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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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GUILDEROY

BY

OUIDA,

AUTHOR OF

"UNDER TWO FLAGS;" "SIGNA," "A HOUSE PARTY," ETC.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1889.

GUILDEROY.

CHAPTER I.

LORD GUILDEROY had written a few pages of an essay on the privileges and the duties of friendship.

"Friendship is generally cruelly abused by those who profess it," he had written with much truth. "It is too often supposed, like Love, to carry with it an official right to that kind of candour which is always insolence. There can be no greater mistake. The more intimate our relations are with any one, be it in friendship or in love, the less should we strain the opportunity to say impertinent and disagreeable things. Intimacy does not absolve from courtesy, though it is so often separated from it by the unwisdom and the impetuosity of human nature. Indeed, there is even a kind of meanness in taking advantage of our entry into the inner temple of the soul to leave good manners outside on the threshold. Abuse of all privilege is vulgar, and the privileges of friendship, as they are without prescription and left solely to our own judgment, demand an infinite delicacy and forbearance in their

exercise. There are many moments in friendship, as in love, when silence is beyond words. The faults of our friend may be clear to us, but it is well to seem to shut our eyes to them. It is doubtful if fault-finding ever did any good yet, or served to eradicate any fault against which it is directed. Friendship is usually treated by the majority of mankind as a tough and everlasting thing which will survive all manner of bad treatment. But this is an exceedingly great and foolish error. Friendship may be killed, like love, by bad treatment; it may even die in an hour of a single unwise word; its conditions of existence are that it should be dealt with delicately and tenderly, being as it is a sensitive plant and not a road-side thistle. We must not expect our friend to be above humanity. We need not love his defects, but we should forbear to dwell on them even in our own meditations. We should not demand from him what it is impossible he should give. A character can only bestow that which it possesses. Time and absence are the enemies of friendship, as of love; but they need not necessarily destroy it, as they must destroy love. For love is so intimately interwoven with physical joys, that without these it cannot exist eternally; but friendship, being an immaterial and intellectual affection, ought to be able to endure without personal contact, and to outlast even the total separation of two lives——.”

Having written thus he rose, and paced to and fro his library.

“That is not in the least true,” he reflected. “It ought to be, but it is not. Between the best friends long absence raises a mist like that which the Brahmin