

His father had died suddenly while Etherington was abroad in Spain, and the mystery still remained unsolved. Here he was now at the other side of the world, and by that parent's wish, taking part in the beginning of a young Empire, and yet amid all the influences of a new and virgin environment and the physical struggle for a day to day existence, which is so deadly in its destruction of all interest in the past, amid all the difficulties of his present position, and the rigorous duties it imposed, this strange silence as to his ancestry, this mystery pursued and haunted him. He had wondered why his father had desired that he should come to Canada, but now he was convinced that it had something to do with this secret.

When, after his father's decease, he had felt free to do so, he had written a letter to the head of the house, to which he understood he belonged, announcing the former's death; but up to the present had received no answer to his communication, which circumstance, he felt, rather added to than cleared up the mystery which surrounded him. Ancestry has ever been a natural pride to the British gentleman, associated as it is with rank, position and personal honor; and it wounded and worried Etherington to realize that he was cut off from an exact knowledge of his family line, and that he could get no nearer to the problem which confronted him. He had written to his father's lawyer, now his own, a respectable solicitor, the head of a firm of long standing, asking for any papers or other information which might relate to his father or his family; but beyond the fact that he had become heir