

**SYBILLA AND OTHER
STORIES, IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Sybilla and other stories, In three volumes, Vol. I by G. Linnaeus Banks

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G. LINNAEUS BANKS

**SYBILLA AND OTHER
STORIES, IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. I**

To, Wm. D. Wm. Thomas Gibbons,
on the 38th anniversary of his birth
with the very warm wishes of their
very sincere friend, the Authoress
Isabella Banks.

SYBILLA,

Oct 27/84.

AND OTHER STORIES.

BY

MRS G. LINNÆUS BANKS,

AUTHOR OF "GOD'S PROVIDENCE HOUSE," "THE MANCHESTER
MAN," "GLORY," ETC., ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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SYBILLA.



CHAPTER I.

THE NEW HOME, AND THE OLD WHEEL.

THE ancient manor of Timperley, on the north-east border of Cheshire, has not been held by a Timperley for more than two centuries, so long is it since it was carried by co-heiresses into other families, only to be finally merged in the estate of Dunham-Massey. And though the old black and white Hall still clings to the soil, and to the name of Timperley, and stands within its own demesne, it has no longer a lordly

tenant, and is but one of the scattered homesteads now inhabited by merchant traders from the great commercial city within a brief railway ride. For here and there, besides the few small farms and cottage homes these old places dot the undulating landscape, almost lost amid their own oaks and sycamores, and hard to find amid the maze of winding lanes and streams, o'er which the willow and the ash wave graceful foliage. Fortunately for pedestrian wayfarers, bridges, mostly of stone, span these flowing waters; ay, and waters that are not flowing, for over the serpentine lakelet, which separates the picturesque garden ground of the Oaklands from the meadow-land, more than one bridge has been thrown for private convenience.

Neither, though tinted by time, dates back to the far antiquity of the many-gabled homestead, and one may have arisen under the same artistic hand that added to the quaint old place so lovingly in consonance; but the other, lying back to the

north-east of the dwelling, half hidden among trees, has, like the abode itself, a far-away history for the telling.

The village proper has but one wide street, with a few diverging alleys—one shop for diverse commodities, one school which flourishes under the wing of the church; which church, with its oddly-shaped spire, stands as a landmark within a green churchyard, on the top of a broad knoll in the rear of the Oaklands; the one solitary spot of rising ground in the rich, if somewhat level landscape. The cosy vicarage looks out on its own beds of old-fashioned, sweet-scented flowers, and on wide-spreading market-gardens which flourished all around.

It was otherwise in 1740, when Elizabeth Coppock, the former owner of the Oaklands, having died a spinster, her executors, John Coppock, of Timperley, a tanner, and Esther Leicester, widow, the brother and sister of the deceased, disposed of the house and lands to Thomas Venables, of Prestbury, gentleman, a widower with a long