

II

There was never a more amazed little boy than Cedric during the week that followed; there was never so strange or so unreal a week. In the first place, the story his mamma told him was a very curious one. He was obliged to hear it two or three times before he could understand it. He could not imagine what Mr. Hobbs would think of it. It began with earls: his grandpapa, whom he had never seen, was an earl; and his eldest uncle, if he had not been killed by a fall from his horse, would have been an earl, too, in time; and after his death, his other uncle would have been an earl, if he had not died suddenly, in Rome, of a fever. After that, his own papa, if he had lived, would have been an earl, but, since they all had died and only Cedric was left, it appeared that HE was to be an earl after his grandpapa's death--and for the present he was Lord Fauntleroy.

He turned quite pale when he was first told of it.

"Oh! Dearest!" he said, "I should rather not be an earl. None of the boys are earls. Can't I NOT be one?"

But it seemed to be unavoidable. And when, that evening, they sat together by the open window looking out into the shabby street, he and his mother had a long talk about it. Cedric sat on his footstool,

clasping one knee in his favorite attitude and wearing a bewildered little face rather red from the exertion of thinking. His grandfather had sent for him to come to England, and his mamma thought he must go.

"Because," she said, looking out of the window with sorrowful eyes, "I know your papa would wish it to be so, Ceddie. He loved his home very much; and there are many things to be thought of that a little boy can't quite understand. I should be a selfish little mother if I did not send you. When you are a man, you will see why."

Ceddie shook his head mournfully.

"I shall be very sorry to leave Mr. Hobbs," he said. "I'm afraid he'll miss me, and I shall miss him. And I shall miss them all."

When Mr. Havisham--who was the family lawyer of the Earl of Dorincourt, and who had been sent by him to bring Lord Fauntleroy to England--came the next day, Cedric heard many things. But, somehow, it did not console him to hear that he was to be a very rich man when he grew up, and that he would have castles here and castles there, and great parks and deep mines and grand estates and tenantry. He was troubled about his friend, Mr. Hobbs, and he went to see him at the store soon after breakfast, in great anxiety of mind.

He found him reading the morning paper, and he approached him with a grave demeanor. He really felt it would be a great shock to Mr. Hobbs

to hear what had befallen him, and on his way to the store he had been thinking how it would be best to break the news.

"Hello!" said Mr. Hobbs. "Mornin'!"

"Good-morning," said Cedric.

He did not climb up on the high stool as usual, but sat down on a cracker-box and clasped his knee, and was so silent for a few moments that Mr. Hobbs finally looked up inquiringly over the top of his newspaper.

"Hello!" he said again.

Cedric gathered all his strength of mind together.

"Mr. Hobbs," he said, "do you remember what we were talking about yesterday morning?"

"Well," replied Mr. Hobbs,--"seems to me it was England."

"Yes," said Cedric; "but just when Mary came for me, you know?"

Mr. Hobbs rubbed the back of his head.

"We WAS mentioning Queen Victoria and the aristocracy."

"Yes," said Cedric, rather hesitatingly, "and--and earls; don't you know?"

"Why, yes," returned Mr. Hobbs; "we DID touch 'em up a little; that's so!"

Cedric flushed up to the curly bang on his forehead. Nothing so embarrassing as this had ever happened to him in his life. He was a little afraid that it might be a trifle embarrassing to Mr. Hobbs, too.

"You said," he proceeded, "that you wouldn't have them sitting 'round on your cracker-barrels."

"So I did!" returned Mr. Hobbs, stoutly. "And I meant it. Let 'em try it--that's all!"

"Mr. Hobbs," said Cedric, "one is sitting on this box now!"

Mr. Hobbs almost jumped out of his chair.

"What!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," Cedric announced, with due modesty; "I am one--or I am going to be. I won't deceive you."

Mr. Hobbs looked agitated. He rose up suddenly and went to look at the thermometer.

"The mercury's got into your head!" he exclaimed, turning back to examine his young friend's countenance. "It IS a hot day! How do you feel? Got any pain? When did you begin to feel that way?"

He put his big hand on the little boy's hair. This was more embarrassing than ever.

"Thank you," said Ceddie; "I'm all right. There is nothing the matter with my head. I'm sorry to say it's true, Mr. Hobbs. That was what Mary came to take me home for. Mr. Havisham was telling my mamma, and he is a lawyer."

Mr. Hobbs sank into his chair and mopped his forehead with his handkerchief.

"ONE of us has got a sunstroke!" he exclaimed.

"No," returned Cedric, "we haven't. We shall have to make the best of it, Mr. Hobbs. Mr. Havisham came all the way from England to tell us about it. My grandpapa sent him."

Mr. Hobbs stared wildly at the innocent, serious little face before him.

"Who is your grandfather?" he asked.

Cedric put his hand in his pocket and carefully drew out a piece of paper, on which something was written in his own round, irregular hand.

