

momentary glance of her pale, sweet face, looking more delicate than ever, in its heavy mourning. She recognised him, and bent forward with a sad, half-smile, for a parting salutation. Little as he had seen of her, Alan felt a pang strike through him, at the thought that she was really gone, and Carrington, for a time, seemed to him strangely blank and lonely.

It was a good while after that before he saw any of the family. On New Year's Day, having returned from a short Christmas visit to Mapleford, he went, with Philip Dunbar, to leave a card; but, to their surprise, they found that the ladies were "receiving." Mrs. George Arnold thought they had "moped long enough"—she found it "*so* dull being shut up there, in the country"—and she had persuaded George, and George had persuaded good-natured Renée, that it would be no mark of disrespect to Mr. Arnold's memory to see their friends quietly on New Year's Day, especially as it would be *so* inhospitable to allow them to come so far without seeing them and offering some refreshment. Accordingly, Alan and Mr. Dunbar were shown into the large drawing-room, where a splendid coal-fire was burning brightly in the grate, and where Mrs. George Arnold, in black silk, heavily trimmed with crape, received her visitors with winning smiles and an air that told how fully she had taken up the part of lady of the house. Renée, a little graver and quieter, sat near, but notwithstanding all her stylish looks and dignity of manner, little Mrs. Arnold evidently placed her in quite a secondary position, helped thereto by her stately mother, who sat beside her, enjoying her daughter's importance. Pauline sat in a window recess with Clara, and joyfully welcomed her friend Alan, whom she had not seen for months.

Mrs. Junor was as gracious to Alan as she had formerly been, on the occasion of their first meeting. She had a reason for this, as she had for most things she did. She had heard an excellent report of Alan from Mr. Dunbar, and she thought that, in course of time, he would make the very partner that George needed; since his thoughtfulness and steadiness, together with the amount of business knowledge which he had obtained, would make up for George's shortcomings in these respects, and place the business, of whose risks she was by no means ignorant, on a much more satisfactory basis. It

would be very much in the same way as that in which her own husband, who at first came as a clerk, had got into partnership with Mr. Arnold. And then—who knows? he might take a fancy to Clara, for whom she could scarcely expect a more brilliant marriage; and in the meantime it was quite as well to cultivate him a little. So Alan, a great deal to his surprise, received sundry invitations that winter to little quiet evening parties at Mrs. Junor's; since, owing to the family mourning, she was precluded from more extensive gaieties. As Mr. Dunbar, and even Hugh, who soon became as great a friend of Pauline's as his brother had been, were always included in these invitations, and the evenings were always pleasantly conversational and musical, Alan found them very enjoyable, especially as he set the invitations down to pure kindness on Mrs. Junor's part.

His old wound was fast healing over now, as it might not have done but for the way in which his illusion with regard to Lottie had been rudely dispelled. He always avoided meeting her, when it was possible, and declined all invitations to parties where she was likely to be present, thereby considerably offending Mrs. McAlpine, who, having heard some rumour of his disappointment might have guessed the reason of his repeated refusals to her party-invitations. But he sometimes heard reports of Lottie's flirting propensities, which she had not yet lost, and which, rumour said, sometimes caused some unpleasantness between her and her husband. And when he heard the way in which she was spoken of by the fast young men of Carrington, it took all the tenderness and charity with which his chivalrous nature still strove to regard his old love, so endeared by a thousand early associations, to prevent his acknowledging to himself that it had been a beneficent providence, rather than a hard fate, that had separated them.

Towards the close of that winter, Alan went to Montreal, to transact some business for George Arnold. It was the first time he had seen the metropolitan city of Canada, for so it may well still be called, notwithstanding the rapid strides of its more modern rivals. High as his expectations had been, they were more than realised. The Point St. Charles railway station, alone, astonished him by its extent, its numerous converging lines of rails, indicating the immense amount of business of which it was