

**A DREAMER, IN  
THREE  
VOLUMES: VOL. I**

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A dreamer, in three volumes: Vol. I by Katharine Wylde

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**KATHARINE WYLDE**

**A DREAMER, IN  
THREE  
VOLUMES: VOL. I**



# A DREAMER

BY

KATHARINE WYLDE

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON  
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PART I.

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VOL. I.

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For every man has a past, some knowledge of which is necessary to the understanding of his present or the forecasting of his future.



# A DREAMER.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE Rev. Arthur Temple was the most popular pastor in one of our large manufacturing towns. His hair had early turned white, but his face, even when he had become elderly, remained unwrinkled and bright, lighted by kind dark eyes and a beaming smile. Mr Temple belonged to the Evangelical section of the Church of England, but his good nature and good sense had prevented him from becoming an injurious persecutor, or even a rigidly intolerant dogmatist. He was a successful man in his own way, for he was not ambitious: if his desires had ever travelled

in the direction of bishoprics or money-bags, he had long since recalled the wanderers home, and he was more than content with his comfortable parsonage, his crowded church, and his active and useful life. He was an ideal pastor, in fact : outside his home he was always benevolent, cheerful, patient, and wise.

I say *outside* ; for within doors a shadow occasionally settled on his smooth forehead, and the smile would disappear when he was quite alone or only in his wife's company. Mr and Mrs Temple had a secret anxiety that was never really forgotten by them in their serenest moments.

There are people who live near a burning mountain, and perhaps daily expect an eruption therefrom ; and there are others who have one particular dependent or relative to whom their thoughts fly instinctively the moment they hear there is a calamity abroad, or that a misdemeanour is committed or feared. The anxiety, the bugbear, the volcano, was Philip.

This beloved son of the good clergyman and his gentle wife had never met with any serious

misfortune, except once pulling a gateway down and crippling himself for six months; nor had he ever been guilty of any flagrant iniquity beyond sowing a crop of wild oats when at college, which had grown up chiefly to his own hurt, and which had been quickly regretted and forsaken. But he alarmed his parents. They had no confidence in him; he puzzled and offended them: they never understood what he was doing, nor guessed what he would do next; they lived in continual dread that he would some day and somehow "come to a bad end."

Philip Temple was the Ugly Duckling of the fairy tale, all the more trying to his parents because he was the only duckling they had. It by no means follows that he was a swan, or even a goose. I start with no theory on that point. I do not so much as observe whether he was above or below the ordinary duck; but most certainly his nature was different from that of his parents. Mr and Mrs Temple brought up their child in the way he should go, but Philip seemed born to refute the asser-