

## CHAPTER I.

### Early Life and Professional Struggles.

My father, an officer in the Hanoverian Army, having died while I was almost a child, I found myself, at the age of 17, governess in the family of the Baron Grovestein in Hamburg, Germany, where I met my present husband, Gustav-Schröder, at that time one of the most "eligible" young gentlemen in that city.

Though not particularly handsome, Gustav was all that could be desired in other respects. He was young, well educated, and the son of wealthy parents, and of an amiable disposition. Soon after my engagement at the Baron's, young Schröder's visits (ostensibly to the family) became so frequent, that his friends, who had divined the cause, forbade his having anything to say to me, more than cold civility demanded; and insisted that his visits to the Grovestein mansion should be discontinued. This, it may well be supposed, had quite the opposite effect, and in a short time we were engaged to be married, with the formal, if not the hearty approval of Gustav's relations, and in course of time the marriage ceremony took place, with all the paraphernalia of an *Alt-Deutsch Hochzeits-fest*.