SYNOPSIS.

The scene at the opening of the story is laid in the library of an old manor-house in Hertfordshire, England, in the early part of the nineteenth century. The history and rival claims of the owners, the quixotic Sir Jeffrey Quintard and his brother Jonathan Cavendish, are told by Mr. Hicks, the lawyer, to Sheldon, a young friend, a former Harrow schoolmate of Lord Hazard, a supercilious child of the old nobleman. Lord Hazard and Sheldon Tancy father the same stage, Lord Hazard Special Envoy from the Regent, but the latter is a mere figurehead, while Tancy is perhaps the more important. The judge tells Sheldon of the feud of the Quintards, an ancient family of Norman origin, and of the quarrel between Jonathan Cavendish and his brother, which finally led to a challenge to duel. Jonathan Cavendish, a thundering old autocrat, was the challenger, but Sir Jeffrey, a mild man, was the challenged party. Jonathan Cavendish, however, was not to fight the duel himself, but sent his son Jonathan, a boy of fifteen, to represent him.