

passing near the place and wished to look at his Aunt Constan-
tia of whom he had heard his mother speak. Lady Lorridaile's
kind heart had warmed through and through at the sight of the
young man, and she had made him stay with her a week, and
petted him, and made much of him and admired him immensely.
He was so sweet-tempered, light-hearted, spirited a lad, that
when he went away, she had hoped to see him often again ;
but she never did, because the Earl had been in a bad humor
when he went back to Dorincourt, and had forbidden him ever
to go to Lorridaile Park again. But Lady Lorridaile had
always remembered him tenderly, and though she feared he had
made a rash marriage in America, she had been very angry
when she heard how he had been cast off by his father and that
no one really knew where or how he lived. At last there came
a rumor of his death, and then Bevis had been thrown from his
horse and killed, and Maurice had died in Rome of the fever ;
and soon after came the story of the American child who was to
be found and brought home as Lord Fauntleroy.

"Probably to be ruined as the others were," she said to her
husband, "unless her mother is good enough and has a will of
her own to help her to take care of him."

But when she heard that Cedric's mother had been parted
from him she was almost too indignant for words.

"It is disgraceful, Harry !" she said. "Fancy a child of
that age being taken from his mother, and made the companion
of a man like my brother ! He will either be brutal to the boy
or indulge him until he is a little monster. If I thought it
would do any good to write——"

"It wouldn't, Constantia," said Sir Harry.

"I know it wouldn't," she answered. "I know his lordship
the Earl of Dorincourt too well ;—but it is outrageous."

Not only the poor people and farmers heard about little
Lord Fauntleroy ; others knew him. He was talked about so
much and there were so many stories of him—of his beauty, his
sweet temper, his popularity, and his growing influence over the
Earl, his grand-father—that rumors of him reached the gentry
at their country places and he was heard of in more than one
county of England. People talked about him at the dinner
tables, ladies pitied his young mother, and wondered if the boy
were as handsome as he was said to be, and men who knew the
Earl and his habits laughed heartily at the stories of the little
fellow's belief in his lordship's amiability. Sir Thomas Asshe
of Asshawe Hall, being in Erleboro one day, met the Earl and
his grandson riding together, and stopped to shake hands with