and most insulting tone.

I was thunderstruck. Every eye was turned upon us! In reply I threw my wine into his face and sent the glass after it. Every man sprang to his feet.— My antagonist drew his dirk and leaped across the table. He was seized and disarmed. I did not draw. A terrible feeling rushed upon me. It was the idea that his insulting words had some connection with a knowledge of the mystery hanging around my infancy! I was rendered almost insensible at the thought. The excitement was very great among the young men. All condemned him and acquitted me; while they demanded of him his reason for using such language.

`He is no gentleman, I repeat,' was the answer of the incensed young midshipman.

`You must prove this or fight him,' said one.

There was a loud murmur of surprise and every eye rested full on me. I stood silent and pale as death. I felt that the curse of my destiny had followed me. I did not speak—for I could not! my limbs and tongue were paralysed! The cold sweat stood in large drops upon my forehead My emotion was witnessed by all. It confirmed my degradation.

`You see he does not deny it,' said the midshipman with scornful exultation. `I happened to be a school−fellow of Russel Carryl, a young fellow now in New Orleans, and to day I got a letter from him, in which he states that he knew Darwell when a boy, and that he was then notoriously known to be the illegitimate son of a woman Darwell who kept an Inn. He says he wrote to me, seeing by the papers that I was here a candidate for `passing' and Darwell's name also; and supposing this *gentleman* might possibly try to cultivate the intimacy of respectable people he put me on my guard.'

On hearing this there was a general burst of indignation. Every eye was fixed upon me with menace.

`Infamous,' said one.

`Degrading to the navy,' cried a second.

`He deserves to be broke for his audacity in getting into the service,' cried another.

`Can this tale possibly be true?' asked a fine young officer approaching me with a look of surprise and sympathy.

`It is false,' I cried, instantly aroused and my whole spirit kindled. `He who asserts it is a liar and a ruffian.'

`I assert it,' retorted my antagonist.

`Then are you a liar and a ruffian,' I answered calmly but firmly. The young man became pale as marble.

`You must fight him,' said several, `you cannot pass this by.'

`I will not fight a degraded fellow like this.'

`Then defend yourself, coward,' I cried, advancing upon him with my dagger, for I was beside myself with anger.

A circle was opened for us and for several moments we fought with our dirks, giving and receiving wounds. At length he fell! I felt my arm firmly taken by the friendly midshipman and his voice in my ear, said,

`Fly! You have slain him.'

CHAPTER IX.

My determination taken to leave the Navy—Sunshine amid the gloom—My resolution formed to devote myself to one purpose—I return home—My plans and intentions communicated to Dame Darwell—I prepare to enter upon my several duties.

The wounds were not mortal which I had inflicted on my antagonist. In a few days he was out of danger and the intelligence of this fact relieved my mind from a great weight. It is true I had been greatly provoked, but this would never have excused me to my own conscience if he had died. Besides, I could not but reflect in my calmer moments that what he had said *might* be true. Indeed the idea began to take such hold upon my mind that I became wretched and filled with gloomy despair and borne down by a painful sense of degradation.

I had left the coffee house in company with the friendly midshipman and gone to his rooms to remain until I should learn the issue of my rencontre. He learned from me my whole story, and comforted me greatly with the confident assurance of his belief that I was honorably born. My affair with Frank — had occurred among us midshipmen alone and did not reach the Department, as it was kept as secret as possible by those who had witnessed it, lest all should suffer. I did not fear a court martial, therefore; yet I resolved at once to resign my berth in the navy. I felt that I could no longer remain in it without experiencing daily insult and a sense of infamy. I felt that the word of disgrace had been spoken and would fly from lip to lip. I therefore resolved to quit the service; and at the same time I made up my mind to enter upon no other pursuit, to devote myself to no other profession, but to give myself up, from that moment, to endeavor to ascertain my parentage. I felt until I could establish my birth I was, in whatever career I might enter upon, a banned man— an object for the finger of contempt and scorn! In the secret chambers of my soul I solemnly formed the resolution to give myself no repose until I should unravel this mystery! To this pursuit I sacredly dedicated myself and all my energies!

I was seated at the window of my friend's apartment on the third day after the rencontre, when I came to the resolution. The hour before he had brought to me the gratifying intelligence that the wounded young man was considered in no danger. I had been wounded also both in the left hand and in the breast, but slightly, however, and suffered no inconvenience therefrom save the necessity of wearing the arm in a sling.

Having formed my secret determination I penned a brief letter to the Secretary of the Navy tendering my resignation, and then with a certain feeling of freedom and hope I resumed my seat at the window. I had hardly done so when I saw two young ladies walking by on the opposite side of the street. As they passed, one of them turned her face and, I know not by what accident, glanced up at my window. My heart ceased to beat! I recognised the beautiful features of Emma Field! She evidently recognised me, for she half arrested her steps, and a glow of surprise and pleasure flushed her lovely countenance. I instinctively touched my lips and waved a salutation. She veiled her face and hastened on, and I was overwhelmed with pain at the idea that my audacity had offended her. But with the regret was mingled an emotion of the deepest joy that I had once more seen her who lighting from time to time crossed my heart's dreary way. The last time I had seen her I have not recorded. It was the year before in Summer street, in Boston. I was passing down and noticed a carriage finely appointed driving up. At the window I beheld Emma Field. She smiled, bowed and waved her fair hand. Before I could recover from my surprise the handsome equipage had rolled onward, and I had the satisfaction of feeling that I must have looked very stupid not even to have had self−possession to return her gracious salute. She was then about seventeen, and beautiful exceedingly. I saw her no more until I beheld her passing my window on Walnut street. A year had, if possible, added to her loveliness. Every charm that woman possesses seemed to have become her rich inheritance. It was but a transient glance, but I saw that she was surpassing fair. Her figure was just tall enough to be graceful, and she walked with the step of a sylph tripping over beds of flowers. After she had gone by a shadow seemed to have fallen upon the street. It soon cast a gloom over my soul. The thought of this charming girl whose form had mingled with all the happy day dreams of my boy−hood and maturer youth, deepened my bitterness of heart! The idea that I was degraded and outcast, and forever, perhaps, destined to approach no nearer the idol of my adoration, filled me with grief and anguish inexpressible. I rose and paced my

chamber, and felt like cursing my destiny! I was tempted to utter execrations upon the parents who could thus cast upon an unfeeling world their offspring! But I restrained the utterance of these feelings; for, ever had I cherished a tender and superstitious reverence for those unknown parents! But the more I compared my present degraded position with that far removed from me, of the beautiful creature who had just appeared before me like an angel of light and with whom forever to unite my destiny I felt would be the highest happiness I should on earth aspire to, the more deeply and painfully I realised my unhappy condition. But instead of giving myself up to despair I was strengthened in the purpose I had just formed; for in addition to the incentive held out by the discovery of my birth, in itself, was the sight of the bright star of love in the distance guiding me to success!

From this hour I was changed in feeling and character. A new spirit seemed to take possession of my being. Instead of being broken and despairing I was buoyant with hope. Love had renewed me and given me courage. I felt inspired by her idea, and resolved that I would win her or perish.

But what step was I first to take? My success depended on the proof of my honorable birth, without establishing which I felt I was bound to consider myself, as all men regarded me, degraded. This proof I was not to make to her, or for her satisfaction, for she was yet ignorant of my passion. It was to be made to the world—to those who had ejected me from their companionship! It was to re−establish me among honorable men, from which position alone, could I dare regard her. Love then, as well as a feverish desire to ascertain my parentage and an honest ambition to assume my proper station in society, was the motive for entering upon my task; a task that seemed hopeless, if I for a moment began to reason upon it and weigh the difficulties and enumerate the chances against me. But love was strong; and hope lighting her torch at the fires of her altar went forward confidently in the search.

After a while deliberating upon the course I should first adopt, my heart instinctively turned towards her, in whose affection and truth I could trust, and who had always been my guide, my friend, my judicious counsellor. Need I name my good foster−mother? I felt the need of a friend and adviser, and resolved at once to proceed home and lay before her all my plans. The next day I left Philadelphia, but not before I had contrived to ascertain that the charming girl whose image was enshrined in my heart, was at a fashionable school in the city and living with an aunt. I did not meet her again before leaving town though tempted to call upon her. But the consciousness of my equivocal position in society led me to reject the thought and to resolve manfully never to see her until I could do so without any ignominy upon my name.

The reader who has kindly condescended to follow me thus far in my narrative, will have seen that my present unhappy condition was no fault of my own. That I was degraded without having committed a single error or wrong against society. This consciousness while it naturally sustained me during my persecutions, served also to render me impatient under them. I could not help feeling that I was sacrificed for another's act, and that I was ill−treated by my fellow−men! Yet I could not prove that I was *not* what I had been represented; which, if I could or should yet prove, would degrade me as much in my own eyes as I was in theirs. My situation was in every respect a painful one; and as I was both high spirited and sensitive, it was a source of the deepest anguish to me. Peace no more, I felt, could be enjoyed by me, unless I could have in my hands the disproval of the charge brought against my birth. This proof I resolved to obtain.

In three days after leaving Philadelphia I reached `The Silver Bottle' Inn. My foster−mother met me with a cordial affection and sincerity that drew tears of gratitude from my eyes. She had heard of my having successfully passed my examination, as I wrote to her the same day. Pride, therefore, mingled with her love for me and her pleasure at my return. I was not unexpected, as I told her I should visit her as soon as I had `passed.' Her quick eye of motherly affection at once detected a sadness in my air and tones as I replied to her numerous inquiries touching my health.

`Something unpleasant has happened, son,' she said in a tone of anxious solicitude after we were seated alone in her little parlour. `Don't keep any thing from me, but tell me all, dear.'

`I will conceal nothing from you, my more than mother,' I answered; and then related to her the events that are already known to the reader.

She wept and tenderly embraced me when I had ended. `Do not mind it, Marlboro,' she said warmly; `your birth will one day be established and you will put all your enemies to shame. Mark my words! Don't let it trouble you. This is a cold−hearted world and people do act strangely, as if you yourself were not just the same whether

your mother was wedded or not wedded. I am so vexed that this should come upon you so and make you unhappy. Cheer up, and the clouds will give way to sunshine. Now you will stay at home with me. You shan't go any where else to be wounded in your feelings and have your happiness broken up this way. You shall now be with me, Marlboro', and I dare say you will be more contented here than among men.'

`I desire no happier home—no pleasanter condition than this, dear mother.' I answered overcome by her kindness. `In truth, I have no disposition to go into society. It has spurned me and I shall not at present court it.'

`Here you shall have what you want. I am worth full twenty thousand dollars and when I die it is to be all your own, except a legacy for poor aunt Keezy, if she should outlive me, and a small annuity for couzin Mariah, if she should ever become a widow. You shall have all, my son. And if it is too lonely here for you and you want to live in Boston, I will go there and live with you.'

`You are all goodness, noble and excellent woman, my more than mother,' I answered; `I only regret that circumstances which have been beyond my controul have prevented my continuance in a career in which I trust your heart would delight to follow me with its approval. It is my intention to remain at home a few days till I am in little better spirits and then enter upon a duty which I have solemnly imposed upon myself.'

`What duty, son?' asked my foster−mother with surprise and anxiety.

`To endeavor to ascertain who are my parents. You start and look with doubt and compassion upon me. I feel that there are great difficulties in the way; but my desire to disprove the ignominious epithet men now attach to my name, will give me a spirit more than human to prosecute this search. I have come to see you and talk with you upon the subject. The idea has long been in my thoughts, but the purpose is now indelibly fixed in my soul.'

When I had ended she shed a few tears, which she said were caused by the thought that I might possibly find my parents and then forget her. But on my assuring her that if my mother then stood before me, my *heart* would only acknowledge *her* as my mother, she was tranquilized; and in a few minutes afterwards she entered with kind readiness into all my views and wishes. I caused her to repeat once more to me all she knew of my history; to describe the carriage and horses; the gentleman and lady; the year and day they came and every thing that had any connection with their appearance. The substance of which was, and my only ground to start from, that in a pleasant June afternoon, 1822, a yellow barouche drawn by a pair of dark bay horses drove up to the Inn door. A gentleman and lady both attired in deep mourning alighted and followed by their black coachman bearing a large traveling basket entered the house and were shown to the `Court Chamber.' The gentleman wore a black cloak, was tall and of fine appearance, with dark eyes and hair and about eight−and−twenty. The lady was not above two−and−twenty, graceful in person, with a face very lovely but pale and sorrowful. That he at first said they should remain all night, but after ten ordered the carriage and departed as the moon rose, taking the turnpike to Boston. The door of the carriage and the blinder of the horses were ornamented with an eagle trampling upon a serpent—probably a Crest. Several hours after the carriage had departed the hostess hearing the cry of an infant followed the direction and entering the `Court Chamber' discovered lying in the bed a male infant about seven months old. In his hand he grasped a silver nursing bottle, on which was the same device of an eagle treading upon a serpent, which had been upon the carriage and harness. Beneath the crest was a cypher—the single letter `M.' This initial with two others preceding it (F. R. M.) were upon the brass plate of a trunk behind the carriage. With the infant was left a note and bundle. This note, written in a delicate, though trembling hand, gave no clue to the mystery, save to confirm the first suspicion of the child's having been left by the gentleman and lady who had occupied the room.

Such was the testimony and ground which I had to start upon in my resolute purpose to clear up the mystery enveloping my birth. It was slight and uncertain. A long period had elapsed, and each year that had passed lessened the chances of discovery. That I should have been suffered to remain so long (for I was now in my nineteenth year) under the pretection of Dame Darwell, by my parents, the more I dwelt upon it, the more it surprised me and deepened the mystery. It could not be because they did not know where I was? Perhaps my mother had watched me year after year unseen, and that I had often met her unknowingly. What could have been the nature of the extraordinary circumstances that not only first led them to leave me at the Inn, but which rendered it necessary for them for so long a period, to keep aloof from me? The more I dwelt upon it the more the whole subject was involved in painful and impenetrable mystery. This mystery I, however, resolved to clear up, and immediately prepared to take the first step towards the object to which I had now sacredly devoted myself.

CHAPTER X.

I put an advertisewent in the papers—My impatience to learn the result—The letter— I depart by Post for Philadelphia—I obtain−a new clue to the line of my destiny— The crest and torn letter.

Having formed my resolution, I lost no time in acting. I felt I could not do much with the slight materials I possessed towards effecting my end; but as these were my only ground of hope, I determined to make the best of them.— Upon the Silver Bottle I placed my chief dependence. It was the shape and size of a flattened oil flask, made of the purest silver, with a curved silver tube. On one side of it was the device before described, of the eagle trampling on a serpent, his claw crushing the head; a bold, spirited design. Beneath was the initial `M.' This crest having been on the carriage and on the harness, led me to believe that the persons who had brought me here travelled with their own equipage; and the fact of their having a black coachman led me also to believe that they were Southerners. A coach with that device upon it was wholly unknown, hitherto, in that vicinity; and no traveler to whom Dame Darwell told her story of my discovery, had ever heard of such a crest. Whoever my parents were it was evident that they did not belong in the part of the country wherein they had left me. It was naturally a source of gratification to me to be assured that they at least belonged to a good condition of society.

The `Silver Bottle' Dame Darwell had made me a present of when I left for sea, saying, at the time, it might one day be the means of ascertaining who were my parents. This idea I now seized upon with lively hope. Retiring to my room I took it forth from a locked case in which I kept it, and began examining it with great care and painful interest. I searched to see if it could reveal any thing further. To my surprise I found on the bottom nearly obliterated by being worn smooth; *the maker's name!* It was with great diffiulty that I could decypher it. But I succeeded in doing so with great joy, believing that this discovery would materially aid me. It was Beufort & Co. Lon—' The name of the place where it was made was nearly obliterated, but I had no doubt that it was London. The reader will at once see what advantage this would give me provided I could ascertain if there was such a Silver−smith's House in London, and learn from it to whom the Silver Bottle had been sold! This I resolved to leave for my last resort, atter trying every means this side of the water. I now sat down and wrote the following advertisement,

`One hundred dollars reward will be paid to whomsoever will forward to the addresses beneath, the name and residence of any family whose carriage plate, or seal bears the device of an eagle, with his claw upon a scrpent's head, and grasping the folds with the other talon .

Address the initials `M. D.' at the office of the Boston Daily —.'

This advertisement I read to my foster−mother, and mounting my horse galloped into Boston with it, the Inn as I have already said, being but nine miles from town. I left instructions with the publisher to request the certain papers in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile and New Orleans, to copy the advertisement and forward their bills to him for adjustment, at the same time leaving him the amount for this purpose. He stared on reading my advertisement, and remarked if such a crest belonged to any family in the Union, the offer I had made would bring it to light. He asked me no questions. I gave him no explanation and left the office I was now relieved of much of the weight that oppressed my spirits. The messenger of inquiry had gone forth, and might return like the dove bearing an olive leaf. I did not remain in town, but at once returned home and informed Dame Darwell what I had done. She looked pleased and expressed her sincere desire that I might succeed; and I saw that she had thrown aside every feeling of a selfish character, and looked only for my own happiness even, if the discovery of my parents should, in the end, lead to a separation from me. But she knew I should love *her* no less. Seeing me elated and full of anticipations of the result, she bade me not to be too sanguine, as I might he unsuccessful, and then my spirits would be crushed forever. I must acknowledge I had very little ground for elation; but my spirits being naturally buoyant I was led to hope against hope.

