

COLLECTION  
OF  
BRITISH AUTHORS  
TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

VOL. 1149.

MY LITTLE LADY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

1/332  
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# MY LITTLE LADY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LEIPZIG  
BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ



1871.

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# PART II

(CONTINUED.)

## MY LITTLE LADY.

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### CHAPTER VII.

#### Fever.

FOR more than two uneventful years Madelon remained in the convent; but early in the third spring after her arrival, a low fever broke out, which for the time completely disturbed the peaceful, even current of existence there, and, by its results, altered, as it happened, the whole course of her own life.

She was between twelve and thirteen then, and had grown into a slim little maiden, rather tall for her age, with a little pale face as in old days, but with her wavy brown hair all braided now, and fastened in long plaits round her head. In these two years she has become somewhat reconciled to her convent life; not, indeed, as a permanent arrangement—it never occurred to her to regard it in that light—but as something that must be endured till a new future should open out before her. She learns her lessons, sings in the chapel, knows some-

thing of compote-making, and can embroider with skilful little fingers almost after Sœur Lucie's own heart. She still holds aloof from her companions, turning to Sœur Lucie for society, though rather with the feeling of the simple-hearted little nun being *bon camarade*, than with any deeper sentiment of friendship or respect. She is rarely *en pénitence* now; the vehement little spirit seems laid; and if something of her old spring and energy have gone with it, if she is sometimes sad, and almost always quiet, there is no one to note it much, or to heed the change that has apparently come over her. And yet Madelon was in truth little altered, and was scarcely less of a child than when Graham had brought her to the convent. She had learned a variety of things, it is true; she could have named all the principal cities in Europe now; and though she still stumbled over the kings of France, her multiplication-table was unexceptionable; but her education had been one of acquisition rather than of development. Her mind had not yet had time to assimilate itself with those around her, nor to become reconciled to the life that was so at variance with all her old traditions; and she maintained a nucleus, as it were, of independent thought, which no mere extraneous influences or knowledge could affect. In the total silence imposed upon herself, and those