

**MEASURE FOR
MEASURE. VOL. I**

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Measure for measure. Vol. I by John Douglas

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JOHN DOUGLAS

**MEASURE FOR
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MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

BY
JOHN DOUGLAS.

"Some rise by sin; and some by virtue fall."
—"MEASURE FOR MEASURE."

"Par divers moyens on arrive à pareille fin."
—MONTAIGNE.

VOL. I.



LONDON:
SWAN SONNENSCHN, LE BAS & LOWREY,
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

1886.

“ The fixed arithmetic of the universe,
“ Which meteth good for good and ill for ill,
“ Measure for measure, unto deeds, words, thoughts ;
“ Watchful, aware, implacable, unmoved ;
“ Making all futures fruits of all the pasts.”

—“ THE LIGHT OF ASIA,” EDWIN ARNOLD.

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In Memoriam

WALTER HERIOT DOUGLAS.

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CHAPTER I.

REJECTED ADDRESSES.

“The kindest man,
The best conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies,”

Merchant of Venice.

ANYONE who knows the good city of St. Mungo, knows “The Crescents” which curve up the sunward slope of a pleasant hill at the western end of Sauchiehall Street. They commence with those handsome and substantial houses in the angle behind St. George’s Road, and culminate in the splendid mansions which crown the terraces overlooking the park. This is a pleasant region of quiet and even somnolent prosperity, an urban rendering of the land

“In which it seemed always afternoon,”

enlivened by broad and languid thoroughfares which divide it from other regions hardly less slumbrous, albeit falling short, perhaps, of the supreme social attainment—the respectability *in excelsis* of the Crescents themselves. Beyond—

northward, eastward, southward—is the roar and the throng and the turmoil of the city:—smoke of its torment rising up for ever—the very cloud-pillar of Progress. A somewhat unsavoury cloud-pillar, it must be confessed, much given to collapsing upon the rear of the Industrial Israel camped on the lower ground towards the river. On the whole it might be an advantage, in more senses than one, if Progress consumed its own smoke. In the multifarious and many-sided life of the great city, the modern gospel of averages finds its justification, not by faith, but in sight of manifold differences in individual satisfactions. One man's gain is compensated in many another's exceeding need—the Olympian ease of the Crescents correlates the squalor of the Kennels. Nay more. The duality even appears in the conditions of individual lives. The mechanical, supply-and-demand providence, which gives to the masses their daily bread, gives them no less therewith, their daily portion of carbonic acid and its concomitants. But of all this the Crescents know nothing. Night by night, the city is ringed with fire: the Pharos light of the smelting-furnace, the volcanic glow of the forge, flare into the dark till the low heaven is

aglow with the sullen splendour of slow-pulsing clouds of flame. Day by day is made hideous with the shrieking of shearing metal, the clangour of riveted plates, the whirring of myriad-spindled looms, the chaffering of the Market Place; but these—these are afar off, and the Crescents are peaceful.

“Archibald Keith, Esq., 33, Bankside Crescent,” was thus a highly-respectable address even for a highly-respectable Glasgow merchant. The house stood well up the slope of the hill, and had a pleasant outlook between the greenery of two squares, and over the houses below them, away to the winding river-reaches and the Renfrewshire hills. It was just the house to give one a sense of easy-going opulence, of gentle life and almost cloistral peace. A hermitage might be duller, it could hardly be more still. To this house, while he was still comparatively a young man, Archibald Keith had brought his dearly-loved wife and his little six-year-old daughter. And when, after a few happy years, the good wife died, instead of joining in the westward migrations of his contemporaries, he remained in the old house for the sake of its loving and tender memories. There are men