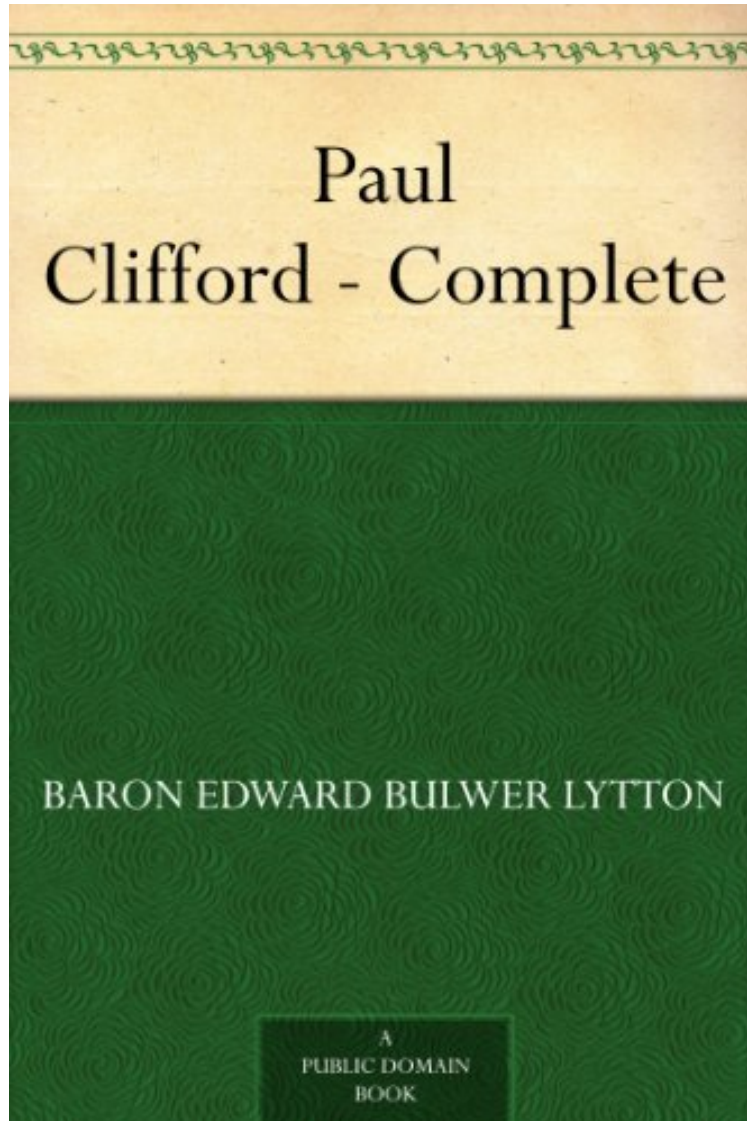


[Free] Paul Clifford - Complete (English Edition)

Paul Clifford - Complete (English Edition)

Von Baron Edward Bulwer-Lytton

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Von Baron Edward Bulwer-Lytton : Paul Clifford - Complete (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Paul Clifford - Complete (English Edition):

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Never Judge a Book by Its First Sentence Von Tristram Shandy Although I thoroughly enjoy reading English literature of the 18th and 19th centuries - I am afraid I may even go so far as to say that one condition an author must fulfil in order to find real favour with me is simply ... being dead -, I have never had a look at the works of Edward Bulwer-Lytton. This is hardly surprising because I have always considered him to be a paragon of purple prose - and why? Simply

because of the infamous sentence - "It was a dark and stormy night" - with which he started his novel "Paul Clifford". For some reason or other, however, I recently started having a go at this very book, and I was quite amazed at how much I enjoyed it. "Paul Clifford" tells the story of a young man, the eponymous hero, born in obscure circumstances and brought up by the landlady of an equally obscure alehouse. After being punished for a crime that he did not commit, he is finally lured into the company of highwaymen and confidence tricksters and decides to take up life as an outlaw. One day, however, he makes the acquaintance of a charming young girl, Lucy Brandon, the niece of a very ambitious and embittered lawyer, and Cupid takes over, throwing him into an ill-fated passion for the girl. How can he possibly hope to be united in marriage to a maiden that is apparently socially unattainable to him, a reckless young man, whose neck is constantly threatened by Jack Ketch? Apart from that, Lucy's scheming uncle is determined to marry her off to Lord Mauleverer, a jaded aristocrat, whose friendship is useful to Brandon in the pursuit of his social ambitions. What seems to be a wild and romantic penny-dreadful really is one, but there is quite more to it. I was quite surprised at Bulwer-Lytton's witty and elegant style, his capacity for exuberant wordplay and his brilliant humour. When, for instance, one of the characters complains of having been robbed of his watch, he receives the witty answer: Your watch has gone? Well, watches are made to go. Whereas a lot of the characters in Bulwer-Lytton are either caricatures or bloodless types, the author actually creates an interesting hero, because for all his noble qualities, there is a tinge of contempt for mankind in Paul that makes his descent into crime credible. On the other hand, even Bulwer-Lytton's crooks have their redeeming qualities, as in the case of Lord Mauleverer, who is much more lifelike than any sinister suitor you may find in Dickens. Lytton's master-piece, however, is the disillusioned lawyer Brandon, whose motives become more and more understandable, though not excusable, in the course of the novel. His view on life is quite depressing, and he expresses it to his niece, whom he really loves, in a very frank way, as for example here: "Posterity! Can you believe that a man who knows what life is, cares for the penny whistles of grown children after his death? [...] Posterity is but the same perpetuity of fools and rascals; and even were justice desirable at their hands, they could not deal it. [...] The word has gulled men enough without my adding to the number. I, who loathe the living, can scarcely venerate the unborn. Lucy, believe me, that no man can mix largely with men in political life, and not despise everything that in youth he adored! Age leaves us only one feeling - contempt!" For all the staginess of monologues like these, they fulfill their purpose, adding another dimension to what would usually be another melodramatic scoundrel. Quite like the inimitable Dickens, Lytton also seems to pursue social aims, indicting the inhumane criminal law of his time, as in Paul's furious final speech in court: "The laws themselves caused me to break the laws: first, by implanting within me the goading sense of injustice; secondly by submitting me to the corruption of example. [...] And it now destroys me, as it has destroyed thousands, for being what it made me!" If you are not too averse to a certain pathos in tone and to melodrama, you might actually enjoy "Paul Clifford" a lot. After the amusing time I had with this novel, I will certainly give some other of Lytton's works a try. The only thing I heartily disliked was the author's apparent prejudice against the Scottish, which is not only mirrored in the caricature one of the characters supplies but also in various scathing remarks about the nation that has come up with some of the finest whiskies and poets in the world.

Kurzbeschreibung This book was converted from its physical edition to the digital format by a community of volunteers. You may find it for free on the web. Purchase of the Kindle edition includes wireless delivery. **Kurzbeschreibung** This book was converted from its physical edition to the digital format by a community of volunteers. You may find it for free on the web. Purchase of the Kindle edition includes wireless delivery. **Synopsis** It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents except at occasional intervals when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies) rattling along the house-tops and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness.