

**LORD ORMONT AND HIS
AMINTA: A NOVEL; IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. II**

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Lord Ormont and His Aminta: A Novel; In Three Volumes, Vol. II by George Meredith

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GEORGE MEREDITH

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VOL. II.

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A Novel

BY
GEORGE MEREDITH

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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LORD ORMONT AND HIS AMINTA.

CHAPTER I.

A FLASH OF THE BRUISED WARRIOR.

THE winning of Lord Ormont's consent to look on at the little bout of arms was counted an achievement; for even in his own rarefied upper circle, where the fervid sentiments are not allowed to be seen plunging, he had his troop of enthusiasts; and they were anxious that he should make an appearance in public, to take what consolation a misunderstood and injured man could get from evidence of the grateful esteem entertained for him by a party of

his countrymen, who might reasonably expect at the same time to set eyes, at rather close quarters, on the wonderful dark beauty, supposed a Spaniard, occasionally beheld riding beside him. If it is possible to connect a woman with the devoutest of their anticipations, the sons of leisure up there will do it. But, in truth, an English world was having cause to ransack the dust-heaps for neglected men of mettle. Our intermittent ague, known as dread of invasion, was over the land. Twice down the columns of panic newspaper correspondence Lord Ormont saw his name cited, with the effect on him that such signs of national repentance approaching lodged a crabbed sourness in his consulting-room, whether of head or breast.

He was assailed by a gusty appeal from Lady Charlotte, bidding him seize the moment to proclaim his views; while the secretary had a private missive from her,

wherein, between insistency and supplication, she directed him to bring the subject before my lord every day, and be sure to write out a fair copy of the epistle previous to the transmission of it. "Capua" was mentioned; she brought in "a siren," too. Her brother was to be the soldier again—fling off silken bonds. The world might prate of his morality; now was the hour for showing his patriotism, casting aside his just anger, and backing his chief's opinion. "A good chance to get their names together." To her brother she declared that the columns of the leading journal were open to him—"in large type"; he was to take her word for it; he had only to "dictate away," quite at his ease, just as he talked at Olmer, and leave the bother of the scribe's business to his *aide*. "Lose no time," she concluded; "the country wants your ideas; let us have *your plan*."

The earl raised his shoulders, and kept