

**THE FORESTERS: A
TALE OF
DOMESTIC LIFE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649284429

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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WILSON

**THE FORESTERS: A
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DOMESTIC LIFE**

THE
FORESTERS.

A TALE OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

BY PROFESSOR WILSON,

AUTHOR OF "LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF SCOTTISH LIFE," AND "THE TRIALS
OF MARGARET LINDSAY."

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY SAXTON & KELT,
NEW YORK,—SAXTON AND MILES.
1845.

I. R. BUTTS, PRINTER,
SCHOOL STREET, BOSTON.

AMERICAN PREFACE.

THE American edition of the trials of Margaret Lyndsay, having been received with the strongest favor, has induced the publishers to issue the Forsters, of the same author, in a corresponding form. Like the "Trials," it will be found to partake of the same delicious pathos, fidelity of character, deep moral lessons, and a beauty of diction, unsurpassed, and in admirable unison with the subject. Its author has indeed a profound knowledge of the human heart, and though he principally delights in depicting "the lowly joys and destinies obscure" of the humble ranks of life, yet, in the present tale, he has given a brief and faithful portraiture of the fashionable world.

One great merit that characterizes our author's productions is their style of sentiment, widely differing from the sickly and sentimental affectation that pervades the writings of inferior novelists —

it is the sentiment of soul, the very essence of exquisite sensibility; and we defy the most heartless in perusing this beautiful story, from not having his feelings keenly excited, and his heart expand with better and holier affections to his fellow men.

It is indeed difficult to say which is the most finished character in the *Foresters* — the beautiful, gentle, and spotless Lucy, — the strong-minded, intellectual, and afflicted Michael, — the patient, suffering and virtuous Agnes, — the prodigal and lawless Abel, — the poor scholar, — the mild May Morrison, or the noble Lady of the Hirst. All of these are true and touching pictures of life, and yet so exquisitely finished are the smaller personages in the drama, that any attempt in assigning to either a precedence in merit, would be a nugatory and hypercritical task.

Like the "*Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*," the scenes and characters are, for the most part, laid in Scotland, and, consequently, the author has done them ample justice. One portion of the story, however, takes place in Cumberland, in England, on the banks of the beautiful lake of Windermere, where is situated the author's delightful residence of Elleray. It is well known that in his poems, and some of his other productions, he has celebrated the scenery of this beautiful region; yet, in our humble opinion, it has never been so felicitously and poetically depicted as in the pages of

the Foresters; while, to those who are curious of acquiring a knowledge of this far-famed portion of England, where have resided some of the first of our modern poets, the founders of what is termed the "Lake School of Poetry," we would recommend its perusal.

As, we believe, this is the first American edition of the work, we trust it will meet with a hearty welcome, and that every parent will give it a place in his family; calculated as it is to diffuse moral and religious principles through the medium of a beautiful domestic story. Such are, indeed, books, and their authors the best friends of humanity — they can never perish — they depend not on the fashion of the world, and cannot be out of date, till the dreams of young imagination shall vanish, and the deepest sympathies of love and hope be chilled. "For, while other works are extolled, admired and reviewed, these will be loved and wept over. Gentle hearts shall ever blend their thoughts of his among their remembrances of the benefactors of their youth. And when the favor of the world 'shall hang upon the beauty of their hearts,' how often will their spirits turn to him, who, as he cast a soft seriousness over the morning of life, shall assist in tranquillizing its noon-tide sorrows."

H. H.

THE FORESTERS.

CHAPTER I.

Of the humble mansions that, not many years ago, were thickly interspersed through the romantic scenery of the Esk, between Roslin and Lasswade, there was not one more beautiful than that which bore the appropriate name of Dovenest. It was built on a gentle eminence, that merely lifted it in safety above the highest water-mark of the river, sweeping round the little sylvan peninsula; and the breath of smoke that rose from its hidden chimneys was, even on the calmest day, lost on the broad bosom of the overshadowing wood, before it could reach the naked cliff that rose like a pillar into the sky. Several glades, and even pasture fields, lay concealed at no great distance up and down the stream; and a few steps could, in either direction, lead into prospects of confined but richest cultivation, where the houses of the more opulent looked out cheerfully, each over its own quiet pleasure ground, nor seemed, in their unostentatious retirement, at all out of unison with the character of the solitary or clustering cottages of the poorer inhabitants. But for a fantastic projection of rock, with its crown of drooping birch trees, Dovenest would have commanded a view of the caverned cliffs of Hawthornden, and indeed, even of Roslin Chapel. Although the castle was not visible, the rooks were seen flying over