From the day the advertisement appeared, I was in a state of feverish and nervous expectation. My anxiety was so great that, too impatient to wait the tardy mail from town, and tired of riding in every day to learn its fate, I took up my lodgings at a private house. I avoided the hotels, lest I should meet some who had either known me in

college or in the navy, and had heard of my ignominious position before men. For the same reason I shunned public resorts and confined myself almost wholly to my room, once a day visiting only the office of the paper. Three weeks elapsed and no notice had been taken of the advertisement. I had in the meanwhile seen it copied as far South as Charleston, which papers were forwarded to the office. A month elapsed, when one morning as I entered the publishing room, the Editor handed me a letter mailed at Philadelphia, and addressed to,

`M. D.' *care* of the Boston Daily —.'

I tore it open with excitement and attempted to read it; but my hands shook, my whole body trembled; I felt my sight swimming, and I should have tallen but for the support of a chair. I nerved myself to overcome this weakness and again prepared to read the letter. My feelings, however, were still strong and I was too much agitated. I felt that it possibly contained a key to the mystery of my life—and that in a moment my happiness would be secured or destroyed forever! At length I recovered composure enough to read:

`Philadelphia, − *September 20, 184—*

Sir,—I have seen an advertisement this morning in one of the papers offering a reward of one hundred dollars for any information touching a device of an eagle treading upon a serpent. Although I do not covet the reward, I desire to serve you, if I can do so. Your advertisement brought to my recollection, a carriage which I painted twenty years ago (for I am by occupation a painter) on which I painted this very device, as I find on referring to my book where I keep patterns of every thing I have ever done in that way. The carriage was a double barouche, light yellow, and highly burnished. Trusting this little information I can give you may be of some service, I remain, Very respectfully yours,

James Merton.'

The reader will easily conceive my emotions on reading this. It conveyed, indeed, nothing definite or positive respecting my parents, but it connected the broken link to a time prior to that on which they had come to the Inn. It confirmed the accuracy of my foster−mother's description of the carriage, and that this was the very carriage I had no manner of doubt. I had, at least, effected something! It was one step and might lead to another of infinite importance. I was filled with joy and hope. The Editor who, a few moments before had noticed my paleness and agitation, now looked at my flushed cheek and sparkling eyes with surprise.

That same forenoon I placed the letter in Dame Darwell's hands, and I was greatly pleased to listen to her exclamations of surprise at the extraordinary discovery of the painter of the coach. The letter at once led my thoughts to Philadelphia, where I now believed my parents had lived. Thither I resolved to proceed without delay to call in person on the coach painter. My foster−mother wept at parting with me, and urged me to write to her and inform her of the progress I made in my search. The third day after leaving home I reached Philadelphia. It was already dark when I got to a quiet hotel in Third street. I immediately examined a directory seeking for the house of Mr. Merton. It was on Ninth street, near Race, and thither I directed my steps; for till I had seen him I felt neither like eating nor sleeping. I found the exterior of the house handsome and prepossessing. On ringing and saying I desierd to see Mr. Merton, I was ushered into a handsomely furnished parlor. I knew that many of the mechanics of Philadelphia lived in good style and were rich, or I should have believed that I had entered the wrong house. An astral lamp was burning on a marble centre table. An inner door opened and my heart throbbed violently at the idea that I was about to meet one whom my unknown father had probably spoken with. An elderly gentleman entered and bowed.

`Mr. Merton, I presume,' I said, returning the salutation.

`Yes, sir.'

`I had the pleasure recently of receiving from you a letter addressed to Boston in reply to an advertisement,' I said with a nervous agitation, which I have no doubt my kind readers will deem excusable when they consider how much reason I had to feel agitated.

`Mr. `M. D?' ' said Mr. Merton interrogtaively.

I bowed.

`Be seated, sir.'

`I have called,' I said, `to thank you for your obliging letter, and to —'

`Don't speak of it, my dear sir; and if you were about to say anything about paying the reward I can't listen to you. I only did my duty. It was by mere accident that I discovered the advertisement. My little son's eye caught it and asked me if I ever had painted such a crest as that, and said he believed he had seen one in my book of cyphers. I took the paper and reading it referred to my book, found it and recollected distinctly when I painted it. It was in the fall of '21!'

`Can you now remember, sir,' I tremblingly asked; `who it was that employed you to paint the crest?'

`It was a gentlemen—an entire stranger to me. He had bought the carriage new of a builder next door to mine and sent it to me to paint. With it he gave me the crest.'

`Have you the pattern he gave you?'

`It is pasted in my book. I will show it to you if it will interest you.'

`Deeply sir.'

He left the room and in a moment returned with a large folio of blank leaves, and opening it to the date of 1821 placed his finger on a crest such as had been described by me in the advertisement. It was done in colors on a piece of white paper and very beautifully though hastily executed. While I was regarding it attentively and with mixed feelings of awe and curiosity, he said,

`I remember the circumstances perfectly. The stranger came to me and asked me if I could paint the carriage and have it done by such a day. I told him I could. He then said he would like to have a crest upon it, and asking me if I had a brush and colors, said he would sketch the design. He went into the shop and in a few seconds sketched this for me to copy. He handled a brush as though he had been apprenticed to the trade, and I never saw anything done quicker nor with finer effect. The eagle I painted on the coach had not half the spirit of this original!'

`Sir,' said I with emotion I could not conceal, this little sketch would be invaluable to me. If I dare be so bold as to ask you to part with it!'

`It is at your service, sir; and I am happy to have it in my power to oblige you. You seem deeply interested in this matter, sir!'

`I am indeed, sir,' I replied; and won by his benevolent and friendly manner, I related to him briefly my history and the object of my advertisement. He listened with deep attention, and after I had ended said,

`I can never too often congratulate myself for having written to you. Your story is one of touching interest. I regret I cannot contribute more towards the furtherance of your purpose. I only saw your father (as I have no doubt he was, for as I recal his form and features I can see a resemblance to them in you) I saw him but twice, and but for a few moments each time. He was a tall, noble looking man and under thirty years of age. If now living he must be fifty.'

`Was he dressed in mourning?'

`No. His dress was strikingly elegant as were his manners. He looked to me more like a foreigner than an American.'

`Was he accompanied by a lady on either occasion?'

`No.'

`Did you ascertain his name?'

`It is my impression I did at the time, but I have forgotten it!'

`This is indeed unfortunate,' I said with a tone of disappointment. `It might have led to a discovery.'

`Perhaps I can assist you. The coach maker is still living and doubtless has his name on the bill for the carriage. Remain with me to−night my young friend, and to−morrow I will see what I can do. I also remember now that he stopped at Head's Hotel, which proves he was a stranger in town; and by going there to−morrow we may find, by referring back to the date, his name on the books.'

`This idea gave me fresh hope; and thanking the benevolent Mr. Merton for his obliging reception of me and my affair, I gratefully declined his invitation and returned to my hotel, bearing away with me the crest which my father, as I believed him to be, had sketched with his own eye and hand. I had now a relic and memento of each; *her* note to my foster mother and this sketch! On reaching my room I sat down to examine it and gaze upon it and indulge the feelings the sight had produced. Turning it over I saw to my surprise, writing upon the back. The paper, I at once saw, had been part of the subscription to a letter. The letters remaining were

`To F. R. Mar'—. −

The remainder was gone! The initials were the same as those on the trunk and thus the link was made stronger. I had also advanced another step—a great step in gaining two letters after the initial.

CHAPTER XI.

Little Marlboro' makes a visit to Head's Hotel—The investigation—The negro and his testimony to the past—The trunk—The coachman—The return of Little Marlboro' to the Inn—His resolution to proceed to England—His adieus.

The unexpected possession of the additional links in the chain of my destiny, mentioned in the last chapter, filled me with bounding hopes. That I had got hold of the clue to my parentage I had not the least doubt. The crest given me by the coachmaker was indentical with that upon the Silver Bottle, and the initials of the name upon the torn letter were the same as those Dame Darwell had remarked on the trunk of the mysterious travellers who had occupied the Court Chamber. The gentleman described by Mr. Merton as having sketched the crest precisely answered the description given by the good dame of the traveler in black. The time, also, was the same, he being in Philadelphia only six weeks before the carriage stopped at the Inn, which left time for an easy journey to this place. All these circumstances formed links of the chain which I was now resolved to trace to its end.

Early the ensuing morning, after taking a hearty breakfast, I proceeded to Head's Hotel, a stately building a little retired from the street, and originally the private mansion of a distinguished citizen. This hotel had a high reputation and was much frequented by wealthy Southerners. The fact that the stranger had also stopped there, strengthened my belief in the idea I had formed, from his having a black servant, that he was a southerner. It was this impression that had led me to send my advertisement to Charleston and other southern cities.

On entering the door of the hotel, I felt the blood mounting to my face with the emotions that came over me at the thought that probably the feet of my father had crossed the same threshold! I was also deeply moved at the reflection that in a moment or two I should be able to learn the name and residence of the person to whom the torn letter was addressed—and which might prove to be that of my father! The clerk saw my embarrassment and fixed his eyes with curiosity upon me as after several efforts I finally succeeded in asking him if he kept the records of the travellers who stopped at the hotel in 1821. The question was heard by the host who stepping up, surveyed me a moment and then said with his pleasant smile—

`That is a long way back, my dear sir; no register remains for the period.— What do you wish to refer to?'

`The name of a gentleman who with his lady put up there that summer. It is important that I should ascertain it!'

`Then you don't know it?'

`No, sir.'

`And how then will you ascertain what you wish?' he said smiling.

`I know the initials,' I answered.

`Ah, that is better. What is your object in searching for names so far back.'

`It is connected with some family matters,' I answered, embarrassed for a reply.

`Well, well, I will see. There is no register, but my books will show. What are the initials of the person you are inquiring for?'

`F. R. M.'

The kind host, with a look in which surprise and curiosity were mingled, began to examine an old account book brought to him from a dusty top shelf in the office, and after running his eye down the column of M's, while I was trembling with hopes and fears, he stopped, placing his finger upon a name. Before he could utter it I was at his side looking over his shoulder. My quick glance rested on the name at which his finger had paused. It was, `F. R. Marlborough. '

I stood perfectly transfixed with astonishment. It was the very name by which I had been so singularly christened! What wonderful relation of circumstances could have produced such a coincidence! I was speechless with amazement. The reader will remember that I happened to be christened by Dame Darwell `Little Marlboro',' because the caps that were left for me by those who had abandoned me were wrapped in a torn leaf of a singing

book, on which chanced to be the well known tune of `Little Marlboro'!'

And now, by a surprising coincidence the name I had been in search of as my father's, turned out to be Marlboro! By what mysterious ordering of events had this thing happened! I now felt a superstitious impression that this person was indeed my father!'

After a little recovering my self−possession, I said with considerable emotion—

`Sir, this must be the name I seek. I know not how to express my obligations to you for your kindness in taking this trouble. Will you be so good as to examine the account to which this refers. It is page 335!'

He turned to the page. The bill was made out to F. R. Marlboro, and lady, and servant, (colored male servant) charging them with three weeks board.— My proofs were augmented by this discovery. Here was the party that had stopped at Dame Darwell's. I had, however, yet to discover what I had turned to the account in search of, viz.: the residence. I was in hopes it might possibly have been witten in the bill. But it was only made out to the name— simply to F. R. Marlborough, lady, and colored servant, without stating the place of abode. This I could only expect to find recorded on the register, and this, was lost. I felt deeply disappointed. I had discovered much. I had clearly proved the identity of the party that had stopped at the Inn with the party that had stopped at the Hotel. All the intermediate links were perfect The proofs were clear and left no room for the shadow of a doubt.

Yet I seemed at once brought to a full stop in my search. I seemed to have met with a barrier that could not be surmounted.

`Sir,' I said with an earnestness that shewed the depth of my feelings, `is it not possible that you may be able to recall the gentleman to your mind; to recollect when he was with you, and also his residence? Perhaps, sir, you may have known him well!

I hung upon his answer. After a moment's reflection, he shook his head:

`I cannot recal him, sir! It is many years ago, and I have at my house so many hundred guests every year, that he is lost among them all. If there was any particular circumstance by which he could be recalled to my mind?'

`They must have had an infant with them,' I said with a trembling eagerness. `It is not mentioned in their account, and perhaps would not be likely to be.— But, sir, they *must* have had an infant with them!'

He thought again and a socond time shook his head! `I am not able to recall them!'

`Have you no old domestics with you! Perhaps some one of them might bear these persons in mind!' I said earnestly.

`You seem deeply interested, sir, and excited. I will do all I can. May I know your motive?'

`Sir,' I said earnestly, `a party answering to this description with these iniitials, stopped in 1821 at an Inn in Massachusetts and left behind them an infant boy of six months, which child was afterwards brought up to manhood by the good landlady. I am that child. I am seeking my parentage! Circumstances have favored me thus far, and I have traced them to your house. I have discovered their name. I desire now to learn their residence!'

On hearing this account of myself and my object the kind−hearted old gentleman at once interested himself in my affair. He sent for an old gray−headed negro and questioned him.

`No, massa,' said the African scratching his forehead, `I doesn't collect zactly any sich gemmun as dis Massa Marlbry wot you axes me `bout; yet dis niggar hab pertikklar good mem'ry too!'

`He is more likely to remember persons of his own color,' I said quickly. He was then asked to recall any black coachman that he might have seen there.— After a good deal of bothering of his thick brain and naming over every nigger servant that come with gentlemen, beginning at the one that came yesterday and going back from year to year, he finally got to the year 1821. It then occured to me to mention that they had a new coach with a crest, an eagle treading upon a serpent.

I had no sooner named this, than his eyes shone with intelligence.

`Ah, dar he be massa, dem's de man! I 'members de niggar wot druv dat caryage mighty well! His name was Pompey. He an' I was 'tikkilar friends ater we'd got 'quainted. Oh, yis! I collects him and his new coach! Now I 'collects his master an' missus too! I 'member's de eagle clawin de rattlesnake!

`Did they have an infant!'

`Lor, yis! I members it jist as well! a *leettle* bit baby—yah, yah! Dis nigger hab good memory!'

`Where did Pompey say his master lived!'

`Dat am de mistery, massa! I recollecs axing dat question ob him, an he nebber gib no satesfaktry answer! He

keep dark as his own skin! He wos a genelmen nigger dough, nebberdeless. He wore a crape behind his hat half a yard long. His master and missus was mighty 'spectable people, or dey'd nebber hab sich a 'spectable servant.'

`Was he a slave do you remember!'

`Dat am a mystery too. I axed him more dan onct if he wor a free nigger genlmun or a slave an he neber gib me no satisfaxion. I tink, homsomnebber, dat he wos a slave and from de West Indgy, coz he look and talk like a Ingy nigger, and not like ol' Wirginny!'

Nothing further could be elicited from the old African. But, to my joy, mine host, whose memory had received an impetus from the negro's reminiscence, now remembered the coach and the party. It was, however, but indistinctly. He remembered they were very retired, and were in mourning; but nothing new was gained by me. After thanking him for his politeness, and receiving his warm wishes for my success, I quitted the hotel. As I was passing out I placed a dollar in the hands of the negro, who, after a bow and scrape, called me back, and said,

`Now I tink ob it massa, dat nigger Pompey make me a present ob an old trunk, dat when dey go away in dar new caryage he couldn't carry. I gib de nigger a pound ob 'baccy for it! Dar be some writin' or printin in de trunk wot may be able to tell massa whar it come from, if dat be wot massa arter.'

My heart leaped into my mouth. I desired him instantly to conduct me to the trunk. It was in the boot−room. It proved to be an old round topped wooden trunk, once covered with seal skin, every hair of which was now worn off. It was shining with blacking, for the old man used it to try his brushes upon before applying them to the boots.

`Dat am de present dat Pomp gib me for a pound ob 'baccy, massa.'

I opened it, as it had no key, and tumbling out without ceremony the contents of coarse clothing upon the floor, I examined it. It was lined inside with newspapers, and a glance shewed me that they were English papers. The date was 1818. But all doubt of its being an English trunk was put to an end by a defaced card on which I was able to decypher the name of `Sandford, *Maker*, London.'

This was all that I could discover in or about the trunk. But it strengthened a former idea that the stamp upon the Silver Bottle had led me to hold that my parents might have come from England. But then the bottle and the trunk might have both been made in London and yet their possessors be Americans. They might have been purchased in the United States. But then again trunks were not imported, and a bottle like that could be as easily obtained here as in England!—The result was that I began to be deeply impressed with the idea that I should have to look yet to England for my parentage! The negro had probably received the trunk from his master, who had no doubt purchased it in London.

I had yet one more branch of events to pursue to its source. The maker of the carriage, Mr. Merton had told me, was still living, I had taken his address; and after leaving the Hotel I hastened to call on him without delay. I found him at home and to my surprise and pleasure, Mr. Merton with him, who had called to see him in my behalf. I related to him the result of my visit to Head's. They had just been looking over the books and accounts of that year and there found the name of Ferdinand R. Marlborough. The bill of the carriage was made out to his name. Beyond this I could learn nothing, save that the coachmaker expressed it as his opinion that Mr. Marlborough was an Englishman. This impression strengthened my own, which were tending to that channel and I began involuntarily to turn my thoughts towards the other side of the Atlantic.

I had now exhausted all my means of information in Philadelphia and felt that I must seek for the next link in London. I at once hastened to my kind foster−mother, and after reporting to her the events which had occurred during my absence, I made known to her my intention to take passage for Europe. My only guides were the maker's stamp on the Silver Bottle, whereby I hoped to trace the purchasers; that upon the trunk, and the crest, by which I hoped to find my parents, through the Herald office.

The good dame was too sensible, and desired too much my happiness to offer any objection, and, though not without tears, gave her consent.

I shall, therefore, depart in the Acadia steamship, which sails next Monday for England. I am, by the generosity of my foster−mother, amply provided with means. I shall be in England in a few days, and there enter upon the search, the resources of which I feel that I have exhausted here!