"I couldn't easily remember it, so I wrote it down on this," he said. And he read aloud slowly: "'John Arthur Molyneux Errol, Earl of Dorincourt.' That is his name, and he lives in a castle--in two or three castles, I think. And my papa, who died, was his youngest son; and I shouldn't have been a lord or an earl if my papa hadn't died; and my papa wouldn't have been an earl if his two brothers hadn't died. But they all died, and there is no one but me,--no boy,--and so I have to be one; and my grandpapa has sent for me to come to England."

Mr. Hobbs seemed to grow hotter and hotter. He mopped his forehead and his bald spot and breathed hard. He began to see that something very remarkable had happened; but when he looked at the little boy sitting on the cracker-box, with the innocent, anxious expression in his childish eyes, and saw that he was not changed at all, but was simply as he had been the day before, just a handsome, cheerful, brave little fellow in a blue suit and red neck-ribbon, all this information about the nobility bewildered him. He was all the more bewildered because Cedric gave it with such ingenuous simplicity, and plainly without realizing himself how stupendous it was.

"Wha--what did you say your name was?" Mr. Hobbs inquired.

"It's Cedric Errol, Lord Fauntleroy," answered Cedric. "That was what Mr. Havisham called me. He said when I went into the room: 'And so this is little Lord Fauntleroy!'"

"Well," said Mr. Hobbs, "I'll be--jiggered!"

This was an exclamation he always used when he was very much astonished or excited. He could think of nothing else to say just at that puzzling moment.

Cedric felt it to be quite a proper and suitable ejaculation. His respect and affection for Mr. Hobbs were so great that he admired and approved of all his remarks. He had not seen enough of society as yet to make him realize that sometimes Mr. Hobbs was not quite conventional. He knew, of course, that he was different from his mamma, but, then, his mamma was a lady, and he had an idea that ladies were always different from gentlemen.

He looked at Mr. Hobbs wistfully.

"England is a long way off, isn't it?" he asked.

"It's across the Atlantic Ocean," Mr. Hobbs answered.

"That's the worst of it," said Cedric. "Perhaps I shall not see you again for a long time. I don't like to think of that, Mr. Hobbs."

"The best of friends must part," said Mr. Hobbs.

"Well," said Cedric, "we have been friends for a great many years, haven't we?"

"Ever since you was born," Mr. Hobbs answered. "You was about six weeks old when you was first walked out on this street."

"Ah," remarked Cedric, with a sigh, "I never thought I should have to be an earl then!"

"You think," said Mr. Hobbs, "there's no getting out of it?"

"I'm afraid not," answered Cedric. "My mamma says that my papa would wish me to do it. But if I have to be an earl, there's one thing I can do: I can try to be a good one. I'm not going to be a tyrant. And if there is ever to be another war with America, I shall try to stop it."

His conversation with Mr. Hobbs was a long and serious one. Once having got over the first shock, Mr. Hobbs was not so rancorous as might have been expected; he endeavored to resign himself to the situation, and before the interview was at an end he had asked a great many questions. As Cedric could answer but few of them, he endeavored to answer

them himself, and, being fairly launched on the subject of earls and marquises and lordly estates, explained many things in a way which would probably have astonished Mr. Havisham, could that gentleman have heard it.

But then there were many things which astonished Mr. Havisham. He had spent all his life in England, and was not accustomed to American people and American habits. He had been connected professionally with the family of the Earl of Dorincourt for nearly forty years, and he knew all about its grand estates and its great wealth and importance; and, in a cold, business-like way, he felt an interest in this little boy, who, in the future, was to be the master and owner of them all,--the future Earl of Dorincourt. He had known all about the old Earl's disappointment in his elder sons and all about his fierce rage at Captain Cedric's American marriage, and he knew how he still hated the gentle little widow and would not speak of her except with bitter and cruel words. He insisted that she was only a common American girl, who had entrapped his son into marrying her because she knew he was an earl's son. The old lawyer himself had more than half believed this was all true. He had seen a great many selfish, mercenary people in his life, and he had not a good opinion of Americans. When he had been driven into the cheap street, and his coupe had stopped before the cheap, small house, he had felt actually shocked. It seemed really quite dreadful to think that the future owner of Dorincourt Castle and Wyndham Towers and Chorlworth, and all the other stately splendors, should have been born and brought up in

an insignificant house in a street with a sort of green-grocery at the corner. He wondered what kind of a child he would be, and what kind of a mother he had. He rather shrank from seeing them both. He had a sort of pride in the noble family whose legal affairs he had conducted so long, and it would have annoyed him very much to have found himself obliged to manage a woman who would seem to him a vulgar, money-loving person, with

no respect for her dead husband's country and the dignity of his name.

