

**THE MODEL MERCHANT;
OR, MEMOIRS OF
SAMUEL BUDGETT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649270255

The model merchant; or, Memoirs of Samuel Budgett by Mrs. S. A. Myers

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MRS. S. A. MYERS

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THE

MODEL MERCHANT,

OR MEMOIRS OF

SAMUEL BUDGETT.

ABRIDGED FROM THE WORK OF THE Rev. Wm. ANTHONY.

By Mrs. S. A. MYERS.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

29977A

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by
JAMES DUNLAP, TREAS.,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of
Pennsylvania.

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MEMOIRS OF BUDGETT.

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CHAPTER I.

KINGSWOOD.

KINGSWOOD is not a bewitching place. Going out from Bristol, you find the road skirted by rough cottages, prolific of a rough population. Here and there is a man whose complexion has just been painted in the coal pit, or a woman in costume appropriate to other ages,—a long great coat of dark blue cloth, with manifold capes, like a coachman's, surmounted by a quaint black hat, with a low crown, and a leaf spreading widely all around but lapped down about the ears. To the eye of a stranger, the neighbourhood seems to lie at a distance from our day. But a few modern houses aspiring towards respectability, a modern church and modern chapels, all in very good taste, show that a new spirit of improvement has broken in upon the old apathy of the place.

Just at the top of Kingswood Hill, about

four miles from Bristol, a lane turns off from the main road, which leads to gates that indicate the entrance to a substantial residence. Passing inside, you see, on the left, a handsome house, surrounded by grounds where shrubs and statues pleasantly contrast with the adjacent rudeness. On a bright green lawn, just before the door, stand a fountain, an arbour of weeping ash, and a pedestal supporting a sun-dial. Through the transparent walls of a conservatory, groups of many coloured flowers are seen, and close by, in a large and handsome aviary, a silver pheasant holds court over a tribe of birds, some curious and some musical. The prospect, varied and extending for twenty miles up a rich valley, embracing every object prized by a lover of the picturesque and beautiful, convinces the beholder that nature is not to be blamed for the roughness of the neighbourhood; and the residence and grounds show, that one was found who could appreciate the offered advantages.

On Wednesday, the 5th of May, 1851, a sombre foreground was in the pleasant picture which lies in front of that dwelling. On the circular pathway before the door, about two hundred men stood ranged in order, two by two; each figure was clad in a mourning cloak, each hat had a funeral band. Those at the rear of the column, were only boys; before these were youths; and so advancing, till,

near its head, you found gray-haired men—and they, although no face there wore the look of an indifferent spectator,—were saddest of all. And deeply mournful did that long column in funeral array, look in contrast with the fresh and springing verdure of the lawn, and the bright Gloucestershire valley now in Mayday leaf and bloom. The head of the column stood close by the portico of the house. A bier was there. A single glance would have told a stranger all;—the master of the place was gone, and his retainers had gathered to honour his burial. Inside the gates, every thing told you that the residence had lost its master;—outside, every thing told you that the village had lost its chief man. The shops were closed, the houses had their blinds drawn down; a dense crowd stood near the gates, and all along the road “to the place of sepulchre,” for a quarter of a mile and more, was ranged an expecting throng. It is natural, when one sees a funeral indicating wealth or influence, to watch among the attendants for tokens of the place the departed held in their hearts, and now, as one looked among that numerous “following,” from the men that bore the coffin, to the boys that brought up the distant rear, it was easy to see that this was not a pageant, but a mourning. The procession entered a spacious chapel. While the solemn service was read, many a countenance among the