The reader shall hear of my progress after I reach England in a series of letters, which I shall transmit to them in recompense for their indulgence in following me thus far in my narrative. Till then I bid you, my dear readers,

an affectionate farewell.

Your friend, LITTLE MARLBORO'.

Boston, June 20, 184—

PART II

CHAPTER I.

London, − *July 8th, 184—. To The readers of the First Part of `The Silver Bottle*.' −

I DEPARTED from Boston in the Acadia Steamship the Monday following the close of the First Series of my narration, and arrived here in safety three days ago. I have already stated that by the generosity of my kind foster−mother, Dame Darwell, I was amply provided with means to prosecute my search. According to my promise the reader shall now hear of my progress in a series of letters which I shall transmit to them in recompense for their indulgence in following me thus far in my narrative.

Having, as has been seen, exhausted all my resources of information in the United States, there remained no alternative but to cross the Atlantic. My readers will probably remember on what proofs I hoped to find some trace of my parentage; but I will here recapitulate them:—First: was the Silver Nursery Bottle which was discovered lying with me in the bed of the `Court Chamber, ' with its crest of an eagle treading upon a serpent, and beneath the crest a cypher—the single letter `M.'

Second: This crest was also upon the harness and carriage and the initial was upon the brass plate of a trunk behind the carriage! These facts of coincidence showed that the bottle must have belonged to the persons in the carriage, and consequently that both the bottle and myself had been left in the Court Chamber by these strangers.

Third: I have traced the carriage to the carriage maker's in Philadelphia and there obtained the original drawing of the crest; and I had discovered at the hotel that the purchaser of the carriage had entered his name as `F. R. Marlborough;' (a singular coincidence with my own!) for as these were the initials on the back of the letter upon which the device of the crest had been drawn by the stranger for the coach−painter, there was no question of the identity of one with the other.

Fourth: The discovery of the old English trunk was a circumstance that I deemed an important item in my array of discoveries; as it, without doubt, confirmed my long conceived opinion that I should yet have to look to England for my parents.

Fifth: The name of the maker of the Silver Bottle on which I placed great hopes. It was `Beufort & Co. Lon—.'

`Sixth: The crest, if belonging to an English family, could without doubt be found at the Herald office, and by this means the family which claimed it might be discovered.

These were the slight grounds upon which I based my hopes of discovering my parents, and which have led me to cross the Atlantic in search of them. I am now in London! My hopes are buoyant. I feel I shall yet succeed! At least I am determined never to cease my efforts to find those to whom I owe my birth. I have been two days in London. But the fatigue and excitement of my journey and of reaching the field of my labors has kept me confined to my room until this morning. I have been engaged all the forenoon in making my plans. The Herald office cannot be visited on business until next Wednesday and it is now Friday. I should first wish to visit that, but I cannot wait so long an interval. I have, therefore, sent a servant for a directory from one of the libraries to examine it for the name of `Beufort & Co.,' the makers of the Silver Bottle. The servant has just returned!

4 P. M. I have examined the directory for this year and those for seven years back without finding the firm. I find several of the name of Beufort both alone and with partners, but none of the firm of `Beufort & Co.' I have despatched a messenger for a bound catalogue of the trade published, as I learn, by the company of Silver Smith's of the city of London, and extending back in volumes for more than a century. I have sent for the volume or twenty−five years ago.

The man has just returned from `The Silver Smith's Arms,' informing me that books are not suffered to leave the library, but that I can call and refer to them. I shall at once proceed to the Hall for this purpose.

8 P. M. I left the house guided by the messenger, for London is a labyrinth to me, and reached the Silver Smith's Hall after half an hour's walk. I was guided up a broad flight of steps into a vestibule, where sat an old man who acted as door−keeper. On informing him of my wishes he asked me if I had a ticket of admission. I replied in the negative.

`You cannot be admitted without a ticket of permission, sir,' he said.

`Of whom am I to obtain this?'

`Of the President of the Company.'

While I was undecided what to do, a gentleman, advanced in years, came up the stairs and was about to enter, when observing my perplexity, for he had overheard what had passed, he said to me politely,

`You are a stranger I peceive, sir!'

`Yes, sir. An American.'

`You may enter, sir, with me. Can I be of service to you?'

`My business in coming here,' I answered, `was to examine the volume of The Silver Smith's Company for about twenty−four or five years ago!'

`You will find them arrayed on yonder shelf, sir. Whose name can you wish to search for, of a date so long back?'

`That of `Beufort & Co.'

`That is my own firm?' he said, looking at me fixedly.

`Your own firm!' I repeated with gratified surprise.

Yes, sir. I am the Senior partner of that House!'

`I could not find it on the directory for the last seven years!'

`No, sir. It is twelve years since I withdrew my name from the firm; it is now `Walley & Beufort,' my son and son−in−law! I should have said I *was* instead of *am* the Senior parter!'

I was so greatly agitated for a few moments after this singular and seemingly providential discovery, that I could not speak. I trembled and had to place my hand against a column for support He observed my emotion and said with alarm,

`What! are you becoming ill, sir?'

`No—no, sir! It is all over. It was only my surprise at meeting you so singularly for whom I was seeking—whom I crossed the Atlantic almost purposely to see!'

`Crossed the Atlantic to see *me?*' he exclaimed with intense astonishment.— `What can you have with me to come so far? I do not remember ever to have seen yon—yet, now I look at you more closely, your features seem somewhat familiar:'

`You can never have seen me before, sir! I have come to see you and ask you what (I said coloring at the seeming trivial nature of the subject) I fear you will regard as a trifling question, but one which is full of the deepest import to me!'

`Well, sir, speak!' he said gravely seeing that I paused, and looking at me as if he suspected I was not exactly in a state of mental soundness.

`Do you remember having sold some twenty−five years ago, a silver nursing bottle?'

He smiled, but answered benevolently,

`I dare say I have, sir, a good many of them. In those days I know we manufactured them?'

`You stamped them with the name of your firm—Beufort & Co?'

`Yes. But why do you ask?'

`I have a motive, sir, if you will indulge me! Did you ever sell such an article to a person by the name of Marlboro'?'

I hung upon his reply. He looked as if he were trying to recollect, and then answered slowly,

`Not that I remember. My books however will show!'

`Can you refer to them easily?'

`Yes, sir. But this would hardly seem necessary!'

`I owe you a thousand apologies, sir, but it is very necessary I should ascertain this. When I tell you, sir, that I am a foster−child and abandoned by my parents in infancy and that the only clue I have to my parentage is a silver nursing bottle which they left with me, stamped with your name, I am assured sir, you will excuse my zeal and overlook the trouble I give you!'

`And this is true that you are such a child and in possession of such a bottle?'

`Yes, sir! Here it is!' I ssid taking it from my pocket and then from two envelops (the inner one being the leaf from the music book with the tune of `Little Marlboro' upon it, in which the baby linen had been wrapped) and

handing it to him. He took it and said immediately,

`This is certainly one of my manufacture, with my stamp upon it! From its shape I know it to be one of the earliest that we had made. I am ready to assist you, sir, if you can tell me how I can do so?'

`If you will do me the honor to listen to me, sir, I will tell you all my past history and my hopes of the future!'

`I will cheerfully hear you. Here are two chairs!'

I then gave him a brief yet sufficiently minute account of the facts the reader is already familiar with up to the time of my embarking for England. He listened with the profoundest attention and at times with emotion he did not attempt to disguise. When I had ended he said, grasping my hand,

`Sir, your narrative has deeply interested my feelings. I am obliged to you for narrating it to me. I agree with you that your search must be now continued in England; and you have my prayers for your success. I believe you will succeed. You shall have all the aid I can give you! The facts you bring to bear upon the search before you are, as far as they go, of importance. They are, however, in themselves nothing unless you can connect each link that follows with its fellow. You deserve all praise for your perseverance. Come with me, sir, to my counting−room, where my books are, and I will examine them. I was always in the habit of making a record of each days' sales, and to whom, if I knew the persons!'

From the Silver Smith's Hall I went with him to his own carriage, which had been waiting for him at the door of the Hall, to his counting−room. It was in the rear of a magnificent establishment for the sale of silver wares. We passed through the glittering room and entered his counting−room, which he seemed to keep only to preserve his habits of business. There was at the desk an aged clerk almost as venerable as Mr. Beufort himself.

`Jacob, turn to ledger B,—date 1818, and see if there is such a name entered upon it as F. R. Marlborough!' said his master as he laid down his hat and stick, and seated himself in his arm−chair. I was too nervous to accept the seat he offered me, but stood waiting to see what Jacob would discover.

The old clerk having found the huge volume, dusted it and run his eye over the alphabetical list at length arrested his finger upon the letter `M.' He then run over the names beginning with this letter, murmuring `Marl—Marl—Marl,' in a half tone, as his eye traveled down the column. I watched him with intense anxiety. At length at the very bottom of the page, he placed his fore−finger upon a name, and emphatically pronounced the word `Marlborough.'

`You've found it!' cried Mr. Beufort half rising up in his chair.

`Yes sir `*Marlborough. F. R*, page 319,' he responded in a formal tone.

`Turn to it quickly,' I said, impatient at his mechanical formality.

He tossed back the heavy leaves of the folio, and laid open the page named. I was instantly looking over his shoulder. It showed an account opened by the House of Beufort & Co. with Ferdinand R. Marlborough. I ran my eye rapidly over the items, which were a score in number. *Among others was a `Silver bottle*!' I uttered an exclamation of joy, and announced it to Mr. Beufort He came and looked over the book.

`Extraordinary! Wonderful coincidence! Providence has taken the matter up, young man! Persevere and you will ultimately succeed! Your Silver Bottle will yet make your fortune! Strange, indeed!'

`Have you any recollection of this, Mr. Marlboro?' I asked earnestly.

`I am trying to think. I have had so many customers that I am not sure that I recollect him. Do you know who it was, Jacob?'

`He was quite a young man, I recollect sir, I sold him most of these articles myself.'

`Can you describe his appearance?' asked Mr. Beufort.

`He was about the height of this young gentleman, sir, and—(here he looked at me with a sudden gaze of surprise) I never saw two more alike, sir! It is surprising, sir,' he added, looking at me and bowing, `the astonishing resemblance between you and Mr. Marlborough!'

I exchanged looks with Mr. Beufort, who looked very much excited with the most pleasurable emotions. `Your case is brightening, sir,' he said to me.

I was silent. I was too deeply moved to open my lips to express what I felt. I trembled between hope and fear.

`What family did he belong to, Jacob?' asked Mr. Beufort.

`I cannot say, sir, though I have no doubt he was one of the nobility. He used to call in a tilbury when he came alone; but when he came with his lady, her carriage had a crest of an eagle strangling a snake!'

`The very same!' I exclaimed almost wild with my feelings.

`And he had a wife, Jacob?'

`Yes, Mr. Beufort. A young wife!'

`Let me see the dates,' he said, looking at the account. `His bills begin January first with the purchase of a diamond necklace, and a set of bridal pearls, doubtless for new year's or wedding gifts. The silver bottle was bought December 20th.'

`The bottle I sold to the lady. She came alone in her carriage. I recollect the circumstance, from her wishing the crest and the initial `M' engraved upon it!'

`Your memory is not only tenacious, Jacob, but very valuable just now!'

`I always had a good memory, sir. I can recollect biting my fingers with my first teeth!' answered Jacob gravely.

`I dare say, Jacob. You have shown evidences of it now. Is that the bottle you sold the lady?'

Jacob took it and examined it closely.

`Yes sir,' he answered confidently.

`It is one of ours; but is it the identical one?'

`Yes, sir. I know it by the crest. I engraved it myself!'

`Then the matter is settled,' said Mr. Beufort, looking at me, and smiling with gratification. `We have now to find out who Mr. Marlborough was, and it is my opinion that will amount to the same thing as finding out your parents, sir! You have clearly proved them to be English, I think! The next step to be taken is to the Herald office!'

`It is closed,' I said in a tone of disappointment.

`Not so that admittance cannot be obtained on application to the proper quarter. Come and breakfast with me at No—Terrace, at nine to−morrow, and we will then proceed together to the Herald office!'

This good man then drove me to my lodgings, where I have now written the progress of events up to this hour. My next letter will make known the result of my visit to the `Herald's Hall.' Yours truly,

LITTLE MALBORO.'

[1] We have thought best to give the letters as they are, instead of bringing them into a narrative form.

CHAPTER II.

London, − —, *1844.*

I have just returned from a visit to the Herald's Hall, and with a beating heart and trembling fingers I proceed to write what has transpired, before I leave London, which I shall do at day−light in a post chaise.

It will be remembered that I was about to proceed to the Herald's office with Mr. Beufort who was to make use of his personal influence to obtain admittance for me. To this gentleman I feel under the profoundest obligations of gratitude.—From the first moment in which I made him acquainted with my story, he has taken the deepest interest in my researches; and has voluntarily and most kindly offered to aid me, not only with his influence and experience, but with money, should I at any time require it. But, thanks to my kind foster−mother, good Dame Darwell, I am amply provided with means to meet every possible contingency.

I left my rooms this morning at ten, and entering Mr. Beufort's carriage, which he had sent to receive me, I drove to his handsome mansion on — Terrace. Ho received me at the door, and said he would be at leisure in a few minutes to accompany me to the Hall, and that in the meanwhile his wife and daughter would entertain me. Thereupon he ushered me into a pleasant withdrawing room opening from the breakfast room, and presented me to Mrs. Beufort and her daughter, an accomplished and exceedingly lovely young lady of eighteen years of age, whose features at once reminded me of Emma Field, a young person no doubt still remembered by my readers as she will ever be by me! Indeed this beautiful girl is ever visible to the eye of my imagination whenever I look into the future! It is she who inspires me to action! To persevere in establishing my birth! It is for *her* that I would be honoured and esteemed! If I should hear to−day that she was no more, or what would be as her death to me, married to another, I feel persuaded that my energies would be paralysed and that I should be indifferent to the result of my researches after my family. If I gain honors it is to lay them at her feet! If I gain wealth it is to share it with her! And without her both would alike be valueless to me!

I could not help betraying some confusion and surprise at the resemblance I discovered to Emma in Miss Beufort; a resemblance rather of air and general manner than of feature. The sight of her revived all my emotions of love for the absent, and I could not withdraw my eyes from her; till, at length, I discovered that she was embarrassed by my fixed regards. I immediately apologised to her, saying that she so surprisingly resembled an American friend of mine that I could offer no other excuse for my inadvertant gazing. She smiled, and we entered into a conversation upon my fortunes, of which they were previously informed by Mr. Beufort. I could see by Miss Beufort's eyes that she wished I might succeed in discovering my parentage and that she sympathized with me in my situation of doubt and uncertainty. My conversation with Miss Beufort only deepened my tender recollections of her whom she so forcibly recalled to my mind, and inspired me with new ardor in my pursuit of that happiness and honor I hoped one day to share with Emma.

`Ah, my young friend, so you are agreeably entertaining the ladies, I see! *Perhaps* we are entertaining a Prince,' added he, smiling pleasantly. `Well, sir, now if you are ready!'

`If my parents prove honest and respectable I shall be satisfied, even if I find them in humble life,' I answered, understanding his allusion.

We entered the luxurious carriage of the wealthy Silver−Smith, two livered footmen behind, and the coach rolled with a rapid and easy motion through the crowded streets of London. We soon left the Strand and stopped in front of a stately edifice, seemingly of great antiquity. Alighting at the grand entrance we passed into a large vestibule at the extremity of which was a flight of dark oaken steps with carved banisters. At the top was a sort of open terrace leading upon a low balcony, in which by a door sat in a carved Gothic arm−chair a man in a Herald's surcoat, who was the porter of the Hall. To him Mr. Beufort handed a ticket signed by the nobleman who regulated the affairs of the Herald's Hall.

`You may enter, gentlemen! It is correct!' he answered, after peeping closely at the signature and seal through a pair of iron spectacles that looked as if they might have been worn by one of the Herald's of the days of the Conqueror.

We entered a vast hall of Gothic architecture, lighted by a stained window at either extremity. It was the most

remarkable apartment I ever entered, and I remained a few moments gazing around me. The ceiling was pointed and groined and formed of groups of light arches supported by columns springing free from the floor thirty feet in height. The arches, pillars and walls were all a dark gray, having the appearance of stone; and the original hue has been changed by time, in many places a deep black. The effect was singularly venerable and impressive. Along the roof was suspended hundreds of banners bearing all sorts of quaint devices, an I presenting a beautiful and strange comingling of gay colors. Some of these banners were very old, and torn doubtless in battle. Along the walls of the hall, beneath this canopy of suspended banners, were arranged rows of shields of every shape, and size, and degree of antiquity, this side the Conquest. Some of them had become perfectly black with age, others were coated with rust; and many glittered and shone as if newly burnished. I noticed that all of them, where they were not so much defaced as to render it impossible for anything to be discerned upon the surface, were carved or else inlaid with devices of heraldry. On some were delineated complete and elaborate coats of arms, by means of gold inserted in grooves cut into the metal. Most of the shields were battered and indented, and in one I saw embedded the end of a broken pike−head.

Upon the opposite side of the hall were arranged casques and helmets with and without visors; and standing around the apartment were numerous complete suits of armor *cap−a−pie*, as if enveloping the body of stalwart knights.

Seeing my curiosity in observing all this, Mr. Beufort said,

`You are here in the repository of the insignia of English family honors.— There is not a family in the land of any descent that is not represented in this Hall by some appropriate device belonging to its name and inheritance. Here the history of every old British family is recorded from its remotest origin, and many of them extend their line beyond the Conquest to Norman lineage. Here are to be found not only their histories, but the causes are recorded which led to the distinction of each!'

