

temper and steady sense—described Thackeray as ‘a man apart’; and so is the Marquis of Esmond. Yet Thackeray was a very real man; and so is the Marquis too.

The element of abstraction disappears, or rather retires into the background, when we pass to Beatrix. She also has the *Ewigweibliche* in her—as much of it as any, or almost any, of Shakespeare’s women, and therefore more than anybody else’s. But she is very much more than a type—she is Beatrix Esmond in flesh and blood, and damask and diamond, born ‘for the destruction of mankind’ and fortunately for the delight of them, or some of them, as well. Beatrix is beyond eulogy. ‘Cease! cease to sing her praise!’ is really the only motto, though perhaps something more may be said when we come to the terrible pendant which only Thackeray has had the courage and the skill to draw, with truth and without a disgusting result. If she had died when *Esmond* closes I doubt whether, in the Wood of Fair Ladies, even Cleopatra would have dared to summon her to her side, lest the comparison should not be favourable enough to herself, and the throne have to be shared.

But, as usual with Thackeray, you must not look to the hero and heroine too exclusively, even when there is such a heroine as this. For is there not here another heroine—cause of the dubietics of the *Doctor Fidelis* as above cited? As to that it may perhaps be pointed out to the extreme sentimentalists that, after all, Harry had been in love with the mother, as well as with the daughter, all along. If they consider this an aggravation, it cannot be helped: but, except from the extreme point of view of Miss Marianne Dashwood in her earlier stage, it ought rather to be considered a palliative. And if they say further that the thing is made worse still by the fact that Harry was himself Rachel’s *second* love, and that she did not exactly wait to be a widow before she fell in love with him—why, there is, again, nothing for it but to confess that it is very