It was a very old name and a very splendid one, and Mr. Havisham had a great respect for it himself, though he was only a cold, keen, business-like old lawyer.

When Mary handed him into the small parlor, he looked around it critically. It was plainly furnished, but it had a home-like look; there were no cheap, common ornaments, and no cheap, gaudy pictures; the few adornments on the walls were in good taste and about the room were many pretty things which a woman's hand might have made.

"Not at all bad so far," he had said to himself; "but perhaps the Captain's taste predominated." But when Mrs. Errol came into the room, he began to think she herself might have had something to do with it. If he had not been quite a self-contained and stiff old gentleman, he would probably have started when he saw her. She looked, in the simple black dress, fitting closely to her slender figure, more like a young girl than the mother of a boy of seven. She had a pretty, sorrowful, young face, and a very tender, innocent look in her large brown eyes,--the

sorrowful look that had never quite left her face since her husband had died. Cedric was used to seeing it there; the only times he had ever seen it fade out had been when he was playing with her or talking to her, and had said some old-fashioned thing, or used some long word he had picked up out of the newspapers or in his conversations with Mr. Hobbs. He was fond of using long words, and he was always pleased when they made her laugh, though he could not understand why they were laughable; they were quite serious matters with him. The lawyer's experience taught him to read people's characters very shrewdly, and as soon as he saw Cedric's mother he knew that the old Earl had made a great mistake in thinking her a vulgar, mercenary woman. Mr. Havisham had never been married, he had never even been in love, but he divined that this pretty young creature with the sweet voice and sad eyes had married Captain Errol only because she loved him with all her affectionate heart, and that she had never once thought it an advantage that he was an earl's son. And he saw he should have no trouble with her, and he began to feel that perhaps little Lord Fauntleroy might not be such a trial to his noble family, after all. The Captain had been a handsome fellow, and the young mother was very pretty, and perhaps the boy might be well enough to look at.

When he first told Mrs. Errol what he had come for, she turned very pale.

"Oh!" she said; "will he have to be taken away from me? We love each other so much! He is such a happiness to me! He is all I have. I have

tried to be a good mother to him." And her sweet young voice trembled, and the tears rushed into her eyes. "You do not know what he has been to me!" she said.

The lawyer cleared his throat.

"I am obliged to tell you," he said, "that the Earl of Dorincourt is not--is not very friendly toward you. He is an old man, and his prejudices are very strong. He has always especially disliked America and Americans, and was very much enraged by his son's marriage. I am sorry to be the bearer of so unpleasant a communication, but he is very fixed in his determination not to see you. His plan is that Lord Fauntleroy shall be educated under his own supervision; that he shall live with him. The Earl is attached to Dorincourt Castle, and spends a great deal of time there. He is a victim to inflammatory gout, and is not fond of London. Lord Fauntleroy will, therefore, be likely to live chiefly at Dorincourt. The Earl offers you as a home Court Lodge, which is situated pleasantly, and is not very far from the castle. He also offers you a suitable income. Lord Fauntleroy will be permitted to visit you; the only stipulation is, that you shall not visit him or enter the park gates. You see you will not be really separated from your son, and I assure you, madam, the terms are not so harsh as--as they might have been. The advantage of such surroundings and education as Lord Fauntleroy will have, I am sure you must see, will be very great."

He felt a little uneasy lest she should begin to cry or make a scene,

as he knew some women would have done. It embarrassed and annoyed him to see women cry.

But she did not. She went to the window and stood with her face turned away for a few moments, and he saw she was trying to steady herself.

"Captain Errol was very fond of Dorincourt," she said at last. "He loved England, and everything English. It was always a grief to him that he was parted from his home. He was proud of his home, and of his name. He would wish--I know he would wish that his son should know the beautiful old places, and be brought up in such a way as would be suitable to his future position."

Then she came back to the table and stood looking up at Mr. Havisham very gently.

"My husband would wish it," she said. "It will be best for my little boy. I know--I am sure the Earl would not be so unkind as to try to teach him not to love me; and I know--even if he tried--that my little boy is too much like his father to be harmed. He has a warm, faithful nature, and a true heart. He would love me even if he did not see me; and so long as we may see each other, I ought not to suffer very much."

"She thinks very little of herself," the lawyer thought. "She does not make any terms for herself."

"Madam," he said aloud, "I respect your consideration for your son. He will thank you for it when he is a man. I assure you Lord Fauntleroy will be most carefully guarded, and every effort will be used to insure his happiness. The Earl of Dorincourt will be as anxious for his comfort and well-being as you yourself could be."

"I hope," said the tender little mother, in a rather broken voice, "that his grandfather will love Ceddie. The little boy has a very affectionate nature; and he has always been loved."

Mr. Havisham cleared his throat again. He could not quite imagine the gouty, fiery-tempered old Earl loving any one very much; but he knew it would be to his interest to be kind, in his irritable way, to the child who was to be his heir. He knew, too, that if Ceddie were at all a credit to his name, his grandfather would be proud of him.