As he spoke one of the ushers of the Hall approached us, and overhearing Mr. Beufort's words, said courteously, after saluting us,

`Yes; there is not a family above the rank of a simple baron whose name and lineage is not here on record with a copy of his arms, and how he came by them. There now,' he said, directing our attention to the rows of shields, `is a shield bearing simply for its device a rook. It is the device of the noble family of Rookley, the founder of which was wounded in battle and lay perishing in a copse where he had fallen under the weight of his armor; but who was saved by a rook which lighting upon a tree above him made such a strange clamor that his followers were led to approach the tree to destroy it, when the Knight was found lying beneath it nearly dead. He afterwards, in commemoration of his preservation, took the name of Rookley and adopted this device upon his shield! There is a shield with a lance's head sticking in it. It is the device of the De Lancey family. The founder was a gigantic soldier in the battle of Croisay, and singly defended his king with this shield against a score of Cavaliers, all of whom shivered their lances against it, and the last piercing it broke it in the metal as you see. The soldier saved the king's life, protecting him till succor arrived, and was knighted, adopting the lance head for his heraldic device and designation.

Interesting as these chivalric remeniscences were, I was too impatient to learn if I was any ways interested in the records of the Hall of Herald's to listen with undivided attention. My eyes were roaming over the multitude of shields and banners with the wild hope of possibly seeing that device which had become so indelibly engraven upon my memory. Mr. Beufort seeing my impatience and referring it to the true cause, said,

`We have visited the Hall this morning, sir, to ascertain if there is an English family which claims a device which we bear with us!'

`If the family is English we will ascertain for you, sir,' answered the usher.

He then led the way into an inner room, the walls of which were piled with old *tomes* and manuscripts on parchment. Writing tables of black wood were standing in the middle of the apartment which was hung round with numerous frames containing on a small scale hundreds of coats of arms, crests and cyphers with numbers labelled upon each. Upon the table over which it was laid a scarlet cloth curiously embroidered with silver and gold threads, and containing in the centre the arms of the kingdom gorgeously done in needle work, and in brilliant colors, was an enormous volume of immense thickness and bearing marks of age. The usher advanced towards this ponderous folio and by the aid of both hands threw it open. I saw that it blazed with paintings of Heraldic insignia and that the text was all done with the pen instead of being printed.

`Now, Mr. Beufort, if you will explain to me the device you wish to trace?' he said.

`Mr. Beufort looked at me. I felt my heart leap to my throat, my agitation was so great. Now that I was about, perhaps, to decide the mystery of my parentage I felt nearly unequal to the command of my feelings. But as my trepidation was natural, I know that my readers will sympathise in it. With a face from which I felt all the blood had retreated and with a forced composure which my trembling hand belied, I handed him the original sketch made for the carriage−painter in Philadelphia, by the gentleman whom I supposed to be my father. He glanced over it with a professional eye and then laying it down repeated as if to himself,

`Eagle *rampant*, serpent *couchant*—talon grasping the head. He then turned to the large book and began to throw over the leaves adding, `I ought to know this—seems familiar! Can't think at this moment! Soon see! Very noble family am sure! E, *eagle*. Here is the letter.'

He then ran his finger along the column of E's and arrested it on the word `Eagle!' I had left my place and was looking over his shoulder. The word was set down several times in conjunction with lions, bears, griffins, and then I read `Eagle and Serpent.'

`Eagle and Serpent,' he repeated, `page 1009.'

`The Eagle and Serpent is the crest of the House of Arlborough,' said an assistant who was writing at the next desk.

`It is so! I thought I knew it! I should have recognised it at once! But then we have so many, Mr. Beufort, that it is difficult to keep the line of each running in one's mind without confusion.'

`What Arlborough bears this device?' asked Mr. Beufort with interest.

`The Duke of Arlborough,' answered the Usher. `Here,' he added, turning the leaves of the folio, `is the representation of the same crest opposite the name of Arlborough. And over against it you see the shield and full arms of the House!'

`Is there any other family in England that bears this crest?' asked Mr. Beufort.

`None. It belongs to the Arlborough's.'

`Then any gentleman bearing this you would set down as belonging to this noble family?'

`Unquestionably.'

Mr. Beufort looked towards me and smiled encouragingly and well pleased; but I dared not indulge the hopes struggling with a thousand fears in my bosom.

`Can you tell me who belong to the existing family of the Duke?'

`Every member of it,' answered the Herald confidently; turning to another volume and running his eye over a catalogue of initial letters. He then opened to the page to which the list referred, and among numerous names of the house, I discovered, with what emotions I cannot express, that of

`FERDINAND RUNDEL ARLBOROUGH,' SECOND SON OF THE DUKE OF ARLBOROUGH, Born *January* 6, 1802.

`That must be he who signed himself F. R. Marlborough. He doubtless *perflxed* the `M.' for disguise,' said Mr. Beufort. `Is he living now, Mr. Usher?'

`He is—but I believe dwells abroad. Some years ago there was a misunderstanding of some kind between him and his father the Duke, and he has resided out of England ever since.'

`This fact strengthens your cause, sir,' said Mr. Beufort, turning to me and grasping my hand. `Further investigation will, I am satisfied, prove your near relationship to this person. To−morrow morning,' he added to me as we left the Herald's Hall, not being able to learn any thing further from the Usher, `you shall go with me in my carriage to visit the Duke. I have met him often on committees and am known to him! We will see what we can learn there.'

In the morning, therefore, I shall depart from London on this visit. Its result shall be duly communicated by the next packet. Yours truly,

`LITTLE MARLBORO'.'

CHAPTER III.

Arlborough Castle, Northumberland, − *August 2, 1844.*

My last letter, it will be remembered, left me on the eve of my departure for the seat of the Duke of Arlborough in company with my friend Mr. Beaufort, for the purpose of following up the investigation which had terminated at the Herald's office. From the date of the present letter, it will be seen that I write from the place to which we were destined. Yes, within the walls and beneath the roof which I firmly believe to belong to the house of my fathers, I address this letter to those who have taken an interest thus far in my fate. With what emotions too I write! With what a trembling of the hand and throbbing of the heart! Yet all is uncertain and doubtful. Nothing is revealed—nothing established to enable me to decide. Yet enough has been discovered to fill me with hope and to lead me to believe that before twenty−four hours elapse I shall have found out who are my parents!

I write in front of a deep gothic window which looks forth upon an extensive park. A league of grand old oaks covering dale and upland stretch away before me, with here and there an open lawn in which deer are browsing. Farther away still, peep from between two green hills a tower and a spire, the latter like a needle of silver pointing man to his home above and indicating to him the way. The tower is a huge ancient pile half−ruinous and marks the site of what was once a cathedral. In the distance swell up blue misty hills with here and there a sharp, bold peak piercing the sky. A glittering river winds through the valley of oaks, and all around is visible one wide scene of beauty. And all this vast domain appertains to the lord of this noble castle, who — but I forbear to anticipate! Twenty−four hours will reveal all! In twenty−four hours all my hopes will be realised or forever crushed!

The room in which I am writing is a noble specimen of the gorgeous chambers of the Elizabethan age. It occupies the interior of a spacious tower, and like it is six sided. It is hung with drapery, which is richly ornamented with the work of the needle, representing field sports, hawking and fishing scenes, and one or two battle subjects in which mounted knights with visors closed are tilting at each other with long lances. The furniture is of a very ancient and imposing character, being of black wood, elaborately carved, the chairs being covered with embroidery. There are little ebony secretaries inlaid with ivory, beaulets, bureaus, desks, supported by the feet of lions, and other articles for which I have no name, all of curious forms and of the most antique and elaborate style of construction. There is in particular a large chair in which I am now seated, the back of which rises high above the head and projects over the sitter in the form of a canopy surmounted by a ducal crown. Upon the crown is perched an eagle of gold holding in his talons a serpent which he seems to be in the act of strangling. When I compare the device upon the Silver Bottle, which I always carry with me and now have before me upon the table, with this, I cannot describe the emotions that occupy my bosom. The one is the exact connter−part of the other; and it would be more extraordinary if there should be *no* connection between the two than if there should prove eventually to be the closest; noble as is the proud family which claims this armorial sign, humble as I am, without name, country or friends! nay, but have I but *one* friend, Dame Darwell my kind foster−mother! I have another tried friend too in Mr. Beufort! With what anxious, feverish tumult of hopes and fears I look forward to the morrow! I will try to banish this solicitude by recording what has past up to this moment.

It was a beautiful morning when we left London. The sun never shone brighter, and I looked upon his enlivening presence as a bright harbinger of the future. After getting clear of the thronged streets, of the crowded suburbs, we entered upon a magnificent turnpike along which our four post horses flew at the rate of twelve miles an hour. We were whirled past countless picturesque country seats which lined the road, some half hid in foliage, others open to the view in the midst of some lawn; others buried deeper in the country amid the stately seclusion of olden parks. Some of them were pointed out to me by Mr. Beufort as the summer abodes of several distinguished men, such as Sir Robert Peel, Lord Brougham, the Earl of Lennox, and others. We also passed in the course of the morning `a box,' as it is called, where Lord Wellington used to sojourn for a few weeks of the season, and also the seat of Lord Cornwallis, who surrendered to Washington. We traversed many quiet villages, picturesque and venerable, with moss grown roofs, centurial trees, and ancient churches, looking, as all English villages look, as if they stood as they stand now in the days of King John and bold Robin Hood. There is a repose and an air of royal peace about these old English villages that are peculiarly inviting, and awaken in the bosom of

the observer a hundred agreeable emotions of domestic happiness and seclusion. There were no new frame houses, new fences, piles of lumber about the quiet streets, characteristics of all our growing American villages. The English towns look as if they were built and *finished* hundreds of years ago.

I have now an incident to record of the deepest interest to me as every one will acknowledge who has followed me through my adventures. We arrived at noon to dine and change horses at a pretty rural village, on the banks of one of the loveliest rivers I ever saw—a river that might have adorned the fields of Eden; for lovelier, greener lawns, more majestic oaks, more secluded groves, more shady copses and sunny uplands, more romantic islands, more enchanting meadows with grazing herds and bounding deer, interspersing and animating all, never have been, or will be found on earth.'

The inn at which we stopped was a large old rambling pile that had entertained cavalcades of Knights, and as the host informed us, had once in olden times the honor of entertaining Queen Bess and her train. It looked large enough to accommodate a hundred persons, yet it was but one story in height, but it covered with its countless out−houses nearly a good English acre. Before the door, over which the eaves of the roof projected full eight feet, grew two enormous and majestic oaks such as Druids in the pagan ages of the Island chose for the scenes of their mystic rites. They flung their gigantic branches not only over two thirds of the moss covered roof of the Inn, but over half the village street. Between them stood a stone pump carved with grotesque visages, and under the spout was a hospitable trough, at which a score of traveler's horses might quench their thirst together. The pump bore the date, in quaint old letters, of 1538. On one of the oaks was a plate, saying that it was planted in 1375. Every thing in England reminds one of the past. In America all that we behold raises in the mind the idea of the future! These two emotions give complexion to the characteristics which distinguish the two nations.

We alighted from our carriage and entered the Inn. The host had come out to receive us, and to welcome us with a degree of hospitality in his looks, tones and manner that made us feel at home in his house. I am sorry to say that this manner of receiving travelers is peculiar to the landlords of English Inns. At American country Inns, the traveler if received at all, is received by the ostler who takes his horse. He enters the bar−room and finds several persons seated about. All stare at him, and he looks round for the landlord. Finally he asks for him, and one of the persons in his shirt sleeves seated at his ease among the group, with his feet upon a barrel, it may be, leisurely gets up and replies that he is the personage, with a look as if he did not like to be intruded upon. On the contrary the English host meets you as you descend from your carriage with a smile, escorts you into his best room, with a pleasant word, politely, and looking as if he really desired to make you comfortable, asks what you will have; and while you remain under his roof, he never intermits for a moment his attention to your comfort. But this is a digression.

We were ushered into a neat, old fashioned parlor with an oaken floor polished like brass; white curtains draped the little ancient windows, and a fire place, in which an English ox might lie down without inconvenience, occupied half of one side of the room. Comfortable old−fashioned arm chairs, stuffed or cushioned, stood around inviting the weary traveler to rest his body in their capacious and luxurious embrace.

We ordered dinner and I walked out to look at the village, and survey the exterior of an Inn which I was told by Mr. Beufort was a fine specimen of the old English hotel. As I passed along the front, I turned to take a view of its root with its numerous angular projections, turrets, and tower−like elevations, when my eyes were arrested by a female figure in one of the windows. The side of the person was turned to me, and a bonnet and veil concealed her face; but my heart bounded with that instinctive recognition in which love is never at fault! I knew that but one person in the world had that air, attitude, and figure! But how could Emma be in England? Yet I was convinced that I beheld her standing in the window. She was in conversation with a gentleman advanced in years.—His face was towards me, and I saw with increased hope that the features were American. At this moment an empty post−chaise drew up at the door. She turned and glanced out of the window at it, raising her veil as she did so. It was the lovely face of Emma Field, every lineament of which was engraven upon heart, soul, and memory!

I stood transfixed to the spot without power of motion. I was making an effort to realize that I was waking and not dreaming, for such an unexpected vision in England seemed as if it should belong rather to dreams than the realities of life! She directed her eyes towards me, for I was in full view of the window not ten paces off. Perhaps my attitude of surprise and bewilderment led her to observe me attentively. As I felt her gaze upon me the blood mounted to my cheek and brow! Our eyes met. She recognised me with a start and an exclamation! I saw with

deep, unutterable joy, that the exclamation was one of pleasurable surprise. She looked a second time, smiled with a blushing, animated countenance, nodded and her lips moved. Her looks, nevertheless, expressed surprise at beholding me; while mine were bent on her filled with adoration and trembling hopes.

The Postilions of the coach drawn up at the door now mounted their horses, and at the same moment the American gentleman came forth with a lady I had seen in the coach with Emma in Boston, leaning upon his arm. Emma was following them attended by Russel Carryl. My pride and natural sensitiveness would have led me to shrink from observation, but a nervous desire to know if she really despised me, and wished no longer to recognise one whom I had no doubt she knew to be regarded by men with infamy, led me involuntarily to advance towards her as as she was about to enter the post−chaise. Her foot was upon the step, when she hurriedly glanced around as if in search of some one. Her eyes met mine. They must instinctively have translated their sad and hopeless expression, for she smiled brightly though stealthily upon me with a smile full of hope, for me and my love's daring ambition.

The next instant she was borne from my sight seated opposite Russel Carryl! The sight of this young man whose baseness had led me to resign from the Navy, and whom I had even in boyhood battled with on account of Emma Field, the sight of him now in her society, and under circumstances which led me to believe that he was her accepted suitor, (yet why that glance and smile of encouragement towards me from the lovely girl?) filled me with emotions of wretchedness that drove me almost to madness! I believed that he was my rival, my successful rival! else why this intimacy and this travelling in the same carriage? But if he was not her suitor, I felt that he would so paint me to her, whom I loved above all earthly objects, that I should be an object of pity if not of contempt in her eyes. Hitherto he had not poisoned her mind against me, else I should never have felt the sunshine of that parting glance thrilling through and warming my soul. He had not recognised me now. For this I was thankful, for I knew I should not be the victim of his malice while they rode.

`Whither were they going?'

This thought no sooner occurred to me than I hastened to inquire at the Inn, and ascertained from the host that he had heard one of the postilions say that they were proceeding to London.

This incident gave a new turn to my thoughts. I confided the circumstance and all the facts to my friend Mr. Beufort as the only explanation I could give him of my change of manner.

`Fear nothing,' he said encouragingly. `You will yet triumph over your enemies, and be rewarded with the hand of the maiden you so much prize!'

May his words be prophetic!

I was now more impatient to bring my investigations to a point. The sight of Emma Field had inspired me with new ambition to succeed, dark and cloudy as the horizon of my hopes with respect to her now seemed to me. But I find I must commence a new letter, this having already been extended to an undue length. Yours very truly,

LITTLE MARLBORO'.

CHAPTER IV.

Arlborough Castle, − *Aug. 2, 1844.*

For more than half an hour after leaving the Inn, where I had encountered in so remarkable a manner, Miss Field, I sat wrapped in my own thoughts, which Mr. Beufort, (divining their character) suffered me to indulge. I was inspired with new hopes, yet they were darkened even in their brightest aspects by the circumstances under which Emma had crossed my path, as the travelling companion of a man I had so little reason to love as Russell Carryl. Still I *hoped*, and being of too sanguine and buoyant a temperament to let obstacles stand in my way, I indulged, while I thought of Emma, the happiest visions of the future. But *all*, all depended on the success of my present mission! This reflection made me more earnest, more resolute in my purpose to clear up the mystery attending my birth. Should I fail after all in proving anything, I felt that the high hopes I entertained, of which Emma was the object, would be forever blasted. But I did not suffer myself to contemplate failure.

We rode on through a eharming country, interspersed with villas, castles, and sprinkled with churches, whose spires and turrets everywhere peeping above the green oaks, gave a lively and picturesque aspect to the fair scenes which we beheld from our carriage windows. England may well be called a garden! It is every where beautiful to the eye! But I could not help reflecting as I gazed upon its pleasant vales and quiet villages, its stately country houses and palace−like mansions of her nobles, how many of her children were at that moment excluded from the enjoyment of these fair objects, shut up by thousands in her factories, or immersed by ten thousands in her cavernous mines! I felt that with all her glory, and beauty and power, and greatness, England at last was but a land of taskmasters and slaves; that every ninety nine of her inhabitants were slaves to the one hundredth! And my heart turned instinctively to American, `The land of the free, the home of the brave.'

