

They were sitting in the store door-way together, and Mr. Hobbs was filling his pipe.

"He oughtn't to 've married," he said solemnly, as he rose to get a match "Women—I never could see any use in 'em, myself."

As he took the match from its box, he stopped and looked down on the counter.

"Why!" he said, "if here isn't a letter! I didn't see it before. The postman must have laid it down when I wasn't noticin', or the newspaper slipped over it."

He picked it up and looked at it carefully.

"It's from *him*!" he exclaimed. "That's the very one it's from!"

He forgot his pipe altogether. He went back to his chair quite excited and took his pocket-knife and opened the envelope.

"I wonder what news there is this time," he said.

And then he unfolded the letter and read as follows:

DORINCOURT CASTLE

"My dear Mr. Hobbs

"I write this in a great hurry becaus i have something curous to tell you i know you will be very mutch supised my dear friend when i tel you. It is all a mistake and i am not a lord and i shall not have to be an earl there is a lady whitch was marid to my uncle bevis who is dead and she has a little boy and he is lord fauntleroy becaus that is the way it is in England the earls eldest sons little boy is the earl if every body else is dead i mean if his farther and grandfather are dead my grandfather is not dead but my uncle bevis is and so his boy is lord Fauntleroy and i am not becaus my papa was the youngest son and my name is Cedric Errol like it was when I was in New York and all the things will belong to the other boy i thought at first I should have to give him my pony and cart but my grandfather says I need not my grandfather is very scrry and I think he does not like the lady but preaps he thinks dearest and i are sorry because i shall not be an earl i would like to be an earl now better than i thout i would at first becaus this is a beautife castle and i like every body so and when you are rich you can do so many things i am not rich now becaus when your papa is only the youngest son he is not very rich i am going to learn to work so that i can take care of dearest i have been asking Wilkins about grooming horses preaps i might be a groom or a coachman. the lady brought her little boy to the castle and my grandfather and Mr. Havisham talked to her i think she was angry she talked loud and my grandfather was angry too i never saw him angry before i wish it did not make them all mad i thort i would tell you and Dick right away becaus you would be intrusted so no more at present with love from

"your old frend "CEDRIC ERROL (Not lord Fauntleroy)."

Mr. Hobbs fell back in his chair, the letter dropped on his knee, his pen-knife slipped to the floor, and so did the envelope.