"Lord Fauntleroy will be comfortable, I am sure," he replied. "It was with a view to his happiness that the Earl desired that you should be near enough to him to see him frequently."

He did not think it would be discreet to repeat the exact words the Earl had used, which were in fact neither polite nor amiable.

Mr. Havisham preferred to express his noble patron's offer in smoother and more courteous language.

He had another slight shock when Mrs. Errol asked Mary to find her little boy and bring him to her, and Mary told her where he was.

"Sure I'll foind him aisy enough, ma'am," she said; "for it's wid Mr. Hobbs he is this minnit, settin' on his high shtool by the counther an' talkin' pollytics, most loikely, or enj'yin' hisself among the soap an' candles an' pertaties, as sinsible an' shwate as ye plase."

"Mr. Hobbs has known him all his life," Mrs. Errol said to the lawyer. "He is very kind to Ceddie, and there is a great friendship between them."

Remembering the glimpse he had caught of the store as he passed it, and having a recollection of the barrels of potatoes and apples and the various odds and ends, Mr. Havisham felt his doubts arise again. In England, gentlemen's sons did not make friends of grocerymen, and it seemed to him a rather singular proceeding. It would be very awkward if the child had bad manners and a disposition to like low company. One of the bitterest humiliations of the old Earl's life had been that his two elder sons had been fond of low company. Could it be, he thought, that this boy shared their bad qualities instead of his father's good qualities?

He was thinking uneasily about this as he talked to Mrs. Errol until the child came into the room. When the door opened, he actually hesitated

a moment before looking at Cedric. It would, perhaps, have seemed very queer to a great many people who knew him, if they could have known the curious sensations that passed through Mr. Havisham when he looked down at the boy, who ran into his mother's arms. He experienced a revulsion of feeling which was quite exciting. He recognized in an instant that here was one of the finest and handsomest little fellows he had ever seen.

His beauty was something unusual. He had a strong, lithe, graceful little body and a manly little face; he held his childish head up, and carried himself with a brave air; he was so like his father that it was really startling; he had his father's golden hair and his mother's brown eyes, but there was nothing sorrowful or timid in them. They were innocently fearless eyes; he looked as if he had never feared or doubted anything in his life.

"He is the best-bred-looking and handsomest little fellow I ever saw," was what Mr. Havisham thought. What he said aloud was simply, "And so this is little Lord Fauntleroy."

And, after this, the more he saw of little Lord Fauntleroy, the more of a surprise he found him. He knew very little about children, though he had seen plenty of them in England--fine, handsome, rosy girls and boys, who were strictly taken care of by their tutors and governesses, and who were sometimes shy, and sometimes a trifle boisterous, but never very interesting to a ceremonious, rigid old lawyer. Perhaps his personal

interest in little Lord Fauntleroy's fortunes made him notice Ceddie more than he had noticed other children; but, however that was, he certainly found himself noticing him a great deal.

Cedric did not know he was being observed, and he only behaved himself in his ordinary manner. He shook hands with Mr. Havisham in his friendly way when they were introduced to each other, and he answered all his questions with the unhesitating readiness with which he answered Mr. Hobbs. He was neither shy nor bold, and when Mr. Havisham was talking to his mother, the lawyer noticed that he listened to the conversation with as much interest as if he had been quite grown up.

"He seems to be a very mature little fellow," Mr. Havisham said to the mother.

"I think he is, in some things," she answered. "He has always been very quick to learn, and he has lived a great deal with grownup people. He has a funny little habit of using long words and expressions he has read in books, or has heard others use, but he is very fond of childish play. I think he is rather clever, but he is a very boyish little boy, sometimes."

The next time Mr. Havisham met him, he saw that this last was quite true. As his coupe turned the corner, he caught sight of a group of small boys, who were evidently much excited. Two of them were about to run a race, and one of them was his young lordship, and he was shouting

and making as much noise as the noisiest of his companions. He stood side by side with another boy, one little red leg advanced a step.

"One, to make ready!" yelled the starter. "Two, to be steady. Three--and away!"

Mr. Havisham found himself leaning out of the window of his coupe with a curious feeling of interest. He really never remembered having seen anything quite like the way in which his lordship's lordly little red legs flew up behind his knickerbockers and tore over the ground as he shot out in the race at the signal word. He shut his small hands and set his face against the wind; his bright hair streamed out behind.

"Hooray, Ced Errol!" all the boys shouted, dancing and shrieking with excitement. "Hooray, Billy Williams! Hooray, Ceddie! Hooray, Billy! Hooray! 'Ray! 'Ray!"

