

light one, but none could have been assumed more cheerfully or have been more heartily discharged.

Two years and six months elapsed. The infant Annie, who had learned the first lessons of childhood, could now roam from room to room unaided. Then a new-comer appeared. In the month of September, 1844 just as the harvest had been gathered, another girl-baby was born.

The advent of Lavinia Francis, as the little stranger was named, was evidently a signal for rejoicing. Father had shown a decided preference for girls from early boyhood. Mother felt that her hands were now strengthened in her settled purpose of bringing her four boys under the refining influence of the fair sex; the boys were chivalrous and devoted; and Mary Jane and Sarah Ann, true to the feminine instinct, gave the little one the very best place in their affections. The welcome was most generous and enthusiastic. There had been boys enough already; the addition of another girl made our number complete. Now we were seven.

The following year marks an era in our family history. The year 1845 will long be remembered. The spring, awakening all nature to new life and making the birds and brooks to sing for joy, had come and gone. The summer had past, and the harvest was ended. There had been the usual merry-making at Christmas, and preparations were in progress fitly to celebrate the approaching New Year, when the founder of a new dynasty, known to family history as the "Four Little boys," suddenly made his appearance and loudly asserted his right to regal honors. The event is thus recorded in the old family Bible:—"Born, December 26th, 1845. Edwin David King."

A tradition has been handed down to the grandchildren that the new-comer was regarded as an enemy to the liberties of the household. The name *Edwin* was given him, it is said, for his Saxon ancestor of warlike fame; and *David*, because he must fight his way single handed. *He* threatened the peace of a happy family, and bid fair to make it a vale of tears,--is the old story!

The ancient slander should be buried and the truth be told. Mother *never* liked boys, as she has often declared, but she gave no little aid and comfort to the arms of the invader, and welcomed him in many a tender embrace. Father was always a conservative in politics, but, although averse to change, was a man of peace. But there *was* the shout and cry of battle, notwithstanding. The reigning "seven" declared war, and there was a fierce and fearful struggle, soon ending in their utter overthrow and unconditional surrender. The chief of the "illustrious seven" and the first of the "Little Boys" then formed an alliance of a character the most intimate. They ate at the same table. They slept in the same bed. A tie more tender than brotherhood united Nathaniel and Edwin, and death only can sever the life-long devotion.

Fourteen months later, on the 22nd of February, 1847, the