

LITTLE HEARTS

CHAPTER I

HOW MR. SAMPSON WROTE HIS PHILOSOPHY

IN a certain well-known year after the saving of the world, there was a young man, of a fair face, newly fled to France ; and there was a young man, of a fair fame, made Treasurer of Ireland and Paymaster of His Majesty's Forces. There was yet a third young man, not conspicuously fair of face and unknown to any fame, fair or otherwise, who thought very little about the other two. And that was Michael Sampson.

Mr. Sampson sat writing at his open window, and the subject ready to his hand was Poverty, daughter of Wisdom and Wayfarer with Saints. "Many have chosen Death," wrote Mr. Sampson, "thinking to find therein cessation of their Pains at the Least, and at the Most, the Crown of their Desires. But only the few have chosen Poverty, shielded her as a Child, worshipped her as a Bride, and in Loneliness clung to her as to a faithful Wife. The last is the greatest Test. For the Child may be shielded for a