

**OWEN GWYNNE'S  
GREAT WORK. IN TWO  
VOLUMES. VOL. II**

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Owen Gwynne's Great Work. In Two Volumes. Vol. II by Augusta Ada Noel

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**AUGUSTA ADA NOEL**

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**OWEN GWYNNE'S GREAT WORK.**

# OWEN GWYNNE'S GREAT WORK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF WANDERING WILLIE,"  
"CONRAD THE SQUIRREL," ETC.

"And Lancelot said—  
. . . . Be ye wise  
To call him shamed who is but overthrown?  
Thrown have I been, not once, but many a time,  
Victor from vanquished issues at the last,  
And overthrower from being overthrown."  
GARETH AND LYNETTE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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## OWEN GWYNNE'S GREAT WORK.

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### CHAPTER I.

TIME passed, and still Godfrey Deane made no sign. Lance wrote to him at all the *postes restantes* where he was likely to stop, and telegraphed for orders to Marlixtowe, from whence the answer was returned that he must wait in Rome.

Lance was glad to be able to do so now. The crisis of Nigel's illness had come and passed by this time, and he was returning by slow degrees to life. But he was still as feeble as a child, dependent for everything on Lance, and like a child receiving all from him with unquestioning simplicity.

From England Lance heard that his

father and mother had some time since departed on their voyage. Mrs. Gwynne wrote from Southampton, whence they were to sail for Lisbon. She gave him an elaborate account of her journey into Wales to take Maxy to his aunt; of Maxy's delight at the grand mountains; and of Aunt Patience's promises of care. "I never breathed such peculiarly fresh air," wrote Mrs. Gwynne. (She might well say so, for the wind had nearly cut her in two.)

Maxy did not write himself, which was nothing remarkable, as Lance knew him not to possess the pen of a ready writer; but he sent his love, and begged his brother should be told that he was very happy.

Lance was therefore free to devote himself to Nigel, who, as his strength slowly returned, was not the easiest person in the world to please. The long nights were specially trying both to nurse and patient. Nigel was like a spoilt child.

"What are you walking like a cat for,"



he used to say, "just as if you were treading on eggshells?"

"I hoped you were asleep," answered Lance, going up to the bedside.

Nigel groaned. "Catch a weazel asleep," he said discontentedly. "You know I never get any sleep."

"Come," said Lance, candid but imprudent, "you had a beautiful sleep this afternoon. You were asleep for two or three hours."

"I wasn't!" exclaimed Nigel indignantly; "nothing of the sort. I never lost consciousness. Two or three hours! That's all you know about it. I had to shut my eyes because the sun would pour in through those odious Venetian blinds of yours; but I wasn't asleep."

"Weren't you? I am sorry for that."

"Oh, it doesn't signify. It all comes to the same in the end. I say, Lance, I shan't get over this, you know."

"Yes, you will—nonsense. You're much better. The doctor said so yesterday."

"The doctor is an old woman. I suppose I may be allowed to know how I feel myself. What's this stuff you want me to drink?"

"Only barley-water."

"Nasty mess! I wish they would give one something fit to drink."

"Yes, it does look very horrid," said Lance, with a masculine contempt for "slops." "They don't know how to make it, I suppose."

"I never knew any one who did, except Ursula."

"I wish Ursula was here!"

"I dare say you do. Oh dear, what o'clock is it?"

"Nearly three," said Lance, stifling a yawn.

"Poor old fellow, you're regularly done. Lie down, Lance. I won't move again (unless I get the cramp in both my legs at once). Go to sleep, will you!"

Lance did look fagged and weary. His broken nights and long confinement to a sick room had told on him, no doubt; but more

than that, he was consumed by a slow fever—not such a one as Nigel was recovering from, though in his way he suffered scarcely less—the fever of longing after his lost art.

“Put your copy, the last one, up there where I can see it, will you?” said Nigel, one day, when he was beginning to sit up a little. “Pray do. Surely you don’t grudge me the small amusement of looking at it. My friend, the Yankee, is in luck,” he went on, after a long look at the nearly finished painting; “I could never have made a copy like that.”

Lance said nothing. He knew that his right hand had not lost its cunning. It was no longer the “Carlo Dolce” now—that had long since been finished, and paid for. He toiled on most perseveringly and conscientiously, but the copying work was getting hourly more irksome to him. Day by day his own picture, the picture he longed to paint, was growing to haunt him more incessantly. He saw the faces, their features,