

## CHAPTER I.

### AN UNSUITABLE FRIENDSHIP.

Janetta was the music governess—a brown little thing of no particular importance, and Margaret Adair was a beauty and an heiress, and the only daughter of people who thought themselves very distinguished indeed; so that the two had not, you might think, very much in common, and were not likely to be attracted one to the other. Yet, in spite of differing circumstances, they were close friends and allies; and had been such ever since they were together at the same fashionable school where Miss Adair was the petted favorite of all, and Janetta Colwyn was the pupil-teacher in the shabbiest of frocks, who got all the snubbing and did most of the hard work. And great offence was given in several directions by Miss Adair's attachment to poor little Janetta.

"It is an unsuitable friendship," Miss Polehampton, the principal of the school, observed on more than one occasion, "and I am sure I do not know how Lady Caroline will like it."

Lady Caroline was, of course, Margaret Adair's mamma.

Miss Polehampton felt her responsibility so keenly in the matter that at last she resolved to speak "very seriously" to her dear Margaret. She always talked of "her dear Margaret," Janetta used to say, when she was going to make herself particularly disagreeable. For "her dear Margaret" was the pet pupil, the show pupil of the establishment: her air of perfect breeding gave distinction, Miss Polehampton thought, to the whole school; and her refinement, her exemplary behavior, her industry, and her talent formed the theme of many a lecture to less accomplished and less decorous pupils. For, contrary to all conventional expectations, Margaret Adair was not stupid, although she was beautiful and well-behaved. She was an exceedingly intelligent girl; she had an aptitude for several arts and accomplishments, and she was remarkable for the delicacy of her taste and the exquisite discrimination of which she sometimes showed herself capable. At the same time she was not as clever—"not as *glaringly* clever," a friend of hers once expressed it) —as little Janetta Colwyn, whose nimble wits gathered knowledge as a bee collects honey under the most unfavorable circumstances. Janetta had to learn her lessons when the other girls had gone to bed, in a little room under the roof; a room which was like an ice-house in winter and an oven in summer; she was never able to be in time for her classes, and she often missed them altogether; but, in spite of these disadvantages, she generally proved herself the most advanced pupil in her division, and if pupil-teachers had been allowed to take prizes, would have carried off every first prize in the school. This, to be sure, was not allowed. It would not have been "the thing" for the little governess-pupil to take away the prizes from the girls whose parents paid between two and three hundred a year for their tuition (the fees were

