

**AN INNOCENT SINNER; A
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ROMANCE, IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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An Innocent Sinner; A Psychological Romance, in Three Volumes, Vol. I by Mabel Collins

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MABEL COLLINS

**AN INNOCENT SINNER; A
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ROMANCE, IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. I**

AN INNOCENT SINNER.

AN INNOCENT SINNER.

A Psychological Romance.

BY

MABEL COLLINS.

"We sit in smooth content with wonted men!
Comes whirling by the awful unknown:
Throws our best balanced plans in chaos-pools,
And turns short views of life all out of focus;
Shakes our self-centre, makes us well-awake—
Find where we are, and what new road to take."

'Travels of a Journeyman.'

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. I.



LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE ST., STRAND.

1877.

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PREFACE.



In this story, which is based upon a situation that has afforded food for romancists from all time, the author has had to face the assertion of M. Dumas *filz*, that on this subject, "It is absolutely necessary to say something new. . . . Predecessors have passed that way, and have shut the door behind them."

M. Emile Girardin had asked his opinion on a dramatic work, which his critic allowed to be clever; but, said he:—"We have all posed our conclusions on this eternal subject. Yours is not a conclusion at all." The present writer is prepared to be considered no more successful in this respect than M. Girardin!

M. Dumas instances well-known plays in which the same situation has been elaborated, and every conceivable mode of escape from it exhausted. The author of these volumes believes that in them a new combination is effected, by simply placing one of the actors in the little drama in a state in which people are conventionally supposed to give up all interest in this particular stage, and in the actors upon it. On this subject every one has an opinion; but within the covers of a novel let us lay aside opinions: we are in the world of romance.

Leaving behind the grosser life of the French school, the writer has dared to treat this situation from a purely psychological point of view.

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AN INNOCENT SINNER.

"*Astrologos.* I have known men who died, and came
to life again ;

I have known men who died, and came to death again ;
I have known men who neither lived nor died at all,
But were pure phantoms, shadows on the atmosphere.

Raphael. Poor ghosts! who shivered through the
world."

'*The Comedy of Dreams.*' *Mortimer Collins.*



CHAPTER I.

THE DOCTOR AT HOME.

"Crabbed age and youth
Cannot live together."

SANDVILLE is a tolerably brisk country town ;
being near enough to London to attract
many city men as residents in the summer
months, it catches a savour of the quick
metropolitan life. At the same time it has