

child, who had to maintain a constant war with the household, to keep his own place among them. This unnatural state of things ended in a total alienation, and the boys regarded each other in the light of enemies.

"The only time when poor Armyn enjoyed any peace, was during the holidays, which he invariably spent with me. I loved the boy, for the likeness he bore to my dear brother; and he loved me, because, as he very truly said, 'I was the only friend he had in the world.' Many taunts I bore in silence, from Mrs. Sternfield, on his account, who wilfully magnified the bad qualities, and ill temper of my stubborn favorite, who she predicted, would turn out a disgrace to the family. Alas! poor woman—her prediction was only too fatally realized.

"The sorrows of Armyn Sternfield's childhood and youth, at length had an end. At eighteen he was sent to college, and became his own master, as my offer of paying the expense of this part of his education had been accepted by the mother, and with unaffected gratitude by the son. He spent three years at Oxford, with great credit to himself, and carried off the head prizes, to my infinite delight, and to the great mortification of his mother and brother. A few months after this event, he returned to spend a short time with his friends in the country, preparatory to entering the army, which, much against my inclination, he was resolved upon doing.

"He had grown into a very fine young man, and his mother, who was a little annoyed at the undutiful conduct of her favorite, who treated her with the disrespect which spoilt children often shew to those from whom they have received the greatest indulgence, welcomed him with more kindness than she had ever done before. This awakened the jealousy of Edward, and for several days they never met without quarrelling; until, tired of these unprofitable hostilities, and willing to conciliate his brother, if possible, Armyn proposed that they should take their guns and spend the morning shooting. His proposal was accepted; and the brothers went out together, but together they never returned.

"Edward, the elder, was found dead in the park, a quantity of small shot having passed through his heart; and Armyn fled, as I afterwards learned, to Ireland. Every search was made for him, but he contrived to elude the vigilance of the law. The disturbed state of that country, for it was during the rebellion, in all probability helped to further his concealment.

"It was from Dublin that I first heard from him. He assured me that the death of his brother was purely accidental, and that he blamed

himself for having left the country as he did; but knowing his mother's love for her eldest son, he felt certain that she would believe that he had murdered him, and he could not remain to witness her distraction. He requested me to state all the circumstances of his brother's death, and to make his peace, if possible, with his mother.

"These circumstances were given with a minuteness which had all the appearance of truth; and I, for one, believed the statements that he made; but his mother's heart was steeled against him, and she determined that the law should take its course; had he boldly given himself up to justice, the want of evidence against him would have cleared him of the alleged crime, while his flight condemned him in the eyes of his best friends. Months passed away, when an undated letter from France informed me of his marriage with Miss Doyle, and he requested me to forward to an anonymous address, a certain sum of money for his present support. I immediately complied with his demand, and enclosed a draft upon a banker in Paris for five hundred pounds. I heard no more of my unfortunate nephew until after his return to England; he then wrote to me again, telling me that he was residing with a farmer at —, and had changed his name to Redgrave. I was dangerously ill when I received this last letter, which indeed was the last he ever wrote to me; and he must have been dead some weeks before I was able to attend to my affairs. I wrote immediately to the farm-house from whence he had last directed his letter, but receiving no answer, I concluded that he had again quitted England.

"The following summer I took a journey into Devonshire, and saw the farmer, and learned from him what you have already told me, that his wife and child had left his house during the winter and gone in search of him, and he could give me no further account of either.

"The children of my brother in India, lately put in their claims to the estate; and information respecting the lost Armyn and his child, was advertised for in every paper. But nothing could be elicited; still I felt certain that the child of my nephew must exist somewhere, and as my brother Henry's eldest son, Dunstanville Sternfield, was still under age, and the property in trust for him, I determined to make every search for the lost heir. A mere accident the other day put me on the right track. My old house-keeper, Mrs. Derby —."

"Mrs. Derby!" exclaimed Jane. "Mrs. Derby! my kind nurse, is she living still?"

"Yes! and looks as young as ever."

"You then are the pretty Jenny Woodley,