

CHAPTER III

CHRIS SEES HALLONQUIST HALL

IT was a bright Sabbath morning in May, and Chris Laird had made his escape after breakfast, to avoid the unbearable union of Ossie and two hours at church. On strong legs that for years had been trained to bear him up high craggy slopes, he now set out to cover the long tepid stretches of Dunrobin's turnpikes. Within the town limits, on a wide tree-shaded road, stood Hallonquist Hall, the impressive "fo' de war" show-place of Dunrobin.

There were four great white oaks at the corners, like four poles set about a new hayrick, when the saplings insist upon growing. Later on, Chris was told that the wife of the original Hallonquist, the daughter of an English divine, had at the time of their planting named the oaks from the four apostles, St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John.

From the gate a broad pebbled driveway lay flat between hedges of lilacs, until, having reached the first terrace, it divided in twain, and running out to the right and the left was lost in a tangle of shrubbery.