

CHAPTER III.

IN the west end of the city, near the public park, stood a very handsome residence, the towers of which rose above the adjacent trees. Its beautiful grounds and shrubberies were the admiration of the neighborhood. Its extensive lawns descended in terraces from the front of the mansion, and were laid out with the perfection of the gardener's art. There were lovely flower-beds, and in the centre of the principal lawn an ornamental fountain continually sent forth its sparkling waters.

This was the Vaughn residence. Its owner's wife had died soon after the birth of his only child, who did not feel the loss of a mother's love and care till the years of childhood had passed. As an only child she had at first led a rather solitary life, and though her school days, at the most expensive and select ladies' school in the country, had opened to her fresh interests, she often wished, as she passed from childhood to womanhood, that she could feel a mother's arms around her.

As is the case with many men of vast wealth, it was not easy to tell how Mr. Vaughn had made