

**PAUL ULRIC, OR, THE
ADVENTURES OF
AN ENTHUSIAST. IN
TWO VOLUMES. VOL. I**

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Paul Ulric, or, the Adventures of an Enthusiast. In Two Volumes. Vol. I by Morris Mattson

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MORRIS MATTSON

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PAUL ULRIC;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ENTHUSIAST.

Sir Hugh Evans.—I will description the matter to you, if you
be capacity of it.—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

—————An outline is the best;
A lively reader's fancy does the rest.—*BYRON.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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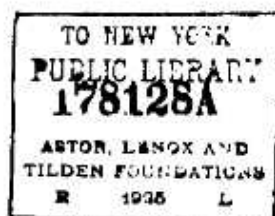
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TO THE HONOURABLE

LOUIS McLANE.

DEAR SIR,

During your residence in London as Minister at the Court of St. James, I received much kindness and attention at your hands. I was a wanderer in a strange land, and you were to me as a Father. Permit me therefore, to inscribe these volumes with your name, as a slight testimonial of my respect and esteem.

Very truly,

THE AUTHOR.

Philadelphia, April, 1835.

PAUL ULRIC;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ENTHUSIAST.

CHAPTER I.

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together : our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not ; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.—SHAKESPEARE.

MY name is Paul Ulric. Thus much, gentle reader, you already know of one whose history is about to be recorded for the benefit of the world. I say *benefit*, because I trust there are but few who have not sufficient discretion to profit by the experience of others.

I was always an enthusiast ; but of this I deem it inexpedient to say much at present. I will merely remark, that I possessed by nature a wild and

adventurous spirit, which has led me on, blindly and hurriedly, from object to object, without any definite or specific aim. My life has been one of continual excitement; and in my wild career I have tasted of joy as well as sorrow. At one moment I have been elevated to the very pinnacle of human happiness; at the next, I have sunk to the lowest depths of despair. Still, I fancied there was always an equilibrium. This may seem a strange philosophy to some; but is it the less true? The human mind is so constituted as always to seek a level. If it is depressed, it will be proportionately elevated; if elevated, it will be proportionately depressed. It may justly be compared to a ship riding upon the billows; at one moment cleaving the heavens—at the next, wrecking in the troubled waters. We can neither be entirely miserable, nor superlatively happy. There will be a mixture of sunshine and storm, the one continually succeeding the other. Those who have their dark thoughts—their moments of gloom and despondency—experience subsequently a corresponding degree of animation, and their spirits leap up and soar away as upon the wings of an angel.

But I am growing metaphysical, which I did not intend. Let me change the subject, and say a few words of my father.

He—good soul!—had the misfortune to become a baronet; and, like many other baronets—with reverence be it spoken—was not remarkable for his intelligence. He was born in Lower Saxony, but was taken by his parents, when only a year old, to England. They died soon after, and he was thrown upon a benevolent parish, where he was initiated, by a certain distinguished rector, into the mysteries of boot-cleaning. He appears to have been a lad of some spirit, as well as industrious habits; and was generally noted for his enterprise. At the age of ten he eloped from his kind-hearted master—the rector—and became a vender of newspapers in the streets of London; at twelve, he sold potatoes in Covent Garden market on commission; at fifteen, he absconded from a soap-boiler in the Strand, to whom he had been apprenticed; at eighteen, he engaged in a profitable speculation with a Jew—such as purchasing and selling old clothes; at twenty, he became the proprietor of a mock auction in Cheapside; and, at twenty-five, by some unaccountable good fortune, he was the owner of a house in Regent-street, and could boast of several thousand pounds in the funds.

The method by which he so suddenly acquired this affluence, has, thus far, remained a secret. I once heard it intimated, however, that he was a

frequent visiter at certain houses in St. James's, usually denominated *hells*; but I was never at any pains to ascertain the truth of the surmise. It was enough to know that he was rich; and as he had gained a reputation among his friends for excellent wines and good dinners, this was a sufficient palliation for the sins and peccadilloes of his previous life, whatever they might have been.

My father had not reached his thirtieth year, when a signal mark of distinction was conferred upon him, which produced a momentary sensation throughout all England. Let me narrate the circumstance. He was returning late one night from a visit to a friend in the neighbourhood of the Regent's Park; and as he was moving slowly along one of the principal streets, he observed a well-dressed gentleman, a short distance before him, who stumbled and fell to the pavement. My father, with considerable effort, succeeded in raising him to his feet—for he was a heavy muscular person—but he proved to be too much under the influence of wine to travel further without assistance. The stranger had a full, handsome face; and the large, magnificent diamond which glittered on one of his fingers, was sufficient evidence, in my father's estimation, that he was too fine a gentleman to be left a prey to the police. Accordingly, a carriage was ordered;