

HANNAH:

A Novel.

By MRS. CRAIK, (MISS MULOCK), Author of "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

"None ever feared that the truth should be heard,
But those whom the truth was indite."—BURNS.

CHAPTER I.

"A STRANGE, sad kind of letter," said Miss Thelluson to herself, as she refolded and replaced it in its envelope: she had a habit of always putting things back into their right places. "I suppose I ought to answer it at once. And yet——"

She stopped; leant her elbow on the table, her head upon her hand, and pressed down her eyelids. They were wet eyelids—though she was not exactly weeping—and tired eyes; for it was late at night, and she had had a hard day's work, of teaching first, and private study, in order to teach, afterwards; since, not being a brilliantly clever woman, it cost her some pains to keep up to the level of accomplishments required of a first-class governess in a "high" family.

"High" though it was, an earl's indeed—and though the little Ladies Mary, Georgiana, and Blanche, now safely asleep in their beds, were good, pleasant children, and very fond of their governess—still, as she sat in that homely-furnished, dimly-lighted sitting-room, Hannah Thelluson looked a lonely kind of woman; not one of those likely to make many friends, or keep up a large correspondence. This letter, which seemed to affect her a good deal, was the only one which she had received for days past, and the servants had forgotten to bring it up until they brought her supper: it did not matter, being only for the governess. Miss Thelluson was scarcely sorry: it was best read when she was alone. For it was from her brother-in-law, the husband of her lately-dead sister.

"Poor Rosa!" she sighed, as her eyes fell on the big, upright, rather peculiar handwriting which she had scarcely seen since the time when she used to bring in Rosa's daily love-letters—"and poor Mr. Rivers, too!"

She had never learned to call him anything but Mr. Rivers; for the marriage, which had all come about when Rosa was on a visit, had been a sudden, frantic love-match, between a rich young man and a lovely penniless girl; and during their brief bright