

TWO LITTLE :: PARISIANS ::

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST MEETING

SHE was present. For several days I had felt her near me. Invisible and kind, she was hovering above ; she touched me gently, and enveloped me. As a matter of fact, I knew she was sure to come. Every year, early or late, she comes, but I know not how. She always takes you by surprise, and is so powerful, in spite of her gentle air, that she overwhelms you. People do all they can to think of other things—there are strikes ; there are revolutions ; there are armies on the march, and ironclads stirring. You try to think that these are the things that matter, but you cannot. You feel through and through that these things are only fiction. The truth, the only truth you