"I really believe he is going to win," said Mr. Havisham. The way in which the red legs flew and flashed up and down, the shrieks of the boys, the wild efforts of Billy Williams, whose brown legs were not to be despised, as they followed closely in the rear of the red legs, made him feel some excitement. "I really--I really can't help hoping he will win!" he said, with an apologetic sort of cough. At that moment, the wildest yell of all went up from the dancing, hopping boys. With one last frantic leap the future Earl of Dorincourt had reached the lamp-post at the end of the block and touched it, just two seconds

before Billy Williams flung himself at it, panting.

"Three cheers for Ceddie Errol!" yelled the little boys. "Hooray for Ceddie Errol!"

Mr. Havisham drew his head in at the window of his coupe and leaned back with a dry smile.

"Bravo, Lord Fauntleroy!" he said.

As his carriage stopped before the door of Mrs. Errol's house, the victor and the vanquished were coming toward it, attended by the clamoring crew. Cedric walked by Billy Williams and was speaking to him. His elated little face was very red, his curls clung to his hot, moist forehead, his hands were in his pockets.

"You see," he was saying, evidently with the intention of making defeat easy for his unsuccessful rival, "I guess I won because my legs are a little longer than yours. I guess that was it. You see, I'm three days older than you, and that gives me a 'vantage. I'm three days older."

And this view of the case seemed to cheer Billy Williams so much that he began to smile on the world again, and felt able to swagger a little, almost as if he had won the race instead of losing it. Somehow, Ceddie Errol had a way of making people feel comfortable. Even in the first flush of his triumphs, he remembered that the person who was beaten

might not feel so gay as he did, and might like to think that he MIGHT have been the winner under different circumstances.

That morning Mr. Havisham had quite a long conversation with the winner of the race--a conversation which made him smile his dry smile, and rub his chin with his bony hand several times.

Mrs. Errol had been called out of the parlor, and the lawyer and Cedric were left together. At first Mr. Havisham wondered what he should say to his small companion. He had an idea that perhaps it would be best to say several things which might prepare Cedric for meeting his grandfather, and, perhaps, for the great change that was to come to him. He could see that Cedric had not the least idea of the sort of thing he was to see when he reached England, or of the sort of home that waited for him there. He did not even know yet that his mother was not to live in the same house with him. They had thought it best to let him get over the first shock before telling him.

Mr. Havisham sat in an arm-chair on one side of the open window; on the other side was another still larger chair, and Cedric sat in that and looked at Mr. Havisham. He sat well back in the depths of his big seat, his curly head against the cushioned back, his legs crossed, and his hands thrust deep into his pockets, in a quite Mr. Hobbs-like way. He had been watching Mr. Havisham very steadily when his mamma had been in the room, and after she was gone he still looked at him in respectful

thoughtfulness. There was a short silence after Mrs. Errol went out, and Cedric seemed to be studying Mr. Havisham, and Mr. Havisham was certainly studying Cedric. He could not make up his mind as to what an elderly gentleman should say to a little boy who won races, and wore short knickerbockers and red stockings on legs which were not long enough to hang over a big chair when he sat well back in it.

But Cedric relieved him by suddenly beginning the conversation himself.

"Do you know," he said, "I don't know what an earl is?"

"Don't you?" said Mr. Havisham.

"No," replied Ceddie. "And I think when a boy is going to be one, he ought to know. Don't you?"

"Well--yes," answered Mr. Havisham.

"Would you mind," said Ceddie respectfully--"would you mind 'splaining it to me?" (Sometimes when he used his long words he did not pronounce them quite correctly.) "What made him an earl?"

"A king or queen, in the first place," said Mr. Havisham. "Generally, he is made an earl because he has done some service to his sovereign, or some great deed."

"Oh!" said Cedric; "that's like the President."

"Is it?" said Mr. Havisham. "Is that why your presidents are elected?"

"Yes," answered Ceddie cheerfully. "When a man is very good and knows a great deal, he is elected president. They have torch-light processions and bands, and everybody makes speeches. I used to think I might perhaps be a president, but I never thought of being an earl. I didn't know about earls," he said, rather hastily, lest Mr. Havisham might feel it impolite in him not to have wished to be one,--"if I'd known about them, I dare say I should have thought I should like to be one."

"It is rather different from being a president," said Mr. Havisham.

"Is it?" asked Cedric. "How? Are there no torch-light processions?"

Mr. Havisham crossed his own legs and put the tips of his fingers carefully together. He thought perhaps the time had come to explain matters rather more clearly.

"An earl is--is a very important person," he began.

"So is a president!" put in Ceddie. "The torch-light processions are five miles long, and they shoot up rockets, and the band plays! Mr. Hobbs took me to see them."

"An earl," Mr. Havisham went on, feeling rather uncertain of his ground, "is frequently of very ancient lineage----"

"What's that?" asked Ceddie.

"Of very old family--extremely old."