About three in the afternoon, as we rose a hill from which there was a prospect of great beauty and extent, Mr. Beufort said, pointing to a noble castle situated in the midst of the valley, surrounded by a park leagues in circumference,

`There, sir, is the seat of the Duke of Arlborough.' I turned my eyes in the direction in which he pointed, with emotions I am unable to describe. I felt my heart bound and my pulse leap. About four miles distant in the midst of a magnificent area of woodland lawn and lake with a back ground of blue moun tains, I beheld situated the place of my destination. It looked like a royal seat! like a royal domain. As I surveyed it and let my eyes rove over the towers of churches and the roofs of half concealed villages, and the far distant spires of a large town, all of which Mr. Beufort informed me appertained to this estate, my heart sank within me. I felt that I was daring and foolishly presumptuous in prosecuting the search. I experienced a feeling of self−reproof for letting my wishes to discover my parents suffer me to proceed to such lengths as I had done!—That the proprietor of that princely estate, that the proud Duke of Arlborough should in any way be any thing to me or I to him, a poor obscure American, without name or birth, seemed all at once so preposterous and absurb and altogether so unlikely, that I suddenly laid my hand on Mr. Beufort's wrist and said,

`Sir, I feel that I am very foolish! It is impossible that I should be connected with this noble house. The circumstances that have seemed to favor the idea, are only singular coincidence without any reference to my case. My courage fails me, and I am beginning to accuse myself of presumption.'

`Your feelings are perhaps quite natural, my young friend,' said Mr. Beufort to me, smiling kindly; `but we must not be governed in this case by feelings. The sight of the Duke's palace has no doubt presented a powerful contrast to your own condition, and you view your situation in its light. But you must take courage! The same motives and circumstances that had such strength in London are equally potent now. Take courage and we shall see that all will, somehow or other turn out as it ought to.'

I was in some degree encouraged by his words, and leaning back in the carriage I tried to calm myself and prepare my mind for the events that were to follow. I was at length aroused from my reverie by the stopping of the PostChaise. I looked out of the window and a cry of surprise involnntarily escaped me. Before us was a stately gate−way, above which was an escutcheon, and over it hovered an eagle in stone trampling upon a serpent. It was the very gateway I had seen in my dream. While I was looking at it utterly overcome by this singular

circumstance, a man dressed in black came forth from the lodge by the gate for the purpose of throwing it open, when seeing me he started, gazed earnestly upon my features, and then with great respect bowed and opened the gate. This very man in black I had also seen in my dream, to which I request my readers to turn back. We passed through the gate before I could recover myself from my surprise. Mr. Beufort seeing my great emotion, inquired the cause, and I related to him my dream!—He was confounded with wonder.

`All,' I said, as I looked out of the window, `is just as I then beheld it. The same noble avenue of trees, the same lake around which the road wound!'

This identity so faithful filled me all at once with the most painful alarm; the most distressing fears! for if I had seen the first part of my dream so faithfully realized, should I not also find the tragical termination the same as I had then seen it? I turned pale and trembled with feelings of unutterable anguish. We approached a group of oaks upon a mound. As I beheld it, I said—

`Sir, I am fated to find my mother here, and to find her dead! That group of oaks I distinctly call to mind; and to prove to you how vividly all I beheld is impressed upon my mind, we shall, after winding round it, come in sight of a small lake with a fountain in the midst, and after passing round the lake and crossing a lawn bordered by chesnuts we shall come in sight of the Castle!

It proved precisely as I had said. Mr. Beufort, as we came in front of the palace, gazed upon me with looks of astonishment.

`A Providence seems to be in this, young man,' he said impressively. `Fear not the result.'

I could not, however, but fear! The idea that I should prove to be a descendant of this noble House was lost in the reflection that my mother's spirit would depart before I should behold her! This feeling was so strong upon me and had such an effect upon my mind, that when the carriage drew up before the terrace I did not wait to have the door opened by the footman, but throwing it open myself I sprang from the coach and flew up the marble steps of the Portico, up which I had been ushered in my dream! Heedless of the surprised stare of the attendants I rushed into the hall, and lifting my eyes, anticipating what I should see, I beheld at the extremity what I looked for—a bas relief in green marble of an eagle with his claw upon the head of a serpent! The double door beneath it was partly open, and without hesitation I advanced rapidly towards it in hopes that I should at least obtain a parting look—a glance—a word! from my mother's lips before she expired! For so vividly was my dream impressed upon my senses, that I had no doubt that I was hastening to her dying couch. Passing through the doors I entered a circular chamber of great height and splendor. It was hung with tapestry worked in gold thread. I recognised this aparrment at a glance. Even the figures upon the tapestry were familiar to me!

How then could I be otherwise than impressed with the idea that I was about to see realized the subsequent portions of my dream? I sought with faltering eyes for the couch upon which I expected to see the dying form of her who I had been told was my mother. The place where the couch stood was occupied by a marble−slab supported by pillars. Upon the slab lay reclined at full length upon her side, as if asleep, the figure of a female exquisitely carved in the purest marble. I stood before it petrified with amazement. The features were those of her I had seen in my dream.

`She is dead then! She is entombed!' I cried in unspeakable anguish and sorrow. `*I am too, too late*.' At this moment a gentleman entered from a door behind this cenotaph, and without observing me knelt by the side of the marble figure and gazed upon the features with sad tenderness. It was the face and form of the same noble looking gentleman I had seen in my dream! How strange that the dream so frithful in all else should have changed in the substitution of the marble figure for the lonely corpse of the dead; a cenotaph for a couch! When I beheld him enter and saw him kneel, the idea that I had at length found only the tomb of my mother, overwhelmed me with such grief—such a crowd of emotions rushed upon me, that I tell forward and fainted at the base of the cenotaph!

When I came to myself I found I was in this chamber from which I write and lying upon a bed. By me sat bending over me with solicitude, the kind, friendly Mr. Beufort. Seeing that I was perfectly restored he allowed me to rise and to put to him a series of rapid questions.

`It is now three hours since we arrived here,' he said, `and since you rushed so wildly into the castle!'

`I owe, sir,' I said mortified, `a thousand apologies to you—but I recognised every thing around me! the portico—the saloon, the chamber containing the cenotaph were all as if I had visited them yesterday' How could I do otherwise than believe I should find my dying mother?'

`How extraordinary!' he exclaimed.

`In place of the couch of which I spoke to you was the cenotaph! In place of the body of my mother, the marble effigy!—All else was the same, even the gentleman who came in and knelt by it! Oh, sir, was it not all a dream a second time! Did I really see such a gentleman? Tell me all!'

`Your entrance into the hall astonished every one who saw you! You were supposed to be insane! I at once divined your object, knowing what I did of your singular dream! I followed you as tast as I could, but we both being unknown to the servants, and our singular mode of entering the castle rousing their suspicions, I was detained by the steward who seized my arm, while others were despatched in pursuit of you!'

`How singular my conduct must have appeared!' I said, quite ashamed.

`It is all over now and will turn out right. I sent them for the Duke giving my name, and was detained till an usher came and informed me that the Duke was then out, but would return in the morning. I then was about to say I must be permitted to find you, when I heard a cry of alarm, and a call for aid from the circular hall in which you had disappeared. I, at once, with the others, rushed forward, believing some fearful event had occurred touching you. As I entered, I saw a tall man of singular dignity of person clad in mourning bending over you. You were lying perfectly inanimate. I hastened towards you, and as I came to your side I saw the gentleman was regarding you with the most fixed and intense interest. `Is he hurt?' was my first exclamation.

`He has fainted, sir,' he answered, without looking up, still regarding your features with extraordinary earnestness; and once I saw him glance from your face to that of the effigy, as if mentally tracing out lines of resemblance!'

`It is astonishing, sir,' I said, deeply moved, as Mr. Beufort related this incident. `I am overwhelmed with what I hear each moment! Is it possible I shall at last prove to be related to this family? perhaps to be the son of this noble−looking gentleman! I am lost in amazement!'

`He made no effort to resuscitate you,' continued Mr. Beufort, smiling with hope and confidence upon me, `and alarmed for you I took upon me to order the servants to bring water and restoratives. In the meanwhile, I addressed the gentleman in the hearing of all, saying that you were a young friend of mine, who with me had come to see the Duke on business of importance, but that circumstances connected with the visit had rendered you highly nervous, and that you had left the carriage and flown into the castle under a temporary state of nervous impulse which was beyond your control!

`This was the best explanation I could offer; and it proved satisfactory to the Steward, who immediately ordered a chamber to be prepared for you, and you to be conducted thither. The gentleman had seemed to pay no regard to what I said, but only continued comparing your faco with that of the sculptured female. And on regarding it myself I was struck with the resemblance which had evidently struck him.'

`Is it possible,' I exclaimed. `How singular is my destiny being wrought out!'

`Wonderfully,' said Mr. Beufort. `I have no question whatever that you are closely related to the Duke or some member of his family' The Steward ordered you to be raised from the marble floor, I saw without asking the gentleman, who silently rising to his feet walked away and disappeared through a door in the rear of the cenotaph!'

`The same by which I saw him appear,' I said.

`I followed you to this chamber where you were soon revived, and then fell into a deep slumber!'

`How long have I slept?' I asked.

`Three hours!'

`It has refreshed and fully restored me. How strange are all these events! Who is this noble gentleman?' I asked earnestly.

`I have not inquired,' answered Mr. Beufort. `I have not left the room since you were conveyed hither. The Duke will be at home early in the morning, and before twenty−four hours we shall know all that regards your fate!'

Such were the words of my benevolent friend; and being now quite recovered I urged upon him to go and walk in the Park, while I sat down to write to good Dame Darwell what had occurred; a duty I have done as faithfully as that I have enjoined upon myself in writing these letters. To−morrow, therefore, on the return of the Duke all will be known! I tremble as the cries of my fate approaches. Twenty−four hours may confirm all my hopes, or dash them to the earth forever. Yours truly,

`LITTLE MARLBORO'.'

[2] See Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER V.

Arlborough Castle, − *August 4, 1844.*

It is with emotions of the deepest gratitude and happiness that I prepare to address this letter to those who have taken sufficient interest in my affairs to follow me through all the vicisitudes which have attended them. I address this letter to such with feelings in which I am persuaded they will deeply sympathise, sharing with me heartily my joys—joys tempered with sadness and tender regrets.

In my last letter I said that a few hours would decide whether the web of my destiny would prove to be interwoven with that of the noble family under whose roof I was then a guest. I will proceed with the events subsequent to that letter as they occurred.

After I had finished it and sealed it in the same package with one to good Dame Darwell, I sat indulging the train of reflections to which the circumstances of which I found myself the centre naturally gave rise. I sat before the gothic window which looked forth upon the town and park. The evening was just closing upon the lovely woodland landscape; and the light of the room was rich and mellow with the glow of the crimson sky. I thought of the wonderful train of events by which I had been brought beneath the roof where I then found myself! I recalled the wondrous dream and its almost exact realization. Then came sad thoughts which clouded the bright and ambitious hopes that I might yet prove allied to this noble house, sad thoughts if I were proved to be so I should find no mother's smile to welcome back her long lost child!— This feeling modified the natural pride which would have filled my bosom at the prospect of so noble a lineage. I felt if I could see my mother and be once more embraced by her maternal arms, I would rather find her in a humble cottage, than share the honors of a ducal palace without her!' From these thoughts I dwelt upon the appearance of the noble looking gentleman, and recollected that in my dream he had called himself my father! Could he be so? Would the dream then be realized? If so, who was my father? Why is he in mourning? Why is the cenotaph before which he kneels erected in the very centre of the castle halls? Why did he bend over me with such tenderness? and what connection is there between me and that lovely effigy that he should so earnestly have been engaged in comparing with its lineaments my own? Why did he suddenly resign me with such apathy? Had he been deceived in the resemblance he fancied it excited, and which evidently had first struck him on beholding me lying upon the pavement? Was he a person of importance in the house? Why then did the Steward disregard him in removing me from before him without addressing to him a word or look?'

Such were the questions I put to myself! Such were the thoughts which filled my mind. Then I let my imagination go forward and revel in power, and rank, and praise of men! In these visions appeared Emma but I could never disassociate her with the hateful form of Russel Carryl! Ever to my imagination he siood smiling triumphantly by her side! Wherefore was she now in England? Suddenly an appalling thought flashed across my mind! I felt the blood leave my heart and fill my brain! My head swam, and the window—the landscape—the room whirled round! Horrible, maddening thought! It was that she was on her bridal tour! that she was Russel Carryl's *wife!*'

I sprung from my chair! I walked the room till I was in a fever! A knock at the door recalled me to myself. Mr. Beufort entered. He was surprised to see my agitation. I frankly told him the cause; for I kept nothing from him. I poured out all my feelings into his bosom as into the heart of a father or elder brother beloved! His arguments to disprove this notion allayed in a measure my suspicions and greatly modified my fears. I again hoped! To−morrow I felt would decide my fate in respect to my birth, and on the issue depended life and happiness; for it I failed what other lineage could I claim! If I failed how should I *dare*, branded as I was, appear in her presence as a suitor! I should even shrink before the eye of Carryl.

But I will not detain my friends with my feelings. At an early hour I took leave of Mr. Beufort, who sought his room; and being fatigued in body and mind I threw myself immediately upon my bed without undressing. I know not how long I slept, but it was dark and still when I suddenly awoke! A man stood above my couch bending over me with a lamp in his hand, the light of which he cast full upon my face! It was the stranger I had seen in my dream! It was the gentleman whom I had beheld kneel before the marble figure upon the cenotaph! His face was

pale and haggard! The dark eyes were unnaturally distended and brilliant. Yet over the whole countenance was a sad, touching, tender expression as if deep grief lay upon his soul. He was steadfastly gazing upon me when I opened my eyes I did not start! I did not feel alarm. I lay passive and regarded him with an interest that left me no room for fear. Sad and sorrowful though it was, a more noble, dignified human countenance I never beheld, and his stature was as commanding as befitted such an aspect! He did not seem to notice that I had opened my eyes. He was speaking as if to himself:

`Such, such would he have been! But Heaven has robbed me of my reason that my memory of all the past may perish and I never behold him again! It is her brow! and such was the expression of her mouth! In infancy my boy had it thus, and in manhood thus would he have looked! But I am mad! I am accursed! *She* sleeps in death and I live as if there were no more death! He opens his eyes and looks upon me, and such eyes were hers! Thus Isidore looked when alive!'

I was deeply moved by his words and tone of his voice. They thrilled to my soul. They awakened chords which had never been stirred to the sound of a human voice before. Tears came into my eyes I knew not wherefore. But I could not restrain them! A sudden impulse seized me! I felt that I could not resist crying out `my father!' and rising and casting myself at his feet! But I could not stir! I lay powerless, while he steadily regarded me a moment longer, and then slowly turned away and crossing the chamber disappeared by a door near the table at which I had been writing, but before unnoticed by me as it was hid by the tapestry. I was left alone and in darkness! I could not sleep! This incident filled my thoughts and gave them food for hours! That this gentleman was my father I arrived at a suspicion that amounted almost to a certainty! Had I discovered my parents to find one in the *tomb*, the other *mad*? The thought filled me with anguish and horror!

At dawn I fell asleep, and three hours afterwards was awaked by the entrance of Mr. Beufort. I told him what had passed during the night, and repeated to him what had been said by the mysterious visitant! Mr. Beufort was for a few moments thoughtful. He then looked up and divining my thought, said,

`I see what conclusion you have come to! It is irresistible in my own mind! There is no doubt that you have discovered your father! But who he is, remains yet to be ascertained; but he is, without doubt, of the Arlborough lineage! We shall soon learn all. His Grace is looked for every moment. I have foreborne to make any inquiries, or seek any information till I see him. Breakfast is served in the anti−room to my chamber. Come and take it with me. By the time we get through, the Duke will doubtless be here.'

I followed him with heavy and foreboding feelings. The idea that my father might prove a lunatic, my mother no more, filled me with sadness; and qualified materially the pleasure I should otherwise have felt at the prospect of discovering my parentage, and finding myself in alliance with one of the noblest houses in England.

I had just completed a hasty meal, when the sound of carriage wheels caught my quick ear. I rose from the table and sprung to the window which over−looked the approach to the Castle. In the avenue was a travelling chariot and two horses with out riders, dashing at speed up to the terrace. Upon the panels of the chariot I saw emblazoned the ducal coronet, and above it the crest, an eagle trampling upon a serpent! My heart throbbed at the near approach of the crisis of my fate! The carriage stopped; the door was opened, and, attended by two footmen, a stout, martial, noble−looking person of sixty−eight or seventy, with locks as white as snow, and plainly dressed in an olive surtout and white hat with a broad brim, got out without assistance. He aided to alight a beautiful girl of twenty and a stately elderly female of sixty still handsome, whom Mr. Beufort, who was now at the window with me, said was the Duchess, whom he had seen often in his ware−rooms in London when he was in business. The younger female from her resemblance, he concluded was a daughter; `Though,' added he, `I am not acquainted with any of the Duke's children, nor do I know what family he and the Duchess has! But we shall know soon. An important era of your life is at hand now, sir,' he said benevolently, seeing that I was becoming a little restless and nervous, `but do not have any fears. I have all confidence in the issue! After the Duke has breakfasted, I will ring for a servant and send him my card, with a request to be allowed the honor of an interview with him!'

`What shall you first say? How shall you introduce the subject, sir? You are infinite kind to take all this trouble upon you,' I said, filled with gratitude `If I was left to myself, I fear I should illy do my part.'

`That same energy which brought you to England would carry you through whatever duty lay before you,' he answered me. `I have confidence in your firmness and strength of character. All you are called upon for now is decision and hope. The issue will be favorable.

