

# **THE EBONY IDOL**

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The Ebony Idol by G. M. Flanders

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**G. M. FLANDERS**

# **THE EBONY IDOL**



THE EBONY IDOL.



"THE RECEPTION."

Flanders, Mrs G W.

THE

# EBONY IDOL.

"It is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols."

JEREMIAH.

NEW YORK:  
D. APPLETON & COMPANY,  
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1860.

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## THE EBONY IDOL.

### CHAPTER I.

"Chief master-gunner am I of this town;  
Something I must do to procure me grace."—*HEXER V.*

My dear Reader—allow me to introduce to your distinguished consideration, the Rev. Mr. Cary.

You will please excuse the gentleman's preoccupation and indifference to introductory etiquette, since he has not the faintest intimation that he is the individual introduced. He does, and always will, suppose it to be some *other* Mr. Cary. He might have been the possessor of Titbottom's magical spectacles all the days of his life, without dreaming of the imperfections of his own heart, or experiencing one longing desire to see himself as others see him!

But we do not wish to criticize the gentleman in his innocent ignorance of our proximity.

Mr. Cary, as you perceive, is seated in his old arm-

I

*Here*

State University of Iowa

chair, in the home parlor of the Parsonage. See how cheerily the rock-maple fire roars and glows behind the polished brasses! How the fire-light dances out coquettishly over the tidy hearth, casting a whole flood of radiance on the occupant of the chair; flying onward to the book-case in the corner; struggling faintly toward the curtains, and suddenly retreating, curls down behind the wooden sticks, while small jets of gandy-colored flame peep cautiously upward, as if playing at bo-peep with some other maple fire!

The door opens, and a little girl glides in with a pair of faded slippers, which she quietly deposits upon the hearth, and without speaking, for she divines her father's mood; lays her dimpled cheek upon his shoulder, and encircles his neck with her arm.

Mechanically the father enfolds her in a caress, but his eyes still pry into the glowing embers, and his brow knits for itself another wrinkle.

As he sits there, with his shadow thrown upon the white wall by the warm fire-light, we gaze at him thoughtfully, as at another of those wondrous studies in God's inexhaustible studio, where, like the child vainly striving to match the fancy-grass in the garden, we weary ourselves in futile efforts to trace in feature or spirit the counterpart of a fellow-mortal!

The rough outlines, the compressed lips, and muscular frame, are each indicative of decision, and the firmest of wills. Phrenologically we are warned, that log-

ical combat may be profitably left alone, and to retire with precipitancy whenever that gentleman approaches an argument or a hobby! If there is any one fact established by Mr. Cary as a mental fixture, it is a conviction of his personal infallibility of judgment and action. Slow and skeptical in his recognition of modern innovations, his heart softens reluctantly, and his decisions close upon his reason with more unrelenting incarceration, than iron doors and bolts upon the victim of crime.

Ignorant of the vices which dig such fatal pits for the feet of our young men, Mr. Cary's life had been invulnerable to temptation. Although pinched by poverty, and early thrown upon his own resources, he had nevertheless struggled through a respectable education, firmly keeping aloof from debt, and while he did not hesitate to earn an honest penny by manual labor, he was too manly-hearted to lean for support upon the Female Charitable Associations, which, for some unaccountable reason, seem indispensable to the interests of modern theology!

Mr. Cary's initiation to the duties of the ministry had commenced at the mature period of thirty years, at which time he had been called to assume the pastoral charge of the church in Minden. We say *the* church, for, though there were other churches in Minden, yet the bulk of the people there were admirably Presbyterian; an exemplary body of Christians, who had, many