

**THE VIRGIN  
WIDOW. A PLAY**

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The virgin widow. A play by Sir Henry Taylor

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**SIR HENRY TAYLOR**

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WIDOW. A PLAY**





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VIRGIN WIDOW.

A PLAY.

BY

(Sir) HENRY TAYLOR

AUTHOR OF "PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE."

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TO WHOSE EXCELLENT JUDGMENT

IN MATTERS OF ART

THIS WORK

IS LARGELY INDEBTED

IT IS

WITH SINCERE RESPECT AND REGARD

VERY GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.





## P R E F A C E.

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IN a letter which Mr. Southey wrote many years ago, on a first and very juvenile attempt of mine in dramatic composition, he observed, that pure tragedy was what few but the young could bear. I felt the truth of the observation before youth was past; and though there are other grounds on which I should have preferred the mixed drama—it is so much more various in its spirit, more wide and general in its scope—yet the oppressiveness of pure tragedy would have been sufficient of itself to turn me away from it ere long; and

as life advances, tragedy of any kind, however mixed and attempered, seems to demand more of the hardihood, perhaps, I may say, the hardness of youth, than it is either likely or desirable that after years should be armed with.

Comedy is doubtless a lower, and, in some measure, a lesser sphere; for whilst tragedy—that is, the mixed and romantic tragedy—admits all elements, not excepting the comic, comedy does not admit the tragic,—which, indeed, can hardly exist except through a general and predominating effect. This, however, is the only element which comedy necessarily excludes. The mere comedy of manners and repartee which has been written for the last two centuries, is, no doubt, with all the brilliancy which it has occasionally exhibited, a somewhat narrow representation of human life. But the romantic and poetic comedy which preceded, includes, though not the four