

**RIVERSTON, IN  
THREE  
VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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Riverston, in Three Volumes, Vol. II by Georgiana M. Craik

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**GEORGIANA M. CRAIK**

**RIVERSTON, IN  
THREE  
VOLUMES, VOL. II**



# RIVERSTON.

BY

GEORGIANA M. CRAIK.

"The power, whether of painter or poet, to describe rightly what he calls an ideal thing, depends upon its being to him not an ideal but a real thing. No man ever did or ever will work well, but either from actual sight, or sight of faith."  
—ROMANS.

"Forgive me where I fail in truth,  
And in Thy wisdom make me wiser."

—BENJAMIN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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## CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
ARRIVAL . . . . .	1
CHAPTER II.	
NIGHT AND MORNING . . . . .	13
CHAPTER III.	
AFTER DINNER . . . . .	23
CHAPTER IV.	
DISCURSIVE . . . . .	33
CHAPTER V.	
A SUMMER NIGHT . . . . .	53
CHAPTER VI.	
A PAIR OF WOOLERS . . . . .	113
CHAPTER VII.	
SYDNEY'S SORROW . . . . .	137
CHAPTER VIII.	
LETTER-WRITING . . . . .	146
CHAPTER IX.	
DISCOVERY . . . . .	173

CHAPTER X.		PAGE
IN THE GARDEN -	- - - - -	185
CHAPTER XI.		
ELEANOR -	- - - - -	204
CHAPTER XII.		
IN A WOOD -	- - - - -	228

# RIVERSTON.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ARRIVAL.

OUR adventure caused so much excitement in the house, and gave rise to so much speculative and ejaculatory conversation, that the hour at which we had originally expected Mr. Kingsley passed away before any of us began to wonder that he had not come. We had expected him to dinner: it was now half-past five, and the next train would not allow of his arrival for a couple of hours: we dined therefore without waiting for him.

"It would be as well, my dear, to let Grace know," Mr. Wynter suggested; "she will be looking for him."



I proffered my services to convey the desired information to Mrs. Ramsay, and, as they were accepted, I took my walk after dinner to her house.

It had been, as I before mentioned, a sultry day. Thunder was in the atmosphere, and, though hitherto the sun had shone with even oppressive brilliancy, there were clouds now towards evening rising sombre and threatening from the south.

Their progress was swift. As I sat with Mrs. Ramsay, half an hour had not passed ere the firmament was hung with their dark pall from zenith to horizon; the glow of day gave place to an almost twilight, although lurid, gloom; for a few minutes, labouring with a distant, soundless wind, their heavy masses, pile on pile, rode on, tumultuous and reeling, till on the sudden, staying, as it seemed, their course, one vivid flash swept the wide arch from north to south, and, answering it, thunder peal, and raving wind, and flooding rain let loose their simultaneous fury.

For an hour they raged, and for an hour we watched and listened. We sat apart; Mrs. Ram-

say's chair was near the chimney ; my seat was the broad ledge of the west window : across her half-averted face the lightning only flung a partial gleam ; mine it lighted with its full blaze : she spoke little to me, and I as little to her : she was a good, reverent, pious woman, and good, reverent, and pious were her thoughts and the few words she spoke. I was far from good, and the thoughts that came to me, the feelings that swayed me, were by no means *all* allied to heaven. For that fierce, disturbed nature had voices for me that my ears awoke to with a swift, wild joy ; sights that my eyes and brain made revel in, filling my veins with leaping blood, thrilling my pulses, evoking even an inward, strange, irrepressible, exultant laughter from me. Not that I wanted reverence. Reverence for all things worthy to be revered is, I thank God, a law of my being : in the wild fire of lightning, in the solemn roll of thunder, my soul knows the hand of God, and bows itself before his might ; but also with the fiercest spirit of the storm—with frantic wind, with deluging rain, with all the raging and seething turmoil of these torn elements, something

there is too in me that claims—ay, and finds—kindred.

I sat looking forth, my arms clasped round my knees, on the broad window ledge. No fear had I, though the lightning blazed upon my open face: all that was tameless in my nature was awake: from the fierce contention of wind and rain I drank in keen exhilarating life, which yet the stronger power, that over these held high dominion, kept down, suppressed, subjected—and with a strength and might and majesty to which my soul spoke a full-toned Amen!

Swift as had been the storm's approach, so also was its termination. Lightning and thunder, rain and wind, tumultuous raged for one short hour; that past, the summer evening grew again into a calm and soft serenity: the flooded earth, the torn and drooping leaves—these were the sole traces that, as the slanting sun broke forth again, marked the past conflict.

The parting clouds had found that sun low on the horizon: ere I went it set, and swiftly following its setting there grew so bright a glory in the