

**THE HON. MISS
FERRARD: IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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The Hon. Miss Ferrard: In Three Volumes, Vol. I by Mary Hartley

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MARY HARTLEY

**THE HON. MISS
FERRARD: IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. I**

THE
HON. MISS FERRARD.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "HOGAN, M.P."

"Only a learner,
Quick one or slow one;
Just a discerner,
I would teach no one.
I am earth's native:
No rearranging it:
I be creative,
Chopping and changing it?"
BROWNING.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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1877.

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THE HONOURABLE MISS FERRARD.



CHAPTER I.

"Mon avis est, qu'on ne peut créer des personnages que lorsqu'on a beaucoup étudié les hommes, comme on ne peut parler une langue qu'à la condition de l'avoir sérieusement appria."—DUMAS.

HE mail from Ballycormack to Darraghstown, a rickety old outside car, painted red, with her Majesty's initials interlaced in yellow paint on the back of the well, carried on the 18th of September, 187—, an unusual burden. A tourist on one side, and his luggage, which balanced him nicely,

carefully fastened on the other seat. The tourist was a man of about thirty-five, dressed in a shooting-suit of heather mixture, with knickerbockers and stout buttoned boots, one of which dangled carelessly below the footboard as he leaned back on the well. He was a strongly-built man, with a tanned face and bright English blue eyes, which roved over the landscape incessantly and intelligently. The driver's head was bent to one side, following with his eyes the outstretched hand of his fare, and answering the never-ceasing questions with which he plied him.

"That is Darraghmore—eh?" the tourist said.

"That's Darraghmore, your honour; I'll pull up one minute here at the gap in the hedge, and then you'll have a clane view of the front. All the land you can see now on the far side of the river was the

estate, up over there to the foot of Tobergeen, an' the finest pasture ever you seen lies there beyond to the wood. The demesne was five miles long, and the river ran by the bounds of it; Jim Devereux's farm 'tis called now."

"What's that I see to the left? a ruin?"

"Yes, your honour, that's a ruin—one of the owld castles Cromwell tumbled down. What you see is the new castle, though it's owld enough too."

"It does not look very old."

"Not from this, sir. There's more than three miles between you and it, but if you were nearer there's not a windy, nor a chimney, nor, for the matter of that, a floor left in it——"

"A floor, do you say! What happened then?"

"Augh, sir, the old lord before he was

bate up entirely was livin' in it, an' sure they didn't care what they done wid it. So they burned the flooring of all the rooms they didn't want, an' a part of the stairs an' the dures; just whatever come handy. Get along wid ye, Bess."

Then Bess, a wiry old grey mare, received a cut of the whip that made her start at a pace that soon left the great bleak house behind. Mr. Satterthwaite forgot his cigar, and turned his head to watch, as long as the car kept the valley road, the beautiful view that lay beneath.

"They're a terrible crew, them Ferrards," the driver began again after awhile. "Like most of the rale owld stock, they were bad livers. Anyhow they're broke now, horse and foot."

"Are they? Who were they? Lord Darraghmore—I know that name. I've seen it beyond a doubt," he added to

himself, "but I never heard it within my recollection—was Lord Darraghmore married? Tell me about the family."

The driver was only too happy to be allowed to do this; and his passenger, having rekindled his cigar, disposed himself comfortably to listen.

"Married? wisha! he was married twice itself, an' has sons and daughters as old as what I am, an' that's forty odd. He wasn't more than eighteen when he ran away to the Continent with a Dublin lady. She was no match for him, an' when she died he married an Englishwoman; she'd a couple of thousand, I b'lieve—but that was a drop in the sea to me lord."

"Are there any children living?"

"There's children, sir, as I said, plenty but whether they are all to the good or no, I can't say. The eldest son of all is in the Austrian army, another's gone to the

diggings, wan was shot, an' wan was drowned at sea, an' wan died—anyhow they say he died. Then there's three boys by the last mar'ge. I b'lieve they're wid him, wherever he is."

"No daughters?"

"Ay! wan married some fellow, an' she's livin' in Paris wid him—God forgive me if I'm tellin' a lie, but they do say he can't live in this country; an' wan married a sailor chap, a captain of some boat they were travellin' by. There's wan by the second wife, too."

"Were there no relatives? no friends?" asked the Englishman, thinking it strange that in this tuft-hunting age the Misses Ferrard could not have found mates more suitable to their rank in life than the "fellow in Paris" or the "sailor chap."

"I dunno, sir; 'tis twenty years nearly

