

**THE THREE PATHS, OR,
TRUTH, VANITY,
AND PROFESSION, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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The three paths, or, Truth, vanity, and profession, in two volumes, Vol. II by Mrs. Anderson .

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MRS. ANDERSON .

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THE THREE PATHS.

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THE THREE PATHS;

OR,

TRUTH,

VANITY, AND PROFESSION.

BY

THE HON. MRS. ANDERSON.

*“The soul’s weak dwelling, water’d and deny’d,
Lets in new lights through cracks by sickness made.”*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1852.

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THE THREE PATHS.

CHAPTER XI.

ANOTHER year had passed, and Louisa Delville again accompanied Mrs. Somerset to London. In the intervening time the Duke of Ormanton had died, and Ernest Somerset had succeeded to the estates and title of his uncle; a circumstance which led to much speculation among those who estimate persons by their possessions, instead of their characters or conduct. The fortunate position of Louisa in being thrown so much into his society excited much envy and ill-nature, while, conscious of the purity of her own intentions, and perfectly aware that his affections had long been disposed of, she laughed with Geraldine at the folly of the world, and continued happy and contented in the enjoyment of a cheerful mind and single eye. Mrs. Somerset never for a moment regretted that she did not share in the elevation

of her children. No such little pride could find place in her heart, and she far preferred being the widow of such a man as Mr. Somerset, to the increased importance she might have gained with the vain and weak. "The death of a good man is like the putting out of a wax perfumed candle, he recompenses the loss of light by the sweet odour he leaves behind:" and so it had been with Mr. Somerset. His good name was his children's best inheritance, and they would have sacrificed all earthly advantages, rather than forfeit so inestimable a treasure. Edith's consistent and correct conduct since her marriage had regained her admission to Mrs. Somerset's house, where Geraldine and Louisa were delighted to receive her. Algernon was now so constantly employed, that she had much time to herself; and as Mrs. Somerset was not ashamed of being seen in her unfashionable street, she frequently called for her, and took her home for the day. Her husband was no longer the wild, ill-regulated man of talent. He had put his mind in order, and by proper direction was turning all his powers and energies to useful purposes. During the hours which he passed at home he read the books with which Edith had been provided, and was becoming steady in his principles. They had still many difficulties to contend with, but resolution and good sense, strength-

ened by Divine grace, enabled them to take them cheerfully; and Edith would smilingly observe, that they deserved a few discomforts for their ill-conduct. It is the remark of a wise man that "small certainties are the bane of a man of talent." This would have been the case with Algernon, had he not been wholly thrown upon his own resources. He would have done nothing. As it was, the consciousness of the great sacrifices Edith had made for him gradually stole upon his senses, and stimulated him to exertion, while the desire of gaining the good opinion of all at Staunton gave him an increased impulse. Mr. Delville had at last consented to Mrs. Melcombe's receiving them, and as soon as it was possible for Algernon to leave London, his mother's heart was to be gladdened by the sight of her erring child. She had every reason to be satisfied with his wife, and the self-denial she had practised for them was as nothing in her eyes. Her son was but "part of herself wrapped up in another skin," and in him alone, in this world, all her affections were centred. It was not without a feeling of regret that she heard at this time from Lady Melcombe, announcing her intention of paying her a visit of a few days. It had been her annual custom, and one which she kept as conscientiously as her Sundays, or any other daily or weekly habit.