

by calling it epigrammatic: it could not have belonged to a fool, or even to a dull person. There was something queen-like about her, but then it was her air only; for though dazzling was the word every one felt inclined to apply to her appearance, yet she had quite as much prettiness as beauty; that is, she had all the feminine delicacy and fascination of a merely pretty woman, with all the dignity and splendour of a perfectly beautiful one. In short, prettiness might be said to be the detail of her features, and beauty their effect. Her eyes were "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue," and the long dark fringes that shadowed them, gave a Murillo-like softness to her cheek when she looked down; her complexion would have been brilliant, had it not changed almost as often as the rose clouds in an Italian sky; for it varied as though each passing thought reflected its shadow upon her face;—her mouth and teeth would have baffled the imagination of a painter, or the description of a poet; and her smile was bright,

Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon.  
When it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun.

"To the greatest strength of character she united the mildest disposition, and withal was what her sex so rarely are, "though witty, wise." Few women could boast her solid and almost universal information, yet was there nothing of the "precieuse" about her—no attempt at display—no contempt for the ignorance of others; in short, good sense did for her manners what religion did for her character—blent, purified, and harmonized each separate or opposing quality without the main springs ever ruggedly or obtrusively appearing to taunt others with their lack of them."

The unkindness of the husband naturally increases the love of *Mowbray*, and predisposes the wife to permit his "delicate attentions" without reproof. The chivalrous honour of the wooer and the stern virtue of the dame, however, prevent any intercourse beyond what is permitted by the world, and the lovers escape from the furnace of passion, without having, as the world goes, greatly sinned: albeit, *Mowbray* avows his love, upon an occasion when the Earl has gone to a masquerade, which some of his brutality prevents the Countess from attending.

While these scenes are enacting on the continent, another somewhat similar, but immeasurably more sad, is going on in England. *Mary Lee*, a beautiful peasant, has fallen a victim to the arts of the Earl, who endeavours to obtain a husband for his miserable victim by offering a dowry with her hand, to a kindred spirit in the neighbourhood. Poor *Mary* is driven beyond "reason's utmost goal," and the Earl consummates his villainy by repudiating her offspring. The picture is a sad one, and although somewhat overstrained, contains much eloquent and beautiful language.

In the course of this unholy episode, the reader is introduced to a gypsy tent, during the progress of an incantation. There is in this the due apportionment of skulls and coffins, with slain birds and beasts, and all the paraphernalia requisite for the "cantrips" of the dark magician. The magic circle, as a matter of course, is tenanted by "*Mary Lee* and *Madge Brindal*, the former in the black dress

and Quaker-like cap she always wore; her fair hair parted on her high, clear forehead; her cheeks colourless, but still with that sort of pale bloom that is seen in a Provence rose; her mouth was the only citadel that health had not deserted—it was full and rich as ever; the beautifully curved, short upper lip, gently parted like a twin cherry, from the red pouting under one—yes, health seemed as though it clung to

—Those yet cool lips, to share  
The last pure life that linger'd there.

Her small, white, and almost shadowy hands were crossed upon her bosom, and she peered into the mysterious depths of her companion's wild prophetic eyes, as though time and eternity were to be read within them. Through the almost Ethiopian darkness of *Madge Brindal's* cheek was a rich red glow, like that of fire against a midnight sky; her profile was chiselled in the most perfect Greek outline; the mouth was handsome, but somewhat sensual—but then the teeth within it were so pearl-like and costly, that no wonder it seemed like a little epicurean; her eyes were large, dark, and lustrous in the extreme, and would have been fierce, but that they were curtained with lashes, so long and so soft, that they almost made one sleepy to look at them; the brows above them were low, straight, and intellectual; her hair, which was of that purple black, seldom seen but on a raven's wing, was braided back beneath a red handkerchief, put on after the fashion of an elderly Roman Contadina; not much above the middle size, her full and voluptuous figure might have been heavy had it been less perfectly moulded. She wore a short green, glazed, stuff petticoat, with a short bedgown of bright red striped calico, the sleeves of which were now turned up, displaying a beautifully rounded arm, singularly white compared to her hands, which were brown, and rather coarse—this being rendered the more apparent by being covered with very showy, but trumpety looking gold and silver rings, glittering with colored stones; on her feet were bright blue worsted stockings, without shoes; and just before them was placed a small brazier, from which issued a thick, dense smoke, as ever and anon *Madge* threw into it with her left hand some mystic powder, while with her right she waved over it a green cypress branch, repeating at the same time some low, unintelligible words."

This may, however, be considered a digression from the main plot, except as illustrating the character of the Earl. We must now return to the narrative.

*Mowbray* is the heir of a nobleman, the *Marquis of Cheveley*, by whose death he succeeds to the title and estates. By this event he is necessarily compelled to tear himself away from the fascinations of the *Lady Clifford*, to whom he addresses a letter, explaining his situation. Her answer, in which she urges him to depart, is not without delicacy and