While he was speaking a servant appeared, and said that the Duke, hearing that two gentlemen from London were in waiting to see him, desired them to be conducted at once to his presence.

`This promptness is characteristic of His Grace,' said Mr. Beufort. `In the House of Lords he was always the most active and energetic man there, and could get through more business in an hour than any other person in a day. He is now in his seventieth year, yet has all the vigor and vivacity of forty−five! You need not accompany me, sir,' he said as he was leaving the room. `I will speak with his Grace first alone!'

Thus speaking he left me. I know not how I passed the interval of his absence. It seemed to me to be hours. I paced my room! I tried to read! I looked from the window! I busily run over in my fancy all that was transpiring in the progress of the interview on which depended so much!

At length I heard Mr. Beufort's foot−step. I flew, and opening the door, admitted him. His face wore a smile that chased a thousand dark thoughts from my mind. He closed the door! I watched his countenance with painful intensity. I dared not open my lips to ask him a single question; yet my bosom was bursting with its fullness!

`My young friend,' he said, taking my hand after seating himself, `I have had a most interesting interview with his Grace. He wishes to see you in a little while. In the meantime I will give you an account of what passed between us! I followed the servant down stairs into his Grace's library, where he was seated at a table opening and reading his letters by that morning's mail. On seeing me he laid down a letter he was perusing, and rising, offered me his hand.

`Mr. Beufort, I am happy to see you, sir,' he said with that frank cordiality and ease of address which has made him so popular in public life and given such a charm to his social intercourse. `To what lucky circumstance am I indebted for this visit from you. It is not light occasions that brings London gentlemen so far down into the country. It is long since we have met! Time, I am glad to discover, has treated you kindly as well as myself!'

`Your Grace,' I replied, `I am most happy to find you enjoying such vigor and health. Time has indeed spared you!'

He smiled and said, `Yes; I find I can yet engage in the sports of the field, and sometimes take a five−barred gate still, if I am sure the ground is soft on the other side! Caution comes with old bones and sixteen stone, Mr. Beufort! Sit down sir. You arrived last night, my Steward informs me!

`Yes, your Grace. I have come,' I added, thinking it best to bring the subject before him at once, `to see you in reference to a subject of the most extraordinary nature, and one in which is deeply involved, the happiness and hopes of an estimable person.'

He looked at me with surprise and curiosity, and said courteously,

`Proceed, Mr. Beufort. I will hear whatever you have to communicate.'

`My lord,' said I, `if I seem bold, and appear to you to tresspass the limits of that courtesy which is due from so humble an individual as myself to one of your exalted rank, I trust you will extend to me your clemency!'

`Speak freely, sir,' he answered—`From your manner, I see your business with me is of no trifling import. I will be obliged to you to open the matter freely to me!'

`I profoundly thank your Grace,' I replied; and then began by saying,

`Your Grace had a son by the name of Ferdinand?'

But the reply of the Duke, and the further account of the progress of the interview, I shall leave to another letter. Yours truly,

MARLBORO'.

CHAPTER VI.

Arlborough Castle, − *August 4, 184—*

I WILL now proceed to relate the particulars which my good friend Mr. Beufort made known to me touching his interview with the Duke. I will give the account in his own words:

`My first question,' said Mr. Beufort, `after being seated, was, as I have just repeated to you. Did your Grace ever have a son by the name of Ferdinand?'

I watched his countenance as I asked this question which I had put boldly and at once as being most likely to bring the matter to a point. He became suddenly pale, and I saw was deeply agitated. He fixed his eyes upon me in silence with painful earnestness for a few moments and then said in a broken voice,

`Mr. Beufort, be so good, I beseech you, as to explain why you have addressed so unexpected a question to me? I perceive there is something deeper in your motive than mere curiosity.'

`I have a very strong motive, your Grace,' I replied; `I am influenced by considerations that intimately concern the happiness and honor of a young friend in whose behalt I have visited you and solicited the honor of this interview! '

`Will you first be so good as to name your motive in making this inquiry?' he asked, still regarding me with intense emotion in his countenance.

`It will give me pleasure to do so, your Grace,' I replied, `if you will condescend to listen to me a few moments.'

`Proceed, Mr. Beufort,' said the Duke in a low voice, waving his hand to me, and still looking distressed. I then began to relate to him the principal events connected with your being left an infant at the Inn in America, and your subsequent course up to the time I saw you in London, with your hopes, wishes, and researches in reference to your parentage. But I did not mention the tokens by which you were led to believe that you were related to his House. I did not speak of the Silver Bottle, nor of the crest, nor the initials, nor the name you had discovered. I gave him no reason, in the whole narration, to lead him to suppose that your history had any reference to himself or any of his family. He heard me through with patience, and not without interest at times apparent in his countenance; but as I proceeded, the anxiety and agitation disappeared from his expression, and towards the close he had recovered his calmness and ease of manner.

`When I had ended he was silent and thoughtful a moment, and then said,

`This relation, Mr. Beufort, is certainly a very interesting one. The young man you say reached London last week in this adventurous search for his family. You told me he had certain tokens by which he hoped to trace his parentage. I trust he will be successful, particularly as you say he is so worthy a person, and, moreover, as you manifest so deep an interest in his welfare. Your object, doubtless, in calling upon me is to enlist my interest in his behalf. I assure you, my dear Mr. Beufort, it will afford me great pleasure if I can in any way favor your views touching your young American friend!'

`I am under infinite obligations to your Grace,' I said; `the end I seek can be advanced by your grace, by a reply to the question I put to you. That you had a son of the name of Ferdinand I believe to be true; but I wish to know particularly if he still lives, and if there has been any event of unusual occurrence in his life!'

`This is a surprising question, sir?' he said somewhat sternly.

`I beg pardon of your grace, but I must be plain and bold to come to what I want.'

`I *had* a son, named Ferdinand, Mr. Beufort,' he said, after a moment's agitation.

`He is dead then,' I remarked.

The Duke looked keenly at me, and then said in a sorrowful and peculiar tone, `Yes, he *is* dead, *dead*, Mr. Beufort!—Why do you interest yourself in him?'

`Pardon me, my lord; but I have reason to believe that the destiny of the young American is, in a very intimate relationship, linked with his!'

As I made this assertion the Duke fairly started from his chair, and bent his eyes upon me with extraordinary

surprise.

`How mean you, sir? Your words seem full of some mysterious meaning.'

`I will explain, my lord Duke. If you will deign me a moment's calm attention, you will understand the subject as clearly as I do myself. I hold here in my possession the nursery bottle which was left on the bed with the infant!— Upon it is a crest doubtless that of the parents of the child. Here is the bottle which the young man has had in his possession from infancy!'

I handed it to him. He looked at the crest and was transfixed with amazement.

`It is the crest of my house!' he cried with surprise. `Do you say this was left with the child?'

`It was, my lord!'

`It is very extraordinary" He mused a moment gazing upon it, and then said, looking at me,

`On this you base your supposition, that there is some connexion between this young man and my family?'

`I do, my lord Duke!' I answered.

`It is without doubt a singular comcidence,' he said, `and there are circumstances— '

Here he suddenly paused, and a deep emotion passed across his features,— `It is singular, sir; but this alone is not enough to prove him to be attached to my house!'

`Was Ferdinand, your son, never married?'

`Yes,' answered the Duke in a voice of deep agitation, and for a moment he turned his face from me, and hid it in his hands. I was silent till he was composed; but was convinced that there lay at the bottom of all this emotion a secret in which you, my young friend, were most deeply interested.

`Did he have any issue?' I asked, seeing him look at me.

`No!' he answered. `He had no issue!'

`It is very strange,' I said, perplexed at the reply so contrary from the affirmation I looked for. He spoke, too, as if he was not deceiving me, or disguising the truth.

`Why is it strange? Why do you refer to Ferdinand in this manner, Mr. Beufort?'

`For this reason, my lord. Circumstances lead me to believe that the young American is the child of Ferdinand, and doubtless by a private marriage, unknown to your Grace; I mean a marriage prior to the one to which you have alluded!'

I was proceeding when the Duke's expression arrested me. His face became deadly pale, and he breathed quickly, while his lips trembled with powerful emotion. He looked as if some strong and painful recollections of the past were rushing upon him; at the same time I discovered in his countenance what appeared to me to be awakened suspicion of the truth of what I had suggested. Yet I was not sure that I rightly read it! I was moved by his distress and regretted I had gone so far; for I was satisfied that with this son were associated the most painful recollections. At length he said, forcing a calmness I saw he was far from feeling,

`I must apologise to you, Mr. Beufort, for this emotion. I can best do it by explaining to you the cause. I feel you are a man of judgment and feeling, Perhaps something yet may come of all this; for your words have awakened in my mind suspicions that I confess may have some foundation. Hear the history of my hapless son, and then let us judge together touching the subject more immediately before us.

`I *had* a son Ferdinand. He was my oldest son. Up to his twenty−seventh year I never knew what it was to grieve for his conduct. He was handsome, intelligent, high−spirited, generous, and devoted to me and his mother. He possessed every grace that could adorn the high rank to which he had been born.— He was our pride and the honour of our house. It was our wish to have him suitably allied in marriage, and we had selected for him the lady Charlotte Bellingham, the only daughter of the Earl of Neville, a lady of great beauty, and endowed with every charm to fascinate and please, and possessed of every quality that could adorn a wife! She was five years Ferdinand's junior; and we knew that already her prepossessions were in his favor. We one day, without anticipating a refusal, for Ferdinand had long known her, and seemed to be pleased with her society, laid open to him our hearts upon the subject. To our surprise he said firmly that he could never regard Lady Charlotte otherwise than as a sister! After recovering from the first shock of his refusal, I endeavored to urge upon him a change of opinion, and to show him that lady Char lotte was the only suitable person by age and rank for his wife in the kingdom, and that it was his duty to marry her. He firmly refused, and at length, to our amazement, informed us that he was privately married to the daughter of a poor baronet who lived not far distant, and a man whom I personally disliked. He gave as the only reason for this step that he loved her, and that he could not be

happy out of her society, and that he would not purchase his own happiness by her personal degradation. I threatened him with the displeasure of the King, with immediate disinheritance in favor of his next brother, unless he at once consented to a divorce; for this ill−advised union as you are well aware, Mr. Beufort, was far beneath him, and it was my duty to annul it by the exercise of my authority. He at once manifested a spirit of independence that surprised and grieved us, and said that he would rather resign his rank than his wife! Finding it impossible to prevail upon him, I dropped the subject. But, in the meanwhile, I formed secretly a plan for separating them, by sending her away privately to the Continent, where he should never hear of her again, trusting time would cause him to forget this foolish passion!'

`Was the lady young and beautiful?' I asked.

`There was no fault to find with her youth or beauty, save that to her charms was owing all this mischief. She was also of good temper and a well−cultivated mind. But still she was no equal for the heir of Arlborough. By some means Ferdinand discovered our plot, and defeated it by flying with his wife to the continent. There, being found out by my spies, he fled France, and, as we supposed, went to Italy!'

`He may instead have gone to America,' I said quickly.

`I have had reason to believe that while he was supposed to be secreted in Italy he was in America. What you have said has deepened this impression! At length weary of persecuting my son, for he was still loved, I wrote to his last address promising to restore him to favor and his rank, provided he had yet no issue; for none of the blood of Sir Richard — should inherit the ducal crown of my house. My chief object in inducing him to return to England was with the hope that I should yet be able to induce his wife by large sums of money to leave him forever. But I saw that if he had issue, their union would be yet more closely cemented.'

`And did he return?' I asked earnestly.

`Yes. Within three months after my letter was written he appeared in England and came to visit me. To my question if he had any heir, his reply was, I and my wife, my lord Duke, are alone in England. Your letter reached me where I was self−exiled, and I accepted the terms. I am not insensible to the rank and dignity of my birth and condition. I am proud of its honors. The name of my fathers is precious to me. But I should feel unworthy to inherit or to wear either if I could prove false to the lovely and confiding woman who has in hour and trust given her hand and heart to me! Receive us both, my lord, or receive neither of us! If I am to be honored as your son, honor her as your daughter; otherwise we once more leave England, and leave it forever!'

`I felt it my duty for the present to assent to his views, and he and his wife became inmates of the castle. But there was a settled sadness visible upon her countenance. She seldom smiled. If she had not been the daughter of Sir Richard — I should have felt interested in her; but as to this was added the fact that she was the cause of our disappointment in the alliance we contemplated for Ferdinand, she was regarded by us with coldness and displeasure that I now feel,' added the Duke with a tremulous voice, `deeply sorry for. Day by day she failed, and seemed rapidly approaching the grave.'

`Doubtless the reflection that she had marred the high hopes of your House,' I said to the Duke, as he paused as if checked by emotion; `preyed upon her mind and brought on a deeline!'

Yes, and something evidently deeper still was upon her heart,' said the Duke huskily. `Well, *she died!* Ferdinand up to the moment of her death had watched over her with a devotion that was most lovely to contemplate. As I regarded his tender devotion I almost repented my harshness to her; but this feeling it was necessary to sacrifice to those higher ones which affected the honor of my house. She died! From that moment a change came over the mind of the widowed husband. He seemed to have buried his heart with her in the grave. He would not quit the chapel where she lay entombed, and food had to be brought to him or he would have perished. He spoke to no one! He answered no questions! He did not smile! When I would approach him, he would fix his haggard eyes sternly upon me, and with one hand pointing to her tomb and the fore finger of the other raised to heaven, seemed to arraign me before the tribunal of the Almighty as her murderer!'

CHAPTER VII.

Arlborough Castle, − *August, 4th, 1844.*

`When the Duke had thus spoken,' continued Mr. Beufort, `he buried his face in his hands, sighed heavily, and seemed to be overcome with the most touching anguish. There was a few moment's silence: and when at length he raised his head and looked at me I saw he was deadly pale.

`You see me, sir, a wretched man,' he said bitterly. `I can never forgive myself the wrong done that innocent wife. I am punished in my son! He is a maniac, sir! not fierce and intractable, but quiet, touching, gentle. As he would not leave the tomb where his wife lay buried, I caused to be erected the cenotaph which you beheld in the circular hall, to draw him from it I succeeded. Near it he has a room which he only leaves to kneel almost every hour before the marble figure of her he loved so well. It is so long,' continued the Duke after a sorrowful pause, `it is so long since these events occurred that my son is supposed to be dead, for no one sees him. He receives from me every attention and kindness, but seems to regard me with cold indifferene. It was he whom you beheld bending over the young man.'

`I then related to the Duke what I had observed,' continued Mr. Beufort, `and how he seemed to be comparing your features with that of the marble face. At this the Duke started and regarding me fixedly, oried—

`Is it possible, Mr. Beufort that there was a resemblance?'

`There was a very close one, your grace. I was struck with it.'

`Then what do you think—what do you suppose this young man is in whom both you and my son have taken such an interest?'

`I have no doubt, your Grace,' I answered, `that he is the child of Lord Ferdinand, your son!'

`It cannot be. They had no child!'

`They may have withheld, and doubtless did conceal from you the fact they had any offspring when we recall the condition upon which your son was to be re−instated. I have no doubt, my lord duke, that a son was born to them and that he was left in the charge of this hostess of the Silver Bottle Inn. In a word, the child whose history I have previously given you, is unquestionably their son. They left him in America probably with the intention at some early period to reclaim him; but the early death of the mother and the madness of the father prevented the fulfilment of their wishes. The child, therefore, remained and grew up to a young man, when circumstances combined to induce him to make efforts to ascertain his parentage. You have before you the Silver Bottle left with him. Here is the sketch of the coat of arms made for the carriage. On the back you see is a torn address to F. R. Mar—. All the other circumstances unite with *t*hese to prove this young man's title to your name and blood!'

The Duke remained silent and thoughtful, and I could see that he was deeply moved. Suddenly he rose up and said impressively—

`Mr. Beufort, if I could think this young gentleman should turn out to be my grandson, I should be perfectly happy. I would acknowledge him with joy. You say he his in the house. Let me see him. I would behold him!—Hasten and bring him hither!'

`I then left the library,' continued Mr. Beufort. `and came hither to seek you! You must prepare yourself, my friend, for the interview. It is evident that on your resemblance to his son your acknowledgment by him will depend. He is satisfied, as far as the circumstantial evidence goes, that you *may* be the son of Lord Ferdmand. Come with me and take courage!'

I took Mr. Beufort's arm, and, trembling with deep feeling, for I was greatly agitated, as upon this interview hung all my hopes, I accompanied him through a long arched gallery elegantly sculptured and adorned with paintings and statuary. At its extremity we stopped before a door at which Mr. Beufort knocked lightly.

`Enter,' said the voice of the Duke. The sound sent the blood from my heart to my brain like lightning.

Mr. Beufort opened the door and I entered with him into the presence of the venerable nobleman. He was standing in the middle of the room and had his eyes fixed stedfastly in the direction of the door. As I entered and he saw me clearly, he clasped his hands together and uttered an exclamation of mingled amazement aud joy.

`It is—it *is* my son. It is Ferdinand. Come hither and let me see thee more fully.

I advanced and impulsively knelt before him. He gazed upon me a few moments with deep earnestness and then bending down took my hands and bade me rise that he might embrace me. He folded me to his heart and his tears bedewed my cheeks mingling with my own.

At length he became composed; and leading me to a seat bade me to sit down, while he took a seat close by my side and held my hand in his. In this manner he sat and studied the lineaments of my countenance. Finally, he turned to Mr. Beaufort and said—

`I am satisfied, sir. He looks like my son at his age. One is the other's counterpart! I also see about the mouth the likeness of that injured woman, his mother! Young man,' he sald, addressing me, `I have heard all your story and am convinced that you are my own blood!'