"Ah!" said Cedric, thrusting his hands deeper into his pockets. "I suppose that is the way with the apple-woman near the park. I dare say she is of ancient lin-lenage. She is so old it would surprise you how she can stand up. She's a hundred, I should think, and yet she is out there when it rains, even. I'm sorry for her, and so are the other boys. Billy Williams once had nearly a dollar, and I asked him to buy five cents' worth of apples from her every day until he had spent it all. That made twenty days, and he grew tired of apples after a week; but then--it was quite fortunate--a gentleman gave me fifty cents and I bought apples from her instead. You feel sorry for any one that's so poor and has such ancient lin-lenage. She says hers has gone into her bones and the rain makes it worse."

Mr. Havisham felt rather at a loss as he looked at his companion's innocent, serious little face.

"I am afraid you did not quite understand me," he explained. "When I said 'ancient lineage' I did not mean old age; I meant that the name of such a family has been known in the world a long time; perhaps for

hundreds of years persons bearing that name have been known and spoken of in the history of their country."

"Like George Washington," said Ceddie. "I've heard of him ever since I was born, and he was known about, long before that. Mr. Hobbs says he will never be forgotten. That's because of the Declaration of Independence, you know, and the Fourth of July. You see, he was a very brave man."

"The first Earl of Dorincourt," said Mr. Havisham solemnly, "was created an earl four hundred years ago."

"Well, well!" said Ceddie. "That was a long time ago! Did you tell Dearest that? It would int'rust her very much. We'll tell her when she comes in. She always likes to hear cur'us things. What else does an earl do besides being created?"

"A great many of them have helped to govern England. Some of them have been brave men and have fought in great battles in the old days."

"I should like to do that myself," said Cedric. "My papa was a soldier, and he was a very brave man--as brave as George Washington. Perhaps that was because he would have been an earl if he hadn't died. I am glad earls are brave. That's a great 'vantage--to be a brave man. Once I used to be rather afraid of things--in the dark, you know; but when I thought about the soldiers in the Revolution and George Washington--it cured

me."

"There is another advantage in being an earl, sometimes," said Mr. Havisham slowly, and he fixed his shrewd eyes on the little boy with a rather curious expression. "Some earls have a great deal of money."

He was curious because he wondered if his young friend knew what the power of money was.

"That's a good thing to have," said Ceddie innocently. "I wish I had a great deal of money."

"Do you?" said Mr. Havisham. "And why?"

"Well," explained Cedric, "there are so many things a person can do with money. You see, there's the apple-woman. If I were very rich I should buy her a little tent to put her stall in, and a little stove, and then I should give her a dollar every morning it rained, so that she could afford to stay at home. And then--oh! I'd give her a shawl. And, you see, her bones wouldn't feel so badly. Her bones are not like our bones; they hurt her when she moves. It's very painful when your bones hurt you. If I were rich enough to do all those things for her, I guess her bones would be all right."

"Ahem!" said Mr. Havisham. "And what else would you do if you were rich?"

"Oh! I'd do a great many things. Of course I should buy Dearest all sorts of beautiful things, needle-books and fans and gold thimbles and rings, and an encyclopedia, and a carriage, so that she needn't have to wait for the street-cars. If she liked pink silk dresses, I should buy her some, but she likes black best. But I'd, take her to the big stores, and tell her to look 'round and choose for herself. And then Dick----"

"Who is Dick?" asked Mr. Havisham.

"Dick is a boot-black," said his young; lordship, quite warming up in his interest in plans so exciting. "He is one of the nicest boot-blacks you ever knew. He stands at the corner of a street down-town. I've known him for years. Once when I was very little, I was walking out with Dearest, and she bought me a beautiful ball that bounced, and I was carrying it and it bounced into the middle of the street where the carriages and horses were, and I was so disappointed, I began to cry--I was very little. I had kilts on. And Dick was blacking a man's shoes, and he said 'Hello!' and he ran in between the horses and caught the ball for me and wiped it off with his coat and gave it to me and said, 'It's all right, young un.' So Dearest admired him very much, and so did I, and ever since then, when we go down-town, we talk to him. He says 'Hello!' and I say 'Hello!' and then we talk a little, and he tells me how trade is. It's been bad lately."

"And what would you like to do for him?" inquired the lawyer, rubbing

his chin and smiling a queer smile.

"Well," said Lord Fauntleroy, settling himself in his chair with a business air, "I'd buy Jake out."

"And who is Jake?" Mr. Havisham asked.

"He's Dick's partner, and he is the worst partner a fellow could have! Dick says so. He isn't a credit to the business, and he isn't square. He cheats, and that makes Dick mad. It would make you mad, you know, if you were blacking boots as hard as you could, and being square all the time, and your partner wasn't square at all. People like Dick, but they don't like Jake, and so sometimes they don't come twice. So if I were rich, I'd buy Jake out and get Dick a 'boss' sign--he says a 'boss' sign goes a long way; and I'd get him some new clothes and new brushes, and start him out fair. He says all he wants is to start out fair."

