

# MARJORIE DEANE.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE HOME OF THE PARVENU.

IT is late in the afternoon of a bright October day, and a golden flood of sunset light streams through the trees about Harley House and glances blindingly back from the west windows of the great structure. Older and more picturesque houses there may be in Berkshire ; but newer or larger—no. Peter Deane knew it, and was proud of it. The thought of it filled his mind always. It filled his mind as he stood now in front of the fire in the drawing-room, his coat tails drawn aside in rather plebeian style. He had intended it to be a large house and a gorgeous house, and it was exactly what he intended it to be. He was expecting his daughter, but he was thinking of his house, and of the effect it would have upon her ; for she had not yet seen it.

"I think she will be impressed," he said aloud.

"I wish she would come. The train never is on time," was the response he received, delivered in an impatient tone.

It was Bessie Deane who spoke. She had been standing in an attitude of listening at the open window, but turned to speak to her father, and disclosed a face as sweet and piquant as ever graced a sixteen-year-old maiden.

Almost as she spoke she heard the sound of an approaching carriage, and in an instant she was off, flying around to the front drive, her fiery golden hair streaming out behind her like a comet. She gained the front steps, just as a carriage, resplendent in all the glory of varnish, polished brass, and new liveries, turned the corner and drew up at the front. The long-coated footman swung down from his perch and opened the door, and Bessie dashed forward, with flushed face and dancing eyes.

"Oh, Marjorie, is it you at last?" she exclaimed.

"Yes, dear, what is left of me," answered a light, musical voice, from amidst the silk linings ; and the next moment the late arrival stepped out and took the expectant girl to her bosom.