`And my father—my mother, sir?' I asked eagerly. `Is it true that I shall never behold them?'

`She, alas, is no more. He is alive, but he cannot know you. He knows no one. I will be to thee in his stead, my child! But this is sad talking. Let me hear you relate your history! I would know all from your own lips.'

As soon as I was able to compose myself, I proceeded to give him a brief account of the circumstances of my life, as they have been made known to the reader. He listened attentively for full two hours. When I had ended he knelt down and lifting his hands thanked God for vouchsafing to him in his old age so great a blessing as beholding the child of her who had died beneath his roof, that he might atone in him for the wrong of which she had been the innocent victim. He then warmly embraced me; and taking Mr. Beufort by the hand thanked him with the most grateful sincerity and fervor for the deep interest he had taken in my fortunes, and for placing in his possession one so long an exile from the house of his ancestors.

My feelings at this happy crisis of my fortunes I will not attempt to describe. I was full of joy, gratitude, hope and love. I found it difficult to realize the truth, and had to make an effort to convince my reason that all was real and not a dream. At length the full force of my happiness rushed upon me, mingled with which were the loved features of Emma Field, and I wept for very joy. There was now no obstacle to my love. How did my heart throb with impatience to throw myself at her feet and assure her that I was no longer unworthy of her, an adventurer without name or birth!

In the meanwhile the Duke and Mr. Beufort were talking together.

`It is possible his father, Lord Ferdinand, may recognize him,' said Mr. Beufort.

`The trial shall be made! You say he was comparing his features with that of the effigy upon the sarcophagus?'

`Yes, my lord.'

`Then an interest has been awakened. It is as you say, barely possible the son may succeed in drawing him out of himself. They must meet.'

`It were best to let our noble young friend enter the vestibule as if by accidentt, and when he comes forth to kneel beside the sarcophagus, as he is wont to do, to let himself be seen. I have no doubt that from the intelligence and memory the sight of him before awakened in him that by judicious management he might gradually be brought out of himself and restored to his intellect. Like things have been in the history of lunacy, my lord.'

`It is too much to hope for,' answered the Duke.

`I will do all that my heart and filial love can dictate,' I answered earnestly.

`If lord Ferdinand could be restored by any means, his acknowledgment of having left an infant son in America would forever put to silence every doubt. I do not question this dear young man's right to my name and lineage, Mr. Beufort. I freely and will openly acknowledge him my grandson. He bears the impress of his ancestral name upon his brow and form. He who looks upon him will bear witness he is an Arlborough. No, Mr. Beufort, I only desire, as you must, the seal of this confirmation, which none can give but my poor Ferdinand. Shall we make the trial to−day? This evening, at sundown, he will be sure to be kneeling there. Perhaps then will be the best time to make trial of the effect his son may have upon him. If the Interest he took in him at first arose from broken and confused images of memory it is probable they may a second time unite, and link, and form a continuous chain from the past to the present. It may prove the key to the restoration of his reason.'

`God grant it may, my lord,' answered Mr. Beufort, to which I devoutly responded an audible `Amen' from my soul's depths.

This evening, therefore, I am to make the trial to endeavor to obtain my father's recognition. I tiemble lest all should prove vain, and I shall be unknown to him for ever. Alas? for my mother, I have already wept bitter tears. To feel her maternal heart throbbing against mine would give me more joy than to have bound upon my brow the

ducal coronet of my ancestors.

CHAPTER VIII.

Arlbororough Castle, − *August 4, 184—*.

I have now to record one of the most interesting events of my life, and one which has been to me the cause of infinite happiness and gratitude. In a word, I *have been recognized and acknowledged by my father!* His reason at my interview returned, and — But I anticipate the narrative of the circumstances, and will at once proceed to relate them as I promised in my last letter.

It will be remembered that the time set for me to see him was at the hour of sunset, at which season it had been long his custom to leave his private chamber adjoining the cenotaph and kneel beside it as if in worship. As the moment approached in which I was to make this trial, in its results so interesting to me, I became greatly agitated, and feared that my feelings would so far overcome me as to render it impossible to go through with the painful scene I had to enter upon. At length the shadows of the setting day began to gather upon the woodlands, and the last lingering glow of sunlight fade from the edges of the hills, and the moment of trial was at hand!

His Grace came to me and taking me by the hand embraced me like a father, and then, attended by Mr. Beufort, we left my chamber and proceeded towards the hall of the cenotaph. At the outer door the two gentlemen remained, and opening the door I entered alone, leaving it ajar, that they might be spectators of what ensued. The saloon was unoccupied, for it wanted yet three minutes to the vesper hour. I had intentionally come in before him, that I might better compose myself for the part I had to act in this interesting affair. With feelings that I find it impossible to describe I slowly approached the cenotaph, and kneeling reverently by its side, I gazed with awe and filial tenderness upon the marble resemblance of her who I believed to be my mother. As I gazed I insensibly forgot my object in being there, and with tears in my eyes and clasped hands I let my thoughts wander to the past days of her unhappiness, and in recalling these I then ceased to regret that she had passed away to scenes of unalloyed enjoyment. In my imagination also, I began to invest the white, cold and immoveable marble with the hues and motion of life, till I seemed to be kneeling by the side of her who only slept, and whom a touch, a whisper from her child would awaken.—Impressed with this feeling, I impulsively extended my hand and laid it lightly upon her clasped fingers, and said in a voice that startled myself for its depth and intensity of mingled love and grief,

`Mother! mother, arise! It is your son who calls you!'

At this moment I heard a step, and looking up beheld gazing down upon me across the cenotaph, Lord Ferdinand! He stood looking calm, sorrowful, and yet fearfully stern, his tall person and dignified air giving him an appearance at once lofty and commanding. I was instantly recalled to a sense of the task before me, and my self−possession returned. I saw his eye was fixed upon me with a look of mingled wonder and anger. He surveyed me, as I kneeled, for some moments in silence! At length he addressed me in a voice that thrilled to my soul—for nature told me that it was the voice of my father:

`Who art thou that darest to kneel by this sacred shrine? Who art thou that callest upon the dead? Speak! This spot is sacred, and he who profanes it must purify it with his blood! Say, who art thou?'

`Father!' I answered, scarcely able to articulate the word from the strength of my emotions, which well nigh suffocated me.

`*Father!*' he repeated slowly; and thrice he repeated the word, each time with increased bitterness. `Yes, I had a father! But I will not tell to strange ears the tale! No! I had a wife, too! Oh, *such* a wife! Angels did love her while yet she lived, and angels are her companions now!' And elevating his finger he remained a few moments silently and impressively pointing heavenward. All at once he cried in a voice of thunder,

`But who art thou that darest to kneel here?'

`Her child!'

`Her child! Ha, ha, ha!' and he laughed wildly and fiercely. The expression of his features was truly terrible. `Yes, she had a child! But — but — Oh, my poor mad brain! Oh, thou Duke! Thou — but hist! he is my father! I may not speak against him. She lies here now! Oh how full of gentleness and joy was thy spirit, my beloved! How soft with love beamed thy eyes upon me, how like chords of a well−tuned harp my heart−strings sounded the

touches of thy gentle words! But thou livest now only in memory!'

`She was very lovely, my lord?' I said, seeing him pause and gaze with sorrowful tenderness upon the beauteous features of the marble face, wishing to draw him to converse with me.

`Her countenance, fair as thou seest it there, was but a rude mirror imperfectly reflecting the divine beauty of her soul!'

`My lord, you said but now she was a mother! What became of her child?

`Did I say she was a mother?' he cried hoarsely. `Hush then, and do not repeat it! It must be kept a secret! The dukedom rests upon it! Aye it does hang upon it! Be silent, if thou knowest it! By and by he will be found, and then upon his noble brow I will place the coronet of his house! But hush! It must not be breathed to the winds! *She* who lies there, and *I* are sole keepers of the secret!'

The loud, cautious, impressive voice in which he spoke this thrilled to my soul. Every word was overheard by the Duke and Mr. Beufort, for though he spoke in a whisper, it was singularly deep and distinct, reaching the remotest corner of the saloon. While he was speaking he came round the cenotaph and stood by my side. I still knelt; for in such a presence! my mad father and my mother's shade! I could only kneel in awe.

`I will keep the secret, my lord!'

`I know that you may be trusted. I know thee not, nor why thou art here; but there is a spirit looks out through thine eyes that I love!'

`Where, my lord, is your child?' I asked, with as much composure and firmness as I could command.

`Breathe it not above thy breath!' he said, seating himself upon the pedestal of the cenotaph and laying his hand impressively upon my arm, while his eyes surveyed me with a peculiar intensity mingled with kindness that seemed to me to be parental, though he himself was unconscious of the source of this regard. `I *had* a boy! A brave, beautiful boy! He was an infant! I saw him only as an infant, but he is gone! *gone!* gone *too?*' This was uttered with the most touching melancholy.

`Dead?' I asked with my heart on my lips.

`Dead! Yes, dead,' he replied, speaking to himself rather than to me. `Are not the lost dead? Yes, he is dead, for I know not where he is! My poor, cracked brain! I cannot guide its thoughts or memories! When I would think, all becomes chaos! Oh, if I could remember *where!* I should not be mad.'

He rose up and walked to and fro before the shrine, his hands clasped across his forehead, and his face eloquent with the anguish of the bitterest woe. I rose, also, and gently placed my hand upon his arm: for I knew I held the key— the talisman—which if properly used would unlock the store−house of memory. I felt that if he could once be brought to a certain definite point of past time so as to recognise it, he could then be led down to the present moment, and reason would once more recover her lost path.

`My lord,' I said, in the kindest tones I could assume, `you have been pleased to regard me with favor! Will you suffer me to hold a few words of conversation with you?'

He looked me steadfastly in the face and then smiling with an affection in his glance that brought tears to my eyes, answered,

`Yes, I will listen to you, for you speak to me in the tones of her I loved! Speak! but I will gaze on you, for you look upon me with the eyes of my beloved! '

`My lord,' I said, `I will speak of your son.'

`*Softly*, though,' he said, with an air of fear. `Softly; for this must be known only *to us three!* Did I not tell thee how the Dukedom hangs upon it! No, it must not be known! But I care not for the Dukedom! I did once, and did wickedly by deserting my poor boy! hoping to get him again; but God has punished me in taking away my memory. Dost thou know, young man, I am mad for the cause that I have forgotten where we left our boy! Sometimes I fancy 'twas at an Inn in the vallies of Switzerland; then I think 'twas in an *auberge* in the South of France! Then again I am persuaded he was drowned in the Atlantic.'

He said this with a painful expression of perplexity and grief upon his haggard yet noble countenance.

`You crossed the Atlantic then, my lord?' I asked eagerly.

`I forget—methinks we were cast away and lost on the voyage! I remember a great storm! Yet, no! if we had been lost I had not been here, you know, nor *she there*.' [It will have been observed that in alluding to his wife, that he invariably seemed to regard her as actually before him in the cenotaph] `But my poor brain wanders!' and he placed his hand to his brow.

`My lord,' I said taking his hand and seating him upon the pedestal, `I will tell you a tale.'

`Marry, I should be right glad to listen! I could listen and look in thine eyes forever.'

`In America, my lord, twenty−six years ago, there drew up to a small inn not far from Boston, a carriage, containing a gentleman and his wife, both in mourning. Does my lord listen?'

I received no reply, but with both hands he laid a firm grasp upon my wrist and rivetted his eyes earnestly upon my face.

`The carriage was yellow and driven by a negro man! They alighted, this gentleman and lady, who seemed overcome with grief. They entered the inn and were followed to a distant chamber by the negro, who carried beneath his arm a covered basket, about the safety of which the lady seemed to be very watchful, giving the man many an anxious and careful caution. They remained an hour or two and then ordering their carriage, though it was already sun−set, they left the inn, taking the basket with them. But now comes the point of my story, my lord. An hour after their departure, the landlady hearing the cry of an infant followed the sound and entering the room they had left, found lying upon the bed—'

`A child? An infant? a boy?—*my* boy! *Her* son!' cried out lord Ferdidinand, catching the words from my mouth and speaking in a loud and terribly excited tone, a tone in which the wildest joy was mingled with trembling hopes. I had watched the glad dawning of intelligence as I spoke, diffusing slowly yet surely, the light of intelligence over the night of reason and oblivion. I had seen with joy, the progressive unfolding of the portals of his memory, and anticipated the certain recognition which followed.

`It was a male infant, my lord, and doubtless left by travellers. In its hands it held grasped this Silver Bottle.'

As I said this I drew from my bosom the bottle and placed it in his hands. He looked at it a few moments with an indescribable expression, or rather crowd of expressions upon his face; for his countenance underwent surprising changes as he held it. Slowly he sank upon his knees and lifting his hands to heaven he bowed his head with a look of inexpressible gratitude upon his breast, and said in a voice I shall never forget,

`God, I thank thee?'

He remained silent a few moments, and then rising turned to me and said in words broken by emotion—

`And the child—the child—the infant? Did—did—it *live?*'

`It did, my lord—it lives still!'

`Still! Oh, tell me where! tell me that I may fly to him! He is my child! He is *her* son! Heaven has sent thee here to throw the light of memory upon my shattered brain, and I once more behold the past. That gentleman and lady were myself and she who sleeps there! We did wickedly in deserting our little one, but we knew in whose kindly hands we left it, hoping in a few short months to have it restored! But the wickedness of those who compelled us to this step is greater far. And I, in my ambition, did urge thee to it, gentle wife! But I know thy gentle spirit forgave me ere it fled!' He paused, overcome with inward feelings. At length he raised his head and said earnestly,

`You tell me my boy lives!'

`He does, my lord!' I answered scarcely audible, and trembling with the deepest emotion.

`Where? I will fly to embrace him. I will kneel at his feet and implore his pardon. Tell me where my boy is: my *child*. That I may fly to his embrace! '

`*Here*, my noble lord! *here*, my *father!* Behold! *your son kneels to you for your blessing!*'

He gazed upon me for a moment with the light of instinctive recognition growing brighter and clearer in his parental eyes and then, with a loud cry, cast himself into my arms.

CHAPTER IX.

The author of `Silver Bottle' to the reader:

Dear Reader,

Having, in the last chapter, brought our story down to that point where our hero is recognized and acknowledged by his father, we shall now pursue the narrative in our own words, `Little Marlboro' having *with this event*, closed his correspondence.

After his extraordinary recognition by his father of his claim there remained no doubt whatever of its validity in the mind of the Duke, if there had been any before. He was acknowledged by him with new testimonials of affection; and lord Ferdinand, entirely restored to his reason, tenderly embraced the Duke, and then in a very clear manner gave a full account of the circumstances connected with the desertion of his infant.

`It was my *fault* and my *crime*,' he said with emotion. `My lovely wife with tears, entreated me to regard more my child's and her happiness than the rank and title, with the loss of which I was threatened. But too ambitious, yet loving my wife and infant with the deepest tenderness, I urged the step we finally took, though it nearly broke her heart. We then returned to England, and—the rest is known!'

Lord Ferdinand then embraced his son, and it being noised that a son of Lord Ferdinand had arrived and that he recovered his reason on seeing him, the castle was filled with the greatest rejoicings.

After the lapse of a week spent in congratulations and festivities, during which time our hero, `Little Marlborough,' had been re−baptized by the name of Henry Frederick, Mr. Beufort said that it was now full time for him to return to London. He said he had never been so happy in his life and should always congratulate himself on having been instrumental in bringing about so much joy. Our hero having now been fully recognized to be the son of Lord Ferdinand and his claim to the title unquestionable, it is to be presumed that he experienced that high degree of happiness that must necessarily flow from the favorable result of his long and persevering researches after his parentage. The high rank he had acquired, the elevated position in society he all at once found himself in, did not so much fill him with gratification, as the reflection that it rendered him worthy of her whose love had been the guiding star of his wandering barque through all his reveries. Of the beautiful Emma Field he first thought, and he felt that his happiness could not be perfect unless shared by her. He therefore resolved to obtain permission of his newly recovered friends, and, in company with Mr. Beufort, visit London.— Reluctant as the Duke and his father were to part with him, they finally consented on the condition that he would be absent but a week.

`If you are away longer than that, my lord Henry,' said his Grace, `I and your father will be posting up to London after you. But as you say you have some private businets you desire to transact before you appear before the world in your own proper rank, go with Mr. Beufort. By the by, Mr. Beufort I wish you to be my grandson's banker to any amount he may require while in London, and pray, my good lord, take care of your health. We have found you too recently to lose you again!'

`I assure your grace,' answered lord Henry, `that I shall do nothing that may bring upon me the reproof of those to whom I owe so much! Farewell, my honored father! I trust on my return your health will be quite restored. Nothing but the most pressing affairs would draw me from you at this time!'

Taking a tender farewell of these and others of the family who were present, lord Henry sprung into the carriage which was in waiting. He saw that its pannels bore the crest of an eagle strangling a serpent; and his bosom glowed with pride and gratitude that he was now no longer a wanderer without any other clue to his family than the Silver Bottle and its device.

After a rapid and pleasant journey they reached London. As they were entering the metropolis Mr. Beufort said,

`Now, my lord, as you have frankly told me that you have come to town to find out your American beauty, what are your first movements?'

`To ascertain where she is—seek her, declare my passion, and if she will make me so happy, I will make her my wife!'

`If you find she is engaged or really married to Mr. Russel Carryl?'

`Impossible! I am convinced their meeting was the merest accident. He could never be any thing to her!'

`Well, there is no doubt now that you will eclipse him!'

`I do not intend to do it by my rank and title, Mr. Beufort. I mean to keep them secret from her!'

`And if she accepts you?'

`Declare *then* my true name and rank!'

