

**ETHEL'S LOVE-
LIFE: A NOVEL**

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Ethel's Love-Life: A Novel by Margaret J. M. Sweat

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MARGARET J. M. SWEAT

**ETHEL'S LOVE-
LIFE: A NOVEL**

ETHEL'S LOVE-LIFE:

I *Hotel.*

BY
MARGARET J. M. SWEAT.



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RUDD & CARLETON, 310 BROADWAY.
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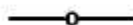
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Prof. C. C. Felton
of Cambridge.

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To the Reader.



If there is aught of truth within these pages, it will assert itself without assistance and without explanation.

If there is any power of expression in these words, it will speak to the hearts which recognise it; and if there is any charm of sentiment beneath the imperfect utterance, it lays itself at the feet of those who give it welcome.





"I am a part of all which I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move."

TENNYSON.





ETHEL'S LOVE-LIFE.

LETTER FIRST.

DEAREST AND TRUEST OF FRIENDS,

You ask me to tell you something of my childhood and my home, with which, though knowing me so well, you are still unfamiliar. Though the retrospect of vanished years must cause me pain, though the past has in it an eternal regret, which sits like the skeleton at an Egyptian feast, in the midst of the present joy that fills my heart, though tears rise to my eyes as I recall my sufferings, and self-reproach utters its mournful words as I recount my errors and my ignorances,—still I will not shrink from the revelation of my whole self to you. You who know my heart with all its strength and all its weakness, all its

intensity of feeling and all its impetuosity of action, should know also the history of my past influences, the external environments and inner springs which have combined to make me what I now am. I will look back steadily upon my old self, and faithfully repeat to you what the past reveals to me. Two years ago you had never seen me; we who are now all in all to each other, whose pulses beat in magnetic sympathy, had never met. Two years ago my inner self was changed, old things passed away, all things became new,—old deadness gave place to new vitality, old passions were extinguished, old loves and hatreds were outgrown and thrown aside in one fresh, vigorous, new-born impulse of my whole nature. Never since then have I disturbed their repose, but now, at the magic power of your word, I reanimate them to a galvanic existence. I will call up at your bidding, the forms of the past, which, though now but weird-like phantoms in the sunshine which surrounds me, and with its healthy glow shows them to be unsubstantial and harmless, were once the giants of my battle-field, and strode fiercely and relentlessly