

and effect. He supplemented his gift of cash with prudent overnight and affectionate regard. Now and then—at rare intervals—he went to London to vote or speak on some great measure in the Lords. Only the great measures drew him from north to south, from the strong air to the weak—Bills for the arming of the nation, Bills for the feeding of the hungry children, Bills for the improvement of the common lot,—the real work of Parliament. On such occasions, he delivered carefully prepared speeches; but the preparation was very different from Irene's excited promptings. These orations were based on a winter's quiet thought, and he always secured attentive listeners. When he said "If I weary you, my lords," the courteous "No, No" sounded in front of him and behind him, from both sides, and had an unmistakably hearty ring. Both sides liked him and respected him, and with their jolly salves of No, No, they seemed to be saying: "You never weary us. You don't come here often enough. Go on—now you *are* up from the country. We'll make a night of it with you, if you want a parliamentary lark."

Twice at least in the year, Lady Emily paid a visit to the Castle. Spring and autumn were her favourite seasons for the trip, but the date was sometimes altered to meet the convenience of the Castle lady. Aunt Emily by postponement might combine a ceremonious duty with mere family pleasure—or would she come three times this year instead of twice? Lady Emily said she would postpone this particular autumn visit until dear Gladys was ready for her by the Norman font. She was wanted at the font again, and again, and yet once again. She used to write to Dearest Seymour with gratified facetiousness, faulty grammar, and deficient punctuation. "You asking me to be godmother again to this second one makes me think you have mercenary expectations and it is not me you want for your young people but some of my money when I am gone." The kind soul thought this to be a mildly brilliant jest, because she held that Seymour had irrefutably proved himself devoid of the money-grubber's instinct. He did not care for money—there lay the goodness of her joke. She wrote to Dearest Gladys in another vein. "If this one is a boy I shall make him my heir. And then if there is another boy I shall divide it between the two and so on. I should be afraid to tell Seymour this for fear of him forbidding me to be godmamma again. But I tell you because