`If she refuses, you can also declare them, and no doubt greatly to her vexation! '

`Do not speak of refusal. I am persuaded I have an interest in her heart. She knows my past history, and the cloud that hung over my name has been the only obstacle both to her more open demonstrations of affection as well as it has been of my own!'

`If such is your intended course, my lord, you had best drive, as the coach is yours and bears your arms, to the C— Hotel in Regent street, and put up there under your proper title and rank. You need not be seen, but take private rooms and remain in them till I can ascertain for you where about your American friends are putting up. I will go about it at once, as soon as we reach London. Possibly they may be at the C—. We can inquire as we drive there!'

Shortly after this conversation, the travelling carriage of the Duke of A— was announced as being drawn up before the door of the C— Hotel. The excitement among the servants and so up to the proprietor was in proportion with the rank of the personage named. From it alighted not the Duke, but a young gentlemen and an elderly gentleman, in whom the host recognized Mr. Beufort.

`I thought my lord Duke had honored us,' said the proprietor looking a little disappointed.

`Not the Duke in person, but his grand−son, lord Henry.' answered Mr. Beufort. `He has been absent abroad for years, and but recently returned!'

This explanation was sufficient. Lord Henry was ushered into the hotel, and escorted to the finest suit of apartments; and it was not long before it was known to most of the nobility sojourning in the C—, that a grandson of the Duke of A— had arrived in England and was then in the house.

Lord Henry kept himself very close for the remainder of the day, leaving his good friend Mr. Beufort, to make such inquiries touching the Field family as would be necessary, he being better acquainted with London, and more likely to be successful; besides our hero did not wish to appear abroad as lord Henry A— until he had seen Emma. About eight o'clock in the evening a servant entered and said with that profound respect characteristic of English footmen in addresing titled personages,

`My lord, a gentleman below desires an interview. He had no card, but he gave his name as Buffet!'

`Mr. Beufort! Show him up!'

`I will, my lord!'

Our hero's heart throbbed violently during the absence of the servant; for he expected that his friend was the bearer of news, from the party in which he was so much interested. The next moment Mr. Beufort entered, and lord Henry saw at a glance that he had pleasant news.

`You have seen them?'

`Yes, my lord. But sit down and I will tell you all about it. After some little inquiry I learned that the family you seek, were at No. — R — Terrace. Thither I drove at once, and as it was a hotel, I alighted and went in. I soon found that the party consisted of Colonel Field and lady, Miss Field, and Mr. Russel Carryl!'

Lord Henry turned pale and bit his lips, while he took a quick turn across the room and back again. He then repeated impressively, `*Miss* Field! They are *not* married!'

`Be calm, my friend. You have nothing to fear from that quarter!'

`Are you sure?' cried lord Henry earnestly.

`Quite. I will tell you how I learned. Taking advantage of my years, I thought I would call upon the lady in person, and have a quiet *tete a tete!* I first, however, ascertained that her father and mother had gone out. I then sent up my name to see him, closely following upon the heels of the servant. On opening the parlor door and announcing me, a piano which was playing ceased, and I heard a very sweet, pleasant young lady's voice reply, that her father had gone out, but would return in half an hour.

`I will then, with your permission, Miss, wait his return, I said, entering the room. Seeing my grey hairs, and

doubtless observing that I had a respectable appearance, at least that I didn't look like a burglar, she rose and politely invited me to be seated!'

`Emma! beautiful, charming Emma! Oh, how greatly do I envy you, my dear Mr. Beaufort, the having been in her presence.'

`We soon entered into conversation, and I must give you credit, my lord, for excellent taste and judgment; for a young person of greater personal charms or a more cultivated mind, I have rarely seen. From one thing to another I led her on, till I learned that they were travelling for the benefit of her father's health, and had been in England two months, and were in a few days to leave for Paris!'

`Not if I have the eloquence and influence to detain her,' said our hero very positively.

`Perhaps it will turn out that you have, my lord,' answered Mr. Beufort, smiling. `I then remarked that there were many Americans in England, and that I had recently met with one, a young gentleman in whom I had been deeply interested. I saw at once by her countenance that she was thinking of you, for love's object is always uppermost in the thoughts.

`Of whom do you speak, sir?' she asked, coloring, and her voice slightly tremulous, as if she feared, yet hoped I should name you!'

`Me? Oh, could it be that I held such quick place in her thoughts! Ah, Mr. Beufort, I dare not hope!'

`Hear me, and then judge, my lord. I answered her, that the young gentleman I alluded to had, when an infant, been left by his parents at an Inn in America, near Boston, kept by a certain Dame Darwell. That this good woman had reared him as her own son: but that having come of age, and through rivalry, having incurred the hostility of a young man of wealth and birth, he had been defamed by him as a person of infamous birth! This fired the young man to seek proof of his lineage; and after various adventures, he was led by circumstances to visit England, believing he should here find what he sought, viz., proofs of his honorable birth. One chief motive that spurred him on,' I added, seeing that she listened with the deepest and most earnest attention, as if she was aware I spoke of you, `one chief motive that led him to make such exertions to discover his parents was *love!* '

`Love?' she repeated with a glowing cheek, and with an animated manner, that showed how profoundly her senses were enlisted in my words.

`Yes, lady,' I answered. `He had from earliest youth loved a beautiful maiden, and this love grew with years, till manhood confirmed his passion, and it became part and parcel of his being. He at length would have woed her, and doubtless would have won her, for he was worthy of her; but that cloud upon his birth, darkened by the gratuitous calumnies of a rival deterred him; and hiding his deep love in the secret chambers of his own bosom, he went forth to seek for proof to confute this calumny, and clear his name from an imputed stain which would else forever bar him from seeking an honorable alliance with the idol of his soul. His researches, as I have said, brought him to Enaland, where a singular circumstance connected with his search, brought me in contact with him!'

`His name, sir?' she gasped, clasping her hands together, and bending earnestly towards me.

`Marlboro' Darwell!'

`The same!' she answered; and turning deadly pale (for she had been alarmingly red and pale by times, as I was speaking, I had to support her with my arm to save her from falling. She soon revived and said, with an embarrassment that made her most interesting.

`Pardon me, sir! I suffered my feelings for a moment to get the better of me! Your narrative has interested me. But, sir, did — (here she hesitated, and then continued with greater firmness), did this young gentleman tell you who— *who* —.' She stopped short. But I finished the sentence for her, by saying,

`Who the young lady was?' Yes, the lady. But I don't know that I ought to tell it. But as I trust you will keep the secret, I will divulge it. There it is!' And I placed in her hands *one of her own cards*, which I had taken up from the table. She blushed as crimson as a peony at sun−rise, and then the bright tears, like great globules of dew rolled sparkling over her cheeks. She smiled through them a moment afterwards, and said sweetly,

`Sir, I do not know, but as you are a friend to Mr. Darwell, you shall be my friend. I freely confess to you that —.'

`What?' cried lord Henry, rising, and seizing his friend by both hands.

`Sit down, good, my lord, and you shall learn,' answered Mr. Beufort, smiling.

Lord Henry re−seated himself and remained as composed as he could, while Mr. Beufort thus continued:

`Said she to me, `As you, sir, are Mr. Darwell's friend I will also regard you as mine. Frankly, sir, I confess to you that he is a person by no means indifferent to me. I have long entertained the kindest feelings towards him.'

`Said she so much in so many words, sir?' cried our hero.

`In so many words, my lord. I give her own language. I then expressed to her the happiness I knew this intelligence would give you, and when I answered her that you almost adored her, you should have seen the happy expression, the joyous lighting up of her beautiful countenance. Her bosom heaved with emotion, and her eyes over−run with gratitude. But all at once a cloud came over her features, and sadness took the place of hope and joy. She looked earnestly at me and said,

`Sir, you know my heart now, and you must know it only to pity me. Mr. Darwell though having so strong a hold upon my regards, you are aware can never be more to me than a friend! It is this reflection that has cast a sadness over my happiness! I think only of himself, sir, but my parents, the large circle of my friends would look only to his birth.'

`But if I could show you that he has succeeded in finding his family and proving his title to an honorable parentage?' I said.

`Can you do it, sir?' she cried earnestly.

`I can, Madam,' I replied. `He has within the last ten days discovered his father and grandfather also, and been recognised and acknowledged by them. They are very respectable people, and he will do honor to them I am sure.'

`Then, if this be true, how I sympathise with him in his happiness,' she said gratefully. `Oh, sir; can this be indeed true?'

`I assure you, madam, it is so. If you desire it, I will prove it to your parents! '

`No, no, not just now! Is Mr. Darwell still in England?' she asked with embarrassment.

`Yes. He is now in London.'

`In London?' she exclaimed with almost a cry of joy.

`He is, madam, and I assure you it would give him the greatest happiness to permit him to pay his respects to you.'

`Well, my dear lord, the upshot of the whole pleasant matter was that she said she should be most happy to see you to−morrow. Don't fly *now*. Tomorrow will come in due time! As I was going to leave, Col. Field entered with his lady, and with him the American Minister, whom I well knew. As I was about to introduce myself to the Colonel, the Minister did it for me, and so at once I was placed in a position to enlist his confidence. I then, as soon as I could conveniently, began to tell your story, addressing myself to His Excellency, but intending my narration for the especial benefit of Colonel Field and his lady. I gave the whole account, only concealing the name and rank of your family, which I said I was not at liberty to divulge, but which I pledged myself as highly respectable and wealthy. When I had done, his Excellency begged that I would bring you to see him, and also Colonel and Mrs. Field seconded the invitation for you to visit them with me; and they were warm in their congratulations upon your good fortune in removing so successfully the stain upon your birth, of which they had been made acquainted by Russel Carryl.'

`I must meet that man,' cried lord Henry, angrily.

`Only to treat him with contempt, my lord! He is beneath your notice. I learned he only travelled *with*, but is not *of*, the party, being only an intruder for the purpose of pressing his attentions upon Miss Field. He called while I was there; and while the parents received him with sufficient friendship, I noted that Miss Field was cold and distant, and seemed to regard him with positive dislike. So you see, my lord, as the way is now open before you, you have only to make the best use of your time; for you must return to A— Castle at the end of the week, or the Duke will be here after you! In the meanwhile, I would advise you to live as becomes your rank at the hotel here, and receive the attentions and notice which the nobility will extend towards you. To the world you must be Lord Henry A—, the representative of the A—family; but to Miss Field, and Mr. Carryl, and the family, you may, still be plain Mr. Darwell. It is not probable that you will meet them as Lord Henry, or that they will recognise you to be one and the same person until you choose to make yourself known.'

The following day about twelve o'clock our hero took a cab and drove privately to the lodgings of Col. Field. Sending up his name as Mr. Darwell of the United States, he was ushered into the drawing room. Emma was

alone. On seeing him she arose, advanced a step to offer her hand in welcome and then stopped short covered with blushes, and her cheeks in beautiful confusion. Our hero approached her with equal embarrassment. She raised her eyes, their glances met, and with a bright smile she extended her hand, which he took and pressed to his lips.

`It is long since we have met, Mr. Darwell,' she said with a trembling tone in her voice and making an effort to be firm.

`It is, in person, Miss Field, save for a moment at long intervals,' he answered, `but in memory you have not been absent from me a day since first I met you as a school−boy and received from your hand a boquet of flowers. A bud of that gift I still retain, and the memory of the giver confers upon them, still, both life and fragrance.'

We will not attempt here to record the conversation between two true and loving hearts, which for years had lived in each other's light though that light had been long obscured by the dark clouds of circumstances, now dissipated forever. Before they parted, our hero had wooed and won her as Mr. Darwell, assuring her that in a few days she should see his father and know more intimately all that related to his family.

As he was descending to the hall he encountered Russel Carryl upon the stairs with two young men, one of whom he recognised as the midshipman with whom he had fought. On seeing him, Carryl, suspecting whom he had been to call on, looked angrily upon him and then sneeringly said, so that he might hear:

`There goes the widow Darwell's protege! I wonder if he has got so wise as to know his own father?'

This infamous insult lord Henry took no notice of, feeling that when Carryl came to know his true rank and his acceptance by Miss Field, he would be sufficiently punished.

`There he goes in a wretched hired cab,' said Carryl, who kept his own tilbury and affected the excess of London fashion, and whose chief ambition was to *know* a nobleman. To have walked arm and arm with a *lord* down Regent street, he would cheerfully have given a hundred guineas!

`I wonder,' he added, `if he has had the audacity to call on Miss Field. If he has, I will cane him.'

He sent in his card and that of his friend, and was confounded and indignant by the reply brought by the footman, `that Miss Field was engaged and could not see him.'

`This is all that nameless fellow's work. He has been to see her, and as I know she has long had a liking for him, I dare say he has succeeded in blinding her eyes to his low birth, and doubtless has been defaming me.'

Here, however, this young gentleman was wrong. His rival had too noble a soul to condescend to such means to ingratiate himself into the regards of Miss Field; but, as he himself had adopted them and made the defamation of our hero to be an instrument towards his own success, he naturally attributed similar motives of action to another.

The following evening an unusually magnificent assembly was to be held at the palace of the Earl of—. Lord Henry was a great card, and although the invitations had some days been issued, he received one, and by the advice of Mr. Beufort accepted it. As he was desirous Emma should be present, he succeeded in getting an invitation for her to go in company with the family of the American Minister.

All the nobility in London was present. It was soon noised that the heir of the Duke of — was in the room, and our hero soon found himself the lion of the evening. But he thought little of the honors and adulations so long as they were not shared with Emma. At length he discovered her and was about to approach her, when he was detained to have presented to him some members of the House of Lords. In the meanwhile Emma, who knew her lover was to be there, was looking for him amid the crowd.

`How would you like to be presented to this young nobleman whom every body is taking about?' said his Excellency to her with a smile; for he had our hero's whole story from Mr. Beufort, together with whom he had dined that afternoon at C— Hotel. Therefore, knowing all the history of our hero and his love, the Minister had prepared himself for an interesting scene.

`I have no wish,' she answered, smiling.

`Well then perhaps I can find Mr. Darwell. Wait here till I cross the hall. I will seek him and bring him here. I dare say you won't object to seeing *him*!'

Mr. — did not wait to observe her confusion, but soon disappeared in the throng. In three minutes afterwards he returned, leading up our hero.

`You can't help yourself now, Miss Field,' said his Excellency. `Here is his lordship come to be presented to

you.—Miss Field this is Lord Henry A—. Lord Henry, allow me to present you to Miss Field.'

Emma stood confounded! Could it be true? Could the minister be trifling with her? Lord Henry approached and taking her hand said in a low voice, but with a smile,

`Emma, I trust that you will keep the promise you made to me as Mr. Darwell, now that you see me before you under the name and rank of Lord Arlborough. '

`Is this indeed true?' she asked with a deep flush of joy.

`It is. My father is the Lord Ferdinand, eldest son of the Duke of A—.'

At this moment several persons of high rank came up to be presented to the lion of the evening, and the formality of the presentation convinced her that all was true. She now trembled for herself, and would have feared that she should be no longer regarded by him, but for the sweet echo of the words he had spoken to her.

As His Excellency had been pressingly importuned by Mr. Russel Carryl to use his influence to get him an invitation to this noble party, he finally consented and was so far successful as to have permission to attach Mr. Carryl to his suite. Russel Carryl was therefore present; but he had not yet seen Miss Field, nor encountered our hero.

`Where, sir, is this distinguished young nobleman, the heir of the title of Duke of Arlborough, every one is talking about, as just arrived from the continent, where he has been since a boy?' asked Russel Carryl of the American minister, coming up to him with his back towards lord Henry.

`Would you like to be presented?'

`Above all things,' answered the young man.

`There he stands talking with Miss Field, his back towards us. I will present you if you will approach with me. My lord, allow me to present —'

`That—*that* is not the Lord A—!' suddenly exclaimed Russel Carryl, starting back in the utmost surprise and confusion, on getting a glimpse at the profile of his rival.

`It is the same! My lord, I beg leave to present to you, *at his particular desire*. Mr. Russel Carryl, who —.'

Both our hero and Miss Field turned round at this name. Russel Carryl stood for a moment petrified with astonishment, enduring the cold and haughty gaze of the man he had injured, and then covered with confusion and vexation which no words can describe, he abruptly broke from the minister and hastened to bury his disgrace and well merited contempt amid the crowd. The triumph of our hero was complete! He felt at that moment of triumph fully avenged of all the wrongs then man had heaped upon him!

We have now only to close our story in the good old fashioned way, that is with announcing the marriage of the hero and heroine, which took place with great splendor three months afterwards, at the Palace of the Duke of A — in London. It would have been celebrated earlier; but our hero as faithful in his love and attachment to good Dame Darwell, as he had been in his devotion to the maiden who had won his young heart, would not have the marriage take place without the worthy Dame's presence. He, therefore, sent over for her, and sure enough Dame Darwell was there in person present at the wedding; but to tell how happy the good Dame was, we should have to write another book! It is hardly necessary to say that she recognised Lord Ferdinand, and that *he* recognised *her* as the hostess of the Inn where they had left the infant! The good Dame has consented to remain in England with her foster son; and with this end she has made over her Inn and other property to Aunt Keezia and cousin Mariah the minister's wife, and `The Silver Bottle Inn' has now become the village parsonage. Russel Carryl left England precipitately, and soon after returned to the United States, where, after running through his fortune, he became intemperate, lost his character, and is now become an idle and despised frequenter of low coffee−houses, and the moneyless haunter of the vile precincts of gambling halls!

Thus we end our story. Its progress will show that virtue and perseverance will overcome every obstacle of birth, fortune, and circumstances; and that the depraved and unprincipled, though favored by these in the outset, will ultimately sink to the level of their true characters. THE END.