There could have been nothing more confiding and innocent than the way in which his small lordship told his little story, quoting his friend Dick's bits of slang in the most candid good faith. He seemed to feel not a shade of a doubt that his elderly companion would be just as interested as he was himself. And in truth Mr. Havisham was beginning to be greatly interested; but perhaps not quite so much in Dick and the apple-woman as in this kind little lordling, whose curly head was so busy, under its yellow thatch, with good-natured plans for his friends, and who seemed somehow to have forgotten himself altogether.

"Is there anything----" he began. "What would you get for yourself, if you were rich?"

"Lots of things!" answered Lord Fauntleroy briskly; "but first I'd give Mary some money for Bridget--that's her sister, with twelve children, and a husband out of work. She comes here and cries, and Dearest gives her things in a basket, and then she cries again, and says: 'Blessin's be on yez, for a beautiful lady.' And I think Mr. Hobbs would like a gold watch and chain to remember me by, and a meerschaum pipe. And then I'd like to get up a company."

"A company!" exclaimed Mr. Havisham.

"Like a Republican rally," explained Cedric, becoming quite excited.

"I'd have torches and uniforms and things for all the boys and myself, too. And we'd march, you know, and drill. That's what I should like for myself, if I were rich."

The door opened and Mrs. Errol came in.

"I am sorry to have been obliged to leave you so long," she said to Mr. Havisham; "but a poor woman, who is in great trouble, came to see me."

"This young gentleman," said Mr. Havisham, "has been telling me about

some of his friends, and what he would do for them if he were rich."

"Bridget is one of his friends," said Mrs. Errol; "and it is Bridget to whom I have been talking in the kitchen. She is in great trouble now because her husband has rheumatic fever."

Cedric slipped down out of his big chair.

"I think I'll go and see her," he said, "and ask her how he is. He's a nice man when he is well. I'm obliged to him because he once made me a sword out of wood. He's a very talented man."

He ran out of the room, and Mr. Havisham rose from his chair. He seemed to have something in his mind which he wished to speak of.

He hesitated a moment, and then said, looking down at Mrs. Errol:

"Before I left Dorincourt Castle, I had an interview with the Earl, in which he gave me some instructions. He is desirous that his grandson should look forward with some pleasure to his future life in England, and also to his acquaintance with himself. He said that I must let his lordship know that the change in his life would bring him money and the pleasures children enjoy; if he expressed any wishes, I was to gratify them, and to tell him that his grand-father had given him what he wished. I am aware that the Earl did not expect anything quite like this; but if it would give Lord Fauntleroy pleasure to assist this poor

woman, I should feel that the Earl would be displeased if he were not gratified."

For the second time, he did not repeat the Earl's exact words. His lordship had, indeed, said:

"Make the lad understand that I can give him anything he wants. Let him know what it is to be the grandson of the Earl of Dorincourt. Buy him everything he takes a fancy to; let him have money in his pockets, and tell him his grandfather put it there."

His motives were far from being good, and if he had been dealing with a nature less affectionate and warm-hearted than little Lord Fauntleroy's, great harm might have been done. And Cedric's mother was too gentle to suspect any harm. She thought that perhaps this meant that a lonely, unhappy old man, whose children were dead, wished to be kind to her little boy, and win his love and confidence. And it pleased her very much to think that Ceddie would be able to help Bridget. It made her happier to know that the very first result of the strange fortune which had befallen her little boy was that he could do kind things for those who needed kindness. Quite a warm color bloomed on her pretty young face.

"Oh!" she said, "that was very kind of the Earl; Cedric will be so glad! He has always been fond of Bridget and Michael. They are quite deserving. I have often wished I had been able to help them more.

Michael is a hard-working man when he is well, but he has been ill a long time and needs expensive medicines and warm clothing and nourishing food. He and Bridget will not be wasteful of what is given them."

Mr. Havisham put his thin hand in his breast pocket and drew forth a large pocket-book. There was a queer look in his keen face. The truth was, he was wondering what the Earl of Dorincourt would say when he was told what was the first wish of his grandson that had been granted. He wondered what the cross, worldly, selfish old nobleman would think of it.

"I do not know that you have realized," he said, "that the Earl of Dorincourt is an exceedingly rich man. He can afford to gratify any caprice. I think it would please him to know that Lord Fauntleroy had been indulged in any fancy. If you will call him back and allow me, I shall give him five pounds for these people."

"That would be twenty-five dollars!" exclaimed Mrs. Errol. "It will seem like wealth to them. I can scarcely believe that it is true."

"It is quite true," said Mr. Havisham, with his dry smile. "A great change has taken place in your son's life, a great deal of power will lie in his hands."

