

**A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY;
A NOVEL OF
AMERICAN SOCIETY. IN
TWO VOLUMES. VOLUME II**

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A Voyage of Discovery; a Novel of American Society. In Two Volumes. Volume II by
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HAMILTON AÏDÉ

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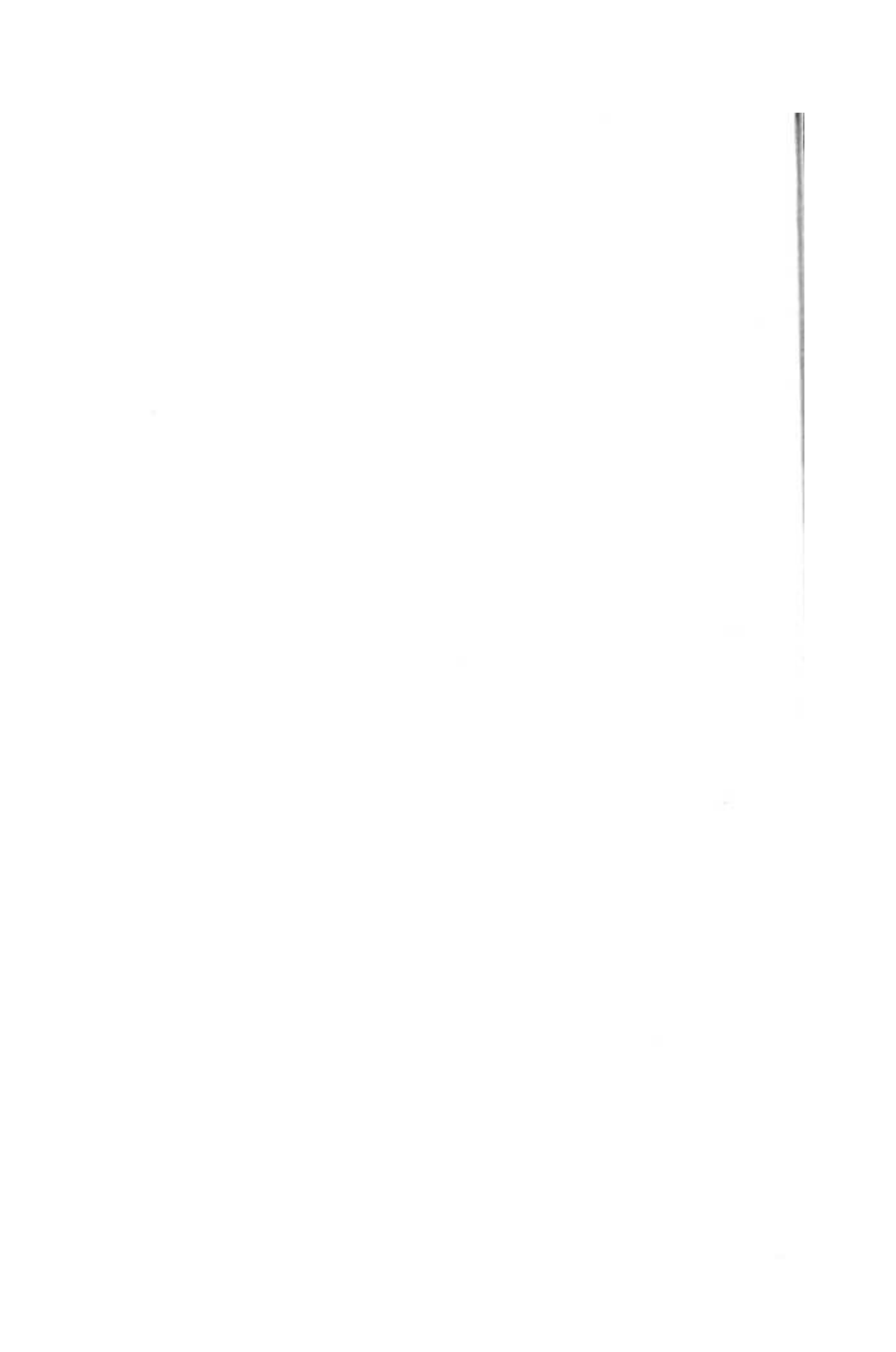
BY
HAMILTON AÏDÉ

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. II.

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A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

CHAPTER I.

A MAN who, in middle age, falls passionately in love, after many bitter disappointments, is as liable to do foolish things, in this same matter, as a raw youth of twenty. He is blind once more. Experience has taught him nothing; his hard cruel insight into the folly and weakness of others is now of no avail. It may be that he is deceived in the woman; or, as in this case, that his worldly wisdom unaccountably fails him just when it should be of most service to protect him from committing an irretrievable error.

It was strange that Ferrars should mistake the difference Miss Ballinger showed in her manner when talking to him and to other men, the keen alacrity with which she listened to,

and the fearless manner in which she attacked, many of his views, for growing interest of a deeper kind. He misunderstood her character, if not completely, at all events, in part. No woman, he believed, could care so much to convert a man to her way of thinking, who was indifferent as to that man's future. She was not indifferent; this young woman felt an unusual, almost a passionate concern about the lives of those in whom she was interested; and she was sincerely interested in Quintin Ferrars. But it was not the sort of interest he imagined: therein was the initial error of his conduct towards her.

On his way from church that evening, he sounded Mrs. Courtly.

"Have you had much conversation with Miss Ballinger since she arrived?"

"No private conversation. Why?"

"I saw a great deal of her in New York. We met every day. Sometimes I was for hours virtually alone with her. You can guess the result as regards myself. I thought I could never care for a woman again. But I care about this English girl as I never cared before. Has she ever spoken to you about me?"

“Not since we were on board the *Teutonic*. She asked me then about you, but I told her nothing. I knew you disliked your secret being talked of, and, as it has been so well kept, I resolved to say nothing, unless absolutely forced to do so.” Then, after a pause, “She is not a woman to be lightly won, Quintin.”

“No; but—unless I am an ass—she takes that sort of interest in me which may deepen into—something stronger. What I want, on all accounts, is time. And that is just the difficulty. They will only be here a few days.”

“Yes, they are going west, after passing a day or two in Boston, when their aunt arrives.”

“And they will leave America in the spring. And if I follow them west, they will be staying with people I don't know. It is time you see, I want—time!”

“Do nothing precipitate, at all events. When will you be free?”

“Not for five months yet. Oh! my dear friend! It seems such an age now, before I can throw off those cursed bonds; and I had grown so indifferent to them! My life was

blasted, and as long as I loved no other woman, it was all one to me. But now—"

He broke off with so deep a sigh that Mrs. Courtly was startled. All the way home he talked of this English girl, and of nothing else. His friend recognized no longer the man who for years had found so little in life to prize, to admire, or to love.

On their return home, they found Saul Barham. Mrs. Courtly had said nothing of his coming for the night; she had kept it as a little surprise for Grace, who would be pleased, she knew, to see him. And she was right. Miss Ballinger greeted the young professor with a warmth which made Quintin Ferrars jealous. He had never liked Barham. More than once on board the *Teutonic* their opinions, or something that lay deeper than opinions, had clashed. Ferrars, so trenchant in his judgments, found a man, fifteen years his junior, who treated him more than cavalierly; for hesitation and diffidence were not among Saul's weaknesses. The young Harvard Professor felt a certain contempt for this idle, wandering fellow-countryman of his, with his superior *nil admirari* tone about their