

pected legacy of a plebeian great-aunt, the despised sister of his grand-father, the farmer, enabled him to leave quill-driving, of which he was heartily weary, and to descend from the high stool in Lombard-street, on which he had been perched for five-and-twenty years, there doubtless mingled with the desire to assist his family, by adding his small income to their still smaller one—for this egregious coxcomb was an excellent son and a kind brother, just in his dealings, and generous in his heart, when, through the thick coating of foppery one could find the way to it—some wish to escape from the city, where his talents were, as he imagined, buried in the crowd, smothered against the jostling multitudes, and to emerge, in all his lustre, in the smaller and more select coteries of the country. On his arrival at Belford, accordingly, he installed himself, at once, as arbiter of fashion, the professed *beau garçon*, the lady's man of the town and neighbourhood; and having purchased a horse, and ascertained, to his great comfort, that his avocation as a banker's clerk was either wholly unsuspected in the county circles which his late father had frequented, or so indistinctly known, that the very least little white lie in the world would pass him off as belonging to the House, he boldly claimed acquaintance with every body in the county whose name he had ever heard in his life, and, regardless of the tolerably visible contempt of the gentlemen, proceeded to make his court to the ladies with might and with main.

He miscalculated, however, the means best fitted to compass his end. Women, however frivolous, do not like a frivolous man; they would as soon take a fancy to their mercer as to the man who offers to choose their silks, and if he will find fault with their embroidery, and correct their patterns, he must lay his account in being no more regarded by them than their milliner or their maid. Sooth to say, your fine lady is an ungrateful personage; she accepts the help, and then laughs at the officious helper—sucks the orange and throws away the peel. This truth found King Harwood, when, after riding to London, and running all over that well-sized town, to match, in German lamb's wool, the unmatched brown and gold feathers, of the game-cock's neck, which

that ambitious embroideress, Lady Delany, aspired to imitate in a table-carpet, he found himself saluted for his pains with the malicious soubriquet of King of the Bantams. This and other affronts drove him from the county society, which he had intended to enlighten and adorn, to the less brilliant circles of Belford, which, perhaps suited his taste better, he being of that class of persons who had rather reign in the town than serve in the country; whilst his brother Earl, safe in cold silence and dull respectability, kept sedulously among his rural compeers, and was considered one of the most unexceptionable grace-sayers at a great dinner of any clergyman in the neighbourhood.

To Belford, therefore, the poor King of the Bantams was compelled to come, thinking himself the cleverest and most fashionable man in the place; an opinion which, I am sorry to say, he had pretty much to himself. The gentlemen smiled at his pretensions, and the young ladies laughed, which was just the reverse of the impression which he intended to make. How the thing happened I can hardly tell, for, in general, the young ladies of a country town are sufficiently susceptible to attention from a London man. Perhaps the man was not to their taste, as conceit finds few favourers; or, perhaps, they disliked the kind of attention, which consisted rather in making perpetual demands on their admiration, than in offering the tribute of his own; perhaps, also, the gentleman, who partook of the family fault, and would be young in spite of the register, was too old for them. However it befell, he was no favourite amongst the Belford belles.

Neither was he in very good odour with the mammas. He was too poor, too proud, too scornful, and a Harwood, in which name all the pretension of the world seemed gathered. Nay, he not only in his own person out-Harwooded Harwood, but was held accountable for not a few of the delinquencies of that obnoxious race, whose airs had much augmented since he had honoured Belford by his presence. Before his arrival, Miss Henrietta and her stately mamma had walked out, like the other ladies of the town, unattended: the King came, and they could not stir without being followed as their shadow by the poor little