"Oh!" cried his mother. "And he is such a little boy--a very little boy. How can I teach him to use it well? It makes me half afraid. My pretty

little Ceddie!"

The lawyer slightly cleared his throat. It touched his worldly, hard old heart to see the tender, timid look in her brown eyes.

"I think, madam," he said, "that if I may judge from my interview with Lord Fauntleroy this morning, the next Earl of Dorincourt will think for others as well as for his noble self. He is only a child yet, but I think he may be trusted."

Then his mother went for Cedric and brought him back into the parlor. Mr. Havisham heard him talking before he entered the room.

"It's infam-natory rheumatism," he was saying, "and that's a kind of rheumatism that's dreadful. And he thinks about the rent not being paid, and Bridget says that makes the inf'ammation worse. And Pat could get a place in a store if he had some clothes."

His little face looked quite anxious when he came in. He was very sorry for Bridget.

"Dearest said you wanted me," he said to Mr. Havisham. "I've been talking to Bridget."

Mr. Havisham looked down at him a moment. He felt a little awkward and undecided. As Cedric's mother had said, he was a very little boy.

"The Earl of Dorincourt----" he began, and then he glanced involuntarily at Mrs. Errol.

Little Lord Fauntleroy's mother suddenly kneeled down by him and put both her tender arms around his childish body.

"Ceddie," she said, "the Earl is your grandpapa, your own papa's father. He is very, very kind, and he loves you and wishes you to love him, because the sons who were his little boys are dead. He wishes you to be happy and to make other people happy. He is very rich, and he wishes you to have everything you would like to have. He told Mr. Havisham so, and gave him a great deal of money for you. You can give some to Bridget now; enough to pay her rent and buy Michael everything. Isn't that fine, Ceddie? Isn't he good?" And she kissed the child on his round cheek, where the bright color suddenly flashed up in his excited amazement.

He looked from his mother to Mr. Havisham.

"Can I have it now?" he cried. "Can I give it to her this minute? She's just going."

Mr. Havisham handed him the money. It was in fresh, clean greenbacks and made a neat roll.

Ceddie flew out of the room with it.

"Bridget!" they heard him shout, as he tore into the kitchen. "Bridget, wait a minute! Here's some money. It's for you, and you can pay the rent. My grandpapa gave it to me. It's for you and Michael!"

"Oh, Master Ceddie!" cried Bridget, in an awe-stricken voice. "It's twinty-foive dollars is here. Where be's the misthress?"

"I think I shall have to go and explain it to her," Mrs. Errol said.

So she, too, went out of the room and Mr. Havisham was left alone for a while. He went to the window and stood looking out into the street reflectively. He was thinking of the old Earl of Dorincourt, sitting in his great, splendid, gloomy library at the castle, gouty and lonely, surrounded by grandeur and luxury, but not really loved by any one, because in all his long life he had never really loved any one but himself; he had been selfish and self-indulgent and arrogant and passionate; he had cared so much for the Earl of Dorincourt and his pleasures that there had been no time for him to think of other people; all his wealth and power, all the benefits from his noble name and high rank, had seemed to him to be things only to be used to amuse and give pleasure to the Earl of Dorincourt; and now that he was an old man, all this excitement and self-indulgence had only brought him ill health and irritability and a dislike of the world, which certainly disliked him. In spite of all his splendor, there was never a more unpopular old nobleman than the Earl of Dorincourt, and there could scarcely have been

a more lonely one. He could fill his castle with guests if he chose. He could give great dinners and splendid hunting parties; but he knew that in secret the people who would accept his invitations were afraid of his frowning old face and sarcastic, biting speeches. He had a cruel tongue and a bitter nature, and he took pleasure in sneering at people and making them feel uncomfortable, when he had the power to do so, because they were sensitive or proud or timid.

Mr. Havisham knew his hard, fierce ways by heart, and he was thinking of him as he looked out of the window into the narrow, quiet street. And there rose in his mind, in sharp contrast, the picture of the cheery, handsome little fellow sitting in the big chair and telling his story of his friends, Dick and the apple-woman, in his generous, innocent, honest way. And he thought of the immense income, the beautiful, majestic estates, the wealth, and power for good or evil, which in the course of time would lie in the small, chubby hands little Lord Fauntleroy thrust so deep into his pockets.

"It will make a great difference," he said to himself. "It will make a great difference."

Cedric and his mother came back soon after. Cedric was in high spirits. He sat down in his own chair, between his mother and the lawyer, and fell into one of his quaint attitudes, with his hands on his knees. He was glowing with enjoyment of Bridget's relief and rapture.

"She cried!" he said. "She said she was crying for joy! I never saw any one cry for joy before. My grandpapa must be a very good man. I didn't know he was so good a man. It's more--more agreeabler to be an earl than I thought it was. I'm almost glad--I'm almost QUITE glad I'm going to be one."