

### CHAPTER III.

A few weeks passed, I cannot exactly say how many, when this circumstance, which in the meantime I had wholly forgotten, was recalled to my mind. Dr. Brant, an old friend of mind, and I, were sitting together one evening in my library; and during the course of our conversation he mentioned incidentally the number of visitors he had had the evening before. There were, he said, thirteen. "Thirteen!" I replied; "then my practice, doctor, is larger than yours. I had fourteen. I counted them over this morning. I go one better than you."

It is very hard, as the Americans say, "to get ahead" of Dr. Brant. "You do, do you?" said the old gentleman, smiling. "Well my friend, now that I come to think of it, I also had fourteen. But as it happened, one of them, a young girl, was in too much of a hurry to wait and see me; however, I may as well count her in, and, counting her, I make up the number fourteen." And the doctor smiled as much as to say that he was even with me again.

A young girl. Rather absurd it was, but I made up my mind that this was the same girl. "What sort of a girl was she?" I said.