

THE HILL

CHAPTER I

THE MANOR

"Five hundred faces, and all so strange!
Life in front of me—home behind,
I felt like a waif before the wind
Tossed on an ocean of shock and change.

"Chorus. Yet the time may come, as the years go by,
When your heart will thrill
At the thought of the Hill,
And the day that you came so strange and shy."

The train slid slowly out of Harrow on.

Five minutes before, a man and a boy had been walking up and down the long platform. The boy wondered why the man, his uncle, was so strangely silent. Then, suddenly, the elder John Verney had placed his hands upon the shoulders of the younger John, looking down into eyes as grey and as steady as his own.

"You'll find plenty of fellows abusing Harrow," he said quietly; "but take it from me, that the fault lies not in Harrow, but in them. Such boys, as a rule, do not come out of the top drawer. Don't look so solemn. You're