

**AN EYE FOR AN
EYE. IN TWO
VOLUMES. VOL. I**

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An eye for an eye. In two volumes. Vol. I by Anthony Trollope

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ANTHONY TROLLOPE

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BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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AN EYE FOR AN EYE.

INTRODUCTION.

At a private asylum in the west of England there lives, and has lived for some years past, an unfortunate lady, as to whom there has long since ceased to be any hope that she should ever live elsewhere. Indeed there is no one left belonging to her by whom the indulgence of such a hope on her behalf could be cherished. Friends she has none ; and her own condition is such, that she recks nothing of confinement and does not even sigh for release. And yet her mind is ever at work,—as is doubtless always the case with the insane. She has present to her, apparently in every waking moment of her existence, an object of intense interest, and at

that she works with a constancy which never wearies herself, however fatiguing it may be to those who are near her. She is ever justifying some past action of her life. "An eye for an eye," she says, "and a tooth for a tooth. Is it not the law?" And these words she will repeat daily, almost from morn till night.

It has been said that this poor lady has no friends. Friends who would be anxious for her recovery, who would care to see her even in her wretched condition, who might try to soothe her harassed heart with words of love, she has none. Such is her condition now, and her temperament, that it may be doubted whether any words of love, however tender, could be efficacious with her. She is always demanding justification, and as those who are around her never thwart her she has probably all the solace which kindness could give her.

But, though she has no friends—none who love her,—she has all the material comfort which friendship or even love could supply.

All that money can do to lessen her misery, is done. The house in which she lives is surrounded by soft lawns and secluded groves. It has been prepared altogether for the wealthy, and is furnished with every luxury which it may be within the power of a maniac to enjoy. This lady has her own woman to attend her; and the woman, though stout and masterful, is gentle in language and kind in treatment. "An eye for an eye, ma'am. Oh, certainly. That is the law. An eye for an eye, no doubt." This formula she will repeat a dozen times a day—ay, a dozen dozen times, till the wonder is that she also should not be mad.

The reader need not fear that he is to be asked to loiter within the precincts of an asylum for the insane. Of this abode of wretchedness no word more shall be said; but the story shall be told of the lady who dwelt there,—the story of her life till madness placed her within those walls. That story was known to none at the establishment but to him who was its head.