

## EPILOGUE

**W**HEN Mrs. Duvenant heard that her grandchild was a girl, she felt that the house of Stronaven had offered its final insult to her family. But it was not long before she began to discover compensations.

Enone had prophesied that she "could very well like a little ba-by," and the prophecy came true. She was amused, delighted; beyond expectation taken up with the new interest. She bloomed and expanded into joyousness. All the recent fretfulness and languors disappeared. Unexpectedly Mrs. Duvenant found out that her daughter had never wished for a son; had dreaded the obligations that would have been laid upon her as mother of the heir; had indeed loathed, with secret terrors, the thought of being obliged to return to Stronaven, the old Castle that frowned in her memory as a place of gloom, incomprehensible passion and death.

And when the grandmother began to trace delicate family resemblances in the pretty, thriving babe, it not only came to be regarded by her as the means of restoring Enone to the zest of life, but as a creature most precious for its own sake. Furthermore, one day the good lady arrived at the pleasing conclusion that her daughter (unless she chose to take a step higher in rank) being the one and only Lady Stronaven as long as James lived, the birth of a son might have detracted from, rather than heightened, this desirable position.

"My Nonny will never be the dowager now, whatever happens!" she said to herself. "And as the girlie will be