

**A FAIR  
BARBARIAN**

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A Fair Barbarian by Frances Hodgson Burnett

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**FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT**

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## A FAIR BARBARIAN

# A Fair Barbarian

By

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

*Author of*

*"That Lass o' Lowrie's," "Haworth's," "Louisiana," etc.*



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### CHAPTER I.

MISS OCTAVIA BASSETT.

SLOWBRIDGE had been shaken to its foundations.

It may as well be explained, however, at the outset, that it would not take much of a sensation to give Slowbridge a great shock. In the first place, Slowbridge was not used to sensations, and was used to going on the even and respectable tenor of its way, regarding the outside world with private distrust, if not with open disfavor. The new mills had been a trial to Slowbridge, — a sore trial. On being told of the owners' plan of building them, old Lady Theobald, who was the corner-stone of the social edifice of Slowbridge, was said, by a spectator, to have

turned deathly pale with rage; and, on the first day of their being opened in working order, she had taken to her bed, and remained shut up in her darkened room for a week, refusing to see anybody, and even going so far as to send a scathing message to the curate of St. James, who called in fear and trembling, because he was afraid to stay away.

"With mills and mill-hands," her ladyship announced to Mr. Burmestone, the mill-owner, when chance first threw them together, "with mills and mill-hands come murder, massacre, and mob law." And she said it so loud, and with so stern an air of conviction, that the two Misses Briarton, who were of a timorous and fearful nature, dropped their buttered muffins (it was at one of the tea-parties which were Slowbridge's only dissipation), and shuddered hysterically, feeling that their fate was sealed, and that they might, any night, find three masculine mill-hands secreted under their beds, with bludgeons. But as no massacres took place, and the mill-hands were pretty regular in their habits, and even went so far as to send their